

So good to be back at Heartland again today.

I think the downside is that there's no food in the hall this week, but it's okay.

You know, we'll just pray that next time, you know, we have some sardines or something.

But it's so good to be here today.

And, you know, I told y'all this last week, but I'm going to tell you every chance I get.

Man, I love Heartland.

I love Heartland.

I love being here.

And I was sharing with some guys yesterday.

I spoke at a mission conference in Jeff City.

And the guy asked me, he said, hey, I often think as a pastor,

Where would I be?

What church would I go to?

What would I look for in a church if I wasn't a pastor?

And he asked me, is there a church that you would join if you wasn't a pastor that you can see yourself locked in with?

I said, oh, that's easy.

Heartland Church.

Easy.

Right.

Easy.

So.

So.

So.

So I want you all to know that y'all are very dear to my heart.

And I love getting to be here with y'all and everything that y'all represent.

I love how the Lord is just breathing on you guys and just seeing the gospel transform lives here.

So glad to be a part of that.

Grab your Bibles.

We're Esther.

Esther today.

Esther chapter 5.

I promise you it's in there.

If you got to go to the table of contents, you'll find it.

Esther chapter 5.

That's smackd right in the middle of chapters 4 and chapter 6.

Esther chapter 5.

We'll look at two verses today.

Verses 1 and 2.

Esther chapter 5.

Super glad to have my daddy with me today.

Yeah.

I told him I was coming back to Heartland.

He said, what time you want me to pick you up?

I'm a little nervous.

I mean, you know, he like Heartland too.

I'm like, hey, you know.

Esther chapter 5, verses 1 and 2.

I'm going to read these two verses and I'm going to pray for us again.

On the third day, Esther...

dressed in her royal clothing, and stood in the inner courtyard of the palace facing it.

The king was sitting on his royal throne in the royal courtroom facing its entrance.

As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard, she gained favor with him.

The king extended the golden scepter in his hand toward Esther and she approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

Let's pray together.

Father, we love you.

We honor you, we adore you, we magnify you, we make you big, Lord, because it's so clear and evident that you and you alone deserve the glory, the honor, and the praise.

In narratives like these, sometimes reading two verses seems so incomplete, leaves us curious, leaves our minds open.

But God, I pray that as we're curious, as our minds are open, God, that you will feel it, that you will speak directly to us right where we are.

We know and we fully believe that your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway.

So we're begging you that by the power of your spirit, you allow these two verses to minister to our soul

that we will be men and women totally devoted to giving you glory.

Lord, I pray today that as your word flows from my lips, that it won't be my voice that's heard, it'll be yours that's heard.

That we'll be challenged, that we'll be encouraged, but moreover, we'll look for ways to honor you in every step.

As a man used for your glory, I pray, Jesus,

that you will make all of our clay wet, mold us, shape us, conform us to your image, that we will lean and depend on you.

It's in your name we pray.

Amen.

Amen.

As we look at these two verses here in Esther chapter 5 verses 1 and 2, I want to use as a subject asking you a question.

Do you have courage?

Do you have courage?

I want you to really think through that question and

And really answer it in your heart truthfully.

How much courage do you really have?

Now when I talk about the courage that we have, I'm not talking about the courage to watch a scary movie at night.

I'm not talking about the courage to ride the biggest roller coaster at Six Flags hoping that you don't get stuck at the top.

I'm talking about the courage to do hard things that God is not only calling you, but wiring you to do.

I'm talking about the courage to stand up for what's right when everybody else around you is going the other way.

I'm talking about the courage to forgive somebody who you feel don't deserve it.

The courage to trust God with your finances.

The courage to trust God with your future.

The courage to trust God with your kids.

The courage to trust God even in your marriage when it feels shaky.

The courage to have hard conversation, the courage to take a big risk or to step into something new that really the thought of it scares you to death.

If you were to rate your courage on a scale from 1 to 10, what would you rate it?

You see, we all like to think of ourselves as brave until it's put to the test.

It's easy to say that we have faith and courage, but when there's nothing on the line, but real courage is the kind that honors God and shows up when the stakes are high and the outcomes are uncertain.

I believe that everybody honestly trusts God until it's time to trust God.

Let me tell you this.

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing that he's asking you to do.

And that's really the main point today.

