

HEROES OF THE FAITH: YOU

September 4, 2011

Psalm 11:7, Isaiah 6:8, John 14:12, John 15:4-5

Patrick DeFoe, Associate Pastor

Video Clip: Holding out for a Hero, Bonnie Tyler, 1985

<http://www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/footloose/holdingoutforahero.htm>

Where have all the good men gone
And where are all the gods?
Where's the street-wise Hercules
To fight the rising odds?
Isn't there a white knight upon a fiery steed?
Late at night I toss and turn and dream
of what I need

[Chorus]

I need a hero
I'm holding out for a hero 'til the end of the night
He's gotta be strong
And he's gotta be fast
And he's gotta be fresh from the fight
I need a hero
I'm holding out for a hero 'til the morning light
He's gotta be sure
And it's gotta be soon
And he's gotta be larger than life

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Somewhere after midnight
In my wildest fantasy
Somewhere just beyond my reach
There's someone reaching back for me
Racing on the thunder end rising with the heat
It's gonna take a superman to sweep me off my feet

[Chorus]

Up where the mountains meet the heavens above
Out where the lightning splits the sea
I would swear that there's someone somewhere
Watching me

Through the wind and the chill and the rain
And the storm and the flood
I can feel his approach
Like the fire in my blood

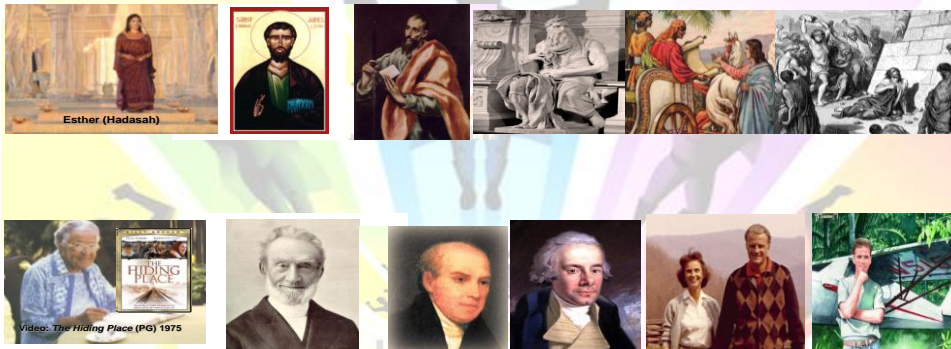
“I need a hero” – we all need a hero at one time or another in our lives. The creators of the Justice League of America knew that fact and capitalized on it to capture our imaginations and for financial gain.

The Justice League of America



Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, Flash, Aquaman, & Martian Manhunter

HEROES of the FAITH



Esther & Corrie Ten Boom, James & George Muller, Paul & William Carey, Moses & William Wilberforce, Phillip & Billy Graham, Stephen & Jim Elliott, You

Psalm 11:7

“For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice; upright men (women) will see his face.”

Summary of what the Heroes of the Faith accomplished for God’s Kingdom.

Ester – risked her life to save her people- the Jews	Corrie Ten Boom – risked her life to save Jews from the Nazis
James – called the church to action to reach out to others in need	George Muller – established orphanages for over 10,000 children
Paul – missionary to the Lost – Gentiles primarily and also to the Jews	William Carey – missionary to India “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.”
Moses – led the Jews out of slavery in Egypt and led them for 40 years in the desert	William Wilberforce – led the movement to abolish slavery in the British empire
Phillip – one of the seven who were the first deacons in the church, baptized the Ethiopian eunuch thus opening the way for Christianity in Africa	Billy Graham - great modern evangelist who preached to thousands/millions around the world.
Stephen – martyred for his faith in speaking out for Christianity	Jim Elliott – a missionary to Ecuador who evangelized to the Waodani people. He was martyred for his faith.

Quite simply – they stood for righteousness and justice at all costs and they changed society for generations and made significant eternal impact for God’s Kingdom.

