

It's Party Time!

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Date: 28 August 2024

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[0 : 00] Esther has now yielded to Mordecai, a picture of us yielding to the Spirit of God, leaving the consequences of what takes place to him.

! The problem being was there was a date already set for that to take place.

And so there was a necessity for her to come into the presence of the king and request that decree to be rescinded, even though it was written by Haman, sealed with the king's ring, which very seldom is changed.

And so that's the necessity here. And so as he gives her favor, he puts out the golden scepter, she goes and touches the top of the scepter.

And then it meant that she then had permission. And he begins to ask her now, what is your desire here? What is it that you request of me?

[1 : 38] And so that's where we pick up tonight in the last part of chapter 5. She has gone into the king, and the king said to her in Esther 5, verses 3 through 5, What wilt thou, queen Esther?

What is thy request? It shall be given thee to half of the kingdom. As Esther answered, and Esther answered, If it seemed good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste that he may do as Esther had said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. Now take note, if you will, the request is made, and that request said there's a banquet that I've already prepared, is the idea.

It's the table set, ready to go, and so I would like for you and Haman to come and be a part of that banquet, because I've fixed that for you. So there was an immediate need to fetch Haman and have him come, and order him really to come to that banquet.

So no doubt this was upon Mordecai's advice, the Spirit of God realized. So the tables were spread, and a great meal set out for everybody, and Esther invited the king and Haman to dinner.

[3 : 06] So think about this. If Haman was to be hanged, this really was the most unusual way to lead him to the gallows, right? I guess everyone that has a death sentence upon them has a last meal.

So maybe that's what she was thinking. All right. Yet Esther did not question Mordecai's wisdom, even though she kind of thought it was an unusual thing for him to have done.

So it was the idea that she simply did what she was told to do, because now, remember, she has surrendered herself to whatever Mordecai has said.

So at that banquet, then, something takes place at this particular banquet. Now, notice here, and I haven't really looked at it closely, but it said, the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, what is thy petition?

Now, do you really have an idea what the banquet of wine is? Is it different than the next banquet is my question? I'm thinking it may be. Maybe this is just a casual wine and cheese type banquet.

[4 : 16] You know, I don't know. But nonetheless, he asked at that banquet, what is your petition? And it shall be granted thee. What is your request? Even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

Now, again, consider this. Don't know if Esther is, I wouldn't call it waffling here, but is she reconsidering how this is supposed to go?

Has the instruction from Mordecai been explicit? Or does she just really not know for sure what to say to the king here?

So that's a good question for us. So she simply says, if you will, king, just bid Haman to come with you to the real banquet, if you will, that I have prepared and will prepare for you.

So he's going to say, yes, this is what she says. Then answered Esther, my petition and my request is, if I have found favor in thy sight or in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition and to perform my request, that the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do tomorrow just as the king hath said.

[5 : 42] So, although to feed a man once was sufficient, to feed him the second time was kind of an unusual thing here that she saw.

So I guess to kill a man with kindness is one thing, but can you hang a man with hospitality? That's the other question here. And so evidently that's what no doubt Esther may have been thinking. So, whatever it takes place here, one thing is for sure.

No matter how curious Esther may have been as to the ultimate course of events, Haman was already on his way out. Now think about that just a moment here.

If you have Mordecai representing the spirit of God, Esther representing the spirit of man, the human spirit, and Haman representing the natural man or the sin nature, consider this.

[6 : 46] As Esther is yielded to Mordecai, as we yield to the spirit of God, what then is the spirit of God going to do? How is he going to respond to us?

I think a key that we need to recognize is this. It's always God that takes the initiative. All right? When God takes initiative and instructs us about something, he will not do anything else until we respond adequately to what he has to say to us.

And when we do respond adequately, what happens? He continues on. And we can always trust him to carry it on until he gets to the actual purpose of what he's doing here.

And so Esther needs to recognize that as her instructions from Mordecai. No matter how this thing is falling out here to the bewilderment of Esther, she has to realize that no matter how this thing falls out, Haman is on his way out.

