1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Samuel 16:1-13, 1 Kings 5-8

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"
II Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

Why would Joshua send spies secretly into Jericho? As far as he knew, he would be attacking a heavily armed city using conventional warfare tactics. He needed strategic information about the city. He did not want to move ahead unprepared. The city of Jericho was protected by a wall of houses surrounding it. In Joshua's day it was common to build houses on city walls. Many cities had two walls about 12-15 feet apart. Houses were built on wooden logs laid across the top of the two walls. Rahab may have lived in such a house with a window that looked out over the outside wall. The city of Jericho was built around an oasis in the midst of a hot and desolate valley 840 feet below sea level. Jericho was the first major city the Israelites set out to conquer. Flax was a farm product that grows about three to four feet tall and then is harvested. After harvest it was piled high on the roofs to dry. After it was dry it would be made into yarn which was used to make linen cloth. A tall stack of flax was the perfect hiding place for 2 men who didn’t want to be found.
Lesson Quest

What I want my students to:

Know: God wants to transform my life.

Feel: Forgiven by God’s grace.

Do: Show others how I can live as a new creation.

Leader’s Devotion

God is amazing. For a woman like Rahab to go from “Harlot” to “Heroine”, or from “Sinner” to “Saint” within a matter of days – wow! She was an “outsider” on the outside wall of Jericho. I think many of us feel like outsiders at times. We are all sinners. When we allow God to use us as He wishes, we can be transformed into so much more than we ever imagined for ourselves. Rahab, the town prostitute, changed her ways and ended up being the ancestor to our Lord and Savior! “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9 NIV). James 2:25 tells us that Rahab moved into the “righteous” category after her visit with the spies. I like to think that the scarlet cord in Rahab’s window is a foreshadowing of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. Our “Promised Land” is the Kingdom, and it’s worth fighting for. We don’t need to wander around in a wilderness of ignorance. We have the Bible – the sword of the spirit – to go into any battle. Let’s fight for ourselves and for the children we are teaching – let’s fight for a transformed community.
Get Set!

Option A

Materials: Saltshaker (with a screw on lid) full of salt, some pepper, scissors, a white napkin.

Twist the lid off of your saltshaker. Press the middle of a napkin into the shaker, forming a well. Pour some pepper into this well. Cut off any extra napkin that will show. Screw the lid back on. Show your saltshaker. Who can tell me what I have in my hand? Have any of you used salt on your food before? I sure have. Sometimes I pour too much on my food, because it’s hard to see. As Christians we don’t want to be “invisible” or “not noticed”. We want to show the Lord shining through us. Pour a little salt (pepper) in the palm of your hand. Look at it as if it’s hard to see, then close your hand. I don’t want to be unseen, or not visible like this salt … I want to be noticed for my Christian behavior. Now, I need everyone to say three times together, “Transform me God, make me new.” Say this with them while moving your fist (full of pepper) up and down. Get closer to the students now, and open your hand. Wow, this salt was transformed into pepper. Show each student the pepper in your hand. God wants to transform every person into a new creation. This doesn’t take a trick, just a simple prayer asking Jesus into your heart.

Option B

Materials: Clear glass, water, beta dine, peroxide, and a stir stick or spoon.

Preparation: Fill glass ¾ full of water and have your beta dine bottle ready to pour.

I want you all to think of different sins. These don’t have to be sins you’ve actually committed. Let’s go around the room and name different sins. I’ll start. Name a sin such as lying. As you say “lying” or whatever sin you wish, pour a drop of betadine into the clear water. Go around the room, letting each child name a sin. Each sin gets a drop of betadine. Comment on how filthy the water is becoming as it fills with sin. Once you have gone through most of the class, it may be hard for them to think of different sins. They can take suggestions, or help, from their classmates. If there are not many students, just have them yell out different sins. Isaiah 1:18 says that “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Hold up your peroxide bottle. This is God pouring his forgiveness out onto us. Pour peroxide in your solution, almost to the top of your glass. If it doesn’t turn completely clear, stir it once and it will be clear. God is the only one with the ability to forgive our sins. He will erase our sins and make us white as snow. Rahab was a woman full of sin. Our scarlet colored drops may remind you of Rahab’s scarlet cord. She changed and became white as snow in God’s eyes.
Materials: A baseball and red licorice for the class.

