

Title: **RAHAB'S FAITH IN CHRIST**

Text: Hebrews 11:31

Subject: *The Character of Faith*

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Tape # AA-54

Readings: *Bob Poncer and Bob Duff*

Introduction:

Men everywhere honor the great triumphs of their heroes with monuments. Most of the monuments are raised in honor of great soldiers. Sometimes they are raised in honor to those who have performed great works of philanthropy, self-sacrifice, or individual heroism.

FAITH MOST HONORABLE

It seems most reasonable to me that there should be a monument to faith in Christ, which is the greatest, most noble, most honorable of all things on this earth. It is the most honorable of all things because faith in Christ is that which is both most honoring to our Creator and that which makes men and women most honorable.

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The apostle Paul raised a monument to faith in Christ by the dictate, direction, and inspiration of God the Holy Ghost in the 11th chapter of the Book of Hebrews. What a great monument it is! In this chapter, God the Holy Spirit, by whom faith is created in the hearts of chosen, redeemed sinners, by whom it is sustained, and by whom it works, shows us many of the great triumphs of faith.

ORDINARY BELIEVERS

Like most monuments, the names recorded here are the names of common, ordinary men and women. There is nothing really striking about any of them, except that for which their names are inscribed in this chapter. They were people like us, ordinary Joes and Marys, nothing but sinners who believed God.

The chapter begins with one triumph of faith, and then proceeds to others. If I have counted them right, there are **48 distinct acts of faith** set before us in this chapter. All are extraordinary, in that they are all acts

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beyond the realm of human ability. Yet, there is a since in which they are very ordinary, in that these acts of faith and the triumphs of them are common to all who believe God.

- Like **Abel** all who believe God obtain witness that they are righteous before God.
- Like **Enoch** all who trust Christ are delivered from death because they please God.
- Like **Noah** all who are born of God are heirs of righteousness.
- Like **Abraham** all believers are strangers and pilgrims in this world, receiving life from the dead.
- **Faith triumphs over natural affection.** — Abraham and Isaac
- **Faith stands firm against the allurements of the world.** — Moses
- **Faith keeps the Passover and the sprinkling of blood.**
- **Faith worships God.** — Jacob
- Faith **is patient** in trial.
- Faith **endures** to the end, seeing him who is invisible.

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RAHAB'S FAITH

I want to pick up right where I left off this morning and talk to you about **RAHAB'S FAITH IN CHRIST**. In Hebrews 11:31 God the Holy Spirit inspired the apostle Paul to finish his great, exemplary deeds of faith by giving us the example of Rahab's faith.

“By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.” (Hebrews 11:31)

Yes, God the Holy Ghost teaches us what is to believe God, what it is to trust the Lord Jesus Christ by using the example of a harlot named Rahab. Rahab was a harlot. She was not merely the hostess of a local Jericho hotel. If the Lord had meant to tell us that she was an innkeeper, he would have used the word “innkeeper.” He didn't. He used the word “harlot,” because Rahab was a harlot. Nothing but proud self-righteousness and an utter contempt for

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the free grace of God would ever lead anyone deny this fact.

The harlot Rahab believed God! – What grace is displayed here! What a great, encouraging picture we have before us of...

“The change that’s wrought in a sinner’s heart,
By the touch of the Master’s hand!”

- The most hideous lusts are conquered by the revelation of Christ!
- The most bestial debauchery is defeated by the grace of God!
- The most useless, most worthless dregs of fallen humanity are made the instruments of the greatest possible usefulness by faith in Christ!

Proposition: I want you to see, and see clearly, that faith in Christ is the greatest gift God almighty can or will ever give to any sinner upon the earth.

- Seek it for yourself.
- Seek it for others.

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- Thank God if you have it.

“Oh, gift of gifts! Oh, grace of faith!
My God, how can it be
That Thou, Who hast discerning love,
Shouldst give this gift to me!

How many hearts Thou might'st had had
More worthy, Lord, than mine!
How many souls more worthy far,
Of that pure touch of Thine!

Ah, Grace! Into the most unlikely hearts
It is thy boast to come,
The glory of thy light to find
In darkest spots a home!

Thy choice, O God of goodness, then
I lovingly adore!
Oh, give me grace to keep Thy grace,
And grace to long for more!”

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Divisions: Let me show you six things plainly revealed about Rahab's faith in Christ. My points will be very simple and plain. I don't want you to miss anything because I did not state it plainly and simply enough.

1. Saving Faith
2. Singular Faith
3. Steadfast Faith
4. Self-denying Faith
5. Sympathizing Faith
6. Sanctifying Faith

1. **SAVING FAITH**

In the first place, this woman's faith was saving faith. — *“By faith the harlot Rahab perished not!”* She was delivered amid the general destruction of Jericho purely and only through her faith. Her salvation, however, was not merely of a temporal nature, not merely the deliverance of her body from the sword, but redemption of her soul from hell. **Oh, what a great gift faith is. It is that which saves the soul from hell!**

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- No arm but the omnipotent arm of Almighty God can snatch a sinner from the jaws of hell!
- Nothing but the almighty, efficacious, saving blood atonement of God's own Son could swallow up the infinite torrent of God's holy wrath and justice!
- Yet, faith in Christ is the instrument by which all the benefits and blessings of God's grace are received.

