

The Point of No Return

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[0 : 00] Now recall last time in our study, we had come to the point where Esther had held the first banquet!

For the king, and in particular for Haman, at that point, remember, the king asked Esther, in essence, what is it I can do for you? What's your request?

And what's your petition? And she said, if you don't mind, I want to invite you all to the second banquet tomorrow. And then at the second banquet, I'll ask my petition and my request.

And so that's what has happened. Now recall, this is a point in time where Mordecai is, his head's on the chopping block.

He's in dire straits here. He's in imminent danger of being hung from the gallows that Haman has built in his garden.

[1 : 14] But remember, in between those two banquets, the night after the first banquet and before the second, just so happens to be a night in which the king could not find sleep.

Tossed and turned and could not find any way. I don't know whether he counted sheep or what he may have counted, but nonetheless, he couldn't sleep.

So of all things, he requested that the book of the Chronicles, the record of his reign in particular, be brought in so he could review over that.

Now, don't ask me why he wanted that particular book. I have no clue. But he did. I just have to believe God was in that, directing all of that.

And so as he reads the record of the Chronicles, he came to the part that we find in the second chapter of Esther.

[2 : 15] And that is where some people had conspired together to put the king to death. Mordecai hears of that, recall, and he lets the powers that be know that that's in the works here.

And so as a result of that, they were able to catch the people involved and put them to death. And Mordecai, I mean, the king, King Hazarus' life is spared. So he's reading that, and all of a sudden, I don't know if it was just the shock of what came to him that moment or what it was, but he asked the question, what was it that has been done for this man Mordecai that was responsible for my life being spared?

And you remember the answer was nothing, nothing. It's as if you were busy with other things and you just never dawned on you that somehow you needed to honor this man that was responsible for your life being spared.

And so the king, having recognized and realized the injustice that was done, all of a sudden determines it's time to honor this man, even though it's late in the time.

And so we picked up, if you will, in Esther chapter 6, verses 4 and 5. This is where we left off last week. So the king said, who is in the court?

[3 : 49] Now, recall with me that this was the particular time Haman, before that second banquet, was going to come in and get audience with the king and persuade King Ahasuerus to put Mordecai to death.

And so when the king asks, who's in the court? Well, Haman was there for that purpose. Haman was coming to the outward court of the king's house to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallow that he had prepared for him.

And the king's servant said unto him, behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, let him come in. Now, recognize something here.

Though the Holy Spirit may bring conviction to the human spirit, it doesn't necessarily mean that it becomes articulate at once, nor discernible within the soul.

Some other things take place sometimes. But realize with me that there are a lot of things, there's a lot of baggage, if you will, that we carry with us from our unsaved days.

[4 : 59] I was saved when I was 21 years old. April the 19th, 1969. West Okie Baptist Church, of all places, Las Vegas, Nevada. Now, I wasn't there to gamble.

I was in the Air Force Station there. But I recognized and realized, boy, for 20, I was 21 years old. For 21 years, there was a lot of stuff in my life.

Now, I've told you before, and you don't believe it, but it's true. I was a good boy. You know, I never was a rebellious kid, all of that type of thing. But I do realize, I did realize at the time, that for 21 years, I lived in reality under the control of the natural man within me.

So, when I got saved, it didn't necessarily mean that all of a sudden, just like that, I became that spiritual giant and knew everything.

It takes a while sometimes for that to be developed within us. So, we begin to see that here. Just as the king was prepared to honor Mordecai, Haman came in then, of course, to hang him.

[6 : 14] Now, the king is a picture, of course, of the human soul. Remember that. He's not yet, the king had not yet become aware of the wickedness of this man Haman.

So, you get the picture there. Now, Mordecai had already revealed it to Esther, but king Ahasuerus has not yet come to that place of understanding.

So, he's still persuaded that this man Haman is a man filled with integrity. So, he has no problem in commissioning him to be the one to bring honor, you know, to Mordecai.

Who better than to Haman himself? All right. So, in Esther 6, verse 6, Haman came in. And, you know, the king beat Haman to the draw here.

The king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor? Now, Haman thought in his heart. Oh, I love this. To whom would the king delight to honor more than myself?

[7 : 23] Gotta be me that he's gonna do this for. Yeah. Now, utterly egocentric and completely obsessed with his own self-importance, it seemed inconceivable, there's that word, to Haman that anybody else could be on the mind of king Ahasuerus here.

