

The Need for Heroes – by Thailer Jimerson

“No, don’t call me a hero. Do you know who the real heroes are? The guys who wake up every morning, and go into their normal jobs, and get a distress call from the commissioner, and take off their glasses and change into capes and fly around fighting crime. Those are the real heroes.” (Dwight K. Schrute, *The Office*).

In all seriousness, though, *we really need heroes*. Role-models. People we can model and emulate. God has designed us in such a way that we learn, even from the earliest of ages, simply by observation and mimicking those around us. And the apostle Paul seems to pick up on that emphasis when he encourages Christians to learn discipleship and modify their own behavior by watching closely the models set by others (1Co.4.16, 11.1; 2Ti.2.2; etc.)

I was recently provided with a newspaper clipping of an article written in the Salem Leader called “*What happened to the role models?*” And in this article the author, Kate Wehlann, discusses the event concerning child star Miley Cyrus (who most know as Hannah Montana) and her sensual dance on the VMA’s in 2013. In the article, her nearly complete lack of clothing and her provocative performance with “36-year-old married father,” Robin Thicke, was noted.

And she makes some apt points about how these children who loved Hannah Montana growing up are now idolizing this new star. For 10- to 14-year-olds, this is the role model. She says, “*This is about the state of available, visible role models in this country and, let’s face it, the world. Outside of school, most kids spend more time on the computer or phones and watching TV than they do pretty much anything else. Most kids aren’t meeting role models in their community anymore or reading books or watching documentaries about people who went out and did something with their lives other than make money and count Twitter followers. They don’t even seem to be able to find fictional role models anymore. When they’re in high school, if they’re really paying attention, they might view some teachers as role models, but other than that, their role model pool pretty much consists of pop culture.*”

Growing up, my hero in life was my grandfather, Harmon Jimerson. I wanted to be just like him – from the way he dressed, to how he walked. These days I’m happy to say that Christ Jesus is a hero, since, after all, he is THE hero to which all heroes point.

It’s natural for each of us to have that one person we look up to. But here’s my question – who is that person? Who is our role model? Is this person worthy of looking up to, and emulating? And, especially, who are our children’s role models? Are we aware of those upon whom they set their eyes, day after day? Are we providing role models for them to follow – even modelling the Christ-life in ourselves, for their benefit and, hopefully, their emulation?