

Series: STRONG: Four Forgotten Truths about God's People from the Book of Joshua; *Sermon:* **You Have to Take a Risk**
Delivered by Josh Moody, senior pastor, on January 19, 2020

Bible text explored: Joshua 2:1-24

¹And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. ²And it was told to the king of Jericho, "Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." ³Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land." ⁴But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, "True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from." ⁵And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." ⁶But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

⁸Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof ⁹and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. ¹⁰For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. ¹¹And 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. ¹²Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a sure sign ¹³that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." ¹⁴And the men said to her, "Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."

¹⁵Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall. ¹⁶And she said to them, "Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way." ¹⁷The men said to her, "We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear. ¹⁸Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household. ¹⁹Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head. ²⁰But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear." ²¹And she said, "According to your words, so be it." Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²²They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing. ²³Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them. ²⁴And they said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melted away because of us.”

[ESV]

Review and application:

1. What (vv. 1-4a) was the first hideout for Joshua’s two-man reconnaissance team on entering the walled city of Jericho?
2. What (vv. 4b-7) was the deceptive message that this prostitute told the authorities?
By what risky action had she concealed them?
3. What did Rahab tell the spies (vv.8-11a) about what Jericho’s residents knew about the Israelites approach?
(See *Exod. 14:21-28* and *Num. 21:21-35*.)
What did she share about how it had affected their morale?
(See the spies’ report to Joshua in v. 24.)
4. What further conclusion (vv.11b-14) had Rahab drawn about their God as compared to “local deities”?
What had Rahab grasped about God’s covenant favor toward his people (as implied by her and the spies’ references to “dealing kindly”) that motivated her to protect them?
Jesus’ human ancestry is tied (*Matt. 1:5*) to Rahab. What does this tell us about God’s readiness to fully forgive the sins of all who turn to him in faith?
5. What made reliance by the rest of the Canaanites’ on the protection of Jericho’s walls risky?
What was the ultimate outcome for them?
How does ignoring an “under-preached doctrine” make many today willing to take the risk of destruction?
6. What risks had the spies taken to provide intelligence for their commander?
Reading the Book of Joshua “through the lens of the Book of Acts,” what discomforts do we face in bearing a gospel witness to everyone everywhere?
But what is God’s promise to those who accept his mission?
7. The scarlet cord to be hung from Rahab’s window (vv.5-21) identified the refuge location for her family. But might it also, like sprinkling the blood of the Passover lamb (*Exod. 12:13, 22-23*), have been a symbol of the atonement of Christ?