



LESSON 5

God approves Rahab's faith

JOSHUA 2:1-24



God saves those who have true faith in Him.



“And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath” (Josh 2:11).

Supporting Truths

1. God saves those who have true faith.
2. True faith is a right response to knowledge of God.
3. True faith produces actions that honor God.
4. True faith comes to God for mercy.
5. God accepts believers on the basis of their faith.

Objectives

1. List the good things that would happen to Rahab because of her faith.
2. List two truths that Rahab spoke about God, and describe her response.
3. Describe how Rahab risked her life to rescue the spies.
4. Explain Rahab's request.
5. Explain why Rahab is a hero of the Bible even though she sinned by lying.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God approves Rahab's faith • Joshua 2:1–24



Lesson Summary

After encouraging Joshua with His words (Josh 1:2–9), God encouraged Joshua with the report brought back by the two spies sent to scout out Jericho: the hearts of the Canaanites had melted with fear (2:23–24). God was already winning the battle by taking away the courage of Joshua's enemies. So as Israel heard this book shortly after Joshua's death, the message was clear: God is trustworthy to save. He gives grace to those who come to Him (Rahab), and He gives victory over all enemies (Jericho).

Spotlight on the Gospel

By God's grace, the Messiah was one of Rahab's descendants (Matt 1:5). Because of Rahab's faith, the Messiah would one day be born and offer salvation to all. But this salvation comes only to those who have faith like Rahab's—faith that is rooted in clear knowledge of God, devoted to God alone, coming to God for mercy, producing actions that honor God, and reaching out to others to bring them to salvation as well.

LAST WEEK



God calls Joshua to be
His servant
Joshua 1:1–9

THIS WEEK



God approves
Rahab's faith
Joshua 2:1–24

NEXT WEEK



God reveals His might
at the Jordan
Joshua 3:1–5:1

POSSESSION

Lesson Commentary

God saves those who have true faith in Him.

The book of Joshua was written to the Israelites at about the time of Joshua's death. It was written to encourage them to stay faithful to God and finish the conquest even without Joshua's leadership. So God's words to encourage Joshua (1:1–9) were recorded to encourage Israel as well. In the same way, the story of Rahab encouraged Joshua, but it was also recorded to encourage Israel.



THINK ABOUT IT

This story encourages courageous faith because Rahab shows what true faith looks like and confirms that God is worth trusting

Rahab protected the spies (2:1–7)

Before crossing the Jordan, Joshua secretly sent two spies to scout out Jericho (Josh 2:1). He trusted God's promise of victory (1:5–6), but he also knew that God may win the victory by means of Joshua's military efforts. He knew that God's

sovereignty does not excuse man from his responsibility. Joshua wisely sent spies ahead to gain information that could make his attack more successful. He also wisely kept the mission secret, so that a bad report would not lead to rebellion as it did at Kadesh-Barnea (Num 13–14).

The two spies traveled to Jericho and chose to stay with Rahab, a sinful woman (Josh 2:2). The spies were not being sinful. They were being smart, because staying at her house wouldn't attract a lot of attention, allowing them to avoid detection. From her busy home they would also have been able to gather valuable information, and since it was on the wall, they could flee the city quickly if needed.

Unfortunately, they were detected and the king of Jericho was informed (2:3). The lives of the spies were in the hands of an immoral Canaanite woman. Fortunately, when the king's soldiers arrived, she hid the spies and lied to protect them (2:4–7). She put her own life on the line, committing treason against her

own king for the sake of total strangers. Why would she do this? And was it ok for her to lie?

Rahab's actions were motivated by her faith (2:8–16)

Rahab explained her reason for taking the side of the Israelites. She had heard of God's mighty deeds. She knew that God had given Israel the land (2:9). When He led them across the Red Sea, God had made Israel His own people (2:10). When He defeated Sihon and Og, two kings on the east side of the Jordan (2:10), He proved that He would fight for Israel and defeat Israel's enemies. All Canaan had heard, and their hearts melted (2:11), just as predicted when Israel crossed the Red Sea (Exod 15:15–16). Although there may have been other Canaanites who responded in faith, it seems that this was not the normal response.

