

RAHAB  
Joshua 2

Who is a hero to you?

For some people Lyndsey Lohan, Angelina Jolene, or Sandra Bullock are their heroes?  
For others Tiger Woods, Jack Nicolas or Arnold Palmer?  
How about LaBron James, Michael Jordan, Larry Bird or even Magic Johnson?  
Or what about Bret Farve or Joe Mauer, Fran Tarkinton or Harmon Killebrew?

For some people these men and women heroes but not necessarily good role models.  
They become heroes because of how they look or how popular they are  
or because of something they have done.

Does anyone recognize the name Armando Galarraga?  
Galarraga is a pitcher for the Detroit Tigers  
and last week he was "cheated" out of a perfect game.  
He was denied of his claim to fame because of a bad call made by the umpire.

Galarraga had retired the first 26 batters  
when with two out in the ninth, the 27<sup>th</sup> batter hit a routine groundball  
to the first baseman who picked up the ball and tossed it Galarraga covering first base.

Three outs, end of inning, end of game, a perfect game-NOT,  
not according to umpire  
He called the runner safe.

Galarraga's response.  
Well, there was no string of swear words, no screaming foul, no spiting in the umpire's face,  
no stomping around kicking dust, and no slamming his hat into the ground.

He just smiled, a smile of disbelief, spoke a comment of conciliation,  
and acted on his attitude of, let's get back to work, play ball.

I don't know about you but to me that example of respect and restraint is refreshing.  
He didn't make the record book but in my book he would be someone to look up to, a hero.

How do you define a hero?  
Well in Vacation Bible School last week we learned that heroes,  
can be unlikely, unsung, or even unnamed heroes.

We learned that heroes do the unexpected,  
take action, step out in faith, save the day, and stand for truth.

By that definition I'd like to introduce you to another unlikely,  
a very unlikely Bible Hero, unlikely and imperfect for a number of reasons.

Her name is Rahab the prostitute.  
Prostitution was detestable in the sight of the Lord but Rahab changed.

She changed from a harlot to become a heroine of faith.  
She was moved from the halls of shame to the wall of fame.

She is listed with the patron saints of faith in the Hebrews 11.  
Hebrews 11.31 says, **“By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.”**

James 2.24-25 tells us that she is actually counted as righteous,  
**“You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent off in a different direction.”**

And she is greatly rewarded for her act of faith.  
Check Matthew 1.5-6, we find her in the lineage of Jesus and King David.  
She is King David’s great, great grandmother.

Of course she has to have a baby to be a grandmother  
and she does that by her husband Salmon,  
who just happened to be one of the spies mentioned in our Scripture today.  
God is the matchmaker of matchmakers.

In this transformation Rahab found a new God, a new life, a new husband, and a new family.  
Their baby boy was named Boaz.  
We’ll talk about him more next month.

As for Rahab herself, her story has a happy ending.  
Let’s see what we can learn from it.

### **RAHAB WAS A CALL GIRL CALLED AND CHOSEN BY GOD**

Joshua 2.1, **“Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. “Go, look over the land, he said, especially Jericho. So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab.”**

After wandering 40 years in the wilderness,  
independent of the Egyptians but dependent on God’s provision and protection,  
Moses brought the nation to the borders of the promise land.

He dies and Joshua is appointed his successor.  
God gives Joshua his mission and his marching orders,  
which were basically to claim and conquer the promised land.

First floating and flooding in their way is the River Jordan,  
which at that time of the year was at it’s greatest depth, flowing fast and furious.  
Pastor Eldon is going to tell you how they dealt with that next week.

And after the river flowing in their way,  
standing in their way was the great fortified walled city Jericho,

hence the need for a little recon.

And what better place to do this reconnaissance work?

Rahab's house.

Her home was situated in the 15 feet between two towering walls.

The inner wall was 12 feet thick and the outer wall, 6 feet thick,

30 feet in the air, high enough to look over the whole city and the area surrounding Jericho.

And her place, because of the nature of her work,  
was a place where people with important information  
just might frequent from time to time.

Now before we leave this point of a CALL GIRL being called by God.

I want to contrast Rahab with Israel's new favorite son, Joshua.

I think it tells us something about our God.

Joshua had prestige, power, and obviously supported the party line.

He and Caleb were the gutsy spies who 40 years earlier went into the promised land,  
came back and said, "We can take her."

But their plan was vetoed.

Joshua became Moses' right hand man and successor.

In the wilderness he had experienced God's protection and provision for forty years.

He was well trained and taught the things of God and groomed for leadership.

He was charismatic and full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid hands on him.

Joshua walked and talked with God.

God told him three times in chapter 1 not to be afraid, but to be strong and courageous.

