

Book of the Week: Small Group Guide

Week 3: Esther

June 21, 2026

Icebreaker Question: Share your favorite "dad joke" or a memorable lesson you learned from a father figure in your life.

Sermon Overview

This week's message explored the Book of Esther, focusing on God's providence working through human courage. Though God's name isn't mentioned once in Esther, His presence is evident throughout. We examined both Esther and Mordecai's courage and how their faith-filled actions saved the Jewish people from destruction.

Key Theme: God at work through human courage

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. **God's Providence:** Why do you think God's name is never mentioned in the Book of Esther? What does this teach us about how God works in our lives today?
2. **Mordecai's Influence:** How did Mordecai's earlier acts of courage (reporting the assassination plot, refusing to bow to Haman) prepare Esther for her moment of decision? What does this tell us about the importance of modeling courage?
3. **"For Such a Time as This":** Discuss the famous phrase from Esther 4:14. What did it mean for Esther in her context? What might it mean for us today?

Personal Reflection

4. **Engine Check:** The sermon asked us to check "under the hood" of our courage. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your "engine of courage" right now? What factors have influenced that rating?
5. **Fight, Flight, or Stand Firm:** When facing opposition or difficult situations, do you tend toward:
 - Fighting (aggressive reaction)
 - Flight (avoidance/running away)
 - Standing firm (courageous conviction)Share an example from your life.
6. **Where is God in This?** The sermon encouraged us to ask "Where is God in this?" rather than "Is God in this?" Think of a current challenge you're facing. Where can you see God's providence at work?

Application for Parents

7. **Raising Them Right:** For parents in the group: What values and virtues are you intentionally modeling for your children? What areas need strengthening?
 8. **Legacy of Courage:** The sermon mentioned the pastor's grandfather (Paka) who risked his life in the Dutch resistance. What legacy of faith and courage do you want to leave for the next generation?
 9. **You Can't Ask What You Haven't Done:** Mordecai could only challenge Esther because he had already demonstrated courage himself. How does this principle apply to spiritual leadership in your home or sphere of influence?
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Key Takeaways

Review these four main points together:

1. **God has a plan in the most secular situations.** God is never frustrated, never thwarted. He uses authentic and available people.
 2. **Stop. Be still and see God at work.** In difficult situations, pause to ask: "Where is God in this? How is He providing? How should I respond?"
 3. **Act with courage, conviction, integrity, and faith.** Stand up for what you're called to do without compromise or apology.
 4. **God has you where you are for such a time as this.** You are positioned purposefully—not by accident—to act with valor when the moment requires it.
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Prayer Focus

Pray for one another in these areas:

- **For courage:** That God would strengthen our "engine of courage" to be ready when called upon
- **For parents:** That fathers and mothers would model valor and raise their children with godly values
- **For trust in God's providence:** That we would stop being anxious and see God at work even in secular, difficult situations
- **For specific situations:** Share one situation where someone needs courage to act, and pray together for God's strength

Closing Prayer:

"Father, help us to be still and know that You are God. You are never thwarted, never surprised, always at work. Give us the courage of Mordecai and Esther to stand firm when the moment requires it. Help us to trust Your providence even when we can't see Your hand. For such a time as this, You have placed us where we are. May we act with valor for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen."