

One great Man in Middle-earth who – in the shadow of Aragorn – might be overlooked is Faramir. He is one of the noblest Numenoreans and has no desire to take the Ring and claim it as his own. He is a selfless Numenorean who truly wishes to see the glory of Gondor restored. This is indicated by his words to Frodo as they discuss Isildur's Bane (the Ring of Power):



“But fear no more! I would not take this thing if it lay by the highway. Not were Minas Tirith falling in ruin and I alone could save her, so, using the weapon of the Dark Lord for her good and my glory. No, I do not wish for such triumphs, Frodo son of Drogo.”

“Neither did the Council,” said Frodo. “Nor do I. I would have nothing to do with such matters.”

“For myself,” said Faramir, “I would see the White Tree in flower again in the courts of the kings, and the Silver Crown return, and Minas Tirith in peace: Minas Anor again as of old, full of light, high and fair, beautiful as a queen among other queens: not a mistress of many slaves; nay, not even a kind mistress of willing slaves. War must be, while we defend our lives against a destroyer who would devour all; but I do not love the bright sword for its sharpness nor the arrow for its swiftness nor the warrior for his glory. I love only that which they defend: the city of the Men of Numenor; and I would have her loved for her memory, her ancientry, her beauty, and her present wisdom. Not feared, save as men may fear the dignity of a man, old and wise.”¹



I think that Faramir is the second noblest Numenorean alive during the Third Age of Middle-earth. He is second only to Aragorn, heir to the throne of Gondor. Furthermore, people like Faramir are the best argument I know in favor of the Just War Theory: a society can use arms to defend itself from one who would destroy all that is true and beautiful and just and good in the world. Violence is not loved for its own sake. Good triumphs over evil!

¹ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 314-315.