

Handfuls of Purpose

Book of Ruth

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Let's take our Bibles and look together once again in Ruth 2 and I want to read from verse 11 down to verse 18 and speak with you on "Handfuls of Purpose." That may be a title that you've heard before. I remember reading years ago a book, a commentary on Ruth, and that was the title of the book, and certainly that could be a good title for this entire book that we're studying, handfuls of purpose. Everything that happened to Ruth happened on purpose just like if we are the Lord's, it didn't just happen, it was purposed of the Lord. That's a key word in Scripture that many in our generation miss and yet we dare not because we know if we are the Lord's, that's the only reason, he purposed it.

Let's read this and then I'll make some comments. Ruth 2, beginning with verse 11, "And Boaz answered and said unto her," so here she has already been drawn to him, he says, "It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Then she said, Let me find favour," grace, "in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar." That word "vinegar" may also be translated "wine." So here we see bread and wine which was a part of the meal that was common for these to eat. "And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed," which is saying about satisfaction, was sufficed, "and left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not: And let fall also," here is the title "some of the handfuls of purpose for her." That little word "for," on behalf of her. That's a small word but great significance in Scripture as it shows God's grace on behalf of. It's not anything the sinner works out but for, for her, "and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not." That's twice, verse 15, "reproach her not," and verse 16, "rebuke her not." "So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed." Twice that says that, "after she was sufficed."

What a beautiful picture of God's grace and his purpose in grace all the way down through here. In verse 11 when it says there, "Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me," I believe that speaks to God's knowing those that are his. The Lord knoweth those that are his. That's his omniscience. He had heard about her even when Naomi and she came back into Bethlehem empty and it wasn't hidden. It's like nothing is hidden with our God. The path by which the Lord leads us to be brought to him may be a very winding, rough path, even as we've seen already with Ruth and Naomi, and yet we know that God purposed every detail of it; that when they had heard, Naomi had heard even down there in Moab of the Lord's visiting his people, that's what is described there in Ruth 1:6. Everything that we see here is in response to God's doing. That's the world, that's the universe, it's God's universe, it's God's world. There is no random acts that ever take place whether it's a famine, whether it's a death, through it the Lord is accomplishing his purpose, and here specifically we see it was to draw these two, Naomi and Ruth, to Boaz, a picture of how God draws his own to Christ.

In verse 12, the reward. In Scripture, it never speaks of rewards. Whenever you hear someone use that word, it's not found in Scripture. There are not rewards when it comes to God's grace, it is a reward. When Christ said there on that Sermon on the Mount, "Great is your reward in heaven," he didn't say, "Great are your rewards in heaven," he said, "Great is your reward in heaven for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Well, what is the sinner's reward? Well, it's Christ. Here when Boaz says, "The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel," it's like the writer of the Hebrews that wrote that God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. It doesn't mean to compensate them based on merit. That's not how God rewards any of his own, but what it means is that in seeking him, those who seek him shall find him. Those who knock, it shall be opened. Those who ask, it shall be given. Now, it's speaking specifically of those that God in his grace causes to knock, causes to ask. None of us would ask in any true sense were it not the grace of God. James wrote that about those that he said, "You ask and you have not because you ask amiss." There are a bunch of people in religion today that are like the false prophets of Baal dancing around an altar demanding. That word "ask" means "to supplicate." When the Lord brings you to that point, lays you low that all you can do is cry unto him, that cry and that need is the Lord's doing else you wouldn't cry.

So the reward, the full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel. It has to do with finding God to be exactly as he says he is. Well, how do we know how he is? Right here in this word, and I daresay if the Lord has taught you, that's one thing you do know. Whether you understand life's mysteries and everything going on or not, one thing you can testify if you are the Lord's is that he is exactly how he reveals himself in this word. And you know, if we're privileged to be among those that by his grace enter into glory, we're going to find him to be exact, there is not going to be any surprises for the Lord's children in heaven in glory. We're going to find him to be exactly as revealed here.

