



Esther's Wisdom, Haman's Folly

Session Five

Look Back at Last Week

- In his sermon on Esther 4:1-17, Pastor Curtis mentioned that the movie, Forest Gump engages the question of destiny and free will. How have you wrestled with these seemingly contradictory possibilities?
- Respond to the question Pastor Curtis posed, “What is your royal position at this time?” We might phrase it, “Who is in my circle of influence?” or “How can I serve God in my current circumstances at home or outside the home?” or “How can I be a person that God uses?”
- How is Esther a signpost to the true Esther, Jesus?

Read Aloud

Passage for this week: **Esther 5:1-14**

Head (15–20 Minutes)

OBSERVE THE TEXT AND THE AUTHOR'S MAIN POINTS

1. Verse 1 refers to the “third day.” Look back at the end of Chapter 4. To what is this referring?
2. Describe the emotions Esther may have felt as she stood in the inner court of the palace (v. 1).
3. What are Haman's character qualities and flaws in v. 9-14?

Heart (15–20 Minutes)

ENVISION HOW THE TEXT—WHEN APPLIED—MIGHT TRANSFORM YOUR INNER LIFE IN TERMS OF YOUR THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS

1. Discuss how you feel about Esther's approach to winning the king over by starting with small requests. How useful is that approach today?
2. Explore how courage, faith, and trust can sustain us during challenging times.
3. Read Proverbs 16:18 and Proverbs 29:23. Reflect on the dangers of pride and its consequences.

Hands (10 Minutes)

APPLY THE TEXT BY MOVING FROM INWARD REFLECTION TO OUTWARD ACTION LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LIVE THE TEXT OUT IN OUR LIVES TO SERVE OTHERS

Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- First discuss and then thank God for the evidence in your life that God is leading and guiding you through people, events, open and shut doors, etc.
- What are practical ways to resolve conflicts wisely?
- How do we deal with excessive pride in ourselves and others?

Reaching Outwards: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Brainstorm ways that you, like Esther, can be used by God for the sake of others in big and small ways. Discuss ideas with your group. For some additional ideas, go to fpchouston.org/serve/ways-to-serve/upcoming-opportunities/ or contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator at mweir@fpchouston.org.
- The book of Esther reveals a person, Haman, who despises the Jews. He acts to eliminate them as a people group and even personally plans to kill Mordecai. Where do we see that kind of hate in our world today? What is behind it? How are Christians to respond when they witness hate in the world?
- June 20 - Post-Alpha Group - The second Post-Alpha group meeting is June 20. Pray that those who come feel welcome and continue their interest in and commitment to the gospel. Pray that those with unresolved questions about Jesus would sense His love and draw close to Him. For additional information, contact Emmanuel Paulpeter, Pastor of Outreach at epaulpeter@fpchouston.org.

Reaching Beyond

- **Pray for the Middle School Mission Trip to San Antonio - June 23-29** - FPC San Antonio will host FPC Houston for the week as Middle School participants and adult volunteers serve with several local mission partners. The work will range from serving the homeless to working with the elderly and special needs communities. In the limited free time, there will be opportunities to explore the historic city, attend a sporting event, and/or enjoy a local amusement park. Pray for safe travel, logistics, safety, harmony, servant attitudes, and that they would show the love of Jesus to all this week.
- **Star of Hope Field Trip - June 27 - 12 -1:30 pm** - Join this Field Trip to Star of Hope Mission Women and Family Development Center at 2575 Reed Rd., Houston, TX 77051. Star of Hope is a Christ-centered community supporting Houston's homeless men, women, and children. SOH encourages positive life changes through spiritual growth, education, employment, life management, and substance abuse. If you plan to come, please contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator at mweir@fpchouston.org.
- **Egypt Missions Partners Vision Trip - June 21-July 2** - FPC will be visiting Global Mission Partners from Bridges of Hope (Here I Am Conference) and Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo. Prayers for smooth travel, for special times with partners and opportunities to encourage them, for good health and stamina through the long days, and for an overall joyful time with our global brothers and sisters. For more details about the trip, contact Mary-Floye Federer, Director of Missions at mffederer@fpchouston.org.