**1. Motivate**

What is your fondest memory of celebrating Independence Day?

* fireworks
* parades

A video introduction to the Bible study is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/yx7p9p8f> If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/4w3zchsm>

* picnics
* family get togethers
* week of fun together
* swimming, boating
* concerts in the park

**2. Transition**

Consider the fact that for America’s founding fathers, it may have been a day clouded with fear.

* The overcame that fear to establish our nation.
* Today we look at how faith acts when others are paralyzed by fear.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Faith Says, “Always Do Right”

Listen for intrigue.

Joshua 2:1-4 (NIV) 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. 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." 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them..

What action did Joshua take as further preparation for leading the Israelites across the Jordan into Canaan?

* sent two spies
* go look over the land
* especially check out Jericho

Why might the two spies have chosen to go to Rahab’s house, a known place of prostitution?

* all kinds of men would go there
* might not be suspicious of strangers going there
* probably a “no-tell” kind of place
* might not have known what it was at first
* later we learn her place was on/in the city wall, first place they came to

How do you imagine the spies felt about sneaking into Canaan, even though it was an important role?

* certain amount of apprehension
* had to know they might not fit in, might be easily seen as foreigners
* realized their speech might betray them
* clothing and appearance would be not quite right
* certainly the presence of all of the Israelites (upwards of 1 million people) camped 15 miles away was known by Jericho
* no doubt the king and his guards would be on the lookout for spies

When have you ever been scared or nervous about doing something that you knew was right?

* go on a witnessing team
* give a presentation at work
* teach a Bible study class for the first time
* sing or play your instrument as a solo
* first time in a marching band half time show
* attend college as a freshman, all alone, far from home
* meet new people you don’t know
* a first date with someone
* getting married

What actions did Rahab take to protect the Israelite spies?

* obfuscation
* hid them on her roof under piles of flax
* told the guards the men (spies) had come and gone
* sent them off searching down the road towards the river

Why was such action potentially risky for her; therefore an act of courage?

* she could be in trouble for hiding spies
* in trouble for lying to the authorities
* her actions were treasonous

How do we navigate the tension between obeying our elected leaders and obeying God?

* the question concerns the issue of when is civil disobedience appropriate for a believer
* generally we are instructed to obey the authorities
* but when government goes against specific commands and principles of scripture, when they oppose God’s commands it is appropriate to disobey the government
* even oppose it and work against it

3.2 Faith in the Face of Fear

Listen for fear expressed.

Joshua 2:8-14 (NIV) 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. 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."

What words and phrases did Rahab use to describe the feelings of the people of Jericho?

* great fear fallen on us
* all who live here are melting in fear
* our hearts melted
* everyone’s courage failed

What reports of awesome events had proceeded the Israelites?

* Jehovah God had parted the Red Sea, dried up the land
* with God’s help, Israel had defeated Sihon and Og, two kings of the Amorites
* you completely destroyed them

What is the significance of her use of God’s name, LORD, or Jehovah in her descriptions?

* people of Jericho knew about the God the Israelites worshiped
* they knew of His name
* they were in awe, fear of his power and authority
* Jehovah God’s reputation had proceeded the approach of the Israelites
* she was convinced that Jehovah God would defeat her city, her land, her people

How would you explain the phrase “fear of God” to someone who isn’t a Christ-follower?

* being in awe of God, being convinced of His power and authority
* being aware of how much he loves us
* realizing God is far more than just a figment of human imagination
* He is the God who created *all* of the universe
* He is the God who entered into time and space and came to earth as a human
* He is in control of the flow of history, despite those who aspire to be power figures – no matter what point in history

Consider the statement, *Fear of God fuels faith into action*. What do you think that means?

* if you are in awe of God’s power and authority and love
* then you can trust him to be with you when you step out in faith
* when you obey Him and do His will you can be convinced of His presence and
* you are assured in your heart and mind that He will enable you

3.3 Our Faith Benefits Others

Listen for a promise fulfilled.

Joshua 6:22-25 (NIV) Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring her out and all who belong to her, in accordance with your oath to her." 23 So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel. 24 Then they burned the whole city and everything in it, but they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the LORD's house. 25 But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho--and she lives among the Israelites to this day.

What assignment did Joshua give to the two former spies when the city of Jericho fell?

* go to Rahab’s house
* bring her out
* bring out all who belong with her
* we will fulfill our promise to her

Who else benefited from her acting by faith?

* father, mother, brothers
* *all* who belonged to her

What do we learn about the mercy, love and grace God in this story about Rahab?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mercy | Love and Grace |
| * she and her family were not killed, even though they were citizens of Jericho * their house on the wall apparently was spared destruction (at least until they were rescued) | * they were allowed to become part of the Israelite community * Rahab ended up marrying Caleb … * she became the grandmother of King David * part of the lineage of the Messiah |

that Rahab’s faith affected not just her, but her whole family. What does this suggest about the “ripple effect” of one’s personal faith?

* God blesses not only the person of faith, but also those close to you
* your faith is a testimony to others near to you
* you become a witness by living a life of faith
* your actions and attitudes of faith affect your family, and in some ways, your close friends

What does Rahab’s story say about God’s willingness to use unlikely people for His purposes?

* we wouldn’t expect her to show up in our Bible study group, but God *did* accept her
* she became the wife of one of the leaders of the Israelites, grandmother of King David
* she is also declared a hero of faith in Hebrews 11
* God can and will use people we consider as unlikely to accomplish great things in His spiritual Kingdom

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

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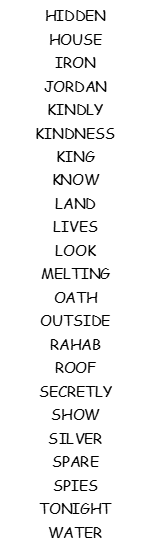
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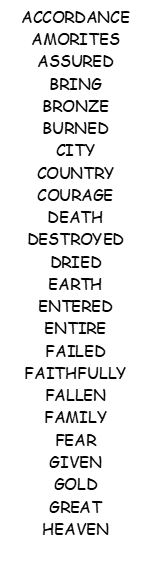
* Your faith may be new but imagine having a strong faith like Rahab.
* Think of one thing in your life that would be different if you had stronger faith.
* What could you accomplish?

Plan.

* Faith demands action. Your life may not be in danger like Rahab’s, but each small step of faith will prepare you to take more giant steps as your faith grows.
* What can you do today that will make progress toward the one thing you considered above? Make a plan.

Share.

* As your faith grows and you take bigger and bigger steps, people will notice.
* What will their reaction be regarding your growing faith?
* It will impact your family, friends, and even the world.
* Choose someone with whom you can share your faith journey.
* Pray for this person before sharing your faith.



Word Search

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A cartoon of a person with glasses

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Well, get out your scarlet rope and your rams’ horns, if you expect to see the walls of this word search crumble. Humph! Bet you don’t even have a ram’s horn. We’re making it easy for you … no backwards or upside down words. First class that finishes **correctly** will get credit for their book reports. Cheaters can go to <https://tinyurl.com/4w3zchsm> for help (Humph !) or to wimp out and do the crossword puzzle instead.