

**Forward: Claiming the Life God Gave You**  
**A Story of Faith- Rahab**  
**Joshua 2:1-24**

**Introduction:** Joshua 2 is a story about a lot of things, but ultimately, it's one of the best Old Testament illustrations of what the Bible means by the word "faith." Let me walk you through the story then I'll give you three vitally important truths highlighted about the Biblical Doctrine of faith illustrated in the story.

**(1) 1 And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there.**

- A. "The precise location of Shittim, which means "acacia trees," is unknown."<sup>1</sup>
- B. There is some debate among scholars over when Joshua sent out these spies. Some believe Joshua is laid out in strict chronological order and therefore it had to have happened after he gave the order to be ready to cross the Jordan in three days. Others believe Joshua sent the spies before he gave the three-day order and thus chapter two kind of takes us backwards for a minute to give context to what's getting ready to happen. I think the later view makes the most sense when you read the entire story at once.
- C. It's also important to note that when these two spies enter the city of Jericho, they lodge in the house of a prostitute named Rahab. Plenty of people in both Jewish history and church history have tried to argue away this part of the story, that is that Rahab was actually an innkeeper and not a prostitute. The arguments all fall miserably short, but especially for Christians, because the New Testament refuses to let us view Rahab differently (Hebrews 11:31, James 2:35).
  - 1. "Josephus and many writers since his time have argued that Rahab was an innkeeper. But the Hebrew word *zônâ*, the Greek *pornē* in the LXX, and Heb 11:31 and Jas 2:25 all definitely class her as a common harlot (not a *qdēshâ*, a temple- or cult-prostitute)."<sup>2</sup>
  - 2. "Why some try to avoid the name *harlot*, and interpret **זונה** as meaning *one who keeps an inn*, I see not, unless it be that they think it disgraceful to be the guests of a courtesan, or wish to wipe off a stigma from a woman who not only received the messengers kindly, but secured their safety by singular courage and prudence. It is indeed a regular practice with the Rabbins, when they would consult for the honour of their nation, presumptuously to wrest Scripture and give a different turn by their fictions to anything that seems

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<sup>1</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Jos 2:1-7). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>2</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament](#) (Jos 2:1). Chicago: Moody Press.

not quite reputable. But the probability is, that while the messengers were courting secrecy, and shunning observation and all places of public intercourse, they came to a woman who dwelt in a retired spot. Her house was contiguous to the wall of the city, nay, its outer side was actually situated in the wall. From this we may infer that it was some obscure corner remote from the public thoroughfare; just as persons of her description usually live in narrow lanes and secret places. It cannot be supposed with any consistency to have been a common inn which was open to all indiscriminately, because they could not have felt at liberty to indulge in familiar intercourse, and it must have been difficult in such circumstances to obtain concealment. My conclusion therefore is, that they obtained admission privily, and immediately betook themselves to a hiding-place. Moreover, in the fact that a woman who had gained a shameful livelihood by prostitution was shortly after admitted into the body of the chosen people, and became a member of the Church, we are furnished with a striking display of divine grace which could thus penetrate into a place of shame, and draw forth from it not only Rahab, but her father and the other members of her family. Most assuredly while the term *זוֹנֵה*, almost invariably means *harlot*, there is nothing here to oblige us to depart from the received meaning.”<sup>3</sup>

- D. However, at the same time, those who use this as a proof text that prostitution or having sex with a prostitute is justifiable behavior are equally errant. Sex outside of the confines of a marriage between a man and woman is clearly identified as sin both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. There is no attempt to justify sexual immorality in this text, nor is there any suggestion whatsoever that these two men did anything other than lodge at Rahab’s house.
1. “The narrative avoids terminology that would suggest any sexual contact took place. If this had been the meaning, the phrase “the house of” would have been omitted (compare Judg 16:1)”<sup>4</sup>
  2. “Perhaps in an attempt to avoid arousing suspicion as foreigners, the spies whom Joshua sent *secretly* entered the house of a common prostitute, who doubtless had many visitors. Note that although the Hebrew reads literally ‘slept’, not ‘stayed’, the narrator pointedly says they slept there, not with her (1), though this was the assumption of the men of Jericho. The same verb is translated ‘lay down’ in v 8 with no sexual connotation. Clearly the author did not intend to say that they had sex with Rahab.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Calvin, J., & Beveridge, H. (2010). [\*Commentary on the Book of Joshua\*](#) (pp. 43–44). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>4</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [\*Faithlife Study Bible\*](#) (Jos 2:1). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>5</sup> Waltke, B. K. (1994). [\*Joshua\*](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 239). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

