



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK FOUR - Jesus Over Our Heroes

NOTE: (The content in this study parallels the content in the Study and Prayer Journal created for this series)

Who among us hasn't donned a cape or two? Superman? Wonder Woman? Super Grover? It's a beautiful thing and inspiring to believe that there are people along our path who seem to be super-human.

I've allowed a few people to be heroes in my life. If I listed them for you, they would eventually fall into two categories- 1) Heroes who pointed me to themselves, and 2) Heroes who pointed me to Jesus. Those in the latter category would be horrified if I remembered them and not Jesus. Heroes are great-in their proper context. We have heroes of the faith that we remember and sometimes revere. Heroes of the faith will be remembered in the way they point us to God's work of salvation, ultimately through his Son Jesus. And therefore the Jesus who is over everything, is over our heroes too.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 11.29-32 (NIV)

As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. ³¹ The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom; and now something greater than Solomon is here. ³² The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and now something greater than Jonah is here.

- Jesus is in their midst, performing miracles, casting out demons, healing the sick, raising the dead—and yet they ask for a sign. But signs are given to those who have eyes of faith to see and understand. Otherwise, Jesus would be just another traveling miracle-worker attraction. Jesus is not here to give a show, he is not around for the spectacle. He is not here to be the kind of hero we have looked to before. He is here to bring salvation. Now, with that understanding, ask Jesus for

signs that he is here with you. Ask him for signs of his great love for you. Ask him for signs that you are in fact pursuing him with a life of faith.

- **Prayer Prompt: And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years,¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” (Genesis 11.14-15)**
- *Jesus, you are the ultimate sign of God’s great love for me, so I look to you and only you. Amen.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 11.29-32 (NIV)

- There are two common interpretations of what Jesus meant by *the sign of Jonah*. It could be a sign of preaching and repentance (like Jonah’s call to Nineveh), or a sign of resurrection (after 3 days in the belly of a big fish/3 days in the tomb). It is also possible that both are true. If so, then the sign of Jonah shared by the Son of Man is a sign of judgment that leads to repentance and a sign of resurrection hope for all people. Make sense?! Yeah, it probably remained a little confusing for the audience in Luke 11 too! Ultimately, we don’t need to look for signs or proofs of the Son of Man when he is right in front of us. His very presence with us is pointing us to repentance and new life. In what ways have you found new life in Jesus?
- **Prayer Prompt: From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. (Jonah 2.2)**
- *God who saves me from the depths, Jesus is the only sign I need. I look to him for resurrection and life. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: LUKE 11.29-32 (NIV)

- These things happened “As the crowds increased...” When we see a crowd gathering, it can indicate many things. It might be that there is something exciting and worth fighting a crowd for (think an unbeatable Black Friday deal). But we’ve all seen how crowds can take on a life of their own, becoming about something other than their original intent (think an unbeatable Black Friday deal!). Jesus was taking an opportunity to correct a crowd that was hungry for more signs. He drew upon a hero of faith (Jonah) to say that this hero, along with all of the signs the crowds were clamoring for, ultimately pointed to him. Have you ever found yourself suddenly caught up in a crowd that started to feel dangerous? How did you exit the situation? Our spiritual lives can be like that as well, ask God for both healthy crowds of believers and times of solitude where you can hear from Him.
- **Prayer Prompt: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. (Isaiah 9.6)**
- *Lord God, I want to remain focused on Jesus whether the crowds increase or decrease. Help me to look to him over anything. Amen.*

THURSDAY: LUKE 11.29-32 (NIV)

- In the introduction to this week I mentioned the two types of heroes in my own life. 1) Heroes who pointed me to themselves, and 2) Heroes who pointed me to Jesus. The first type of hero would include people like exceptionally talented musicians and athletes. The second type would include

fellow disciples and Sunday School teachers, pastors and authors who only wanted me to see Jesus. Use the space below to reflect on the people you would place in hero status. Spend time thanking God especially for those who point you to Jesus.

- **Prayer Prompt: But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel (Micah 5.2)**
- *Almighty God, the prophets are among the heroes of faith for me. They point me to your Son. Thank you for the many people who I count among the heroes of faith, when I think of them, I think of Jesus. Amen.*

FRIDAY: LUKE 11.29-32 (NIV)

- We believe in a miracle-working God. It's one of our core values at Providence Church. We've seen healing take place in Jesus' name. And yet, even in seasons where miracles seem to be rare, we trust in Jesus. This means we don't simply move from one miracle to the next. Instead, we focus on the One who gives us our life to begin with. Is there a miracle you have been asking God to provide? How do you remain with Jesus as you wait?
- **Prayer Prompt: He is the one you praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes. (Deuteronomy 10.21)**
- *God, I am always in awe of your power and might. And yet I also delight in the stillness of your presence that brings me comfort. Let me be content in you. Amen.*

SATURDAY: LUKE 11.29-32 (NIV)

- The queen of the South (Queen of Sheba) sought wisdom from Solomon, and the Ninevites benefitted from Jonah's heroic (if reluctant) words of woe (31-32). They would celebrate those heroes. But there is one greater, a greater preacher with a greater message and a greater hope for salvation. Our best heroes lead us to a place where we can recognize that a greater one is here. Jesus is over all of our heroes. How grateful are you to live in a time and place where you can come to know this greater One, Jesus? Use the space below to express those thoughts and that gratitude.
- **Prayer Prompt: No one is like you, LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. (Jeremiah 10.6)**
- *Faithful God, make my life a response to your faithfulness. May I put nothing and no one over you and your Son Jesus. Amen.*