

8-27-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-9

Purpose: Provoke people to imitate the example of faith of Rahab, Gideon, and Jephthah.

Truth for Today: If we follow the example of men and women of faith, we'll get the results they did.

Text: Hebrews 11:29-34

Topic: Faith, Rahab, Gideon, Jephthah, Grace, willingness, Victim

Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.

Series Truth for Today: Faith that endures becomes faith that receives God's promise.

## Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-9

- I. Introduction (Wed Life Group Launch/ livestream. Attend Sat. night KZ overcrowded)
  - A. Hebrews 11:29–34 (NLT) It was **by faith** that the people of Israel went right through the Red Sea as though they were on dry ground. But when the Egyptians tried to follow, they were all drowned.<sup>30</sup> It was **by faith** that the people of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls came crashing down.<sup>31</sup> It was **by faith** that Rahab the prostitute was not destroyed with the people in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.<sup>32</sup> How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the **faith** of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets.<sup>33</sup> **By faith** these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions,<sup>34</sup> quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight.
    1. The secret to every great thing they did was they all had faith in God. They believed what God said, obeyed His word and impossible things became possible.
  - B. Review series: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, a vs. by vs. study of Heb. 11. The example of faith of these great men and women enabled them to endure difficulty and receive God's promises. Faith means we believe or trust God and act in obedience.

- C. Last week we talked about Moses, today we'll learn several life applications from Rahab, Gideon, and Jephthah. (We'll finish the series next week.)
- D. Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-9
- II. Rahab experienced God's saving grace because she walked away from her old way of living and chose to obey God. (Context: Moses died; Joshua led Israel across the Jordan river and the fortified city Jericho stood in the way of them and the promised land.)
- A. [Vs. <sup>31</sup> It was by faith that **Rahab the prostitute** was not destroyed with the people in her city who **refused to obey God**. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.
1. [Joshua 2:1–5 (NLT) Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies...“Scout out the land... around Jericho.” So the two men...came to the house of a **prostitute named Rahab** and stayed there that night...<sup>3</sup> So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: “Bring out the men...<sup>4</sup> **Rahab had hidden the two men**, but she replied, “Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn't know where they were from. <sup>5</sup> They left the town at dusk...I don't know where they went...] A prostitute lied because of her faith in God. This is where her life changed for the better.
  2. Why a prostitute? The 2 spies would have a good chance of going unnoticed in a house of prostitution. Also, her home was built into the city wall for easy escape. The Jewish historian Josephus speaks of Rahab as an innkeeper, not a harlot. She may have been both.<sup>1</sup> The NT clearly indicates she was a prostitute.
- B. She was a sinful woman in whom God in His grace spared from the judgment soon to fall on the city.<sup>2</sup> Rahab was in the genealogy of Jesus. [Mt. 1:5 (NIV) Salmon the father of Boaz, whose **mother was Rahab**...] There are 4 women with sinful pasts (and a lot of men) in Jesus' genealogy: Tamar and Rahab were prostitutes, Ruth was a Moabitess and Bathsheba was an adulteress. Rahab and the others show us the power of God's grace to forgive our sin and put us on a path of life with new meaning.<sup>3</sup>
- C. Life App #1: God's grace is greater than our sin. Jesus loves sinners, no matter how bad we are. He died to save us. [Luke 15:1 (NKJV) Then **all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him**. Luke 19:10 (NKJV) for the Son of Man has come to **seek and to save that which was lost.**”]

D. Ruth's act of hiding the spies was more than self-protection, it was an act of turning to God, faith, and obedience. She chose to follow God while everyone else in town rejected Him. [Heb 11: 31.the people in her city who **refused to obey God.**] Life App #2: Genuine faith in God demands we turn our back on our sinful ways and follow Jesus. This is how we are saved from the penalty of sin and experience eternal life.

III. Gideon said 'yes' to God and God accomplished great things through him.

A. [Heb 11:32 It would take too long to recount the stories of **the faith of Gideon,**] Context: Israel had rebelled against God and God used the Midianites to discipline them. [Judges 6:11–30 (NLT) ...**Gideon...was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites.** <sup>12</sup> The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "**Mighty hero, the Lord is with you!**"] Pic winepress One day God use Gideon to turn the nation back to God.

1. Life App #3: God sees our potential; all He needs is our willingness to do what He says. E.g. Pic Christin Bentley, housewife and mom who got sick of our culture sexualizing kids. She helped pass several bills in Tx.

B. [Vs. <sup>13</sup> "Sir," Gideon replied, "if the Lord is with us, **why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles** our ancestors told us about...<sup>14</sup> Then the Lord turned to him and said, "**Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel...I am sending you!**" <sup>15</sup> "**But Lord,**" Gideon replied, "**how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest** in the whole tribe...and **I am the least in my entire family!**" <sup>16</sup> **The Lord said to him, "I will be with you...**] He said yes and burned the altar of Baal, restored the altar of God and led an army of 300 to destroy the Midianite oppressors.

