

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of October 24-30, 2021

“FROM CAPTIVE TO QUEEN”

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

When it comes to a game, a book and a movie, would you rather know the outcome first or would you rather not know? Why?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Esther 1-2. (It is suggested that you read the chapters before the small group session.)

1. As much as you can, what do you know about the setting of the book of Esther? List them down and comment on which one you feel is relevant in understanding the story.
2. Would you agree that Xerxes lived for his possessions, passions and pride? How does 1 John 2:15-17 warn about the danger of living for this world and what it has to offer? What warning is also found about prideful people in Proverbs 16:18-19?
3. How do you see Vashti in this story? As a heroine? Or as someone who should've obeyed the king? What do you think are some possible reasons why Vashti refused the king?
4. Xerxes was humiliated in front of the people and he was angry. What are your thoughts about his solution to the situation? What do you think about Memucan's advice? Are there lessons that can be learned here about how the world views and dispenses "justice"?
5. Historians tell us that a gap of about 4 years have passed between chapter 1 and 2 and that Xerxes came back from a defeat with the Greeks during this period. What do you think would be his overall disposition at this time and what was the solution that was suggested by his advisers? In what way do we (even as Christians) solve our problems this way?

6. Most scholars peg Esther's age as a teenager (around 15) and no more than 20 years old when she was taken into the harem. Considering this as well as her background, what are the possible struggles that she could have gone through at this time? Would you agree that Esther failed during this time?

7. List a few things in the events of chapters 1-2 that seemed to happen by chance. What does this tell you about God? So far, what lesson(s) does this teach you about how a Christian ought to live in a culture that is very much opposed to your faith?

8. NEXT STEPS

God is the God of the seen and the unseen.

- I will trust in God even when I don't see his hand.
- I will value each day, ordinary or not, as a day that the Lord has made.
- I will live by the truth of my identity in Christ and not of the world.
- I will lean on Christ and let him lead me in whatever situation I face.
- I will dispense grace to others because I have been given grace by God.

Don't forget to:

- Go through the devotionals everyday this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God's Word.
- Commit 30 minutes a day for God's intervention in this fight against the COVID virus.

CLOSING THE SESSION.

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray that you grow in your understanding of God's grace in your life and that you will live with that understanding in how you treat others.
- Take the time to pray for our nation, for peace and for the gospel to prosper during this time of the pandemic.
- Pray for those who are hurting, going through fear, worry and anxiety in the group.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends and loved ones.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE.

October 25 Esther 1:1-9; Philippians 2:5-11
October 26 Esther 1:10-22; James 5:5-8.
October 27 Esther 2:1-4; Colossians 3:12-14
October 28 Esther 2:5-18
October 29 Esther 2:19-23; Matthew 5:13-16
October 30 Isaiah 8:16-22
October 31 Luke 2:8-20