

## LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

## ESTHER SERIES

These questions are for the **March 11, 2018** sermon, "From Weeping to Joy." Please read the sermon passage (Esther 8:3-17) together out loud.

### SERMON OUTLINE

AS GOD COMPLETES AN EPIC TURNAROUND, NOTE THE . . .

1. Perseverance of his servants (3-8)
  - a. Perseverance in timing: press hard toward the finish line.
  - b. Perseverance in relationship: the power of collaboration.
  - c. Perseverance in emotion: let your heart be moved in compassion for others.
  - d. Perseverance in content: Esther hopes for and asks for a miracle, but is refused.
2. Wisdom shown by his servants (9-14)
  - a. Esther and Mordecai collaborate to write a new edict giving the Jewish people the same legal rights afforded to their enemies. This evens the "playing field."
  - b. When they did not get a miracle (revocation of the king's first edict), they were not dismayed. They proceeded with wisdom. They proceeded without bitterness.
  - c. This edict does not show us that God condones destruction, but that he promotes wisdom in self-defense in many situations.
3. Joy because of his servants (15-17)
  - a. Mordecai is promoted and honored in the palace (which is what Haman desired).
  - b. The "lots" cast by Haman and his wicked cohorts produced joy for God's people, and was used of God as an evangelistic tool to spread a fear of his name.
  - c. God completes an epic turnaround, and Purim is born.

### Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: As we near a perceived "finish line," it is crucial for God's people to recognize the human responsibility which God will use to "win the race." Which of the four areas of "perseverance" (timing, relationship, emotion and content) is most instructive to you today?
2. Based on #2, above: Esther and Mordecai were not discouraged by the king's refusal to revoke his edict or his seeming unwillingness to lift a finger to help them. Instead, they pressed ahead in faith, knowing that God would act to save his people. Have you ever asked for a miracle and been refused? How does Esther & Mordecai's example encourage/instruct you?
3. Based on #3, above: God took a wicked person, and a wicked plan and radically turned the situation around. Instead of death, there was protection. Instead of genocide, there was evangelism and even growth. Instead of the end of a promise and hope, there was more fuel to trust and believe God. Do you have a constant and growing faith that God will keep his every promise no matter how dark the day seems? How is God using your faith and faithfulness to be a light to others this week? How can you grow in this area?