

**Esther 4:4-17**  
**For Such a Time as This**

**Faith is an internal conviction that leads to an external action.**

A) Faith is not just what you believe, it's how you behave.

B) Example: We have all seen it and many of us have experienced.

C) A little kid standing on the side of the pool looking nervous.

1) You see dad in the pool, saying "Trust me, I'll catch you. Jump!"

**How do you know whether or not the child has faith in their father?**

A) It is not that they can give the proper definition of what faith is? – **no the evidence of their faith is seen when they JUMP!**

B) And after the first time their faith grows – Dad is moving farther and farther back –

1) and the nervousness is replaced by a huge smile/laugh - PURE JOY

**Another example: You see a young man and a young woman on their wedding day.**

A) Friends and family are gathered together – watching intently as she walks down, **the isle toward her husband to be**

B) The groom waiting there is an act of faith, the bride walking toward him is an act of faith.

C) The two of them standing together, holding hands, it's an act of faith.

1) They are saying, "I trust you," and everybody gets to see it!

D) See faith is demonstrated in what you do.

**Well we saw in our Study last time a Jewish man by the name of Mordecai who was moved by his internal conviction – led to external action**

A) When he refused to bow down and pay Homage to a Persian leader by the name of Haman

B) Mordecai is a Jewish man – a follower of God, living in a pagan society – in Persia

C) When a decree is put forth that everyone needs to bow and pay Homage to a recently promoted Persian leader – Haman

D) Mordecai – makes a stand for his convictions – refusing to bow.

1) **His Reason: His Jewish faith and heritage**

**We noted in our study last time that one of the first marks you see in the kind of person that God uses**

A) Is this: they stand on their convictions  
Their faith is active –

**B) The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing we noted about the kind of person that God uses is they bloom where they are planted.**

C) Mordecai has been faithfully serving the pagan King – that is his Job –

1) he even interrupts a plot to assassinate the King

D) He is simply trying to be faithful in the place that God had him

**Prior to this we saw how he stepped up and adopted his orphaned cousin – Hadassah – Esther**

A) He raised her as his own daughter

B) He is a Standup guy – doing what he can – where God has placed him

C) Well we noted a wicked twist in the story last week

**When this evil man Haman – gets so mad that Mordecai will not bow because he is a Jew**

A) Haman invokes a plan to have all 3 million Jews in the Kingdom of Persia – annihilated

B) And he gets the king to sign off on this plan! –

C) By the casting of lots it was determined that in 11 months – **All the Jews would be eradicated from the Kingdom**

**That led to the 3<sup>rd</sup> thing we noted about the kind of person that God uses:**

A) Is they mourn over sin and injustice

B) Mordecai – rips his clothes and puts on sackcloth and ashes and goes before the entry way

to the palace 1) He is out there wailing loudly and bitterly – and he is doing it publically

C)Store owners are watching, officials are staring – people are shocked but he doesn't care –

1)This is wrong and he is going to let it be known

**And Jewish pp in every province of Persia followed suit**

A)And that is where we left the story last time –

B)weird place to stop – but I sensed the Lord imploring my heart –

C)For us as believers and for us as a church to consider: **Do we mourn over the sin and the injustice in our society –**

1)Especially the sin and injustice against the unborn?

D)If we are going to see change happen – if we are going to see Revival come – starts with mourning

**E)Today we are picking up the story in Ch.4 v.4 –**

**4 So Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, {about Mordecai} and the queen was deeply distressed. Then she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth away from him, but he would not accept them.**

A)It seems that Esther was living a bit of sheltered and isolated life in the palace

B)She seems to **be clueless** to the new law that has been passed – sent throughout the Kingdom

1)That in 11 months all the Jews are going to be annihilated

C)We need to be careful we don't get isolated in our Christian bubbles –

1)where we don't know what is happening in our world

D)911 – prayer meeting – running late – everyone was kind of somber – no one was really praying –

E)So I started praying like normal

1)The US has just been attacked – what ?

**Esther is kind of clueless at this point about this edict that has gone forth to Kill all the Jewish people in the Kingdom**

A)So when Mordecai refused the clothes she sent – Esther knows something serious is happening here

**Then Esther called Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and she gave him a command concerning Mordecai, to learn what and why this was. {Go investigate what is going on?}**

**<sup>6</sup> So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square that was in front of the king's gate. <sup>7</sup> And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. <sup>8</sup> He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people. <sup>9</sup> So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.**

B)Mordecai is Charging Esther- "you've got to go in and intercede for the nation, for your people."

**4<sup>th</sup> thing we see about the Kind of person that God uses is – they inspire others to take steps of faith.**

A)We haven't heard anything about Esther's faith or convictions up to this point

B)But now her heart is being stirred – but she starts off by seeing the obstacles – thinking rationally

**<sup>10</sup> Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: <sup>11</sup> "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, *he has* but one law: put *all* to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days."**

**C)Understand the king and queen lived in separate quarters slept in separate beds –**

D)It wasn't like they were eating dinner every night together

1)She only was allowed to come into his presence when summoned

The law in Persia said that NO ONE could come into the presence of the King unless they were summoned by him.

