

simply

ESTHER

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faithfulness to God and her people  
while married to a pagan king

simplifying life  
re-prioritizing life  
cultivating a deeper walk with God

All Bible verses are taken from the New Living Translation unless otherwise indicated.

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You may copy this resource or any part of it to build up God's Kingdom.  
Please include the following reference information:

More studies available at  
[www.SimpleChurchAtHome.com](http://www.SimpleChurchAtHome.com)

# Simply ESTHER

updated October 8, 2020

## Outline

The Word Among Us  
How to Use This Leader's Guide

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2. Chosen, 2:1-18
3. Dependent, 2:19–3:15
4. Deeply Hurt, 4:1-17
5. The Secret of Happiness, 5:1-14
6. Waiting for God's Timing, 6:1-14
7. Boldness, 7:1-10
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# The WORD Among Us

The [Simply Series](#) is a different kind of Bible study. It is not doctrine or life application. It is relational, which means there are no right or wrong answers to the questions in this facilitator's guide.

Relational Bible studies focus on building relationships with God and each other. They create a space for the WORD among us to wash over us, plant seeds in our lives, and change us by the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit.

Relational Bible studies give everyone, no matter what their perspective or depth of Bible knowledge, space to share and contribute to the dialogue as we journey together. They help us discover how our personal story intersects with the Bible story.

These guides are designed to facilitate real and authentic dialogue in such a way that secular and unchurched Truth seekers come away saying, "This is different! This is real."

People need the Everlasting Gospel. Simple Church is about creating a space for Truth seekers to journey together.

May God bless you as you simplify and re-prioritize your life, creating time to "spend" with Truth seekers from all walks of life.

# How to Use This Leader's Guide

This leader's guide assumes you have:

1. Read through the [www.SimpleChurchAtHome.com](http://www.SimpleChurchAtHome.com) web page.
2. Completed the online Simple Church training.

## Title

outline

Bible story reference will be listed here.

**Message of Hope:** Have this idea crystal clear in your mind. This is what you want people to remember for the rest of the week.

*Helpful Tip: These tips show up here and there.*

**The Basic 8:** These are covered in the [free online training](#).

1. Collection Box (explained in PhaseONE training videos)
2. Connection Card Envelopes
3. Business Cards
4. Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet
5. A variety of extra Bible translations.
6. Child Safety Poster
7. Blessing Board
8. Email link to online Simple Church Weekly Summary Form (When officially launched this is emailed to your Details Coordinator every Sunday.)

**Welcome:** We are glad everyone is here. We focus on three things: connecting with God, connecting with each other, and serving our world. In other words, this group does not exist for us.

Before we introduce ourselves, let's remember:

- This is a safe place to grow spiritually.
- We are a wide diversity of Truth seekers. We are glad all of you are here.
- You will notice we do not use a bunch of fancy religious language.
- We do not try to impress people with how much Bible quoting we can do. We are common people.
- Please be sensitive so everyone has an opportunity to share and contribute.
- Cell phones should be put on "vibrate," or turned off.

### Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What is a high light or a low light (a headline) from your week?
3. [*Insert rotation question for the week.*]



**Rotation Questions:** Rotate through the following three questions:

Week 1: How would you like to simplify your life?

Week 2: How would you like to re-prioritize your life?

Week 3: How would you like to cultivate a deeper relationship with God.

Week 4: How would you like to simplify your life?

Week 5: etc.

At the end of check-in ask the person who facilitated to choose another adult to facilitate check-in next week. Anyone can facilitate check-in. It does not have to be a CORE leader.

**Children's Check-In Questions:** How did you help Mommy or Daddy this week? (Or they can answer the adult questions.)

**The Quiz:** A child asks three questions. They randomly choose from the check-in questions people just answered. Ask everyone to raise their hands and the child picks someone to answer the questions.

For example:

1. What was his (pointing to the person) high light for the week?
2. What was her name (pointing to the person)?
3. How did she want to simplify her life?

At the end of the quiz ask the child who facilitated to choose another child to facilitate the quiz next week.

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*This is what page 2 of a typical leader's guide for a given week actually looks like.*

**Facilitator's Directions:**

1. *Talk as little as possible, encourage others to share, and avoid a monologue.*
2. Cut on the dotted lines. Distribute questions around the circle. (✂ -----)
3. Keep this top part and the bottom part (question D) of this page.
4. Reassure people they do not have to answer the questions, just read it for us.
5. At the end, choose someone to facilitate the questions for next week.

