

BIBLE STUDY: Hall of Heroes

by Jonathan Ruehs

Movie Connection

As a fun event, have a movie night at the local theater, a church or a home and show a superhero-themed movie. Use the Bible study as a means to connect God's Word to popular culture. Or if you decide to use this study in a more time restricted setting (i.e. Sunday morning youth Bible study) show a short DVD clip of a superhero who is discovering and/or using their newfound powers.

Copyright note: It is recommended that your church secures license to show the film. This can be provided in an annual subscription by <http://www.cvli.com/>

Discussion Questions

- When you were little did you ever want to be a superhero? If yes, which hero and why?
- If you could have any one superpower, which would it be and why?
- Why do you think people are so enamored with superheroes?

Read: Hebrews 11:4-40

Directions: Divide up the above section to various students (whether individual or small groups) and have them determine the identity of the hero of the faith and why they were a hero. After the students have had time to do their research allow them a chance to share their findings.

Discussion Part #2

- In the first Spiderman film Peter Parker claims that being Spiderman is both a gift and a curse. What do you think he meant by that?

Read: Ephesians 2:8-9

- Paul claims two gifts in this passage. What are they?
- What makes a "gift" a "gift"? Explain.
- How does the gift of grace connect to the gift of faith?
- How does the gift of grace remove the curse of sin? (if need be see Galatians 3:13)

Discussion Part #3

- In the first Spiderman film Uncle Ben tells Peter: "With great power comes great responsibility." What do you think this phrase means?

Read: Romans 1:16

- What "power" gives salvation to people?
- Recall Ephesians 2:8-9. Can we do anything to gain this power? Why or why not?

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- In looking back at the list of heroes in Hebrews 11, what common "gift" did all of them possess?

Read: Hebrews 11:1

Discussion:

- How does the definition of faith in the above passage help you to understand why the heroes of the faith are called out as examples?
- Look again at Hebrews 11:31-32. Who was Rahab? Why might it be so amazing that the author doesn't have time to tell much about someone like David (who was lifted up as the paradigmatic king of Israel), but he takes time to talk about a prostitute as a hero of the faith?
- Recall again Ephesians 2:8-9. How does this also help us to better understand how it is that even prostitutes can be lifted up?

Wrap-up Discussion and Thoughts:

Note: Surf the web and find pictures of the following groups: The Avengers, The X-Men, The Justice League of America, and The Teen Titans. Show the pictures to the students and ask them to identify the differing groups. Share with them the following thoughts: The book of Hebrews talks about the "great cloud of witnesses" that has gone

before us. That great cloud is the list of heroes in chapter 11. Although each hero is named individually, as a whole they collectively make up the hall of heroes—just as Captain America, Ironman, Thor, The Hulk, and others make up The Avengers. All believers in Jesus—past, present, and future—by the gift of faith through the power of the Holy Spirit make up this great group of faith heroes, which the Apostles’ Creed refers to as the “communion of saints”. The temptation is to look at people like an Abraham, a Moses, or a David and say “be like them”. Yet when we look at Scripture we realize that they weren’t any better than we are. What makes them “heroes” is not something that they did or some quality that they internally had. What makes them heroes is that they had faith, which is again the same gift that is available to us through the Holy Spirit. We stand shoulder to shoulder with those heroes of the past in the great Kingdom halls of our Savior!

Closing Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the greatest hero of all...Jesus! Thank you that He endured the cross, conquered the grave, and defeated the powers of darkness all for us! Thank you for the gift of faith that you endow us with through the Holy Spirit. Help us, Lord, to be strengthened in our faith to face the world. In the name of Jesus we pray, amen.