



## Generations

### Part 4 – Leaving a Legacy of Redemption

Shay Robbins

I'm excited to be here with you. I've got a fun message lined up for this morning; a powerful one that's been kind of working on my heart. This season in the Robbins' family... We just got back from a fun summer camp where we got to see God transform little hearts for the gospel. This season of life is exciting. We added our fifth child three weeks ago. Piper June is three weeks old we are far from having it figured out. We are trying to figure out how to be a family of seven and keep our wits about us and our sanity, but we really are having fun being a family.

Doesn't this place just love family. It's such a blessing. And that's really what this entire series is about. It's what we are talking about this morning. In my family and in this season, when I get back from camp, it's always Pinterest season in the Robbins' family. My wife is thrilled about it and I'm incredibly apprehensive. Most of you probably know that if Pinterest was a person, they would be my arch nemesis. I call Pinterest they because they can whittle a rocking chair out of a 50-year-old birch. They fabricate their own screws to save a penny on each one. They can easily walk through a 118-point project and just have the best time doing it. For me, it's kind of like pulling teeth.

Probably the biggest thing about it is that I hate following directions. I'm just going to be honest with you. I fall into the stereotype. I love carpentry, but I hate following directions. I like to figure it out on my own. Do you know what I'm talking about, men? "I'll do the measurements myself, alright?"

In the last week, we had to figure out how you fit four little girls' clothing into one closet. That was our Pinterest project. Here it is. Let's just go ahead and throw that bad boy up there. Look at that! That is beautiful! Now, it looks square, but it's not. My wife is probably mortified right now because she still has to go to Target and get all of her matching boxes and what not. That was her brain child that was inspired by Pinterest. I rejected all the directions and just did it myself. We had a fun time doing it together.

It's interesting that following directions happens to be something we're talking about this morning. God has a certain way that he asks us to do things. Often times, we're like Shay Robbins in that when someone tells us to do something, our immediate reaction, our human nature is rebellion, is it not? It's in our fiber. It's who we are as human beings. But, God's way is best, is it not? And that's what we are going to look at this morning.

The title of this message, which is Chapter 4, is *Leaving a Legacy of Redemption*. Just to pull in a little bit of context, you guys know this well, but Ruth took place in the time of the Judges and, as Ted cast the vision for us, there was kind of a status update at the end of Judges. It says that everyone did what was right in their own eyes. This happened thousands of years ago, but does it sound familiar? Everyone does what is right in their own eyes. And you think about this people group, the people of God, the people of Israel, who were miraculously taken out of Egypt, miraculously led by a cloud in the day and a pillar of fire by night, miraculously provided food and water on a daily basis in the middle of the desert. They were miraculously given the law of God at Mount Sinai. They miraculously walked through the parted waters. The list goes on and on.

They miraculously go into the Promised Land that was full of people that were bigger and stronger and more violent than them and God delivered victory after victory and gave them the Promised Land that he had intended for them. Yet, once the people of God got settled in, they began to enjoy their prosperity and got comfortable. We find that the people of God need God less when they are comfortable. When everything is going my way and I don't have to worry about food to eat every day and the bills are getting paid, I just don't need God as much.

Then, a little bit of time goes by and you don't hear from God. You wonder where he has gone. Is he even real? And these doubts begin to sink in. Just yesterday, God did miraculous, amazing things in our life, but when the people of God get comfortable and apathetic and they stop seeking God, they begin to question when they don't hear from him and they don't see him showing up on a daily basis. They become ignorant of the ways that he is moving. When that happens, we begin to question God and doubt. That's Satan's playground. One seed of doubt is a stronghold of the enemy that can turn into destruction over time. It can turn the people of God into a people of fools. We walk away from the one true God.

When we begin to doubt God, we begin to say "You know what? Forget him. I'm going to do things my own way. What's right for me is right for me and what's right for you is right for you." In that is born relativism. Let me define relativism: "The doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation, culture, or historical context, and are not absolute."

