

“Developing a Heroic Character”

HERO ...

- a mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability
- an illustrious warrior
- a man admired for his achievements and noble qualities
- one that shows great courage
- Me?

Today’s song is “American Hero” by Toby Keith. [Play song]

Memorial day is a time for remembering fallen heroes. That memory ought to prompt us to take up the cause for which they died. Let’s look at how you can become a modern day American hero.

NOTE: Heroes come in all forms. We have heroes in uniform. We have heroes in the classroom. We have heroes in everyday life ... all of them deserve honor and recognition.

Here’s how you can become an everyday American hero:

1. Love like Jesus.

John 15:12-13 (NLT) [12] This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. [13] There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

1 John 3:16-18 (NLT) [16] We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. [17] If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person? [18] Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.

2. Have the courage of obedience.

Joshua 1:6-9 (NLT) [6] “Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them. [7] Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you

will be successful in everything you do. [8] Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. [9] This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Last, but by no means least, courage—moral courage, the courage of one's convictions, the courage to see things through. The world is in a constant conspiracy against the brave. It's the age-old struggle—the roar of the crowd on one side and the voice of your conscience on the other. *General Douglas MacArthur*

3. Live generously.

Leviticus 19:9-10 (NLT) [9] “When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. [10] It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the Lord your God.

4. Determine to make a difference.

Matthew 5:13-16 (NLT) [13] “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. [14] “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. [15] No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. [16] In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Remember, being a Hero takes hard work, so, don't give up on your hero status ... “The first virtue in a soldier is endurance of fatigue; courage is only the second virtue.” -- *Napoleon Bonaparte*

A closing prayer ... “Dear God, thank you for the Heroes in our midst. And thank you for the many Heroes-in-the-making. You are making us into the kind of leaders, lovers, and givers you want us to be; we pray Your way would become our way. Today, we remember those who have paved the way for us. We honor them and pray you would make us respectful of their sacrifice. In Jesus name, amen.”