Unthinkable to think except in terms of self-grandeure. All the measures he suggested then were designed for his own purposes here, his own advantage.

So, what happens? Verse 7 through 9 of Esther 6, Haman answered the king. Ah, here we go. For the man whom the king delighteth to honor, let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rides upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head.

Boy, that's quite an extent, isn't it? You know, he's already got the ring on the finger, but now he even wants the crown. Let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man with whom the king delights to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man who the king delights to honor.

Now, Haman could just fancy himself being led through the streets, all the crowds excited about this one man that the king is going to honor, or is honoring, raiding all the royal garb on the king's horse.

[9 : 08] Boy, I mean, after all, he's the king's favorite, and the queen's favorite as well. So, he's just thinking about all of this. Now, so, in reality, thinking about all that, it's a little matter now that, you know, that Mordecai's going to be hanging from the gallows.

It's a done deal now. As far as Haman's thinking is concerned, after all, the king's going to royally honor him, so he'll answer, or he'll do what he desires for the king to do in putting Mordecai to death.

Now, he could think of nothing more delicious than to see his arch enemy swinging by the neck as the glorious grand finale of this great day that he's going to be honored in.

Just think about that. Try to put yourself in the mind of Haman here, boy. You know, it's not quite a coronation, but, boy, it's close to it.

And what better thing at the end of that thing than seeing Mordecai swinging from the gallows.

Yeah. Because, after all, recall, when he was invited to the banquet, he went home and bragged about that, but on the way home, he came by the king's gate, who was there.

[10 : 28] It was Mordecai. It just irritated him to death in spite of the fact that he was honored by the queen of all people. Now, verse 10, Then the king said to Haman, Make haste.

Now, think about this. Make haste, and take that apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate.

Let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Can you imagine? Can you imagine there? Wouldn't you have loved to see Haman's face at the moment probably turn white blood rush from his head to the feet, and just shaking with hate and anger, but he controlled himself.

He wasn't about to explode in the presence of the king, but boy, inwardly, he was boiling over, I just imagine. Now, something quite obviously had happened to the king.

He didn't know quite what that was, didn't know the king had rediscovered Mordecai through the reading of the record, but he somehow knew to defy the king in his present state of mind would be more than his life was worth, so he wasn't about to do that.

[11 : 56] Now, recognize, it's dangerous for the flesh when you rediscover Christ through reading the book, that's the Bible, the scriptures. It's dangerous for the flesh when that happens.

It was now, for Haman, a question of self-preservation. Now, realize, Haman representing the flesh. When the flesh is exposed, self-preservation mode kicks in for the flesh.

He was prepared even to go through the motions of honoring Mordecai if that was the price that it took for survival. Now, the flesh will do anything to survive after it's been exposed for what it is. The king was quite sincere in commissioning Haman to honor Mordecai because he didn't know of his true character. Now, for the same reason, we too may well have harnessed the energy of the flesh in a genuine desire to honor the Lord Jesus in the life.

Has anybody here ever done that? Anybody here being untruthful? Yeah. We've all done that sometime in our life.

[13 : 25] Not recognizing that we've done that, especially early on in the early days of our salvation. It's easy for people to do because there's such a longing, such a desire to serve God.

And not really understanding that to serve Him, we've got to serve Him in the direction and leadership and power of the Spirit of God and not by the flesh.

What we'll discover is what the king discovered then, that the flesh, which has its origin in Satan, he's going to go along with you. He's quite prepared to engage in every form of Christian activity if that be the only chance of survival.

The flesh will sing in the choir. It'll teach Sunday school class. Amen? Yeah. It'll sit on boards on boards and even go to boring meetings.

I mean, board meetings and all of those things. Even preach. Yeah. It'll even preach. Anything it needs to do to keep the noose from around its neck.

[14 : 33] Now, it is characteristic of the spiritually immature that they're unable to discern between good and evil. And the baby Christian, like the foolish Galatians, having begun in the Spirit, still tries to be made perfect by the flesh.

That's what Paul said in Galatians 3. 3. Are you so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? Now, in verse 11 of chapter 6 of Esther, then took Haman the apparel and the horse and arrayed Mordecai.

Boy, picture that in your mind here. And try your best to imagine what was going through the mind and heart of Haman at the time.

