

5-Day Devotional: From Dead Vines to Beautiful Purpose

Day 1: Recognizing God's Power Above All Voices

Scripture: Joshua 2:8-11; Psalm 86:10

Reflection: Rahab heard the same stories as everyone else in Jericho—stories of God parting the Red Sea, defeating armies, and doing the impossible. But while her neighbors responded with fear and fortification, Rahab responded with faith. She declared, "I know that the Lord has given you the land."

In our lives, we're surrounded by competing voices—political opinions, cultural pressures, family expectations, and our own anxious thoughts. Like the people of Jericho, we can respond by building walls and defending our position. Or like Rahab, we can pause and ask: What is God actually doing here?

Rahab's realization wasn't just intellectual—it changed everything. She didn't just acknowledge God's power; she aligned her life with it. Faith begins when we stop viewing God as one option among many and recognize Him as Lord over all.

Reflection Questions:

- What "voices" are loudest in your life right now?
- Have you merely heard about God, or have you personally trusted Him with your circumstances?
- What would change if you truly believed God is sovereign over your current situation?

Prayer: Lord, help me hear Your voice above all others. You alone are God. Give me faith like Rahab to recognize Your power and trust Your plan, even when circumstances seem overwhelming. Amen.

Day 2: The Courage to Reject Your Former Life

Scripture: Joshua 2:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:2

Reflection: Rahab didn't just believe differently—she lived differently. The woman who once used her house for prostitution now used it to store flax and wheat, organizing her life with purpose. She transformed her home into a place of refuge and ministry, hiding God's

servants at great personal risk.

Repentance isn't just feeling sorry about our past; it's actively turning away from it. It's taking what was once used for sin and offering it to God for His purposes. Your body, your home, your resources, your time—what were once "dead vines" can become instruments of beauty in God's hands.

This rejection isn't easy. Scripture tells us to "daily take up our cross" because the pull of old patterns is strong. But Rahab shows us it's possible. Following Christ often requires us to reject old loyalties, sinful patterns, and cultural pressures that once defined us.

Reflection Questions:

- What areas of your life are you still using for your own purposes rather than God's?
- What would it look like to "organize the flax" in your life—to intentionally structure your days around following Jesus?
- What old loyalty or pattern is God asking you to reject today?

Prayer: Father, I confess the areas where I'm still living for myself. Give me courage like Rahab to completely turn from my old ways. Transform what was once broken and make it useful for Your kingdom. Amen.

Day 3: The Scarlet Thread of Grace

Scripture: Joshua 2:17-21; Ephesians 2:8-9; Isaiah 1:18

Reflection: The spies gave Rahab a simple instruction: hang a scarlet thread in your window. When destruction comes, we'll see it and pass over your house. Rahab had to trust that this crimson cord would be enough—that grace, not her own efforts, would save her.

That scarlet thread points us to an even greater truth. Just as the Israelites painted lamb's blood on their doorposts in Egypt, just as Rahab hung the scarlet cord in Jericho, Jesus shed His scarlet blood on the cross for us. His blood makes us "white as snow"—completely redeemed.

But here's the key: Rahab had to receive the grace offered to her. She could have dismissed it, tried to save herself another way, or fled the city in fear. Instead, she did exactly what the spies instructed. She trusted their word and hung the thread.

God's grace is greater than your past. But you must receive it. Not earn it—receive it.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you trying to earn God's approval, or are you resting in His grace?
- What does it mean practically to "hang the scarlet thread"—to actively receive God's grace today?
- Is there a past failure that you're letting define you instead of letting God's grace define you?

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for Your blood shed for me. I cannot save myself. I receive Your grace today—not because I deserve it, but because You freely offer it. Let Your grace define who I am. Amen.

Day 4: Saved for a Purpose

Scripture: Joshua 6:22-25; Matthew 1:5; Hebrews 11:31

Reflection: Rahab's story didn't end with her rescue. She and her family were brought out of Jericho and "lived in Israel to this day." But even more remarkably, Rahab married Salmon and became the mother of Boaz, the great-grandmother of King David, and an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

The prostitute from Jericho is listed in the genealogy of the Messiah. She's celebrated in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11. God didn't just save Rahab from destruction—He gave her a legacy that would impact generations.

