

Small Group Questions – 3.6.18
Esther 4: 6-17

1. Esther and Mordecai found themselves living in a very 'ungodly' society and chose to live distinctive, faithful lives to God. In what ways are there parallels and challenges to us and the society and culture we find ourselves living in?
2. How easy/difficult is it to live 'counter culturally', as salt and light? As the gospels show us, Jesus actively engaged in the society in which he lived - he sought out the sick and social outcasts and engaged in challenging controversial issues - how confident are we to also engage or do we sometimes find ourselves shying away from the difficult issues?
3. Read also Ephesians 6:18. Esther and the Jewish people in this part of Xerxes' kingdom committed themselves to prayer and fasting in order to gain wisdom from God in discerning the right times to act. And in the gospels we often read about Jesus choosing to take time out to pray in a solitary place. What is your experience of committing regularly to prayer (and fasting)?
4. God put an ordinary person like Esther in place 'for such a time as this' - to save the Jewish people from a very dangerous situation and to make an impact on her society and ultimately the King of a hugely powerful empire. In what ways do we sometimes disqualify ourselves from being used by God?
5. How encouraging is it to look through God's word to see the kind of people God chooses to use to reach out to the world? Bearing in mind... Abraham was 'too old', Joseph was abused, Moses was a murderer and worried about what he should say, Gideon was afraid, Rahab was a prostitute, Jeremiah and Timothy were too young, David was a murderer and adulterer, Jonah ran from God, Naomi was a widow, Job went bankrupt, John the Baptist ate bugs(!), Martha worried, the disciples fell asleep while praying, Peter denied Christ and Lazarus was dead!

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