Now, it's important for us to recognize and be aware of the wisdom and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

[8 : 10] Always keep in your mind. God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Our thoughts are not his thoughts. His thoughts are what? Always higher than ours.

That's why I think sometimes we go beyond the realm of what we should be doing when we try to figure God out. Amen?

Figure him out. How's he really doing this thing? What's he doing? Well, if God's pleased for us to know ahead of time, he'll show us. Amen? So we need to recognize the wisdom and the work of the Spirit of God in the circumstances of our life.

Always trusting him to know the circumstances, to know what needs to be done, and to be able to guide us and lead us through those and make the right choices, decisions, and actions.

Now, even when we don't understand it or when we don't even recognize it, he's always at work in our lives, so we must trust him to do what he knows how to do in our lives.

[9 : 22] Now, Haman, when it came to the idea of being invited to the banquet, can you imagine when those servants of the king come to him and said, make haste, the king has summoned you, Esther has summoned you to a banquet?

Oh, can you imagine what he's thinking here? He knew he was already the king's favorite son, if you will, not a son, but favorite guy, giving him the authority of the kingdom that he's given to him. But now, he's got not only a single invitation, but he'll have a double invitation to a banquet here. So, when he gets that news, Haman went forth that day joyful with a glad heart. That's in verse number 9 of chapter 5. So, what did he do?

When he got home with the news of a second banquet, he calls his friends, his family, he's got his wife there, and he's going to give them what is the perfect exhibition of the flesh.

[10 : 31] He's going to just really let them know how boastful he is in the news that he's gotten about the invitation.

In verses 11 through 12 of Esther 5, Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

And that's when he put the ring on his finger, remember? Haman said, moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared, but for myself. And tomorrow, I am invited unto her also with the king. And notice how he phrases that. He didn't say, I'm invited along with the king and with Esther.

No. I'm invited unto Esther with the king. Alright? Now, it's almost as if he said, Hey, I'm not only the king's favorite, I'm the queen's favorite too.

[11 : 44] Now, recognize, look what the flesh does. It's characteristic of the flesh to seek its own aggrandizement at the expense of everyone else.

Well, let's move on here a minute. Reading between the lines and in so many words, what Haman had to say to his friends was this, Apart from the king, the queen would not let anyone else come to the banquet but myself.

And confidently, between you and me and the gate post, I do not think she was really enthusiastic about the king being there. Yeah, and this is married man talking here too, by the way.

Now, the flesh has an unlimited capacity for self-deception when it comes to its reputation and enhancing that reputation.

Now, you've probably heard, have you heard the old statement being made of the guy that said, I am a self-made man?

[12 : 54] And his friend replied to him, that shows you what the horror of unskilled labor is. Yeah, yeah, that's the horror of unskilled labor.

But the flesh likes to do that, likes to make us feel like we are something above the ordinary and causes us to want to brag about that.

Think back, think back, if you will, to Paul's letter to the church of Corinth. What, what are the characteristics of agape love? There's one characteristic that comes to my mind in all of this.

What is agape love? It doesn't boast. It doesn't boast. Okay. Yeah, it doesn't seek itself or its own, if you will, its own aggrandizement.

That's agape love. Because it is, it is exactly the opposite of what the flesh wants to do. it's self-sacrificial in its nature always to benefit the others.

[14 : 11] All right. That's what agape love is plus many other things. And again, remember, agape love can only be produced in the life of the believer by the Spirit of God.

And so this, again, if we yield to the Spirit of God, if we are, if we are constantly, consistently yielding to the Spirit of God day by day, then that agape love will be produced within our heart and our life.

Let me ask you something else here real quick. When we're dealing with people, I don't care who it is, it even could be a friend that's kind of gotten sideways with you.

How should I put this? When we're dealing with people and we kind of get in our own heart and our own mind kind of contrary with them.

And all of a sudden the Spirit of God begins to convict us about something. and we begin to question our mind. All right, God is saying to me here, you need to love this person.

[15 : 29] You need to have agape love for this person. All right? can we just simply say, all right, I'm going to have agape love for that person.

And all of a sudden it happens. Spirit of God is showing us something's not right, Dave.