That's what I want to get across to you in my next few preaching minutes.

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing that he's asking you to do.

Biblically speaking, courage is not about being fearless or tough on your own.

Courage is about trusting God enough to obey him when it's hard to do what he tells you to do when it's scary, scary or even risky.

Courage isn't just about being bold or loud or naturally strong.

fearless it's about having such deep confidence in who God is trust in his goodness trust in his power trusting in his faithfulness that you're willing to obey him even when it costs you what you love even when it costs you what you value it's trusting God even when it's costing you something it's saying God I trust you enough to forgive even when it's going to cause me pain

It's saying that, God, I trust you enough to speak up for what's right, even if people are going to reject me for it.

See, courage is, God, I trust you enough to give generously, even when I'm not sure where it's going to come from.

I trust you enough, God, to step into this new calling, even though I feel unqualified and afraid.

Courage is not about being strong, though.

It's about trusting God enough to do the hard thing he's putting on your heart and leaving the results up to him.

See, because most times we want to do what God wants us to do, but we're too busy distracted by the end goal.

Too busy wondering what the results are going to be.

Do you know that God never called you?

God never wired you to focus on results.

The result is up to him.

He just wants you to do it.

It's not about being strong.

It's about trusting God enough to do the hard things.

See, scripture makes this clear for us even in Joshua chapter 1.

Have I not commanded you?

Be strong and courageous.

Do not be afraid.

Don't be discouraged for the Lord, your God, here's your shout, will be with you wherever you go.

Amen.

Which means that I don't have to be discouraged about the results.

I don't have to be worried about all of that because I know that God is going to be with me.

Come here, Matthew 28.

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.

He says, baptizing them, teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you.

And the shout material is that, hey, you don't have to be nervous or afraid.

Have courage because he says, I'll be with you always.

Even to the ends of the age.

Scripture drives this whole thing about courage home.

Right?

Psalms 56.

When I'm afraid, he says, I put my trust in you.

In God whose word I praise.

In God I trust.

I'm not afraid.

Courage, it comes from knowing that God goes with us into every hard, every risky, every uncertain place.

See, courage doesn't mean we never feel fear.

It means that when we are afraid, we choose to trust God more than our fear.

Hear this though.

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing that he's asking you to do.

And in the chapters before Esther 5,

A crisis has now struck the Jewish people living under Persian rule.

See, Haman, this powerful official in King Xerxes court, gets all mad and in his feelings when Mordecai, the Jew and a cousin of Queen Esther, refuses to bow down to him.

But Haman, fueled by pride and hatred, devises a plan to wipe out the entire Jewish empire.

But King Xerxes, unknowingly, he agrees to this evil plot by signing a decree that set a date for the slaughter of all Jewish people.

And when Mordecai learns of this, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and begins to mourn publicly, urging Esther to go before the king and plead for the people's lives.

I want to encourage you, when you get a chance, I want you to read Esther chapters 1 through 4.

It's going to rock your life, right?

When you realize, right, that Esther was this orphan girl, right, who was raised by Mordecai, right?

And the previous queen, right, the king gets drunk, right, and tells the queen to do something to show off to his boys, right, and to show how strong he was.

He did something he shouldn't have done, gets rid of the previous queen and then has a beauty pageant.

Right?

Esther becomes queen.

Isn't it interesting that all the way back then, men make decisions with their eyes and not with their mind, not using wisdom.

Right?

It's the same way today.

I promise I'm not going to get into that because that's a whole other sermon.

Right?

But all of these things are happening that leads us to Esther chapter 5.

But when we get here, right, if you look at the story, you'll see at first, right, when Esther had the responsibility to do what God told us to do at first, when Haman,

or Mordecai, her cousin daddy.

When he goes to her, right, at first she hesitates because she knew that going to the king without being summoned was against the law.

Anyone who did so could be executed unless the king extended his golden scepter.

But after Mordecai challenged her with the famous words, who knows but that you may come to the kingdom, he says, for such a time as this.

Esther says,

Resolves in that moment.

To act.

She called for all the Jews in Susa.

To fast with her.

For three days.

Saying I'll go to the king.

Though it's against the law.

And if you read.

She says if I perish.

I perish.

Right?

She started off nervous, but at some point, courage kicks in for her to say, I'm just going to do what I'm supposed to do.