**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first)

**Bridge:** This transitions the group from the Kick-off Question into the Bible story.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Bible story reference will be listed here. (Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible during our discussion.)

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

*Some helpful pointers for digging questions:*

- Remember: there are no "right answers" to relational Bible study questions. Help people contribute their perspective to the dialogue.

- You DO NOT have to "accomplish" all the questions listed. Use them as a resource from which to select during your discussion.
- Spend a maximum of 50% of your Bible study time on these questions.
- Affirm each answer, no matter what is said, by saying something like, "Excellent, someone else"; "Thanks for sharing, someone else"; "Good, someone else"; "How about the rest of you, what do you think".
- Did you catch the common denominator, "someone else"? You are always affirming and always inviting others to give input.
- If someone gets off-focus, simply say (after they have stopped talking), "What was the question? Let's read it again."

### **Sharing Questions: (50% of your study time)**

*Some helpful pointers:*

- Spend a minimum of 50% of your time on these questions.
- These questions are designed to invite people to share portions of their life story as it interacts with the Bible study.
- At appropriate times affirm confidentiality and offer reassurance that this is a safe place to share and grow spiritually.

### **Group Prayer:**

1. We are blessed by being a part of this group, yet it exists for those who are not yet here.
2. Put an [Empty Chair](#) in the middle of your prayer circle. Pray for the people who are not yet here.
3. Close by saying the [Blessing Board](#) blessing together.

*At the end of prayer, ask the person who facilitated to choose another adult to facilitate the questions for next week. Anyone can facilitate the questions. It does not have to be a CORE leader.*

### **Lunch:**

1. Keep it simple. Keep it easily reproducible.
2. Hostess (one of the CORE4) provides the beans.
3. During lunch have the [Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet](#) available.



# Replaced

outline

Esther 1:1-22

**Message of Hope:** This story may seem hopeless, but chapter two comes next week.

**The Basic 8 Simple Church Tools:** Collection Box, Connection Card Envelopes, Business Cards, Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet, a variety of extra Bible translations, Child Safety Poster, Blessing Board, Summary Form (which is emailed to the Details Coordinator every Sunday).

## Breakfast

**Welcome:** We are so glad that you are here today.

### Setting the Context:

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**Kick-off Question:** *(60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)*

What is one of the biggest parties you have attended? Who else attended?

**Bridge:** Today we start a new story in a new book of the Bible. The book is called *Esther*, and this story describes events during the reign of King Xerxes of Persia some 1,500 years ago. During Xerxes's reign the Persian empire was near its peak, and his military had accomplished great things, which brought excessive amounts of wealth to Persia. Esther was chosen as Xerxes's new queen. Her challenge was to faithfully serve God during a crisis while still being the faithful wife of a pagan king. We begin our story by learning what happened to the old queen.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 1:1-22

*(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)*

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** *(50% of your study time)*

1. What do you think drove King Xerxes to throw a six-month-long party followed by a seven-day feast?  
✂ -----
2. Why do you think Queen Vashti said, "no"?  
✂ -----
3. Read verse 22 again. What do you think is right with this decree? What do you think is wrong with this decree?  
✂ -----
4. Most likely King Xerxes and Queen Vashti did not believe in God. Is it possible for God to work in the lives of people who do not believe in Him? If so, where do you see God working in this story?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** *(50% of your study time)*

- A. On a personal note, with which person in this story do you most identify, and why?  
✂ -----
- B. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt someone wanted to exploit you for selfish reasons? How did you handle that situation?

**Leader's Tip:** *This is NOT a time to "rag" on someone else. It is a time to talk about how you handled the situation.*

✂ -----

- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **This story may seem hopeless, but chapter two comes next week.** How can this

group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer & Lunch:**

# Chosen

outline

Esther 2:1-18

**Message of Hope:** Whether or not you know it, you have been chosen by God.

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**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

Whether or not you know it, you have been chosen by God.