- E. So, why did the spies choose to lodge in the house of a prostitute? There's all kinds of speculation related to that question, and much of it is really good and very possible. However, I think the only certain, and consequently most important reason, is that no matter what the rationale or circumstances were that made the spies choose this location, in the end, God had a plan for Rahab and He is the one who ultimately guided them there. D.K. Campbell notes,

**Note:** "How the spies chose the house of a prostitute named Rahab is not revealed. While some suggest they saw her walking the streets and followed her, it seems better to believe that in the providence of God the men were led **there.**"<sup>6</sup>

**(2) 2 And it was told to the king of Jericho, "Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." 3 Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land."**

- A. Did the spies come in claiming to be trade representatives of Israel or did they attempt to just fit in as travelers passing through on their way to somewhere else? We have no answers in the text to these kinds of questions, but what we do know is they got made as Israelites and rightly assumed as spies the first night they were there!
- B. Given the news that everyone in the region had certainly been hearing about the Israelites, it's to no surprise the King was immediately alerted to their presence in the city, and no surprise that the King immediately sent out men to arrest them!

**(3) 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, "True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. 5 And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." 6 But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. 7 So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.**

- A. Rahab decided to protect the spies, possibly when she saw the King's men approaching, or when she heard word had gotten out that the spies were hiding in her house. Either way, she took them to the roof of her house and hid them under the stalks of flax she had stored on her roof. There are all kinds of reasons people might store sizable amounts of flax on their roof, possibly Rahab was not only a prostitute but a producer of some sort of textile products. Flax is the plant

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<sup>6</sup> Campbell, D. K. (1985). [Joshua](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 330). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

used to make linen as well as all kinds of other textiles.<sup>7</sup> The point however at this point in the story is that her lie was convincing, therefore, the King's men took off out of the city to try and track down the spies before they could return to the people Israel.

**Note:** “The Hebrew verb for ‘hid’ literally means ‘to bury’, and thus the two Hebrew spies are buried deep inside the flax. Flax was used in antiquity to produce linen thread, but the flax had to be completely dried before it could be employed in that way. Part of the process was that flax stalks would be laid out to dry on the roof of a house. This would have been a common practice for many, if not most, of the households in Jericho.”<sup>8</sup>

- B. Now again, it's very likely everybody in the region had heard about the Israelites defeating the Kingdoms on the east side of the Jordan, what had happened forty years prior at the Red Sea, and likely the daily miracle of manna, water miraculously coming from rocks on more than one occasion, as well as the testimony of the fire and cloud that had led them! So, it's safe to say Rahab had been pondering the news about Israel, and more importantly the God of Israel for some time. However, her crisis of faith came suddenly. There's no way she could have known that one day two Israeli spies would show up at her house and that she would then be forced to pick a side—stay allegiant to Jericho and its people and gods, or surrender her allegiance to the God of Israel and His people. All the pondering of all she had heard now faced the necessity of an immediate decision and she chose Yahweh and His people.
- C. Here again is another place in the story that has left many scholars and preachers alike going down a totally unnecessary, and frankly unbiblical path. The perceived problem is in the fact that Rahab lied. Being they believe lies are always sinful, they cannot therefore accept the conclusion that God both used and honored a lie. They are forced then to formulate complex arguments to show that Rahab's lie to save the lives of the two spies was actually a sin that God in no way honored even though He used it. The problem with all these arguments is that they are a complete waste of time. James 2:25-26 makes it bluntly clear that the righteous act of Rahab's faith was the act that necessarily included this lie!
- D. The New Testament makes it clear that all the Law of God is summed up and fulfilled in one word—love (Romans 13:8, Galatians 5:14). Therefore, if I need to lie to keep a person from being unjustly treated or harmed, then not lying would be the more unethical and thus sinful behavior! What could be more morally

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<sup>7</sup><https://www.newenglandflaxandlinen.org/resources/faq/#:~:text=Flax%20is%20the%20plant%20that,bo%20binding%20thread%2C%20and%20more.>

<sup>8</sup> Currid, J. D. (2011). *Strong and Courageous: Joshua Simply Explained* (pp. 35–37). Darlington, England; Carlisle, PA: EP Books.

right than protecting innocent life? For instance, if I knew where a woman was hiding to avoid being beaten by an abusive husband, it would be flat out sinful for me to do anything but lie if that's what was necessary to protect her. Another example would be bribery. Bribery is of itself sinful unethical behavior. However, if I needed to bribe someone to safely get a person out of a city where they were about to be unjustly killed, then that bribe would be a righteous act of love worthy of celebration, not condemnation!

