



## Part 8: The Unexpected X-Factor

### INTRODUCTION — War, what is it good for?

Deuteronomy 7:1-3; 20:16-185

### LOOK TO THE BOOK – Rahab, the Rescuer

Joshua 2:1-24

- Spies sent from Shittim?
- Rahab, the Prostitute?
- A bold-faced lie?
- Faith in the power of the one true God?
- Commitment grounded in “hesed”?
- A scarlet cord of hope?

### TAKE OUTS – I’ll Have That to Go Please

#### TAKE OUT #1

People marginalized in community at times most easily see God’s approaching kingdom (Matthew 21:32). Rahab lived on the margins in a house on the walls of Jericho. She discovered that she was strategically positioned to help the purposes of God. Do you view those who are marginalized as the most likely to see and welcome God’s community?

#### TAKE OUT #2

Again and again we are confronted that we look at outward appearances but God looks at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). Rahab could be labelled a prostitute, liar and traitor and yet her heart was right before God. Am I judging someone right now by outward appearances without truly knowing their heart before God?

#### TAKE OUT #3

To embrace God’s kingdom, we must transcend our own culture. We can’t fully align with our culture and at the same time fully engage God’s kingdom (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 2:1-6; Colossians 2:8). We must make a choice.

#### TAKE OUT #4

God doesn’t blindly follow the rules so we shouldn’t. The Torah strictly condemns prostitution, inter-marriage with Gentiles and making exceptions when executing God’s judgment. Rahab the Canaanite prostitute and her family are spared judgment, welcomed into community, she marries an Israelite, and becomes an ancestor of Jesus. Am I open to those God-honouring exceptions when those with the right heart are not judged for breaking the rules as they seek to obey God in the best way they know how?

#### TAKE OUT #5

God often delights to use the small things in our lives to accomplish his big purposes (1 Corinthians 1:25-29). Rahab’s scarlet cord becomes a saving lifeline for the spies and a symbol of God’s acceptance of her and her family. If you feel insignificant and lacking anything big to offer God, do you grasp that this makes a prime candidate for God to use? Have you offered God your small things?

### CONCLUSION – Become an X-Factor

Matthew 1:1-6; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25

## HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

### Warming Up...

1. Review this week’s message and talk about what most challenged, puzzled, or encouraged you.
2. How do you react to the notion that God commanded Israel on occasion to kill entire communities? (How is that for warming up the discussion?) ☺

### Look to the Book...

3. Rahab was in one of the weakest positions of any character of the story of Israel. 1) Discuss what her life and social status may have been like as a prostitute in an ancient city that practiced ritual prostitution and child sacrifice as a part of their cult worship of fertility gods? 2) Read 1 Corinthians 1:25-29. How does Rahab illustrate this verse and why do you think God operates this way?
4. In what ways are the two spies contrasted to Rahab in their devotion to God? How are their hearts revealed to be self-centred rather than other centered? How does Rahab’s story inspire you to show “hesed” to your enemies?
5. Read Joshua 2:9-11. Hand out pieces of paper and pens. Have each person write out her or his own personalized statement of faith. If you were cornered and asked to declare your faith, what would you say? You may want to use her statement as a template. If you feel comfortable, read your statement to the group.

### So What?...

6. God used Rahab’s scarlet cord, something seemingly small and insignificant, to strategically advance his purposes. What in your life might be a “scarlet cord” that God could use to advance his purposes in your sphere of influence?
7. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9. What area of your life do you feel weak or marginalized and where you need God’s grace and power in your life? Pray for each other in these areas that God’s grace would be sufficient and is power shown to be perfect.