

Remnant Life Church
May 15, 2016
Sunday School Stories Retold:
Jericho – Before and After
Joshua 7:2-12;19-26

Rahab:

- Rahab figures prominently in a story of military conquest
- Perhaps one of the oddest accounts in the scripture given the nature of her life
 - She is not an Israelite but a Canaanite idol worshipper
 - + She was the wrong race
 - + The wrong religion
 - + Certainly not the type of person you would want to add to the family
 - And yet that is exactly what happened
- Now consider Achan
 - An Israelite
 - A member of the tribe of Judah (the same lineage as David, Solomon, and Jesus)
 - + The right credentials
 - + Living with the right people
 - + Headed in the right direction
 - Until his greed made him an outcast and cost him everything

Read – Joshua 7:2-12

1. The Israelites had just come off the greatest upset victory ever until David beats Goliath
2. They had seen the mighty hand of God on their side – why?
 - Because of Joshua's faith, obedience, and patience.
3. Now they have the next obstacle as they worked their way into the promised land
4. Ai –
 - Joshua makes his first mistake
 - + He sent spies even though God had already told him that the entire land was theirs
 - + The spies to Jericho had been for a very specific purpose
 - + Not to get information but to save Rahab and her family
 - But he sends them to Ai
 - + Their report: don't even send the whole army
 - + They are nothing compared to what we just defeated
 - They are routed and 36 men are killed (7:4-5)
 - Joshua reverted back to a general instead of staying an obedient servant of God
 - + New things of God in our lives means leaving the old behind
5. Joshua cries out to God (in current terms and perspective)
 - We just went in and took Washington, DC representing the most powerful military force on the face of the planet
 - And today we got torn up by Dillsburg!

6. Joshua's prayer, (7:7-9) and in fact this entire event, parallels Moses' prayer in Ex 32
 - The sin of the people; golden calf; reverting back to the old
 - What will the other nations think?
 7. God tells him that sin is in the camp (7:11)
 8. Achan took some things when God had said that none of the spoils were to be kept
 9. Achan disobeyed and not only the country suffered but he and his family were wiped out
- Rahab vs Achan
 - Their stories are bookends to the first great victory of the Israelites entering the Promised land
 - They are actually what is called a *contrasting narrative*
 - + Rahab was saved with her entire family
 - + Achan was executed for his disobedience along with his entire family
 - Also contrast:
 - She was a Canaanite; he a Hebrew from the tribe of Judah
 - She should have died but prospered; he should have prospered but he died
 - Her family and all she owned survived; his family and all he owned perished
 - She feared God; he showed no fear
 - She only heard of God, yet believed; he had seen the hand of God, but disobeyed
 - Her house survived while the city burned; his tent is burned while the nation survives
 - She becomes like an Israelite and lived; he becomes like a Canaanite and dies
 - What do we learn from this account?
 - Sin permeates and effects areas of your life that you had not intended
 - Sin will be found out
 - That was the end of Achan's family and we never see his name again
 - What about Rahab and the end of her story?
 - We read in Matt 1:5 that Rahab married a man by the name of Salmon
 - He was a man of wealth who became the father of Boaz who married Ruth
 - Rahab is one of 4 Gentile women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1
 - + 1:3 – Tamar the daughter-in-law of Judah (Gen 38)
 - + 1:5 – Rahab the Canaanite prostitute (Josh 6)
 - + 1:5 – Ruth the Moab woman (Gen 19)
 - + 1:6 – Bathsheba the wife of Uriah (2 Sam 12)
 - Why is this significant?
 - + Not only because they were women
 - + Not only because they were Gentiles
 - + But so that we can see that no one is excluded from the will of a loving God
 - The plans and the will of God for each of us are not determined or controlled by the circumstances of our lives
 - Flight 93 took off from Newark NJ headed for San Francisco and was one of the 4 planes high-jacked on 9-11

- Todd Beamer was a 43 year old software salesman who happened to be one of the passengers; married with 2 small children and his wife Lisa pregnant with their third
- He attempted to call his wife using a seat back phone but the call was rerouted to a GTE supervisor, also named Lisa.
- He told her what was happening and said that he and several other of the passengers were planning to rush the hijackers and try to get control of the plane back and the last thing she heard him say was, "Let's roll"
- Became a motto of the spirit of those who died that day.
- What most people do not know is that Todd met his wife and graduated from Wheaton College and he and his wife were both born-again Christians active in youth ministry in their home church
- His wife wrote a book called "Let's Roll: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage" and in it she wrote -

"Slowly, I began to understand that the plans God has for us don't just include "good things", but the whole array of human events. The "prospering" he talks about in the book of Jeremiah is often the outcome of a bad event. I remember my mom saying that many people look for miracles- things that in their human minds "fix" the situation. Many miracles, however, are not a change to the normal course of human events; they're found in God's ability and desire to sustain and nurture people through even the worst situations. Somewhere along the way, I stopped demanding that God fix the problems in my life and started to be thankful for his presence as I endured them."

- Can we simply desire God's presence enough that the circumstances, the problems of our lives stop being the center of all that we are?
- Rahab focused on God in the midst of certain death
- Achan ignored the presence of God in the glory of the victory and paid the ultimate price
- What are you focusing on this morning?
 - The circumstance of your life – some of which may be difficult?
 - What you don't have?
 - The rotten hand you've been dealt or the unfairness of your life?
- Or can you set that aside and fix your eyes on the only way you will walk through events of life with any hope of peace or victory – in His presence?
- **Psalm 23:4** – *Even though I walk through the darkest valley I will not be afraid because you are with me.*
- I urge you this morning to change the way you look at things – it is not about the happenings of your life rather it should be about a grateful heart that is pursuing and thankful for His presence to endure, persevere, learn, grow, and to be victorious all because of the love of our Heavenly Father.