

## Your Story Can Change Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Describe a significant change you have experienced in your life.
2. If you were going to live in a city outside of the United States, what city would you choose?

**Read the following passage:** Joshua 2.

There is more going on in the first verse of Joshua 2 than we may realize. When, decades earlier, Moses sent 12 spies to investigate the promised land, things did not go so well. The spies convinced the people of Israel that there was no way they could overpower the people living in Canaan, and the mission was sidelined for 40 years. Joshua surely remembered all of this as he, once again, sent spies into the land. In addition, we learn in Joshua 2:1 that Israel was camping in Shittim. That was the location of one of the worst moral failures in the history of Israel. In Shittim, the people of Israel worshiped false gods and engaged in sexual immorality. All of this is in the background as Joshua and the Israelites prepare to cross the Jordan River. This time, however, things would be different. Joshua would lead the people to inherit the land.

Israel's experiences are a reminder to us that our stories can change, too. This change includes the stories we tell ourselves about the world we're living in as well as our real histories—the things we have done and the things that have been done to us. Rahab, the main protagonist in Joshua 2, gives us a striking picture of how we can experience real transformation.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Why is Rahab an unlikely hero in the Hebrew Scriptures?
2. Rahab's communication with the spies indicates that she was very aware of the reality of her circumstances. Why is beginning with reality an important part of experiencing real transformation? Are you acknowledging reality in your own life? Explain.
3. Rahab had a surprisingly clear understanding of the God of Israel. This understanding led her to make a significant change in her allegiance. Are you convinced that God is going to accomplish his purpose in the earth? Explain. What do you think God is doing right now? Are you aligning your life with God's purpose? Explain.

4. Read Joshua 5:13-15. What does this angelic figure mean when he responds to Joshua's question by saying, "Neither"? What does this interaction teach us about how we should relate with God?
5. Rahab showed kindness to the spies from Israel (Joshua 2:12). Why is this somewhat unexpected? What can we learn from Rahab's example?
6. Rahab recognized that if she didn't take some risks, she would likely die when Israel attacked Jericho. What are some ways you might need to take a risk in order for your own story to change? How do we know what risks we should take?
7. The spies told Rahab to tie a scarlet cord in the window of her home so that the Israelites would know to spare the people living in her house. Like the blood of the sacrificial lambs that the Israelites applied to their doorframes during the Passover, this is a powerful picture of what Jesus has done for us. Explain the connection between these events in the Old Testament and Jesus's work of salvation.

## **Pray**