

This glorious Easter morning, I am going to be talking about the journey that Jesus took and the model he gave us of how to take the *Heroic Journey*. Today, we are celebrating Jesus's resurrection on Easter morning. We will discuss the ways we too can *rise up* and face our trials, crucifixions, and resurrections. That is what Jesus's life was all about. He said: *Follow me*. So today, we are going to be looking at a blueprint he left for us, and the phases of the *Heroic Journey*. I have incorporated some of the wisdom shared by Joseph Campbell in his work on the *Hero's Journey*.

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered, and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow blessings on human kind. Joseph Campbell

We all take the *Heroic Journey* many times during our life. It is a spiritual journey that brings to light the areas of our experience where we can have a transformation and resurrection.

Here are the six phases that we go through on our Heroic Journey. Jesus experienced them in his life, his trials, his crucifixion, and his resurrection.

The First Phase: *Life is Ordinary*. Everything is going along smoothly. Life is good! (Jesus teaches and heals for three years before he faces extreme resistance.)

The Second Phase: *The Call to Adventure*. Something happens and change begins. The change could be a death of a loved one, illness, an end of a relationship, or our limited thoughts or feelings that cause us to suffer. (Jesus's teachings and actions upset the Jewish and Roman leaders.)

The Third Phase: *Refusal to the Call*. The change causes us to have a negative reaction. We might experience fear, anger, depression, feeling stuck, feeling worthless, or being confused. We may not know what to do. (In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus was afraid and says, *Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me.*) Luke 22:42

The Fourth Phase: *Trial and Crucifixion*. In this phase we feel judged, tried, and crucified. We may dwell on our fears, mistakes, or shortcomings, all of which cause us to suffer. (Pilate asked Jesus, *Are you the king of the Jews?* Mark 15:2. We sometimes doubt our abilities and judge ourselves.)

The Fifth Phase: *Making the Inner Shift*. We can make a spiritual shift when we discover the Truth about ourselves and our situation. Meditation is a great tool for getting inner understanding and guidance. Frequently forgiveness of ourselves or others precipitates the Inner Shift. (From the cross Jesus says, *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.* Luke 23:34. He is demonstrating the power of forgiveness for ourselves and others.)

The Sixth Phase: *The Resurrection and the Gift*. A resurrection happens when we restore our mind and spirit by realizing and releasing the limiting thoughts and beliefs that are keeping us stuck. When we go through the *Heroic Journey*, we receive a Gift. The Gift is a spiritual realization that will transform our life in ways that provide us with an abundance of good. A true hero then shares their gifts with others. (Jesus's gift to the world was his life. Jesus's life, his trials, his time in the tomb, and his resurrection are great examples of what we can expect on our Heroic Journey.)

On the *Heroic Journey*, the hero begins as an ordinary person in the ordinary world and receives a call to enter a strange, unknown world. If he/she accepts the call, he/she must face tasks and trials, sometimes alone and sometimes with the assistance of others and Spirit. These trials are both external and internal, and we are changed for the better in the process. In the end, the hero receives a gift and then must decide what to do with it. The true hero returns to share their gifts with others.

It is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life. Where you stumble, there is your treasure. Joseph Campbell

Affirmation: *The Christ Spirit is alive in me and I go forth to share it with the world.*