



# WEEK 4

## SERMON GUIDE

# ORIGIN STORY

## THE BIG IDEA

Heroes are heroic  
in ordinary moments.

## THE BIBLE

Luke 10:25-37; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; John 5:6;  
Matthew 4:18, 9:36; Colossians 3:12-14

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### VIDEO | A Clip from *Thor: Ragnarok*

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this clip](#) of Thor and the Hulk fighting, joking, and finally reconciling.
- I hope you've never been in a fight with someone that involved having a metal shield hurled at your head. But I'm guessing there have been at least a few times when you and someone you care about have been really angry with each other.
- This month, we've been talking about how heroes . . .
  - Embrace their unique identities.
  - Take care of others.
  - Know they can't save the world alone.
- To help us learn these lessons, we've looked at the origin stories of some of our favorite superheroes. There's a lot to love about those stories — like the action, stories, characters, and definitely the jokes.

### STORY | Talk about a time when laughter mended things with someone after a fight.

- In that clip we just watched, laughter helped mend a tense situation between friends.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell a story from your life (or ask a volunteer or student to tell a story) about a time when you fought with a friend, but a little humor helped you reconcile. Maybe, right in the middle of a screaming match, you both realized how ridiculous you were being and burst into laughter. Or maybe, after you've had a fight, one of you shared a funny story or comment in order to bring you back together.
- After a disagreement (or sometimes during a disagreement) it's amazing how much can be solved by laughing or having fun together.

### **STORY | Talk about a time you needed to apologize to a friend.**

- But sometimes, a joke isn't enough. Sometimes you have to work harder to reconcile with someone you care about.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story from your life (or ask a volunteer or student to tell a story) about a time when you needed to apologize to a friend or other loved one for something you did. Talk in detail about the reconciliation — how you felt beforehand, what you said, how it was received, and what you learned from it.*
- When we think about heroes, we often think about saving the world in big ways — like defeating evil aliens or preventing villains from destroying a city. But in real life, being a hero is more about what you do in ordinary moments.
- Heroes are courageous, strong, compassionate, and driven to make wrong things right in the world. Sometimes the best way to do that is by owning our mistakes and reconciling with someone we've hurt — even if we didn't mean to hurt them.

### **SO WHAT?** *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

#### **SCRIPTURE | James 5:16**

- There are plenty of passages in Scripture where God or one of God's people tells us how to handle things when we've hurt someone. Here's one of them . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read James 5:16 together.*
- Reconciling with someone we've hurt is really hard work, but it's the key to healing.
- In the clip we just watched, here's what reconciliation looked like:
  - Thor apologized and corrected the hurtful thing he said.
  - Hulk accepted his apology.
  - Thor shared the hurtful thing Hulk had done to him.
  - Hulk apologized and shared how he felt.
  - They found common ground.

### **STORY | Share how your story of reconciliation compares.**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break down the story of reconciliation you shared earlier into a few simple steps, giving students an understanding of how a reconciliation conversation could go.*

#### **SCRIPTURE | Luke 10:25-29**

- I could share more passages of Scripture specifically about apologizing, forgiving, and reconciling, but instead I want to share a bigger principle about how we're called to treat each other. As I do, think about . . .
  - Who you need to reconcile with.
  - How this passage relates to that person.
- In the book of Luke, we read about a time when a lawyer tried to trap Jesus into saying something that would upset the religious authorities of the day. But Jesus wasn't fooled.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 10:25-29 together.*

- It's almost like this lawyer was asking Jesus, "How much can I get away with and not get in trouble? What's the bare minimum I can do to please God?"
- Jesus flips the question over and says that the way to please God is simple — "love your neighbor as yourself." But loving your neighbor is not simple or easy.

### SCRIPTURE | Deuteronomy 6:4-5

- Because this man was an expert in Jewish law, Jesus knew he understood the reference to The Shema, an ancient prayer of God's people.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Deuteronomy 6:4-5.*
- This prayer is often repeated throughout the Old Testament. It's called The Shema, which is the Hebrew word for "listen," and is the first command in the prayer. The second command is the word "love."
- Listen to God and love God. Isn't it interesting that "listen" comes first?
  - In order to love God, we must first listen to God.
  - Maybe by listening to and loving God, we can learn to listen to and love others as well.

### SCRIPTURE | Luke 10:30-37

- Back to the story. This lawyer wasn't totally satisfied with Jesus' answer to love God and his neighbor, so he asked, "Well, who is my neighbor?"
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 10:30-37 together.*
- There's no doubt the Samaritan man is the hero of this story. He noticed a need, showed compassion, and saved this man's life.
- But the Samaritan man didn't set out to be a hero. He simply saw a need and met it. Other people saw the same need, but passed by. The Samaritan man *saw*, and then *loved*. **He was heroic in an ordinary moment.**
- Have you ever seen someone in need, but ignored them? Let's be more specific — **have you ever seen someone get hurt by your words or actions, but ignored the problem?**