Now, there are many that just like that old spiritual says, many talking about heaven ain't going there. There are going to be many that are ushered out of this life that are going to find instead of heaven, they are going to find hell, they are going to find condemnation. They may look around for that little g-o-d that someone taught them about and they believed and hung their hope of eternity on, only to find that it was nothing but a figment of their imagination. That's an idol God.

You say, "Well, how can you tell the difference between a true God and an idol God?" And idol God is somebody you've got to help. Think of an idol. The Lord said there in the Old Testament, "They've got eyes but cannot see. They've got ears but cannot hear. They've got a mouth but cannot speak." Listen to how people are describing their god in this generation, this little g-o-d, it's a figment of their imagination. It doesn't exist and their little g-o-d stands in contrast to what this word reveals concerning the God because the God of Scripture is sovereign; he accomplishes his purpose. He doesn't depend on us, we depend on him. He doesn't need us, we need him. But how many there are that have a God, you've heard that expression, I've mentioned it before, they say, "Well, God doesn't have any other hands but your hands so you'd better give. God doesn't have any feet but your feet, how is he going to get his work done if you don't get running?" This is a taskmaster, modern day Egypt; people being whipped into making bricks and if their leader doesn't feel like they are doing well enough, well, they'll take the straw away and still require the same number of bricks like pharaoh did with the children of Israel. That's works religion but that's not the Gospel.

I don't see anything in this portion here in Ruth where Ruth was being required to fulfill certain conditions in order for Boaz to love her and to provide for her and care for her. In fact, we saw that last time, her amazement in verse 10. Ruth 2:10, "Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" I believe that's a testimony of everyone to whom the Lord has taught. If you hear any kind of other language than that, it's not the language of grace.

So speaking here of the Lord recompensing you for what you have done, it's not earning but the Lord is faithful. I'm dealing right now with a friend that is in a spiritually dark place. For him it's not pleasant but as he was describing it to me, I had to tell them, "Do you know what? It sounds to me like the Lord is showing you you are lost." And that was one of his questions, "How do I know I am one of the Lord's? I labor over it." I tend to think that if a person is laboring over that question, that's because the Lord is giving them some light and the reason they are laboring over it is because he is showing them that there is nothing in them, and to be lost means there is no way back. When you read the Scriptures and they say to believe, the cry is, "I can't. How?" When the Scriptures say repent, we don't even know what that is. It's like one old preacher said, if repent was written in boxcar letters on the side of a wall, you still wouldn't know what to do with it.

Well, that's our state. You know, how is it that you should take knowledge of me? But the recompense, what does the Lord say? "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me." You see, there is the description. That's how we know that one has been given of the

Lord. Just like here, how do we know in this story that this was purposed for Naomi and Ruth? God caused their path to be drawn to Boaz, a picture of Christ. And then the recompense, if you will, in coming, not for coming but in coming, is where it says, "and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." You see, as Ruth was drawn again and again back to Boaz and even as we read on, Naomi said, "Don't go to anybody else's field." Why did she keep going back? Because every time she found him to be who he said he would be, and that's the recompense here, the full reward. She couldn't fathom it at the time but when you look at that word there in verse 12, "a full reward," this is not just some chump change reward for some merit done by some meager means. No, full reward means all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus that have been given us and we only find that out as we come and continue to come. It's not our coming that opens it up to us but it has been opened to us and that's what draws us to come again and again.

And it says there in verse 12, "under whose wings thou art come to trust." That coming is not of her but under whose wings. We saw last time that's a picture of the cherubim over the mercy seat where God's presence was there but only through the blood shed of the sacrifice. That's the full reward, that all for whom Christ paid the debt are saved, have been saved, we just find out about it. Here was this in God's purpose drawing Ruth to Boaz only to find out that he was all she needed and all that she would want.

Then in verse 13 we see the unmerited grace of God typified there. Where grace is given, there is comfort. There is no comfort in looking into ourselves. You see, that's where we get in trouble, we start introspective trying to figure out if I've got enough light or no light at all. That's not where we are to look. Eyes to see. Whenever the Lord healed somebody, the blind, the first they saw was the one who healed them, it was Christ, and therein was the comfort.

