

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

ESTHER SERIES

These questions are for the **January 7, 2018** sermon, "A Decision with Consequences." Please read the sermon passage (Esther 1:1-2:7) together out loud.

SERMON OUTLINE

WHEN CONSIDERING GOD'S MYSTERIOUS WAYS, DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE WAY HE USES . . .

1. Political arrogance to achieve his purposes (1:1-9)
 - a. Though the unwise and temporary political leader may seem to have authority, remember that it is ultimately God who is sovereign.
 - b. Though God seems invisible, he is involved.
 - c. "The more we have pride in ourselves, the more we dislike [it] in others." -CS Lewis.
 - d. Who is in charge of your life?
2. Unwise decisions to achieve his purposes (1:10-22)
 - a. In a long line of alcohol abuse and drunken decision-making, God was in control.
 - b. Queen Vashti publicly refuses the king, thus challenging his authority.
 - c. This is not a record of marital roles, but a reminder of God's ultimate sovereignty.
3. Unlikely people to achieve his purposes (2:1-7)
 - a. Xerxes has now removed Vashti as Queen, and God has brought Esther into influence.
 - b. Esther is all about timing. Note the "Now" in 2:5. God positioned Mordecai to Susa.
 - c. Mordecai and Esther are faithful God-fearers in a Pagan stronghold. Are you?
 - d. The evil one is still trying to snuff out "the offspring" of Adam and Abraham.
 - e. But God always keeps his promises.
 - f. Note how Mordecai is discipling the next generation for God's glory, while he is faithful.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Political leaders can be wise or foolish; humble or arrogant. God uses every authority, humble and arrogant, to position every detail of history to his exact specifications. How does this truth encourage your heart?
2. Based on #1, above: God desires that his people pray for political leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-4) even while we remain faithful to him at the local or personal level. How are you doing at this? Tell us about your prayer life for those you agree with. What about your prayer life for those political leaders with whom you disagree? Respond to this quote: "The more pride we have in ourselves, the more we dislike [it] in others" (CS Lewis).
3. Based on #2, above: The king made drunken and unwise decisions, yet Mordecai and Esther do not resist or condemn these decisions. They continue to submit to God (first) and the king (second). Do you submit to decisions passed down by drunken or unwise leaders?
4. Based on #3, above: Esther has been placed in Susa. She has been disciplined by her uncle after her parents passed away. Even though she is in the gross minority, she is ready to stand as a faithful God-fearer. Are you ready? Who are you preparing (next generation) to stand?