Show the baseball. **What am I holding?** Tell me some of the rules of baseball. Wait for responses. **In baseball you get three strikes before you are out.** God is all about second chances. Sometimes we really mess up the first time we do something. As we start a new sport, or a new season, we tend to mess up a little more often. Someone may get more strikes at the beginning of the season, but with practice and time, there are fewer strikes – less needs for second chances. When we decide to follow God’s way instead of our own, we may mess up now and then. We may end up on our knees asking for help to get back on track. God is always willing to give that second chance. We don’t want to keep “striking out” in God’s ballpark; we want to be running toward “home.”

There was a woman in the Bible named Rahab, who was in desperate need of a second chance. God gave her the opportunity to help His people and change her ways, and she took it. Joshua and God’s people, the Israelites, had been wandering in the wilderness for forty years. They were anticipating the day they could actually go conquer the land God had promised them. They had spent one year for every day the twelve spies had spent in Canaan Land spying. Moses had sent those spies. Joshua was one of the twelve. Now Joshua is in charge, and is sending spies in to check out the land and it’s defenses. When the twelve were sent in before, only two had faith that God could help them take over the land. This time Joshua only sent two spies. The spies entered the gates of Jericho and began taking mental notes for their leader Joshua. They made a clever decision to stay with a woman named Rahab. Rahab was a woman with a terrible reputation. She was known to the community as a prostitute, which means she spent the night with men for money. Don’t be as explicit if you have a younger group. **This was a smart decision for the spies, because not many people would concern themselves with two men coming and going from a prostitute’s house.** It’s possible too, that Rahab saw an assortment of people in her business, and knew a lot of gossip or news about the town.
Rahab gave the spies vital information while they were there. She let them know that her entire country was afraid of the God of Israel and His people. (Joshua 2:9). She told them, people were melting in fear because of the things God had done. Amazing that 40 years earlier the Israelites were melting in fear over the “giants”, now the fear has reversed. While the spies were at Rahab’s house, the king of Jericho learned of their visit. He sent guards out to capture them. Rahab told the guards that the men had left at dusk, but she didn’t know which way they went. She urged them to hurry and go after the spies. The guards quickly left the city in pursuit, and the gates closed behind them. The two spies were actually still at Rahab’s house. She was hiding them on her roof under stalks of flax. Rahab knew that the Israelites would soon take over her land. She asked that her family be spared since she helped the spies. The spies made an oath with her. They told her to have her entire family in her house, not to tell anyone what was going on, and to tie a scarlet rope in her window as a sign. If she did these three things, they would live. She lived in the wall of Jericho, and was able to let the men out her window to freedom. They climbed down a rope to safety. They fled to the hills for three days, just as Rahab had instructed them. After the three days in the hills, they traveled safely back to Joshua with all the information they needed. They told Joshua, “The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us.” (Joshua 2:24 NIV). They were reiterating exactly what Rahab had told them. The day Rahab let the men down to freedom; she tied the scarlet cord in her window and chose freedom for herself – freedom from sin. She chose a new life. She decided she needed the God of all creation who could transform her into a new creation. When Israel did go into battle, Rahab and her family remained safe in her house. Rahab later became an Israelite and is an ancestor (great, great, great … grandmother) to not only King David, but also to Jesus Christ. (See Matthew 1:5). Do you think God gave this sinful woman a second chance? I’d say. The Bible actually calls Rahab “righteous” in James 2:25. She’s one of two women named in Hebrews 11 as an example of having “godly faith”. What a wonderful example of God’s willingness to give second chances.

Jesus’ blood has given us a chance at salvation. What color was Rahab’s rope she hung in her window? Scarlet or red. Jesus wasn’t born yet when Rahab was alive, but red seems to be a sign for salvation. Hand out red licorice as a reminder of Rahab’s rope and salvation.
Knot So Easy

OBJECT LESSON

Materials: A two to three foot long rope or string.

Procedure: Lay the rope on the table. Ask for a volunteer. I want you to pick up this rope, and tie a knot in it without letting go of the ends. Take as many volunteers as you like to try this. To show them how it’s done, cross your arms and grab an end of the string in each hand. When you uncross your arms, a knot will appear in the middle of the string.

Quest Connection

This task seemed impossible until you saw how it was done. Rahab’s situation seemed impossible as well. She had two men hiding on her roof with guards trying to seize them. She had God’s people coming to take over her town and she knew it. She was a sinner. How was any good going to come from her? She proved to be one special woman of faith, with one special rope.

