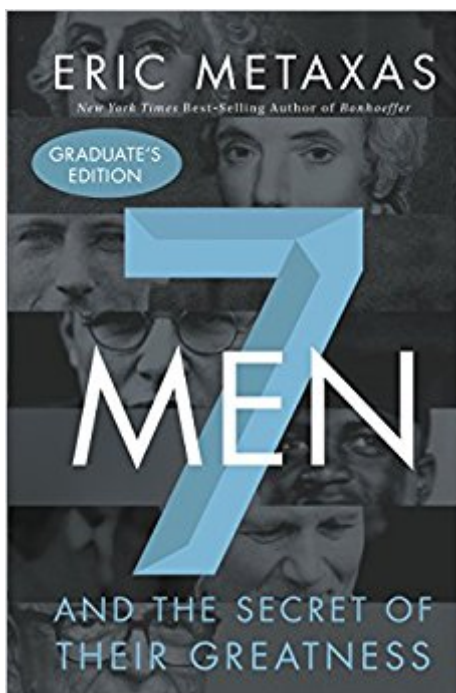


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# Seven Men: And The Secret Of Their Greatness



## Synopsis

A beautiful gift edition of this instant classic exclusively for graduates, with a special letter from Eric Metaxas to those entering the next phase of life's journey. What makes a great man great? In *Seven Men*, New York Times bestselling author Eric Metaxas explores that most important of questions in through the captivating stories of some of the greatest men who have ever lived. How did George Washington resist the temptation to become the first king of America, and why did William Wilberforce give up the chance to be prime minister of England? What made Eric Liddell cast aside an almost certain Olympic gold medal? What enabled Jackie Robinson to surrender his right to fight back against racists, or Dietrich Bonhoeffer to jeopardize his freedom and safety to defy the Nazis? In this stirring and inspiring work, Eric Metaxas reclaims a long-lost sense of the heroic--the idea that certain lives are worthy of emulation. Get to know the seven men in this book, and your life will be immeasurably richer.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Eric Metaxas is the author of the New York Times bestseller *Amazing Grace*, *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About God (But Were Afraid to Ask)*, *Everything Else You Always Wanted to Know About God*, and thirty children's books. He is founder and host of *Socrates in the City* in New York City, where he lives with his wife and daughter. His writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Atlantic*, *Washington Post*, *Books & Culture*, *Christianity Today*, *Marks Hill Review*, and *First Things*. He has written for *VeggieTales* and *Rabbit Ears Productions*, earning three Grammy nominations for Best Children's Recording.

This book, written by Eric Metaxas, is a wonderful celebration of the lives of seven men who each left an indelible mark on the world, from George Washington and William Wilberforce to Jackie Robinson and Pope John Paul II. By Metaxas' own admission, the seven men whom he chose to include in this book was done in a subjective manner, and was based on his own opinions of those men whose lives he considers to be instructive for learning how to live out our own lives - including his close friend, Chuck Colson. And yet, when one examines the lives of each man who is included in this book, one is left with the impression that Metaxas has chosen well. There are two common threads that run through the lives of each man in this book: Each man exhibited courage through a sacrificial choice that many others would find difficult if not impossible to make themselves; and each man lived a Christian faith that gave each of them the strength to make the sacrifices each one made. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn from the good examples of other men how they, too, can live lives of courage and significance.

It helps to see that great men, and women, who believe God is using them and their situations have fears, doubts, and make mistakes. However they press on in the glorious service of our Father to advance His kingdom and reduce suffering.

Maybe at least 1-star for each man, and then some! The world needs heroes and Metaxas gives us a bunch here to consider. The world needs mentors and Metaxas takes on the role second-handedly by presenting these men as mentors we can emulate. I was surprised by his presentation on each of these men, beginning with George Washington. These were people I thought I knew. Metaxas narrated (in audiobook format) exciting unknown facts about each of them by which he built up their character beyond that which might have been known by most people about them. This is the first time I have read anything by the author, although I've owned his book *Miracles: What They Are, Why They Happen, and How They Can Change Your Life*, but it's been just sitting there. But, *Seven Men: And the Secret of Their Greatness* (Audio CD) was sitting there too until I began reading it. So, there's hope! I was so impressed by this book that I just bought two of his other books: *Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery* and *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* about two of the seven men he spoke about, plus this DVD: *Amazing Grace*. Metaxas is an impressive individual.

