

## Bad Girls of the Bible - RAHAB

Pastor Jack Schull

Joshua 2:1-21; 6:22-23

Good Morning...turn with me to Joshua 2

Intro: series: (*bad girls of the bible ...redeemed*)

Today we explore a woman who was @ 1<sup>st</sup> known by her reputation – but remembered thru history by her faith.

She acted upon her new found faith with great courage and she wagered everything on a promise– sort of a lifeline – and she had *everything* riding on it...

-pause-

→ I want us to get at her story maybe through a different way this morning...

Q how many of you like game shows? Anyone ever been on one? To have some interaction this morning: I want you to share with your neighborhood (2-3 pp) around ya which game show you wish you could be on? (allow 30 sec)

Q how many of you ever watched: *who wants to be a millionaire?* (today we're going to play – I need 1 contestant, for 1 question, for a chance at 1 million dollars (ok-just kidding)

- Have contestant come up with music in background – play along – get audience the applause sign participation...
- Ask them the 1 question – tell them about the 1 life-line left – who would they call?
  - The deal with the lifeline – is that you're hanging all your hope on that call!
  - Reward contestant with small gift card & transition into talking about lifeline

T the lifeline is part of the appeal of that show – and it is vital when you get down in that moment of decision – all your hope is hanging on the help from that lifeline & this morning I want us to look at a story of a woman who got to such a moment: all her hope was hanging on her lifeline...she had pinned all her trust on this scarlet cord (this scarlet lifeline) → we'll see her story, draw out some insights as we move toward a time of taking communion together...

### Joshua 2:17-21

Now: this is the story – of Rahab...in fact she is more widely known by her reputation, her occupation – turn back with me to Joshua 2:1...Joshua has sent out 2 secret spies, the Israelites have been on this 40 yr journey in the desert, now coming to the land God has promised them...but they will have to battle for it. A lot going on here in the minds of the people...

### Joshua 2:1

- Spies have been sent out before...Joshua is maybe wanting this to be secret to gather info for himself – not to risk the tension that was created last time spies reported to the people
- Whose house did they go too? As a God follower – isn't there something that just twitches inside you – how could they go to 'her' house (we've labeled her 'that woman'; we've instantly devalued her in a blink of an eye)...we've allowed her to be hidden and only seen by her label: the prostitute)

Most scholars point out her beauty, the probability that she ran an inn / brothel like establishment – being part of the outer wall of Jericho’s fortified city.

This is a woman, for whatever the reasons were – had gotten detoured in life, she’s lost and wandering, trying to make it through. And yet – God is active behind the scenes...

*The story of Rahab – is the story of the unapproachable woman...*

- In the city – many knew all about Rahab – but probably very few actually knew her!...
- She was the woman who was talked about, but not with.
- she was noticed, but never acknowledged
- she was held close, but felt distant from all
- she probably felt unapproachable, unworthy – maybe especially toward God.

→ But God feels differently toward her...toward you...

Her story is a part of ours: it’s a story...

*...for those that have ever felt past over or forgotten or uninvited...*

*...for those who feel that their littered past disqualifies them from life with God.*

*...for those who are searching for a hope that will finally renew.*

*...for those that hold out that someone might feel you’re worth finding.*

*...for those who are stuck wandering the ‘detours’ of life.*

### **Q Why did they go to her house?**

- Some say b/c they were military spies, and lots of military men had been in that house
- Some say b/c it was a place where foreigners’ might not stick out as much

→ I believe they went there: b/c God lead them there. b/c God was already at work in that house.

T ...the interesting thing about Rahab’s story – is that it’s a part of God’s story...and we begin to see some things taking shape within her soul, God revealing Himself and her fear turning toward faith

Let’s keep reading:

*I just want you to listen to her story and what transpires...I’m not going to put it on screen, b/c I want your heart to hear it and not let your eyes distract you...*

### **Joshua 2:2-7**

- Think about this moment for her...if she is found to be harboring these spies, she’s died
- She sends them away – out on a wild goose chase...the gate to the whole city is closed and the 2 spies are trapped inside (*not good if you’re a spy*)

### **Joshua 2:8-10**

#### **Joshua 2:14**

- Then the agreement that they make: as she ties that ‘lifeline’ – that scarlet cord to her window – that cord would hang there for the next few days...it would hang through the 7 day siege as all Israel encircled the fortified city of Jericho and marched around it...you know the rest of the story...on the 7<sup>th</sup> day: *Israel shouts, the walls fall, the city’s conquered & the promise was kept*

### **Joshua 6:15-17, 24a-25**

This is a great story: a story of Rahab's faith/courage, God's power & faithfulness, Joshua's leadership and the people's resolve to following God...but this morning I want to draw out a couple different things we can gather from Rahab's story – things that have been preserved for us; as we move toward a time of communion...