Remember, through Christ, all things are possible!
OBJECT LESSON

Materials: Red yarn and scissors for each student.

Preparation: Cut yarn into two foot long pieces. Put yarn and a pair of scissors in front of each student, and in front of yourself.

Pick your yarn up and run one hand over it. Feel how soft and smooth it is. We all start out with pretty smooth reputations. As we grow up and go through life, we make different decisions. Most of us try to make decisions to avoid sin. Sometimes though, we make decisions to do things that don’t make God happy, such as lie, cheat on tests, disobey our parents, say bad words, or treat people poorly. I want you to think in your mind of something you did once, which would not have made God happy. Have you thought of it? Make a cut in your smooth reputation for that event. Cut your yarn to demonstrate. If you can think of another event when you didn’t make the best decision, make another cut. Let your students see you make more than one cut. There is no need to go into the details of your sin though. Tell your students they can make one to five cuts in their yarn. Lay your yarn flat in front of you. Your yarn will never be the same. Even if no one on earth knew of your sin, God knows. The good news is: God can turn us sinners into saints. Take your yarn, and start knotting it together where it has been cut. You want to have a long straight piece of yarn again. Sinning severs our reputation. Even if God is the only one that knows there are holes in our reputation, it’s worth fixing. Get your yarn knotted back into one piece.

Now, to God we are made whole again. He sees us as a new creation. We look at ourselves and can remember the sin, and possibly pain that came with that sin – but if we ask God to forgive us, it’s gone to Him. Run your hand over your yarn now. It’s good to remember we are sinners, but that God has mended our sinful hearts and made us whole again. Life is a bumpy ride, as our yarn proves. We need to stay focused on God so that He will continue to see us as Saints not Sinners. Our story tells of a Sinner turned Saint who dealt with a scarlet piece of rope also.
Go!

Top Spies

GAME

Materials: Twelve to Fifteen household items, cookie sheet (or basket), paper, pens, and an adult volunteer. A prize for the winner is optional.

Preparation: You must come up with twelve to fifteen questions about your volunteer’s appearance. She or he can answer them at the end of the game. Have items spread out on a cookie sheet.

Quest Connection

Learning about real spies is exciting. Could you imagine what a hard job it would be… trying to remember all you’ve seen and then relaying it to your leader? We’re going to see who the best spy is in this class. Spies have to be observant, they must think fast, and remember as much as possible. I have a volunteer who will bring in a cookie sheet full of household items. I’m not giving you paper to write on until after she/he is gone. Try to remember as much as you possibly can.

Have your volunteer walk the items around the room for 5 minutes. The kids will be concentrating on all the household items, however you will be asking them questions about your volunteer. Have your volunteer leave with the items. How are my spies doing? Are you feeling confident?

Hand out paper and pens. Don’t write anything yet. Your job was to be observant, and try to remember as much as possible when our volunteer came around. I have some questions for you to answer. The person with the most questions correct, wins. Now give them ten to twelve questions. Examples: Was the volunteer wearing earrings?, How many rings was she wearing?, Did she have on shoes or sandals?, Black or brown shoes?, Lipstick or none?, Fingernails painted or not?, etc. Bring your volunteer back in to verify your answers. Prize is optional. Congratulate your top spy.

Close

Did anyone get flustered when I didn’t have you name the items you memorized? Sometimes God has us working on many things at once. We may get flustered thinking we are doing what needs to be done, then we find out we should have put more energy into a different project. For instance, maybe you are working your hardest with some toddlers in a Christmas play. You may feel it’s your job to get those little bodies in the perfect spots before the big show … however God may have put you in that position to befriend someone. Maybe one of those toddlers doesn’t have a friend in the world. If that little boy or girl takes to you, that may be the bigger job God had in store for you. Don’t get flustered with God; He knows what He’s doing.
Go!

Braided Bookmarks

CRAFT

Materials: Red (scarlet) ribbon or yarn, scissors, and tape.

Preparation: Cut ribbon into 15 inch pieces. Each student will need three.

Quest Connection

Procedure: Have students tie their three ribbons together at the top, and then tape that to the table in front of them. Now it’s time to teach braiding. If you don’t know how to braid, have a guest help with this project. Once they’ve finished, they can tie the bottom, and remove the tape from the top. Their bookmark is complete.

