

A painting depicting a glowing cross rising from a manger scene. The cross is composed of bright, radiating lines of light, extending upwards into a dark, textured sky. Below the cross, a simple wooden manger structure is visible, with silhouettes of figures inside. The background is a dark, textured sky with hints of blue and purple, suggesting a night scene. The overall mood is one of divine light and hope.

Christmas – The Bridge of Joy
Ruth 2:1-3

Ruth 2:1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* Boaz.

2 And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after *him* **in whose sight I shall find grace**. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

Our theme this year is *Building Bridges*. During the Christmas season we will look at several “bridges” that are all related to the Book of Ruth.



The Book of Ruth is one of the most fascinating and important short stories that anyone has ever written. As a piece of literature it is almost perfect.

- The German poet Goethe called it "the loveliest complete work on a small scale" ever written.
- Alexander Schroder, a literary critic, wrote: "No poet in the world has written a more beautiful short story."
- The eminent archaeologist W. F. Albright wrote: "The delicacy of the story of Ruth remains unsurpassed anywhere; Ruth's loyalty to her mother-in-law, the scene between her and Boaz in chapter 3, and the final episode with Naomi (4:14-17) are gems of world-literature."
- Yet, as a revelation from God, it is equally impressive.

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/htm/OT/Ruth/Ruth.htm>



Last week we saw how Ruth portrays a Bridge of Love. This morning we will look at chapter two, and see *The Bridge of Joy*.