You may feel like a "dead vine" with no purpose or value. But God specializes in redemption. When you trust Him, reject your old life, and receive His grace, He doesn't just save you—He gives you a purpose that can change the trajectory of generations to come.

Your faithfulness today matters eternally. The decisions you make to follow Jesus don't just affect you—they create a legacy.

Reflection Questions:

- How does knowing Rahab became part of Jesus' lineage change how you view your own story?
- What legacy are you creating through your daily choices to follow or not follow Jesus?
- Who in your family or community might be impacted by your faithfulness to God?

Prayer: Lord, I'm amazed that You don't just save us—You give us purpose. Use my life to impact generations. Help me live faithfully today, trusting that You're writing a story bigger than I can see. Amen.

Day 5: Your Scarlet Thread Moment

Scripture: Joshua 2:21; Romans 10:9-10; Titus 3:4-5

Reflection: Rahab said, "According to your words, so be it." Then she hung the scarlet thread in the window. It was her moment of decision—the point where hearing about God's power became personal trust in His grace.

Maybe you've been hearing about God for years. You know the stories, you've been to church, you understand the theology. But have you had your "scarlet thread moment"—that point where you personally receive His grace and say, "According to Your words, so be it"?

Or perhaps you've been a Christian for years, but you're realizing there are areas of your life where you haven't fully surrendered. You've been trying to save yourself through effort, performance, or hiding. Today can be your moment to hang the thread again—to trust completely in God's grace.

There's nothing you can do to make God love you more. There's nothing you've done that makes Him love you less. His grace is sufficient. His blood is enough. Will you receive it?

Reflection Questions:

- Have you personally trusted Jesus as your Savior, or have you only heard about Him?
- If you're already a Christian, what area of your life needs a fresh surrender to God's grace today?
- What's your next step in responding to God's invitation?

Prayer: Father, according to Your words, so be it. I receive Your grace today. I trust that Jesus' blood is sufficient for all my sin. Transform my dead-vine life into something beautiful for Your glory. I surrender everything to You. Amen.

Blog Post: The Prostitute in Jesus' Family Tree

What Dead Vines Teach Us About God's Redemption

I was rummaging through my attic recently, looking for an object lesson for a sermon, when I found my artificial Christmas tree. Yes, I know—it's June, and I'm thinking about Christmas. But bear with me.

This particular tree is made from old, dead vines. The kind of brown, brittle branches you'd normally rake up and throw away. Or burn. They're worthless on their own—just dead wood. But someone saw those broken vines and thought, "I can make something beautiful out of this."

That's exactly what God does with our lives.

The Woman Nobody Expected### The Woman Nobody Expected

In Joshua chapter 2, we meet one of the most unlikely heroes in all of Scripture: Rahab, a prostitute living in Jericho. When we first encounter her, she's about as far from God as you can imagine—living in a pagan city, making a living through sin, with seemingly no purpose or value in God's story.

She's a dead vine.

But God had other plans.

When the Spies Came Knocking

The Israelites were on the move, conquering the Promised Land city by city, and word was spreading. Joshua sent two spies into Jericho to scope out the situation, and they ended up at Rahab's house. When the king's men came looking for them, Rahab made a choice that would change everything.

She hid the spies on her roof and lied to the soldiers, sending them on a wild goose chase. Then she climbed up to the roof and said something remarkable:

"I know that the Lord has given you the land... For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you... and as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted."

Everyone in Jericho heard the same stories. They all knew about the Red Sea, the defeated armies, the impossible victories. But while her neighbors responded with fear and fortified walls, Rahab responded with faith.

Three Lessons from a Transformed Life

1. She Realized God's Power

Rahab didn't just acknowledge that the Israelites' God was powerful—she recognized He was THE God. Not one option among many. Not just stronger than other gods. THE God who controls everything.

In our world of competing voices—political pundits, social media influencers, cultural trends,

even well-meaning friends and family—we need Rahab's clarity. We need to ask: What does GOD say about this? Where is GOD moving? What is GOD doing?

Faith begins when we stop treating God like one voice among many and recognize Him as Lord over all.

2. She Rejected Her Former Life

Rahab didn't just believe differently—she lived differently. The Bible tells us she had been storing flax on her roof, organizing her household. The woman who once used her house for prostitution was now using it for productive work and, ultimately, as a refuge for God's servants.

