

# “Seizing Our Moment” //

## Esther 4:8-17 // 2017 Multiply

### Announcement (Multiply Handout)

**Let me start by addressing what is in your hands.** For you younger members, it’s called a NEWSPAPER. It’s how you got information before the internet was invented.

Over the last two years, we’ve **focused all of our generosity** in one fund called Multiply. We always say that our **primary goal** has never been financial, but **to have 100% of our people engaged** in the mission of God through sacrificial giving and serving.

**The NEWSPAPER** looking thingy that you hold in your hands is filled with stories of how God has multiplied us as we’ve done that.

**When you step back and think about it**, what we are seeing happen is really incredible, glory to God.

**For example, get this:**

- **You’ve probably heard us say that 228 of our members live overseas.** We have them keep track of what they are doing, and last year, they shared the gospel more than 10,000 individual times. Think about that for a minute—these Summit members live in some of the most unreached places in the world, and thanks to your generosity Jesus’s name was preached over 10,000 individual times. That has **resulted in 42 new churches** being planted internationally.
- **You’ve heard us say we want to plant 1000 churches** in our generation. A new focus on that goal is we want to plant **12 churches in the next 12 years** in the most significant college towns, starting with our ACC schools. We’ve got one going out to

UVA next year. **Clemson, Notre Dame, and Florida State**, we’re coming for you.

- **In addition to all this, your generosity helps us continue to grow here.** We now average more than 11,000 here in the Triangle each weekend and have baptized 1,258 since Multiply started. **And in the new year, we’ll begin construction on a new 1800 seat facility** off of Capital Blvd in Raleigh.

But the focus of his newspaper isn’t numbers. **What you will see** in there are some **stories that give you a taste** of how God is at work **multiplying you**.

Let me share one<sup>1</sup> really quickly because it’s just too good: One of our members that we sent to **Central Asia wrote us and said that over Christmas last year he had been invited to visit a remote village in an unreached people group in the mountains** and have lunch with the village leaders. It was **around Christmas time**, so when the conversation turned to **religious things**, and so he shared the Christmas story. He said, “I was so excited, because I had asked God to let me have a chance to do that.” He said they politely listened until he got done and then they said,

*“Yes, yes. We already know this story. And we believe it. We asked you here today because we want to know, now that we believe it, **what do we do now?**”*

Our missionary said, *“I’m confused.”* **They explained that a couple of years ago someone else come and had shared the story** with them and left them some Bibles. The village leaders had gathered to read the Bibles, and as they read them they realized they believed them. They wanted to know if our missionary could help them with whatever came next after belief. **Our missionary said, “How many people are we talking about?”** thinking it would be a dozen or so. They said, **“Oh, about 200.”**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://jdgreear.com/blog/an-incredible-story-of-gods-saving-power/>

[He writes,](#)

*(Well, this is church planting made easy.)* People like me shouldn't get to see this. I get to see the birth of a church in a new people group? What did I do to deserve that? How could I possibly be qualified to be part of this?

I can **just imagine the conversation around the throne of God**, he says:

*"Really Lord, you want **him** there? Do you think that will work?"* one of the angels asks.

And God answers, *"Well, yeah, his language is frankly sub-par; he isn't exactly good at the work in general; he wasn't even that impressive in America. But he is there. Besides, no one on earth is going to think he had anything to do with this, and so this is how I roll."*

**Summit, your generosity** made that story, and many more like it, possible.

As 2 Corinthians says, God has **"enriched us in every way to be to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God"** (2 Corinthians 9:11 ESV).

*Summit Church, thank you for your continued generosity, and for never ceasing to pursue this great mission of ours to take the gospel to our neighbors and the nations.*

**Put our hands together?**

## Introduction

If you have your Bibles, open them to the book of **Esther**. It's right after Nehemiah and right before Job. **Page 410** of my Bible, if that helps.

Esther is one of only **2 books in the OT named for a woman**, and believe it or not, it's been a pretty **controversial book**. Not because it is named for a woman, but because God's name is not mentioned—not even one time—in the whole book! **In fact, a few times throughout history** various Jewish and Christian councils that have tried to have the book removed from the official Bible.

Thankfully, however, **God has kept it in there for us**—because it really has something important to teach us, I believe. And **the fact that God's name is not mentioned** in it is part of the way he teaches that to us, **as I hope to show you**.

**I am going to zero in on a specific moment** in Esther's life that I believe parallels where we are as a church. It's in **chapter 4**. But to get there, I'll need to give you some of the **backstory**.