Rahab's response reveals the character of biblical **faith**, which is trust in God. First, biblical faith is not blind faith. Rather, true faith is a right response to the facts God has made known about Himself (Isa 41:18–20). Second, biblical faith includes the fear of God, trembling in awe before His might (Josh 2:9). Third, biblical faith is trust in the LORD alone as God (2:12; Deut 4:39; 6:4). True faith is not half-hearted. It does not leave room for two masters (Matt 6:24). Fourth, biblical faith does not stop with recognizing God's supremacy—it presses on until it rests upon God's mercy (2:12). True faith trembles before the power and wrath of God, but instead of running away from God it runs toward God seeking refuge. Fifth, true faith cares for others (2:13). Love for God cannot be separated from love for one's neighbor (Mark 12:30–31). Sixth, true faith takes action, even at great risk—in Rahab's case, she hid the spies and enabled their escape (2:14–16; Jas 2:25–26).

So what about her lie? The story never comments on whether the lie was good or bad, because the point of the story is Rahab's faith. The New Testament praises

THINK ABOUT IT

Faith is a trust in God that is expressed through: (1) a confident assurance of things hoped for; and (2) a conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1).



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

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her for her faith, not for her lie (Heb 11:31, James 2:25).

Rahab was promised safety (2:14, 17–22)

Because of her faith, Rahab experienced God's grace. She would escape death, along with any family member who would stay inside her house (Josh 2:17–20). Again, she proved her faith by her actions when she did as the spies said and tied a scarlet thread to her window (2:21).



THINK ABOUT IT

Lying is wrong (Prov 12:22; 1 John 2:21), but rather than focusing on her lie, we ought to be astonished by her faith—and be thankful that God evaluates us according to our faith, not our perfection (Rom 4:5).

Rahab's salvation is a testimony to God's grace. She was a Gentile and a sinful woman, but from the beginning, the Abrahamic covenant was intended to bless all nations (Gen 12:3). Jesus would later make this same point with the Samaritan woman. Like Rahab, the Samaritan was unclean—a non-Jew and an immoral

woman. But like Rahab, the Samaritan woman would believe and bring many others to salvation with her (John 4:7, 29, 42). God's grace is especially amazing in Rahab's life considering who her descendants included: the great king David, and ultimately the Messiah (Matt 1:5).

Rahab's testimony encouraged Joshua (2:22–24)

The story ends where it began, with Joshua talking to the spies. Rahab had given them good advice, allowing them to return safely (Josh 2:22–23). So they brought Joshua the encouraging news from Rahab that the hearts of the Canaanites had melted with fear (2:23–24). By causing the Canaanites to despair, God was already winning the battle. God's word is enough to confirm our faith, but God knows human weakness. He gave Joshua additional evidence to help him feel sure of God's promises.

So as Israel read this book shortly after Joshua's death, the message was clear. God is trustworthy to save. He gives grace to those who come to Him, and He gives victory over all enemies. Therefore they ought to respond in faith as Rahab did—even if it meant risking their lives. Will you respond with faith like Rahab? We have seen an even greater display of God's power than the crossing of the Red Sea or the defeat of Og and Sihon. We have God's word, the Bible, which is more complete, more permanent, and more authoritative than anyone's experience. In this word we have heard of Christ's power to conquer sin, Satan, and death (Col 1:13; 2:15). How will you respond to this revelation?

