

A TIME OF REFLECTION

[Pastor Gene Henderson edited by Pastor Pier]

Of all the great women who appear in the Bible, two of their stories appear in writings named after them: **Ruth** and **Esther**. Unlike Ruth who loved her mother-in-law and left her homeland to become Israeli, Esther grew up far away from Israel, never really knowing her parents. The story starts with her as a beautiful young woman raised by her uncle; uncertain of herself, unaware of her beauty, wide-eyed by the City of Susa and the palace of the king. But she has a great personality, and she is extremely beautiful, but most of all she lives with God's favor. Which is how she meets the king.

Okay, there's a little more to it than that. She gets chosen, along with many others, to live in the king's palace, be one of his many "wives", and be considered to become the new queen. The man in charge of the harem loves Esther's intelligence and beauty and humility, and he sets her up to be tutored as one of the king's best young women. In the end, Esther is chosen to be queen in accordance with God's plan.

Haman, a king appointed ruler among the princes of the realm hated the Jews, but no one knew that Esther, the queen was indeed a Jew. Only Mordecai who had raised her as his daughter when her parents died for, she was the daughter of his uncle. Mordecai uncovers an assassination plot against the king and he tells Esther the queen and this was recorded in the chronicles of the kingdom. The king wrestled with sleep and one night he asked for someone to read his kingdom's history to him. He commands the very man, Haman who had already got the king to authorize the killing of all the Jews to honor Mordecai by parading him through the city and proclaiming that this is what the king does to those he wishes to honor. This infuriated Haman who had built gallows on which he planned to hang Mordecai. Intrigue? Certainly!

The story continues with Esther's dinners for the king and, finally, her accusation against Haman. The plot contains palace intrigue, life-threatening danger, bloody execution and battles, and ends with an Israeli feast day named after Esther's heroism. It's one of the greatest love stories of all time. Not just the story of a love between a king and his captive subject, but of God's care and deliverance of His people. And it's in the Bible. Check it out. Romans 8:28:

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

Welcome!

February 11th, 2024



"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way."

SERVICES

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
Unity in Prayer & Youth: 6:00 – 7:00 PM
Wednesday – Bible Study: 7:00 PM; Kid's Club
Prayer ½ hour before services

COMPOSURE IN CRISIS

TEXT: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

I am to _____ always, _____ always, and give _____ always and for everything.

I. _____ – Habakkuk 3:17-18; Job 5:22

If we are godly, we will suffer _____, but we won't be _____. 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Lamentations 3:24; Hebrews 12:10; Psalm 34:8; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Matthew 5:4; Isaiah 57:15-21

II. _____

We must accept that rejoicing in _____. Psalm 37:4; 4:7; Philippians 3:8-11; Hebrews 10:34; John 16:22; James 1:14; Romans 8:5; Song of Solomon 1:4

Rejoicing in God puts out _____ delights, as much like the brightness of the sun dims the fire! Nehemiah 8:10

III. _____ – Psalm 33:1; 2 Peter 1:4

A _____ heart after God _____ what He wants.

Holy _____ conceives the beautiful fruit of joy every time. John 15:10-11; Acts 9:31; 2 Corinthians 1:12

If we fall into sin that _____ us from God's peace, then our rejoicing in Him will suffer critical _____.

It can't be sustained if it isn't continually _____. John 5:35

We must _____ it with constant _____ so it will grow and flourish until we see Christ! Psalm 32:3-4

Sins of the _____ betray what is concealed deep in the _____. Ephesians 4:29-32; 5:4

Because God has given the gift of _____, we can believe Him to _____ the joy of His salvation so our broken heart can be _____ and made whole again. Psalm 51:12



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday Bible Study – we continue our new study, “The Great

Disappearance” – Rapture of the church, taken from Dr. David Jeremiah’s study. We have student study guides available for \$10 each. Please see the Pastor for more details.

Flagging Class – begins again on Wednesday evenings, at 6:00 PM. We will be focusing on a praise presentation for our Easter Service on March 31st. Parents, please try to have your children here on time. Thank you!

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