## The Story of Esther (1–7)

Esther's story begins **circa 483BC**. Esther is **part of a large Jewish community that has remained in Persia** (or, modern day Iran), where God had sent them into exile 100 years ago because they wouldn't obey God.

**Most of the Jews had already gone home, however, because in 536 B.C.** a Persian King named Cyrus had issued an edict declaring that the Jews could return to their homeland and re-build the temple. **And so, a large group** returned to the land under the leadership of **Ezra and Nehemiah**, whose books come right before Esther in your Bible.

**But there was a large group of Jewish people that remained in Persia and didn't go with Ezra and Nehemiah**. They were sometimes looked down on by the Jews who returned to Israel because they assumed these Jews were living in disobedience—**because they had not gone back** into the Promised Land **when God had opened the door**. They had gotten **too comfortable** in captivity.

## *You with me so far?*

**Esther was one of those who remained.** She is an orphan girl who is being raised by her older cousin Mordecai.

The story of Esther begins, chapter 1, with a king named Ahasuerus doing what kings do best—throwing an enormous party for himself.

(And Ahasuerus) displayed the glorious wealth of his kingdom and the magnificent splendor of his greatness for a total of 180 days. A 6 month party! After which, the real party began: At the end of this time, the king held a week-long banquet in the garden courtyard of the royal palace for all the people, from the greatest to the least. (Esther 1:4-5 CSB).

Vs. 8 describes the party: <sup>8</sup>The drinking was according to royal decree: “There are no restrictions.” It was **all-inclusive**.

<sup>10</sup>On the seventh day, when the king was feeling good from the wine. In Hebrew, that is **stone-cold plastered**—and (vs. 11) Ahasuerus commanded his eunuchs... <sup>11</sup>to bring Queen Vashti before him with her royal crown. He wanted to show off her beauty to the officials. (The implication being *only* wearing the crown on her head) so that **all his drunken guy-friends** could “gaze on her beauty.”)

**Not surprisingly, Vashti is not as excited about this**, idea, and she refuses. And good for her.

But this **embarrasses the king in front of his buddies** and he goes back into his bedroom and starts sulking and one of his wise guys comes to him and says, “*King, bro, this is serious. You gotta do something about this. And not just for your sake, but for the sake of all men everywhere.*”

- (In fact, this might be my favorite verse in Esther. If you don't, this guy says, “Before this day is out, the wife of every one of us

will hear what the queen did and will start talking to their husbands in the same way. There will be no end to the contempt and anger throughout your realm.” (1:18) “King, if when we command our wives to come out naked in front of our drunk buddies she won't do it, what's this kingdom going to come to?” Anarchy! Lawlessness!

**So, Vashti gets kicked to the curb.** But now Ahasuerus needs a new Queen. So, he comes up with this **brilliant idea**...

**Chapter 2:** “Let us search the empire to find beautiful young virgins for the king... then the young woman who pleases you most will be made queen instead of Vashti.”

IOW, he holds a **nationwide contest** eerily similar to *The Bachelor*. And here is how it contest worked. Contestants were **put into the king's harem** and the king would try them out. Each night one would appear before him, answer some questions; I guess do some kind of talent—and then that night the king would sleep with them. **After it was all over**, the King would pick his favorite.

Now, that **probably sounds to you** like a contest that a nice girl would not enter, and I agree, but I'm **not sure whether Esther had much choice** in the matter.

The **text makes it clear she was chosen to be in this contest (vs. 8); I'm not sure she could refuse.** It's probably most accurate to **think of Esther as a sex slave**, a victim of cruel and exploitative man in power.

On the other hand, **there doesn't appear to be a lot of opposition to this on her or her family's** part. You don't really find any kind of Daniel, or Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego kind of courageous defiance where they say, “*We'll obey God no matter what the cost.*”

- In fact, **2:20** says **her family concealed the fact that she was Jewish, which also meant she was silent about her belief in God**

(because talking about that would have **given away that she was a Jew**).

- Plus, the fact that Esther and Mordecai *both* are still in Persia several generations after Cyrus gave permission for Jews to return to the land is supposed to raise **suspicion** as you start the book.
- **Maybe most importantly, like I told you**, God's name is not in this book, which is an indication that God is likely not first and foremost thing in their minds.

**All this to say, this is really a messy situation.**<sup>2</sup> **Let's get back to the story:** The good news is, Esther wins the contest. 2:7 explains why: **"And Esther had a beautiful figure and was lovely to look at." (2:7)** (The literal word here in Hebrew is "bodacious.")