A)If someone just barged in and even came humbly without being summoned – Put to death.

B)There was an ancient archeological dig where they discovered a picture of a Persian king sitting on his throne,  
1)and behind him was a soldier with an enormous axe.

C)Can you imagine that? You're like, "I've got to see the king, - then you see this guy behind him with a giant axe –

1)On 2<sup>nd</sup> thought – my problem really isn't that big of a deal.

So this is how it worked in Persia

A)let's say you wanted to meet with the king and you got entrance into the palace, you would stand off at a distance,

B)If the King was interested in meeting with you he would lower his put his golden scepter –

1)granting you entrance –

C)But if he kept his scepter raised – that meant he wasn't interested in meeting with you –

1)they would chop off your head

D)So anyone Including the Queen who sought an audience with the King without being summoned  
1)you were taking a huge risk.

E)Esther is reasoning – I can't just barge in there uninvited – it would be a huge risk –

1)he hasn't called for me in 30 days.

Notice Mordecai's response in V.12-13

<sup>2</sup>So they told Mordecai Esther's words.<sup>13</sup> And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.

Mordecai wanted Esther to realize that the palace offered no protection, no special privilege for this edict to destroy all the Jews

A)No free pass for the Queen – Now that this was law – it couldn't be reversed

B)That is another interesting thing to note about Persian law –

C)when the King signed something into law –He couldn't even change it himself –

1)that is how their judicial system was set up

D)That is why the King didn't just Bring Queen Vashti back once he started missing her

Example of this in the Book of Daniel –

A)Persian King Darius – tricked into signing a law

B)that if anyone in the Kingdom prays to anyone but him – lions den

C)This edict was put forth by these men who hated Daniel – and they knew he was a man of prayer –

1)Darius – loved Daniel and realized he was tricked but he couldn't reverse it – had to wait and hope.....

D)This is what Mordecai wants Esther to realize - just because you are the queen doesn't mean you will be an exception to the law

But then Mordecai says something that is really intriguing.

<sup>14</sup>For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" {Two things to note here:

1<sup>st</sup> Mordecai says look Esther if you don't do this Deliverance is going to come from another.

A)Mordecai has faith – God is not going to let this happen.

B)It seems logical to him that God has put Esther in a position of influence to be used by the Lord

1)But he says – if you refuse to answer the call – he is going to raise up another.

C)Deliverance will come – and Esther you will lose the opportunity to be the instrument that God is going to use.

I think God often does this in our lives as well.

A) He will bring you into a situation where you see a problem – a need – in your community or a need in the church

**B)Often times God is showing you the problem because He wants you to be a part of the solution.**

1)Not to complain – not to gossip – not to point fingers

**C)He is showing it to you so that you can pray about how you can be a part of the solution**

**D)But if you fail to respond – he will find someone else. –**

1)You will miss out on the opportunity and the reward.

**Now think for a moment: How many of us if we were in Esther's shoes would have responded: Great let him raise up someone else?**

**A)G. K. Chesterton, "The Christian life has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried."**

**B)What Chesterton declared about the Christian life – is equally true about Christian ministry and service**

**C)Too many Christian's say: that just seems too hard or you are asking too much – I will pass.**

**D)But the problem is when you do that you miss out on an opportunity for God to use your life**  
1)and stretch your life – bless your life

**E)The most rewarding and exciting thing that you can ever experience is being a vessel or an instrument that is used by God.**

**I believe God has a plan and purpose for each of us.**

**A)Paul, as he is writing to the Ephesians 2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."**

**B)Workmanship–Poema– Chosen in Christ.. purpose**

**C)In other words, what Paul is saying is God has set out a plan & purpose for your life for you to walk in**

**D)Part of the Christian life is discovering what it means for you to be HIS WORKMANSHIP**

**1)In each season of your life.**

**E)Realizing called to be on mission – Given us a sphere of influence –**

1)Where he has placed resources, responsibilities, gifts and talents INTO OUR HANDS

**F)So the question is always this: What are we going to do with what has been given to us by the Lord?**

**It is clear to Mordecai this is the reason why Esther was chosen to be queen!**

**A)If she doesn't answer the call God will raise up a deliverer from somewhere else.**

**B)That is the first thing that God wants her to see – if you don't respond.... Raise up another person**

**C)But there is another thing – to note here**

**Notice again the end of V.14 Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"**

**A)You have been placed in this position specifically for this MOMENT!**

**B)Mordecai was expressing confidence that Esther's position was, in fact, designed and purposed by God."**

**5th Trait in A man/woman that God uses: They help others to see the big Picture and the urgency of the hour.**

**A)Mordecai's great appeal to Esther was based on this big picture principle.**

**B)The greater the privilege the greater the responsibility.**

**C)The more God has given you, the greater your responsibility to use it for his Kingdom.**

**Imagine what God might do with us – if all of us in the church embraced that Big picture Principle?**

**A)If we embraced this reality-You are God's workmanship**

**B)He has placed YOU here at Calvary Vista –  
1)He has YOU living in North county SD – for such a time is this**

C)He has a purpose for your life – that goes beyond just living – existing – earning an income –

D)Goes beyond simply raising your kids to be Jesus followers – even though that is hugely important

E)But he wants you and your kids to realize you exist for a bigger purpose than just your personal happiness and pleasure.

