

DAY 7: Faith Is Always Rewarded *Josh. 6:25; Philippians 3:7-9

Because of the faith with which she acted, Rahab and her family did not perish at the hands of the Israelites in their conquest of Jericho as did their fellow citizens who were disobedient to the LORD (Heb. 11:31). As a result of her faith producing works, she was also made righteous before God; her past, circumstances, and all acts of disobedience were pardoned, and she was justified before God (James 2:25). Even more so, Rahab was mightily used by God not only in Israel's claim of the Promised Land but also in the royal genealogy of the promised Messiah (Matthew 1:5). Greater still was the fact that she was not too far gone to be saved, to know God in a personal way. Because of her faith, according to God's grace, she made conscious, daily decisions to seek after the Lord and pursue a knowledge of the Creator.

We tend to forget, in the highs & lows of life, that knowing Christ is our ultimate prize. Don't get so wrapped up in praying for blessings and delighting in them that you fail to delight, first & foremost, in the Giver of those blessings. In our pursuit of God, secondary blessings can come—improved life circumstances, a new job, better relationships, etc.—but those things do not supply ultimate fulfillment & joy. The greatest prize in our pursuit of God is God. We have been created to know and glorify God. The Apostle Paul knew this and held to this so deeply that he counted everything else as rubbish. Our faith in the God of the universe has many benefits, but there is none greater than a relationship with and knowledge of the God of the universe. Let us not lose sight of that.

INSPECT: How did Rahab display and act on her faith in a way that showed that her personal relationship with God was her most treasured prize?

REFLECT: Do you treasure knowledge of God above everything else? Or is your love for God predicated by what He can give you?

PROJECT: Any and every thing that could be gained in this world is loss compared to the exceeding joy of knowing Christ. Is this true for your life? Do you delight yourself in seeking Him day by day? Why or why not?



**RIVERTON HEIGHTS
BAPTIST CHURCH**

**CONQUERING THE
MOUNTAIN OF OUR PAST**

2017 Anniversary Campaign

"We Are More Than Conquerors Through Christ"

Week 2 Devotion Guide - Base Scripture: Joshua 2:1-24

We are excited for what God has in store as you embark on this devotion series. These supplement Pastor Correa's Sunday sermons for August, but you can still seek out God and unpack His truth through these devotions if you haven't heard them.

*Read the central Scripture text (listed above) carefully, repeatedly, and prayerfully throughout the week. Each day's devotion will have daily Bible reading, notes, and questions to pray about & ponder. **Inspect** questions review the verse & notes for understanding.*

***Reflect** questions lead you to personally connect with Biblical truths. **Project** questions are applications & next steps. It is recommended that you write out answers to these questions on paper or in a journal*

I pray that God will speak to you profoundly through His Word and that you will respond in faith. Blessings!

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DAY 1: Conquer the Past, *Joshua 2:1-24

The past can be wonderful—learning from history & reminiscing old memories. However, our past can also be crippling chains, holding us captive in fear as we spend the remainder of our lives running from it. Whether good or bad, our past greatly influences our present and future.

This week, we study Rahab—a Canaanite prostitute who was not defined by her past and served as an instrumental part of God’s plan for Israel to claim the promised land. Throughout Joshua 2, we witness God’s work on Rahab’s heart, drawing her to faith in Him. When she felt the tug of God on her life, Rahab did not resort to using her past as a crutch for saying she “couldn’t do what God wanted.” She didn’t wallow in shame or self-pity. She didn’t doubt that God could redeem her & use her. Rahab came to believe that the God of the Israelites was the true God, and she acted in the faith that He was who He said He was..

Please remember that you are not your past. Faith in Christ brings redemption (see Eph. 1:7). Your identity is in Christ, not in past mistakes. Don’t get me wrong; I don’t know your past. I don’t even know who exactly is reading this, but I do know we serve a God who is above all. God is bigger than your past. He knows everything about you –skeletons and all, still loves you and has a beautiful plan for your life. Don’t let your past keep you in bondage. Give in to Him. Past decisions, no matter how wicked, are not nearly as significant as the decisions you make for the Lord now.

INSPECT: Summarize Joshua 2 in 2-3 sentences.

REFLECT: Put yourself in Rahab’s shoes, would you have acted as she did? What excuse could you have made for rejecting God’s will in her case?

