



Rahab the Prostitute

Date: June 16, 2024

Text: Joshua 2:1-24

BIG IDEA

God's character throughout the Bible consistently shows that He delights in using those the world deems most unlikely to accomplish His plans. What He seeks in the hearts of those He will write into His story is often something only He can see. As the strength and courage we focused on last week gets cultivated by the Holy Spirit in your heart, the Holy Spirit will begin to teach you that the labels of the world mean nothing in God's Kingdom. Who you believe you are OR who others believe you are will never limit our God.

Conversation Starter

- What kinds of people can make "Christians" the most uncomfortable socially or spiritually?

COMMENTARY #1

(Verses 1-7) God makes clear His favor for Rahab here by naming her in scripture and giving her the opportunity to serve the

Israeli spies as she becomes an integral part of their war strategy. The mention of her being a prostitute is not His focus at all in her story. However, the king of Jericho and his men severely underestimate Rahab “the prostitute” in this situation, which is why they so easily believe her cover story for the Israelites she is hiding. The spies themselves must see something in Rahab that they know marks her as a woman of God because they choose to trust her.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think God notices Rahab? What does this teach us about how He views us?
 2. What assumptions would the people of Jericho have made about Rahab?
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COMMENTARY #2

(Verses 8-21) This passage recounts an interesting conversation between Rahab and the spies that is evidence of prior conversation Rahab has had with God about who He is. She confesses, “For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.” She openly proclaims the power of God before men who have been sent to decimate her culture. She defies her entire culture to proclaim His name.

Also countercultural, God has given Rahab power in this story, and that does not reflect the values of the cultures that existed in this region during that time period. Women did not have power,

and they were not valued as equals. Yet, notice the way she is treated in this conversation by God and His people.

Discussion Questions

1. What kind of tone do you hear when you read Rahab's words in this passage? (Examples: Humble? Terrified? Desperate?) Is this the kind of attitude you expect from a prostitute?
 2. When Rahab makes this deal with the spies, she knows she is changing her family's legacy. What legacy do you think she imagined God would give her?
 3. What would Rahab herself say about being named by God in the "hall of faith" passage in Hebrews 11:31 for the choice she makes in this passage?
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COMMENTARY #3

(Verses 22-24) In these concluding verses of the passage, God has made a way possible for the spies to execute their mission. The name of a prostitute is mentioned as they report her courage to a great man of God. What an unlikely ending to the story if anyone but God wrote it!

Discussion Questions

1. Does God see any difference between Joshua and Rahab as warriors in His Kingdom? Why or why not?

2. God's kindness is on full display in this story. The Bible describes God as a Father. How do you see God teaching Rahab this truth about His character in this snapshot of her story?

GOING DEEPER

1. God often challenges disciples with mature Christian faith by asking us to love the Rahabs of the world, people who are underestimated, forgotten, and ignored. But He often won't do that until we are forced to confront our own "Rahab" so that we understand how lifesaving that grace can be in someone else's story. What labels has the world given you that you want God to redeem spiritually?

2. What does God value so much in Rahab that He honors her by name in scripture?

3. What kind of spiritual legacy did God give Rahab when she made this decision to protect God's people and honor Him?

4. Later in the New Testament, Paul proclaims God's desire to adopt Gentiles into the faith that we all now share. This is a controversial decision at the time. God is dreaming much bigger than the Jewish community is dreaming at the time Paul voices this idea. How does the story of Rahab lay the foundation that God's heart is big enough to love many people from many cultures?

5. This story can feel like Rahab is taking on all of Jericho. How does her boldness in this choice bless God?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Bible Project: Jesus' Genealogy](#)
 - [Propel Women: Don't Fit in? Finding a Sense of Belonging Amidst Your "Otherness"](#)
 - [Propel Women: Making the Most of Your Life Story](#)
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Group Activity

When Rahab says in verse 21 “I accept your terms” to the spies, she knows that she is saying this to a new God, a new life, a new culture. There are still so many things she does not yet understand about this transition in her life. In fact, she may not have realized in that moment just how life-changing this decision could be. But she said it in faith.

With your group, pray this simple prayer and commit to pray it each day this week. Honor Rahab’s faith and our God by proclaiming, “I accept your terms” to Him, whether in a still small voice or shouting it at the top of your lungs to the heavens, find the power of her words.