Love Metaxas! 40 year old husband loved the book, 75 year old father loved the book, 13 year old

son loved the book. We recommend Bonhoeffer, great book also!

Seven Men is the third book I have read by Eric Metaxas. I liked Metaxas Bonhoeffer biography (although even I as a non-Bonhoeffer scholar caught several mistakes.) But I really was not a fan of his William Wilberforce biography. Mostly that was because it felt more like hagiography. But after reading Seven Men I realize that the Wilberforce book was his first biography. Bonhoeffer was significantly better than Wilberforce. And Seven Men I think corrected several of the problems of the Bonhoeffer biography. The men included in this book are George Washington, William Wilberforce, Eric Liddell, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Jackie Robinson, Pope John Paul II and Charles Colson (presented in historical order). I am pleased that Metaxas included John Paul II. Too many Evangelicals want to ignore Catholics. I definitely view that as a point in Metaxas's favor. I did get off on the wrong foot with this book, however. Metaxas starts off by saying that heroes and role models do not exist in our modern world. I think that is clearly wrong on its face. There are lots of people that get looked up to as role models. And the word hero, if anything, is overused. Metaxas problem is that the people he thinks should be looked as a role models and heroes are not the ones that are being chosen as heroes and role models. That might be a problem, but it is not the problem he identifies and is trying to solve according to his introduction. He also turns this into a men's issue, which just irritates me. While I disagree with his premise, if I were going to agree with it, I don't see why it is men in particular that need more heroes and historic role models pointed out. In case you haven't noticed, history is a little male heavy already. The problems were not completely over once I got through the introduction. The first biography was of George Washington, and for the most part it was good. But again, like most evangelicals he wants to highlight Washington's evangelical faith. And he does it without much real evidence and more as a throwaway page to justify his inclusion in a book where everyone else has a clear Christian faith and overt Christian practice. I will say that other than the religious faith section, the rest of Washington's biography was pretty good. On the whole I thought each of the biographies were fairly well balanced, although again, Colson verges on Hagiography, I assume because Metaxas used to work for him. All of these men were incredible men. All of them deserve any recognition that they get. However, I do not think that Metaxas really accomplished his subtitle. These are several short biographies of men that did some great and unusual things. But the subtitle insinuates that there is going to be some type of commentary or wrap up or something to talk about why they were great. Instead it is really just the biographies. If I had not read Metaxas previous books, I might not have had as many prejudices going into the book. Many people that I respect,

like Metaxas as a person. I don't know him, but his politics and presentation bug me. And the introduction really illustrated that well. I was quite bugged and I highlighted a number of sections that I disagreed with or where I thought he was making unsupported claims. But the main section of the book I (somewhat reluctantly) enjoyed. I still think that Washington was a bad choice to include. Or if he did include him, Metaxas should have handled the Christianity differently. But the other six were good. I think I enjoyed the Jackie Robinson bio the most. I am not a sports fan and really didn't know anything about him. But reading that chapter made me want to go watch the movie 42. I picked Seven Men up when it was on sale for kindle. I did not invest a lot into it (and it was a quick read.) In the end I am glad I read it and I would recommend it if you like biographies and have not read more extensive biographies of the highlighted men.

I read this book for a church retreat. It is a superficial review of these men's lives, which I expected. However, I did not care for Metaxas' style of writing--it reminded me of a college term paper. I also felt his point of view was very much one of hero worship. In fact he said as much in his introduction to Charles Colson. As I was reading I decided that if I was not reading it for a specific purpose I would not have finished it. It was OK, but disappointing. I was thinking about reading Metaxas' biography of Bonhoeffer after this, but I may reconsider and read another source. Picky point: I cannot believe that no one with the publisher did not pick up on the major factual gaffe in Robinson's story. It stated that he threw out the first pitch in the second game of the 1972 World Series between the Reds and the Pirates on a specific date. Both teams are in the National League and as such would NEVER play each other in the World Series. I even Googled the facts, and the date given was Game 2 of the Series, but the Reds played the A's. Someone should have jumped on that in the manuscript.

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