



**“Where Have All The Heroes Gone?”**  
**John the Baptist \* Matt.3:1-15 \***  
**12/6/09**

*I. First things*

*A. What is a hero?*

*B. What are heroes known for?*

*C. What is a celebrity?*

*D. What are celebrities known for?*

*F. What does our world emphasize? And is it a problem?*

***The Traits Of A True Hero***

**Trait #1 – A Hero Lives For The Bringing Of \_\_\_\_\_ and Of \_\_\_\_\_ To Others**

*I. What was John the Baptist’s ‘job description’? (What was he born to do?)*

*A. He’ll bring \_\_\_\_\_ believers back to God.*

*B. He’ll bring \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ families.*

*C. He’ll bring total, abject \_\_\_\_\_ to God.*

*D. He’ll be a \_\_\_\_\_ for the Messiah.*

*II. Ask most people what they want to do with their lives, and how do they respond?*

*III. What’s my ‘Job Description’? What was I born to do?*

**Trait #2 – A Hero Isn’t Concerned With \_\_\_\_\_ But With \_\_\_\_\_ God.**

*I. John was popular but didn’t care about it – how do we know?*

*II. John came from the desert. What does God do with almost all of his heroes at one time or another?*

*III. Why does God do this?*

**Trait #3 – A Hero Stands Up For The \_\_\_\_\_, Whatever The \_\_\_\_\_.**

*I. What was John the Baptist’s message?*

*II. John’s message cost him – how did his life end up?*

*III. What amazing thing did Jesus say of John?*

*IV. Who will heaven throw a party for when all is said and done?*

*V. My assignment for the month:*



**“Where Have All The Heroes Gone?”**  
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*I. First things*

*A. What is a hero?*

Websters defines “hero” this way: - “a mythological or legendary figure endowed with great strength or ability; an illustrious warrior; a person admired for his achievements and noble qualities; one that shows great courage.” To look at it from another angle, it could be said that a hero is someone who does something heroic. Webster’s defines heroic as this: “exhibiting or marked by courage and daring; supremely noble or self-sacrificing”.

*B. What are heroes known for?*

For achievements, for noble qualities, for courage, for showing strength, for virtue, for self-sacrificing.

*C. What is a celebrity?*

Webster’s simply says a ‘celebrity’ is a ‘celebrated person’. They’re well-known.

*D. What are celebrities known for?*

They’re known for their fame, their money, their good looks, for being outlandish, for being visible – for getting face-time on TV or You-Tube or some other media.

*F. What does our world emphasize? And is it a problem?*

Heroes inspire us. Celebrities entertain us. Kids used to grow up and say, “I want to do great things,” and they searched for heroes to fire their imagination as to what that might look like. Kids grow up today and they say, “I want to be famous,” and they look to celebrities to feed their fetish of one day being rich and well-known. And it is a fetish. It’s a national obsession. Our world desperately needs heroes today. In the book “True Heroism in A World of Celebrity Counterfeits,” author Dick Keyes writes, “Our fascination with heroes comes from a hunger for

excellence...Without heroes, what will inspire us to go beyond mediocrity and cynicism? What will keep us from becoming bored and boring? And what do bored people do? They seek after idols of amusement to medicate their boredom.”

*The Traits Of A True Hero*

**Trait #1 – A Hero Lives For The Bringing Of God and Of Good To Others**

*I. What was John the Baptist’s ‘job description’? (What was he born to do?)*

A. He’ll bring backslidden believers back to God.

B. He’ll bring healing to broken families.

C. He’ll bring total, abject unbelievers to God.

D. He’ll be a forerunner for the Messiah.

*II. Ask most people what they want to do with their lives, and how do they respond?*

You ask a young person what they want to do with their lives and many are going to answer, “I want to be famous! I want to be a celebrity!”, and if they answer that way, who are they thinking about? Themselves. You ask a college graduate what they want to do with their lives and if they answer, as many of them do, “I want to get a good job and make lots of money,” who are they thinking about? Themselves. You ask a 45 year old what they want most out of life and they say, “I gotta make sure I have enough money for retirement. I gotta work hard so I can kick back one day”, who are they thinking about? Themselves. You ask a 65 year old what they want most out of life and they say, “Gotta get this knee replaced so I can get back on the golf course”, who are they thinking about? Themselves.

