

THE MAKING OF HEROES

LIVING IN THE LAND #7

Introduction: Last week –

- Don't let trust be eroded by strong opinions
- Strong opinions are to be tempered by strong love.

Romans 14:17-18 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.*

1. True Heroes see Potential in Others

- Gibeonites started the wrong way (with deception)
- Joshua and God saw their potential
- How do you think the Gibeonites were treated by the Israelites?
 - Some would have been treated well, otherwise they would have rebelled.

Romans 15:1-2 *Now those who are mature in their faith can easily be recognises, for they don't live to please themselves, but have learned to patiently embrace others in their immaturity. Our goal must be to empower others to do what is right and good for them, and to bring them into spiritual maturity.*

2. True Heroes See Team Unity as Important.

- Self-interest weakens your potential.

Joshua 17:12-13 *Yet the Manassites were not able to occupy these towns, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region. However, when the Israelites grew stronger, they subjected the Canaanites to forced labour, but did not drive them out completely.*

- God had told the Israelites to force Canaanites out
- The land was given to Israelites
- God was judging the Canaanites for their behaviour (Genesis 15:16)
- Yet when they were strong enough, they made the Canaanites slaves
- Self-interest had weakened their resolve.

Romans 15:5-6 *May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- Spirit of unity so that.... (unity has a purpose)
- Team is more effective than the one
- Unity is different people with the same mission
- True heroes need a good team behind them.

3. True Heroes Seize Opportunities

- How long will you wait?

Joshua 18:3 So Joshua said to the Israelites: "How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of our fathers, has given you?"

- How long will we wait to conquer that giant in our lives?
- Hope is the secret ingredient.

Romans 15:13 *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

- Notice joy and peace are connected to hope
- Hope overflows by the power of the Holy Spirit

4. Two Heroes

(a) Caleb:

- Father was a Kenizzite, so had Gentile blood in him
- One of the spies who checked out the land (> 40 years earlier)
- Spoke (up) for God:

Numbers 13:30 *Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."*

- Lived for God

Joshua 14:8b *"...I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly."*

- Expected God to act
 - Caleb saw God's provision and miracles in the wilderness
 - Saw miracles of crossing Jordan and Jericho's defeat

(b) Paul:

Romans 15:18-19a *I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done – by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit.*

- Spoke for God
- Lived for God
- Expected God to act

ILLUSTRATION: Miracles of Today

One of Scotland's best-known contemporary painters is a Christian called **Nael Hanna**, originally from Iraq. His God-given talent is amazing, the pictures he produces are beautiful, but for me the most wonderful thing about my friend Nael is that he has seen Jesus. Not once but three times. The first two times were in Iraq when, as a very young man, he had been seriously injured in the Iran-Iraq war and was near death. The third time was more recently, late at night at his home in Scotland. Nael was suffering terribly painful gout and cried out to Jesus to help him. Jesus appeared to him, touched and healed his foot and asked him to tell the story to others.



Conclusion:

- Speak for God
- Live for God
- Expect God to act.