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## **Esther #4: Summoned to Share Sorrow**

August 24 & 25, 2024

Esther 5

### **Opener:**

This week we are called to reflect on the difference between humble selflessness and prideful, self-consuming, self-destructing self-reliance. Read 2 Peter 1:3-4. As people in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells, what do you and I get to participate in and how should that affect our lives?

### **Go Deeper:**

1. Compare Esther 4:16-17 and Esther 5:9-14. Who did Esther look to for support? Who did Haman gather to give him support?
  2. Read Isaiah 58:6; Luke 4:14, 18; and Psalm 35:13. What is the benefit of fasting and prayer in our lives?
  3. Read Esther 5:1-4. After King Xerxes spared her life, what did he say to Esther? What was her response? Why do you think she requested Haman's presence at the dinner?
  4. Read Esther 5:9-10 and compare Haman's attitude to that of Esther's. What brought Haman joy? What stole his joy?
  5. Throughout history God has used people to bring about His kingdom. Read Genesis 12:1-3 and Esther 6:12-14. What warning did Haman's wife and advisors give him about his fate and why did they feel this way?
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## Live It:

1. Read Esther 6:1-3. What caused the King's sleepless night? Has God ever given you a restless or sleepless night? What was the reason? What was the outcome?
2. In the end, the story of Esther is not about Mordecai, Esther, Haman or King Xerxes. This story is about God and how He uses ordinary people to fulfill His plans/promises to Abraham. When was the last time you prayed about the plans God has for your life?
3. It is easy to think we are insignificant or unworthy to play a role in God's plans. On our own, in our power God is not able to use us, but when we submit our will to His, He uses us in amazing ways, regardless of our sins and brokenness? When was the last time you recognized God working in your life?



### GOD TIME:

#### Daily Bible Readings (August 25-31)

Sun:	Luke 11:2-4	The Lord's Prayer
Mon:	Matthew 5:21-26	Reconciliation
Tues:	Matthew 18:23-35	The Unforgiving Servant
Wed:	Psalms 103:6-18	God's Great Forgiveness
Thurs:	1 John 1:1-10	God's Faithful Forgiveness
Fri:	Luke 5:17-26	Jesus Forgives Sins
Sat:	Luke 24:36-49	Forgiveness Proclaimed in Jesus' Name

\*The readings selected come from the Narrative Lectionary calendar.