What qualifies one to be considered a hero? I was thinking about “hero” from a world point of view.

- What about the four-year-old who called 9-1-1 when his dad cut himself severely (could have bled to death)? He was called a hero.
- And the staffer who helped the Arizona senator who’d been shot was called a hero, even though he said he wasn’t.
- Captain Sully Sullenberger who safely landed his plane in the Hudson River, saving everyone aboard, was called a hero.
- So was the man who some years earlier climbed out of a plane that crashed into the water, only to dive back in and save two others before he himself perished.
- Some called the Chilean miners trapped for months below the surface of the earth, heroes.

And if we call people heroes who save the physical life of another person, then how much more can we call someone a hero if he/she leads one person to spiritual salvation; saving their soul for eternity through Christ? I say much more! The heroes we studied the past six weeks made impact upon church doctrine, social norms and upon thousands and millions of lives for all eternity. Yet, are they more or less heroes than those who save one? Is there a hierarchy to heroism? Does it matter in God’s eyes?

Does the world need Heroes of the Faith today? YES! There are many similarities between Biblical times and today. We have wars, slavery (human trafficking), poverty, famine, billions of unsaved people and places where nearly 170,000 Christians are being martyred for their faith each year. The world is experiencing crisis after crisis today. In fact, as much as any other time in history, there is an overwhelming need for heroes of the faith.

So, what will it take to become a hero of the faith? The key to becoming a mature Christian to the point of serving your generation like the Heroes of the Faith did is to DO EXACTLY WHAT THEY DID! We didn't study these men and women's lives just for the fun of it. No, we studied them so we can learn from them and model ourselves after them. That's what heroes are for; to become role models for us.

Before I go further I must state that we should not go forward with a personal objective to be a hero. Not one of these men or women went about their Kingdom work with that objective; no, their purpose was to serve the Almighty God. And as a result God used them mightily and mankind added the designation "hero" to them. Be sure your motives are all about serving God and then let the chips fall where they may.

Scripture outlines for us the fundamentals of what we must do to be like our heroes.

Isaiah 6:8

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

I expect that God, if not literally, then figuratively, sits on His throne and looks out over the world. He sees all the turmoil of mankind and even today says "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" The need is great today for men and women to heed God's calling.

First, our heroes had willing hearts to follow Christ's call upon their lives. Do you want to open the possibility of becoming a Hero of Faith? Begin the journey by being willing to say "Here I am. Send me." "Use me Lord for your eternal purposes" might be our personal response to the Lord today.

John 14:12

"¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

This short verse has both a **statement & a promise in it.**

Second, they did the same kind of thing Jesus did and trusted the promise of Jesus.

When we understand this scripture we realize that we won't do greater miracles than Jesus did. For what can be greater than raising a man from the dead after 3 days in the ground, restoring health after decades of being crippled by simply speaking words, or restoring the sight to the blind through touch or voice? The only answer that makes sense as we interpret this scripture is that "greater things" will be in the spiritual realm. Anything done in the spiritual is greater

than the anything done to the body. Anything done to the spirit of a person is permanent; that which is done to the flesh is merely temporary.

Jesus **promised that if we believe in Him and do what He did, then** when He goes back to the Father, those He left behind on earth will do greater things than what Jesus did. **God uses men and women for His Kingdom purpose to effect eternity.**

We can better understand this by looking at some example of “they will do even greater things than these”:

Jesus preached to crowds from just a few to about 5,000.	Billy Graham preached to over a million people in one event, more than 2.2 billion people total and has led over 2.5 million people to the Lord
He spent 3 years in public ministry.	Our Heroes - Most of our heroes spent decades ministering in God’s Kingdom.
His area of direct contact was in Israel and the surrounding territory.	William Carey did missionary work in a country of about 1 billion people and in the latest figures 24 million (2001) have been saved. Paul traveled over 3,000 miles and to multiple countries on his missionary journeys. Billy Graham traveled across the world.
He physically touched a few children and commented about their faith.	George Muller impacted the lives of over 10,000 children

Now does this scripture make sense? Our heroes did what Jesus did and trusted the promises of God to fulfill His purposes. They did greater things in reaching more people across the globe than Jesus did during His earthly walk. Some of you may react negatively to that statement and wonder if I have offended Jesus. Surely, that’s not my intent. Jesus gets 100% of the credit and glory.