If it costs me my life, it costs me my life, but I'm about to be about that life.

I'm going to do what I'm supposed to do, but all of that sets the stage for Esther chapter 5, where after three days of fasting and seeking God, Esther courageously approaches the throne, risking her life to save her people.

And just like Esther, sometimes God calls us to do some things that feel risky.

some things that feel uncomfortable.

God has called some of us to do some stuff.

To be honest, it's just downright terrifying.

Her story reminds us that obeying God often means stepping into situations where the outcome isn't guaranteed.

And believe it or not, all of us are being called by God.

If you've responded to the gospel, you're being called by God to step into some stuff that's going to be uncomfortable.

Guess what that's called?

Mission.

You don't know the outcome.

You may go and tell somebody just how much of a sinner they are.

You know what?

I think I've realized in my own mind, in my own heart, what has made mission so hard for me.

What makes mission evangelism so hard for me is because I start in the wrong place.

Let me help you.

I was trained and programmed to evangelize starting at Genesis 3.

Telling people how broken and sinful they are.

Is that true?

Without Christ it is.

But that's not where God's design begins.

God's design begins in Genesis 1.

Telling people that they were created in the image of God.

So we need to tell people, hey, you were created in God's image, but sin broke relationship.

Yeah, is it risky to be missional?

Is it risky to be evangelistic?

The only thing risky is our pride because we don't want to be wrong.

We don't want to be uncomfortable, but I'm going to tell you something.

When you have the courage to obey God, you don't.

Let me tell you, when you have the courage to obey God, you won't be on.

You won't be missional no matter what it costs you, because you understand like godly courage says, I don't care about my comfort.

What I care about is being obedient to my father.

Right.

It's like obeying God often means stepping into situations where the outcome isn't guaranteed.

And that's why courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing he's asking you to do, even when it might cost you.

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing he's asking you to do.

And really, as we continue really to assess really our courage as Christ followers.

To do what he's asked us to do.

These two verses really points out three things that we got to wrestle through.

Three things that I want to leave with you about courage that we find here in these two verses.

Number one, we see that courage, I'm talking about godly courage.

Do you know this?

Courage requires preparation.

Courage requires preparation.

If you look at verse 1, in verse 1 it says, On the third day, Esther, dressed in her royal clothing and stood in the inner courtyard of the palace facing it, the king was sitting on his royal throne in the royal courtroom facing its entrance.

Now notice how verse 1 starts.

On the third day.

Okay.

Those four words actually tell us a lot.

They actually put us back to the previous chapter where Esther tells Mordecai, go gather all the Jews to be found in Susa and hold a fast on my behalf.

I and my young women will also fast as you do.

He says, then I will go to the king, though it is against the law.

And if I perish, I perish.

Now, before Esther even stepped into the throne room, I love this.

Before she even stepped into the throne room, she spent three days seeking God through fasting and prayer.

She didn't rush in on her own wisdom.

She didn't just rely on her own beauty or her title as queen.

She took time to humble herself and call on the Lord.

Y'all got to let that marinate a little bit.

Like, I think that, Heartland, we're going to help y'all to learn how to catch your shout cues.

Okay?

That's one of them, right?

And if you let that marinate, like think about it.

Before Esther even stepped into the room, right?

Before she risked everything by approaching the king, she spent three days seeking God through fasting and prayer.

She didn't just throw on her royal robe and march in, count on her charm or her title or her beauty to save the day.

No, she understood that this was bigger than her.

So she humbled herself, admitted her need, and called on the only one who could truly move hearts and change outcomes.

Family, let me tell you, what about us?

So often when big decisions need to be made, we rush into big decisions.

We rush into hard conversations.

We rush into risky steps without even stopping to just simply pray.

We lean on our own experiences.

Lean into our connections.

Just use common sense.

I'm going to tell you, common sense ain't all that common.

Right?

We're thinking that we're okay to just know that a decision needs to be made, and we just wing it because we've been programmed to make decisions based off of our feelings.

Y'all may have heard me say this before, but I'm going to say it again, right?

Feelings are a great thermostat, but a bad compass.

Right.

We find ourselves making decisions led by our feelings.

But when you've been rocked by the gospel, when you're a Christ follower, you don't make decisions in your feelings.