1. Life App. #4: Faith says yes to God in spite of doubts, questions, and excuses. Pic E.g., Larry Myers Mexico Ass.God. you're too old, no \$, language barrier...today

2. Life App #5: God is looking for willing people to advance His Kingdom; God and I are a majority. <sup>16</sup> *The Lord said to him, "I will be with you.* When I have faith in God and do what He says, nothing is impossible. E.g., Pic. Coach Kennedy Supreme Court overturned 'Lemon' case restoring religious liberty in public. Pic Restoring faith in America, RFIA.com First Liberty Institute

3. God is looking for modern day Gideons to help change America.

#### IV. Jephthah shows us we don't have to be a victim because of our circumstances.

A. [Heb. 11:32 How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the **faith of Jephthah**] [Judges 11:1–2 (NLT) <sup>1</sup> Now Jephthah...was a **great warrior**. He was the son of Gilead, **but his mother was a prostitute**. <sup>2</sup> Gilead's wife also had several sons, and when these half-brothers grew up, they chased Jephthah off the land. "You will not get any of our father's inheritance ... for **you are the son of a prostitute**." <sup>3</sup> So Jephthah fled...and...**Soon he had a band of worthless rebels following him...**]

1. Life App #6: People will follow a gifted the leader. Leaders can lead people the wrong way or the right way.

B. [Vs. <sup>29</sup> At that time **the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah...**and from there he led an army against the Ammonites.]

1. Jephthah had a divine destiny to be a leader and judge in Israel. His identity could have been 'the son of a prostitute', i.e., a 'victim mentality' or a great warrior with God-given ability to be a leader in Israel. The way he thought about himself would determine what he did with his life. He could believe the lie or God's truth.

2. Life App # 7: The way we think about ourselves will control what we become. We must let what God thinks about us become more important than our circumstances, how we feel about ourselves or what people say about us.

3. Video Titans...I'm not going to college...I'm just no good white trash.

C. Life App #8: Christians aren't victims of our circumstances; we have a new identity in Christ. Society makes us feel like a helpless victim because of our race, education, possessions, etc., but the truth is [2 Cor. 5:17 (NLT) ...anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!]

#### V. Conclusion: summary

A. (1) Rahab experienced God's saving grace because she walked away from her old way of living and chose to obey God. (2) Gideon said 'yes' to God and God accomplished great things through him. (3) Jephthah shows us we don't have to be a victim because of our circumstances.

#### VI. Response

A. Prayer

B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Bratcher, R. G., & Newman, B. M. (1983). [\*A translator's handbook on the book of Joshua\*](#) (p. 24). United Bible Societies.
2. 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). Victor Books.
3. Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). [\*Matthew\*](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 18). Victor Books.

VIII. Supplemental Material

A. Joshua and Israel's faith was tested multiple times.

1. Vs. <sup>30</sup> It was by faith that the people of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls came crashing down. Archaeology
2. Joshua 3:8–13 (NLT) Give this command to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: ‘When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, **take a few steps into the river and stop there.**’ ” ...<sup>13</sup>...As soon as their feet touch the water, the flow of water will be cut off upstream, and the river will stand up like a wall.”
3. Joshua 6:1–5 (NLT) Now **the gates of Jericho were tightly shut** because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. <sup>2</sup> **But** the Lord said to Joshua, “**I have given you Jericho**, its king, and all its strong warriors. <sup>3</sup> You and your fighting men should march around the town once a day for six days. <sup>4</sup>...On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. <sup>5</sup> When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams’ horns, have all the people shout as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town.”
4. The 1<sup>st</sup> test was the Jordan at flood stage; the 2<sup>nd</sup> test was the impenetrable city of Jericho.
5. The Christian life is often 1 test/ challenge after another // climb ladder to get to top...we need daily constant vigilance but God will be there to help us.
6. Life App#: Living by faith is a daily mentality.
7. Satan left Jesus until an opportune time

8. Mentality// soldiers daily training for battles pop up anytime eg world trade center...seals deployed...stay spiritually strong every day, don't take it easy...NT always devil prowls// athletes in constant training
  9. // police officer...vest on job, Nehemiah slept with sword
- B. Judges 6: <sup>25</sup> That night the Lord said to Gideon...Pull down your father's altar to Baal, and cut down the Asherah pole standing beside it. <sup>26</sup> Then build an altar to the Lord your God here on this hilltop sanctuary...<sup>29</sup>...And after...making a careful search, they learned that it was Gideon, the son of Joash. <sup>30</sup> "Bring out your son,"..."**He must die** for destroying the altar of Baal and for cutting down the Asherah pole."
- C. Samson shows us God will give us another chance when we mess up
1. [Heb. 11:32 How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the **faith of Samson**] Judges 14:1–3 (NLT)...one of the Philistine women caught his eye. <sup>2</sup>...he told his father and mother... I want to marry her...<sup>3</sup> His father and mother objected. "Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites you could marry?" they asked. "Why must you go to the **pagan Philistines** to find a wife?" But Samson told his father, "Get her for me! **She looks good to me.**" Judges 16:1 (NLT) One day Samson went to the Philistine town of Gaza and spent the night with a prostitute. Delilah Judges 16:21 (NLT) <sup>21</sup> So the Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They took him to Gaza, where he was bound with bronze chains and forced to grind grain in the prison.
  2. Life App #: Sin has a heavy price tag and will eventually bring great pain in our life.
  3. Life App #: God can use us after we blow it...He's the God of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chance. Judges 16:23–31 (NLT) <sup>23</sup> The Philistine rulers held a great festival, offering sacrifices and praising their god, Dagon...<sup>25</sup>... "Bring out Samson so he can amuse us...<sup>28</sup> Then **Samson prayed**...remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time...<sup>29</sup> Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars...Pushing against them with both hands, <sup>30</sup> he prayed, "Let me die with the Philistines." And the temple crashed down on the Philistine rulers and all the people. So **he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime.**