**Bridge:** Everyone likes to be chosen. It makes us feel good, especially when someone chooses us from among several options. Today's story will bring up a mixture of thoughts and feelings, but at the foundation of this story we will be reminded that each one of us has been specially chosen.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 2:1-18

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Go back to verse 1. As King Xerxes is thinking about what has happened, what variety of thoughts do you think are going through his mind?  
✂ -----
2. Read verse 9 again. What causes Hegai to treat Esther with special favor?  
✂ -----
3. In verse 10, Uncle Mordecai instructed Esther not to reveal her nationality. Why do you think he did this?  
✂ -----
4. Verse 18 records that another banquet was given; this time in Esther's honor. How might this banquet have been different from the one we read about last week?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, when has someone taken you in like Mordecai did for Esther or taken you under their wing like Hegai did for Esther? What kind of guidance, mentoring, or providing has someone else done for you?  
✂ -----
- B. While it's great to be chosen, how have you passed on the blessing by choosing to help, mentor, or take someone else under your wing?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **Whether you know it or not, God has chosen you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.

# Dependent

outline

Esther 2:19–3:15

**Message of Hope:** There are times in our lives when God's miraculous intervention is our only hope.

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**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

Which word describes you best—*dependent, independent, or interdependent*?

**Bridge:** Today's story is about dependence. Many people think that dependence is for children, and the older one gets the more independent he should become. In most cases, people don't even think about what “interdependence” means. But, as we will see today, whether we like it or not, we are 100% dependent on God. Sometimes it's painfully obvious, as we will see in this story today; other times we are tempted to think we have it all together.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 2:19–3:15

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Is it dishonest not to say all that you know? Or, to say it another way, is honesty saying everything that you know?  
✂ -----
2. What are the possible reasons why Mordecai does not bow down or show Haman respect?  
✂ -----
3. If Mordecai has told Esther to keep her identity a secret, why, according to verse 4, has he revealed his identity as a Jew?  
✂ -----
4. Look at verse 8 again. How do you think people would respond today if a group of people chose to obey God's laws above the government or an employer's laws?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, have you ever been asked by an employer or government to disobey one of God's laws? How did it go? How do you wish you would have responded?  
✂ -----
- B. When you don't get the respect that you think you deserve, how do you typically respond (be honest)?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **There are times in our lives when God's miraculous intervention is our only hope.** How can this group pray for you this week?



**Group Prayer & Lunch:**

Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.

# Deeply Hurt

outline

Esther 4:1-17

**Message of Hope:** God can heal your hurt.

**The Basic 8 Simple Church Tools:** Collection Box, Connection Card Envelopes, Business Cards, Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet, a variety of extra Bible translations, Child Safety Poster, Blessing Board, Summary Form (which is emailed to the Details Coordinator every Sunday).

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**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

What do you think are some of the recurring themes that bring hurt to people?

**Bridge:** In today's world, everyone has been hurt; many have been deeply hurt. It takes time to recover when we have been deeply hurt—sometimes a very long time. In fact, we often carry the scars of deep hurt with us throughout our lives. Today's story is about being hurt. Sometimes we are tempted to gloss over hurt and pretend it does not exist. But as we spend time with our hurt, healing begins. So today it is okay to share as little or as much as you wish, and it is okay to cry. This is a safe place. As we will see in this story, crying is part of healing.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 4:1-17

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Let's review—why is Haman attacking the Jews?  
✂ -----
2. In verse 5, why do you think Esther sends Hathach to find out why Mordecai is mourning instead of going to Mordecai herself?  
✂ -----
3. Read verses 10-11 again. Why do you think Esther responds this way? What is she really trying to say, and how can Mordecai's answer in verses 13-14 be interpreted?  
✂ -----
4. In verses 15 and 16, what does fasting have to do with praying?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, given the conditions you are currently facing in life, who in this story do you most resonate with? Why?  
✂ -----
- B. When you experience deep hurt like Mordecai or a life crisis like Esther, how do you go about surviving, recovering, and working it through?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **Your faith and actions strengthen each other.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.

# The Secret of Happiness

outline

Esther 5:1-14

**Message of Hope:** You control your happiness, and nobody can take it away from you.

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**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

How would you complete this sentence: The secret of happiness is \_\_\_\_\_?

**Bridge:** Today's story is about the secret to happiness. But it's not about what you think it will be. We will discover the "secret to happiness" in this story by learning about a guy named Haman who never found happiness. This may seem like an odd way to learn about this secret, but often we can learn from other people's mistakes—if we are willing.

