

TRUE HEROES

MINI-CAMP BIBLE CLASS OUTLINES

This year at Mini Camp we will be studying some of the outstanding characters of the Bible. These true "heroes" will be **Joseph, Joshua, Daniel**, and, from the New Testament, the **Apostle Paul**.

These outlines are suggestive of what might be covered in the four classes you will teach this summer. This subject matter has been chosen with the idea that corollary materials will be easy to find and develop. Included here are four outlines concerning these four Bible Heroes. We hope they will be helpful.

JOSEPH: A TRUE HERO

Introduction:

- A. When introducing each class it will be good to remind the students that there are many different types of heroes in the world. Their heroes may come from the entertainment or sports worlds. They may think of Mr. Rogers, Big Bird, or even Barney as a hero. The older children may think of sports figures or some other of the "stars" in our culture.
- B. There are other, more important, heroes in our lives. Think of parents, grandparents, other relatives, our teachers, the folks at the police station and the firehouse, the soldiers who keep us free, *etc.*
- C. In addition to these, there are spiritual heroes that we can and should have in our lives. Jesus Christ is, of course, Chief among these. But we will be studying four others, beginning with Joseph.

Discussion:

I. The hero Joseph and the Bible.

- A. The life of Joseph is covered in Genesis 37-50. Except for the material that deals with Abraham, this is the longest personal narrative in the Old Testament. This space was not wasted. It may be good to give an overview of Joseph's life here.
- B. Joseph was a hero in many ways. One of them was the way he dealt with problems in his life. Joseph had to face a number of tests or temptations. Some of them were when he was very young. The way he relied on God and what is right is a wonderful example for us to follow today.

II. Joseph: A Hero Faces Trouble (He had to face many troubles. This section deals with a series of Joseph's problems.)

- A. Troubles at home. Genesis 37:12-36
1. Home is not always free from troubles.
 2. Joseph had to face his brothers, jealousy, hatred, and their lack of appreciation of him. (Romans 12:17-21).
 3. But Joseph overcame by relying on God. He knew God was with him because of the dream (Genesis 37:5-8).
 4. He was tested when he was sold into slavery (Genesis 37:12-36, 39:1). This resulted in his being taken to Egypt. He could have become sour and bitter but he did not. He relied on God. He realized that people and situations change, but God's purpose never changes. He dealt with the situation the best way he could (Genesis 39:3-5). Sometimes that's all any of us can do.
 5. He did not let his success "go to his head. This is really heroic. Joseph always remembered it was God that had blessed him.
- B. Troubles in Potiphar's House and Prison. (Genesis 39:7-20).
1. Joseph was tempted to do wrong, but he refused.
 2. He was tested when the lady lied about him.
 3. Joseph overcame by running away from sin (2 Timothy 2:22).
 4. He did not deserve to be in prison.
 5. Sometimes we do the best we can and things still badly. We need to remember that God will take care of us.

Conclusion:

Joseph had to deal with his brothers again. (Genesis 45, etc.) At the end, Joseph had the "upper hand." But he did not use his advantage to "get even." His love and compassion for his family were truly heroic. Real heroes care about other people.

JOSHUA: A TRUE HERO

Introduction:

A. There are great heroes in time of war. We remember people like General Dwight D. Eisenhower who helped the allies win World War II. War is a terrible thing, but sometimes good must fight evil. There was a time like this in the history of God's people when they were the nation of Israel.

B. We hope that we will never have to fight anyone, even anyone very evil. But there is a way in which we must fight and battle evil every day of our lives. We must fight to defeat evil and wrong and to do good and right. There was a man named Joshua who was a heroic fighter and leader for the nation of Israel. In his example of courage and faithfulness we can see important aspects of what it means to be a true hero.

Discussion:

I. **Joshua: A Hero Who Would Not "Give in."** (See Numbers 13-14).

A. God told Moses to send 12 spies into Canaan to see how they might, with God's help, take the land that God had given them.

B. After forty days they came back home, and gave their reports. The Bible tells us that 10 of the 12 spies were afraid and said that the people of Canaan could not be conquered. They said "We were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Numbers 13:33).

C. However, two of the spies said that God was with them and that they could defeat the people in the land of Canaan. Those two men were Joshua and Caleb. Joshua said: "If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us..." (Numbers 14:8).

D. Now, the people were very upset with Joshua and Caleb. They were going to stone them, but Joshua and his friend did not give in. They were brave because they knew God was with them. They trusted God.

II. **Joshua: The Hero at Jericho.**

A. Joshua was a righteous warrior. He was commissioned (Dt. 34:9, Joshua 1:2,5), careful (Joshua 6:10), and committed (Joshua 24:15). In many ways Joshua is a picture of what Jesus would be. Indeed, "Joshua" is the same name in Hebrew as "Jesus" is in Greek. Jesus also was commissioned directly by God (Mt. 3:16-17), was careful (Jn. 3:17, Heb. 5:8-9), and was committed (Heb. 12:2) to do the Father's will.

B. Consider what happened at Jericho (Joshua 6). There was a plan (6:1-6), the application of the plan (6:6-19), and the victory (6:20).