When she said in verse 13, "Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord," and notice in order that I should be comforted. That's not what she said, "for that thou hast comforted me." Stop and think about if the Lord has drawn you by his Spirit what it is that drew you in the first place. It wasn't fear. Fear drives away. There is no fear in love. It's the love of God that casts out all fear, the perfect love of God. It's in the depths of our sin, seeing ourselves as totally helpless, and finding some measure of hope and comfort in what the Scriptures say of Christ just like here.

"If I have found favor in thy sight, for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid." You know, when I began to by God's grace read the Scriptures as they are set forth and to realize that Scriptures don't have one bad thing to say about one of the Lord's, now it exposes their sin but in no case do we find any one of the Lord's that he has chosen and redeemed and drawn to himself, that God has turned away because their sin was too great. We find just the opposite. Where sin did abound, it says there in Romans 5, grace did much more abound. And you'll find that so. Why has not God cast off any one of us in light of all that we are in sinfulness? Well, it's because he has already purposed that grace and he cannot, he will not cast off any of his.

You see, that's where we begin thinking again, and this is where self-righteousness clings to our flesh because when we sin, and we do, we fall because we are fallen, immediately our thoughts begin to think, "Well, because of that sin, then, God has abandoned me." Now wait a minute, if it were really that, why would he even have anything to do with us to begin with? That's self-righteousness. That's thinking that somehow up to that point I wasn't a sinner. Stop and think about that. If you begin to think at any moment that, "Ah, that's what caused God to turn away from me," then you had wrong thinking all the way from the beginning. Why not five seconds previous? Why not a minute before? Or were you in any better state yourself in your sinful flesh before that fall? No.

But if we're the Lord's, that's the point there, "and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid." That's the amazing thing about God's infinite grace is that he doesn't have a thing to say against any one for whom Christ has paid the debt. He doesn't even see the sin. Ruth saw it. She was aware of it. She was conscientious of it. That's why she asked, "How is it that you show favor to me?" But he didn't see it. All he saw was good and that's exactly how the Lord deals with his own. Oh, a grace that is unmerited and it comforts and she said that. She recognize that, "though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens." I'm not even worthy to be called one of your handmaids and how is it that you speak friendly to me? Comfort. Grace. Do those words mean anything to you? If you are a sinner, they do.

Then we see here the bread and the wine, a type of Christ. Boaz is a type of Christ. Everywhere in here we see types of Christ. "And Boaz said unto her," in verse 14, "At mealtime come thou hither." There is a second time we've seen that command, "Come." You see, when the Spirit says, "Come," we come. When the Lord says, "Come," we come. Verse 12, "under whose wings thou art come to trust." "All that the Father hast given me shall come to me." I hear some preachers get off track here talking about how you come. No, it's to whom we come, it's not how we come. Sometimes we come feebly, sometimes more energetically. I think of Peter, at one point he's right up there in our Lord's face and declaring that he would never deny him, and then the next time you see him, way back there, far away. Either way, in either case he never stopped being the Lord's. The Lord was drawing him all the time and that's ours, that's our situation.

But as the Lord draws, what do we find? Well he says, "come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar," in the wine. Actually, it was a conglomeration of wine and oil which, again, oil is a picture of the Spirit of God, the oil of Christ's anointing. There is a lot here. We partake of him.

"And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat." Even the corn. Christ compared himself to the grain, the seed that is sown in the ground and it must die and then when it comes forth, it brings forth much fruit.

Every one of these things is a picture of Christ, and where Christ is revealed, where Christ is given, you see there it says, "and was sufficed, and left." She didn't leave forever. Those that are the Lord's, they cannot fall back into perdition. It's the Lord keeping them. But she went away satisfied. She came hungry, weary, weak, refreshed,

went back. But guess what? She's going to be hungry again before too long just like any of us. I think we like to think that somehow once we've been filled with the word or the thoughts of Christ, it's almost as if you want to freeze time and think, "If I could just always be in this state of mind." We won't be. It's not true physically, it's not true spiritually. You could eat the best meal there is until you are stuffed and you get away from that table and I've heard some say, "I don't think I could eat another bite." Well, give it an hour or two and what are you doing? You're scrounging around in the kitchen because you're getting hungry again.

