



Rahab's Confession

Joshua 2:8-13; 6:16-17

And Rahab 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. 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 (Joshua 2:9, 11—ESV).

As Christians, we know from our experience that no one can become a Christian without knowing some important truths that can only be found in the Bible and thinking about or wanting to know more about those truths. We also know that more than one person made it possible for us to learn these truths. In the experience of most of us, we had to think about these truths and what those truths might mean for us personally. At some point we came to believe in and trust these facts and confess that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior according to the Bible's teachings. If we did not learn this at the time, we discovered later that we sinners would never have become a Christian without the grace, mercy, and love of God working through the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit is still working within us and giving us the gifts and the fruit of the Spirit we need to live increasingly like the follower and friend of Jesus that He wants us to be.

By comparison, let's look at Rahab's confession. Rahab knew some facts from Israel's history and her own recent history. She knew the effect these facts had on the people living in the land promised to Israel. From these facts, she knew that the people of the land had lost their spirit or courage and lived in fear of the Hebrews. Knowing these facts but without fearing the Hebrews, we may understand Rahab's growing faith and courage as evidence of the Holy Spirit graciously working in her heart when she confessed to the Hebrew spies, "I know that the LORD has given you the land" (Joshua 2:9). Notice she did not say, "I think," or "I believe," she expressed her confident faith with the words, "***I know.***" Eventually, Christians come **to know truths** about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit that inspire them to live faithfully for God.

Even though Rahab's understanding was still limited, the Holy Spirit worked in Rahab and helped her know the truth and risk her life in the service of the LORD. The Holy Spirit gave her courage to save the Hebrew spies and the wisdom to ask the spies to save her and her family. I think we can truly believe that when the walls of Jericho fell the part of the wall that was her home did not fall because the LORD saved her and all those in her home in the wall as the spies promised her.

The Old and New Testaments teach the consequences of Rahab's faith in the LORD. First, in Matthew 1:5, we learn that Rahab became the mother of Boaz by Salmon and was therefore included in the ancestral line of David and Jesus. Second, in Hebrews 11:30-31, we read, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to

the spies.” When soldiers of Jericho searched for the spies, her faith led her to receive the spies peacefully and hide them. Third, in James 2:25-26, we read, “And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.” Her faith and the work of the Holy Spirit led her to do the necessary work to save the spies, her own life, and the lives of those in her family who came to her home for protection.

Rahab’s journey of faith was similar to the journey all those who follow Jesus take. She came to believe in the true God, the LORD, and she knew He was indeed the true God above and on earth. Her confession and actions indicated a decisive turning away from her people’s unbelief and toward the LORD, which was the beginning of a transforming life of faith. Therefore, she married a Hebrew, Salmon, and became part of the ancestral line of Jesus.

When we become Christians, we do not know where Jesus will lead us as we endeavor to faithfully follow Him and live as His friend, as He said to His disciples in John 15:14-16, “You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

Looking back as we mature as Christians, knowing we are sinners saved by the grace of God through faith, we can humbly and gratefully see some of the work that Jesus and the Holy Spirit have done in our lives, the work He prepared us to do, and some of what He achieved through us. We thank God knowing that His work in us in the past was only the beginning of His work in us. Jesus has more planned for us when we go to the eternal home that He prepares for us. In John 14:3, Jesus said, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” Praise the Name of Jesus!

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The Bible does not tell us everything we would like to know or answer every possible question, but the Bible, the Word of God written, is true. The Bible is true in all that it affirms in the original writings. We use translations that must be studied carefully, and we humbly recognize that our interpretations are not always as accurate as we might hope.

As teachers and students of the Bible, we try to learn, remember, and teach clearly what Scripture declares. We also try to identify honestly what Scripture implies, because the Bible would be huge if God tried to explain every event and describe all that happened between important events. For example, in John 21:25, we read, “Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the

books that would be written.” Finally, we try to humbly seek and learn all the Scripture reveals, and we try to leave unanswered what Scripture does not reveal rather than go beyond what the Bible teaches. The Bible warns in Revelation 22:18-19, “I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.”

Let’s think about how both the Old and New Testaments identify Rahab. Joshua 2:1, says the spies came to lodge in the house “of a prostitute whose name was Rahab.” The New Testament calls her: “Rahab the prostitute,” but that does not mean she never became a godly woman in a godly marriage. Likewise, identifying Matthew as a tax collector does not mean he continued to collect taxes as a follower of Jesus. Another example, in the Book of Joshua, without being explicitly told we can reasonably infer that the part of the wall of Jericho where Rahab lived did not fall down, which was another part of the miracle that God worked when the trumpets blew and the walls fell.