Something's not right. Every time I see you with that OSU hat, it ruffles my feathers.

Okay? Yeah. I'm going to get you on OSU hat one of these days. Anyway, if I just get irritated at Dave, the Spirit of God just shows me clearly that's not right.

Your heart toward Dave is not right. And my natural man says to me, I don't care. I don't want it to be right. He's got an OSU hat. All right?

What should I do? What do I need to do? Confess it, but also say, Lord, I need you to change my heart about Dave.

[16 : 41] Yeah, I do. I need you by your Spirit to work that agape love in my heart for Dave. Yeah. And if we honestly, sincerely bring that to the Lord in that way, He will do that.

Because sometimes it's hard to pray for somebody when you don't have agape love for them.

You've got animosity or whatever toward them. So if we ask God to change our heart about that, produce that agape love in us for Him, then it'll create in us not only the ability, but the desire to pray for Him.

Amen? Amen? Yeah. Lord, give me that agape love for Dave. So, again, that's the attitude that Haman's taking here when he gets this second invitation or this invitation to the second banquet.

And, so, again, the flesh has an unlimited capacity for self-deception when it comes to enhancing its own reputation.

Ah, wow. Now, take note. In verse 9, there's still a fly in the ointment.

[18:10] All right? Still, when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

All right? Now, again, get things together.

The natural man and the Spirit of God at battle here. Recognize that the Spirit of God is never going to give way to the, excuse me, the Spirit of God.

Yeah, will never give way to the natural man. That's not his job. It's not his office. His office is to control the Spirit of the believer.

All right? That's why the Scripture talks to us about the idea of that constant battle that's going on between the Holy Spirit and the natural man within us. In fact, I forget where it's at, perhaps, in the book of Colossians.

[19:22] It speaks of the idea that he said, no, you're not, that the Spirit of God is driven to envy. He's driven to envy in your life because he wants so much to control your life, but it's being battled by the natural man within us.

And again, the idea here is there's the only thing, the only thing that can make a difference in that. Well, let me ask you, what is the only thing that can make a difference? The Spirit of God so driven to envy because he wants to control the life of the believer to lead and guide and direct him in the will of God which is the best for our life.

But the natural man within us is fighting that drastically. What's the thing that makes the difference? Paul says in the book of Romans, to whoever you yield yourself to, they become your master, you become their servants.

And that's the key. It all depends on who we are going to yield ourselves to. Yeah. It's up to us. Yeah.

How many of you have grandchildren? No matter what the age is. Okay. You love your grandchildren to death, don't you? Sometimes people even would accuse us of loving them more than we did our actual children, their parents.

[21:04] Children, when they're small in particular, when they're young, are sweet and precious. Amen? Amen. To most people because they don't see them at home.

But we love them. We love our kids. I mean, we think they're sweet, they're precious, but every once in a while they'll do something that we've told them not to do.

Yeah? And we tell them again. Worst thing you can do is tell the kid, don't do that. Yeah? Because he'll do it. You tell them again.

What's he going to do? He's going to do it again. Until something comes along and persuades that kid that wasn't a good idea to do it.

All right? Then what is it the parent loves to do? He loves to say, I told you so.

[22:11] Yeah. I told you so. Yeah. I told you that was going to happen if you did that. Has anybody here done that? No, of course not.

And that's kind of what the Spirit of God does to us. Sometimes He'll let us go along until we come to the realization. Boy, He knows what He's talking about.

Yeah. We've got to yield to Him. Lord, give me the ability to yield to the Spirit. Good way to start the day. Lord, give me the ability to yield to Your Spirit today.

Give me that grace to do that every hour of the day. Yeah. Yeah. And as we continue going through this study, we're going to find out how really easy it ought to be.

because of what Jesus has done for us and about this. All right? So, the fly in the ointment here is, all of this that the king has done avails me nothing because of one fly in the ointment.

[23:20] And that is Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate. Spirit of God always exposes the flesh for whatever it is.

Now, there's nothing more frustrating or infuriating to the currently minded believer than when those who are spiritually discerning remain wholly unimpressed in spite of so much self-advertising.