You want to be led by the spirit.

Right.

Esther shows us a better way.

She teaches us that real.

She shows us where real courage starts.

Real courage starts on your knees.

Real courage starts with you leaning and depending on Jesus.

Don't miss this.

There was a song.

There was a song that...

That we used to sing what a friend we have in Jesus.

All our sins and grief to bear.

What a privilege it is to carry everything to God in prayer.

Oh what peace we often forfeit.

Oh what needless pain we bear.

All because we do not carry everything.

Everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged.

Why?

Because what a privilege it is to take everything to God in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful?

Who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness.

Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Amen.

So what am I getting at?

Before you send a text message, before you post it on social media, before you bring it to your community group, take it to the Lord in prayer.

Before you have a tough meeting, before you step into a new opportunity, have you taken time to humble yourself before God?

Have you fasted?

Have you prayed?

Have you opened your Bible?

Have you asked God to lead you?

Because the truth is we're never more ready to do the hard thing God is calling us to do than when we first spent time with him, letting him shape our hearts and prepare our steps.

Scripture says man makes his plans, but the Lord orders his steps.

We find ourselves knowing that we need to make hard decisions, make courageous steps, but we're anxious.

We're frustrated.

We're worried.

Let me just go home and close the window and lay down in a fetal position until the Lord opens the blinds and speaks to me through the cloud.

Let me tell you something.

If you want the Lord to speak to you and you've never opened your Bible, you'll never hear his voice again.

Philippians 4 says, be anxious about, don't be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

Real courage does not come from hyping ourselves up.

It comes from humbling ourselves before God.

And some of us, you facing some big decisions, but before you step out,

Are you prepared spiritually?

Have you fasted?

Have you prayed?

Have you sought wise counsel from the Lord?

Have you asked God to go before you?

Courage.

requires preparation.

Maybe you're saying, all right, I get it.

I get it, loud black guy, bald guy, right?

How do I prepare then?

The text says it, right?

Through prayer, through fasting, through meditating on God's word, right?

Do you know that the more and more you spend time with God, the more and more he increases your courage to do what he says?

Courage takes preparation.

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing he's asking you to do.

Not only do we see, number one, that courage takes preparation, but the second thing that we see here is that courage means taking a risk.

Courage means taking risks.

Risks right look at what Esther does after she comes out of fasting and praying still in verse 1 It says on the third day right after that it says she put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace When you think about this, that's not a small thing See because in Persia you didn't just walk into the king's court uninvited even if you was

his pretty young thang.

You didn't just walk in.

Even if you was the king's wife, you just didn't walk in.

If the king was in a bad mood or simply uninterested, you could be executed on the spot.

But Esther, Esther knew what was at stake.

Her people's lives were on the line.

So she dressed in her royal robes, took a deep breath, and stepped out in faith.

Listen, faith often means stepping into places that feel uncomfortable or even dangerous.

It means having hard conversations, sharing your faith when you're nervous, obeying God when it doesn't make sense on paper.

But let's be real here.

Faith is not always about comfortability.

Faith isn't always comfortable.

In fact, it usually is not comfortable.

Faith will often pull us out of the safe place.

Faith will often pull us out of predictable spaces of life and push us into situations that stretch us or scare us or don't seem to add up all the time.

It might look like having a hard conversation you've been dreading, apologizing to somebody that you've wronged, or even confronting someone's sin in love.

It might mean sharing your testimony or sharing the gospel with a friend or a co-worker.

Even though your heart is pounding and you're worried about what they're going to think.

Sometimes it means taking a job that pays less because you believe that's where God wants you to be.

Or being generous with your finances that you could have kept to yourself.

Courage is taking a risk.

It could mean forgiving somebody who deeply hurt you.

Even when every part of you wants to hold a grudge.

That's what real living faith looks like.

It looks like trusting God enough to step into the uncomfortable.

Trusting God enough to step into the uncertain.

And sometimes even the risky.

Believing that he's already gone ahead of you and he's going to take care of you no matter what.

Do you know that it takes courage to stand in risky situations and trust God no matter the outcome?

It takes courage to say, I'll trust you, God, beyond my comfort.

Because Proverbs 3 says, trust in the Lord with all your heart.

Lean not into your own understanding and all your ways acknowledge him and he'll direct your path.

