

Mapping the Hero's Journey

A thin line separates heroes from the rest. Three qualities explain the birth of a hero; a call to action, responding and persistence. Then what happens? That is the part that is not as easy to explain – or is it?

The Tentmaker as Hero

The tentmaker is one of the cloaks that God uses to hide the identity of His hero. His son wore the cloak of humanity. David wore the cloak of a boy shepherd. Peter, the profane fisherman and so forth.

The hero's journey is not a new story. It is universal and inspires the great literature of history and the powerful storylines for today. The great characters in the Bible follow the hero's plotline. These stories encourage our imaginations. We can all quote from our favorite movie when the hero turns the tide having overcome the odds and delivers justice, freedom or saves the day.

“You've got to ask yourself one question: 'Do I feel lucky?' Well, do ya punk?”

There is an interesting secret in these captivating stories. They are not just stories. They are maps! That's right – they reveal the path, the themes, the obstacles, the battle ahead and our ultimate victory.

By the end of the day, you will be able to create your own hero's map and story to guide you on your real life journey.

Why is this important? For one thing, I believe there are thousands waiting for something or someone to pull them out of their ordinary lives, out of the pews and into something venturesome and meaningful. I meet people everyday waiting for their “call to action.” Everyone has received that call but for many, perhaps most, they have missed it or have denied it.

The “call” initiates the hero's journey coming in many forms. A voice or someone may call you to leave the world you know. You may be confronted with a cause others are afraid to answer. The call may be a decisive moment about the ugliness of one's condition or a sense there is some hidden purpose to discover. A stranger may enter disrupting your normal life posing a question or challenge you cannot ignore. You may encounter an event that upsets the equilibrium of your life or simply feel a nagging sense that there has to be more etc. There is no way to predict where or when the call will come – but it will come! On the other hand, you just might hear the call at an event like *The Return of the Tentmaker*.

Jim Carroll will begin the morning by addressing our call to action. What is it? How do you know when you have heard it? What happens when hear it? What

gets in the way of responding to that call to action? How do you overcome the many obstacles to responding?

Once Jim takes you through his interactive session, you will later work through the hero's map to further identify and clarify that call.

The Lead-tone

How is this different from being purpose driven? Finding purpose is one of the important elements to your hero's story. It is one crucial destination along the journey. Purpose is the lead-tone. On a musical scale, the seventh tone makes you feel the need to resolve it in some way. This is called the [leading tone](#). Try it – “do, re, me, fa, so, la, **Ti**, do.” You will resolve it by either moving a half step higher to “do” or descending the scale. Finding purpose is like landing on that leading tone. It begs for a finish – a resolution.

The epic story was the mission-vision statement of ancient culture. Frankly modern culture has given up a lot in search for more efficient means to boil down the essence of a motivating mission.

During The Return of the Tentmaker, we will take some time to work through the framework for your own epic story and hero's journey.

Finding Your Hidden Identity

The more you are like yourself the less you are like anyone else which makes you unique. Michael Vance, former dean of Disney University

I can still remember this statement sitting in a seminar about building creative cultures twenty years ago. This impact has not faded.

Finding our unique traits, character, calling and destiny challenge everyone. The journey is universal. You and I muddle, wrestle and wander to discover why we are on this earth. Those who not only find but also embrace their journey are forever changed transformed by a captivating purpose and life giving force.

This search is at the core of the hero's journey. The hero must battle to find out who he or she is in order to complete their call to action. This is the first threshold we must all pass through. Identity is the gate that prevents most of us from effectively fulfilling our mission. The major battle through this first gate deals with the false attachments for our identity. David O'Hara has successfully defeated the guardians of this threshold. He will bring insight direct from the battlefield and exercises that will free you to pass through this threshold to search out your purpose and fulfill your call to action.

Where are you along the journey?

- Do you need to clarify your call?
- Do you need to respond and overcome delay?

