



BAPTIST CHURCH

The Book Of Esther For Such A Time As This

**“Sermon Five—I Was Made For This II”
Esther 4:10-17**

Introduction

Esther’s life teaches us There are defining moments in our life.

A Defining Moment is when we realize we have a choice to make and we must take action.

Esther’s Defining Moment came when she was confronted with the problem and given the opportunity to save the Jewish people from Haman’s plan to exterminate them.

Last week we discovered Six principles we can practice to help us overcome distress, grief, fear and doubt that problems can cause.

- 1. Read and Study God’s Word**
- 2. Believe God’s Word**
- 3. Obey God’s Word**
- 4. Pray**
- 5. Be Patient**
- 6. Do not fear what you do not know**

Esther’s example teaches we were made with God’s Kingdom in mind.

When we realize this we will live knowing “I Was Made For This.”

Scripture

Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to tell Mordecai, ¹¹ “All the royal officials and the people of the royal provinces know that one law applies to every man or woman who approaches the king in the inner courtyard and who has not been summoned—the death penalty—unless the king extends the gold scepter, allowing that person to live. I have not been summoned to appear before the king for the last thirty days.”

¹² Esther’s response was reported to Mordecai.

¹³ Mordecai told the messenger to reply to Esther, “Don’t think that you will escape the fate of all the Jews because you are in the king’s palace.

¹⁴ If you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will come to the Jewish people from another place, but you and your father’s family will be destroyed. Who knows, perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this.”

¹⁵ Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:

¹⁶ “Go and assemble all the Jews who can be found in Susa and fast for me. Don’t eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my female servants will also fast in the same way. After that, I will go to the king even if it is against the law. If I perish, I perish.”

¹⁷ So Mordecai went and did everything Esther had commanded him. CSB

Quote Of The Day

“Our life on the earth has nothing to do with grandiose goals, lofty achievements, or universal fame. Purpose is the quiet confidence that, even if we never leave our neighborhood, we will have lived a full and satisfying life.” — Sybil Stanton

Dr. William Breitbart, the chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, specializes in end-of-life care for terminally ill cancer patients. For much of his career Dr. Breitbart has been surrounded by suffering people who just want to die. Dr. Breitbart said, “Many times I have walked into the room of my patients and I have heard them say, 'I only have three months to live. If that's all I have, I see no value or purpose to living.'” One of his patients, a former IBM executive who had been diagnosed with colon

cancer, said, "Everybody said how important it is to have a positive attitude, but...I want to jump in the grave."

If death means nonexistence, Dr. Breitbart's patients reasoned, then what meaning could life possibly have? And if life has no meaning, there's no point of suffering through cancer. By the nineties, physician-assisted suicide was a hot topic in Dr. Breitbart's circles and beyond. As Dr. Breitbart heard more and more stories of assisted suicide, he began to wonder what specifically was driving the terminally ill to give up on life. The assumption had been that the ill chose to end their lives because they were in terrible pain. But when Dr. Breitbart asked patients why they wanted a prescription for assisted suicide, many said it was because they had lost meaning in life.

Dr. Breitbart knew he could treat depression with drugs or therapy, but he was stumped when it came to treating meaninglessness. "What I suddenly discovered," Dr. Breitbart explained, "was the importance of meaning—the search for meaning, the need to create meaning, the ability to experience meaning—was a basic motivating force of human behavior. We were not taught this stuff at medical school!" Citation: Adapted from Emily Esfahani Smith, *The Power of Meaning* (Crown, 2017), pages 217-220.

Esther's story reveals a distinctive process that transforms our problems to praise.

I was made for this:

Esther's Purpose— Esther 4:13-14

1. Our problems are transformed into praise when we live with Purpose.

Mordecai told the messenger to reply to Esther, "Don't think that you will escape the fate of all the Jews because you are in the king's palace. ¹⁴If you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will come to the Jewish people from another place, but you and your father's family will be destroyed. Who knows, perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this. CSB

Every person is created with God's Kingdom in mind.

God seeks to utilize our passions, our gifts, our abilities, our experience, our relationships and our opportunities to advance God's Kingdom on the earth.