The punch line is that the accomplishments of our heroes were really done through the power of the Holy Spirit and therefore God gets all the glory. By wanting to do great things we are not in any way discrediting God but are in fact fulfilling His promise --- “they will do even greater things than these”.

John 15:4-5

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. **If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.**”

The third thing they did was to remain in Christ and to allow Christ to remain in them; “Remain in me and I in you”. We stay connected to God through worship, prayer, fasting, etc. He remains in us through the decisions we make that are Christ like. It takes both to bring us to the place God desires.

The fourth was to lean on the power of God to accomplish His purposes - “apart from me you can do nothing”. They realized that without God’s power nothing worthwhile, lasting or eternal

would be possible. They knew that if they failed to keep either of these requirements they would be acting on their own power and would not be effective; “Apart from me you can do nothing.”

I want to conclude my message by spending a few minutes on the Greatest Hero of Faith who ever lived; Jesus Christ.

The Greatest Hero of the Faith

Jesus, throughout His ministry prayed and remained in the Father and He allowed the Father to remain in Him. As Jesus faced His most difficult mission, the cross, He was able to do it because He knew that He would be the instrument of redemption for all mankind. He knew that millions of people would be restored to God by His willingness to be used of God. He said to the Father, “Send me”. He allowed the Father to work through Him. He remained closely connected and in tune with God. He acted upon the Father’s strength and power. He was obedient to the Father. Our heroes did what Jesus did.

Heroes of the Faith: You

What about you? Are you ready to live as our heroes lived? It starts with faith. The thing I notice is that faith isn’t something fearless people have. It actually is what God gives as an antidote for fear. So that’s the faith part — fearful people trusting God regardless of their circumstances.

And with faith there comes the potential for heroism. The hero part ----- is living in such a way that your life is pleasing to God and others want to be like you. I don’t think heroes set out to be examples for others — they just are.

I now want to get up close and personal with you about this hero stuff in your life. Let me challenge you:

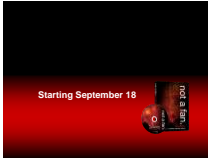
- Fathers, you need to be the “Super Man” to your children. Not by giving them “stuff” but by being the man God calls you to be – spiritual leader of your family.
- Moms, be the Wonder Woman to your children – be the visible heart of God they see each day.
- Students, be a Super Boy or Super Girl to a younger brother or sister – their role model. They look up to you and your life should be one they admire and emulate.
- Grandparents – be a hero to your children and grandchildren by being living a life centered on God.
- Everyone, be a hero by being like Christ to someone this week.

God isn’t done with Heroes of the Faith yet. He wants more of them. The world needs more of them. God is calling you! Be a Hero by:

1. Making yourself available to God’s calling for your life
2. Doing what Jesus did and expect great things from God
3. Remaining in Christ and allow Christ to remain in you

4. Leaning on the power of God to accomplish His purposes

As you continue your journey of faith I encourage you to become part of a group to go through the study “not a fan”. It will challenge you in many ways and if you prayerfully consider God’s calling upon your life during this time I am convinced God will direct you and use you mightily for his Kingdom Purposes.



Will you say “Here I am, send me”?

Prayer Moment

- **Thank God for the Heroes who went before us**
- **Ask God to reveal to you His view of your real worth in His kingdom**
- **Ask God to help you commit to “Follow Him” where ever He leads you**
- **Ask God to lead you to be a hero to at least one person in the days and years ahead**