

Real Characters
Rahab (Joshua 2)
By Pastor David Hillis, 11 May 2014

BIG IDEA: Your past does not have to define your future as long as God is in it.

For all of us, there are those times when life can paint us or those we love into a corner, and we want to give up.

Rahab the prostitute

- Rahab was known as a harlot, a prostitute. That had become her *label*. That is how everyone knew her. When these Hebrew spies came into town, that's how they saw her.
- Rahab heard about this all-powerful God the Israelites serve, and she thought that through them that maybe, *just maybe*, she could have a fresh start. That her past didn't have to define her future, if God is in it.

Rahab the protector

- Whereas others in the city of Jericho had heard about God and believed in His power and maybe even been scared of God, Rahab is different. She doesn't just believe in God; she puts her faith, her trust in God.
- Despite her past, despite how disappointing and no doubt *hopeless* it had been, she resolved that day that her past did not have to determine her future any longer

Rahab the parent

- Rahab, who was once known as a prostitute, manages to marry into the most prominent family in Judah. She no longer is a prostitute; she is a Mom.
- This is the woman God chose to be a protector, and use to help His people come into the Promised Land. This is the woman whom God held up for us as a parent, a woman to be honored in the lineage of Jesus.
- Rahab embraced the God of Israel and went from being a nobody to being important and respected - all because God made Himself known in her life and she decided that her past did not have to dictate her future.

With just what you know now of God, are you willing to trust Him?

Will you act on your faith, like Rahab?

What does it look like for you to embrace God's plan and put your faith into action this week?

A MOTHER'S DAY LOOK at 1 Corinthians 13!

I can do storytime every night until my child is grown and take him to church every weekend.

But if I don't have love, it's as annoying as another episode of "The Wiggles" or "Barney & Friends".

I can chase a naked toddler peeing through the house while cooking dinner and posting to Facebook.

I can become an expert at getting cactus needles out of body parts and read a sick child's temperature with the back of my hand.

But if I have not love, it's for nothing.

Love is patient while watching and praying at the front window, an hour after curfew.

Love is kind when hearing back in anger, "I hate you!"

Love doesn't envy the parents of those obedient, overachieving neighbor kids.

Love doesn't brag after multitasking all day and seeing my husband return, unable to get even one thing done at a time.

Love is not rude when he then says, "So what have you done all day?"

Love isn't easily angered when my son thinks the world revolves around him.

Love isn't self-righteous when he brings the car back with a missing fender, but rejoices in the truth (he made it home in one piece).

Love always trusts God to protect my children, when I finally accept that I cannot.

Love always perseveres, through the belches, the rolling eyes, messy rooms, hidden tattoos and bad report cards.

Love never fails.

But where there are memories of painful labor and 1,000 diaper changes, they will fade away.

Where there is talking back, it will (eventually) cease.

Where there is a teenager who thinks she knows everything, there will one day be an adult who knows you did your best.

For we know we fail our children, and we pray they don't end up in therapy, but when we get to heaven, our imperfect parenting will disappear.

(Thank you, God!)

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.

Faith I can get the newest stains out of their clothes,

Hope that one day I will be able to go to the bathroom again by myself,

and an unconditional love for my children that could only come from God.

And the greatest of these is love!

— Dave Hillis, May 2014