Session 6: Esther 8

**SESSION GOALS**

**Main Idea:** God’s providence leads to salvation, which is a cause for communal celebration with other believers.

**Head Change:**To know why waiting on God to act on your behalf will always be the best choice.

**Heart Change:**To feel thankful about the salvation we’ve received through God’s providence.

**Life Change:**To celebrate our salvation and share God’s goodness with those around us.

**OPENing question**

**Do you enjoy getting gifts? What’s your reaction when receiving a gift?**

It can be easy to receive something from God we’ve been waiting on or hoping for, and then immediately move on with our busy lives. If we aren’t careful, we can forget to rejoice, express thankfulness, and share what God has done in our life.

In Esther 8, we finally see God’s plan completed. The tables turn in favor of the Jewish people, causing them to rejoice in the streets. In this session, Dr. Brown walks us through Esther 8 and helps us see the importance of celebrating the salvation of God.

**READ**

Read Esther 8.

**WATCH VIDEO**

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Dr. Brown’s teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how she answers the following questions.

**What did Dr. Brown say is the appropriate response to God’s salvation?**

**How can we actively respond to those suffering around us?**

﻿Show Session 6*: Esther 8*(8 minutes).

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. In verses 1–2, the king gives the estate that once belonged to Haman to Esther. The king turns over his signet ring, a symbol of authority, to Mordecai. Their change in status shows us that God can bring us from weeping and mourning to favor and celebration. **What are some ways you’re hoping to see God turn your circumstances around?**

1. Though they have received approval from the king, Esther and Mordecai still burdened need to save their people. Dr. Brown pointed out that thinking about the welfare of others is also our responsibility as Christians. We cannot be satisfied with comfort while others are suffering and need our help. **What needs do you notice in your community?** **What could it look like for you to help meet the needs of the people around you?**

1. Esther and Mordecai couldn’t change Haman’s edict, but they could write their own. Using the king’s signet ring, they create a new decree that will allow the Jews to defend themselves from attack. God’s provision did not free his people from conflict but provided them with a way to overcome their enemies. **In what ways do we expect our lives with God to be free of conflict? How can continued struggles help refine our character and teach us to rely more on God?**

1. Mordecai has gone through significant change since he was mourning in ashes and sackcloth. In verse 15, we see Haman’s threat against the Jews is over and now Mordecai is clothed like royalty. Similarly, when we remain patient with God, we’ll look back over our lives and realize how much he’s changed within our situations. **Look back over your life—how is it different than it was a few years ago? In what ways have you seen God shift your seasons in life from mourning and sorrow to joy and contentment?**

1. In verses 16–17, the Jews turned from mourning to rejoicing after hearing about their salvation. God’s salvation—whether he saves us from a hard situation or saves us spiritually—is always cause for celebration and rejoicing. **How quickly do you run to God with rejoicing and thanksgiving when he’s acted on your behalf? What has it looked like for you to celebrate God?**

1. Mordecai and Esther found themselves in a situation that could have ended terribly. But their faithfulness to take a risk allowed God to intervene and bring salvation to not only them but also to their people. **What can we learn about God’s love for his people from Esther and Mordecai’s story? In what ways do you see God intervening in your own story?**

1. Esther 8 reminds us that it is important to remain thankful for the activity of God in our lives. Pausing to give God praise is always an appropriate response. **How could you be intentional about taking a moment each day to praise God for his activity and presence in your life? What could it look like for you to walk with a grateful heart before the Lord?**

**LAST WORD**

A life of faith is built on the knowledge that God will provide for us. He has not forgotten us, no matter what our circumstances are. God’s providence and provision give us ample reasons to rejoice.

But remember, your salvation is not for you alone. God can use your situation to bring more people to himself. So, as you celebrate our good God, reach out to those around you and share what he has done. Your testimony is a reason to celebrate.