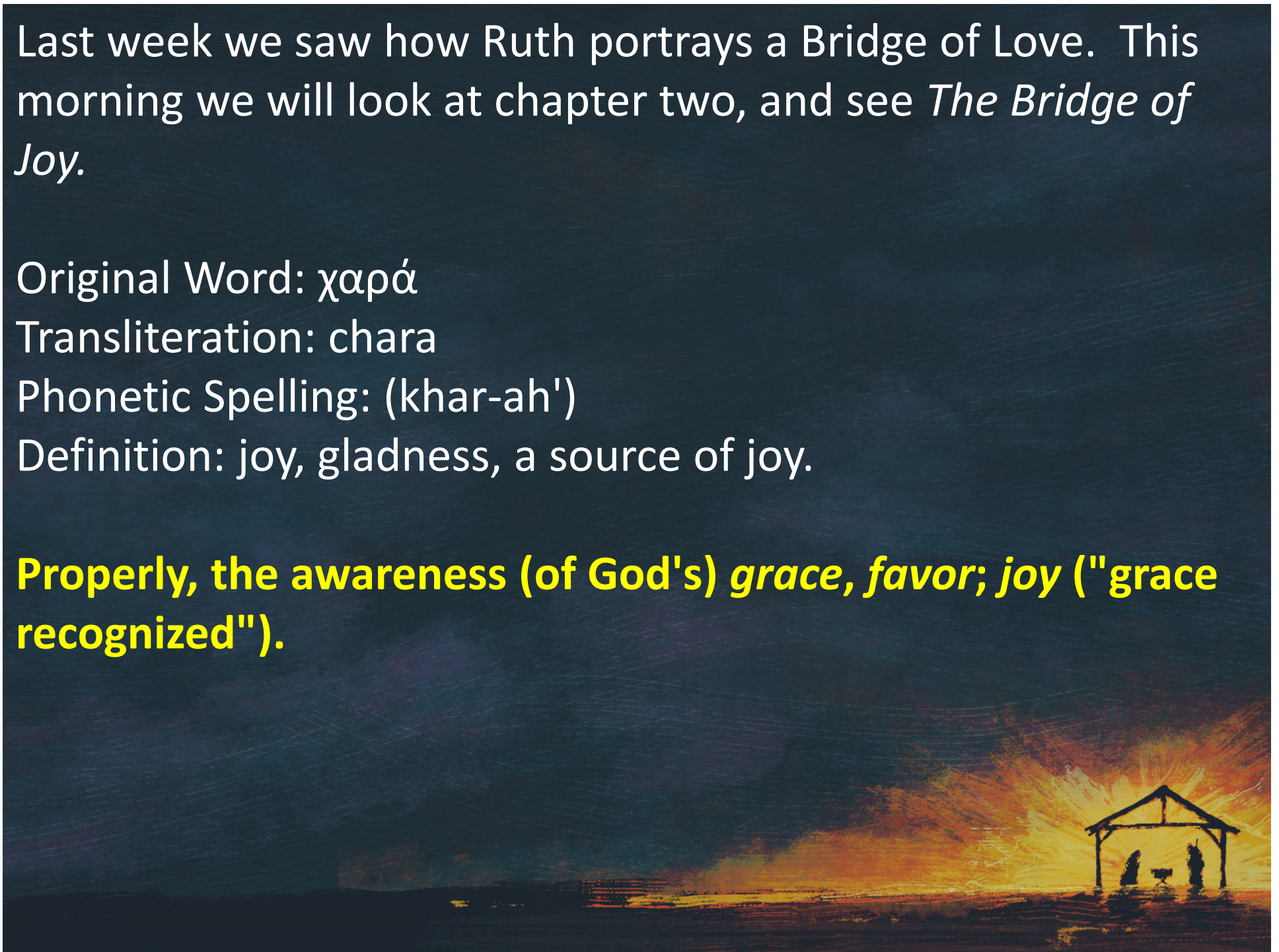
Original Word: χαρά

Transliteration: chara

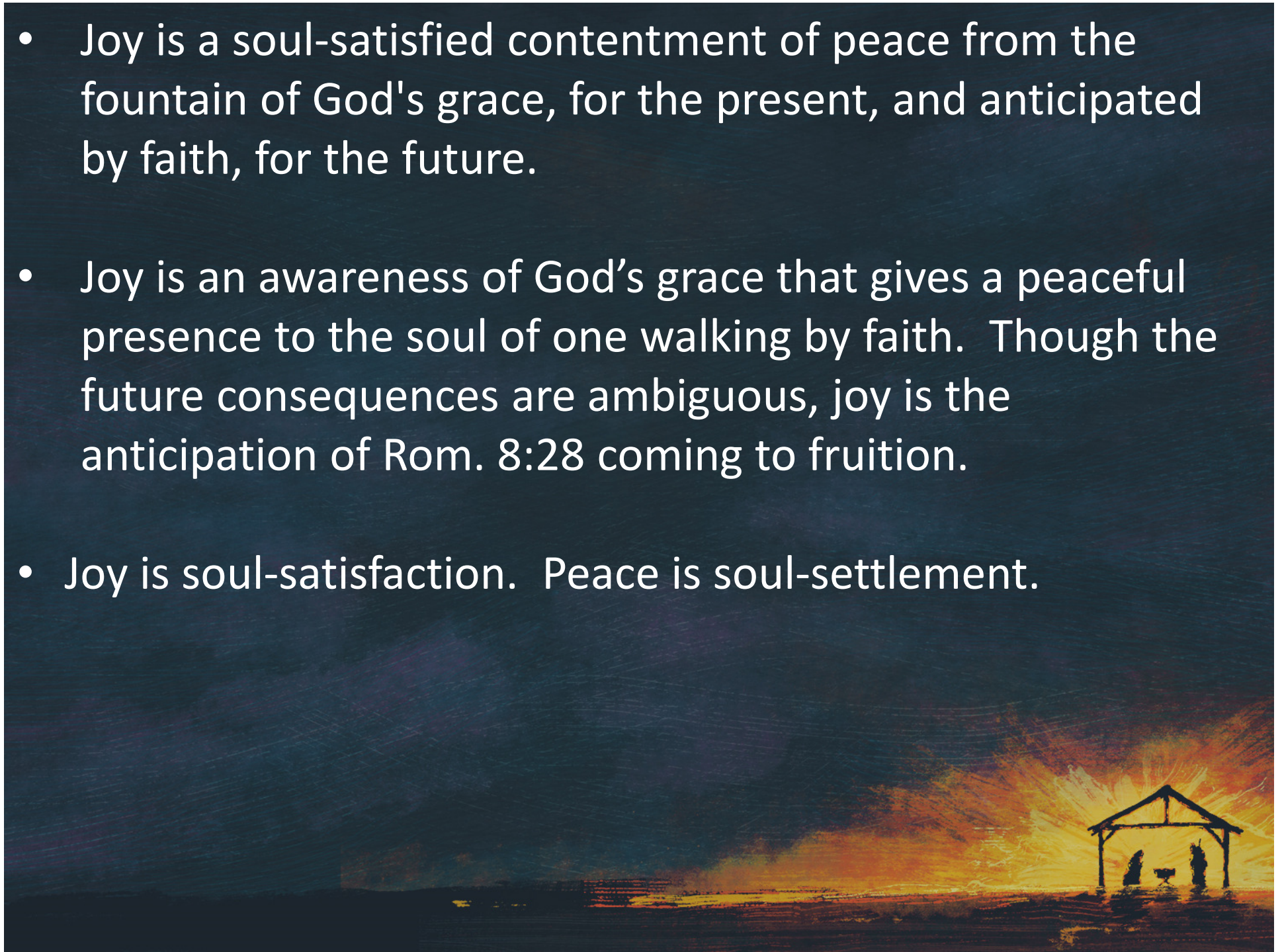
Phonetic Spelling: (khar-ah')

Definition: joy, gladness, a source of joy.

