



The bible is full of unlikely heroes. God loves to use the least and the lowest to reveal His glory, His power, and His character.

We must begin this series with Jesus. As a human being, the son of man, Jesus was an unlikely hero.

- He was conceived out of wedlock.
- He was raised by his stepfather who was a blue-collar worker, a carpenter.
- He became a carpenter, a blue-collar worker.
- He was from the poor village of Nazareth.
- He was from an oppressed race of people of color.
- He was not a citizen of Rome.
- He was uneducated by his world's standards.
- He was single.
- He owned no property and had no wealth.
- He was not special physically.
- He was not a gifted public speaker.
- He was publicly considered a heretic and a failure.
- He was defamed by his siblings.
- He was abandoned by His followers.
- He was executed as a criminal alongside other criminals.

Jesus was an unlikely hero.

But Jesus has saved more lives in world history than any other man.

How did He do it? How did Jesus become such an extraordinary figure despite coming from such humble beginnings? How did He overcome all odds to accomplish His mission?

He was God in human flesh!

[John 1:14](#)

[14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.](#)

[NKJV](#)

I have heard this excuse in counseling:

["I cannot be like Jesus because I am not Jesus!"](#)

Jesus promised His disciples they would perform greater works than Him.

John 14:12

12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

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How could they do greater works than Jesus?

Jesus promised His disciples that He would be in them performing those works.

John 14:16-17

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever —

17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

NKJV

He promised them that they could become unlikely heroes like Him. And they did!

What about you? Can you become unlikely heroes like Jesus? Like His disciples?

Acts 1:8

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

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Acts 2:4

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

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Acts 4:31

31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

NKJV

Acts 9:17

7 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

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Acts 13:52

52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

NKJV

Eph 5:17-18

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit...

NKJV

You can be an unlikely hero like Jesus if Jesus is living within you!

There have been many unlikely heroes in our church. They came from humble beginnings like Jesus. At one time they were oppressed by the devil and slaves to sin. But then they were saved by Jesus and filled with the Holy Spirit and their life completely changed. Through them Jesus has saved the lives of countless others.

- Steve Black
- Laura Storment Stanlake
- Phil Chain
- Dennis Jernigan
- Ben Manis

What needs to happen in you for this to happen to you?

- Jesus must be in you

Jesus will send His Spirit to live in you if you will repent of your sin and believe upon Jesus for the forgiveness of sin.

There are some in the church that have not been saved. The Spirit of Jesus is not in some of you. You profess to be a Christian, but the truth is, you are not. You were not sincere when you decided to become a Christian.

- Jesus must be leading you

Jesus lives in everyone who has repented of their sin and believed in Him for the forgiveness of sins.

Why aren't all believers' unlikely heroes?

Why are there so many believers that are still slaves to sin?

Why are there so many believers that never disciple anyone? Never will disciple anyone?

What are some believers missing?

There are some believers in the church that have the Spirit of Jesus, but He does not have you!

Why?

You were never taught what it means for Jesus to live in you. You were never taught how to exchange your life for His life; how to be filled with the Holy Spirit; how to walk in the Spirit.

As a result, some of you lead a double life. You were very sincere when you decided to become a Christian and you received the Holy Spirit. But after some time, you were tempted to sin and you began to intentionally choose sin rather than obey Jesus. (Greed, Bitterness, and sexual lusts) By intentionally choosing to live in sin, you allowed Satan to form strongholds in your mind to justify your immoral behavior. Strongholds are false ideas that Satan uses to hold believers in bondage to their unhealthy emotions and their sin.

As a result, your relationship with God looks like this cycle of rededication (condemnation).

- You rededicate your life to God
- You fall back into your sin
- You confess your sin and ask God for forgiveness
- You rededicate your life to God

If this has happened to you, eventually...

- You will become a stumbling block to the faith of others.
  - You will bring shame to the name of Jesus and to His church.
  - You will be disciplined by God.
- You will deserve death. If God keeps you alive, it is only because He still has a plan to use you.

The Holy Spirit is in you, but you have grieved the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is grieved, He will not live through you!

What do you need to do?

What can you do right now that will enable you to be filled with the Spirit of Jesus?

[Matthew 16:24](#)

[24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.](#)

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Jesus was an unlikely hero because He walked in the power of the Holy Spirit. Yes, He was the Son of God but as the Son of Man, Jesus had to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

[Luke 2:40](#)

[40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.](#)

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Luke 4:1

4 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness...

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What did Jesus do to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

- He denied Himself.

