

Sharing Like A Hero Maker

Acts 2

You might wonder at the odd assortment of things I have on the stage this morning (lawn mower, bicycle, floor jack, fishing pole. etc.)

These are all things that my dad taught me.

He taught me how to ride a bike.

He taught me how to shave.

He taught me how to tie a tie with a Double Windsor knot. Although I do a Half Windsor these days.

He taught me how to mow the lawn (although I'm still not sure I've forgiven him for that) Actually, I bought my first computer, a Commodore 64 and the first few of my really cool bikes by mowing lawns and shoveling walks.

He taught me how to drive, and, of course, change a tire, and with three girls in the house that still remains my job.

He taught me fish, although my interest in that began to wane when I grew older and discovered there were more interesting things to catch on shore during vacation.

It was also on one of these vacations when dad taught me to pee behind a tree. This got him in trouble one Sunday when, after church, I decided to water the tree near the front door of the sanctuary.

Dad also taught me things like loving the New York Yankees, the Minnesota Vikings and Nascar. Don't ask how an Iowa boy ever came up with that combination.

He taught me important things about how to love God and how to love my wife and love my children.

There's no way I could fit all he taught me on this stage or in a single sermon. None of these things that my dad taught me did he teach me by having me open a book, except for the Bible. He didn't lecture me, well, not usually. It didn't happen in a classroom.

Dad taught me by spending time with me. He let me watch him. He explained what he was doing. He let me do it. He gave patient instruction. He'd catch my fails with encouraging words. He praised me when I got it right. The most important lessons in life are caught, not taught.

This isn't just how a father teaches a son. It's also how you make heroes.

So far, we've considered the first two essential practices of a Hero Maker: Multiplication Thinking and Permission Giving. Multiplication thinking is when we go from thinking that ministry happens, change happens, growth happens through our own work and effort to thinking that ministry happens through efforts of many.

Permission giving is when we shift from seeing what God can do through yourself to seeing what God can do through someone else, and then giving them the freedom to achieve that.

This morning we look at the third practice of a Hero Maker – Disciple Multiplying. Disciple Multiplying is the heart of being a Hero Maker. If we want to become hero makers, we must commit to making heroes, or as Jesus calls them, making “disciples.” This is also the heart of Jesus' Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20

(Can anyone quote it, yet? Consider having them step up and do it in front of the church.)

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age

To be a disciple-multiplier, here is the shift that has to take place...

Common Practice: Prioritizing personal growth. We want to grow spiritually. We want to improve our own walk with Jesus. We want a closer relationship with God. We want to improve our lives.

Disciple Multiplying Prioritizes the Growth of Others. (It invests in the growth of others to multiply heroes.)

There's nothing wrong with personal growth, but what if we could expand our horizons imagine this hero making practice – investing in the work of others to multiply heroes. What if we could help others grow, and not just ourselves. We deepen their walk, we grow their skills, improve their lives so that the kingdom can grow?

For this to happen we must share like a hero maker and sharing like a hero maker requires that we shift from information sharing to life sharing as we overlap our lives with others.

Peter was a hero maker who was great at multiplying himself by sharing his life with others.

One of the greatest examples of this is how Peter was used by God to launch the church.

During the Feast of Pentecost God poured out the Holy Spirit—as He had promised— and the disciples were given the ability to speak in other languages. This was a miracle with the purpose of getting everyone’s attention.

And, once everyone was paying attention, Peter spoke up and delivered a powerful sermon to this Jewish audience about how the Messiah had come and they had killed him.

The response was amazing! Acts 2:36-41 36

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

3,000 heroes were created in one day!

Life Together

But, Peter wasn’t just about sharing this life-transforming information; He didn’t just share the good news and move on. He was also about sharing life. Look what happens in the immediate aftermath of Pentecost.

Peter and the rest of the new Christians immediately started doing **life together**. Look at Acts 2:42-47

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The number of disciples was growing “day by day.” Wow! Why?

Because they weren't just learning information. They weren't just listening to sermons and lessons, although they did that. They didn't just attend home Bible studies, although they did that. They shared life together. Money, meals, possessions, time— they did life together.

Where did they learn this? Where did Peter and the other Apostles pick up this idea?

Peter learned to share his life the very first time he met Jesus. Peter was fisherman. We read about this in Luke 5. He first meets Jesus after a long night of fishing and having no luck. Peter was washing his nets when Jesus wants to use his boat as a portable pulpit. He has Peter launch the boat and from the boat he teaches the crowd that gathers on the natural amphitheater of the seashore.