**Leader's Tip:** For new people who are present, assume they do NOT know anything about the Bible. Give a 60 second summary of the Esther story so they know what has happened so far.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 5:1-14

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. What feast is happening in verse 1?  
✂ -----
2. Is there a specific reason for including Haman in the special invitation to the banquet?  
✂ -----
3. There are two banquets. Is Esther stalling, or is there some other reason why she invites both the king and Haman to a second banquet before making her request?  
✂ -----
4. Read verse 9 again. Does happiness come from an internal choice, or from an external circumstance? Why?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, when encountering an enemy (either physically or in your mind), what could you do to avoid responding like Haman?  
✂ -----
- B. What have you found helpful in choosing happiness when your surrounding environment tempts you do otherwise?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **You control your happiness, and nobody can take it away from you.** How can this group pray for you this week?

## **Group Prayer & Lunch:**

# Waiting for God's Timing

outline

Esther 6:1-14

**Message of Hope** God's timing is always the best for you, even if you must wait.

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**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

What do you do when you cannot sleep at night?

**Bridge:** Today's story begins with a man who couldn't sleep. What he did sets in place an amazing sequence of events. As we read the story, notice the unlikelihood of these events happening by chance.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 6:1-14

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Read the final verse from last week's story, 5:14. Was it by chance that today's story begins by telling us the king couldn't sleep? Was it by chance that he asked for the "book of history" to be read? Was it by chance that he learned how Mordecai had exposed the plot to kill the king? If it was not by *chance*, what other explanations could there be for this sequence of events?  
✂ -----
2. Read verse 10-11 again. What do you think Haman and Mordecai are thinking?  
✂ -----
3. What does this turn of events do for the opinion of those observing in the city?  
✂ -----
4. Read verse 13 again. What was Haman's wife and his advisers trying to say? And what does "being a Jew by birth" have to do with it?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. You might have noticed that, so far, the book of Esther has not mentioned the name of God. However, on a personal note, what does today's story tell you about the way God works?  
✂ -----
- B. Mordecai has learned the important lesson of not rushing ahead but to wait on God's timing. What is an area of your life where you sense God may be leading you, but you find you are having to wait on His timing?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **God's timing is always the best time for you, even if you must wait.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.

# Boldness

outline

Esther 7:1-10

**Message of Hope:** God honors you when you boldly do what is right.

**The Basic 8 Simple Church Tools:** Collection Box, Connection Card Envelopes, Business Cards, Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet, a variety of extra Bible translations, Child Safety Poster, Blessing Board, Summary Form (which is emailed to the Details Coordinator every Sunday).

## Breakfast

**Welcome:** We are so glad that you are here today.

### Setting the Context:

- We come from a variety of backgrounds and seek to create a safe place for Truth seekers to grow spiritually.
- You will notice that we try to avoid fancy religious language. We are common people.
- Let's encourage those who like to talk to give opportunity for everyone to participate.

### Check-In:

1. What is your first name?
2. What is a high-light or a low-light (a headline) from your week?
3. [*Insert rotation question for the week.*]

At the end of check-in ask the person who facilitated to choose another adult to facilitate check-in next week. Anyone can facilitate check-in. It does not have to be a CORE leader.

**Children's Check-In Questions:** How did you help Mommy or Daddy this week? (Or they can answer the adult questions.)

**The Quiz:** A child asks three questions. They randomly choose from the check-in questions people just answered. Ask everyone to raise their hands and the child picks someone to answer the questions.

At the end of the quiz ask the child who facilitated to choose another child to facilitate the quiz next week.

**Facilitator's Directions:**

1. Talk as little as possible, encourage others to share, and avoid a monologue.
2. Cut on the dotted lines. Distribute questions around the circle. (✂ -----)
3. Keep the top part and the bottom part (question D) of this page.
4. Reassure people they do not have to answer the questions, just read it for us.
5. At the end, choose someone to facilitate the questions for next week.

**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

What's one of the most courageous thing you, or someone you've observed, has done?

