

# JOSHUA

## Week Two

### Developing a Faith Based Plan of Attack

#### Significant truths:

#### Chapter 2

#### 1. Planning your objectives and course of action is guided by:

- a. God's Word and being obedient to His word,
- b. Information and facts objectively obtained,
- c. Praying for Wisdom, and
- d. Moving ahead trusting in the provision and direction of the Lord.

Joshua is now faced with leading the Israelites into battle. Through three major military campaigns involving more than thirty enemy encounters, the people of Israel learned a valuable lesson under Joshua's capable leadership: Victory comes through faith in God and obedience to His word, rather than military might or numerical superiority.

Joshua had received his commission to cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land God had given them. While Joshua had the promise of God's deliverance, he had not been given instructions on just how God would defeat the enemies they would face. As a wise military leader, he needed information regarding the enemy before launching his attack. He needed to know the layout of the enemy's defenses, the condition of their morale, their strength in numbers, and their confidence of victory. Joshua began to assess the situation. He sent two men as spies to view the land, especially Jericho (Joshua 2:1). He wanted to know the facts necessary to make wise decisions. Too often, we turn to God, pray for help crying out for Him to rescue us, but what we fail to do is gather the facts and information that will allow us to objectively assess the situation. We blindly go forward without understanding the circumstances, and as such, we often times, begin to lose our way because we have not developed a proper plan. Luke 14:31 says, "Or what king, going out to confront another king in battle, will not sit down first and determine whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?" We are to know the facts, turn to scripture, pray for wisdom and guidance and then establish plans, goals, and objectives along with priorities and attack the problem accordingly, all the while resting in God's intervention and direction. "The intentions of the heart belong to a man, but the answer of the tongue comes from the Lord (Proverbs 16:1)"

#### 2. God will always be out ahead of us working and preparing the way.

Chapter 2 of Joshua points to God's sovereign control over the affairs of men and how He directs the steps of those who rest in His provision or are looking to know him better. As the spies enter Jericho, they encounter Rahab, a prostitute, who takes them to her home. It is clear that God had already worked in Rahab's heart, He knew her faith, her longing to know God and perhaps even to become a part of God's people. So, He brought the spies and Rahab together for their protection and her blessing.

Rahab had confidence and conviction in the fact of the Lord's power. Somehow, she knew what had occurred at the Red Sea and afterwards, and that it was the product of the sovereign power of Israel's God. The news of God's power and the Israelite victories had traveled throughout the land and as Rahab contemplated on this news, God worked in her heart, and

she gained confidence and conviction in Israel's God as the one and only true God who rules over heaven and the affairs of men on earth. Her statement in verse 11... "for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath," is more than a statement that she was expressing but rather demonstrated her confidence and belief that Yaweh was the one and only true God.

### **3. Look for God's touch and respond in faith knowing that God is at work in our lives.**

Amazing things happen when we perceive that God is at work. The only thing that can hinder us in doing the will of God and fulfilling our call is our own unbelief. Rahab, a gentile prostitute, was as far from God's covenant community as we can imagine. But she believed in and obeyed God? and the Bible remembers her for her faith. Aside from being the main character in this story. Rahab is mentioned three times in the New Testament. She is in Jesus' genealogy (Matthew 1:5), she is listed among the heroes of the faith (Hebrews 11:31), and James uses her as an example of faith in action (James 2:25). Rahab wasn't a great preacher or theologian, but she believed God and did what He said. That is all God asks of us.

### **4. Faith requires appropriate action. Our response demonstrates our transformed heart.**

Rahab had a deep desire to know God, to put her faith in God, and to turn from her brokenness. She desired to have a relationship with God, even if it meant losing all she had and joining the Israelites. She gave them the information the spies needed, that they had already heard about the Red Sea and the other victories. In her heart she knew that the land had already been given over to the Israelites even before one battle had been fought. She tells the spies that when they heard of all that had taken place and how God protected them, "our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below." (Joshua 2:11)

But faith depends upon a changed heart, and God calls us to demonstrate our faith. "And similarly, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another way? (James 2:25) Rahab did not just talk about her faith she put it into action. She not only protected the spies, but she protected her family as well. She made a covenant with the spies that they would treat her and her family with kindness as long as she did not tell them what they were doing. She kept her word and she and her family were saved. Her silence and the scarlet cord she tied to the window demonstrated her faith in God.

**Questions and Discussion:** Look at the key truths provided in Chapter 2 of Joshua and consider the following questions for discussion:

- When faced with difficult challenges or in the face of adversity, do you "react" or "respond" to the circumstances? What's the difference between reacting and responding? How do you approach the situation? Discuss your thoughts...
- Did you consider any of the following: meditate and study God's word, pray for wisdom, gather all the facts and information before you act or respond, consider the consequences...
- Do you expect God to do the heavy lifting or do you move forward trusting in the provision and direction of the Lord? How do you discover miracles or signs from God before you move?

- Are you encouraged by Rahab's story knowing that even when we are deep in sin, God still loves us and extends his grace to redeem us and rescue us? Share a recent time you experienced God's love and grace.
- Think about the news that Rahab and the people of Jericho had heard regarding the power of God in protecting and caring for the Israelites. How important is it for us to protect our relationship with Jesus as He works through us knowing that the news of what He has accomplished in our lives will be heard from those who are broken and lost? Are you ever concerned about how you are perceived by others? Think of time when you have reflected who you are in Christ and share that with the group.
- What happens when we rush ahead without Christ front and center?