When society gives birth to relativism, truth disappears. So, while I stand up here and the majority of the stage is black, in a relative perspective, I'll say, "This stage is white" and you'll say, "No, you're crazy, that stage is black." I'll respond, "How dare you tell me what color my stage is!" "You're standing on a black stage." Then there becomes this friction and it turns into hatred. And then it gets even more confounded when government steps in and begins to defend relativism. That's a scary place to live.

That's what was happening in Ruth's context and that's what's happening today. Can you believe how relevant this book is 3,000 years later? It's jaw-dropping. So with what we are going to dive into today, we need to pay attention. We have to pay attention to what God has for us today. There are four points this morning. The first point is this:

## 1. God is concerned with the process.

We don't like the process because we want to do it our own way. Do you know what Shay's way is? It's faster, it's easier, and it's guaranteed to get the results I want. God's way is a little bit slower, a little bit more deliberate, a little bit harder, and it's guaranteed to get the results that he wants. Let's read from Ruth, Chapter 4, and see what's happening in our story.

***1 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there, and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz spoke was passing by, so he said, "Turn aside, friend, sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. 2 He took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. 3 Then he said to the closest relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. 4 So I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.'" And he said, "I will redeem it."***

Boaz knew what he wanted. He wanted to marry Ruth, but God had a process in place. This particular process required that Boaz would have to go to the closest relative. There was a relative that was closer that could marry, redeem Ruth, buy the land of her ancestors, and carry on her fallen husband's name. That was the way God set it up; that was his plan. But, Boaz knew what he wanted and this next of kin, the closest relative, was standing between him and what he wanted. Now there are probably a hundred different ways that Boaz could have manipulated this situation to make sure he got what he wanted as fast and as easy as possible. But, God required that Boaz would have to take a risk. In order to do it God's way, the results would not be guaranteed. Boaz didn't know for sure if he could get what he wanted. Boaz, being a righteous example, showed us how to go about doing God's business.

**Doing things rightly requires godly character.** Remember, God is concerned with the process. This process required that Boaz would grow in his trust of the Lord, did it not? It required that he was patient. It required that he would walk in the ways of the Lord. God had a plan, a process in place. He wanted Boaz to walk according to His plan and he wanted Boaz to trust Him with the results. You have to believe that process caused growth in Boaz.

I don't know about you, but I've been walking through things in the last year of my life where the godly process, the path that he wanted me to walk was very painful. In fact, I'm looking out into this crowd and I know there are people that have walked through a painful path and are currently walking that way. What I want to encourage you with this morning is I want you to trust God. No matter how hard what you are walking through is, God has a perfect plan in place to redeem the situation. He's going to cause you to grow in character. How many of you want to be godly men and women? How many want to have godly character? We all want it; it's resounding. Everyone in this building wants it, but it's going to require that we walk things out the way that God would have it because he's going to grow our character in the process.

Is it going to be easy? It never is. If you want to build something... If you want to build up your body, if you want to lose weight, if you want to construct a house, if you want to build a business, if you want to

raise a godly family, anything good and worth doing is not going to be easy. God has a way for you to walk through it to experience his results and not ours.

## 2. Redemption is going to cost someone.

Let's jump back into our story. **5 Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance."**

**6 The closest relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, because I would jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it."**

Redemption always comes with a cost. Did you know that every redemption story testifies to God's love? The majority of movies and books that we fall in love with follow the same storyline. There is character development, characters you fall in love with, and then enters conflict. Conflict fractures relationships and brings adversity and hardship into the situation. In the midst of that conflict, it hits a climax. At that climax, we experience hopelessness and desperation. And then, according to every redemption story, in that moment, in runs the savior, a hero to save the day.

Just rattle through your favorite movies in your head. They all follow this course. Do you know why? God designed it that way. Every redemption story was designed to point you and me back to him. The ultimate redemption story is found in Jesus. Just think about that. How awesome is God that throughout the course of human history, every redemption story that was written points back to him. That's a God who deserves glory to pull something off like that.

