Then Joshua son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” So they went, and entered the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and spent the night there. **2**The king of Jericho was told, “Some Israelites have come here tonight to search out the land.” **3**Then the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come only to search out the whole land.” **4**But the woman took the two men and hid them. Then she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they came from. **5**And when it was time to close the gate at dark, the men went out. Where the men went I do not know. Pursue them quickly, for you can overtake them.” **6**She had, however, brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof. **7**So the men pursued them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. As soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

**8**Before they went to sleep, she came up to them on the roof **9**and said to the men: “I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before you. **10**For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea[a](https://biblia.com/bible/nrsv/joshua/2/1-14#footnote1) before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. **11**As soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no courage left in any of us because of you. The Lord your God is indeed God in heaven above and on earth below. **12**Now then, since I have dealt kindly with you, swear to me by the Lord that you in turn will deal kindly with my family. Give me a sign of good faith **13**that you will spare my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” **14**The men said to her, “Our life for yours! If you do not tell this business of ours, then we will deal kindly and faithfully with you when the Lord gives us the land.”

**6:22**But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute’s house, and bring the woman out of it and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.” **23**So the young men who had been spies went in and brought Rahab out, along with her father, her mother, her brothers, and all who belonged to her—they brought all her kindred out—and set them outside the camp of Israel. **24**They burned down the city and everything in it; only the silver and gold and the vessels of bronze and iron they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. **25**But Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, Joshua spared. Her family has lived in Israel ever since. For she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

In his book Jesus and The Disinherited, Howard Thurman asks, “What does Jesus have to say to those with their backs against the wall?” His question resonates with many people whose outward appearances may not reflect the internal struggles they’re facing or those who have been rendered invisible by means of their social status. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others in the Civil Rights Movement were inspired by this question and used it as an analytical lens for social justice and inspiration for their personal devotion. Reverend Crawford applies Thurman’s central question to extract spiritual principles and revelations from the life of Rahab, a prostitute, certified heroine of faith (Heb 11:31), ancestor of Jesus and a woman with her back against the wall.

While the dominate narrative of the bible text essentializes Rahab’s identity as a prostitute; God’s counter narrative reveals she’s so much more than her occupation, social position, gender, or racialized stereotypes. Rather, she proves to be indispensable in the plan of God as her home (Bed and Breakfast, Airbnb, Brothel, etc.) was an information depot which Joshua’s soldiers both patronized and used strategically.

With her back against the wall Rehab’s teaches us:

1. Always advocate for your life (v12) – Rahab understood the threat against her people and negotiated safe passage with the soldiers.
2. We have a responsibility to help someone else (v.13) Rahab could have saved only herself, but she requested her family also be saved (remember the River Boat).
3. God will keep you in the midst of it all (6:25 - But Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, Joshua spared. Her family has lived in Israel ever since. For she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.)

**Discussion Questions**

1. Share an experience when your back was against the wall and your relationship with God delivered you.
2. Rahab lied to save the soldiers, does the outcome justify her actions?
3. Is moral purity a necessity to serve God?
4. Explain your limitations when it comes to advocating for your life.
5. How do Rahab’s occupation, location and experience position her save her family?