**One other detail before we get into chapter 3.** The author tells us about a man named **Mordecai**, again, Esther's older cousin, and essentially who adopts her when her parents are killed. **He works near the palace** finds out about a plot to kill the king. **He stops it**, and saves the king's life. The **King never finds out**.

Now, **chapter 3** is where it really starts to get interesting. Enter **Haman**, the villain: **3 After all this took place, King Ahasuerus honored Haman the Agagite.**

- You know he's the villain because he is called an "**Agagite**," and they were the people in the Bible who had sworn themselves the enemies of God and whom God has promised to destroy.
- (BTW, **fun fact** I learned about this story this week: When **Orthodox Jews celebrate the feast of Purim** every year, during the season when this happened, they retell this story, and every time they say the name 'Haman' the children respond by **hissing/booing**.
- It sounded kind of fun. Want to try it?

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<sup>2</sup> The point is this book is less about the courage of a man and woman of faith and more about God's sovereign control of history.

Ahasuerus promoted Haman in rank and gave him a higher position than all the other officials. Ahasuerus makes this fool **prime minister**.

<sup>2</sup>The entire royal staff at the King's Gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, because the king had commanded this to be done for him. But Mordecai would not bow down or pay homage. <sup>3</sup>The members of the royal staff at the King's Gate asked Mordecai (who, again, was Esther's cousin), "Why are you disobeying the king's command?"

- (Scholars point out that this question in verse 3, btw, "**Why are you disobeying the king's command?**" is the **central question of the book**. Who is the **real King in control** here? Who should we really be concerned about obeying?)

**Well, the fact that Mordecai won't bow down to Haman** (OK, you don't have to do it anymore) makes him madder than a 3-legged dog trying to bury a bone on a frozen pond, and **when he finds out Mordecai is a Jew**, he hatches a plan to kill ALL the Jews (3:7-8). *These people have been here long enough, he says. We'll just destroy them.*

**He presents his plan to Ahasuerus, who evidently** has a pretty hands-off approach to governing and doesn't really pay any attention to what Haman is asking... because he's **planning his next 6 mo. party** or on Twitter calling people who disagree with him nasty names or whatever.

Well, **CHAPTER 4**, Mordecai, who, again, hangs out around the palace, hears about this plot to kill the Jews and he gets an **urgent message** to Esther and tells her, "*Esther, you've got to do something about this!*"

And **Esther sends a message back to him**, saying, (4:11) "*Cousin Mordecai, I appreciate your concern, but what can I do? You remember how Ahasuerus responds to women disagreeing with him in public? Remember? He had Vashti banished just for refusing to*"

*strut her stuff naked in front of all of his drunk buddies... Imagine what he'd do if I, a woman, had the audacity to confront him and suggest he's making bad government decisions! He'd have me killed."*

**Persian law said that if anybody** came before the king uninvited, they could be killed. And for this **little Jewish girl to appear** before Ahasuerus, who is basically the poster child of male chauvinism and tell him he doesn't know how to run his government? This would be a **death wish!**

**Mordecai's response to her**, in chapter 13, is timeless, and our main text for the weekend: [13] "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. (IOW, you are not really safe). [14] For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. The question is not whether God will accomplish his purposes and save his people. The question is whether you will be saved.

And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for just such a time as this?" (Esther 4:13–14)

**As we've seen**, Esther, hadn't lived a privileged life, and she didn't even really start out that well in her walk of faith. But this is a **defining moment** for her.

**She responds with one of the greatest statements in the Bible:** "I will go to the king, though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." (Esther 4:16)

And so, **chapter 5**, on the appointed day, Esther enters the King's court. And the King, who evidently is still taken by her beauty, **raises his scepter**, which was a symbol she was accepted by him. **He says**, "My queen! What do you need from me?"

**She says**, "I'd really like you to come to a banquet tomorrow, and bring your friend Haman."

The King says sure, and he and the prime minister come to dinner. At this 1<sup>st</sup> banquet, Esther **doesn't mention anything about the prime minister's genocide plan**. Instead, she just invites the two of them to another banquet the next night—because she knows how the king likes to party.

Meaning, **Haman goes home from this 1<sup>st</sup> banquet really happy**, because of all the people in the Kingdom, the Queen specifically requested him, which makes him feel like they are some kind of **"power team"** in the Kingdom.

**But as he is going home, he passes through the city gate**, and when he does, Mordecai does that thing where he just stands erect and just glare at him while everyone else bows. (You know, everyone else is bowing, and Mordecai makes the "Loser" sign on his head.)

