

## NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 10/12/2020-10/16/2020

The following content is based on the message on 10/11/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. It is not meant to be a full synopsis, but rather a resource to help you analyze and apply the main ideas. To use this devotional effectively, please listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

### MONDAY // THE HANGOVER AND THE BACHELOR

**Read Esther 1 and 2:18.** Israel was in captivity in the Persian kingdom. The king of Persia, King Ahasuerus, threw a massive party for 180 days to honor himself. After the party, he put together a banquet with all of his VIPs. They spent the entire time drinking and feasting without limits. King Ahasuerus was completely drunk and he tried to get the queen to walk through the banquet wearing nothing but a crown. The queen refused, and Ahasuerus banished her from the royal palace. However, the king wanted a new queen, so he made all the young girls in the kingdom audition. Esther, a Hebrew woman, was chosen from all of the others to be the new queen.

- *Later in the story, we will see that God will redeem His people from the horrible situation they are in. What is a current area of pain in your life where you have a hard time seeing that God is at work?*
- *Reflect on the areas around you where you feel like God is not working. Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and ask God to comfort you in the middle of the chaos.*

### TUESDAY // CRIMINAL MINDS

**Read Esther 2:19 - Esther 3.** The king's right hand men wanted to kill all the people of Israel because they wouldn't worship the same gods that the rest of the Persians worshipped. Mordecai, who was Esther's cousin, was a Hebrew man who very publicly refused to bow down to the Persian gods. He had two events that brought him to the public eye. He overheard some men plotting to kill the king and he discovered an evil plot to kill all the Hebrew people. God placed Mordecai in specific places where he could build trust with an evil leader and where he could uncover evil plots against God's people.

**We don't have to cave in to culture in order to be used by God within evil systems.**

- *How can you be more aware of your surroundings? How can you believe that God has given you what you need in order to live within the place where God has you?*
- *Reflect on the cultural context in which you find yourself. Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and ask God to guide you today.*

### WEDNESDAY // BRAVEHEART

**Read Esther 4.** Esther knew that she had to approach the king in order to protect her people. Even though she was in a terrible situation, God empowered her to be courageous. God gave her strength and He gave her Mordecai to go on the journey with her. God provided community and courage. Our enemy wants us to live in fear.

But God is bigger than whatever situation you are in. God wants to rewrite your story, but it will require you to trust that God is bigger than your fear. We could be one brave decision away from starting a brand new storyline. We are often tempted to fill out the following sentence with fear rather than with God.

If \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_.

- *How do you usually fill out the sentence above with fear? What keeps you from believing that God wants to fill out the second part of that sentence above?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Reflect on how God wants to show up for you despite your fears.*

### THURSDAY // PARDON THE INTERRUPTION AND SLEEPLESS IN SUSAN

**Read Esther 5 and 6.** Esther doesn't come to the King in fear. She keeps taking the next step despite being afraid. Esther didn't have an absence of fear, but she still courageously entered the king's court and requested that the king and Haman come to dinner. Despite coming into an abusive situation, God gave Esther the strength to stand up to the one who was oppressing her. God used Esther and Mordecai to abolish the system of power. God was still at work even when it seemed that nothing good could come out of it.

**Courage is not the absence of fear, but acting in spite of fear.**

- *What do you fear? How could God be moving you to act despite your fear?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and reflect on how God meets you in the middle of your fear.*

### FRIDAY // THE BIGGEST LOSER AND HEROS

**Read Esther 7 and 8.** The real hero of the story is never named in the entire book of Esther. God's name is never mentioned, but He is ever-present throughout the entire book. This is a great principle that we all need to remember. We don't have to be the hero of our story. God is the hero who is already at work. Maybe you are going through something right now where you don't feel like God is at work. Never forget, even when you may not see God, He is constantly at work throughout your life. God has positioned you in this time and space to follow Him into the place where God is taking you.

**Even when you don't see God in your story, He is with you.**

- *How are you tempted to find yourself as the hero of your story? How do you need to constantly reframe God as the hero of your story?*
- *Reflect on a time in your life where you didn't feel God's presence in the moment, but you look back and see God's hands all over it. What does that do in your heart?*