

The Theology of Christmas:
The Sovereignty of God
Galatians 4:4-5; The Book of Ruth

November 29, 2009

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Introduction: This Christmas season we will examine several theological themes confirmed by the Christmas story. Today, we go way back in history to the book of Ruth. Ruth's story may seem like an unusual place to begin the Christmas story, but as you will see, God was always at work, so that in the fullness of time He would send forth His Son. Before we go to the book of Ruth, though, I want to show you a couple of verses in Galatians.

Text: ⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

So, what does the book of Ruth have to do with Christmas? Well, we are going to get there. But, first, I want to help you to see a rather general principle about Christmas that applies to Christmas and to all of our lives. **God's Sovereignty.** By God's sovereignty, I am talking about the absolute control of God in the happenings of our lives.

The book of Judges and 1 Samuel is separated by Ruth, which gives an account of a "bright spot" for Israel in the days of the judges. Ruth points to the theological truth that God is still sovereign and in control, even in the darkest days of rebellion and sin.

God is always at work. **He is working behind the scenes of our lives to bring about His purposes.** Ruth's story gives evidence that God is at work in all areas of our lives.

God uses the tragic events of our lives to bring triumphant events.

Ruth is a story of tragedy—famine (1:1) and death of all of the husbands (1:2, 5). But even in this tragedy God is bringing triumph. Without the death of the men (1) Naomi would have never known of Ruth's great devotion, (2) the women might not have returned to Bethlehem {and notice that they return at the beginning of the barley harvest (1:22)}, and (3) the stage could not have been set for the Davidic line.

- So, we must resist the temptation to become bitter. Consider verse 20. Everyone is excited, but Naomi. She believes that the hand of God has gone against her. (1:3)
- So, we must trust that God is always working.
God's sovereignty is sometimes subtle—probably more often subtle. God doesn't always appear in a burning bush as He did to Moses. God does not always speak with a loud voice. God is actually at work when we do not even realize He is at work.

God uses the ordinary events of our lives to bring extraordinary events.

God worked through the ordinary event of going to glean in the field. (2:2) {It just so happens} that she chooses the field of Boaz, who is a relative and can serve as her kinsman-redeemer. God is at work!

Consider the Ordinary Things of Christmas:

Mary, Joseph, Census, Shepherds, stable

Consider the Extraordinary Things of Christmas:

Angels declared His birth, Kings acknowledge His birth, Star announced His birth, Virgin birth

So What?

God, in His sovereignty, works through the mundane as well as the miraculous, just according to what we need.

We better pay attention to all that God is doing. Everything I do is important and should include God. God uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary purposes.

God uses the tragic, triumphant, ordinary, and extraordinary events of our lives to bring us first to salvation and then to complete surrender.

Everything God is doing, He is doing to bring us to salvation. All of these events in the story of Ruth point directly to Jesus, as the line of David is established in the genealogical record at the end of the book.

This whole story about Ruth is to get to Ruth 4:18. We worry about so much. God is interested in two things really—our salvation and our sanctification—our continued growth in Him.