



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

May 12- 18

Esther 1-4

Things to Know

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder. Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

1. God's Providence Puts You Where You Are for a Purpose

Esther wasn't in the palace by accident. Neither are you in your workplace, family, or community by accident.

Esther 4:14 reminds us: "Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

God strategically places His people in positions to reflect His purposes.

2. Obedience Often Requires Courageous Risk

Esther had to choose between comfort and calling. True obedience isn't always safe—but it's always significant.

Esther 4:16 shows her resolve: "If I perish, I perish."

Following God might cost you something—but it's worth everything.

3. Esther Points Us to a Greater Savior

Esther risked her life to save her people. Jesus gave His life to save the world.

Her bravery foreshadows Christ's greater sacrifice. The gospel gives us the power to live courageously for the good of others and the glory of God.

Discussion Questions

What does Mordecai's response in Esther 4:13–14 reveal about God's sovereignty and our responsibility?

"If you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews

from another place...”

→ How does this shape the way we view our role in God’s plan today?

1. Esther 4:11 describes the risk Esther faced in going before the king.
“All the king’s servants... know that if any man or woman goes to the king... he shall be put to death...”
→ What are some fears or risks you face when considering obedience to God’s call?
 2. Esther 4:14 includes the famous phrase, “for such a time as this.”
→ How can we discern when a moment in our lives might be a “such a time as this” opportunity?
 3. In Esther 4:15–16, Esther calls for a fast before taking action.
“Go, gather all the Jews... and hold a fast on my behalf...”
→ Why is prayer and fasting a wise response before making a difficult decision?
 4. Esther concludes in 4:16 with “If I perish, I perish.”
→ How does Esther’s willingness to sacrifice point us to Jesus? What does it look like to follow Christ with that same resolve today?
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Read

Read Esther 4:13-14 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Scripture

Esther 4:13-14

¹³ Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. ¹⁴ For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

[The Holy Bible, English Standard Version](#). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.
Esther 4:13-14

Living on Mission In Community

God may not have placed you in a royal palace, but He has placed you exactly where you are for a reason. Like Esther, you may be facing moments of decision that feel risky, uncomfortable, or unclear. Yet, God's providence means there are no accidental assignments in the kingdom. Whether it's speaking up at work, showing up for a struggling friend, or leading your family with conviction, your obedience can become part of someone else's deliverance. Esther didn't feel ready—but she was willing. And God used her willing heart for something far greater than she could imagine. The same is true for you. So here's the question: What is God asking you to do in this season that requires courage and trust?

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?

- *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 - 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 - 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
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Leader Resources

Session Title: Your Life Matters. God's Sacrifice Secures It.

1. Session Overview

Esther 4 brings us to the defining moment in Esther's story—and perhaps in all of Jewish exile history. In this chapter, a hidden queen confronts her purpose, a frightened woman finds her courage, and a divine silence echoes with providence. It's a story of how God places His people in strategic positions to fulfill His saving purposes, even when His name is not explicitly mentioned.

2. Opening (Prayer & Icebreaker)

Prayer Prompt (2–3s):

Break into small groups and ask:

“Is there any way we can pray for our personal walks with God this week?”

Leaders are encouraged to model vulnerability first.

Icebreaker Question:

Think of a time when you were in the right place at the right time. What happened?

3. Scripture Reading

Read Esther 4:1–17 aloud.

Assign different readers for Mordecai's speech and Esther's reply to engage group members with the drama of the text.

4. Teaching Points

I. Your Life Matters in God's Plan

- **God's Sovereign Placement:**
Esther did not stumble into royalty—she was placed by God for a purpose. Mordecai reminds her, “Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” (v. 14). God's providence places His people where they can do the most good, often in surprising and uncomfortable places.
- **Responsibility Meets Risk:**
Esther hesitates to act, knowing the risk of death, yet Mordecai's challenge reminds her that not acting is also a risk (v. 13–14). Obedience to God's call is often dangerous—but always purposeful.
- **Your Place, Your Purpose:**
Like Esther, we are not in our workplaces, homes, or neighborhoods by accident. God's people are strategically sent, not randomly scattered.

II. God's Sacrifice Is Your Salvation

- **Esther's Courage Foreshadows Christ's Sacrifice:**
“If I perish, I perish” (v. 16) echoes forward to the greater courage of Christ who did not risk His life but gave it to save His people.
- **Jesus, the True and Better Esther:**
Jesus left the ultimate palace to stand in the gap—not before Xerxes but before the throne of heaven—on behalf of His people.
- **Call to Boldness:**
Esther's decision came after prayer and fasting. God's people today must also seek clarity and courage through dependence on Him.

5. Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you about Mordecai's challenge in verses 13–14? How might this apply to your own life and calling?
2. Have you ever felt God was placing you in a position “for such a time as this”? What made it hard to step up?
3. Esther called for fasting before acting (v. 16). How do you seek God's direction before big decisions?

4. Esther's willingness to risk her life points us to Jesus. How does Jesus' greater sacrifice give you courage today?
5. What might obedience to God look like in your current season—especially if it feels risky or costly?

6. Application Points

- Reflect on where God has placed you. How can you steward your position for His purposes this week?
- Commit to one step of courageous obedience—big or small—that God may be calling you to take.
- Pray for someone in your life who needs bold intercession, as Esther stood for her people.

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

Invite the group to reflect silently for one minute:

“God, where are You calling me to act with courage for Your glory and others' good?”

Close with this prayer:

“Lord, thank You that You are working even when we cannot see it. Give us the courage of Esther to step into the assignments You've given us, trusting not in our own strength but in Your sovereign hand and sacrificial love. Amen.”

8. Leader's Notes

- Don't rush the opening prayer groups. Vulnerability builds trust.
- Emphasize the gospel, not just Esther's bravery. Help your group see that Jesus is the ultimate Savior who empowers us.
- Encourage follow-up during the week—ask how people took bold steps in obedience.