It reminds me of James 1: 27 that says, ***Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*** That's one of the beautiful roles, one of the primary roles of the church. When we talk about generations, this is what we are talking about, pure and undefiled religion, caring for widows and orphans. For any of you who have cared for a widow or orphan, you know that it comes with a cost. There are some amazing families in here that have adopted and that are a part of the foster care system. I think about the Brawners and the Cartwrights and the Watsons just to name a few. They are actively taking part, they are being used as the hands and feet of Christ in the midst of a redemption process. If you ask them, they will honestly tell you it comes with a cost. There is an emotional cost, there is a financial cost, there is a cost for all our kiddoes and our family, there is a cost for the space in our house. Redemption comes with a cost.

Peter writes, in 1 Peter: 1, ***18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.***

Did you know that value is based off of what someone is willing to pay? So all these beautiful stories of redemption that we fall in love with and we gravitate towards, they all point back to the ultimate redemption story and in that redemption story, the cost was as high as it possibly could be. It cost God

his son. For those of you who have kiddoes, you can understand, at least to some extent, the cost of sacrificing a child. Lean into that for a second. Taking your child and giving up their life for others. There is no greater cost. Do you know what that does? That places greatest value on you and me. Do you want to know how God feels about you? Consider what he paid for you. The God of the universe, in his divine authorship, paid the highest price to communicate to you and me our value in his eyes. Wow! Sit in that, church.

### 3. Faithfulness is highly honored.

Let's pick up our story. ***6 The closest relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, because I would jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself; you may have my right of redemption, for I cannot redeem it." 7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and the exchange of land to confirm any matter: a man removed his sandal and gave it to another; and this was the manner of attestation in Israel. 8 So the closest relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." And he removed his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon.***

I'm going to pause there for a second. I think about Boaz going down to the city gates and gathering up the elders. I think modern day our best representative of that would be Clockers. Have you ever walked into Clockers and see Paul Etheridge and all his Vietnam Veteran buddies back there drinking coffee and yucking in up? You know they are all packing heat, right? You're thinking *Look at these guys; they are so jovial and they are loving their life, but I bet they could disarm me in less than five seconds.* Men like that, elders of the city, sit around... We live in a country and a time where accountability is attorneys and the threat of suing and legal documents. When you encounter men like that, you know that if you were to shake their hand and make a deal, it would be better than an attorney setting up mediation.

I think there is a beautiful picture happening in the back of Clockers. I don't get political very often, but I bet if you gave Paul and his buddies at Clockers the White House for eight years, they could fix a lot of things. Don't you think?

So, Boaz went down to the elders and he drew them in and they walked through things God's way, the right way. You better believe that when the closest relative said he couldn't take on the financial burden of Ruth and the property and that he was going to give Boaz the right of redemption... Could you imagine what Boaz's heart was like in that moment? "God, you're so awesome! Thank you." I bet his heart exploded with joy. That's what happens when you do things God's way. You get to experience his plan; it's the best.

So not only did Boaz get to cash in on his heart's desire, but he also had his character built in the process. When you walk with God, it's a package deal of blessing. This church knows that we don't buy into the prosperity gospel of when you obey God and you walk with him and you pray to him... Health, wealthy, and prosperity is not what we're looking for. But, faithfulness does come with blessing. The blessings of a faithful man or a faithful woman look like joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control. They look like a beautiful family that loves each other. They look like the

freedom from walking without shame and guilt. Those blessings look like having hope in a future of whether I die today or not, my hope is in Christ. And the day I do die, it's going to be a party because I'm going home to be with Jesus and I'm leaving this broken world behind. There is no amount of money that can replace that.

***10 "Moreover, I have acquired Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, to be my wife in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance, so that the name of the deceased will not be cut off from his brothers or from the court of his birth place; you are witnesses today."*** There's that handshake. You saw that they handed a sandal back in the day. That was their cultural thing. They would take off a sandal and instead of shaking hands as we would, they would hand the sandal over and say this deal is done, it's official. I don't know if they gave the sandal back or what, but...