C. Consider these lessons from Jericho:

1. The tasks before us are not always easy. There had been forty years of toil before they had come to this point.

2. We can accomplish great things if we rely on God. Joshua's heroism came from his trust in God's Word. He always did what God told him to do. So should we.

3. We must continue to do right in order to continue to be blessed. See Joshua 7 and think about the sin of Achan. Would Joshua have done such a thing? What was Joshua's reaction to what Achan had done?

Conclusion:

Review Joshua 24:15. The true hero follows God. Never give up.

DANIEL: A TRUE HERO

Introduction:

- A. Some people are called upon to be heroes while they are very young as well as when they are quite old. Daniel was one of these people.
- B. When Daniel was young he and a number of his friends were captured in their homeland of Judah and carried away to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar.
- C. As a young Jewish boy and as a faithful follower of God Daniel was placed in conflict with his new surroundings. The people in Babylon did not worship Daniel's God, the True and Living God. Often Daniel was called on to stand for what he knew to be true in opposition to the culture in which he was made to live. In each instance, Daniel was a true hero.

Discussion:

- I. Daniel, the Young Hero. Daniel 1:1-21.
 - A. When Daniel was a young boy, he lived in Judah under the Law of Moses. God had given this law from Mount Sinai and He meant for His people to live by it. Part of that law prohibited the eating of certain foods (see Leviticus 11). Daniel was a faithful young man, so when he was offered "the king's delicacies" in Babylon, he refused them (Daniel 1:8).
 - B. Daniel instead asked for vegetables and water. He knew that God would bless him and his friends on this diet. He was brave enough to trust God.
 - C. In this instance Daniel's heroism is special because no one but God, Nebuchadnezzar's servants, and Daniel himself would know what he was eating. He did what was right when he might well have "gotten away" with doing what was wrong.
 - D. Daniel was also heroic in that he denied himself something that many people would want. Most folks would rather have rich, tasty, fancy food than dull, plain food. But Daniel knew that for him eating the king's food would mean being unfaithful to God.
 - E. Living the Christian life requires that we be heroes. Many things in our world are like the "king's delicacies" Let's be like Daniel and avoid them.

- II. Daniel, the Older Hero.
 - A. When Daniel was no longer a young man when the events recorded in Daniel chapter 6 took place. He was made one of three governors over the kingdom, now headed by Darius. His great skill as an administrator was clear and it looked as if he would be elevated over the whole realm. However, some other men in the government hated Daniel, and they hatched a plot to get rid of him. They convinced the king to make a law that said no one could pray to anyone but the king for thirty days. If the law was broken, the person praying would be cast in to a lion's den.
 - B. Daniel could have avoided any trouble by being quiet and not praying. But he was a faithful follower of God and he intended to pray to the One True God ... and he did.
 - C. The evil men played their trick and Daniel was cast in to the Lion's Den. But God was with Daniel and no harm came to him.

Conclusion:

Daniel's courage was the courage of faith. He was a hero because he trusted God to take care of him, when he was young and when he was old. Real heroes trust God and are faithful to Him.

PAUL, A TRUE HERO

Introduction:

- A. Our other heroes were characters from the Old Testament. This hero is the Apostle Paul. He is the writer of fourteen New Testament books and is the subject of about half of another (the book of Acts.)
- B. Paul was a great man. He was born in Tarsus in Cilicia and was brought up knowing the best of both the Roman and Jewish world. He was well educated (Acts 26:24-25 "...much learning...") and very zealous in the practice of his religion as a Jew and, later, as a Christian.
- C. With all of his fine background and education he still relied on God (Galatians 1:14, Philippians 3:1-11). He considered himself the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15) and was brave enough to depend on God and His grace for salvation. Real heroes today will do the same thing.
- D. One of Paul's great characteristics was that he remained courageous even when things were going badly, very badly indeed (see 2 Corinthians 11:22-33). He was a hero who persevered.

Discussion:

- I. Paul was a hero who preached the word of God.
 - A. Romans 1:16, Philippians 1:17, Acts 9:20-22, 2 Timothy 4:1-4.
 - B. He told others how important it was to study God's Book (2 Timothy 2:15).
- II. Paul was a hero who practiced the word of God.
 - A. Philippians 3:13-14. He knew that he didn't "have it made,, but he kept on being as faithful as he could (1 Corinthians 9:27). He had a singleness of purpose that was admirable (" ... but this one thing I do...") .He believed in progress as a child of God (" ... press on... ").
 - B. He loved the church and knew its tremendous value (see Ephesians 5).
 - C. Think about that list of things that happened to Paul that we read in 2 Corinthians 11:22-33. Can you imagine being any more of a hero than that? Paul walked by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).
- III. Paul was a hero who depended on the Word of God.
 - A. Paul was in prison, waiting to be executed, when he wrote the book of 2 Timothy. Read 2 Timothy 4:6-8.
 - B. It takes a hero to face the end of life with this kind of faith. A real Christian hero. Paul knew he would get to go to Heaven when this life was over.

Conclusion:

We normally think of heroes as extraordinary people. Well, they are. And many of us may believe that we don't have any heroism in us. But that is not so. We can be heroes of faith by trusting God, doing His will, and living for Him. And just as He helped Joseph, Joshua, Daniel, and Paul, He will help you, even today. Decide as soon as you can to be one of God's good heroes.