That's the way it is spiritually. Do not be surprised at the sense of urgency that the Lord gives us at times. There are times when we aren't hungry and it could be because we are just so focused on other things we don't sense it, but sooner or later if one is the Lord's, that hunger is going to be to such a point where they are going to cry, "Give me Christ or I die!" That's why I don't really worry a lot about trying to control people or fit them into a mold like some who will say, make sure you get up early every morning and read your Bible and have your devotions. Well, if you're not an early morning person and you're nodding off, what good does it do getting up? That's not the time of need. There are times you might go a couple of days without ever opening this book. And I know I hear some saying, "Well, perish the thought! They are backslidden if that happens!" Well, you know, if the Lord doesn't give you the urgency to read his word, some get busy, have other concerns, they are not focused, you might think of those, "Well, they need to get back into a routine." That's works religion talking. I've always said it's like our kids, you know, you worry about giving them three meals a day, the old traditional style, but one thing is for sure, when they get hungry enough, they're going to eat. When they get thirsty enough, they're going to drink. And that's the way it is with us. But she got up satisfied and left, but it doesn't say there left forever. She went about her business but she would be back, and I'm thankful it's that way. It says the Lord shows us our need.

But now here's the part of the handfuls of purpose in verse 15 down to the end of the chapter, and I see in this a picture of how God commands all things for the good of his children, those he has purposed to save. It says when she got up to glean in verse 15, "when she was risen up to glean, Boaz," look at that word, "commanded." She was unaware of it. She had already left. You see, I think again this shows our need of the Lord teaching us again and again because we get thinking that God is doing what he's doing because we do certain things or he is not doing what he's doing because we are not doing certain things. That's an idol God. That's a marionette. That's got the sinner pulling the strings and God reacting. That's not the God of Scripture.

Everything about this even with Boaz commanding, directing, anticipating what would be her need. Do you suppose at mealtime she would have approached to eat from his table of herself had he not said there in verse 14, "come thou hither"? Why do any of us know anything of Christ and his grace? Why am I standing here talking to you about his grace even now? I couldn't speak of what I don't know. The only thing I know is that he has commanded this for such a one as I, just like with Ruth, and so with you.

That's a strong word, "commanded." I don't see anywhere in here Boaz inviting Ruth. "If you will, Ruth, would you please?" That's a little g-o-d of our generation. You've got preachers pleading with sinners as if God would really like to do some things but, alas, he can't now because you won't let him.

In this verse, 15 and 16, you've got the word "let" twice, but it's not Ruth letting Boaz do anything, it's Boaz commanding. So when you read here about handfuls of purpose, he says, he "commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not." That's him letting her. He has given authority. That's what that word means. It links right with that word "command."

Verse 16, "And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them," and again, "and rebuke her not." Verse 15, "reproach her not." And verse 16, "rebuke her not." And we're going to see this here in just a little bit in verse 17, that little word "so," why are things so? Why does it say "So she gleaned"? Well, that was according to his commandment, according to his letting.

"So she gleaned." There is nothing what God orders but what it fulfills what he orders. So if I have come to Christ, it must be, then, that he ordered it else I would not come. If I can in any measure enter into who Christ is and partake of that bread and that wine, and bread resending his body, the wine his blood, and in any sense partake of that fellowship, to sit there at his table, it must be that he ordered it else I would not. Stop and think about that. You know, when you get to thinking in your mind, "Well, am I the Lord's or am I not?" You know, doubt yourself but don't doubt him. How is it that you even know anything of who he is, even an inkling of who he is? It must be that he ordered it else I would not. I would be right there in the mix with all the rest of this religious world perishing.

