

# Learning from the Heroes of Faith

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Posted by admin

Your past should be a “guidepost,” not a “hitching post.” This statement has motivated me through the years to learn from the past but not to be stuck in the past; the past with its failures, disappointments, discouragements and sin. I spend entirely too much time regretting the past or fearing the future that often robs me from living in the present, Looking back can be a great source of learning as long as I don’t live there. In addition to looking at our own past, observing the past lives of others can be extremely helpful. I borrowed from John Maxwell for some of the following thoughts.

There is a well-known and instructive passage in the book of Hebrews,

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”*

## *Hebrews 12:1-3*

Who are these “witnesses?” Some Bible scholars believe that they are saints from the past who are observing us run our race. How did they run? What did they learn? What can they teach us? To not grow weary in our leadership roles we need encouragement, the encouragement from the Lord Jesus by “looking to Him and considering Him,” as this passage admonishes us to do, and also by learning from some of the “heroes of the faith.”

If a few of these Heroes, who are catalogued in Hebrews 13, were to step out of the past and spend an hour with us to give us some perspective on our leadership, what would they have to say to you and me? Let’s look at three of them: Abraham, Joseph and Esther.

## **ABRAHAM**

What would Abraham say to you and me over a cup of coffee? I believe his message would be:

### ***ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE***

Abraham might say, “When I was promised that the entire world would be blessed through me, and that my descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the heaven and the sand on the shore, it sounded absolutely impossible, ridiculous. My wife laughed at the notion. How could I, one person, and an old person at that possibly be a part of something so huge?”

From Abraham we learn that:

1. You can make a difference in your family
2. You can make a difference for future generations
3. You can make a difference at any age

## **JOSEPH**

What would Joseph say to you and me if we had him over for lunch? I believe his message would be:

### ***NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS***

Joseph might tell us, “When I was young, I had a dream about the future and what my role in it might be. But it was a long road between the birth of the dream and the fulfillment of the dream. I experienced lots of discouragement, abandonment, temptation, and injustice in between. But God, in His time, made good on His promise.”

From Joseph we learn that:

1. God is always with you and at work around you regardless of the circumstance
  1. God may seem slow, but He’s never late
  2. Never give up on your dream

## **ESTHER**

What would Esther say to you and me if we could take a walk with her? I believe the message would be:

### ***GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER EVERY DETAIL OF OUR LIVES***

She might say, “I was in harm’s way numerous times, trusting Him for the outcome that would be pleasing to Him. He always came through and powerfully

**ruled over every detail and every decision.”**

**Every time I read the book of Esther, I am empowered to again trust the sovereignty of God. One of my favorite verses from the book is the first verse of chapter nine, “On the day that the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite occurred.” God has lots of names in Scripture, but the name I am coming to appreciate more and more is, “The God of the opposite.” When things seem to be going one way, God can turn it completely around and send it another way. The entire book of Esther is surreal and a vivid account of the “Blessed controller of all things” (I Timothy 6:15 Phillips) .**

**From Esther we learn that:**

- 1. God put you where you are and will use you where you are**
- 2. God can turn any situation around regardless of how impossible it looks**
- 3. God is all-powerful and all-wise and worthy of our complete trust**

**These are three of my heroes. Why not pick some of your own and use your imagination as to what they might tell YOU right now, if they stepped out of the past and spent some time with you. What can you learn from their experience? Hebrews 11:4 says, in regard to Abel, “He still speaks, even though he is dead.” So do all the “cloud of witnesses” speak though they are dead and their words are powerful and encouraging in our leadership journey.**