It takes courage to say, God, I will step out in faith and not get stuck in fear.

Even when Isaiah 41 says he is with me and will uphold me with his mighty right hand.

It takes courage to say, God, I will do what you ask me, even when it's hard.

Although James says be a doer of the word and not a hearer only.

Let me ask you.

If you really believe that Philippians 4.13 is real, why won't you take the step that God is calling you to do?

Why are you afraid to do risky things?

It takes courage to stand in risky situations and trust God with the outcome.

It takes courage.

Let me ask you, do you have courage?

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing he's asking you to do.

Courage takes risks.

And hear this.

Just like Esther, sometimes God is calling us to do things that are risky, uncomfortable, and just downright scary.

Do you know that I made up in my mind?

Well, Tracy ain't here this week.

When I winked at her and she melted at me and she just, oh, my God.

God said you was my husband.

I said, I know, girl.

Come on.

right we got married and made a decision we moving out of the city and never moving back but then God sent us right back to the place that we just knew that we weren't going back to nothing about me wanted to go back to North City nothing about me wanted to go back to North St.

Louis

But then I realized that God was calling me to do something that was risky for my kids.

Risky, right?

Even for our marriage.

But I knew that seeing the gospel transform my hood was the greatest thing that can happen.

And I said, if I perish, I want to perish being obedient to my father.

But then I realized that because I'm with him always.

I will never perish.

I will have life eternal.

So if I'm going to live for him, I might as well be obedient to what he says.

Courage means taking a risk.

Courage is doing stuff that makes us uncomfortable.

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing that he's asking us to do.

Courage takes preparation.

Courage takes risks.

Third thing I'll show you here and then I'm done.

I promise courage does not go unnoticed.

Courage does not go unnoticed by God.

See, when you take a step of faith, when you obey him, despite your fear, when you do the hard thing simply because you trust him, here's what I want you to know.

God sees it.

Other people may call you crazy.

Other folks may never understand your decisions.

But God sees it.

He's paying attention.

What you're doing, it matters to him.

Your quiet acts of obedience, your willingness to step into uncomfortable and risky places, your trust when you don't know how it will turn out, none of that slips by God.

Scripture shows us over and over and over again that God honors and responds to those who trust him enough to be courageous.

Like Esther standing before the king, like Peter,

Stepping out of the boat like Abraham, leaving everything familiar.

Their courage didn't earn God's love because they already had it.

But it showed their trust and God moved powerfully on their behalf.

So for us, though, it means your courage is seen by God.

You're valued by God.

And that often becomes the very thing that God uses to accomplish his purposes through us.

Do you know that God does not have to use you?

He don't have to even trust you to do risky things.

But because he does.

Why won't you just do it?

It's a shoe company.

Many, many years ago, they created a slogan, just do it.

And when I watched the movie about Michael Jordan getting signed to Nike, they took a risky step by signing Michael Jordan to this big deal, but also giving him a percentage of every shoe sale.

Their slogan wasn't just do it, they just did it.

While it was risky, that was one of the greatest decisions that the company ever made.

To this day, they're still making money off of Michael Jordan.

He's mean, old, retired, and don't play basketball.

But to this day, they are still making money off of Michael Jordan.

Certainly, we don't want a secular company like Nike to have more courage than people who are following a powerful savior.

If they have the courage to do it, why won't we just have the courage?

Right?

God wants to use us for his glory.

But do you have the courage to step forward?

Look at verse 2.

Verse 2.

As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard, she gained favor with him.

The king extended the golden scepter in his hand toward Esther, and she approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

Do y'all see God's hand right there?

The king could have rejected her.

He could have sentenced her to death.

But instead, God moved the king's heart.

To extend favor.

That reminds me of Proverbs 21.

The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord.

He turns it wherever he will.

Esther did what only she could do.

Step out in courage.

And God did what only he could do.

Turn the heart of the king.

See, when we obey God and take steps forward, we can trust him with the results.

Maybe it won't always look exactly what we hoped for.

But God is always working behind the scenes for his glory and our good.

When we step out in faith, when we obey what God is asking us to do, we can trust that he going to handle the results.

That don't mean that everything going to turn out exactly the way we picture it.

Because sometimes God's plan looks very different from ours.

You might forgive someone.