Of all of these reapers, of all of these handmaidens that were serving Boaz, and that's a type of Christ's sovereignty over all flesh, his affection and attention was on one, Ruth, and the reason it was, the reason she had this favor, and I don't know, it doesn't say but there may have been some that fulfilled his order because he commanded them, and yet inside like the Pharisees may have been thinking all along, "What's the deal? This is a Moabite." That was a term of derision. But their lips were sealed because he commanded it. I love that. When you talk about handfuls of purpose, the Lord ordering all things, all things are at his disposal for the good of the heirs of salvation and for his glory.

So she gleaned and it says there, "until even." I see there a picture of perseverance. Why did she persevere? Well, the blessing. The words that comforted her up there in verse 13. Why would she not go to another field? Again, it all begins with who Boaz is. Why would she go anywhere else? This matter of persevering in the faith is not just pulling yourself up by your bootstraps and getting on with it and holding tight. When we come and we come again, it's because of who Christ is and the comfort we find in him.

When everyone else had gone away, there in John 6, the Lord looks at his remaining disciples and says, "Will you also go away?" What did they say? "To whom shall we go?"

Thou art the one who has the words of eternal life." Even given the opportunity to go away, it never crosses their mind. It doesn't cross mine. I see a lot of publication about religious events going on and seminars and performances and productions that all of these various worship centers around here are promoting. Are you attracted to any of that? You look at you neighbors and your friends, they are running toward it. They are inviting friends. That's where they are headed.

They are gleaning in other fields but here we are small in number and you stop and ask yourself, "Well, what is it that in any way draws any one of us even to come to a meeting like this?" Cars drive by on this road out here and they are probably looking in and thinking it's some kind of committee meeting because there are not that many cars out there. Surely it can't be the entire church that is meeting. Well, yeah it is. It's everyone that the Lord has purposed. There is not one person that is here tonight that shouldn't be and there is not one person not here tonight that should be. You see, even there we get thinking in terms of conditions. "Well, you should have been there." Well, if you weren't, no, you shouldn't have been there. There is no shoulda, woulda, coulda.

Here Ruth was there and stayed and gleaned it says until even, "and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley." There are different discussions about how much that is but it would have been enough for her to pick up and carry, for sure, but a full basket, that I do now. The Lord never does anything halfway. Just like Boaz filled it to the full to where when she got back in verse 18 and had sufficient for herself, gave the rest to Naomi, and therein we see the satisfaction that comes.

Now, I wanted to get through that entire portion just to show you the grand picture, but coming back to verses 15 and 16, and particularly verse 16 where it speaks there of the "handfuls of purpose," central to understanding God in Scripture, his workings in creation, in providence, providence just means the out workings of what he has purposed, the creation, this order. The word "world" means "order; cosmos," so there is an order. This didn't just evolve whether it's in creation, providence, salvation, or even in the condemnation of sinners. You see, that was kind of a sacred area back when I was growing up and going to preacher's school, they would say, "Well, God orders the good things but, you know, when it comes to condemnation, God doesn't really ever send anybody to hell or into condemnation. They go by their own choice." Well, what kind of judge do you know of that gives the defendant the option, "Would you like to go free or would you like to go to jail?" The reason why the defendant is there is because he is already condemned and it's up to the judge now to exercise the law which means that if the law says life sentence, it's life sentence; if the law says death by hanging, it's death by hanging. It's the law. The judge isn't making this up as he goes along. It's not up to the defendant. You see, this trial is over. A lot of people are acting like the trial is still ongoing when, "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, therefore death passed upon all men for all have sinned." All did sin. When Adam fell, we fell in him. The trial is over as far as the condemnation.

What we're talking about here is salvation and God purposed that, but in that fall, this people that he has purposed to save, that's what we see described here in verse 16, "let

fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her." This is something being done on her behalf, the command being given. So again, it's not like religion says, let go and let God. You just need to let go and let God. That's their little g-o-d. No, if God will. You see, it is God letting us do what we do. If he will.

And it's interesting, that word "let" in Scripture, in Genesis 1, the very first time that we see it is right up in the beginning. Look how it is used in Genesis 1. It says, "In the beginning," verse 1, "God created the heaven and the earth." In the beginning God. He doesn't even explain it, he just declares. "And the earth was without form, and void." That's an interesting language. It's language in the original that speaks of something that had been created but destroyed. We don't know, it may have been that the Lord created all of this and then destroyed it. Some say it was when Satan fell, he cast him out of heaven. I don't know.