**Bridge:** Today's story is about boldness to do what is right. There is something that feels good when evil loses, and truth wins. But, as we will soon see, truth wins because one person is willing to be bold and do the right thing.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 7:1-10

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Verse 2 says, "The king again said to Esther." Can someone summarize the story that has led up to this second special banquet?  
✂ -----
2. Read verses 3 and 4 again. Do you notice anything unique in the way Esther makes her request?  
✂ -----
3. What character qualities do you see in Esther?  
✂ -----
4. What evil qualities (if you can call them "qualities") do you see in Haman?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, how do you generally respond in a crisis?  
✂ -----
- B. When have you, like Esther, stepped out in faith? What were the risks of stepping out in faith, and what happened?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **God honors you when you boldly do what is right.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- o Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.
- o Close by saying the **Blessing Board** blessing together.

**Lunch: Taco Salad sign-up sheet.**

# Vindicated

outline

Esther 8:1-17

**Message of Hope:** God will vindicate you in His time.

**The Basic 8 Simple Church Tools:** Collection Box, Connection Card Envelopes, Business Cards, Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet, a variety of extra Bible translations, Child Safety Poster, Blessing Board, Summary Form (which is emailed to the Details Coordinator every Sunday).

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### Check-In:

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2. What is a high-light or a low-light (a headline) from your week?
3. [*Insert rotation question for the week.*]

At the end of check-in ask the person who facilitated to choose another adult to facilitate check-in next week. Anyone can facilitate check-in. It does not have to be a CORE leader.

**Children's Check-In Questions:** How did you help Mommy or Daddy this week? (Or they can answer the adult questions.)

**The Quiz:** A child asks three questions. They randomly choose from the check-in questions people just answered. Ask everyone to raise their hands and the child picks someone to answer the questions.

At the end of the quiz ask the child who facilitated to choose another child to facilitate the quiz next week.

**Facilitator's Directions:**

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2. Cut on the dotted lines. Distribute questions around the circle. (✂ -----)
3. Keep the top part and the bottom part (question D) of this page.
4. Reassure people they do not have to answer the questions, just read it for us.
5. At the end, choose someone to facilitate the questions for next week.

**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

When was a time you did the right thing, even though it was hard?

**Bridge:** Today's story is about doing the right thing even when it is hard. Sometimes in this life we are vindicated for doing the right thing, and other times nobody ever knows how hard it was to do to the right thing. Today's story is the kind we all like—when the good guy wins. But today we will also wrestle with the question of how to live our lives when it seems that evil is winning.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 8:1-17

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Let's summarize last week's story so this continued story makes sense. What happened to Haman in the previous chapter?  
✂ -----
2. Read verse 1 again. Is the emphasis on the fact that Esther and Mordecai are related, or is the emphasis on the fact that they are both Jews? Why?  
✂ -----
3. Read verses 3-6 again. Why do you think Esther did not present this request to the king at the second banquet she had held for the king when he asked her what was her request?  
✂ -----
4. The last verse said that many people became Jews. How does one become a Jew if you are not born a Jew?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, you may not have been given a king's signet ring, but when was a time someone gave you some great responsibility? What was it, and what happened?  
✂ -----
- B. In today's story, evil loses and good wins. But life is not always like this. How do you make sense of life when it seems that evil is winning and good is losing?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **God will vindicate you in His time.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer & Lunch:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.

# Underdogs

outline

Esther 9:1-19

**Message of Hope:** Someday all things will be made right.

**The Basic 8 Simple Church Tools:** Collection Box, Connection Card Envelopes, Business Cards, Taco Salad Sign-up Sheet, a variety of extra Bible translations, Child Safety Poster, Blessing Board, Summary Form (which is emailed to the Details Coordinator every Sunday).

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## Check-In:

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2. What is a high-light or a low-light (a headline) from your week?
3. [*Insert rotation question for the week.*]

At the end of check-in ask the person who facilitated to choose another adult to facilitate check-in next week. Anyone can facilitate check-in. It does not have to be a CORE leader.

**Children's Check-In Questions:** How did you help Mommy or Daddy this week? (Or they can answer the adult questions.)

**The Quiz:** A child asks three questions. They randomly choose from the check-in questions people just answered. Ask everyone to raise their hands and the child picks someone to answer the questions.

At the end of the quiz ask the child who facilitated to choose another child to facilitate the quiz next week.



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2. Cut on the dotted lines. Distribute questions around the circle. (✂ -----)
3. Keep the top part and the bottom part (question D) of this page.
4. Reassure people they do not have to answer the questions, just read it for us.
5. At the end, choose someone to facilitate the questions for next week.

