

Life Group Discussion Questions

May 6, 2012

Series: Esther

Sermon Topic: Hang 'Em High - Esther 6 & 7 - Dr. Matt Cassidy

Introduction: In our 4th week on the book of Esther, Matt taught us how to "speak missionary" and the importance of "chiastic" structure to unlocking the key point to Hebrew narratives. In Esther, Matt demonstrated that the chiastic structure leads us to the main point of our story in Esther 6:1; that the LORD is the hero in what turns out to be the hinge point for this amazing tale of poetic justice.

Sermon Questions:

1. Last week we were encouraged to fast and pray either individually or as a Life Group as our application to last week's sermon. Take some time and share with your group how it went? Did you fast and pray? How long? What did you fast? What was your purpose? What was the experience like? Easier or harder than expected? Anything to report as a result? Continue sharing amongst the group members and encourage each other to make prayer and fasting a normal practice in the faith.
2. Read Chapter 6 & 7, reflect on the Matt's sermon and discuss the following question in your group.
 - a) Why would God want His name hidden in code, aka...missionary speak, within the story of Esther? It's obvious to Jews that from the chiastic structure He is identified as the hero, so why hide His name? What difference did a day make? What events in all transpired between Esther's first and second banquet and how did they play a role in the outcome of the story.
 - b) When Esther identified Haman as the evil opposer of the Jews, why was King Xerxes so enraged that he would leave his wine and withdraw to the palace garden? Why not simply condemn Haman on the spot? Why leave only to return? What predicament did the King find himself in upon learning of Haman's conspiracy?
 - c) What attributes of God have you become aware of from the story of Esther? How does knowing these attributes contribute to your relationship with God today? Do they cause you to fear Him more, love Him more, both or something different?
 - d) What was Haman's primary sin? Read Proverbs 29:23, what is the antidote for this sin and how can we guard against this sin in our lives today?
 - e) Have you prayed for the building of others' gallows in order to help them? If yes, share quickly the situation and outcome. If no, is there someone that comes to mind that you might pray for in that way? Share with your group.
 - f) Do you have the scars from past gallows? Can you tell of a time in your past that you built "spiritual" gallows, and what the result was from them? Did God rescue you from them or was He simply there when you were broken and humbled? What change happened in your life as a result?
 - g) How about now? Is your prayer life and relationship with other believers

deep enough to bring to light any potential gallows being erected in your life today? Together with your Life Group, review and grade yourself on the Johari window example of openness in relationships (see attachment). Are there hidden areas of your life that need to be exposed? Are you open for others to speak into your blind spots?