What a great thing the salvation of a soul is! You can never know how great it is until you experience it. There only two people who know what salvation is: The Saved and The Savior!

- No one knows what liberty is except a freed captive and the Deliverer.
- No one knows what redemption is but a ransomed soul and the Redeemer.
- No one knows what forgiveness is but a forgiven sinner and the Forgiver.
- No one knows what salvation is but a saved soul and the Savior.

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“By faith, the harlot Rahab perished not.”

- God sent his Word, and she believed it.
- God showed her the blood, and she hung everything on it.

Now, hear me, my friend. – The same faith that saved Rahab saves sinners today. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall perish not, even if your name is Rahab! – Christ’s Gospel is a declaration of free salvation for sinners. Thieves, murderers, and harlots find in his blood full absolution from all sin!

(Romans 8:1-4) *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.
3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the

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righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

(Romans 8:33-34) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. 34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

The fountain filled with Immanuel's blood was opened for the cleansing of souls as black as hell. **The robe** of Christ was woven for buck naked sinners, guilty before God! **The balm** of Calvary is for sin-sick souls! **He who is Life** came into the world to raise the dead. Oh, perishing and guilty souls, may God give you Rahab's faith! If he does, you shall have Rahab's salvation, and shall with her stand yonder, where the white-robed spotless hosts sing unending hallelujah to God and the Lamb.

2. **SINGULAR FAITH**

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Here is something else. Rahab's faith was a singular faith. The city of Jericho was about to be attacked. Within its walls there were hosts of people of all classes and characters, and they knew right well that if their city should be sacked and stormed they would all be put to death. They had heard clearly what God had done and would do.

Yet, strange as it may seem, there was not another person in the entire city, young or old, male or female, who believed God and sought his mercy, except this woman who had been a harlot. **Rahab and Rahab alone believed God!** – If we would believe God, there is a sense in which we, too, must be singular in believing him!

- Faith is always individual.
- Faith always stands alone.
- Faith always swims upstream, against the tide.
- Faith always stands by itself before God. – *Barefoot Before God!*
- Faith is never the result of group therapy!

Illustration: *The Deception of Mass Evangelism*

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3. STEADFAST FAITH

Third, Rahab's faith was a steadfast faith.

- Her faith stood firm in the midst of trouble.
- She believed God when everything she hoped for seemed most unlikely. – “*Why didn't anybody bring an umbrella?*”
- She believed God to the end. – When Jericho was gone, when the storm was over, she was right where she was when the walls began to fall. – In the house marked by blood, kept by a covenant, and secured by the very Word of God!

4. SELF-DENYING FAITH

This woman's faith was a self-denying faith. She dared to hazard her life for the sake of the spies. She knew that if they were found in her house she would be put to death. Yet she ran the risk of being put to death to save these two men. True faith is always self-denying faith.

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Someone once actually made this statement. I don't know who he was and don't really care. I have seen his face many times. He said, "I have got a good religion; it's the right sort of religion; I do not know that it costs me a cent a year; and yet I believe I am as truly a religious man as anybody." – That's the kind of religion you get from Babylon, not from heaven.

- The Rich Young Ruler
- Paul and Barnabas

(Luke 14:25-33) And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26 If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it*? 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the

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foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him, 30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Illustration: *The Pearl*

“If I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my God with zeal so great,
That I could give Him all.”

“Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

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5. SYMPATHIZING FAITH

Briefly, Rahab's faith was a sympathizing faith. **She was not content to go to heaven alone.** She desired the mercy and grace of God for her family, and got it for them!

(Acts 16:31-34) And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

(Romans 9:1-3) I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish

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that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

(Romans 10:1) Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

George Whitefield once said, "As soon as I was converted, I wanted to be the means of the conversion of all that I had ever known." – **I wouldn't give two cents for religion that does not spread itself!**

Illustration: *"This oak stands as witness."*

6. **SANCTIFYING FAITH**

Now, let me show you one more thing, and I will send you home. Rahab's faith was a sanctifying faith. – **Rahab was no longer a harlot.** The grace of God that brings salvation teaches all who experience it to live graciously, to live godly, to live as unto the Lord.

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(Titus 2:1-14) But speak thou the **things which become sound doctrine**: 2 That the **aged men** be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. 3 The **aged women** likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may **teach the young women** to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. 6 **Young men** likewise exhort to be sober minded. 7 In all things **showing thyself a pattern of good works**: in doctrine *showing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, 8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. 9 **Exhort servants** to be obedient unto their own masters, *and* to please *them* well in all *things*; not answering again; 10 Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may **adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things**. 11

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For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, *12* Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; *13* Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; *14* Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

In the case of Rahab, faith in Christ gave a harlot holiness, turned a prostitute into a prophetess, and made a strumpet a saint. — It still does the same work. Trust the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will leave here tonight just like Rahab left fallen Jericho...

- Forgive of all sin!
- Perfectly holy before God!
- A new creature in Christ!
- An Israelite indeed!
- Under God's covenant care!
- One of Christ's family! — And more...
- One with Christ forever!

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Amen.