

THE PARTY WITH A HIDDEN PURPOSE

Esther 1:1-22

- “If you have to tell others about how awesome you are, then you’re probably not all that great.” – Landon Dowden

WE FIND OURSELVES FOCUSING ON OUR OWN GLORY WHEN WE FAIL TO MEDITATE DAILY ON THE GREATNESS OF GOD (Vss. 1-10)

- *“For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made.”* (Romans 1:20)
- **If we are not careful we will find ourselves living for the praises and acceptance of people, while missing the truth of who God already says we are.**
- **Pleasures found in earthly possessions and money will always leave us disappointed and craving more, but fulfillment found in Christ is everlasting.**
- *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”* (1 Timothy 6:10)
- **No matter how much authority, power, and possessions one has on earth, there is One who holds ALL authority over everything, and His name is Jesus.**
- *“He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens— 21 far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”* (Ephesians 1:20-21)

A SELF-ABSORBED EGO LEADS TO DETRIMENTAL DECISIONS RESULTING IN CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES (Vss. 10-22)

- **Although seeking counsel is a biblical principle, it is imperative that the counsel we seek comes from wise and godly individuals.**
- *“Without guidance, a people will fall, but with many counselors there is deliverance.”* (Proverbs 11:14)
- *“Plans fail when there is no counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.”* (Proverbs 15:22)
- *“How happy is the one who does not walk in the advice of the wicked or stand in the pathway with sinners or sit in the company of mockers!”* (Psalm 1:1)

- **The slippery slope of sin is that sin usually leads to more sin, just in different ways.**
- *“And don’t get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit.”* (Ephesians 5:18)

GOD DOESN’T ORCHESTRATE OUR SINFUL AND STUPID DECISIONS, BUT HE DOES WORK THROUGH THEM TO ACCOMPLISH HIS KINGDOM PLANS

- *“You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people.”* (Genesis 50:20)
- **God doesn’t cause people to act sinful but He can use every situation for good and for His glory.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Ice Breaker: Share about your favorite party you’ve hosted or attended.

Start thinking:

- What stands out to you as you read Esther 1?
- Why do you think King Ahasuerus went to such great lengths to show off his riches, possessions, and power?
- Why do you think the King’s “counselors” gave him such bad advice?

Start sharing. Discuss in depth to create openness.

- How do you see some of the King’s actions or attitudes displayed in your own life at times?
- How can we avoid falling into the self-absorbed “all about me” mentality?
- What are some verses that can help us keep our focus on the glory of and goodness of God?
- How can we pray for each other?

Start praying. Be bold, and pray specifically.

Heavenly Father, You alone are worthy of all honor and praise. I am tempted at times to be self-centered and I ask You to help me to keep my eyes fixed on Your glory. I know You call me Your masterpiece, and that You have wonderful plans for my life. Help me to fulfill Your plans as I seek to live a life that brings You honor and glory each day. - Amen