**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

When was a time you saw someone stick up for the underdog?

**Bridge:** There is something that feels right when abusers of power become powerless and those who had been abused are vindicated. Today's story is about the underdog—people in life who are powerless and of whom others have taken advantage. But notice how the tables are turned.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 9:1-19

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. In verse 1, what are the two decrees that were put into effect (see verse 8:11)?  
✂ -----
2. Why do you think the Jews do not take any plunder in verse 10?  
✂ -----
3. Read verse 12 again. What do you think is going on in the king's mind when he calls Esther, and why does the king ask Esther if there are any other requests?  
✂ -----
4. Do you think Esther's second request is going too far? How do you make sense of this?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, when have you seen a “good thing” taken too far?  
✂ -----
- B. Who are the underdogs in today's world? In everyday life, how do you stick up for the underdog?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **Someday all things will be made right.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.
- Close by saying the **Blessing Board** blessing together.

**Lunch: Taco Salad sign-up sheet.**

# Party with a Purpose

outline

Esther 9:20-32

**Message of Hope:** Having a party with a purpose can strengthen your faith in God.

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At the end of check-in ask the person who facilitated to choose another adult to facilitate check-in next week. Anyone can facilitate check-in. It does not have to be a CORE leader.

**Children's Check-In Questions:** How did you help Mommy or Daddy this week? (Or they can answer the adult questions.)

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5. At the end, choose someone to facilitate the questions for next week.

**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

What is a personal or family event that you remember and celebrate each year?

**Bridge:** Today's story is about a party—a big party that became an annual holiday. But this party is not your typical party. It is a party with a purpose to remember something very specific. Let's read our story.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 9:20-32

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. Of what Godly intervention was this party to remind the people?  
✂ -----
2. Why do you think Mordecai, in verse 22, includes instructions to give presents to the poor? What kind of presents were these?  
✂ -----
3. The Jews turned this event into the annual celebration of Purim. What deeper meaning of this celebration did the Jews hope future generations would remember?  
✂ -----
4. Once Queen Esther endorsed the Festival of Purim, how might this have affected people who were not Jews?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, what is an event that turned your sorrow into joy?  
✂ -----
- B. What “God events” in your life do you commemorate in order to strengthen your faith that God is still with you, especially when you are unsure of the future?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **To party with a purpose will strengthen your faith in God.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.
- Close by saying the **Blessing Board** blessing together.

**Lunch: Taco Salad sign-up sheet.**

# Credit

outline

Esther 10:1-3

**Message of Hope:** Even though God may not be given the credit, He is working for your good.

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5. At the end, choose someone to facilitate the questions for next week.

**Kick-off Question:** (60 second answers, facilitator goes first, go around the circle)

Tell about a time someone gave you credit for something you had done.

**Bridge:** Today's story is only three verses long; they are the last three verses of Esther's story. These verses will give us much to think about and reflect upon as we continue to live our lives in today's world. And hopefully today's story will give us some pointers on how to live life so that we can finish it well.

**Read the Bible Story from two different translations:** Esther 10:1-3

(Encourage people to stick to this story instead of jumping all over the Bible.)

✂ -----

**Digging Questions:** (50% of your study time)

1. With King Xerxes giving Mordecai national recognition and honor, what temptations does Mordecai face?  
✂ -----
2. Read verse 3 again. Which do you think comes first—recognition and greatness or humble service? Why?  
✂ -----
3. If we could ask Mordecai how he remained humble and faithful to God in spite of the glamour, what do you think he would tell us?  
✂ -----
4. You may have noticed that the entire book of Esther did not even mention the name of God. How have you seen God's activity in this story, even though He was never given credit?  
✂ -----

**Sharing Questions:** (50% of your study time)

- A. On a personal note, where are you seeing God's activity in your life, even though you may have not given God the credit?  
✂ -----
- B. Read verse 3 again. How are you living a life that works for the good of other people?  
✂ -----
- C. What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that you needed to hear today?  
✂ -----
- D. Remember: **Even though God may not be given the credit, He is working for your good.** How can this group pray for you this week?

**Group Prayer:**

- Put **Empty Chairs** in the middle of your circle. Pray for people who will be invited.
- Close by saying the **Blessing Board** blessing together.