Lesson Outline

God saves those who have true faith in Him.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. Rahab protected the spies (2:1–7).
2. Rahab believed that God is the true God (2:8–13).
3. Rahab showed her faith by rescuing the spies (2:14–16, 21).
4. Rahab and her family were saved because of her faith (2:14, 17–22).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. **Rahab protected the spies (2:1–7).**
 - Joshua secretly sent two spies (2:1).
 - The two spies cleverly chose to stay at a harlot's house (2:2).
 - Rahab the harlot deceitfully protected the spies (2:3–7).
2. **Rahab's actions were motivated by her faith (2:8–16).**
 - Rahab feared God because of God's powerful deeds (2:8–10).
 - Rahab believed that the LORD alone is God (2:11).
 - Rahab entrusted herself to the LORD's mercy (2:12).
 - Rahab cared about her family, not just herself (2:13).
 - Rahab showed her faith by helping the spies escape (2:14–16).
3. **Rahab was promised safety (2:14, 17–22).**
 - The spies promised to save her if she saved them (2:14).
 - The spies promised to save her if she tied a scarlet thread to her window (2:17–18).
 - The spies promised to save her family if they stayed in Rahab's house (2:18–20).
 - Rahab showed her faith by tying the scarlet thread in her window (2:21).
4. **Rahab's testimony encouraged Joshua (2:22–24).**
 - The spies followed Rahab's advice and returned to Joshua (2:22–23).
 - Rahab's story showed that God had already defeated the heart of the enemy (2:23–24).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God approves Rahab's faith • Joshua 2:1–24



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **Who did Joshua send to Jericho?**
Joshua sent two spies.
2. **Who rescued the spies?**
Rahab rescued the spies.
3. **Why did Rahab rescue the spies?**
Because she believed in the God of Israel.
4. **What would happen to Rahab because of her faith?**
She would be saved along with all her family.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **Why did Joshua send out two spies?**
The spies were sent to gather information about Jericho in order to know the best way to defeat it.
2. **Did the spies' mission stay secret?**
No. The king of Jericho sent men to find them.
3. **What did Rahab do to protect them?**
First, Rahab hid the spies and lied to the soldiers to protect the spies. Second, she let them escape by a rope through her window. Third, she gave them advice on how to stay hidden and return to Joshua.
4. **Why did Rahab believe in the God of Israel?**
She had heard of the things God had done for Israel, like the crossing of the Red Sea and their victory over the two kings, Sihon and Og.
5. **How did Rahab and the Canaanites react to the news of God's mighty deeds?**
Their hearts melted and they trembled with fear.
6. **Instead of trying to fight against God, what did Rahab do?**
Rahab worshiped God as the true God and came to Him for salvation.
7. **What was the result of Rahab's faith?**
Rahab and all her family were saved, and Rahab became the ancestor of Jesus the Messiah.
8. **How did the news from Rahab encourage Joshua?**
Joshua saw that God was already winning the victory. He had already won the battle inside the hearts of the Canaanites.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



SPY GAMES

I Spy

Play a game of “I Spy” with the children.

Hide the Spy

Have the children sit in a circle and close their eyes. Pull one child from the group, and have him hide somewhere in the classroom. Have the rest of the children open their eyes and find the missing child. In today's lesson, they will learn about two spies who had to hide from soldiers.

SPYING OUT THE CLASSROOM, PART 1

Hide objects around the classroom to give clues about this week's passage (e.g. Number 2 (2:1, 23), cityscape of Jericho (2:1), house with roof made from tissue box (2:1), king's crown (2:2), gate (2:5), stalks of flax (2:6), picture of river (2:7), heart (2:9, 11, 24), rope (2:15), window (2:15, 18), picture of a mountain (2:16, 22), number 3 (2:16, 22), scarlet cord (2:18, 21)). As children enter class, direct them to search for the clues. Ask the “child spies” who found clues to present their findings to the class. Lead the class in a discussion of what the day's lesson might be about, based on what these spies discovered. Tell the children to listen carefully for the clues they found to be mentioned in the story.



SPYING OUT THE CLASSROOM, PART 2

Use the “clues” the children found in the first part of this activity as illustrations while you teach the lesson (the king's crown, gate, Stalks of flax, picture of river, heart, etc.).

SKIT

Have the children act out a skit of Rahab hiding the spies. Choose one girl to be Rahab, two boys to be the spies, and a handful of children to be the soldiers.