### SCRIPTURE | John 5:6; Matthew 4:18, 9:36

- Just like the Samaritan man saw a wrong and made it right, Jesus' own ministry is filled with seeing wrongs and making them right.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Briefly read each passage.*
  - **JOHN 5:6** — Jesus saw a man who had been paralyzed since birth. He righted that wrong by healing him.
  - **MATTHEW 4:18** — He saw two men who hadn't yet heard of the good news Jesus was offering. He righted that wrong by inviting them into a more purposeful life with Him.
  - **MATTHEW 9:36** — He saw a crowd of people who needed hope and healing. Jesus righted that wrong by teaching, healing, and encouraging His disciples to do the same.
- So far in this series we've talked a lot about how heroes right wrongs — but all of the wrongs we've talked about have been wrongs our heroes didn't create. So what happens when a hero causes harm or hurts someone, intentionally or not?
- **Heroes are known for righting wrongs, but sometimes the hardest wrongs to right are the wrongs we've caused.**

- Everyone wants to be a hero in situations when . . .
  - They get to do something big and flashy.
  - Everyone notices and applauds.
  - They get all the glory and none of the blame.
- But real heroes know the most heroic things happen when . . .
  - You right a wrong, no matter how small.
  - Hardly anyone notices but you and God.
  - You take responsibility and work to right your own wrongs.
- Real heroes know that small acts of heroism sometimes require the most sacrifice, courage, and strength. Real heroism isn't about extraordinary acts of sacrifice or dramatic moments of bravery.  
**Heroes are heroic in ordinary moments.**

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

**IMAGE | A Fence**

- So who's your neighbor? For starters, your neighbor is . . .
  - The person you can't stand.
  - The person who can't stand you.
  - The person you're fighting with right now.
  - The person you haven't talked to in a while because they're still angry or hurt because of what you did or said.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show the image provided in your Week 4 folder.*
- When we fight with our neighbors, it's easy to start putting up fences between them and us, like bitterness, anger, silence, guilt, fear, or revenge.
- The more time passes, the bigger the fence between us becomes. The bigger the fence becomes, the more difficult it is to see each other — and thanks to Jesus' example, we know how important it is to see each other.
- If we can't see each other through all of our distance, anger, and bitterness, we'll struggle to clearly see the wrongs that need to be made right.
- So what about you? Are there any fences separating you and a neighbor? What are the wrongs you need to make right in your relationships? **What fences do you need to heroically climb in order to reconcile with someone you've hurt?**

**RESPONSE | Admit and Apologize**

- So how do we reconcile with someone who feels hurt or angry at us? Even if you both feel hurt or angry, someone needs to make the first move toward reconciliation — if you want to be heroic, let it be you.
- How do you reconcile? Two words: admit and apologize. **Admit how you hurt them. Then apologize.**
  - Don't make it all about you.
  - Don't defend yourself.
  - Don't tell them not to be hurt or angry.

- If they have also hurt you, you can share that! But don't use it as an excuse to not take ownership for what you've done.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before your teaching time, print the response cards provided in your Week 4 folder on cardstock, and cut. Place one card (along with a pen) under each seat. Give your students time to write down two or three names of people they will commit to apologizing to within the next week.*
- This week, let's do something heroic. **Let's choose to reconcile with someone we've hurt and right a wrong that we've caused.** For you, maybe this looks like . . .
  - "Hey friend, I'm really sorry. I said some things that were really hurtful, and it was wrong of me to say them. I'm going to try and be a better friend to you. Can you forgive me for hurting you?"
  - "Hey dad, I want to apologize for being disrespectful to you the other day. I know it was hurtful and I'm sorry I wasn't able to express my feelings better. I'm trying to get better at saying what I need to say in a way that isn't disrespectful, because I appreciate you."
- Apologies don't guarantee healing or reconciliation. Your apology might get rejected, or the relationship might be beyond repair, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't try to right your wrongs.
- I know it's not easy to be the first person to apologize, but that's exactly why we're talking about it. It's not easy, but that's exactly why it's heroic.

## HEROES ARE HEROIC IN ORDINARY MOMENTS

- This is our last week of our series *Origin Story*. In the last few weeks, we've talked about a lot of things.
  - **Heroes embrace who God made them to be.**
  - **Heroes care for the people in front of them.**
  - **Heroes are stronger when they're on a team.**
  - **Heroes are heroic in ordinary moments.**
- Heroes right wrongs. Heroes fight for justice. That's what Jesus came to do, and it's the mission He's called us to be a part of too.
- Most of the time, the kind of heroism God calls us to isn't flashy or newsworthy, but it is life-changing. It happens one person at a time – one moment at a time – one mission at a time.
  - It happens when we discover who God made us to be and boldly use our unique gifts for the benefit of others.
  - It happens when we notice the needs of people right in front of us, and get creative to meet those needs.
  - It happens when we work alongside like-minded people who are committed to the same mission that we're committed to.
  - It happens in school hallways or in our living rooms, when we commit to restoring and healing relationships we've broken.
- You're not only *capable* of being a hero, you're *called* by God to be one. So will you?
- **How are you going to join Jesus on His mission to save the world?** Could today be the start of something new in your faith? Years from now, could you look back and say that today was your "origin story"?

## MUSIC | "Neighbor," by D. Jax

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As students leave, play or perform [this song](#) by D. Jax.*