PROJECT: Are you letting shadows of your past loom over you? Don’t try to run away or deal with them alone; seek the Lord’s guidance and know that there is forgiveness & restoration in submission to God.

DAY 6: Faith Demands Demonstration

*** Joshua 2:14-21; Galatians 5:22-23; Matthew 5:14-16**

In Matthew 5:16, Jesus describes the believers as the “light of the world.” The work of such light is to shine and point to the glory of the Heavenly Father. Rahab demonstrated her faith in today’s passage in Joshua. According to the promise of the spies, she and her father’s household would be spared so long as a scarlet cord was tied to the outside of their window. Even more so, her family was to stay in her house for the duration in which the Israelites were circling Jericho & conquering the city. If anyone from her family were to stray out of the household, that person would be put to death.

These demonstrations of faith were, indeed, conditional. As in, Rahab tied the scarlet cord, gathered her family in her house, and had them remain there as a means of showing her faith to God and to her commitment to the promise made between her and the Israelite spies. We must remember, however, that any demonstration of faith, when done in true faith, has the ultimate end of God’s glorification. Such is the case with being the “light of the world.” Similarly, we glorify God when we demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). When you live by faith, you’re walking according to the leading & will of the Holy Spirit. When in tune with the Holy Spirit, you start to develop the fruit of the Spirit —love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, & self-control (notice that these components are a singular fruit and not a group of smaller fruits). This fruit glorifies the Father because it is a direct extension & display of the very character of God, thus leading to His honor.

INSPECT: What obstacles might Rahab have faced in her demonstrations of faith? What would people think? What would her family think?

REFLECT: How do you see the Holy Spirit molding you through the development of the Fruit of the Spirit? Is God the Holy Spirit calling you to more joy? Patience? Kindness & compassion?

PROJECT: How can you decide to be a light this week? How will you demonstrate your faith to living for the Lord?

DAY 5: Faith Demands Decision

*Joshua 2:2-8, 12-13; Habakkuk 2:4; Joshua 24:15; Luke 9:23

Rahab made key decisions in this passage in which she chose her faith in God over any consequence she would face. The king of Jericho knew she had taken in the Israelite spies and demanded Rahab to deliver the spies to him. Because she knew the importance of the spies and their part in God's promise for Israel, she stuck with her conviction of faith and chose not to reveal what she knew about the spies' identity and location. The Bible does not condone her deceit, but it does record the account and show the lengths to which Rahab went to act on her faith.

Later on, Rahab asked the spies to swear by the LORD that, because of her protecting them from the king of Jericho, she and her family remain safe during the Israelite conquest of the city. This is a pretty wild statement when you think about it. She truly believed that God would lead this traveling nation of Israel to somehow break down Jericho's formidable walls and destroy the nation's defenses. She wholeheartedly believed that God would deliver Jericho into their hands. Based on this, she appealed to the spies for the safety of her family.

Rahab fully understood the consequences of helping these spies and betraying her nation, but she followed through for no other reason than her newfound faith in the God of Israel. She laid her life and the lives of her family on the line, believing that God would act. Faith requires daily conscious decision to follow the Lord. So count up the cost, deny yourself, and walk in faith. This involves intentionally choosing God over fear, insecurity, comfort, money, etc. Make the choice each day to faithfully follow Christ. Remember, "the just shall live by faith."

INSPECT: Based on Josh. 24:15 & Luke 9:23, what does deciding to follow Christ mean? Relate those attributes to Rahab's story.

REFLECT: "True faith always has a transforming effect on the life of the individual." How has your faith in Christ transformed you?

PROJECT: How can you intentionally choose God each day over self, comfort, fear, insecurity, money, people's approval, self-image, etc.?

DAY 2: Rahab's Faith

*Joshua 2:1-24

Let's review Rahab's story again. Rahab was a woman who had to many at the time (and even many people afterward), she was known as a harlot. She received foreigners into her home, whom she knew intended to invade her city. In helping these spies, she committed treason against her government, risking her own life in belief that the God of the Israelites really was the true God.

How did she attain such faith? It was given to her by the love & grace of God. She wasn't particularly religious nor was she usually around it. Her faith came simply by God's divine providence. This same God that redeemed Rahab is at work in your life. God had an elaborate plan to redeem Rahab from her past, drawing her to Himself and making her valued and important in His eyes. Maybe you feel like a Rahab, or maybe you connect more with the story of Joshua's faith. Perhaps you're in between. Regardless, know that you are precious & redeemed in God's sight when you are in Christ. Be encouraged! You are never too far gone to be made new in Christ. Lay your life down at His feet; lay your yes down.

