

The Banquet

(Esther 7:1-10)

Yearly Theme: "Love Is..."

Series Title: *Never Give Up*

May 19th, 2019

Something to think about:

Many times, when we are trying to live love we must do it in the face of direct opposition. There are forces in this world that are in direct opposition to love, not just unaligned with it, but actively seeking to destroy it. These forces can be scary and can cause many problems for us. This week in Esther chapter 7, we see Esther face a man who is in direct opposition to her and her people and we see her speak truth boldly for the love of her people. This situation could have gone any number of ways for Esther, but she chose to never give up. Are we as bold as Esther in our lives?

Esther 7:1-10 (NLT)

1 So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet. **2** On this second occasion, while they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "Tell me what you want, Queen Esther. What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!"

3 Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor with the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my request, I ask that my life and the lives of my people will be spared. **4** For my people and I have been sold to those who would kill, slaughter, and annihilate us. If we had merely been sold as slaves, I could remain quiet, for that would be too trivial a matter to warrant disturbing the king."

5 "Who would do such a thing?" King Xerxes demanded. "Who would be so presumptuous as to touch you?"

6 Esther replied, "This wicked Haman is our adversary and our enemy." Haman grew pale with fright before the king and queen. **7** Then the king jumped to his feet in a rage and went out into the palace garden. Haman, however, stayed behind to plead for his life with Queen Esther, for he knew that the king intended to kill him. **8** In despair he fell on the couch where Queen Esther was reclining, just as the king was returning from the palace garden.

The king exclaimed, "Will he even assault the queen right here in the palace, before my very eyes?" And as soon as the king spoke, his attendants covered Haman's face, signaling his doom.

9 Then Harbona, one of the king's eunuchs, said, "Haman has set up a sharpened pole that stands seventy-five feet tall in his own courtyard. He intended to use it to impale Mordecai, the man who saved the king from assassination."

"Then impale Haman on it!" the king ordered. **10** So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

Here's the key point this morning:

Key Point: *"Love never gives up even when it is facing those who would seek to destroy it."*

We must be willing to face the forces in this world that seek to destroy love. We must seek to face it head on and not behind anything or anyone. We must do this in spite of the harm or problems that might come.

- Esther was willing to speak Truth even in the face of the man who was seeking to Destroy her.
- Love doesn't always take away our problems But Love always wins.

Something to take home:

Are you willing to stand up for Love? Are you willing to use more than words? Are you willing to take action, to change how you're living, to face those who oppose God (Love), to speak truth into the world? The Bible doesn't say that doing this will take away our problems, or our hurts, or make this life easy for us, but it does say that Christ who is Love conquered death and because of that we know that love wins and we have salvation.

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KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ What is the definition of the word “unjust?”
- ⇒ Has there ever been a time when you were treated unjustly? Explain...

SCRIPTURE: (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

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GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Because of Haman’s anger toward the Jewish people (specifically Mordecai), he convinced King Xerxes to issue a decree to have them exterminated. However, one thing Haman was unaware of was Queen Esther’s own ethnicity (she was Jewish). Summarize what happens at this second banquet given by Queen Esther for King Xerxes and Haman...

2. King Xerxes inquires a third time what Esther’s request is. What does she tell him (vv. 1-4)?

3. What is the king’s response to Esther’s news (v. 5)?

4. Esther explains that it is Haman that has caused the destruction of the Jewish people (even herself), and enraged by this the king jumps up from his place at the banquet in rage and storms out into the palace garden. What does Haman do as a result of this, and what does the king do upon his return from the palace garden (vv. 7-8)?

5. The final scene in this passage deals with Haman’s demise. What happens to Haman as a result of his selfish pride and arrogance (vv. 9-10)?

6. Selfishness and pride always catches up with a person. What are the results of prideful arrogance ruling a persons life?

7. Contrast Esther’s behavior with Haman’s behavior. What is the difference in their behavior (give specifics)?

8. How does a person overcome pride in their own life? How should a person respond to someone who is prideful and arrogant?

SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **ARE YOU RIGHTEOUS** in how you treat others? Do you look to others’ interest above your own? How do you relate to those with whom you struggle to be around? Do you treat others justly, in spite of how they treat you? Are you willing and able to point out injustice when you see/experience it, and are you willing and able to overcome injustice through Christlike means?
- ⇒ **INJUSTICE** is a reality in the broken and fallen world in which we live. Overcoming injustice cannot be done apart from a relationship with Christ. (Refer to John 15:5).
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** *Esther 7:3-4; Psalm 94:20-21; Proverbs 28:16.*