But what is sure is that, "darkness was upon the face of the deep." There was a darkness, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." I love the order of Scripture because many times men think that where there is darkness, that means the Spirit isn't at work. Yeah, he is. The Spirit is as much at work in leaving people in their darkness as he is in giving light, passing over. That's why Paul there in Acts 16 said he is saved to go into Bithynia and some of those areas, but the Spirit of Jesus permitted him not. Talk about God letting. The Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, was at work there even in the leaving of these in their darkness, and from there took him to Troas where he heard that Macedonian call and went over to Philippi. He later came back into that area, that's the area of Galatia, but for that time and that season, there was darkness.

Who purposed it? God did just like here. Look at those two words together, "darkness was upon the face of the deep." Why do we think every time there is darkness it must be then that God is not in it? There is darkness right now. Go outside. He has purposed 12 hours of darkness. Does that mean God is asleep because there is darkness? That's what I've been telling this friend of mine, talking to him, "What makes you think that because right now there is a darkness in your soul, that somehow God has abandoned you? Is that your thought when the sun goes down that suddenly now God is asleep?" There is a reason there is darkness, that when he does bring the light, how great is that light? It is like the day dawning. David wrote about in Psalm 130, about being one that waited, as one who waits for the morning, and he said, "Again I say as one who waits for the morning." If you've ever been up all night with a sick loved one or a sick child and the doctor has said to you, "Well, if he'll make it until the morning light, he'll be all right," do you go to bed and lay down your head and think, "Oh well, que sera, sera, whatever will be, will be?" No, you wait for that dawn because there is a hope in what the doctor has said.

That's the hope that the Lord gives to a sinner. It's so remarkable to me there in verse 2, "darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was all the while moving on the face of the waters in that darkness." But what, verse 3, "God said, Let there be light." That's the first time the word "let" is ever used and what is it? It's in the form of a commandment. And look at the same flow, "God said, Let there be light: and there was

light." Just like we saw over here in Ruth 2, "let," Boaz said, "fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them," don't you bother them, "leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not." So there is the "let there be," and then verse 17, "So she gleaned." The only type of grace that Scripture ever knows is a saving grace. There is nothing left undone to chance. It's God's saving grace.

Handfuls of purpose, verse 16, coming back to Ruth 2 because I've got to wrap this up but notice, "for her." Actually, the original refers to a bundle of grain, not just a handful. I'm not sure why the translators use that word because you're thinking a little handful. It's talking about a bundle of grain that has been prepared and left there for her just to pick it up.

And it's a unique word in that it's only used here in Scripture. It's not used. You think it would just be a common word where it talks about handfuls of purpose. This is the only place in Scripture where that word is used in the original. You know, that caused me to think of God's distinctive grace. It's unique. You can talk about fields, you talk about even the law that said that when you are cutting the field to carry in your harvest, don't cut the corners, and so you might say, "Well, that's a picture of this," but this is unique. This is cutting it. It was already cut and laying it right there where she could pick it up. That's what the Lord does with us. There is not any work involved with us meriting his grace. It's unique. It's distinctive.

And that word "purpose" there means "to draw out," and even in the sense of fixing it so that when she picks it up, there is nothing there to hurt her. I don't know if you've ever harvested some barley or whatever, but it gets itchy and there are little extras. He said, "Fix it to where when it is laying there, leave it there, all she has to do is pick it up and carry it." That's a picture of that work of grace that the Lord does. It's deliberate. It's based on love. Boaz loved her. It's based on order, deliberate order. And it's based on a deliberate grace, free, unconditional.

When it says there, "reproach her not," in verse 16 and "rebuke her not," what comes to mind? Romans 8, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." And later on Paul says, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" So is there anything that can separate us from the love of God? When I stop and consider that this is the grace that the Lord has given us in Christ, what a picture. What a glorious picture that is.