



Message Discussion Questions

5/7/2023

SERIES: Jesus Story: Esther

WEEK:#4

MESSAGE: Haman the Hater

COMMUNICATOR: Pastor Stephen Masters

CENTRAL TEXT/S: Esther 5; Matthew 5:43-44; Romans 12:14

CHECKING IN: How was your week? What was one of the highlights? Share wins (things God did that moved his mission forward and you closer to Jesus). What did you put into practice from last week's discussion?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Choose questions that will work best for your group. Feel free to add to or ask a question in a different way than is written.

1. If money wasn't an issue, where would you go for a special dinner and what would you have? (Think extravagant).
2. Growing up or as an adult did/do you have a nemesis, i.e. An opponent, rival, or someone who strives to make your life miserable? (Boss, spouse, In law, kids, friends, co-worker, your person). Why would you put them in that category?
3. Read Esther 5:9–13. Looking at both Haman and Mordecai...what might have been their thoughts when the other person was present? How did this hate for Mordecai hijack all the positive things Haman had going for him? Do you think Mordecai had hatred for Haman? Why or why not?
4. What tends to trigger your emotions either positive or negative? What are some of those triggers? (Sounds, smells, sights, songs, etc.) What do they remind you of?
5. How do the extremes of love and hate blind us from making good decisions in life? Explain.
6. Read Romans 12:14. Why is this verse so hard to live out? Do you think it is an option or a directive?
7. When you pray for your best friend, spouse, kids or grandkids, what are some of the words you use to bless those you love? (That is how we should pray for those who have hurt us). Moving forward, can you see yourself praying those types of blessings on your enemies? Why or why not?
8. Read Matthew 5:43-44. How does this teaching of Jesus challenge us to be different from our culture regarding difficult relationships? How would you define 'loving our enemies' in today's culture? Give some specific examples.
9. If 'hurt people hurt people,' how does that help you have compassion for your enemies, or those who hurt you?
10. Read 1 Cor 13. How does this passage illustrate what it means to 'love our enemies?' How can this passage inform your prayer life this week?
11. Read Luke 23:34; Why do you think Jesus took such a strong position on forgiveness for his enemies and us? Read Matthew 6:14; John 20:23; How do you translate what Jesus is saying here? Why do you think forgiving others is so important to Jesus?

TRUTH DEMANDS A RESPONSE! What is one action step you will take this week in response to our discussion? Be specific. **It might be forgiving someone, praying blessings over them, or showing the unconditional love of Jesus to them.** Try attaching a name and date to your action step.

1. _____.



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WANT TO GROW DEEPER? We have created some resources to help you grow. Check out and explore the *Experience God* page. Go to canvas.church/experience-god or *Experience God* on the App.

GROUP PRAYER OPTIONS:

- **Take time to silently pray blessings, forgiveness, love for your enemies or those who have hurt you, or cause you difficulty**
- **Prayer Question:** "What's going on in our lives that we can involve Jesus?"
- **Ask:** What was one praise and one challenge you experienced this week? Celebrate the praises and pray for the challenges.
- **Ask** if anyone has a need or knows of a need, you can also offer "unspoken" prayer requests.
- **Pray for the person on your right, *it can be out loud or in silence***, if in silence nudge the person next to you letting them know you are done.
- **Prayer Clusters:** Groups of two or three (by gender) and share your week together. Pray together and for each other. Send them a text, or leave a message letting them know you have prayed for them this week.
- **Have someone in your group keep an active list of the requests and the answers for both the updates and to celebrate the answers.**

Are you interested in the Bible and in helping Life Groups benefit from the weekend message? We have a team for you! Canvas members like you create these discussion guides each week. If you are interested in joining the team, please email rickz@canvas.church