
Entering In: (Ice breaker question)

How would you describe “faith” or “my faith” to someone who doesn’t understand these terms?

The Context:

As we move through the Advent season, we will be looking at individuals from Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus that are examples of the characteristics of faith (Rahab), hope (Ruth), love (David), peace (Asa) and joy (Josiah).

This week we look at Rahab the prostitute in Jericho visited by the spies of Israel. At a time of uncertainty and anxiety for Israel, Rahab serves as an example of faith that “the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.” (Joshua 2:11)

Going Deeper

Everyone believes. Either you believe something is true or you believe it is not. The question we need to ask ourselves is, “Do I truly believe?” True belief (faith) effects the now.

What are three concrete ways that I see my faith effecting “the now” in my life?

1. Jericho is a City Set for Destruction

*Because of its unbelief, immorality and unrighteousness, Jericho is set for destruction. They have heard about God. They have trembled and feared Him, but they did not turn to him. John 3:19 says, “**This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.**” What is the attraction of darkness/immorality/unrighteousness?*

2. The Word of Power

“¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

¹⁷Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. “

What does it mean that “the message is heard through the word about Christ”? Other translations say “through the word of Christ” or “by the word of Christ”, do these help?

Compare Rahab’s words in 2:11 with the actual position of Israel at the time (see chapter 1). What differences do you see?

Observe how Rahab’s faith kindled the faith of the spies. How do you see this dynamic take place in the life of faith? Describe a situation where you have experienced something similar.

3. The Covenant of Promise

In verse 14, the spies give a straightforward response of commitment to Rahab. Then, in verses 17-20, they seem to amend their commitment by adding additional stipulations. Why do you think they do this?

What parallel is suggested to you by the house protected by the scarlet cord? (cf. Ex. 12:22 and Heb 9:14-15b)

4. The Life of Faith

Read James 2:17 and 1 John 3:18. How does my faith measure according to James' illustration? How does my faith differ from that of the demons?

5. The Sure Deliverance

The promise of what is to come is glorious, even if we can't see it today. What is a situation in your life where you need to know the sure deliverance that God promises? Take some time as a group to pray together for these needs.