

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Icebreaker

Question: Do you believe people should "dress for success"? Why or why not?

In Chapter 5 of Esther, we still see the response to Haman's plan to kill the Jews. It looks as though Haman has all the power and connections. In this chapter, things begin to change for Esther, for Mordecai, and for the people of God. It's a reversal of what's been going on so far.

Read Esther 5

The Wisdom of Humility

"On the third day"... What has Esther been doing for three days?
(Hint: look at the end of chapter 4.)

Question: How would you describe your prayer life?

- Stagnant
- It's there, but barely breathing.
- I'm too busy to pray.
- I have a vibrant prayer life.
- I enjoy praying, but I don't do enough of it.
- Other: _____

What does our prayer life reveal about what we believe about ourselves and about God?

Esther finally approaches the king. The king doesn't have her killed, but offers his golden scepter. But Esther doesn't immediately ask for what she wants. Why do you think she delays?

- Fear
- She knows the king's language: parties
- She wants the reader to have some suspense
- She's trying to get the king interested in what she's doing.
- Other: _____

Question: If any request could be granted, as was done for Esther, what would you ask for and why?

Question: What assurances do we have that we can always approach God and ask for what we need and want? Do you believe that He listens?

My greatest motivation to pray is:

- I need a lot more of God in my life.
- It works!
- Honestly, I'm more into doing things on my own. Why is that?
- It helps me deal with the stress and pain of life.
- Hey! Why tackle life on my own when it's God who can really make things happen?
- Other: _____

The strength of your prayer life is determined by how well you know the promises of God. You need to really get familiar with God's promises in Scripture.

Some of God's promises that encourage me most are:

- God will always be with me, no matter what happens, Hebrews 13:5.
- God's at work in my life to make me more like Jesus Christ, Philippians 1:6.
- God loves and cares about me like no one else can, Zephaniah 3:17.
- God's always consistent, Hebrews 13:8.
- God will give me the strength to do what's good for me and honoring to Him, Philippians 4:13.
- God uses life's difficulties for my good, Romans 8:28.
- Other: _____

The Folly of Pride

When we get to verse 9, Mordecai is feeling pretty good about himself. Why is he so happy? And what does he do when he gets home?

If we are honest, most of us tend to brag at various times in our life.

Question: What do you tend to brag about?

- Accomplishments
- Possessions
- Experiences
- Connections
- My sports ball team that I like.
- Other: _____

What does our "Bragging" reveal about ourselves?

Question: Why does Haman get so angry?

What is the irony of the gallows that are being built?

How do we protect ourselves from pride? Why is this issue important to our relationship with God and with others?

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:
