



SERMON NOTES:

- Esther 4:14
 - II Corinthians 5:17
 - Romans 3:26
1. The past cannot be changed, but the future can be made new: Your past does not determine your future WHEN Jesus is followed! Jesus changes YOU!
 - Esther 8:5
 - Esther 8:7-8
 - The battle for holiness is intense, but victory is promised when following Jesus. We fight from victory, not for victory!
 - Esther 8:11
 - The righteousness of Jesus changes our condition in the midst of our circumstances
 - Esther 8:15-16
 2. What the devil uses to bring harm, God can turn to joy and celebration: There is JOY in following Jesus!
 - The feast of Purim (casting lots) becomes an annual holiday (March 13-14) celebrating the goodness of God.
 - Esther 9:20-21
 - Esther 9:27-28
 - Jesus turns our lives around when we honor Him through our obedience
 - Esther 9:22
 - Mordecai was a changed man: humble and holy. God wants to change you into the image of JESUS!
 - Esther 10:3
- The Love of God does not leave us in bondage but delivers His people from the grip of the enemy and sets them FREE!
 - II Corinthians 3:17



GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. The Feast of Purim is still observed to this day. The date for this year's feast is March 13-14. People dress up, shared food, give to the poor, read the book of Esther (they hiss when Haman's name is read). It is one of the feasts that is truly a celebration of God's protection and provision. The Jews had been sentenced to death by Haman, but God intervened and gave them freedom and life. It is comparable to the day of your salvation. Sin had sentenced you to death and hell, but God provided life and freedom through Jesus. Reflect back through the book of Esther and see where the Holy Spirit intervened to direct the thoughts and actions of people to accomplish the will of God. Look back through your life and see how Holy Spirit was at work in your life to allow you the opportunity for salvation. Read Romans 3:26 and describe how this passage relates to you and the story of Esther.
2. Read Ephesians 6:10-19. How does that passage differ from the battle the Jews waged in Esther 9:1-19? Sometimes we know the face of our enemy and sometimes we do not. It's not the face that matters, it's recognizing the influence of the enemy in their life. Israel's physical battles were examples of the spiritual battles we face today. Just like Jesus taught in parables so we can see physical examples of spiritual influences. Several times it is listed that "they laid no hand to the plunder." Why? What significance is that teaching us?
3. Read I Samuel 15; Esther 2:4-5; 9:11-17; Exodus 17:8-16. The Amalekites were enemies of Israel. God told Saul to completely kill them but Saul disobeyed. The Amalekites (of which Haman is a descendant) continued to pursue the Jews, until Mordecai and Esther completed the task. The hanging of Haman's sons is fulfilling the command by God to Saul. What enemies (lust, pride, anger, unforgiveness, etc.) has God called you to completely remove from your life (heart) and you have allowed to stay around? Read II Corinthians 10:3-6 ; James 1:13-18; Galatians 5:19-23. How can you wage war on spiritual enemies that attack your mind and heart?
4. Read Esther 8:16. Light. Gladness. Joy. Honor. What is the significance of each of these descriptions? What are some other verses that deal with each of them? Are these descriptions applicable to Christians today? Why/How? How would the Church be different today if these four words were evident in believer's lives? Which one is easiest/hardest for you? How does your past affect your display of God's workings? What is a sentence that you think you deserve that God wants to free you from its grasp? What's keeping you from walking in freedom?
5. Read Esther 4:14. How does this verse relate to chapters 8-10? Summarize the entire book of Esther in relationship to this one verse. You were created for such a time as today: Don't miss out! Trust that Jesus loves you and uses His Holy Spirit to guide you for good and for the glory of our Father. What would the Book of (your name) look like? Are you live FREE in JESUS today?