

## LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

## ESTHER SERIES

These questions are for the **March 4, 2018** sermon, "The Time for Full Disclosure." Please read the sermon passage (Esther 7:1-8:2) together out loud.

### SERMON OUTLINE

WHEN EVIL THREATENS US, NOTE HOW GOD USES . . .

1. Delayed disclosure to achieve his purposes (1-2)
  - a. Esther took the initiative to tell King Xerxes of Haman's wicked plot.
  - b. Esther also waited for just the right moment, led by God, to address the king.
  - c. There is a difference between patience and passivity.
2. Timely confrontation to achieve his purposes (3-6)
  - a. Esther makes no assumptions about what the king might do, even though she clearly wants him to act in her favor. She starts with the "If . . ." statements.
  - b. She starts with a personal plea, save "My life . . . and my people." (3)
  - c. People in our world today have a hard time detecting evil . . .
    - i. We often begin with the assumption that people are good (we are not).
    - ii. We must establish the ability to call evil, "evil."
    - iii. The king, by passive abdication, has himself participated in this evil plot.
  - d. Haman is identified as wicked and tried. Justice is immediately administered.
3. Sudden turnarounds to achieve his purposes (7:7-8:2)
  - a. The wicked man, Haman, wants to preserve his own life from a Jew (Esther), even while he had positioned himself to take the lives of many Jews.
  - b. In order to resist evil, one must accurately identify it.
  - c. Haman experiences

### Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Sometimes we feel deceitful when we withhold information from someone. But is often wise to wait until an opportune moment before revealing everything you know. When is withholding information wrong? When is it wise? Specifically discuss the timing of Esther finally revealing to the king that Haman and his plot was wicked.
2. Based on #2, above: Esther started her request with conditions: "If . . ." (verse 3). She made no assumptions, and that means that she would make her request, but completely accept whatever decision the king made. Are you able to make a request of someone (at work, in the neighborhood, at church or in your marriage) with no assumptions? How would your spouse benefit from you making requests without manipulating, without badgering or without assuming that your request must be honored by them?
3. Based on #3, above: God often orchestrates sudden turnarounds. Note in this case that the turnaround is orchestrated on behalf of a righteous servant (Esther), and to spare the lives of a generation of God's people, keeping his promise to bring Messiah through the Jews. How have you seen God work great turnarounds in fulfilling all of his promises?