

HERO!

Welcome to HEROES! Institute 2008 at Epworth Forest. We are glad you're here!!

This week you'll be invited to discover the HERO! inside of you while learning about the ultimate hero, Jesus Christ. Your heroic adventure includes the life experiences you bring with you as well as the opportunity to try and talk about new experiences from this week.

Your HERO! book is for both your personal devotion time and your Peer Small Group (PSG) time. On each page, you'll find information and questions designed to help you make this week the richest, most amazing opportunity to flex your super-HERO spiritual capabilities.

Yeah, you heard right. We think you've got the power. Super-HERO power. The ability to choose a life with Christ and be transformed from the regular person you started out as and become better than before. A triumphant hero with eternal life and a whole list of new talents and skills.

Living life with Christ opens the portal to amazing experiences. It lets you be more than you were before. Sort of a faster, stronger, able-to-leap-tall-buildings-in-a-single-bound kind of person!

We're glad you're here. We hope this book will help your week be all God has proclaimed it can be. But more than that, we hope you'll talk to one another, ask questions, pray together and leave Institute 2008 stronger than you were when you came in.

Blessings in Christ,

Eric Stoops
Chris Stahlman
Matt Bock
Paul Burris
Scott Miller
Shannon Stringer

Monday
What Makes a Hero?

Take a minute and think about it. What makes a hero?

Is it what they say?
Is it what they look like?
Is it what they do?
Is it what they stand for?
Is it what they resist?
Is it what they endure?
Is it their courage?
Is it because other's say they are?
Is it because you believe they are?

Do you have one? Have you heard about one? Can you imagine one?

Take another minute and write down what you think makes a hero?
(Grammar doesn't count.... just your ideas) Not much of a writer? Pictures work, too.

Now take another minute and look at this list of names. If you know them, decide if they are a hero.... or not.

Donald Duck
Taz
Billy Graham
Helen Keller
Albert Einstein
Koby Bryant
Spiderman
Hulk
George Washington
George Bush
Barack Obama
Rosa Parks
Princess Diana
Jesus Christ

Why?

Take a look at Matthew 22:36-40. What does that have to do with anything?

Tuesday
Heroes in Disguise

What's the best costume you've ever worn? Why was it great?

Who is the person who knows you best in the world? Why?

Do you trust them? Why?

Where do you feel the most like you can be yourself? Why?

Where do you feel the most like you have to hide who you are? Why?

When you're honest with yourself, how do you see Jesus? As someone you really know? As someone who is hiding? As someone boring? As someone heroic? What is Jesus to you, really?

Can you imagine knowing Christ as a real presence in your life? If you already know that, what is it like? If you are wondering about it, what would it be like?

Take a look at Acts 17:24-27.
Are you searching for God?

Wednesday **Heroic Weakness**

Every Hero has a weakness. Superman has Kryptonite *and* Lois Lane. And every villain tries to get the best of the Hero by using their weaknesses.

1 Corinthians 10: 12-13 says:

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

Why do you think God warns us about temptation?

If you are standing firm in your faith, what are some things that might make you fall?
If you are not standing firm in your faith, what are some of the things holding you back?

When you think about things that might tempt you, that might be like kryptonite to your Christian walk, what are some of the ways you see to break free of the destructive hold that could cause you to fall?

Thursday
A Hero's Choice

Everyone has a choice about how to live their lives. People with special abilities can choose to use them, or not. We can choose to use our gifts in a lot of different ways. For real, non-imaginary people, part of the choice about how to use our gifts includes deciding for whom we want to use them. Who are we going to live our lives for? Our friends? Our parents? Ourselves? or something more than all of those combined?

What kind of choices do you make every day?

What kind of BIG choices have you made? I mean *really* BIG ones?

How did you make that/those choice/choices? How did it work out?

Would you make the same choice again? Why or why not?

Read Matthew 19:16-22. Think for a minute about the choice the rich man had. And the choice he made.

What kind of choices are you making about your spiritual life?

Why are you making those choices?

How is it working out for you?

Friday
A Hero's Welcome

We'd like to think that every hero gets a great welcome. But they don't.

In Luke 10:8-11 Jesus says:

“When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you.
Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’
But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say,
‘Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be
sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.’”

Jesus knew that even when the disciples were working hard to bring the good news about Jesus' life to strangers, they would not always be welcomed.

Can you think of a time when someone did something for you and you did not appreciate it?

How about when you worked really hard for someone else and they didn't appreciate you?

If people are not going to always appreciate the things we work to do for them, what makes doing great things for other people worth our time and effort?

Do you really believe that? Can you find a scripture that supports how you feel?

Saturday
Super Friends Unite

As we part our ways today from camp, it's really important to continue growing closer to God through the elements of camp that we enjoyed the most. Take a minute and reflect on two or more impacting moments that you had this week and write them down.

Seriously. You don't want to forget them. And, more importantly, you want something to help you stay strong when you're away from your Super Friends.

Wondering what to remember? How about a conversation you had with a new friend? A spiritual leader? A staff member? An evening of worship that was amazing? A moment when you felt stronger than ever before?

Whenever you need a reminder to keep growing closer to God, you can always flip to this page and immediately be right back in the memories of camp... no matter where you are physically. Memories are a powerful way to fight temptation and hard times. Put your good memories to work for you.

May you embrace the true heroes in your life and learn from them.
May you recognize and embrace that *you* CAN be a hero to others.
May God bless you as you bravely go where only you can fight.