

Introduction

- Ron in "Goblet of Fire":
 - "I told you!" Ron hissed at Hermione as she stared down the article. "I told you not to annoy Rita Skeeter! She's made you out to be some sort of **scarlet woman!**" Hermione stopped looking atonished and snorted with laughter. "Scarlet woman?" she repeated, shaking with suppressed giggles as she looked around at Ron. "It's what my mum calls them," Ron muttered, his ears going red.
- Scarlet has been linked with prostitution and sexual promiscuity for thousands of years, some have speculated perhaps because of this passage here!
 - so in all sorts of ways we have poor expectations of Rahab, a prostitute, immoral, not at all upstanding or apparently godly

Reception

- Rahab receives God's representatives
- The servants of God receive from Rahab, or accept her help
- There is some kind of initial contact, some kind of starting point for further contact, engagement, conversation, whatever
 - when do we see such an initial openness? where do we see doors open for contact and sharing of God's work?

Risks

- Rahab runs the risk of being considered a turncoat, and of being stitched up by the invading Israelites
 - what risks have we run to be allied with God's people?
- The servants of God run the risk of trusting an enemy, of being misunderstood in having gone to a prostitute
 - what risks have we run to receive people into God's kingdom?

Recognition

- Rahab recognised God (2:9ff):
 - his power, his rule, his presence with his people...
 - and also the possibility of his mercy, his kindness (2:12ff)
 - have we "recognised" God, put our faith in him - not just once in the past when we came to faith, but issuing in action today, this week, in our relationships, in our character...
- How was Rahab's faith/trust in God and his servants recognised?
 - protected by a sign - intiguingly red, like the blood that protected the people in Egypt...
 - she and her people were indeed rescued - God, through his people, kept the promise
- And her faith is recognised in the New Testament:
 - *By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. (Hebrews 11:31)*
 - *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? (James 2:25)*
- We can have confidence that our faith is and will be recognised:
 - like Rahab we will have initial signs now of the reality of our faith... for her in immediate salvation, for us signs of God's goodness to us now...
 - but also like Rahab there is a greater recognition to come... for her in the New Testament, for us in glory...
- *She had faith, and her faith issued in action...*

Conclusion

- What kind of people does God accept?
- What kind of people does God use?