***11 All the people who were in the court, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel; and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem. 12 "Moreover, may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which the Lord will give you by this young woman." 13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. And the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.***

Here is a sub point that I don't want this group of believers to miss. Children are a gift. In Psalm 127, David writes, ***...children are a gift of the Lord***. They are a blessing from the Lord. I want to make it clear to everybody that every single child that is born is a gift, regardless of circumstances. I will say this. Circumstances are often brutal. They are sad, they are broken, and many times they are evil, but that child is a gift. It is a blessing. If you want to raise up a godly generation, if you want your family legacy to be one of redemption, you value children. Not just yours, but all the ones around you. Even the annoying ones. We value children.

Andy Stanley says this and I couldn't say it better. *"The most important work you do for the kingdom may not be what you do, but who you raise."* Isn't that amazing to think about? Our role as a church family... We are a community that binds together to raise up kiddoes; not just your own, but the kids that are in your circle of influence. We all have a responsibility. Did you know that God honors faithfulness? Those little ones that raise up and take on the faith and begin to fight for Jesus, everything they accomplish will be credited to your account. Do you know that. God doesn't let faithfulness go unnoticed.

Luke 16: - ***10 "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.*** This has been a verse that has been resounding in my life. I'm drawn to it because to be honest with you, I need to grow in faithfulness. I have a tendency to be the homerun hitter, to swing for the fences, rather than to be concerned with taking my practice swings and giving them as much value as the homerun swing. Raising a godly family and in a godly community and growing in godly character is not something that's done in the big moments of life, but rather, it's the small moments, the everyday moments that matter. I truly believe that success in God's economy has to do with everyday little things, rather than the big things you accomplish in your life.

If you have a job as a custodian and your job is to get a 10' x 13' room completely spotless, I truly believe that being faithful in that task and having joy in your heart has the same value as leading 10,000 people to Christ at a crusade. I really believe that because God isn't attaching our success to results because who are the results attested to? Who's in charge of the results? God is in charge of the results. You and I are responsible to be faithful to whatever we've been called to. Faithfulness is the key to leaving behind a legacy of redemption in our families.

Paul was good to let me borrow this compass. This compass is magnetized. It's an old school compass and it shows me where north is. The word *orientation* has taken on all kinds of meanings in our world today, but traditionally, the word *orientation* is a directional word. The reason you use a compass is to find your direction. Right now, I'm pointed north. That's my direction and so, I gain my orientation by looking at this compass.

Did you know that if I was just one degree off and I walked for a mile, I would be 92 feet off the mark? If I walk for 60 miles, I would be off by a mile. Think about your responsibility of raising up a family or contributing to a godly, biblical community. If we compromise as Christians living in a time of relativism, if we make one compromise... "Yes I believe the Bible, but this thing... I think it was just a cultural thing so it doesn't apply to today." If I'm off by one degree, what will that mean for the next generation? Have you ever heard the phrase "If you give them an inch, they'll take a mile"? I see it played out in my family every day; it's maddening. But, if you make a compromise in your faith... and it might be on a secondary theological issue, but if you make a compromise, you're going to set the next generation up for catastrophe. A compromise today results in catastrophe tomorrow. That's why it is absolutely vital, church, that we take the word of God and that we hold it high and that we follow every precept, every ordinance. Remember, there is a way in which things work; that's the way God has designed it.

I'm reminded of Psalm 1. ***1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.*** If we meditate on God's word, we won't be off, not even by a degree, not even a fraction of a degree, and we'll be setting up the next generation that follows in our footsteps, leaving a legacy of redemption. Man, this gets me pumped up. Isn't that awesome. God's word is truth.

#### **4. There is power in living in your redemption.**

***14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel."*** This summer, a young man was brought to me... I'm going to use his initials, LP. LP was this scrawny little squirt of a kid. He was bullying his buddies who were all almost twice his size. It was unbelievable. As he was being brought to me to process through this bullying situation, he told the young guy that he was walking with that he wanted to die.