In this passage of Scripture God blessed Esther with beauty that allowed her to rise to a place of prominence as the Queen of Persia.

God allowed Esther to rise to her position of prominence so she could save her people, the Jewish people, from extinction.

Just as God utilized Esther to take her part in the advancement of God's Kingdom— God has given us the same purpose and He is calling us to take our part in His Kingdom.

God's purpose for life is more than just earning money, eating the donuts and drinking the coffee: God created us and He is calling us to make a positive difference in whatever space we're called to inhabit.

Our problems are transformed into praise when we live with Purpose:

I was made for this:

Esther's Power— Esther 4:15-16a

2. Our problems are transformed into praise when we seek God's Power!

Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go and assemble all the Jews who can be found in Susa and fast for me. Don't eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my female servants will also fast in the same way. CSB

Matthew 6:5-18 Jesus gives us instructions about how to Pray and Fast.

"Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father

who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words. ⁸Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him. ⁹"Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy. ¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us today our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. ¹⁴"For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. ¹⁵But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses. ¹⁶"Whenever you fast, don't be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they make their faces unattractive so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting isn't obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. **And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.** CSB

Prayer— means to communicate with God. Communication that listens as well as speaks.

God calls us to pray and He gives us a Plan for Prayer **Matthew 6:9-15**

Fasting— means to cover the mouth, to abstain from food for a specified time in order to seek God's wisdom, discernment, and help in our life.

Fasting, Purposely abstaining from food, for a specified time reveals to God our willingness to deny the physical desires of our body in order to emphasize the Word, the Work, the Will and Wisdom of God.

"Fasting declares our desire for God— Our desire for God's Presence in our life, our desire for God's Power in our life, our desire for God's Provision in our life, our desire for God's Protection in our life, our desire for God's Purpose in our life— **is greater than our desire for food.**"

"Fasting must always have a spiritual purpose – a God-centered purpose, not a self-centered one- for the Lord to bless our fast. Thoughts of food must prompt thoughts for God. They must not

distract us, but instead remind us of our purpose. Rather than focusing the mind on food, we should use the desire to eat as a reminder to pray and to reconsider our purpose." — Donald Whitney

Our problems are transformed into praise when we seek God's Power.

I was made for this:

Esther's Courage— Esther 4:16b-17

3. Our problems are transformed into praise when act with Courage!

After that, I will go to the king even if it is against the law. If I perish, I perish." ¹⁷ So Mordecai went and did everything Esther had commanded him. CSB

Courage is the conviction to do what is right and necessary in the face of fear, threats, rejection or danger.

What does courage look like?

It looks like Ruby Bridges!

In his book ***A Pretty Good Person: What it Takes to Live with Courage, Gratitude and integrity.*** Lewis Smedes writes:

A federal judge had ordered New Orleans to open its public schools to African-American children, and the white parents decided that if they had to let black children in, they would keep their children out. They let it be known that any black children who came to school would be in for trouble. So the black children stayed home too.

Except Ruby Bridges. Her parents sent her to school all by herself, six years old.

Every morning she walked alone through a heckling crowd to an empty school. White people lined up on both sides of the way and shook their fists at her. They threatened to do terrible things to her if she kept coming to their school. But every morning at ten minutes to eight Ruby walked, head up, eyes ahead, straight through the mob; two U.S. marshals walked ahead

of her and two walked behind her. Then she spent the day alone with her teachers inside that big silent school building.

Harvard professor Robert Coles was curious about what went into the making of courageous children like Ruby Bridges. He talked to Ruby's mother and, in his book *The Moral Life of Children*, tells what she said: **"There's a lot of people who talk about doing good, and a lot of people who argue about what's good and what's not good," but there are other folks who "just put their lives on the line for what's right."**

Citation: *A Pretty Good Person: What it Takes to Live with Courage, Gratitude and integrity.* Lewis Smedes, HarperCollins January 1, 1991.

In Mark 8:35 Jesus said: If you insist on saving your life—[if you insist on the comfort of playing it safe]—you're going to lose your opportunity for life! Only those who give away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will ever know what it really means to really, really live.