*III. What’s my ‘Job Description’? What was I born to do?*

When people cross paths with you and me, when they bump shoulders with you and me, they should leave that exchange brought closer in some way to God. A backslidden Christian

bumps into you, they should come away thinking, “You know, I need to get back to church, I’ve gotten too lazy lately, I’m missing out on something.” A person bleeding and bruised from a broken family or marriage crosses paths with you, they should think, even in some small way, “Wow, I want what they have. They have something that I’ve been missing. I like being with that person. They always encourage me.” An abject, total unbeliever crosses paths with you, they should get their bubble burst in some way. Your life should jar them, alarm them, inspire them, rattle them in some way that you set them thinking about their own life. In a very real way, you and I also are forerunners to Jesus. We are the ones that people see first before they ever see Jesus. And this is how God wants us to live.

**Trait #2 – A Hero Isn’t Concerned With Popularity But With Pleasing God.**

*I. John was popular but didn’t care about it – how do we know?*  
His clothing, his diet, his message. John was not urban-educated. He was not a city boy. His jeans didn’t have to have a certain label on them. He never qualified for the sexiest man alive poll. In fact, he had more in common with the Geiko caveman than anyone else. Only whereas it bugs the heck out of the Geiko caveman that he can’t fit it, John could care less.

*II. John came from the desert. What does God do with almost all of his heroes at one time or another?*

God more often than not takes his people into the desert before he uses them. Before he could use Abraham, he had to call him out of his home city of Ur, that Las Vegas of the ancient world from which Babylon would later spring. God called him out of that place into the wilderness of Canaan. Before he could use Moses, God took him out of Pharaoh's palace and brought him into the desert. Moses disappeared off the map for 40 years to tend sheep and walk with scorpions. Before Israel could inhabit the Promised Land, she first spent 40 years wandering in the desert. David before he became king spent several years running for his life in the desert. Paul, the great apostle, after his conversion, disappeared off the map for 14 years in the rural regions of Asia Minor before he exploded on the scene with a ministry that sent

tremors throughout the Roman empire. Elijah literally walked out of the wilderness one day, completely unknown, to become one of God’s greatest warriors.

*III. Why does God do this?*

Luke 1:80 says that John “became strong in spirit and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel.” If you want to be "strong in spirit" like John the Baptist, you can count on it - at some point God will take you into the desert. Why does God bring us to desert places? God wants to know if you'll follow him no matter what. If you'll put him first above all things.

**Trait #3 – A Hero Stands Up For The Truth, Whatever The Cost.**

*I. What was John the Baptist’s message?*

The message of John the Forerunner, and the message of forerunners today is simple: Repent, change your life, for Jesus is coming.

*II. John’s message cost him – how did his life end up?*

Where does John end up? Wasting away in jail. And how does his life end? With his head being cut off at the whim of a pagan king and a wicked woman. At first glance, this doesn't add up, especially when you call to mind the miraculous nature of John's birth. Elijah was whisked away from earth in a chariot of fire. John, this one who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, died with scarcely a whimper. And died young no less. Barely 30. And died with the residue of doubt hanging over him. John, while in prison, went through a dark episode where he actually wondered if Jesus was the Christ after all. This wasn't how John thought things would end up. And for a time at least, John felt genuine disappointment with God.

*III. What amazing thing did Jesus say of John?*

“I tell you the truth: among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist.” That's quite a statement to make. John, greater than Abraham. John, greater than Moses. John, greater than David, or Solomon, or Elijah. How could Jesus say that? John did no miracles. He had a short ministry of two or

**three years. And then he died a lonely, pitiful death in a Judean dungeon. But greatness is not measured by God in how many converts you make, how many years of service you log, how many people know your name. Your job is to stay faithful to the end, stand up for the truth and finish the work that God gives you to do, for however long God gives you to do it.**

*IV. Who will heaven throw a party for when all is said and done?*  
**All who stayed faithful to the end, no matter how “popular” they became.**

*V. My assignment for the month:*  
**Find true heroes in the world around me.**