

Holy Moments

Week 2: Rahab

Scripture

Matthew 1:1-6; Joshua 2:1-18; James 2:25

Motivation

We're studying some of the women in the genealogy of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

What is genealogy?

The study or record of a person's family history, showing how we are related through parents, grandparents, and earlier descendants.

Why are we obsessed with genealogy?

- **It helps us know where we came from (maybe understand who we are now)**
Family stories, cultures, and places answer, "What kind of story am I part of?"
- **It gives us a sense of belonging**
It gives a sense of roots instead of feeling like we just appeared out of nowhere.
- **It connects us with a larger story**
Genealogy turns random names into stories (struggles, relocations, wars, faith, addictions, and sacrifices)

Although genealogies can be exciting when you discover that you were related to someone famous or vital to history, it can also make you ashamed when an unsavory character pops up.

We want to be able to tell people that we're related to [fill in the blank].

While walking through the women in Jesus' family tree, we discover both people you'd be proud to be related to, and others...not so much.

Specifically, we are looking at five women, but most ancient genealogies didn't include women, especially not...

- Tamar (scandal)
- Rahab (prostitute, Gentile)
- Ruth (Moabite)
- Bathsheba (adultery, abuse, murder in the background)
- Mary (pregnant under a cloud of suspicion)

Information

Today, we'll be looking at Rahab, taken straight from Matthew's genealogy of Jesus.

Matthew 1:1 (NLT) This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham... **5** Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab). Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth). Obed was the father of Jesse. **6** Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah).

Why is it important that we talk about the genealogy of Jesus?

- It shows us that Jesus is the promised King (traces Him through David, proving He has the legal right to the throne of Israel)
- It shows us that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises (connects Him to Abraham, showing He is the One through whom all nations are blessed)
- It shows us that Jesus' story is rooted in real history (a traceable family line)
- It shows us that God's grace runs through His family tree (including the broken, outsiders, and people marked by shame)

Matthew's genealogy shows us that Jesus came for sinners, not the "perfect."

Three Phases of Rahab's Life...

- **Rahab had a shameful past**
 - ✓ She was a prostitute in Jericho (Israel had sent spies to scout out the land He had promised them)

Joshua 2:1 (NLT) Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia Grove. He instructed them, "Scout out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho." So the two men set out and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that night.

After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, Israel finally stood on the edge of the Promised Land (Jericho was the first city in their way). Joshua sent two spies into Jericho, and they entered the house of Rahab, a prostitute.

- ✓ She had chosen to hide the men, risking her own life

Joshua 2:4 (NLT) Rahab had hidden the two men, but she replied, "Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn't know where they were from. **5** They left the town at dusk, as the gates were about to close. I don't know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them." **6** (Actually, she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them beneath bundles of flax she had laid out.)

■ **Rahab had a faith that led to action**

- ✓ She had heard about God's promise to give them the land (Genesis 12:1-3)
Joshua 2:8 (NLT) Before the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went up on the roof to talk with them. **9** "I know the Lord has given you this land..."
- ✓ She had heard of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage (40 years prior)
Joshua 2:10 (NLT) For we have heard how the Lord made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt...
- ✓ She believed in God as the supreme God
Joshua 2:10 (NLT) And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed. **11** No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.
"Rahab's confession of faith declared the greatness and superiority of Yahweh, the God of Israel. This phrase is used in declarations of faith for the people of Israel. – David Guik
- ✓ She believed she would be rescued, along with her family (they were)
Joshua 2:12 (NLT) "Now swear to me by the Lord that you will be kind to me and my family since I have helped you. Give me some guarantee that **13** when Jericho is conquered, you will let me live, along with my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families." **17** Before they left, the men told her, "We will be bound by the oath we have taken only if you follow these instructions. **18** When we come into the land, you must leave this scarlet rope hanging from the window through which you let us down. And all your family members—your father, mother, brothers, and all your relatives—must be here inside the house."
Joshua 6:25 (NLT) But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

■ **Rahab looked forward to a future hope**

James 2:25 (NLT) Rahab the prostitute is another example. She was shown to be right with God by her actions when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road.

Rahab the prostitute believed the stories of God's saving work for the Hebrews. So, at some personal risk, she hid the Jewish spies from her own people, then lowered them on a rope so they could escape. Thus, she became a model of faith completed in works. – ESV Study Bible

Application

As Jericho fell, Rahab and her family were brought out before the city was destroyed.

They weren't pushed to the margins but welcomed into Israel.

She eventually marries Salmon (an Israelite) and becomes the mother of Boaz.

Her family line continues with Obed, then Jesse, then David... and, generations later, Jesus.

The prostitute from Jericho is grafted into the King's family line.

Grace doesn't just pull you out of the rubble; it seats you at the family table.

And this points us forward.

Centuries after Rahab tied a scarlet cord in her window, Jesus hung on a cross outside another city wall.

On that cross, He took the judgment we deserved so that anyone who trusts Him (no matter your past) would be spared eternal separation from God and brought into His family.

You don't get into Jesus' family by having a clean record. You get in by clinging to His mercy.

As we close, let me ask...

- *Have you ever really trusted this Jesus, or just stood at a distance?*
- *Will you let Jesus rename you and rewrite your story?*
- *Have you ever actually responded in faith, like Rahab did?*

If God can take Rahab (the prostitute) of Jericho and write her into the story of Jesus, there is hope for you.

In Christ, you're not outsider anymore, but you're invited into the family of God.