**Big Picture:** You have a role to play in THE MISSION and plan of God

A)Imagine what would happen if all of us – started praying – and asking the Lord –

B)why am I here? – what is my purpose ? **FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS!**

C)And then we moved in faith to be used in the realms that he directed us!-

1)I will tell you what would happen - **It would be incredible –**

**But that only happens and we only pray in that way: If we see the urgency of the hour**

A)And we realize – We have been placed here for a purpose.

B)If we don't sense that – if we don't believe that we are living in turbulent times

1)We are living in the latter days {**not pray that way**

**Mordecai is inspiring Esther to see her opportunity and he is charging her to see the urgency of the hour.**

A)Esther has been the queen for 5 years now and had no idea why she was put into that role

B)But now it is becoming very clear-

C)Some of you have a desire to be used by the Lord – he has you in prep time right now –

**D)Charge you is two things: #1 Don't grow weary in waiting for God's plan to unfold**

1)Be faithful where he has you – be faithful in the moment

E)2<sup>nd</sup> Don't get too comfortable

1)so that when the time comes to respond you are so

comfortable you fail to respond

**F)SO Mordecai is telling Esther – the time is now!**

**15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: 16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" 17 So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.**

**#6 The person that God uses – know the importance of prayer and fasting**

A)Esther is wise enough to realize here that this is not a political issue – **this is a spiritual issue**

B)This is about the forces of light and darkness being in conflict with one another

C)Gather all the Jews for a 3 day time of prayer and fasting/ 3 days of crying out to God for grace/ mercy

**Remember the story in Matthew 17 Jesus comes down off the MT of Transfiguration**

A)Father with a demon possessed son – pleaded with the disciples to cast him out and they couldn't

B)Jesus does – They asked Jesus why couldn't we cast him out – Jesus said –

1)**this kind only comes out by prayer and fasting**

**C)Interesting statement/ – there are certain strongholds of the enemy –**

1)that are so strong – only removed by prayer and fasting

D)Now One could argue – well the disciples didn't know they were going to encounter.....

1)this radical demonic stronghold

E)Which means if we are going to be used by God – against those type of strongholds –

1)prayer and fasting needs to be a regular discipline

**That is definitely one of the things you see in the book of Acts about the early church**

A)Prayer and fasting were a regular part of their lives and routines



B)Prayer is a mark of our dependency upon God – the realization that we can't do anything without him

C)Fasting is the denying of the flesh – that heightens are spiritual antenna – makes us more receptive to hear the Lord's voice.

D)Prayer and fasting are two disciplines that are imperative in the lives of the person that God is going to use and work through

The 7<sup>th</sup> and final thing that we learn from this story that is part of the person's life that God uses

A)Is they are not afraid to take **A RISK** for the glory of God

B)Esther says - **I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!**"

C)I am going to take a risk – and if it fails and I perish – so be it!

Esther has changed from fear to abandonment and faith,

A)from hesitation to confidence and determination,

B)from concern for her own safety to concern for her people's survival.

C)She has reached her own personal hour of decision and has not been found wanting.

"There is no one so free as the person who is not afraid to die. If you aren't afraid to die, then you are free to serve the Lord and do whatever he calls you to do." - Pastor Ray Pritchard

Paul the apostle expressed a similar sentiment when he met with the Elders of the church in Ephesus

A)Knowing that he was headed to Jerusalem where he would be arrested and quite possibly die

B)Paul uttered these words: <sup>24</sup> But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." Acts 20:24

C)Paul understood if I am going to finish my race and fulfill my purpose as God workmanship

1)I can't live in fear of the what if –

D)I have to be faithful to where God has called me – and what he has put before me

Now that is Not the easiest mentality to have

A)especially when we think about leaving loved one's behind.

B)But it is a key to fulfilling your mission as God's workmanship -

There have been several times in my life – when I have gone on a mission's trip – war torn country

A)Or a violent place – where there was the potential of not making it back.

B)Had to really pray: Once I got the confirmation from the Lord – I was supposed to go

1)I adopted this mentality – **I do not count my life dear to myself** – opened up a life insurance policy ☺

Listen God is going to use Esther in a way that will literally change Human history

A)But in order to be that instrument – she had to be willing to take a risk

B) Remind you of how we started today: **Faith is an internal conviction that leads to an external action.**

C)If God is going to use your life in some way – you will have to be willing to take a risk = FAITH

It might not be a life threatening risk but it could be a risk to your reputation

A)There is Always the risk of failure

B)Often financial risks involved in steps of faith

1)Risk of being misunderstood

C)But with the risk – comes the reward – and the blessing of being used by God. –

The Question is are we willing to take that step of pray knowing it will involve Risk?

Pray