- E. Therefore, when a lie is told because of love, one cannot suggest its sinful, however, when a lie needs to be covered by love then it is! What I mean by that is if my lie is intended to hide or excuse my sinful behavior, cowardice, or selfish ambition, then that lie is eventually going to need to be covered by the loving forgiveness of others; it's going to need the healing power of love to bring healing to that which was wrongfully betrayed, offended, damaged, or even destroyed by my sin.

**(4) 8 Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof 9 and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. 11 And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.**

- A. The fact that everybody in Canaan was already freaking out about the Israelites and their God was actually prophesied of forty years prior. God told Moses,
- B. **27 I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. (Exodus 23:27)**
- C. This of course got delayed for forty years because they refused to trust God at His word and follow Him in to conquer and claim the land. However, forty years after God had judged Israel's unfaithfulness, God did exactly what He promised and demonstrated His power and favor on the people of Israel in such a way that it struck terror in the people of Canaan!
- D. Rahab's decision to hide the spies and place her trust in the God of the Israelites is because she heard the news about what their God, who is in actuality the only God, was doing for them, and through them. Her decision wasn't based on a feeling she got when she met the men, or through some sort of personal meditation and revelation, but rather on the raw facts of how God was demonstrating His Glory! News had traveled all over Canaan about the Israelites

defeating the Amorites, Bashan and the Midianites as well as what God had done for the Israelites at the Red Sea.

- E. In addition, it wasn't just general news of conquest but specific news about the God of the Israelites who was doing it. In verse nine she says, **"I know that the LORD has given you the land." (2:9)** The word for "LORD" here is Yahweh! She doesn't generically say she knows your God did all this and has given you the land, but rather uses the specific name God calls Himself (Yahweh). The word that was being spread was the testimony of Yahweh, meaning the Israelites were being very open in their relationships with other nations and peoples of the God they serve! As such, when Rahab heard all that Yahweh had done in and through the Israelites she rightly concluded, **"for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath." (2:11)**
1. "The two words 'heaven' and 'earth' serve as a merism—that is, two opposites that are all-inclusive. Thus, her proclamation is stating that Yahweh is God over all. This assertion is especially striking in the light of the Canaanite belief in polytheism and of their personification of their gods in the very elements of creation."<sup>9</sup>
  2. "Here the image of Rahab's faith appears, as if reflected in a mirror, when casting down all idols she ascribes the government of heaven and earth to the God of Israel alone. For it is perfectly clear that when heaven and earth are declared subject to the God of Israel, there is a repudiation of all the pagan fictions by which the majesty, and power, and glory of God are portioned out among different deities; and hence we see that it is not without cause that two Apostles have honoured Rahab's conduct with the title of *faith*."<sup>10</sup>
- F. Therefore, there is no doubt whatsoever that as people traveled around trading goods with one another, they indeed carried news about this big people group that's been walking around the Transjordan for the last forty years. More importantly, to the context of Rahab's story, they carried news about what the God of these Israelites had done through them and for them!
- G. Likewise, we do not blindly surrender to God. To repent and believe in Jesus we must receive truth from God that demands and stirs us to respond. God gave Abraham truth that demanded and caused him to respond with faith (Genesis 15). Romans tells us the lost cannot come to repentance and faith without the preacher who brings the Good News to them (The Gospel). Paul wrote,

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<sup>9</sup> Currid, J. D. (2011). *Strong and Courageous: Joshua Simply Explained* (pp. 37–38). Darlington, England; Carlisle, PA: EP Books.

<sup>10</sup> Calvin, J., & Beveridge, H. (2010). *Commentary on the Book of Joshua* (pp. 50–52). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

**H. 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. (Romans 10:14-17)**

**I.** But the key here is that what we get to hear on this side of Christ is FAR greater news than what Rahab heard, and thus far better reasons to live by faith in God than what Rahab was given! What Jesus accomplished on the cross and what He did in His resurrection gives us more reason to trust in God than Rahab ever imagined! God's glory is seen much greater through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus than anything we read about in the Old Testament. Furthermore, what God offers us in Christ is the best news we could ever hear! The writer of Hebrews states,

**1. 6 But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. (Hebrews 8:6)**

**2. "39 And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 since God had provided something better for us" (Hebrews 11:39-40a)**

**3. 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (Hebrews 12:24)**

**(5) 12 Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a sure sign 13 that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." 14 And the men said to her, "Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you." 15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall. 16 And she said to them, "Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way."**

**A.** We are going to talk more about this in a minute, so for now I just want you to make a mental note about how the spies responded to Rahab's request for a symbol to assure them of their commitment to pass over her house when they invaded Jericho. The spies were well aware of how God assured them His wrath

would pass over them when He poured it over Egypt, therefore, they couldn't judge Rahab for asking for a sign.

