

It comes back to story

Esther

Week 2
FAMILY & GROUP DISCUSSION

Story (Esther 1:1-9)

INTRODUCTION

In the story God tells, HE ENTERS onto the stage as the chief actor. The story doesn't begin or end with you, it begins and ends with Jesus. This is a story YOU need to be a part of.

DISCUSSION

Why is false pretence (pretending) so much easier than living true pretence (being genuine)?

EXPLANATION

If you had to tell your life so far in story form, how would you do it?

If you placed your story in God's story throughout eternity past, how do you think it would fit?

What does it mean that God has narrated a story for you?

APPLICATION

What was the best party you have ever been to?

What made it a "good party"?

Why do you think so many people who claim to follow God are so afraid to loosen up and actually enjoy themselves and throw a party?

Have you ever thought about the fact that all creation culminates with a party that is thrown by God?

What do you imagine that party will be like when all of our stories fold together to make one large story?

It comes back to story

Esther



Story (Esther 1:1-9)

Mark 16:7

Revelation 1:9

2 Corinthians 3:18

Psalms 27:4

Philippians 3:8-11

Joshua 1:8

Psalms 1:1-3

Isaiah 55:17

Psalms 119:62

Philippians 3:12-14

1 Peter 2:9-10

Week 2 Notes

& SCRIPTURE VERSES



Story (Esther 1:1-9)

Mark 16:7 *But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'*

God loves story and Esther is a brilliant story. From the beginning to it's end it is woven with humor, betrayal, guile, intrigue, despair and hope.

Esther 1:1-5 The Party

Esther starts off at party that lasted over six months. There are ancient accounts that Persian parties had to feed and serve upwards of 15,000 guests. At the end of the six month party a seven day drinking party ensues. The drinking part probably took place in a Persian garden/park that was considered part of the palace; these parks were called *paradeisos* from which the word "paradise" comes. The drinking party is for the men and held in a covered garden so they can drink in peace.

Esther 1:6-9 Xerxes and Vashti

Vashti is simply a short player in this story, but Vashti sets up the story... without Vashti there would be no Esther. Xerxes is like a young fool with too much money, time, and resources.

That is the set up to the story, but it is God's story we want to focus on. We are all connected to God's unfolding story... that which preceded Esther and that which went on long after. If someone was to write your life story it may be like Vashti, here and gone, but not forgotten by God.

We share a fundamental identity as old as the earth itself. We belong to a story because the God of scripture has narrated a story for us. The scriptures can be read as a record of what God has been doing. The core of Christianity are stories (true accounts) that help us understand what God has been doing from creation to consummation. God has a purpose to everything.

- Redemption - we learn about EXODUS
- Being a blessing to the world - we learn about Abraham
- Being a kingdom of priests - we learn Israelites at Sinai
- Understand the providence of God - we look at Esther.

He is a good story teller.

God is alive and true, which means story starts in eternity past and culminates with re-creation ...creation to re-creation. In the story God tells, HE ENTERS onto the stage as the chief actor. The story doesn't begin or end with you, it begins and ends with Jesus. This is a story YOU need to be a part of.

CS Lewis, "the key to the Christian life is right pretense." 2 kinds of pretending

- Where you lie to someone, being a hypocrite.
- Where you realize who you are and act consistent with who you are.

If you believe in Jesus then YOU ARE a child of God.

Phil 3:12-14 *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

