

Heroes of the Faith

Spiderman is a hero. Why?

He has a neat costume.

He fought a bad guy and won.

He has special abilities.

He strong and athletic.

Heroes wouldn't be heroes unless they had fought a battle. Some battles are fought with weapons and fighting. Battles can also be fought in the mind.

Hebrews 11, often called "The rollcall of faith", lists many heroes of the Jewish people. What were some hardships they endured in verses 33-38?

¹Jn 4:7-16 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because **God is love**. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. **We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of **the ruler of the kingdom of the air**, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

What did God tell Abraham would happen (verse 11)?

By earthly standards, having lots of offspring was highly improbable. Why did Abraham believe what God said? _____

1 John 4:7-16 insists that God is _____. However, many things in life seem to prove that this isn't true. What bad things happen to good people that would make you believe that God does not love you?

What did God do that John says proves God loves us? _____

Like Abraham, why should we believe this is true?

How do we really know God exists? _____

In Ephesians 2:1-5 Satan is referred to as _____. For reasons known only to God he is able to do a lot of bad stuff to people.

Our enemy's goal is to keep us from God. So, we are in a battle to remain faithful to God despite a lot of evidence to the contrary.

What does this battle look like on an *everyday* level?

What are some ways we can help each other remain faithful?

What are some things we can do to be stronger in our faith?

By Faith

Hebrews 11:1 [Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.](#)

Heb 11:2 This is what the ancients were commended for.

Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

Heb 11:9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

Heb 11:10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Heb 11:11 [By faith Abraham, even though he was past age—and Sarah herself was barren—was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise.](#)

Heb 11:12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

Heb 11:13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.

Heb 11:14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.

Heb 11:15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.

Heb 11:16 Instead, they were longing for a better country—heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,

Heb 11:18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."

Heb 11:19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

Heb 11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.

Heb 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

Heb 11:22 By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.

Heb 11:23 By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Heb 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

Heb 11:26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Heb 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

Heb 11:28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

Heb 11:29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

Heb 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days.

Heb 11:31 By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.

Heb 11:32 [And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets,](#)

Heb 11:33 [who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.](#)

Heb 11:35 [Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection.](#)

Heb 11:36 [Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison.](#)

Heb 11:37 [They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—](#)

Heb 11:38 [the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.](#)

Heb 11:39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised.

Heb 11:40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

Lesson Plan: Heroes of the Faith

Lesson Page Preparation:

In the blank space on the upper right of page one and lower left of page two I had pictures of Spiderman. These removed to avoid copyright infringement. Go to Google Images, find your own pictures and paste them there to dress up the lesson plan.

Pre-Lesson Activity: I had Spiderman playing on the TV when the kids came in. I let them watch for about 15 minutes.

The Goal of this lesson: The goal of this lesson is to introduce the thought of faith as a battle.

Leading the Lesson: Spend some time in prayer the day before, going over the verses and questions in your mind.

Begin by asking the kids Why Spiderman was a hero. The answer is because he fought a battle and won. Talk about a battle that can be waged in your mind. You can refer to Romans 7 for Paul's description of this battle. Next: read Hebrews 11, often called "The Rollcall of Faith". It's a long passage so feel free to paraphrase or skip a few verses but pay attention to verses 33-38 (printed in orange).

Paul's struggle in his mind (Romans 7) dealt with his choosing to do good or bad. The battle we are talking about today is believing God is faithful and loves us or believing what the enemy tries to prove: that God is unjust, unfaithful, and just plain mean.

1 John 4:7-16 is the proof that God loves us. We believe this is true because God's Spirit lives in us.

Have a kid read the first set of verses and then go thru the questions for those verses. Give them time to answer. Listen to what they say and lead the discussion with additional questions of your own to lead them to the correct answers.

Note: When reading, kids will frequently stumble on words they do not know. Explain the meaning of the words so they can fully grasp the concept of the Bible verse. Sometimes you must restate the passage in your own words for them to get it.

(If your group is younger junior-high age encourage them to fill in the blanks with the correct answers and hand in their papers at the end of class. For older kids, especially high-school age, just use the questions as discussion starters.)

Read Ephesians 2:1-5 and discuss how what we "see" happening in the world seems to contradict the Bible's claim that God loves us.

Continue using the remaining questions to further the discussion.

Summary: Discuss how having Christian friends and remaining connected to a "body of believers" like their local church can be a source of strength when the battle is tough. For my family, God used the people of the church to sustain us for many weeks after our daughter's death.

Take Prayer Requests

Always ask the kids for prayer requests for the next week. Check how things have turned out from the previous week's concerns.