Our problems are transformed into praise when we act with Courage.

I was made for this:

Esther's Faith— Esther 5:1-2

4. Our problems are transformed into praise when we Live by Faith

On the third day, **Esther dressed in her royal clothing and stood in the inner courtyard of the palace facing it.** The king was sitting on his royal throne in the royal courtroom, facing its entrance. ²As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard, she gained favor with him. The king extended the gold scepter in his hand toward Esther, and she approached and touched the tip of the scepter. CSB

James 2:1 “ . . . faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself.” CSB

Esther is a great example of what it looks like to put faith into action.

Hebrews 11:6 “Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” CSB

“Don’t be afraid to be afraid. Courage isn’t the absence of fear; it’s choosing to walk forward by faith even when your knees are knocking.” Dr. Phil McGraw

Our problems are transformed into praise when we Live by Faith

I was made for this:

Esther’s Request— Esther 7:1-6, 8:3-6

5. Our problems are transformed into praise when we ask for help.

Esther 7:1-6

The king and Haman came to feast with Esther the queen. ² Once again, on the second day while drinking wine, the king asked Esther, “Queen Esther, whatever you ask will be given to you. Whatever you seek, even to half the kingdom, will be done.” ³ Queen Esther answered, “If I have found favor with you, Your Majesty, and if the king is pleased, spare my life; this is my request. And spare my people; this is my desire. ⁴ For my people and I have been sold to destruction, death, and annihilation. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept silent. Indeed, the trouble wouldn’t be worth burdening the king.” ⁵ King Ahasuerus spoke up and asked Queen Esther, “Who is this, and where is the one who would devise such a scheme?”. ⁶ Esther answered, “The adversary and enemy is this evil Haman.” Haman stood terrified before the king and queen. CSB

Esther 8:3-6

Then Esther addressed the king again. She fell at his feet, wept, and begged him to revoke the evil of Haman the Agagite and his plot he had devised against the Jews. ⁴ The king extended the gold scepter toward Esther, so she got up and stood before the king. ⁵ She said, “If it pleases the king and I have found favor with him, if the matter seems right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let a royal edict be written. Let it revoke

the documents the scheming Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces. ⁶ For how could I bear to see the disaster that would come on my people? How could I bear to see the destruction of my relatives?" CSB

Asking for help is not easy. We often hesitate to ask for help because we are caught between fear of judgment and the pressure to appear strong. Reaching out and asking for help is not a sign of weakness but a testament to courage and growth.

Our problems are transformed into praise when we ask for help.

I was made for this:

Esther's Victory— Esther 7:9-10, 9:1-2

6. Our problems are transformed into praise when we experience victory.

Victory is— Overcoming an enemy or antagonist.

Victory is— The achievement of mastery or success in a struggle or endeavor against odds or difficulties.

Esther 7:9-10

Harbona, one of the king's eunuchs, said, "There is a gallows seventy-five feet tall at Haman's house that he made for Mordecai, who gave the report that saved the king." The king said, "Hang him on it." ¹⁰ They hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's anger subsided. CSB

Esther 9:1-2

The king's command and law went into effect on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month Adar. On the day when the Jews' enemies had hoped to overpower them, just the opposite happened. The Jews overpowered those who hated them. ²In each of King Ahasuerus's provinces the Jews assembled in their cities to attack those who intended

to harm them. Not a single person could withstand them; fear of them fell on every nationality. CSB

Our problems are transformed into praise when we experience victory.

I was made for this:

Esther's Praise— Esther 9:28

Our problems are transformed into praise when we recognize and celebrate God's blessings!

These days are remembered and celebrated by every generation, family, province, and city, so that these days of Purim will not lose their significance in Jewish life and their memory will not fade from their descendants. CSB

The words translated “**remembered** and **celebrated**” come from the Hebrew words:

Zakar— To think about, to call to mind, to make mention of, to preserve in our memory.

Asah— To make much of, to bring forth, to engage in joyous activity usually in appreciation and remembrance of a significant event.

It is good to celebrate the victories in our life!

Problems that transform into praise lead to powerful personal testimonies that reveal God's presence and power in our life.