RAHAB SHOWS HER FAITH

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheets, stapler, crayons, and scissors or cutting board.

Directions: Before class, make double-sided copies of the two craft pages (so that they are both on one page). For younger students, cut the page in half along the dotted line beforehand. Older students may cut it out for themselves. Then they can put the pages together to create a book, and color and decorate it. After the craft is complete, walk through each page with the students.



*Rahab Shows Her Faith
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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AGES 6–8



FAITH

What are some things that we believe but cannot see? Examples might be that there is air all around us, that gravity is real, that a chair will hold us up, or that God exists. What do we call it when we believe in something we cannot see? Faith. In Hebrews 11, Rahab was commended for her faith for hiding the spies. She had not seen God or His works directly, but she knew about Him and trusted Him in faith.

GOOD NEWS

Have you ever received good news? Maybe you have heard that someone important to you was coming to visit. Or maybe you learned that you would be receiving a special gift. Discuss with the children various kinds of news that would make them excited. Explain that Israel received some great news; they heard that the people of Jericho greatly feared them because of what the Lord had done on their behalf in the past (Josh 2:8–11).



MELTING WITH FEAR

The spies returned with Rahab's encouraging report: the hearts of the Canaanites had melted with fear (Josh 2:23–24). To illustrate this, use a blow dryer to melt ice cubes in a glass bowl. Explain that this report would have been very encouraging to Joshua and the Israelites because it demonstrated that God had already begun to defeat their enemy.

ESCAPE PLAN

Make a window from black construction paper. Attach it to the wall or a bulletin board. Hang a red cord from the window when you talk about what Rahab's escape plan. Do you know what to do in an emergency? Have you talked with your parents about what to do in case of a fire? Show the children building plans of escape routes or participate in a fire drill as a class. Maybe the children participate in fire drills at school. Talk about the plan the spies had for Rahab when Israel would conquer the city. Since we know that God "wins," what plans do we have for the day when we will stand before our great God? (salvation).



RAHAB HIDES THE SPIES

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, tan construction paper, brown paper, crayons, and tape.

Directions: Color and cut out pictures from craft sheet. Form a cube shape building from brown paper and tape it to the tan construction paper. Form a fence for the roof from the brown paper and tape on top of the cube. Place figures in specified locations, as shown below.

*Rahab Shows Her Faith
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11

**INTRODUCE****A REPUTATION**

A reputation is an important thing, and it can stay with someone for a long time. Ask the children what kind of reputation they have. Are they known for being loving, kind, smart, etc.? Talk about God's reputation. During the time of our lesson today, God was known for being with His people and taking care of them. The people of Jericho had melted with fear because of what they had heard about God and what He had done for His people in the past.

TREASON

Discuss with the children what treason is. Treason is acting to overthrow your government or showing allegiance to a government other than your own. In today's lesson, children will learn about Rahab, who committed treason against her city, Jericho. Ask the children what the consequence for treason is. Our government looks at treason as even more serious than murder. It is very likely that if Rahab had been discovered, she would have been killed for protecting the spies. However, because she feared God, Rahab was willing to risk severe punishment in order to serve the God of the Israelites.

**ILLUSTRATE****FAITH IN ACTION**

Discuss Joshua's faith in God and how Joshua's use of the spies was not a lack of faith, but also not presuming on the Lord. Talk to the children about situations in life that require both faith and hard work (promotions at work, becoming class president, being a good athlete, etc.). Talk about how presuming on the Lord is not wise and the fact that true faith involves our interaction with God.

**APPLY****MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES**

Talk to the children about the choice Rahab made and the type of faith it required. She knew that she could possibly lose her life if she was found out, but she also knew that Jehovah, the God of the Israelites, would protect her. Have the children look at times in their lives when saying that they are Christians or evangelizing others could come with some type of consequence (not using bad words, not watching television shows or movies that everyone else is watching because it does not honor God, standing up for what you know to be true even though your friends don't agree with you, etc.).