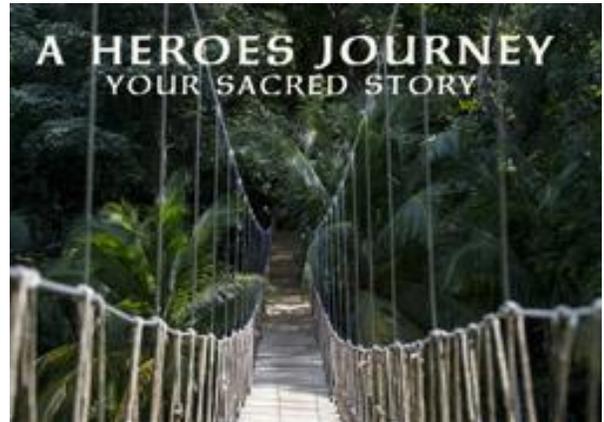


**Crossroads Daily Guide**  
**Week of June 5, 2016**  
**A Heroes Journey-Your Sacred Story**



**Sunday, June 5, 2016**

*Matthew 4:19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.*

**Reflection:** In 1949 American scholar and writer, Joseph Campbell, published a book called *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, which outlined the basic plot line of every drama, myth, and religious ritual known to humankind. In the book Campbell says all stories can be broken down into three acts: 1) an initial set up: the protagonist is called to adventure; 2) a confrontation: the protagonist faces trials and setbacks; and, 3) a resolution: the tension is resolved and the character learns something new about themselves. According to Campbell we find this narrative arch meaningful because it reflects the rhythms of our own lives. As we walk this journey of faith it is important we look out for the next adventure God may be inviting us into. This adventure could look like moving to a new city, starting a new job, or entering into a new relationship. Whatever it is, God is ready and waiting to use these new experiences to transform our hearts and lead us into deeper discipleship. The question is: will you say "yes"?

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder this question for the next two minutes: *What new adventure is God calling me into now?*

**Monday June 6, 2016**

*Genesis 50:20 Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today.*

**Reflection:** When the hero says a hearty "yes!" to their adventure they are often met skepticism. Key people express criticism or try to stop the hero from carrying out their intentions. We see this all the time in our lives: you start a new diet and exercise regimen and your friend says, "You don't really think you will lose the weight this time do you?" You quit your job to pursue new dreams and your parents say, "Do you really think you will be happier doing this?" Or worst of all, you risk being vulnerable and are met with condemnation.

Former president Teddy Roosevelt once said,

*"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly..."*

There are a lot of reasons why we tend towards skepticism and judgment. Sometimes it's fear getting the best of us, other times it's jealousy that this person is taking steps to change their life for the better. But we must remember that neither the critic nor the criticism counts, rather – as Roosevelt says – "...the credit belongs to the one in the arena."

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder this question for the next two minutes: *Am I willing to "dare greatly" in spite of the possibility that I will face skepticism?*

## **Tuesday June 7, 2016**

*2 Corinthians 11:25b -26 Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters.*

**Reflection:** In his book, *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years: What I Learned While Editing My Life*, Donald Miller writes, "Every creative person, and I think probably every other person, faces resistance when they are trying to create something good...The harder the resistance, the more important the task must be." In his second letter to the Church of Corinth, the apostle Paul speaks at length about the many trials he has faced in his mission to spread the gospel across the ancient world. He does this not to scare the Corinthians, but to impress upon them the importance of his mission.

As you embark on your next adventure, remember that disappointment is inevitable—but do not let that deter you! Meaningful stories are wrought with challenges. Face them head on, knowing that God is cheering you on.

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder this question for the next two minutes: *What is stopping me, or has the potential to stop me, from living life to its fullest?*

## **Wednesday June 8, 2016**

*John 14:26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.*

**Reflection:** In Joseph Campbell's account of the hero's journey there are always mentors who come alongside the adventurer to offer support and guidance. When the road gets bumpy these figures help the hero find the strength to go on.

In John's Gospel the Holy Spirit is referred to as "the Advocate," or "one who comes alongside." The Greek word he uses casts the Holy Spirit as a defense lawyer who argues tirelessly on our behalf. As we make this journey, we remember that the Holy Spirit walks beside us, offering wisdom and empowering us to fight the good fight.

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder this question for the next two minutes: *Who are my advocates and guides on this journey?*

## **Thursday June 9, 2016**

*John 14: 8-9 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*

**Reflection:** When the hero conquers their fear and overcomes obstacles there is a sudden change in the way they understand life. Oprah often refers to this as the "Ah-ha moment." In our own lives this would be a dramatic revelation that challenges everything we thought we knew and opens up new ways of thinking and being. These moments are a sign that transformation has occurred and there is no going back to how things used to be.

In the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus reveals his divine identity and in so doing changed the way God has been understood up to that point. Here was God in the flesh, a man who eats with sinners and comforts the afflicted. This revelation sparked a movement that continues to this day, a movement that is birthing new revelations all the time.

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder these question for the next two minutes: *What are my "Ah-ha moments"?*

## **Friday June 10, 2016**

*Luke 5:31-32 Jesus answered, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance."*

**Reflection:** After the hero experiences their “Ah-ha movement,” they have to grapple with the old habits and hang ups that once held them back. In other words, something must die for something new to be born – this process is called atonement. And atonement, rather than merely requiring something to die, acknowledge that we must reflect on our old ways of being before we can decide how to move forward. Broken down, atonement really means “at-one-ment.”

The concept of atonement may seem cryptic, but we are actually confronted this experience all the time. For example, when you have a child old ways – be they schedules, habits, living situations, etc – have to change to accommodate the new life. Divorces must be grieved before healing can occur and new relationships formed. Addictions must be acknowledged, apologies offered, and better choices made before we can live into the new things God is doing with our lives.

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder this question for the next two minutes: *What old ways of being do I need to sort through and confess before I move forward into God’s dream for my life?*

### **Saturday June 11, 2016**

*1 Corinthians 13:12-13 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*

**Reflection:** The final step of the hero’s journey is called the “return.” At the end of the adventure the hero returns to everyday life with a deeper awareness of who they are.

In Paul’s letter to the church in Corinth, he claims that in Jesus — the way he lived, his forgiveness in the face of death and his resurrection— we glimpse a kingdom not yet fully realized. He says someday we will experience this kingdom in its fullness, but until then, we are invited to deal in its currency: faith, hope, and love.

**Practice:** Spend one minute in silence and then ponder this question for the next two minutes: *How can I integrate my “Ah-ha moments” into my everyday life?*