- Do you need a mentor to guide your journey (every hero has one)?
- Are you meeting resistance from tricksters, naysayers and others whose aim is to throw you off your journey or give up?
- Are you in the abyss and struggling with the shadow of death whose aim is to defeat your call and purpose?
- Have you entered your cave of darkness, fear and doubt?
- Have you recently been transformed and now find the awkwardness of living in the world you left behind and the new world you have discovered?
- What ordeals test your resolve?
- Have you experienced a resurrection, a reward, a renewed vision?
- Has that Word become flesh in your life and are you ready to break it off for others?

Your hero's map will guide you toward developing the structure and outline for your epic story.

Your Posse

Every hero has a posse. Even hardened loners must eventually let the walls down and other people in. We need mentors (spiritual fathers), heralds (those who bring discernment and insight) and "brothers" (those who keep us honest and true). This critical component requires direct and frank talk. Heroes are tempted to venture out alone and our culture has reinforced this thinking. No hero completes the journey alone. This may be the one missing ingredient to your journey. We are fortunate to have Rich Klena join the event. He has a gift helping men build a transformational posse.

The Hero's Map

Storytelling is an ancient and almost lost art. There are common structures to epic stories. You will find it with every Bible character as well as in great literature. Hollywood has capitalized on the power of these universal themes – and if we take a moment, they can provide clues to our own epic journey.

Are you ready to discover the structure, themes and story to your own hero's journey? If so, the Hero's Map was designed to guide you along through your epic story.

The map is organized along five key areas.

Key events: we begin by listing the key events in our lives, both positive and negative. These crossroads shape our character and map out our past. List as many as you can on this first step without going into much detail. Analysis will come later.

Key influences: list people, books, movies etc. that have changed your thinking, provided inspiration or left a mark on your life.

Recognition and achievements: list the awards you have received, the traits that other people have said about you. For example, “Jim always has a fresh idea to share.” The recognition is both formal and informal revealing hidden strengths and weaknesses.

Desire: list the things that make you passionate. Whatever it is, even a hobby, there is something at the root of that passion and once that discovered that passion could lead to making a difference to others. Also, consider some of the things that make you mad, the few things that if you could, you would change them. Getting to the root of ones passion is essential to the hero’s journey. A call to mission comes from external motivation. When that mission connects to ones passion then it is inspired. Motivation does not last and requires continuous external reinforcement. Inspiration provides its own fuel source.

Vocation and calling: list the areas of life you feel a duty to address, serve or support. There are reasons you feel this way, history that has shaped you.

Once you complete this first round of brainstorming follow up with a few more exercises:

- **Chronology** – if you believe that God has a plan for your life then it also has continuity. This exercise guides you in discovering that continuity and narrative. Do your best to assign some chronological order to your list. This will help make connections between events, you will begin to see patterns, and themes emerge.
- **Patterns and Themes** – identify common themes. For example, you may find that each job you found success had common elements through the process. You may find that there are common obstacles that keep holding you back.
- **Significance** – if you believe that your life has meaning then the events and circumstances in life provide clues. Drill down your list and ask what your entry means, what residue do you still carry, what questions it raised, what truth uncovered.
- **Storyline** – this is the fun part. Begin linking your map to other stories or characters. Pastors commonly identify with Peter’s “foot in mouth” theme. You may draw a link to characters like Rocky or Bilbo Baggins. Your story may take a page from “The Rookie” a late bloomer who becomes a hero. This is where you build your own composite story.

Key Events	Key Influences	Achievements and Recognition	De-Sires	Vocational Drives
<i>Events that made and impact +/-</i>	<i>People: teachers, coaches, adults, friends, parents +/-</i>	<i>Awards, accomplishments, comments from others, goals</i>	<i>Latin for Of the Father</i>	<i>Callings - what do you feel compelled to do?</i>
<i>What was significant about the event?</i>	<i>Books, movies, songs, shows, tapes, messages</i>		<i>Interests, hobbies, passions that one would pursue if one were free to do so.</i>	<i>What do you feel your purpose or reason for being here is?</i>
<i>What does the event symbolize?</i>				<i>What do you feel you are here to accomplish or leave behind?</i>
				<i>Describe your legacy.</i>

We will provide time and worksheet during the event so you can begin the process.