God assured Joshua he would be with him.

As Pastor Eldon pointed out last week,

God had even given Joshua the law with instructions  
to read, think about, talk about, and do what it said.

And as a soldier and leader, Joshua, the golden boy of Israel had a solid reputation.

When we first hear the name Rahab, we first hear of her sordid reputation,  
not solid but sordid.

That certainly did not bode well for her as a candidate for a heroine.

Besides being a prostitute,

which is mentioned a number of times (certainly for emphasis)

Rahab was a foreigner, an Amorite.

The Israelites hated foreigners

and between the Hebrews and the Amorites there was bad blood, a lot of bad blood.

Rahab as an Amorite, was not only a woman of ill repute, but an idol worshipper as well.

Her name begins with RA, the name of an Egyptian God

and we know the Amorite's worshipped pagan gods.

She might have had some wealth because of her professions,  
but she wouldn't have had much power or prestige.

And even though the culture had very permissive attitude towards prostitution,  
she was used and abused, looked down upon,  
rejected, condemned and cast off by the culture.

She wouldn't have had all the teaching and training or the experiences of faith like Joshua.  
And she wasn't given the law to read about, talk about, think about, or do.

Now doesn't that make her conversion all the more inspiring  
and for some of us, well, doesn't it give us a bit more hope?

### **THIS CALL GIRL WAS NOT ONLY CHOSEN, SHE WAS CONVERTED**

We read in verses 2-7 that Jericho's JBI,  
Jericho's Bureau of Investigation knew the spies were in town.

The JBI confronts Rahab who not only hides but lies for the spies as well.  
She basically said they went that-a-way and pointed to the hills.

Anyway after the JBI left she visits the spies on the roof and says,  
Verses 9-11, **"I know that the Lord has given this land to you  
and that a great fear of you has fallen on us,  
so that all who are living in this country are melting in fear because of you.**

**We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea  
for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og,  
the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, who you completely destroyed .  
When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you,  
for the Lord you God is God in heaven above and on the earth below."**

She spoke with great insight didn't she?  
It is obvious that fear is holding the city and it's citizens captive.

Four times in these three verse fear is mentioned.

**"a great fear of you has fallen on us..."**

**"living in this country are melting in fear because of you..."**

**"when we heard it our hearts melted (sank or lost heart) because of you..."**

**"everyone's courage failed because of you (the wind got knocked out of our sails)..."**

Rahab met her fear with faith, faith in the great I AM.  
She no longer found sanctuary behind the walls of Jericho,  
she found safety and sanctuary in the arms of God.

Remember she had no prior teaching or training,  
no Bible or Bible Studies, no commentaries, no Sunday School or caring SS teacher,  
no Vacation Bible School, no camps, confirmation, or church experience,  
without any personal experience or prior knowledge,

only upon some hearsay plus the movement of the Holy Spirit,  
she sought safety and security in the arms of God.

The Spirit of God had penetrated the walls of her heart.  
Fear had knocked on her door, faith answered,  
and she would find favor with God  
as she spoke and acted with greater faith  
than many of the great leaders of Israel or even many of us today.

Incredible story isn't it? We're not done.

### **RAHAB WAS A CALL GIRL WITH GREAT COURAGE AND COMPASSION**

Remember a hero does the unexpected, takes action, steps out in faith, and stands for truth.  
And Rahab was a hero to her family too because she came to their rescue,  
She negotiates with the spies on their behalf,

**Verses 12-13, "... please swear to me by the Lord**

**that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you.**

**Give me a sure sign that you will spare the lives of my father and mother,**

**my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death."**

You know when you think about it, when we experience the saving faith in Christ ourselves,  
God gives us a deep and abiding compassion for the saving faith of our family and friends.  
In this story Rahab models and expresses that for us very well.

So who is or has been a hero to you? Thank God for them.

And maybe as important is the question, who have or who can you be a hero to?  
Remember the past doesn't need to determine the future, you can change, Rahab did.

If God isn't real to you or you haven't experienced his love,  
Seek him with all your heart and he promises to be found.  
And like Rahab trust what you know, and do what you know to do.

Oh, what about the scarlet cord in the window.

I'm glad you asked.

Let's try to tie up that loose end.

Verse 21, **"...So she sent them on their way and they departed.**

**And she tied the scarlet cord in the window."**

The cord is an expression of faith and a symbol of hope.

The word for cord actually has the same meaning for the word hope used in I Timothy 4.9-10,  
"...we have put our hope in the living, who is the Savior of all men,  
and especially of those who believe."

Well we know Rahab believed.

If you believe stand and we'll make a statement of faith as we sing Trust and Obey.