They may never apologize.

You might share your faith and they still reject Jesus.

You might give generously and still face financial tightness for months.

But here's the promise.

God is always working even when we can't see it.

Behind the scenes, he's shaping our hearts.

He's opening doors.

He's closing doors to protect us.

And he's using our small acts of obedience to accomplish something far bigger than we can even imagine.

So don't obey God because...

It's guaranteed to be easy or because we'll always get the outcome we want.

We obey God because we trust that he knows exactly what he's doing and he loves us.

We obey him because he's in control.

We take risks.

We are courageous people because in the end, we know it's going to be for his glory and our good.

That's why we got to step out with courage, leave the results in his hands and sleep peacefully at night.

No one hear this.

He's got it.

He's got it.

Hear me today.

I don't know what hard thing God is asking us to do right now.

Maybe it's forgive somebody who shattered your heart.

Maybe it's to trust him with your money when the numbers just not adding up.

Maybe it's to finally have the hard conversation you've been avoiding.

Maybe it's to step out in faith and share your story with someone who desperately needs hope.

But whatever it is, know this.

God is not blind to your fear.

He's also not deaf to your prayers.

He sees you standing there in your throne room moment, trembling, wondering how it's going to turn out.

But just like Esther, you might be saying, listen, if I perish, I perish.

But God is saying, no, you're not going to perish.

You're going to see my power.

You're going to see my hand move in ways that you've never imagined.

Well, how do I know he's saying that I won't perish?

Because he says that in him you have eternal life.

Courage is simply trusting God enough to do the hard thing he's asking you to do and leaving the results up to him.

You don't have to manipulate it.

You don't have to guarantee an outcome.

You just got to step out and trust God to do the rest.

What does that look like, though?

It looks like being patient, having integrity, being generous and sharing your faith.

So today I want to challenge you.

Wherever God is calling you to take.

a step of courage, if that's your marriage, if it's in your finances, if it's in your friendships, if it's forgiving somebody, if it's sharing your faith, if it's surrendering your life to Jesus once and for all, I want you to know that God is still the God who has the power to turn hearts.

He's still the God who parted the Red Sea.

He is still the God who moves mountains and open doors that no man can close.

He's still the God who honors courage that comes from trusting him.

So I'm wondering today.

Would you say like Esther, Lord, I'll do it even if it costs me.

I'll step out even if I'm afraid.

I'll obey you because I trust you more than my fears.

Because when you do.

Let me tell you, you're going to see God move.

Interesting thing about the book of Esther, a fun fact.

Esther gives a great narrative, but the name of God is mentioned nowhere.

But what's interesting about it, while his name is not mentioned, his fingerprints is all over it.

You don't see his name, but you see him at work throughout the whole book.

What am I getting at?

Courage is trusting God enough to do the hard thing that he's asking you to do.

But remember that it takes preparation.

Courage is taking risks.

But know that even in all of that, it doesn't go unnoticed by God.

You don't have to be fearful.

You don't have to be afraid.

But if you are, know that you can cast all of those cares on Jesus because he cares for you.

What is he asking you to do?

Why are you afraid?

But lean and depend on him and he'll order every step in your life.

Let's pray.

Jesus, you're in control.

We know that there's at least one thing that you're calling all of us to do.

But God, sometimes

our fear is louder than your voice.

Sometimes, God, it's not that we don't want to do what you tell us to do.

It's just so uncomfortable.

And this culture we live in, God, is programmed and trained us to be consumers instead of submissive to you.

But I pray now that you help us to overcome that.

God, Esther didn't know that even as an orphan that she would one day become queen and that you would use her to save her people.

But God, even in our lives, you didn't save us for us to sit on our hands.

You didn't call us into relationship with you just for us to

Sit back and treat our Christianity like an entertaining movie on a movie screen.

But you've called us to live for you.

So help us not to be weary, not to be fretful, not to be fearful.

But I pray for courage.

I pray for boldness.

We see in Acts 4 where they prayed for courage and boldness, God, and you gave it to them.

We even see in Esther.

She fasted, prayed, trusted in you and you moved on her behalf.

So we ask you to do that for us.

Not because we're perfect.

But because we desire to give you glory.

And help us to do so.

Because we want to honor you in every way.

Hear our prayer.

In Jesus name.

Amen.

