

Remnant Life Church
Sunday, February 14, 2016
Any Vessel, Any Vehicle, Any Instrument
Joshua 2:1-21

- What does it mean to be a vessel of God?
- What is required to be a vessel or instrument who God can work through?
- Surely I must be of great ability, pure in every way of my life, and a giant of faith!
- If you believe any or all of this then you are believing a lie!
- The fact is that God will work through any man, woman, or child – sometimes even those who do not know or even deny Him

- The Roman empire continued to rule over the Jews and now Christians for another 300 years
 - But they took a dramatic turn in 312 AD
 - In October of that year what would become known as the Battle of Milvian Bridge
 - A part of the Roman civil wars that at this time had pitted Constantine against Maxentius
 - Both claimed the right to be emperor and were in fact brothers-in-law
 - The Milvian bridge was an important route over the Tiber river and this victory by Constantine led to his becoming sole emperor over the Roman Empire
 - On the eve of the battle Constantine saw a cross in the sky superimposed over the sun
 - The words “In this conquer”
 - Took it to mean that Christ was going to give him victory in battle – marked that by placing a cross on their shields and helmets
 - In gratitude to God for his victory he issued the “Edict of Toleration”
 - “Every man may have complete toleration in practice of whatever worship he has chosen” – for Constantine that worship was Christianity.
 - He was actually not baptized as a Christian for another 25 years in 337 AD
 - At that time convened the Council of Nicea which gave us the the Nicene Creed
 - Among others, affirmed the church’s stance of the Holy Trinity as being equal in deity one to another; the virgin birth; the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus
 - All this led the way for emperor Theodosius to declare 380 Christianity as the official religion of the Roman empire – effectively establishing Roman Catholicism

- St. Patrick – late 5th century
 - The primary patron saint of Ireland for the Catholic church
 - He was not Irish nor was he catholic
 - He was born in Great Britain; age 16 captured by Irish pirates held for 6 years
 - Escaped back to England; became a cleric; returned to Ireland as a missionary
 - The shamrock is used as a symbol because of the legend that Patrick used it as a tool to explain the concept of the trinity to the Irish pagans

- The caste system in biblical times was fairly firm
 - You were always identified first by the land you were from
 - Second was the family or heritage of your people

- Third was what you did within that community – wealthy, ruling, priestly, occupation
 - Several of Jesus’ disciples are identified by what they did – James/John/Andrew/Peter – fisherman; Matthew – tax collector; Simon the zealot was involved in the politics of the day
 - A woman in biblical times however, with some notable exceptions, was not given the same status as men
 - They held no positions of authority within the community or the church
 - Their opinion and word had much less value than the man
 - Their most important function was that of raising the family
- Rahab – **READ - Joshua 2:1-21**
 - A woman who lived, with her family, in the outer wall of the great city of Jericho
 - Jericho – city located on the west bank of the Jordan River
 - History dates so far back that it is widely believed to be one of the oldest continuously habited locations on the earth
 - It was a vital city in biblical times from the OT through to Jesus’ time as it is recorded that Jesus also passed through the city (**Matt; Mark; Luke**)
 - The walls had made it nearly impregnable (at least to human means)
 - Rahab lived in a section of the outer wall that looked out at the area approaching the gate
 - She lived with her family and had a rather prosperous business
 - She was a prostitute
 - Before you pass Judgement listen to **Heb. 11: 31** - *By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.*
 - Listen to **James 2:25** - *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?*
 - How does a woman go from being a prostitute to a vital player in the future of Israel and God’s people?
 1. She feared God
 - **Vs 9** – I know the Lord has given this land to you
 - **Vs 10** – the Lord dried up the Red Sea (40 years ago)
 - **Vs 11**- the Lord you God is God in heaven above and on the earth below
 - This all has to do with God not the might of their military
 2. She believed what the men told her
 - Many times God will bring us into situations but we don’t believe
 - She had a choice to accept or reject who the men said they were
 - She began to demonstrate a new element of her life – faith
 - Many times the greatest hindrance to what God wants to do in our lives is our intellect
 3. She acted

- Hiding these men was a crime punishable by death
 - She also was putting her entire family in jeopardy
 - Prostitution was widely accepted in the Canaanite culture and religion
 - She was not put away by her family or in hiding
 - She lived within the outer wall and saw all who approached the main city gate
4. She worked within the plan of God
- She let them sneak out of her window (proof of her guilt if caught)
 - Sent them on a different way
5. She did not think only of herself
- She made sure that her family was saved
 - God's activity in our lives is never about us alone
 - Becoming a Christian is about you – from that point on it should be about others
- Why was this woman of the OT, this prostitute, this pagan idol-worshipper so important?
 - *Matt. 1:4-6 - Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David.*
 - Rahab was the great-great-great grandmother of David!
 - Which means that Rahab is listed in the lineage of Jesus!
 - God will work in and through every person, every situation, every triumph, and every failure of your life –