- B. For now, what I really want you to see is that Rahab put her life on the line to protect the spies BEFORE she had a commitment from them to protect her and her family. She made her decision to protect them solely on what she heard about Yahweh and His favor on the Israelites! There is no doubt the Holy Spirit had worked on Rahab's heart to be able to act with this kind of faith, because despite the fact God had proclaimed His glory, power and love for His people, He had in no way made it clear that this opportunity was open to all people! This then is why her faith made the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11. Rahab would rather trust in Yahweh with no Word from Him that He would respond positively to her faith, than to continue placing her trust in the gods of Jericho who were clearly not even real!
- C. In addition, it's clear her faith is in the God of the Israelites, not the Israelites themselves. Did you notice that she asked the spies to swear by Yahweh that they would protect her and her family? Her faith is not being inspired by the Hebrew people, but rather the GOD the Hebrew people place their faith in. Therefore, when she asks them to make a promise of protection for her and her family, her faith is not in the Hebrew people to hold to their promise, but rather in God holding the Hebrew people to it because they swore to it by His name.
- D. Here's how this whole event concluded.

**(6) 17 The men said to her, "We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear. 18 Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household. 19 Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head. 20 But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear." 21 And she said, "According to your words, so be it." Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window. 22 They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing. 23 Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them. 24 And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us."**

- A. "The spies were carefully lowered by a rope through a window of Rahab's house (v. 15). Their escape would have been more difficult, if not impossible, had it been necessary for them to go out the city gate. Scarcely a half-mile west of

Jericho are limestone cliffs about 1,500 feet high, honeycombed with caves. Here the spies hid (in **the hills**) for **three days** (cf. 1:11) **until the** soldiers of Jericho gave up the hunt. Then under cover of darkness the spies swam back across the Jordan, made their way quickly to the camp at Shittim (cf. 2:1), and reported to **Joshua** about their strange and stirring adventure and the alarm and utter despondency of the Canaanites. Their conclusion was, **The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands for all the people are melting in fear** (cf. v. 9; Ex. 23:27; Deut. 2:25). How different from the report of the majority of the spies at Kadesh Barnea who said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are" (Num. 13:31)."<sup>11</sup>

- B.** Israel didn't have a good history with reports from spies! However, this time the spies saw things through the lens of faith. If a pagan, who had only heard about what they had seen God do, could repent and believe in Yahweh, then why in the world should they doubt Him! How cool is it that the faith of a converted pagan prostitute inspired the faith of the people of God to do what forty years prior they were unwilling to do! God GAVE them yet another testimony that HE is totally trustworthy, and as such, they had every reason to be strong and courageous in moving forward to conquer and claim the land.

Now, there are so many things we could talk about in this passage, but what I want to major on is what the New Testament tells us to major on. The New Testament tells us that the primary testimony of Joshua 2 is the testimony of what faith looks like. Granted, the New Testament tells us how Rahab fits into the lineage of Jesus as well, which is really cool and encouraging to know that God redeemed a pagan prostitute into His plan to redeem the nations. However, the New Testament also tells us the most practical part of Rahab's testimony to our relationship with God is the testimony of her faith. The Bible states,

**31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies. (Hebrews 11:31)**

**25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. (James 2:25-26)**

Therefore, to conclude our time in Joshua chapter 2, I want to make sure you make the Biblically correct conclusions about what Rahab's story in Joshua teaches us about faith in Christ; that is, what it means to claim and walk in God's life (Galatians 2:20)! There's a ton we can talk about but for time's sake I've cut it down to what I believe are the three most important.

**Proposition: There are three vitally important truths highlighted in Joshua chapter two about Biblical faith.**

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<sup>11</sup> Campbell, D. K. (1985). [Joshua](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 332). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**The first vitally important truth Joshua 2 highlights about Biblical faith is that ...**

**(1) Biblical Faith = Right Belief + Repentance. Repentance is turning from your allegiance to your own desires, religion, or anything else, to instead submit yourself to God.**

- A. Rahab's faith was based on right knowledge about God that she then acted on (repentance). Rahab clearly demonstrated a turning to trust in God when she covered for the spies. She was forsaking her allegiance to Jericho and its gods to instead give her allegiance to the God of the Israelites.
- B. Notice how the New Testament makes it clear that Biblical faith, sometimes referred to as "saving faith" always contains right belief and repentance.
- C. **38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)**

**Note:** Baptism is an outward demonstration of your allegiance to Christ, as such, an outward testimony of repentance. If you read the entire sermon of Peter in Acts 2 you will see that it is also a clear call to rightly believe who Jesus is, what His death accomplished, and that He rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven.