When Jesus was done with the sermon, he'd just started with Peter. He told Peter to put his nets out to catch fish. Peter was skeptical because he'd fished all night and hardly caught a thing. He pulled in such a miraculous catch of fish that it broke their nets and nearly sank two boats.

At this, Peter became very afraid because he knew he was in the presence of divine power, and he knew he wasn't worthy. But listen to what Jesus tells Simon Peter in Luke 5:10:

“Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.”

And for three years he shared life together with Jesus. The first key to sharing like a hero maker:

I. Intentionality

Jesus said, *“You will be catching men.”* Matthew records Jesus telling Peter and his brother as well as James and John, *“Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* Jesus was very intentional about his mission.

You don't catch fish by accident. My Dad taught me that good fishermen, who want to catch fish, are very intentional with how they fish.

If you really want to catch fish you need...

The right equipment. You don't catch river trout with a deep-sea fishing rod with 1000 lbs test line!

The right location. You don't fish for bass off a bridge in the Florida Keys!

The right bait. You don't fish for Crappie on Grand Lake the same you fish for Walleye in northern Minnesota.

If we want to raise up heroes, we need to be more intentional with how we share our lives with them.

We need the right equipment... the love of Jesus and confidence that God has created them for something more.

We need the right location... wherever they are for however long it takes.

We need the right bait... a genuine love and intentional desire to help them become true heroes.

We need to be intentional as Christians in our own personal witness, and we need to be intentional as a church.

Here's a very practical tool. It's been called the five steps of leadership development, apprenticeship, discipleship, but this morning we'll call it the five steps of hero making: 1) I do. You watch. 2) I do. You help. 3) You do. I help. 4) You do. I watch. 5) You do. Someone else watches.

Essentially, this is what Jesus did with Peter, and what positioned Peter to be a hero on the Day of Pentecost.

Now, between his calling and his powerful message on the Day of Pentecost, Peter lost his way during the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus—when he denied knowing Jesus.

But, Jesus... the ultimate hero maker... wasn't done with Peter, yet so He came to Peter again while he was fishing. Peter had gone back to his nets and his boat. He went back to his comfort zone and what he knew so well. Again, just like three years earlier, Peter had fished all night and caught nothing. Again, Jesus shows up. John 21 records the scene for us.

4 Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." 6 He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. 7 That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. 8 The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

Jesus then fixes the disciples breakfast. Fish, of course. The numbers here are quite interesting. Peter had denied Jesus three times. This was the third time Peter had seen Jesus alive since his death. After breakfast, Jesus asks Peter three times, "Do you love me more than these?" Maybe he was pointing to the boats, or to the fish, or maybe the nets. Three times Peter answered, "You know that I love you." Each time cut a little more deeply.

Each time reminding him of each denial. But Jesus meets Peter not with judgment, but with grace. Three times Jesus restores Peter to his calling. This time Jesus doesn't call Peter to fish for people. Instead, Jesus switches metaphors. "Feed my sheep." "Care for my sheep." Jesus ends the conversation by telling Peter the same thing he said three years before, "*Follow me.*"

In restoring Peter, Jesus teaches us the second key to sharing like a hero maker:

II. Persistence

My Dad taught me that it takes a lot of persistence to catch fish. You can't quit too quickly. You have to stick it out and be committed to catching fish. We quit too easily and too early too often.

I LOVE that Jesus didn't quit on Peter, because I probably would have!

John Timberlake was a runner for the University of Tennessee. John was a 4:08 miler. That's crazy fast! As a Freshman at the University of Tennessee he was trying to qualify for Nationals, but his times were just too slow.

He had one more chance so—to motivate him—his college coach invited John's High School coach to come and cheer him on.

His High School coach came and brought some of his old teammates to cheer him on. Two laps into the mile John was in last place and started to feel embarrassed that he was doing so poorly with so many people there to watch him so—on the 3rd lap—he stepped off the track. He quit.

After the race, his coach ran up to him and asked him why he quit, saying, "You were on record pace! Everyone who finished that race qualified for Nationals. If you would have just maintained your pace and finished the race, you would have qualified for Nationals."

John's focus was on the wrong thing, so he lost hope and quit.

Where is your focus?

If your focus is not on yourself, but on how you can intentionally share your life by being a hero who persists in multiplying disciples, then our lives, this church, and our community will be changed forever.

Well, it's time to wrap this up... I hear the fish are biting.