Well, that **totally kills Haman's buzz**, and he decides he can't wait just to kill Mordecai with the rest of the Jews. This **needs to happen** tomorrow.

So, **when he gets home he order that a gallows 75 feet** high be constructed that very night, and he plans to ask the king the next morning for permission to hang Mordecai (5:12–13).

Well, **it just so happens on that very same night the King can't sleep**, and so around **2 in the morning he says to one of his guards**, "Go get a book and read it to me." And this guy goes to the library and **randomly picks out a book**, it just so happens that the book he chooses **recounts the story of Mordecai saving** the King's life.

**The King says**, "This is remarkable! How exactly did we reward this fellow Mordecai?" The servant says "we didn't," so the King decides that he is going to do this *first thing in the morning*. **So, as soon as the**

sun rises and the King gets to the office, guess who *just so happens* to walk in the room? Haman, who has come to ask the king for permission to hang Mordecai.

But before he can say anything, the King says, "Hey man, I got a question (get it, Haman?)

What should be done for the man that the king wants to honor? And, of course, Haman thinks, "He's talking about me." And so, he says, "Let a wreath be put around his neck and let him be paraded through the streets and let a high-ranking government official call out as they drive through the streets, "***This is a man whom the king loves!***" And the king says, "Great idea. The guy I want to honor is named Mordecai, and the guy who should do the shouting is you."

- (Which is pretty doggone funny, you have to admit.)

Well, after this little charade, Haman is madder than a mosquito in a mannequin factory, so he kicks his plan to kill all the Jews into overdrive.

But that night, he goes to Esther's 2<sup>nd</sup> banquet. This time, Esther tells the king about the plot against her people, and reveals that she too is a Jew.

And the King says, "Who would conceive such a plot against you?" And Esther points across the table at Haman, who has his mouth full of mutton, and says, "Behold the man." Well, now it's Ahasuerus' turn to be angry, and he storms out of the room in rage, at which point Haman goes over to Esther and grabs ahold of her dress to plead for his life. But apparently, as he was pleading, he fell on top of her. And guess who happens to walk back in the room at just that moment? King Ahasuerus! Who says, "What, now you are trying to rape my wife, also?" And he orders Haman to be hung on the next available gallows, which of course, just so happens to be the gallows he had constructed the previous day for Mordecai.

And so, it is, that Esther, who got a really rough start in life—saves the Jewish people.

And, her courage transformed our lives, because a few generations after this, one of the descendants of the people that Esther saved that night would be visited by an angel and told that she was pregnant with the Messiah, the Son of God. And Jesus came into the world, and died for our sins, and now we sit here worshipping him today.

I believe Esther's story serves **2 purposes** in the Bible: It shows us the remarkable way God brought Jesus into the world; and it **shows you the way that God wants** to use you in his global purposes.

I believe that **some of you (and us as a church) are at a defining moment of faith**, like Esther, and her story shows you...

4 ways you can seize your moment:

### 1. Realize that God can use 'Mordecais' and 'Esthers'

"Mordecais" are the kinds of people you normally think of in church. They are good people; sincere in their faith. They haven't been involved in any major scandals. They have pretty vanilla testimonies; the worst thing they've done in life is speed or forget to recycle.

"Esthers" are people whose lives are filled with shame and regret; or maybe compromises and mistakes.

- **Maybe, like Esther, you've been the victim** of someone else's manipulation. Maybe you've been the victim of assault.
- Or maybe **you look back and see that you have not always acted** with courage and faith when you should.
- What you need to see is that God has a plan to use you, also.

*Esther is the one that God uses to preserve the Messianic line. Why? It has to be to show us that God brings his salvation into the world*

through unlikely, weak instruments who are available. Of all the people in Israel this is whom God chooses to bring salvation into the world, God chooses a **young, orphaned immigrant** with a checkered past.

**My point: It doesn't matter what your history is. It doesn't matter what your ability is. It matters what your availability is.**

- God has placed many of you at a **specific place, with specific opportunities**, for his kingdom.
- I **want you to look around and realize that you “in a palace,”** so to speak—a place where you've got a chance to influence and literally save the lives of others.
- **And maybe you even look back with a lot of regrets** as to how you got where you are.
- But you're there now, and **God wants to start a new thing** with you, beginning right now.
- **Esther didn't get off to the best start**, but in her defining moment, she said yes—put her yes on the table—and changed the course of history.
- **That's where some of you are.**
- It's **never too late for you to begin** the journey of faith.
- **Salvation is about new beginnings**, and God is ready to start a new beginning with you.
- **Quit looking back...** Yes, others have mistreated you. Yes, you've made mistakes. But God is ready to start a new thing in you if you're willing to put your yes on the table.