Properly, the awareness (of God's) *grace, favor; joy* ("grace recognized").



- Joy is a soul-satisfied contentment of peace from the fountain of God's grace, for the present, and anticipated by faith, for the future.
- Joy is an awareness of God's grace that gives a peaceful presence to the soul of one walking by faith. Though the future consequences are ambiguous, joy is the anticipation of Rom. 8:28 coming to fruition.
- Joy is soul-satisfaction. Peace is soul-settlement.



I. A SOLUTION IS AVAILABLE WITHOUT OUR GRASP

Ruth 2:1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and **his name was Boaz**.

2 And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after *him* **in whose sight I shall find grace**. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

A. The Unknown Present

- We are introduced to Boaz before Ruth is.
- We have a “Kinsman Redeemer” that was once unknown to us.



Rom. 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

Eph. 2:2 Wherein **in time past ye walked according to the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also **we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh**, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But **God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,**

5 **Even when we were dead in sins,** hath quickened us together with Christ, **(by grace ye are saved;)**



- When our situation is more desperate, our *Boaz* is available!

B. The Unknown Provider

Ruth 2:15 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:

16 And let fall also *some* of the **handfuls of purpose for her**, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.



- The Lord commands us to indirectly provide for others.

Lev. 23:22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: **thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger:** I *am* the LORD your God.

- The Lord provides through obedient children.

Ruth 2:16 And let fall also *some* of the **handfuls of purpose for her**, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.



- The “handfuls” were called “purpose” – implying an intended reason, even if unknown.

Rom. 8:28 And we know that **all things work together for good to them that love God**, to them who are the called **according to *his* purpose**.

2 Tim. 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but **according to his own purpose and grace**, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

- The answer was provided, but Ruth still needed to put forth an effort – “...that she may glean *them*...”



- Ruth, like each of us, must walk by faith “...**in whose sight I shall find grace...**”

1 Pet. 1:7 That **the trial of your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Prov. 3:5 Trust in the LORD **with all thine heart**; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and **he shall direct thy paths.**



II. A SEARCH IS ACCESSIBILITY FOR OUR GAIN

Ruth 2:2 And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now **go to the field**, and glean ears of corn after *him* **in whose sight I shall find grace**.

3 And **she went**, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

A. The Motivation for our Search

Rom. 3:11 There is none that understandeth, **there is none that seeketh after God**.



Jer. 10:23 O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: **it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.**

Psa. 37:23 The **steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD:** and he delighteth in his way.

Pulled out of the mud of your own ego, so that you have stopped thinking that you are somebody, at last you are delivered from yourself and are seeking God for Himself alone.

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Phil. 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that **he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it** until the day of Jesus Christ:

Phil. 2:13 For **it is God which worketh in you** both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

B. The Means for our Satisfaction

Jer. 29:13 And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, **when ye shall search for me with all your heart.**

- Ruth was in the right place to find what she needed.
- Ruth was diligent in searching the field, not half-heartedly gleaning.
- We must search in the right place in order to find what we need.



Jn. 5:39 **Search the scriptures**; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and **they are they which testify of me.**

Prov. 2:3 Yea, **if** thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding;

4 **If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;**

5 **Then** shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Acts 17:11 These were **more noble** than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily**, whether those things were so.



- Joy is soul-satisfaction.
- The Scriptures provide the blanket of joy during the wintertime of life.

Jn. 15:11 These things have **I spoken unto you**, that **my joy might remain in you**, and *that your joy might be full*.

- The Holy Spirit, with the Word of God, gives us the fruit called joy.

Gal. 5:22 But **the fruit of the Spirit is** love, **joy**, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,”

- Prayer produces joy!

Jn. 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: **ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.**



III. A SATISFACTION IS ACQUIRED BY GRACE

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?

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, **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.

12 **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.

13 Then she said, Let me find favour 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.



A. The Humility of Honesty – “...Why have I found grace...
I am a stranger...”

B. The Honoring of Humility

Ruth 2:12 **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.

Psa. 10:17 **LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble:** thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

Jas. 4:6 But **he giveth more grace**. Wherefore he saith, **God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.**



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1 Pet. 5:6 **Humble yourselves** therefore under the mighty hand of God, that **he may exalt you in due time:**



Conclusion

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, **so that I might finish my course with joy**, and the ministry, which **I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.**

2 Tim. 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished **my course, I have kept the faith:**

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and **not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.**

