

Joshua: Courage for Battle

Embracing a Greater Kingdom- Session #2

Small Group Notes

Introduction:

Have you ever received help or direction from an unlikely source?

Consider a time when you had to act in faith in the past. What fruit have you seen in your life as a result of that season?

Who are people that you think of that had to act on faith in the past not knowing the outcome and yet we see it made a huge impact?

Context:

Joshua sent scouts so that he would know what to expect upon entering the land of Canaan in order to conquer it. Joshua was moving forward in the belief that God was going to provide for Israel, just as He had promised. If you remember, forty years prior, Joshua was one of the Israelites who scouted the land of Israel. He and Caleb returned with a favorable and faith-filled report, but the Israelites lacked the courage and faith to take it despite God's promises (Numbers 13-14). Yet here was an opportunity for them to either trust in God's plan or return to disobedience.

Discuss:

1. Read Joshua 2:1-7

- In the Kingdom of God, everyone has a seat at the table.

Explain: God directed them to the home of a woman who feared God and was willing to give her life to protect them and ensure that the Lord's will was done. Not only that, but here we also see the Lord using the most unlikely people to accomplish His will. While Rahab's act was treason against her people, she went even further by covering for the spies when asked about their location. While God does not endorse lying by any means, He was able to redeem her decision to lie in order to still receive the glory. Other characters in Scripture lied (Abraham about Sarah as his wife) and God was not pleased and yet He reveals His sovereignty in redeeming our failures.

Ask:

Think of a time in your life that you have been faced with a hard decision in order to be obedient to God. How did you respond?

Is there currently an area that you feel the Lord calling you to obedience, but you are experiencing fear or doubt? How do you need to respond to the Lord regarding this situation?

2. Read Joshua 2:8-11

- Rahab surrendered a familiar kingdom for a greater Kingdom.
- “Jesus didn’t come to take sides, He came to take over.” -Tony Evans

Explain: Despite Israel’s past failure and pattern of disobedience, God was continually faithful to His promises. Though we are often disobedient and fail Him, God is steadfast in His love, care, and leading of His people. The result that we learn in these verses impacted Rahab deeply as she stated how the entire country was in fear for them.

Ask:

How can we be encouraged by God’s work in the past? What are some specific events in your life that encourage you in the Lord?

What can be obstacles that we sometimes allow to stand in the way of accepting the Lord’s work in our lives?

3. Read Joshua 2:12-16

- Rahab surrendering a lesser kingdom for a greater Kingdom changed her family and future generations.

Explain: The spies recognized that protection through Rahab was a gift of God. They showed favor toward Rahab in her request, mirroring the grace and love that God had shown Israel. Rahab’s request with an identical form of words as in 1Sam 24:21 where Saul described God’s will for David and then, as here, requested David to spare his family. Show kindness is a key expression that also appears when Abraham’s servant requested from God direction to find a wife for Isaac (Gen 24:12).

Ask:

How is the way they acted an indication of the Lord's mercy? How did Rahab display faith toward the Lord in her actions (vv. 14-21)?

Where has the Lord shown you mercy through the actions of His people?

4. Read Joshua 2:17-21

- Our place in the Kingdom is solidified by the King.

Explain: The scarlet cord at the opening of her house with the family gathered inside is clearly symbolic of the Passover and its placement of blood on the door frames of the house in which the family was preserved from death (Ex 12:3-13). Soon Rahab would be joining them in similar actions that would bring about her salvation from Jericho's destruction.

Ask:

What other symbolism does the scarlet cord carry as you read this account and understand God's plan of redemption?

5. Read Joshua 2:22-24 and Hebrews 11:30-31

- The King's Kingdom is better, Romans 15:5-6

Explain: The spies' report is a summary of what Rahab said, using her words (v. 9). The spies here emphasized what God had done. Rahab, though not a leader like Joshua, was able to contribute to the success of Israel thus solidifying her place in the "hall of faith" and being a part of the genealogy of Jesus. Christians can learn to do the same wherever they are by confessing their faith and acting on it (Jms 2:25-26).

Ask:

Are there ways you have put limits on the ways you believe God can work? How does God's use of Rahab on behalf of Israel challenge you in this area?

What are some difficult circumstances in your life that present an opportunity to grow in your faith in God?