Matthew 16:24

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

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The word deny means to disown. To deny yourself means to disown your life. It means to give up ownership of your life to another.

Jesus became an unlikely hero by giving up ownership of His life to God the Father. Jesus said....

John 5:30

30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

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Paul said this about Jesus.

Phil 2:5-11

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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A bondservant is a slave who voluntarily disowns his life and gives ownership of his life to another. A bondservant would disown his old identity and take on the identity of His master.

Jesus did that. He voluntarily left behind His old life in eternity and took on a new identity as the Son of Man.

As a result, Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and became an unlikely hero.

- He took up His cross.  
Matthew 16:24  
24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.  
NKJV

To take up a cross means to take on a difficult mission. The difficult mission for Jesus was to become the Son of Man, to train 12 men to be His disciples, and to atone for the sins of the world.

By disowning Himself and by taking up His cross, Jesus walked in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lived in and through Jesus. As a result, he became the greatest unlikely hero who has ever lived.

He ends Matthew 16:24 by saying follow me!

Matthew 16:24

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.  
NKJV

If the Holy Spirit is in you, the way to be filled with the Holy Spirit is to do what Jesus did.

- **Deny yourself**

Disown yourself. Surrender the ownership of your life to God. Become a bondservant of God. Exchange your life for the life that God has for you. This means surrendering your old identity for the new identity that God wants you to put on.

There are some people who are given the opportunity to join a witness protection program. To join the program, they must be willing to disown themselves. They must be willing to change their identity. This means changing their name, their family, their friends, and where they live.

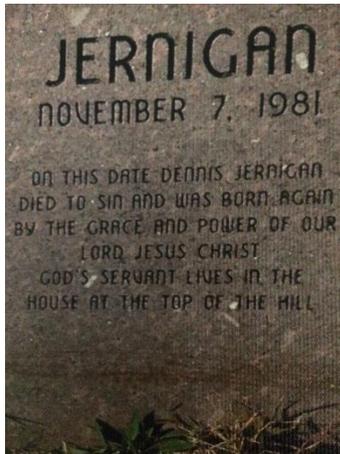
This is what Jesus meant when He told His disciples to deny themselves. Disown yourself and accept the new identity that God has for you.

If you have believed upon Jesus, His Spirit living in you has already provided the new identity.

By faith, you need to deny yourself and take on your new identity that Jesus has for you.

Just as it is difficult for someone to enter the federal witness program, it is difficult for believers to deny themselves. Believers want to be forgiven but they are still in love with their old identity. So instead of denying themselves, they hold on to themselves.

You will never be filled with the Holy Spirit and become an unlikely hero unless you by faith let go of your old self and put on your new self.



To be filled with the Holy Spirit you must deny yourself.

To be filled with the Holy Spirit you must....

- [Take up your cross](#)

God has a difficult mission for all of us who follow Jesus. That mission is to make disciples.

As we take up our cross, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

[Acts 4:29-31](#)

[29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,](#)

[30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."](#)

[31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. NKJV](#)

We are not all called by God to be a hero to the whole world. But we are all called to be an unlikely hero to someone.

Family

- A husband to your wife

- A father to your children
- A wife to your husband
- A mother to your children
- An older sibling to your younger sibling
- An uncle or aunt to your nephew or niece
- A grandparent to your grandchildren

#### Friends

- Your neighbor
- Your class mate
- Your co-worker
- Your servants
- Your employee
- Your team

Jesus had a lot to lose by becoming a bondservant of God the Father.

What do you have to lose?

- Sins that enslave you.
- Guilt from a hypocritical lifestyle
- Feeling alone
- A legacy as a failure

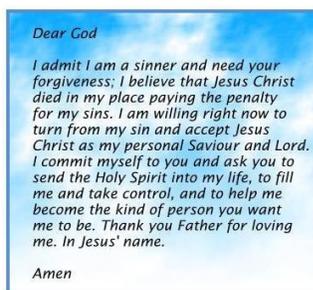
What do you have to gain?

- Freedom from bondage to sin
- Peace with yourself
- A deeper intimacy with God that satisfies all your needs even when you are alone
- A legacy as an unlikely hero to others

Deny yourself and take up your cross. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Become an unlikely hero.

#### Prayers

- Salvation



- Sanctification

Lord Jesus, I believe in You. You are my Savior and Lord. I want to live my life for your glory. I want your Spirit living in me to continuously fill me.

I surrender my old life for your life.

I surrender my old identity for who you are in me.

I surrender my old mission for the mission you have for me.

Live your life through me.

Amen