She completely repurposed her life.

That's what repentance looks like. It's not just feeling bad about your past—it's actively turning away from it. It's taking what was once used for sin and offering it to God for His purposes.

Your body. Your home. Your resources. Your time. Your talents. What were once "dead vines" can become instruments of beauty in God's hands.

3. She Received God's Grace

The spies gave Rahab a promise: "Hang this scarlet cord in your window. When we return to destroy the city, we'll see it and pass over your house."

A scarlet thread. That's it. That's all that would stand between her and destruction.

It echoes the Passover in Egypt, when Israelite families painted lamb's blood on their doorposts and the death angel passed over. It points forward to the cross, where Jesus shed His scarlet blood so that we could be made "white as snow."

But here's the crucial part: Rahab had to receive the grace offered to her. She could have dismissed it as too simple. She could have tried to save herself another way. She could have fled the city in fear.

Instead, she trusted. She hung the thread. She did exactly what the spies instructed.

And she was saved.

The Rest of the Story

When Joshua's army conquered Jericho, they rescued Rahab and her entire family. She went from being a Canaanite prostitute to living among God's people.

But the story gets even better.

Rahab married an Israelite man named Salmon. They had a son named Boaz (yes, THAT Boaz from the book of Ruth). Boaz became the grandfather of King David. And David's lineage led directly to Jesus Christ.

When Matthew wrote his Gospel, he included a genealogy of Jesus. And right there in the family tree of the Messiah, he lists Rahab—the prostitute from Jericho.

God didn't just save her. He gave her a legacy that would impact all of human history.

What About Your Dead Vines?

Maybe you're reading this and thinking about your own life. The mistakes you've made. The years you've wasted. The sin you can't seem to shake. The past that haunts you.

You feel like a dead vine—worthless, broken, fit only to be thrown away.

But God specializes in redemption.

He takes dead vines and makes Christmas trees. He takes prostitutes and puts them in the lineage of the Savior. He takes broken people and gives them purpose, meaning, and a legacy that echoes into eternity.

The question is: Will you let Him?

Your Scarlet Thread Moment

Rahab had a moment of decision. When the spies gave her the scarlet thread, she said, "According to your words, so be it." Then she hung it in the window.

That was her moment—when hearing about God became trusting in God.

Maybe you've been hearing about God for years. You know the stories. You've been to church. You understand the theology. But you've never had your "scarlet thread moment"—that point where you personally receive His grace and say, "According to Your words, so be it."

Or maybe you've been a Christian for years, but you're realizing there are areas of your life you haven't fully surrendered. You've been trying to save yourself through effort, performance, or hiding.

Today can be your moment to hang the thread again—to trust completely in God's grace.

The Truth About Grace

Here's what I want you to hear: There's nothing you can do to make God love you more. And there's nothing you've done that makes Him love you less.

His grace is greater than your past.

His blood is sufficient for your sin.

His plan for your life is bigger than your mistakes.

Rahab shows us that God doesn't just save us FROM something—He saves us FOR something. He doesn't just rescue us from destruction; He gives us purpose, meaning, and a story worth telling.

The dead vines of your life? God wants to make something beautiful out of them.

But you have to let Him. You have to recognize His power, reject your old ways, and receive His grace.

You have to hang the scarlet thread.

So What Now?

If you're ready to take that step—or take it again—here's what I'd encourage you to do:

Recognize God's power. Stop treating Him like one option among many. Acknowledge that He is Lord over everything in your life—your past, your present, your future, your circumstances, your struggles. All of it.

Reject your former life. What needs to change? What are you still using for your own purposes instead of God's? What old loyalty or pattern is competing with your devotion to Christ? Name it. Confess it. Turn from it.

Receive God's grace. Stop trying to earn what Jesus already purchased with His blood. Trust that His sacrifice is enough. Hang the scarlet thread. Say, "According to Your words, so be it."

And then watch what God does with your dead-vine life.

Because if He can take a prostitute from Jericho and put her in the family tree of Jesus, He can certainly do something beautiful with you.

What's your next step? I'd love to hear your story. Drop a comment below or reach out—

because your scarlet thread moment might be exactly what someone else needs to hear about today.