

Discussion Guide: Hall of Fame of Faith – Part 11

September 14, 2003: “Hall of Fame of Faith” by Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor of College Park Church. Pastor Kimber continued his expository preaching of Hebrews 11 and the hall of fame of old testament saints who lived by faith and accomplished God’s purpose in their lives. Today’s sermon focused on Rahab in Hebrews 11:31 and corresponding passages in Joshua 2 and James 2:25.

Though Rahab was a pagan Canaanite woman, she had heard the many stories from travelers through the region about the mighty acts of the God of Israel, and had believed the stories that she heard about Him: how he parted the Red Sea and had destroyed two other mighty kings, Sihon and Og. When the two spies were sent by Joshua to gather a report from Jericho, Rahab brought them into her home (perhaps an Inn), told them how the king and his men were afraid of Israel, hid them from the king’s men, and gave them a safe route back to their camp. She did all of this in faith, believing that the God of Israel would have mercy on her and her family and save them when Jericho was overtaken by Israel.

However, believing that Jericho would fall went against logic. Jericho was the most fortified city of its day. Two enormous walls encircled the city, guarding it from outside attackers. But Rahab answered God’s call on her heart to believe in Him through the stories she had heard and the message sent to her by the Israeli spies. Rahab chose to disregard the circumstantial evidence that would lead her otherwise.

In Joshua 6:17-25 we learn that Rahab and her family were spared and took up residence among the Israelites. In Matthew 1:5 we read that Rahab was the mother of Boaz. If, as many Bible scholars believe, this is that same woman, what a story of continuing faith as she became a part of the family of those in the lineage of Jesus, and undoubtedly had a positive influence on the life of Boaz, whose story is recorded in the book of Ruth.

By the way, did you know that the name Jesus, is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua? It was originally Hoshea (Numbers 13:8, 16), but changed by Moses into Jehoshua (Numbers 13:16; 1Chronicles 7:27), or Joshua. After the Exile it assumed the form Jeshua, hence the Greek form Jesus. It was given to our Lord to denote the object of his mission, to save (Matthew 1:21).” (Source: Easton’s Bible Dictionary).

Discussion Guide

As you begin your discussion, pray for the Holy Spirit’s enlightenment of the scriptures as you read Hebrews 11:31 and Joshua 2:1-24, 6:17-25 and Matthew 1:5.

1. How does the story of Rahab’s life exemplify the definition of faith as described in Hebrews 11:1 and 6?
2. What are the similarities of the story of Noah, and the story of Rahab in light of Proverbs 3:5-6?

3. Give an example of a time in your life when you believed in a promise of God, even when you could not see how it was going to happen, and your own understanding told you not to.
4. Pastor pointed out how Rahab's concern for her family was evidence of true conversion in that "true faith propagates itself." How has your conversion been evidenced by a true concern for others' welfare? In the past? Recently?
5. The story of Rahab also gives evidence to the fact that God is **FOR** those who believe in Him and **AGAINST** those who refuse to be persuaded toward belief in God. Give an example of a time when you were tempted to, or in fact, refused to be persuaded toward believing in and acting in accordance with God's word.
6. What are some similarities between the salvation of the nation of Israel in Egypt, Rahab's salvation in Jericho, and the salvation we receive from Christ?
7. Clearly Rahab heard the stories of God and her heart believed and yearned to see God at work and know His salvation personally. Are you hearing from God? Is he speaking to you? Are you yearning in your heart to know more of Him and His salvation? Describe what that's like.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Hebrews 12:1 (NIV)