Our three strands represent the three days the spies spent hiding in the hills after meeting Rahab. Her scarlet cord was a symbol of salvation for her family. Let’s use our scarlet cords in our message of salvation, our Bibles. The color can remind us that it’s by Jesus’ blood that we have been given the gift of Eternal Life.

Close

Make extra bookmarks if there is time so that students can share with a friend and tell them the story of Rahab.
Wild Goose Chase

GAME

Materials: Toothpick, rubber band, Band-Aid, pencil, eraser, chewing gum, and a mint.

Preparation: Hide these seven items around your room.

Procedure: Ask for two volunteers. Send them to different places in your room to look for items. Have them look in the wrong places such as: in books, under the trash can, behind the door, or on shelves. Go outside or to a bigger area if it's available. Now after they've looked in the wrong spots tell them, Okay, now that I've sent you on a wild goose chase, you may look wherever you want for items. Here are the seven things I want you to find. Name the seven hidden items. The rest of the class may help now. When they find the items have them set them on the table in front of the class.

Rahab sent some of the king’s guards on a wild goose chase. She was hiding the two good spies, but told the guards “Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them.” The guards took off after them. We didn’t want to look, aimlessly, for too long. All of our items have a special meaning. Now that we are a “new creation”, these items will help us on our Christian walk. The toothpick will remind us to pick out the good qualities in others. The rubber band will remind us to be flexible; things might not always go the way we want. The Band-Aid we remind us to heal hurt feelings (yours or someone else’s). The pencil will remind us to list our blessings every day. The eraser will remind us that everyone makes mistakes. Chewing gum will remind us to stick with it, and we can accomplish anything with the Lord. The mint will remind us that we are worth a mint to our heavenly father.

If we ever feel like we are on a “wild goose chase” we need to get on our knees and ask God for direction. Don’t walk aimlessly; walk with God!
CRAFT

Materials: Buttons, pipe cleaners, and magnets.

Preparation: Have one button, one pipe cleaner, and one self-adhesive magnet for each student.

Procedure: Comment on the fuzzy, straight pipe cleaner resembling a long, plain caterpillar. Have students push pipe cleaner through the button, so that the button is in the middle of the pipe cleaner. Have them bend the pipe cleaner into the wings of a butterfly. Add magnet to the back, behind the button.

A butterfly is a beautiful example of our transformed lives in Christ. Butterflies don’t start out pretty. They begin as an unattractive caterpillar. It’s easy to bend these pipe cleaners into a beautiful creation. Once we let go of our “old ways” of living, it will be easier for God to bend us into the people He wants us to be. When we accept Jesus as our savior, we will be made “new” on the inside and outside. Let’s allow God to transform our lives however He sees fit.

Close

Hang a picture of yourself with this magnet on your refrigerator. Your transformed creation magnet can hang with a transformed you.
If you were baptized, write that date here _______________

Put an x on the line where you feel your life is now.

List 3 things that will draw you closer to the top of this page.

1. ____________________

2. ____________________

3. ____________________

Date ________________
Rahab sent the king of Jericho’s guards on a wild goose chase.
The message above is well worth chasing and taking as your own.
Spies in Jericho

Draw a picture in the box to help explain your lesson using three items listed above.

COURAGE
HELP
JORDAN
PROTECT
STRONG

FLAX
HIDE
JOSHUA
ROPE

GOD
HILLS
KING
SPIES

Elementary KQ
Spies in the Promised Land

ACROSS

2. Men sent to check out the land
4. Leader that followed Moses
5. Spies used this to climb down
6. Promised Land
8. Number of spies sent by Joshua
10. “Be strong and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ “
14. Wanted to find spies. Joshua 2:2

DOWN

1. Spies hid here for three days (Joshua 2:16)
3. Harvested and then dried on roof
4. First major cities Israelites took
7. God told Joshua to be _ _ _ _ _ _ .
9. River the spies crossed.
11. Hid spies.
12. _ _ _ be with you!
13. color of the cord in Rahab’s window.
God told Joshua to be strong and courageous! He would give his people the Promised Land of Canaan as He had promised. Joshua wanted to be prepared! He secretly sent out two spies to know what he would encounter. God protected the spies at the house of Rahab. When the king wanted the spies, she hid them on her roof in the flax. She told them to go into the hills and hide for three days, then go back and report.