**2. God has been at work in your life whether you've recognized it or not.**

Again, where is the **name of God** in this book? *It's not there.* Not a single time.

But the **fingerprints of God are all over this book, are they not?** Think about all the so-called “**coincidences**” that led to Esther being in this position.

- Queen Vashti **just so happens** to upset her husband, and he **just so happens** to come up with a contest to replace her that Esther has been designed to win.
- And Esther **just so happens** to be Mordecai cousin, who **just so happens** to hear about a plot to kill the King.
- And it **just so happens** that for some reason, he isn't honored at that point, but his act of heroism gets buried in a book.
- And it **just so happens** that the night before Mordecai is to be hanged, the King can't sleep, and it **just so happens** that the guy who goes to get a bedtime story for the king—out of all the books he could have pulled off the shelf—pulls out the one that tells the story of Mordecai saving the King's life.
- And it just so happens that when the King decides that they need to honor Mordecai first thing in the morning, the first one to walk in the room is Haman.
- It **just so happens** that at the banquet where Esther unveils Haman's evil plan the King **just so happens** to come back in at the moment he thinks Haman is trying to rape his wife.
- And it **just so happens** that when the King orders Haman to be hanged, the only gallows available are the ones Haman built for Mordecai.
- **It's like my friend David Platt says, “Folks, you can't write a script any better than this.”**<sup>3</sup>

**Do you realize what the book of Esther is teaching is about history?** God has the whole system rigged. He's sovereignly weaving the stories of his people for his redemptive plan. And that **includes your story.**

You have a **divinely appointed role** in the kingdom and **you have been sovereignly shaped** to fulfill it, and you'll never feel like you've found your purpose until you do.

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<sup>3</sup> David Platt, “For Such a Time as This,” McLean Bible Church, September 24, 2017, accessed October 20, 2017: <http://www.radical.net/sermons/sermons/for-such-a-time-as-this>

Think of the palace as your place of opportunity.

- **There are people God has put in your life** he intends for you to share Christ with. Your dorm. Your classroom. Neighborhood. Office complex. Cubicle.
- **Platforms he has given you** from which you can bless and serve others.
- **Professions** you can serve in.
- **Passions he has given you**.
- You've **been given financial resources** for just such a time as this, to enable this church to reach the Triangle and from here, the world.

**Summit, we are not the most impressive people** in the world, we're not the richest, but we are here at this moment in time, and our **God has rigged the system** to bring the **Great Commission** to **completion**.

**All that God needs to reach the Triangle** he's already put in our hands. He just wants our availability.

- ***You have come into the kingdom for just such a time as this.***  
*Have you said yes, yet?*

**BTW, for some of you, you don't even know God yet, and you need to realize that God brought you here this weekend** in pursuit of you. **Sometimes I look around and wonder** what your story is... He's been speaking to your heart, and he put somebody in your life invite you today. You said no, but now you're here... He's **trying to get your attention**.

### 3. You can't hold on to life, so risk it for the Kingdom.

**Understandably, Esther demurs** when Mordecai urges her to go before the King. She knows she could die. But watch how Mordecai responds: [13] **"Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.** [14] For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from

another place, but you and your father's house will perish. (Esther 4:13-14)

- **IOW, your safety, Esther is a myth.** The word "perish" or "destroy" (*abad*) occurs in this book *more than it does the first 5 books of the Bible combined*. It's as if this book is reminding you that death and danger are always nearby.
- **What is certain, he tells her,** is that God will accomplish his purposes.
- **IOW, "Esther, you might die either way.** So, you might as well go out doing what's right."

**In the same way, your safety is a myth.**

- **Any moment** you could get a disastrous phone call from your doctor that would change your life forever.
- You could **walk into work one day** and be told that you no longer have a job.
- **Safety is an illusion,** so you might as well bet your life on what you know will last.

It reminds me of the words of Jim Elliott, a missionary to Ecuador who was martyred in his late 20's, **"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."** (LEAVE UP UNTIL #4)

- **"What you cannot keep"** is your life. You cannot possibly hold onto your life.
- You **cannot lose whatever you have staked** in God's eternal kingdom.
- So, **bet your life** on that.

