

Discussion Questions for *The Soul of a Hero*

Introduction: Heroes at Heart

1. Do you think of yourself as the hero of your own story? Why or why not?
2. Write your own definition of a hero. What are the essential elements of a real-life hero? What for you are the elements of “a rich and satisfying life”? We’ll come back to this definition at the end of the book, so spend a few minutes fleshing it out here.
3. What has kept you from becoming the hero of your own story? What steps can you take toward becoming your definition of a hero?
4. What kind of environment would help your heroic masculine soul to stretch, grow, and thrive?

Chapter 1: Come Empty

1. Describe a time in your life when you came up empty. What barriers did you face that made it difficult to realize and/or admit you had nothing to offer? What did you do next?
2. Have you ever experienced *spiritual multiplication*, a time when you saw God take your measly efforts and offerings—your *nothing*—and turn it into something greater? How did this affect your faith in God? How did this affect your willingness to surrender what you have to God?
3. Describe a time when you had to let go of your pride, unlearn some old ways of thinking, or yield to the greater wisdom or experience of another person in your life. What lasting effects have resulted?

Chapter 2: Your True Identity

1. What elements contribute to your sense of identity? Your job, marital status, ethnicity, age? In other words, what makes you who you are?
2. Do you have a sense of your *true* identity—that is, how *God* sees you? How does that differ from your self-perception or sense of identity?
3. What does it mean to be an adopted son of God, with all the rights and privileges that go along with belonging to God’s family? What are some of those rights and privileges? How does it make you *feel* to be called a beloved son of the Father in heaven?
4. How does knowing you are a beloved son of God affect how you live from day to day? How *should* it affect the way you live?
5. Have you asked God yet for a nickname that reflects your true identity? If not, ask him now for a name that will encourage you, expand your vision, and prepare you for the next stage of your hero’s journey.

Chapter 3: The Dad Factor

1. In what ways were you wounded by your father? In what ways did he affirm you and encourage you? (If these questions are difficult to answer on your own or share with a group, we encourage you to

seek out a qualified professional counselor or therapist.)

2. If you find it helpful, write down the hurtful memories to purge them from your mind. Then write what *should* have been, or what *should* have happened, if your father had been emotionally healthy. (If you're able, share this with your group or with a counselor.) Now imagine yourself telling the child you once were about the things that should have been said and done.
3. What steps would you need to take in order to forgive your father for what he did or did not do when you were a child? Remember, forgiveness doesn't mean that what happened was okay. It simply means letting go of the memories and forgiving as you have been forgiven.
4. Do you have a mentor or mentors in your life? Who in your sphere of relationships would be a good mentor for you? What can you do to initiate a conversation with that person about becoming your mentor?
5. Do you have a man or men in your life that you are mentoring? If not, who in your sphere of relationships could you mentor? What can you do to initiate a conversation with that person about becoming a mentor to him?

Chapter 4: Sidekicks for the Soul Journey

1. What qualities would you look for when seeking a friend you could say anything to or call in times of trouble? Who is in your inner circle? Do you have a friend or friends who would come for you if you ended up in a foreign jail?
2. How can you become more intentional about staying in touch with your male friends? What kinds of activities or service projects can you do together?
3. If you don't have "sidekicks for the soul journey" types of friends, what can you do this week to seek out opportunities to get involved with some potential soul-level friends?
4. What positive steps can you take to open your circle to a few guys who may need a band of brothers to join?

Chapter 5: Your Mission, Should You Choose to Accept It

1. Do you have a sense of purpose in your life—a life mission or life goal? How would you define it? What does it mean for you to be *on mission*?
2. What brings you deep gladness? What makes you feel alive? Make a list of your talents, interests, abilities, and gifts—things that come naturally or easily to you, that fill you with joy and renewed passion for life, and that bless or serve others in some way. Now compare the items on your list and look for common themes that may point you toward a life mission.
3. How does your life mission align with God's purposes? How central is God in your statement of purpose? Are there adjustments you might need to make? As you pray about your life's purpose or mission, what do you hear or sense God saying to you? Write these things down and pray for greater insight and clarity from the Lord.

Chapter 6: Being a Real Man in #MeToo Times

1. How do you generally view the women in your life? As fellow heroes or as damsels in distress? As servants or sex objects? As fellow partners with you in pursuing God's purpose in the world? What can you do to appropriately draw out their innate, God-given beauty, strength, and purpose? (The answers will of course vary, depending on whether you're talking about your wife, daughter, sister, coworker, or friend.)
2. If you're married, what would it look like to be an everyday hero to your wife? How much of that are you currently doing? What specific areas need some attention and change on your part?
3. When you have conflict with your wife, how do you typically respond? What needs to change in your approach to conflict resolution in order to honor your wife's perspective? What practical steps can you take to identify each other's core needs and work toward constructive, win-win solutions?
4. If you have a daughter, how actively engaged are you in her life? How do you show your interest in her? What can you do to encourage her sense of beauty, well-being, and potential? What does it mean to you to be your daughter's hero? What does it mean to her?
5. What can you do to constructively and appropriately encourage and support your female friends and coworkers? How well do you advocate for equality of opportunity? Whether you supervise people or not, how diligent are you in your workplace to make sure that sexual harassment or abuse does not take place?

Chapter 7: Mastering Your Mind

1. Would others describe you as a glass-half-empty or a glass-half-full type of person? What is your typical mindset when life is difficult? Are you problem oriented or solution oriented?
2. How do you typically respond to circumstances beyond your control? What are your usual coping strategies? What needs to change in your approach to hard times?
3. "One thing we can always control is our thoughts about our circumstances." Do you agree or disagree? What practical steps can you take to create a gap between the stimulus and your response in times of conflict or challenge?
4. For the next week, look for opportunities to put into practice the Four Steps to an Inner Miracle discussed in this chapter. At the end of the week, write down what you have experienced and learned (and share it with your discussion group, if appropriate).

Chapter 8: Get Ready to Soar

1. Look back at the definition of a hero you wrote for question 2 in the introduction. What would you change about your definition? What key elements would you add?
2. Christopher Reeve, who played Superman in several movies and was later paralyzed in a horseback riding accident, wrote the following in his postaccident memoir, *Still Me*: "A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles." Give an example of a time when you have done this yourself or have seen it in the life of someone close to you.
3. Review the seven "heroic secrets" we have discussed in this book. Which ones have resonated the

most with you? Which ones do you need to focus on more in the days ahead?

4. Now that you have a greater understanding of the heroic soul that lies within every man, how are you going to share this wisdom with other men?