

Week One – Study Notes for Zoom Bible Study



- Did you ever watch a movie and think, “I would have chosen someone different for that part”?
 - We are not casting agents for a movie, and we are not God.
 - He sees all things, knows all things, and is working behind the scenes for our good.
 - He often chooses people we would not pick to fulfill His redemptive purposes in the world – including Rahab.
 - If God had not written Rahab into the script of history, we would not know anything about her.
 - She offers us a powerful picture of the redemption Christ offers us.
- God forbade those who had seen Him part the Red Sea from entering the Promised Land.
 - They spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness.
 - As we open to Joshua¹, we find that God’s people are preparing to enter the Promised Land.
- The Hebrew word in the Old Testament translated “courage” is often tied to the concept of strength.
 - If someone faces a challenge and loses courage, she is going to feel weak and inadequate.
 - If a person has courage, she will be strengthened and tackle whatever is before her with confidence.
- Imagine you are Joshua, tasked with leading millions of people into a foreign land. What might you be feeling? How would it help you to have reminders that God was with you?
- God called Joshua to a task that was bigger than Joshua could handle in his own strength.
 - There were many battles ahead.
 - Joshua would need to overcome fierce enemies in the Promised Land.
 - He was prone to discouragement and fear in the face of challenges.
- It is likely that Joshua felt unequipped to cross the Jordan River with 12 tribes of people.
 - To go over to Canaan and tackle Jericho was a challenge!
 - This was a tough assignment.
 - He chose to step out in faith!
- Many times, we would not choose the tasks that God assigns to us.
 - God asks us to trust Him.
 - He will help us be strong and courageous.
- We find clues about Rahab’s background scattered throughout Scriptures.
 - Jericho, where Rahab lived, was an important city in Canaan.

- The Canaanites worshiped many gods.
 - They had shrines, temples, and idols across the land of Canaan.
 - Their religious practices included:
 - Ritual prostitution
 - Child sacrifices
 - Rahab was a part of that culture.
 - God chose to write her into His story.
- Rahab and the Ninevites reveal the pattern of God.
 - Even when an entire culture has gone off the spiritual deep end, and the wickedness is exceeding:
 - God desires for those who are separated from Him by sin to repent and return to Him.
- During the 400 years while the Israelites were in slavery, God was giving the Canaanites an opportunity to repent.
 - He extended grace and mercy to this pagan while His people were suffering in Egypt.
- How did God show patience toward you before you became a Christian?
- Some commentaries and ancient scholars try to say Rahab was an innkeeper.
 - Rahab's profession is also listed twice in the New Testament.
 - It is possible Rahab was an innkeeper. Some scholars say that an innkeeper and a prostitute were considered one in the same in ancient cities.
- From a human standpoint, Rahab was not the type of person we could have chosen to help the spies.
 - Yet..... God chose to use her in the script of His story.
 - Moses was a murderer.
 - Gideon was a coward.
 - David committed adultery.
 - Peter was hot-tempered.
- We might consider all of these to be inadequate and unsuitable for the job God had planned.
 - Over and over throughout the Scriptures, God chose to use unexpected people to accomplish His purposes.
- Rahab was a prostitute.
 - She may or may not have chosen this profession.
 - She may have been used and abused by someone and cast aside.
 - This may have been only way of survival for her.
 - Either way, God and His Grace and mercy looked down from heaven and chose to use her in His plan for the defeat of Jericho.

- Shame is often a cycle.
 - Something happens in our lives and causes pain.
 - The pain cries out for relief.
 - It moves to find a way to cope.
 - It could be several things, from shopping, eating, drugs, depression, total shut down, etc.
 - We need to run to God!
- The cycle continues.
 - Good news, if we belong to Jesus, we do not have to be stuck endlessly on this traffic circle of shame.
 - We have exit ramps with God.
- When the first pain comes, turn to God for help.
 - Tell Him your pain and emotions.
 - He will be with you IN your suffering.
 - He is near the brokenhearted
 - He loves you and will help you.
- If you are past these decisions and you have turned the wrong way, there is still an exit ramp to God.
 - Repentance-Gods grace will cleanse you.
- God is present and will rescue you.
 - He rescued Rahab, he will rescue anyone and everyone that turns to Him for help.
- When shame starts to rise up in your heart, hold onto these truths.
 - Choose to believe again that Christ's sacrifice is enough.
 - Worship instead of Wallowing
- From our perspective, Rahab was not only an unlikely person to be used by God, but she was also an unlikely candidate for the Grace of God.
 - We might consider her to be one of the last people on earth to choose for faith, but Rahab had heard stories of how God had rescued and provided for His people and she believed them. That is FAITH!
- God uses His Word to illuminate our true condition.
 - None of us deserve GRACE.
 - Because of God's love and mercy, which He showed by sending His Son to die for us, we can be made alive!
- Through His Word, God declares that He can:
 - Redeem your failures.
 - Forgive your sins.
 - Restore what is broken.
 - Make beautiful things out of our messes.
- The thread of redemption begins with a story that we would not have written.