

Small Group Discussion Guide — May 10, 2020

- Series: Character Studies
 - Sermon: For Such a Time As This
 - Scripture: Esther 4 (NIV)
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK:

Have you had to take any Elijah-style detours this week? How has this entire COVID-19 experience felt like a detour from everything familiar?

CONNECT:

1. When you watch a scene in a movie which requires great personal courage and bravery, how do you relate to that character? How easy or hard is it for you to imagine acting with such bravery?
2. Is there anything or anyone that you would be willing to die for? Why or why not?

ENGAGE:

1. Read Esther 4: 12-14a.
 - What does the statement in verse 14 reveal about Mordecai's faith?
 - If God will accomplish his will, with or without us, why wouldn't we want to be part of it?
2. Read Esther 4: 14b-16.
 - How do you think Mordecai's question made Esther feel? Why?
 - Esther offers a matter-of-fact declaration in verse 16. What do you think prompted such a radical response?

APPLY:

1. Andy made the statement, "Your life, your existence is a crescendo." For Esther, it was the realization that the salvation of the Jewish people was more important than her life. Has there been a similar moment in your life where the needs of others became much more important than your own? Share about this experience with the group.
2. Is it possible that crescendo moments happen much more often than once a lifetime? Suppose each day has a crescendo moment? How would living with this knowledge change the way we live?
3. It has been said that selflessness doesn't mean that you never think of yourself, but rather you think of yourself less. Is it possible to learn selflessness? How might the Holy Spirit help in this regard?
4. The "for such a time as this" statement by Mordecai sounds a little like Pete's famous line, "you go nowhere by accident." Is it comforting or intimidating to contemplate that God has specific jobs for us to do in our lives?

PRAY:

Heavenly Father, help us to seek after selflessness, to pursue it through the power of the Holy Spirit. Place people and situations in our lives that will give us an opportunity to serve others so that your name would be lifted up.

GOING DEEPER

The story of Esther, unlike any other in scripture, is a complete narrative that reads very much like a novel. To appreciate its lessons, it needs to be read in one sitting. This week, set aside some time this week that you can do just that. Take in the full sweep of the story, the incredible drama, the tension and conflict. Then imagine the depths of personal courage and faith it took for Esther to save the day. While most of us will never be asked to do such a dramatic thing in our lives, we all need a measure of courage and faith to deal with the challenges in our lives, especially during this pandemic. Be thankful as you read the Book of Esther that God sent us the Holy Spirit to comfort and empower us in our time of need.