So, he came down and he sat in my office. I asked him, "Tell me about the guys that you've been bullying." I got out a notepad and he started rattling off names: one name, two names, three names, four names, five, six, seven. Then he stopped and thought about it and then it was eight names.

So, we had this list and I asked him, "Have you ever been bullied before" and he said "Yes." I asked him how it made him feel. Of course, then he began to emotionally attach to what he had been doing. He knew what it's like to be bullied. Tears and snot started rolling down his face and he was just wrecked by his sin.

I said, "Why did you say that you wanted to die?"

He just couldn't quite get it altogether; he was just crying so hard. I asked, "Is it because you feel so much guilt and shame for what you've done to your buddies?"

And he just said, "Yes, yes, yes."

I said, "What is the cost for your sin, LP?"

He said, "It's death."

I said, "That's why you want to kill yourself, that's why you want to die. It's because the cost of sin is death and you are feeling the weight of sin. But, guess what? Do you know why Jesus died?"

He looks up at me and says, "To forgive me for my sins."

I said, "That's right." I told him, "There's a way in which things work. First thing we are going to do is go to God and ask for forgiveness." So, we let the little guy pray. He went through all the names and he asked for forgiveness.

I said, "The next part of this process is you need to go to every single one of those guys and ask for their forgiveness for what you've done." So, that night, he pulled every single one of them aside, one at a time, and asked for forgiveness. Without even flinching, every single kid forgave him. We went through all eight and he was sitting out there. We asked him if there was anybody else. He said there was one more. He went in and got him and asked for his forgiveness. He walked through that process and you better believe it was hard, but the next morning, the dude was on cloud nine. He was living in God's grace. I mean, cloud 9! All the weight of sin was washed from his shoulders. He didn't want to die; he was too filled with life. We got to watch a redemption story play out right before our eyes. LP was walking in freedom.

Here's a mistake you and I can make. We've all had those moments where we've been forgiven of so much and we experience that amazing grace of God that sets us free and immediately transforms us. Often times, we get further and further away from that big moment and the power of that moment begins to decrease, little by little, day after day, to a point where we are so far removed from that moment that it just didn't seem like as big of a deal and we begin to compromise. We begin to drift away in the way of society.

My friends, that is not the way that Christians are to live. Christians are to carry those moments of redemption and live in them every single day. As we mature in our faith every day, we should become

more and more aware and concerned with our sin. Not less and less, but more and more, increased heightened awareness of how broken and putrid and vile we are in our sinful nature. When we do that, we take that LPG (I call it the LP Gospel) moment and we carry it with us and we live in that grace every single day and that redemption gives you abundant life on a daily basis. We've got a responsibility to hand that off to our children, to take that redemption legacy and envelop them in it to the point where when we cut them free, they begin to carry the baton better than we did. That ought to be our prayer that our children would walk in redemption ever so mightily more than we did.

***15 "May he also be to you a restorer of life and a sustainer of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him."***

***16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her lap, and became his nurse. 17 The neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi!" So they named him Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David. 18 Now these are the generations of Perez: to Perez was born Hezron, 19 and to Hezron was born Ram, and to Ram, Amminadab, 20 and to Amminadab was born Nahshon, and to Nahshon, Salmon, 21 and to Salmon was born Boaz, and to Boaz, Obed, 22 and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse, David.***

And, of course, we know that through the line of David came the Savior Jesus Christ.

Woodland Hills, let's carry the banner of redemption in our families. Let's leave a legacy of redemption. Shall we pray together?

Lord Jesus, thank you for leaving us this story from Ruth. I just want to ask, God, that your Holy Spirit would take hold of these words of truth and that it would change us, change our character. I pray that you would give us bravery and courage to do things rightly, to walk it out your way, to not cut corners, to not be lazy, apathetic, or afraid, but we would walk in faith and trust and hope and do things your way. I pray a prayer and a blessing of a redemption legacy over everyone that this message touches. And I pray in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.