#### **1) God's always looking – always at work moving people toward faith**

##### Joshua 2:9-11

- For Rahab: she had this wandering heart, things got tough in her city and the feelings of fear were gripping the hearts of the people, then the same signs that caused fear in some, brought her to a place of faith.
  - i. Maybe today: you've got some fears that are gripping you – it's like your heart is melting...fear of rejection, the economy, the unrest around the world or within your very home.
  - ii. In that moment – you can either cling to your fears – or you can notice the One who is BIGGER.
- Rahab lived in a land of polytheistic philosophy – lots of gods that needed worshipped, appeased and attention...
  - i. but as things were changing around her – she noticed the trust the people of Israel had in their God...she saw what God was doing for them, she took note that maybe there was ONE true God who was over all – who could be trusted when things were falling apart...

##### **Joshua 2:11**

→ God was working in the lives of Israel – & others were noticing -- God was using that to get their attention – to draw them toward faith in Him.

John 5:17 "My Father is **always** at his **work** to this very day, and I, too, am **working**."

John 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him

-jesus speaks of the Father drawing people...

Jesus was always looking for all who would be receptive to Him, because God has a heart for all people!

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to **perish**, but everyone to come to repentance.*

→ **friends:** God wants to use you – to help people see Him...that the things that are unfolding in your life, the stories of God's interaction with you can be used to draw others attention toward Him.

→ God's already at work behind the scenes in the lives of your friends, co-workers, neighbors, family members, classmates – and though you might not be aware of it, doesn't make it any less real.

You may never know – what people notice about you and within you and your walk with God, but you can be certain of this. God wants you to grow – so that they might know.

*God's always at work moving people toward faith*

## 2) **God is looking for active faith**

Faith is: believing in something and allowing it to shape how you behave/act/respond

You all exercised faith this morning – by sitting in the chair, you believed it would hold you..

Illust: Story of zip line in china (*show 2 pics*)

Faith invites our response (it moves us) we're not to be a mere bystander, but a participant!

### **James 2:25-26**

Faith is not merely about head knowledge – it's to penetrate our hearts and permeate our life and our living!

Life in the Kingdom: is about having our faith activated – changing, shaping us, calling us to respond toward the things God stirs us toward for Him and His glory!

--so let me ask you this morning:

Q how is God calling you – moving or inviting you to respond in life? Or has faith become something that you know about, believe in your head, but doesn't stir your heart to action anymore?

T another thing that I'm struck by in this story is:

## 3) **God looks past our labels**

### **Joshua 2:1**

*Rahab the prostitute*: it was her label...almost like her last name. every time she is mentioned by the biblical writers, they are using her last name...why is that?

- a) it's to give us hope: it's like those late night infomercials – they are plastered with the “BEFORE AND AFTER” pictures.

-as the biblical writers are recording: they're saying God can take you from where you are to where He wants you to be. (*Paul says: phil 1:6 – he who started the work will be faithful to complete it...*)

**-Your past doesn't predetermine your future!**

- b) it's to remind us: *that none of us deserves God's love, but He desires to love us* and He looks past our labels...we've all fallen short → yet most of the bible is spent telling us who we are, not who we were! (Satan's mode is: remind us of who we were, God is constantly telling us who we are!)
- Moses was a murderer, but God saw him for the leader and man of God he would be
  - Peter was merely a fisherman, but Jesus saw him as the 'rock' to build the church
  - Rahab was a prostitute, but God saw her as valuable, courageous and worth picking

I've met a lot of people who are stuck in life (detoured) by their 'label':

- Addicted or Abandoned
- Unfaithful or a Quitter
- Criminal or Failure
- Alcoholic - Depressed
- Unworthy
- Abused
- Anxious
- Fearful

→ many live locked up by those labels – unable to see themselves as anything else...

I want to remind you

In the words of the Scriptures – as a follower of Jesus = of your new label this morning: **YOU ARE: New creation, God's child, Beloved!**

*--Dismiss the ushers for the (Lord's Supper)*

The beauty of the Lord's Supper – is that it's a table that none of us can earn a seat at, but yet every believer has a place card with your name on it...a space reserved for you.

Today we started this morning with a lifeline – and now we enter a moment to remember our lifeline – not a cord – but a person: His name is Jesus Christ. His sacrifice on our behalf seals our eternal security! His love is available to those who trust in Him. He is the ultimate lifeline!

**Ephesians 2: 1-2a, 3a, 4-5**

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