

Reflection Questions: Rahab

Rahab was a prostitute. Unlike Tamar, her vocation as a prostitute was a problem for people who heard her story. In other Jewish literature, it has been suggested that maybe Rahab was simply an innkeeper; but there is no indication in the story that this is the case.

And yet, even though Rahab was a prostitute, she showed heroism as well. She saves the Israelite spies from certain death if they are caught. Rahab is a model of loyalty.

It is interesting that Rahab appears in the line of Jesus' genealogy. She could very easily have been left out of the story. In fact, it is hard for scholars to trace the marriage to Salmon and her being the mother of Boaz from other sources both in the Bible and literature outside the Bible. But she was important enough for Matthew to include her name in the Bible as one of the great-great-grandmothers of Jesus. Interestingly, the Gospel of Matthew is the only gospel to state that both tax collectors AND **prostitutes** will enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 21:31)

1) Why do you think Rahab was included in Jesus' family tree?

Rahab is also mentioned as being faithful in other Scriptures.

Hebrews 11: 31 says: "By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient."

James 2: 24-26 says: "You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead."

2) What do you learn about faith by the example of Rahab?

3) Does anything about Rahab's story resonate with you? Have you felt marginalized, like an outsider, or too sinful to be part of God's people?

4) Rahab's story works on reversal of expectation. No one expected a prostitute to be loyal or an example of faithfulness, and yet Rahab was. Can you think of examples of types of people in our world today that you might be tempted to dismiss, who you think couldn't possibly teach you anything about faith or discipleship?

5) Is there anything about Rahab's story that you can apply to your life today?

Putting it together

Choose one bead out of the assortment that to you represents Rahab's story.
Why did you choose the bead you did? What about it represents Rahab's story to you?