Amen? Yeah. Yeah. I know now, I know you guys are all spiritually discerning.

Amen? Spiritually mature and discerning except for Latrish because she married Matthew.

you. No. You've seen people and I've seen people that put on that air of sophistication and spirituality that in their lives they just really kind of go over and above board in the flesh on the guise of doing things for the Lord.

[24:31] Remember the old adage of the guy that, remember when they used to pass the offering plate around? A lot of churches got modern and stowed the wooden offering plate, there used to be

wooden offering plates with velvet down, not velvet but felt, thank you, felt down on the bottom and now then they came out with the metal ones.

Ah, perfect thing for the believer that's in the flesh because he could reach in his pocket take out a handful of coins and just drop them in that and that metal offering plate will make that sound like man, that's a ton of money he's putting in there.

Clack, clack, clack, clack, clack, clack, clack. Now there have been people, I've seen people do that and that's a perfect picture of someone that confesses to be saved, know the Lord, but that flesh has still got a hold of him and that flesh still has a way of promoting itself and true believers then of course are wise to that.

Now, so, Mordecai goes to his family and you know, confesses that he's just miserable because Haman's still in the king's gate and he won't be, he won't honor me in my position that I'm holding. So, in verse 14 of chapter 5, Zeresh's wife and all of his friends said unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and tomorrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon.

[26 : 15] And then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman and he caused a gallows to be made. So, when I keep reading this verse, I keep thinking, this is a guy that the king has utter confidence in to the point that he's made him overseer of the entire kingdom.

Nobody has as much power as he does except the king himself. Gave him his ring, all those things, but he couldn't figure this out. Amen? Had to be his wife and his friends tell him, just go build a gallows.

And in between the two banquets now, you've got a space of time, hang him, hang him. And so that's the simple way to do it here.

So, what happens here? He goes ahead and he makes that gallow, the gallows in his garden. All right? And as a result then, somebody's going to sling on it. Had Esther known what was going on behind the scene, she may well have been tempted to wonder whether everything was going according to plans here.

[27 : 35] In the little time that she still had remaining, the all important issue would have to be decided. Because there was a gallows in the garden. And the question is, who was going to hang? who's going to hang? Now, catch this. Is it going to be Haman? Or is it going to be Mordecai? That brings us to this. Ultimately, this is the all important issue that has to be decided in the heart of every believer.

It's got to be. All right? If Christ is still on the cross, if we still got him hanging on the cross, then self is on the throne.

All right? But if self is on the cross, if we've died to ourself, then Christ is on the throne.

Okay? Recognize that. We've got to come to the point, if we're not there already, that we recognize the work of Christ on the cross, bringing us to the point where we have died unto sin, but made alive unto God.

[28 : 50] So there's a gallows in the garden who's going to swing. And that brings us to the doom of duplicity, which we'll look at next week. Let me just say, a good way for us to end this and just go out until next week, is to just get along with God and say, Lord, I need you to show me.

Because, again, remember, the heart is deceitful above all things, and it's desperately wicked. Who can know it? Lord, I need you to show me what you see in me.

Show me my heart the way you see it. When it comes to the matter of yielding to your spirit, and walking with you to the degree you've designed me to walk with you.

Yeah. Yeah. And see what he shows you. Now, when he shows you something, don't say, all right, Lord, thank you for showing me that.

Yeah. Stay there with the Lord until that begins to grieve your heart. And say, Lord, I'm sorry that I've neglected yielding to your spirit to the degree I needed to.

[30 : 10] But thank you for showing me. Yeah. Amen. Amen. All right. Same time, same station, different hat. Next week. Let's pray.

Father, again, thank you for your loving kindness, your goodness and grace to us today, and for the privilege again of being back together with these wonderful people that love you, love your word, and love to study.

And so, Father, I thank you for our visitors as well, and I ask your continued blessing upon them as they've heard what you've said in their heart tonight. And so, Father, we thank you for that, and now ask you to enable us all to just seek you and let you show us what you see in our hearts. And so, bring us back again next week, and allow us to open our hearts to see what you have for us then. And we'll thank you for it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.