- D. In Acts 11 we see this truth that Biblical faith equals belief plus repentance testified of very clearly,
- E. **20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. (Acts 11:20-21)**

**Note:** It seems as if everybody who believed the correct facts that were preached about Jesus didn't turn to the Lord, but a "great number" did. The implication is that belief alone is not enough, but rather belief that results in turning your allegiance to Jesus. Faith isn't just correct belief, it's also a turning to Jesus because of it.

- F. Now what about Romans chapter 10? Doesn't it tell us that belief in the facts about Jesus is enough to be considered faith. Well, not if you read it in context! Look at it really quick,
- G. **9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For**

**with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (Romans 10:9-10)**

1. To believe something in your heart is not a reflection of “emotion” but of self-totality, that is, it’s what you are committed to/submitted to and defined by. Therefore, the outward action of confession in verse ten is not a simple statement of intellectual agreement that God raised a man named Jesus from the dead, but that Jesus is also LORD, and as such, God Himself as well! Furthermore, this belief is something that is so true to a person’s sense of identity (with the heart) that they have no problem confessing this truth that Jesus is not just Lord, but implicitly also their LORD and the one they are allegiant.
2. The nature of what Paul is saying can’t be missed here. He is saying all that are willing to state to the world that their LORD, the one they are allegiant and submissive to, is not in this case Caesar, nor anybody or anything else but Jesus, should also know that they are saved—they have what the Bible calls faith in Jesus.

H. This is why James wrote,

- I. **17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? (James 2:17-20)**

**The second vitally important truth Joshua 2 highlights about Biblical faith is that ...**

**(2) Its normal for Biblical faith to need assurance.**

- A. Rahab’s faith needed assurance which is how she ended up with a scarlet cord to hang in her window (Joshua 2:12, 18). She obviously believed what we had heard about Yahweh and had clearly acted on it in repentance, but she still wanted some assurance! It is totally normal for our faith to struggle with doubts. True faith in God endures, but that doesn’t mean it doesn’t get wonky at times! This is why the New Testament does so much to assure us that we are not saved by the measure of our faith but rather by the measure of His grace!
- B. **28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:28)**
- C. **19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a great**

priest over the house of God, **22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith**, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.** (Hebrews 10:19-23)

The third vitally important truth Joshua 2 highlights about Biblical faith is that ...

**(3) Biblical faith endures.**

- A. Rahab's faith needed to persevere for it to save her and her family from the wrath of God that was about to be unleashed on Jericho. Rahab had to continue trusting God, which meant following the instructions of the spies in Joshua 2:17-20.
- B. When it comes to our salvation, Jesus was crystal clear on this subject as well. He said,
- C. **18 "Hear then the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. 23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."** (Matthew 13:18-23)
- D. Elsewhere in the New Testament we read,
- E. **19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. (1 John 2:19)**
- F. This is not to say faith never falters in our right beliefs about God, nor never turns away from following Him. But it is to say if we can stay turned away then we were never born again because HE is the one who guarantees our faith will endure! Enduring faith doesn't earn our salvation, it testifies of it because our salvation is a work of God in us, not by us! Its why Paul wrote,
- G. **6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6)**

- H. There is Someone in everybody who repents and believes in Jesus who is working out God's will within them to know and follow Jesus, and that Someone is the Holy Spirit of God! So, the Bible absolutely assures us that His grace is greater than our faith, but if you have no faith, you should also have no assurance. To live your life believing you belong to God because you used to have faith in Him is an incredibly foolish gamble that many Biblical scholars would argue you're guaranteed to lose.

**Challenge: Is your faith in Christ Biblical faith or some other kind? What impact is your faith having on those around you?**

I already commented on how Rahab's faith impacted the two spies. Remember how Joshua two ended. When they gave their report to Joshua they said,

**24 And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us." (2:24)**

Who do you know that says this about you,

**8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. (Romans 1:8)**

**15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers (Ephesians 1:15-16)**

**3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. (Colossians 1:3-5)**

**4 I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, 5 because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, 6 and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ. (Philemon 1:4-6)**

Biblical faith can NOT be hidden because it ALWAYS bears the fruit of the one its in—Jesus! If you claim to have faith in Christ but nobody is being affected by it, then you need to know you have faith, but it's not in Jesus! Some will see the fruit of your faith and be disgusted by it, others will care less about it, some will be intrigued by it, others will be motivated to know and follow Jesus by it; but make no mistake, if you have it, it will necessarily affect those around you!