

The Curse Reversed: God's Surprising Work in the Book of Esther

March 6th, 2022

Jeff Bruce, Lead Pastor

Moving from Cowardice to Courage (Esther 4:1-17)

1. Step 1 – Choose Your Side (vv. 1-14)

2. Step 2 – See Your Need (vv. 15-16; see vv. 1-3)

3. Step 3 – Own Your Role (vv. 14-17)

For Further Thought and Discussion:

Getting Started:

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?

2. Think of a recent time you experienced a *“failure of nerve”*, and didn’t act with courage. Looking back, what would you have done differently?

Going Deeper

3. Compare and contrast Mordecai and Esther (vv. 1-11). How does Mordecai react when he hears the King’s edict (vv. 1-3)? Why does he cry at the entrance of the King’s palace (v. 2)? What is he hoping to accomplish? Why is Esther hesitant to go before the King (vv. 10-11)? Why for Esther is this dilemma a crisis of identity (compare 1:10-22; 2:10, 20)?
4. Why is Mordecai so confident that the Jews will ultimately be delivered (see Genesis 12:1-3)? Why does he think Esther will not escape judgment if she remains silent (v. 14)? In what sense will she and her father’s house perish?
5. Why does Esther call for a fast (v. 15)? Why is the timing of the fast especially significant (see Esther 3:12; compare Exodus 12:1ff)? What does this reveal about the severity of the situation?
6. How does Esther change in the course of this chapter (see v. 14; compare v. 17 with 2:10, 20)? Where do we hear words similar to hers (*“if I perish, I perish”*) in the Old Testament (see Genesis 43:14)? How is Benjamin’s plight in Genesis similar to Esther’s here? Discuss the parallels between these stories.

Application:

7. Courage comes from fearing God, seeking God’s power, and seeing God’s providence in our current position. Which of these was most relevant to you? Where do you need courage right now?
8. What’s one thing you can do this week to apply this message?