

WEEK 11 PREVIEW

New Testament Heroes

Compared to those in the Old Testament, New Testament heroes feel a little more “blue collar.” No kings of nations. No leaders of chosen people. No government dignitaries worth speaking of. Instead, we have fishermen and tax collectors. Carpenters and stay-at-home moms. More “salt of the earth”-type people.

This might explain why the men and women from the New Testament feel more accessible. It’s hard to relate to the wisest man who ever lived or a guy who lived inside a fish. Someone who works with his hands for a living? I can identify with someone like that.

New Testament heroes are no less flawed than the Old Testament ones. In some ways, you could argue that they are more so. They had done life with Christ and still had their struggles. They performed miracles with Him and yet denied Him. They had been taught from the Master, yet still could not master the flesh.

Just as with our Old Testament heroes, we can find encouragement in the New Testament heroes, warts and all. This time it’s a little different. This time . . . there’s Jesus. This time we see firsthand how God in flesh dealt with sinful man. This time, we see how Jesus inspired His followers to live for the One who lived in constant communion with His

Father. This time, we have emboldened examples of lives lived post-Resurrection.

At the end of the day, New Testament heroes were like you and me. They were ordinary people that God used in extraordinary ways. He can and will do the same with us if we are open to His leading, like these heroes were.

This week, if your results have plateaued, if your enthusiasm has waned, or your resolve has diminished, take heart. Our New Testament heroes set a great example for us. They experienced eventual victory in the face of loss, setbacks, and uncertainty.

Because there’s Jesus . . . you can be victorious too!

Daily Spiritual Exercise: Fasting

Our King is, among other things, unrelenting in the pursuit of our hearts. We want to be the same toward Him. One way to do that is by staying in constant prayer with our Father.

Fasting is a great way to remind us of this need. So, fast from one meal every day. It doesn’t matter which meal you choose. Then, whenever you feel hunger pangs, use them as a reminder to be fully surrendered to Him. Pray with thanksgiving for the health He has given you. Pray also that by His Spirit in you, you’d be unrelenting in pursuing your fitness. Most importantly, pray to be unrelenting in pursuing His heart.