**I've tried to arrange my life according** to the one moment I know is going to happen. **I am going to stand before God.**

**Y'all listen:** I've read the Bible **all the way to the end**—I didn't even stop at Revelation 22, the last chapter. So, I read all the way **through the concordance**, and all the way to the maps.



And **here's what is clear: God wins.** He writes the epilogue. The only question is whether we'll be part of it or not. **That's what is certain,** so I am angling the resources of my life toward that.

**You see, we have an even greater assurance of how all this will turn out than Esther did.** Here's how: we see in Esther's story a shadow of our coming Savior. Think about it: **Esther risked her spot** in the palace to intercede for the people of God.

**This prefigured Jesus who,** years later, would not only risk the ultimate palace, but lose it; not only risk his life but actually sacrifice it in order to save his people, and how who stands before the throne of God faithfully interceding for us.

**His resurrection assures us that God is going to win this thing, and overturn** all the diabolical plans of the world's Hamans for good and overwrite all the Enemy's schemes with victory. **It shows us that he is control and** that he has sovereignly rigged the system for the completion of the Great Commission.

You see, **the point is this book is less about the courage of a man** and woman of faith and more about God's sovereign control of history.

And he assures me that **that one day people** from every tribe and tongue will worship him (Rev 5). That's how it ends, and that means anything risked or sacrificed to that end is not wasted.

I've told you before how I see the kind of ministry we do: The **proverbial woodpecker** (this is my kids' favorite illustration that I tell)...

- The tapping is sharing Christ... praying. Serving in a hard place.
- When it happens, we write a **newspaper**...

*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep... God will win, the only question is whether my life will be wasted, or if I have invested them in that process.*

**Some of you have great wealth,** and in eternity you are going to lose it all. You might as well invest a large chunk of it in the things that last forever.

- **Our experiment: 5 things**—which of these should you consider transferring to the KINGDOM?

*Well, lastly...*

#### 4. The need is urgent.

**Esther stood at the crossroads of a literal life or death moment for Israel.** People's lives were on the line.

**We also stand at a literal crossroads of life and death** for others. Consider this:

- On average, around **60 babies** will be aborted in our area tomorrow.
- Every day somewhere in the neighborhood **25k children die** from starvation or a preventable disease.
- There are **more slaves around the world today** than at any other time in history.
- Most tragically, there are **millions of people around us that will spend an eternity in hell.** There are **3.1 billion** people around the world without a gospel witness. **How dare we just sit by?**
  - **(BTW, don't lose the impact of that last one.**
  - **Many people are moved by the needs of the world.** The **greatest need** is the need of the gospel. The **greatest suffering** is eternal suffering. For some of you, **your heart breaks for those who hunger.** The greatest hunger is for the bread of life. You **yearn to see people freed from slavery.** The greatest slavery is slavery to sin.
  - **Of all the things to give your life to,** the gospel is the most important.
  - **It's not that we should ever** ignore the others; just that we must never forget that the gospel is paramount.)

- **Esther's life shows us** these issues are of life and death importance. Just like **Esther couldn't ignore** those life and death realities, **neither can we.**

## Conclusion

**Summit Church**, Esther's story in the Bible is a great story. **But it's also a picture of your life.**

We're in the **same moment as Esther**—we're in a divinely orchestrated moment, with life or death implications. We've been placed here for ***“just such a time such as this.”***

We've called our moment **“Multiply.”** **This is where we offer our lives, and our resources,** to God for the spread of the gospel to others.

### My challenge to you:

- **If you made a Multiply commitment, *finish strong*:** Like we saw **last weekend**, you and we only reap the benefit if we persevere.
  - **Maybe at the end** of this 2-year commitment God is calling you to go farther than you anticipated.
    - **That's where my wife and I are...**
  - **Maybe there is more**—or something specific—that you want to transfer into the Kingdom. For this chapter of Multiply, you've got to the end of the year to do that.
- **If you are new, JOIN US.** You say, “How?” **Just by starting to give.** All that you give into our offering goes automatically into Multiply.
  - I told you last week, if you have questions, you can visit **[Summitrdu.com/Multiply](https://Summitrdu.com/Multiply)** for more details, or you can ask us whatever question you want.

**As I said last week, MULTIPLY is not a 2-year journey,** it's a way of investing what God has **given to us for the purpose of the spread** of his kingdom.

**Multiply is us** saying, “God, you put us here in this moment for just such a time as this; and you have put this seed into my hand for just such a time as this, to bring salvation to others!”

**Check out this awesome VIDEO** about what Multiply has meant for us over the past two years...