

Study Guide: "Faith that Makes Heroes"

Carter Sanger, Dec-09

Introduction

Read Hebrews 11:32-40.

- What do you find in common among the accomplishments listed?
- What do you find that's different?
- Read Judges 6-7 for the account of Gideon. The 300 men that defeat the Midianite army are heroes, but because of the great odds and unlikely unfolding of events, whose strength is really on display? What makes these 300 heroes then?

I. A Hero's Life

Read verses 32-35a.

A hero's resume

- How would you characterize this list? Could these people have accomplished these feats on their own? What does that tell you about your own expectations of God?
- Read Paul's perspective in Philippians 4:13. Does this verse encourage you?
- What kinds of things are you called upon to do today that requires this same kind of faith?
- What does this hero's resume encourage you to imagine is possible in your own callings?
- Do you ever find it difficult to have this kind of faith? What makes it difficult?

A hero's qualifications

- Read Judges 6:15 for Gideon's response to God's call. Does he strike you as a hero in his response? Do your excuses ever sound like his?

II. A Hero's Death

Read verses 35b-38.

A hero's resolve

- Do all heroes find such success? What do they often find instead?
- The Emperor Nero blamed Christians for a great fire that broke out in Rome in 64AD and consequently tortured and killed many. He sewed some into animal skins and released them for the dogs to attack and kill. He dressed some in wax shirts and put them on axletrees and lit them on fire to illuminate parts of the city after dark. He crucified others. Their only crime was being Christian. History has more stories of suffering as a result of faith than it does of success. Still, are those who suffered for their faith any less heroes?
- What does the hero's resolve look like in your everyday callings as student? Spouse? Employee? Friend?

A hero's qualifications

- According to the end of verse 35, what is the one qualification these people had? This changes our expectations. When we consider the success hero's have had by faith we should note that **the faith of a hero expects that God can do great things through him** (which vary but are always in keeping with the advance of God's kingdom). When we consider their suffering (which is more often the case) we should note that **the faith of a hero expects that God will do great things for him** (raise him to a better life).

III. A Hero's Hope

Every Christian is called to have the faith that makes you a hero, not just a select few. How can you have the faith of a hero? Read verses 39-40.

A hero's future

- What have these hero's not yet received? Does that strike you as odd, given they lived after Israel was a nation in the Promised Land? What does this say about God's promise for a new land? Read Daniel 2:31-45. Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream tells us about God's future

kingdom. Revelation 21 and 22 describe this future kingdom as a new heavens and a new earth. This future is the hope of the hero.

A hero's frailties

- In your reading about Gideon from Judges 6 and 7, how many times does Gideon ask for a sign from God? Does Gideon's faith strike you as unreachable or familiar?
- Read 1 Samuel 16:1-11. What strikes you about the son that is missing?
- How does the frailty of these hero's encourage you?

A hero's foundation

- A hero's resume and resolve can only stand as long as the object on which it stands. What object of faith do you know of that can withstand threats and sufferings and death and overcome?
- According to verse 40, who is already in the new Promised Land and made perfect? Why or why not? How does this change the way you look at your relationship to the church?

Wrap-up

- The faith of the hero is persevering faith. In fact, it is through perseverance that we attain to Christ. Read Philippians 3:8-16. What strikes you about the relationship of what Paul has already attained and what he strives for?