

CORE COMPETENCIES

Core Beliefs

- **Trinity**
"I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

Core Practices

- Worship
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

Welcome (or welcome back) to the Engage! I trust God has been meeting you in the pages of His Word and that you're already sensing His encouragement to your heart—just as He encouraged Joshua. This week we encounter one of the most intriguing people in all of Scripture—Rahab, the prostitute. If you've ever wondered whether God could or would use a "very unlikely" person, then look no further than this woman! I'd encourage you to learn as much as you can about her, how God used her life and faith, and how that can encourage "unlikely" people like you and me, too. I pray that your heart will be stirred and your vision of who God is will be expanded, even this week!

Constantly amazed,

Richard Gotthardt, Pastor of Spiritual Formation

Reading Plan

Because we are studying through the book of Joshua in just nine weeks, by necessity we are not looking in depth at each chapter. Your study time and questions will cover the 13 chapters corresponding to the message series. It is optimum for study and understanding to be familiar with the entire book of Joshua. Therefore, we are offering a reading plan that will enable you to read through the entire book of Joshua during these 9 weeks. This is simply a suggested reading plan. Feel free to use this one or devise your own! In fact, if you are very ambitious, perhaps you could commit to the additional reading of the entire book every week—along with your reading and studying of the specific chapters assigned to that week!

| Week | Sermon Date | Study Chapters | Reading Assignment |
|------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | June 26 | Joshua 1 | Joshua 1 |
| 2 | July 3 | Joshua 2 | Joshua 2 and 3 |
| 3 | July 10 | Joshua 3 and 4 | Joshua 4 and 5 |
| 4 | July 17 | Joshua 5 and 6 | Joshua 6, 7, and 8 |
| 5 | July 24 | Joshua 7 and 8 | Joshua 9, 10, 11, and 12 |
| 6 | July 31 | Joshua 10 and 11 | Joshua 13, 14, and 15 |
| 7 | August 7 | Joshua 14 | Joshua 16, 17, and 18 |
| 8 | August 14 | Joshua 23 | Joshua 19, 20, and 21 |
| 9 | August 21 | Joshua 24 | Joshua 22, 23, and 24 |

Review from last week's study in Joshua 1

Last week we saw that when God gives us a clear and definite assignment, He also promises to supply what is necessary to complete that task. From us, He requires that we be strong and courageous in obedience to His calling. I pray that as you have been faithful to spend time with God in His Word, that your strength and courage will be multiplied in the assignments that He has given to you, and that you will experience His success.

Day 1 (Deuteronomy 34, Joshua 1 and 2)

- If you have not already, read the **introduction to our study** on the book of Joshua (included in last week's Engage or available on the web site version of last week's study guide.)
- Pray first!

Before we begin to study the details of Joshua 2, we are going to spend our time today getting the "lay of the land."

Read through the *three chapters listed above*, marking every reference to a **geographical** location. One way you may want to do this is to simply underline any geographical references with a brown or green colored pencil.

Because locations are important in a historical or biographical book of the Bible, the habit of consistently marking and locating each reference is very useful for putting yourself into context geographically. As you mark these references, refer to the map at the back of this study guide and locate each geographical site.

Day 2 (Joshua 2)

Pray first!

Read one time slowly through the second chapter of Joshua to get the general context of *who, what, where, when, why, and how*. Also be aware of the **30 Core Competencies** listed on the side of this study guide, and watch for any that you see exemplified in this chapter.

Today we will read through the second chapter of Joshua several times, looking for and marking some key words and their related synonyms or pronouns. A few are words that you marked last week and some are new this week. The marking of these words will help you to make/add to lists in a future assignment and to clearly see the main details of this chapter. Mark with distinctive colors or symbols the following words in Joshua two (remember to put these on your personal bookmark with their appropriate marking):

LORD (God)- Joshua – Rahab – Heard - the Land

Every reference to a geographical location (you should have already done this on Day 1)

Every reference to time, or any words such as then or after if they indicate an important sequence in events

Before you stop for the day, what is your **first impression** of this chapter?

What are your **thoughts and feelings** about the main character of this chapter, *Rahab*?

What do you believe is the **main thing** that God is trying to convey.

Day 3 – (Joshua 2)

Pray first!

Today we will be using the marking that you did yesterday to add to or begin lists regarding some key words in chapter two. Read once more straight through the chapter before you begin your lists.

Note all the times that you marked **LORD** or any related pronouns. As you read through these verses, what do you discover about **God's character and His ways** from this chapter? **Record** all these details on the list you began last week from chapter 1.

Do the same thing with your markings of **Joshua**.

If you did not start lists as a part of last week's *Engage*, you may want to go back and complete Day 1, 2, and 3 from last week or simply begin your lists with the information from chapter 2. Remember that each list should be on separate sheets of paper, which will allow you to add to them as we continue through the book of Joshua.

In Joshua chapter two, Rahab is definitely a main character. However, she will only appear once more in the book of Joshua. Begin a list on **Rahab** and the things that we learn about her from this chapter. Tomorrow we will look at some additional passages of scripture regarding Rahab and will add to our list.

You marked the word "**heard**" as a key word yesterday. Observe below *what was heard, by whom, and the effect that came from the hearing*.

When you study the Scriptures, one of the most important things for you to see is what that text reveals about God. As you review your list about God's character and His ways, think about how such knowledge might manifest itself in your daily life. Allow God to speak to your mind, your heart and your life and show you how He would like you to respond to that which He has revealed to you.

Day 4 – (Joshua 6:22-25, Hebrews 11:31, James 2:25, Matthew 1:1-16)

Pray first!

