

How Saving Faith Works

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. ²The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." ³So 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." ⁴But 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." ⁵At 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.) ⁷So 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. ⁸Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof ⁹and 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. ¹⁰We 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. ¹¹When 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. ¹²Now 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 ¹³that 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." Joshua 2:1-13 (New International Version)

This text presents Rahab's confession of faith and then demonstrates how her faith progresses. Rahab helps us see the principles of faith; how faith actually works.

- **Principle #1: SAVING FAITH BEGINS WITH KNOWLEDGE.** (Joshua 2:10)

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 (NIV)

The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead . . . ³²We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him." Acts 5:30, 32 (NIV)

So, faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. Romans 10:17 (New American Standard Bible)

Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts and they will learn the truth. 2 Timothy 2:25 (New Living Translation)

- **Principle #2: IN SAVING FAITH, KNOWLEDGE OF GOD GROWS INTO A CONVICTION ABOUT AND CONFESSION OF THE TRUTH.** (Joshua 2:11)

Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other. Deuteronomy 4:39 (NIV)

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:13 (NIV)

For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. Romans 3:25a (NLT)

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. James 2:19 (NIV)

- **Principle #3: SAVING FAITH ACTS; IT SEEKS REFUGE IN GOD'S PROVISION.** (Joshua 2:12-13)

But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. Romans 2:5 (NIV)

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! Romans 5:9 (NIV)

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. John 1:12-13 (NIV)

(See Joshua 2:14-18, 21)

- **Principle #4: GOD HONORS FAITH BY EXTENDING HIS GRACE.**

But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute . . . and she lives among the Israelites to this day. Joshua 6:25 (NIV)

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. Psalm 103:10 (English Standard Version)

Project under principle 3, but don't put in outline:

“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.”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.”¹⁷ The men said to her, “This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us¹⁸ 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. . . .”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.
Joshua 2:14-18, 21 (NIV)