INSPECT: Do you notice any similarities between Rahab & Joshua's stories? Differences? What do these tell you about God?

REFLECT: How is your story similar to Rahab's? Have you given in to God's ultimate plan for your life, your good, and your eternal joy? What evidence do you have to say so?

PROJECT: Take comfort in knowing that, in Christ, you have been crucified and raised from the dead. Your identity is in Christ; God sees you, loves you, and values you. If you haven't laid yourself down at His throne, take this opportunity to do so in faith.

DAY 3: Faith Born in Unpromising Circumstances

*Joshua 2:1; Isaiah 59:1; Ephesians 2:8-9, I Kings 8:12-13

Rahab is an unlikely hero, yet God saw her, drew her near, and saved her. Living in immoral Jericho, Rahab had little religious background, little exposure to information about the true God, and an immoral line of work (prostitution). You might think there'd be no way that such a person could come to know the Lord. Maybe you didn't take it that far, but we, in our finite way of thinking, tend to look at external circumstances and pass judgment as to whether we think God could do something there or not. Whether we have this view on our own lives or someone else's, it's arrogant to think that the infinite God of the universe is somehow limited by someone's bad decisions, social status, or income. He saves according to His abundant love.

Isaiah 59:1 & Ephesians 2:8-9, show that it is God who saves. Salvation is a gift from the overflow of His own goodness, grace, & mercy. God is fully capable of and righteous in saving anyone and using them for His ultimate glory. Rahab is an extraordinary case of that. Our all-powerful God can work in any situation, no matter how bleak or hopeless. It takes faith to trust Him in these dark moments. Perhaps we don't think or express disbelief, but we can sure act like we don't trust Him. We must remember that God is faithful and works in the most unpromising circumstances. Looking at the passage in I Kings, we see that God continued to dwell with His people even after generations of disobedience and wickedness throughout the whole nation of Israel. Despite their actions & situations God gave them grace through His presence as long as they remained faithful to Him. Let us be faithful to God even in the midst of unpromising circumstances.

INSPECT: List how Rahab had the odds "stacked against her" when it comes to her faith. How was she an unlikely heroine?

REFLECT: Have you ever found yourself doubting that God could work in a situation? Why did you (or didn't you) feel that way?

PROJECT: In detail, what can you do in times of great trial to remain faithful to the Lord (elaborate on concepts of Bible reading, prayer, seeking counsel)?

DAY 4: Faith By Hearing & Acting Upon the Truth

*Romans 10:17; Josh. 2:9-14; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25

Twice in the New Testament (Heb. 11:31 & Jam. 2:25) Rahab is praised as a model of faith. In reading these passages her example results from her hearing and acting upon the truth about the God of Israel. Because of her job, she could hear much about happenings outside of Jericho, which means she would've known about Israel's miraculous crossing of the Red Sea in their departure from Egypt and their victory over the kings of the powerful Amorite people. While this struck fear into the hearts of her fellow citizens, her response of faith was radically different. Upon hearing the headlines about Israel, Rahab came to the conclusion and belief that there must be no other god greater than Israel's God.

Not only did Rahab believe, but her belief was met with action (see Joshua 2). Faith is encompassed by 2 essential components — belief & repentance. Belief is the understanding of the heart & mind while repentance is belief in action. In faith, Rahab believed that the God of the Israelites was who He says He is, that there was no god who could oppose Him. As a result, she received Israelite spies into her home, committed treason against her government, and lied to officials to protect the spies because of faith in the LORD of all. While our acting faith may not look the same as Rahab's, it should line up with intentions of loving God, knowing Him, serving Him, and trusting on Him more than you rely on yourself.

INSPECT: Read Romans 10:17; reflect on how that played out in Rahab's life.

REFLECT: How did you come to hear the truth of the Gospel & act on that truth?

PROJECT: How would your life look if you 100% believed that God is who He says He is (in terms of how your world view, personal Bible reading, prayer, sharing your faith, & service to the Lord)? What might be stopping you from living like this? Remember, Rahab could've made the excuse that following God was too inconvenient or costly or that she needed to focus first on her own career, family, or friends. Don't disregard those things. Submit to God as the Lord over all of those things.