



# ESTHER

## Discussion Questions 9/10/23

### Battle of the Sexes

**Intro:** As Xerxes throws a wild party he calls in his queen and she refuses. This causes drama like you could not believe. Xerxes flexed his power for his own benefit and to prove to other leaders how great he and his possessions were. Xerxes and his queen had a toxic relationship. Maybe you've wondered, "How does God feel about toxic relationships?" We see that even in a story where God's name is not mentioned, that he still cares about the vulnerable and desires for people to flourish.

**Story:** Vashti's decision led to a loss of power. She was the queen, but was no longer welcome to step into Xerxes's presence after her decision not to step into his presence. Have you ever had to make a decision that led to a loss of power? What have you learned a loss of power looks like in God's kingdom?

**Read:** Esther 1:9-22

1. What does Xerxes teach us about power, respect, and and the relationship they hold?
2. Pastor Ricky mentioned that we would discuss whether Vashti's decision was morally right or wrong. Discuss opinions on this and express what the implications of your opinion mean for how you live your life.
3. All of the characters in Esther are questionable. Sounds a lot like real life. So often we want God to give us black and white answers to tell us how to live life, but instead he pushes us to get wisdom. What areas in your life do you see where you need to receive wisdom from God? Your group will pray about this later.
4. Esther chapter 1 is about authority in the government and at home. What does Jesus require of his followers regarding authority at home and in the government?
5. Both Vashti and Esther find themselves in toxic relationships. How would God have you to respond to toxic relationships that you are in and toxic relationships that those around you are in?

**Pray for:**

- Wisdom in morally ambiguous situations.
- Jesus to heal toxic relationships.
- Honor and dignity to be provided to all of humanity.