

October 5, 2008
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
Hebrews 11:31

“Jesus Christ is Infinitely Better!”
Examples of Faith, Part Thirteen: Rahab the Harlot

- I. Jesus Christ: Infinitely Better in His **PERSON** (1-7)
- II. Jesus Christ: Infinitely Better in His **WORK** (8:1-10:18)
- III. **Christianity: An Infinitely Better WALK OF FAITH (10:19-13:24)**
 - A. The Confidence of Faith (10:19-39)
 - B. **The Examples of Faith (11)**
 - 1. Definition (Description) of Faith (11:1-3): **a) Recognizing** the invisible God; **b) Responding** obediently to God’s spoken word; **c) Receiving** God’s gracious approval
 - 2. Examples of Faith (11:4-40)
 - a. Abel (v. 4) – Faith Worshiping
 - b. Enoch (v. 5-6) – Faith Walking
 - c. Noah (v. 7) – Faith Working
 - d. Abraham and Sarah – Faith Waiting
 - e. Isaac – Faith Waiting
 - f. Jacob – Faith Waiting
 - g. Joseph – Faith Waiting
 - h. Moses’ Parents – Faith Watching (v. 23)
 - i. Moses – Faith Warring (v. 24-29)
 - j. Joshua – Faith Winning (v. 30)
 - k. Rahab – Faith _____ (v. 31)**

Discussion Questions:

1. In Heb. 11:31 the author specifically points out that Rahab was a HARLOT who had faith. Why did he include the fact that she was a harlot? Was this simply to single her out from all the other Rahabs in history? What else could he have been teaching them about genuine saving faith?
2. Given Rahab's background, would she have been the first person you thought of witnessing to in Jericho? What does Rom. 1:16-17 say about the Gospel message? To whom should we proclaim this message? What keeps us from reaching the "Rahabs" of our culture?
3. Critics often point to Rahab as an example of a contradiction in the Bible: she lied, yet she was commended by God. Many have postulated that she was following a higher law/ethic when she faced the dilemma of telling the truth or protecting people's lives. These people would say that there are times when it is appropriate to lie when we have to do so to obey a higher moral law. Read Joshua 2, Joshua 6, Hebrews 11:31, and James 2:25. What do these passages say about what Rahab did by faith? What do these passages NOT SAY that she did by faith?
4. T. Manton said, "*I observe there was a mixture of infirmity in this act, an officious lie, which cannot be excused, though God in mercy pardoned it. This is not for our imitation, yet it is for our instruction; and it shows us this, that faith in the beginning hath many weaknesses. Those that have faith do not altogether act out of faith, but there is somewhat of the flesh mingled with that of the spirit. But this is passed by out of God's indulgence; He accepteth us notwithstanding our sins before faith, and notwithstanding our weaknesses in believing. Before faith she was a harlot; in believing she makes a lie. God doth reward the good of our actions and pardon the evil of them, not to encourage us in sinning, but to raise our love to Him who forgives us so great a debt, receives us graciously, and pardons our manifold weaknesses.*" What is your response to that quote? Can you identify with Rahab in believing yet resorting to old practices at times? What does this say to you about God's grace? Does this give us an excuse for sin?
5. Why doesn't God point out the negative fact that Rahab lied when He comments positively about her faith in Heb. 11:31 and James 2:25? What do Ps. 130:3 and 1 Pet. 4:8 have to do with this? What can we learn from these passages about dealing with the weaknesses (sins) of other people? How is this different from the media (especially in the way they handle people running for public office)?
6. How is Rahab an example of our three-fold definition of faith? How did she recognize the invisible God (Joshua 2:8ff)? How radical was her obedience? How gracious was God's approval (Mt. 1:5)?
7. What was the significance of the "scarlet cord" that Rahab placed in her window (Joshua 2:17ff; Is. 1:18)? Note: the word "cord" can also be translated "hope." What is the possible play on words here?
8. When Rahab came to saving faith whom did she immediately think of to protect from God's coming judgment (Joshua 2:12-14)? How foolish might Rahab have appeared to them over the next few days while Israel prepared for and then marched around the city? Did that stop her from warning them and bringing them into her home for safety? What are we doing to reach our families with the Gospel? Should we be hindered by their thinking that we are foolish?
9. What is the most significant lesson you have learned from Rahab's example of faith? What can you do this week to practice this in your life?

[Answer to blank: **Winning**]