Today we will see what more we can learn about Rahab. **Look up** the verses listed above, **read** them within their context, and then **add the truths** you observe to the list you began yesterday on Rahab.

Now take all the information you have learned about Rahab and consider why God has told us about her. What might He want us to learn from Rahab's life—about His dealings with her and her response to what she hears and knows?

What lessons and principles from Rahab's life can you apply to your life?

Record how you would "title" Joshua 2, or a summary statement that expresses the theme in your Bible. This will be an invaluable tool for remembering what is contained in the various chapters of the book.

Day 5 - Pray first!

Today we will seek to make some personal application of the truth that God has revealed to you as it regards this week's core competency, the belief in the **Trinity**. Our creed states, *"I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."*

Review the truths that Rahab believed about God.

Were these **"beliefs"** simply a mental understanding? **Why** did you answer that way?

Specify the **difference** this belief made in the life of Rahab? Did it **change** the course of her life? Did it **affect** the course of history?

Read the quotes below. Allow the truths, that God has revealed to your mind and heart this week, to be applied by the Holy Spirit to your very life!

Bullet-Proof Vests

Bob Vernon, formerly with the Los Angeles Police Department, tells of how the Department would test bullet-proof vests—and demonstrate to rookie officers their value—by placing them on mannequins and then shooting round after round at them. They'd then check to see if any of the rounds penetrated the vests. Invariably the vests would pass the test with flying colors. Vernon would then turn to the rookie officers and ask, "So who wants to wear it now instead of the mannequin?"

Source unknown

Rope

You never know how much you really believe anything until its truth or falsehood becomes a matter of life and death. It is easy to say you believe a rope to be strong as long as you are merely using it to cord a box. But suppose you had to hang by that rope over a precipice. Wouldn't you then first discover how much you really trusted it?

C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* ¹

Begin today to **memorize Joshua 2:11**. What is happening in your life today that if you truly believed as Rahab believed that "the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below," would change the course of your life? See if God can't use this verse to cause you to be strong and courageous and to have success wherever you go!

Joshua in Context

Joshua 2:1-24

¹Galaxie Software. (2002; 2002). *10,000 Sermon Illustrations*. Biblical Studies Press.

Chapter 2 of Joshua is a distinct literary unit. Chapter one is an introduction and sets the scene for the crossing of Jordan. Joshua will lead the people across the Jordan in Chapter 3. However, the setting for Chapter 2 is based out of Shittim (2:1, cf. 3:1) and the task is spying on Jericho.

¹ Then 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 and stayed there.

- ◆ Joshua tells them "especially Jericho" because it is the major city in the land. Jericho is one of the earliest city known to scholarship, being settled as early as 8000 B.C. It is also the lowest town on the globe resting some 750 feet below sea level.
- ◆ Sending out spies appears to be a common practice in Israelite war (Numbers 13-14, Judges 1).
- ◆ In order to avoid suspicion, the men entered a house of a prostitute. This would have been a place where many men would enter, so it would not gain them any undue attentions.
- ◆ The text is interesting because you would expect it to say that they "entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and slept with her." However, it does not say that. It only says they stayed there.

² The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." ³ So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land."

- ◆ One would expect a prostitute to take whatever course of action was most profitable to her. However, Rahab gives her loyalty to two poor, foreign spies rather than the King of Jericho.

⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. ⁵ At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them." ⁶ (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.)

⁷ So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut. ⁸ Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof ⁹ and said to them, "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 live in this country are melting in fear because of you. ¹⁰ 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, whom you completely destroyed. ¹¹ When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

- ◆ This confession of all that God had done in the Exodus of rescuing his people from slavery is probably referenced from the central OT text of Deuteronomy 6 where the children of Israel are told to recount the story of the Exodus to their children.
- ◆ Rahab follows in the footsteps of Abraham and Ruth in renouncing her country of origin for Israel and her God, Yahweh (the LORD).

¹² Now then, 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 ¹³ 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." ¹⁴ "Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land."

- ♦ Rahab's actions of hiding the spies and, in a sense, trusting in the LORD won her accolades throughout Old Testament history. Even the New Testament writers hold her up as an example of faithfulness (Hebrews 11:31 ; James 2:25). In the James passage, she is mentioned alongside Abraham as an example of a faith that works. She is also included in Matthew's geneology of Jesus (Matthew 1:5).

¹⁵ So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. ¹⁶ Now she had said to them, "Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way."

- ♦ Note that Rahab does not only give them a clandestine way of escaping from her house, but she also tells them how to escape the city. The escape route would have been in the opposite direction of where the Jericho soldiers would have looked.

¹⁷ The men said to her, "This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us ¹⁸ unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house. ¹⁹ If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him. ²⁰ But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear." ²¹ "Agreed," she replied. "Let it be as you say." So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

- ♦ The spies make a covenant with Rahab. Notice there are stipulations that Rahab is responsible for in order for the covenant to remain valid. She is responsible for getting her family into the house and tying the cord.

²² When they left, they went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them. ²³ Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them. ²⁴ They said to Joshua, "The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us."

- ♦ The spies' report back at the camp underscores the point that the Israelites had already defeated the Canaanites on a spiritual level because it demonstrated that the LORD was with them.
- ♦ The irony of this account is that Israel's courage to carry out the attack on Jericho and Canaan came not from the mouth of an Israelite prophet, but from a Canaanite prostitute. It were her words that assured the spies, and Joshua, that the LORD had indeed given the land to them and would win the battle for them.

Occupying the Land