He takes that royal robe and puts it around the shoulders of Mordecai, puts him on that horse, sticks that, and this has got to be the stinger for him, takes that crown and sticks it on his head while the king's ring on Haman's finger is glistening in the sun.

Puts that crown upon his head. Now, Haman did what he was commanded and seemingly to the king's satisfaction because the king was so enthusiastic in his desire to honor Mordecai that he was altogether unsuspecting of the duplicity that Haman had here and was exhibiting.

[16 : 05] Now, we've got to be patient for what we're concerned about here. We that are, what? Mature. I was going to say, we that are spiritually mature, we ought to be if we've been saved as long as we have.

Amen? Yeah. We've got to be careful about those that have not grown in the grace of God in the things of Christ to the same maturity level that you and I have.

we've got to be patient with them. We've got to be understanding of them because a lot of times we'll see in them what's happening that in their desire to serve God and to please Him, they seem to be utilizing the things of the flesh and the power of the flesh to do that.

So, we've got to be discerning of them. Mordecai returned again to the king's gate, but Haman hastened to his house mourning and having his head covered.

Now, to Haman's wife, all his friends, again, he lodges his complaint, poured out this sorry story of his humiliation.

[17 : 24] And he, guess what the king made me do? Of all people he wanted to honor, it was Mordecai and I had to go and put all his stuff on him and parade him through the streets of the city.

Their response didn't bring a whole lot of comfort to poor Haman here. You're thrashed. You're beaten. You're done. Is in essence what they said.

Haman told Zeresh, his wife, and all of his friends everything that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh, his wife, unto him, if Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews before whom thou hast begun to fall.

In other words, you're already falling before these folks that you hate. If that's the case, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.

And guess what? While they were saying all of this to him, while they were speaking, who came to the door? The king's chamberlains and hastened to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

[18 : 35] The second banquet, they come knocking at the door and it's time to hasten him, time to drag him, no, not drag him, time to escort him, if you will, to the second banquet.

Now realize, the king yet does not know what all this is about. He still finds Haman to be a great guy, but Haman doesn't know that.

He just knows that for some strange reason, something different has happened to the king that has caused him to honor Mordecai of all things.

Now, time had run out on Haman. Table was laid, the stable, the stage was set, and from the gallows in his garden, fifty cubits high, a rope swung gently in the breeze, and in the heat of the, in the heart of Haman, there was a sense of doom and that's the doom of duplicity.

Saying one thing that wasn't what really your heart was intending, kind of a double-minded man here if you would. All right, the moment of truth.

[19 : 57] The flesh will threaten, shout, strut, domineer, sulk, plot, creep, beg, plead, or sob, whatever the situation may be, may demand in its own interest in order for its own survival.

In the heart of Haman, there was some terrible feeling that something bad was happening as he went with the king to the banquet. Now, he had no idea, but he knows something's going on here. He's got to have that sense that this is not good. You know, he was before just bragging about being the queen's blue-eyed boy, but now he knows this is not going to end up pretty.

All right? He knew he was beaten. If the king had come to know the truth about Mordecai, it wouldn't be long before he comes to know the truth about Haman.

Now, the flesh hates to be exposed for what it is, and it'll fight desperately to avoid the awful moment of truth. And that's that moment in our lives when the Holy Spirit rips off the mask of its face for and shows us exactly what it is.

[21 : 16] So, no doubt, Haman planned to be on his best behavior here at this second banquet. And he would try to be so very convincing, but probably most of his servants recognize there's something even with Haman going on here.

Probably a real nervousness that they were able to see. Now, when the Holy Spirit begins to convict you, when he brings that conviction to your spirit and your soul, bearing witness to your human spirit that the Lord Jesus Christ is being denied his rightful place in your life, I want you to recognize that in a moment.

Anybody here ever felt conviction of the Holy Spirit? Sure we have. You realize that whatever it may be, whatever it may be specifically, whatever the act was of sin that he was convicting us of, whether it's an action or a neglect, whatever it may be, in reality, the truth of the matter was, what he's neglect, what he's convicting us of, is the fact that we've not allowed Jesus, for whatever moment it may have been, we've not allowed him to have his rightful place in our heart.

Because recognize that Jesus, that God, is jealous over our heart. He wants our heart more than anything else.

He wants our heart. He wants our heart toward him. That's what he wanted for Israel of old in the Old Testament. He wanted the people's heart tuned toward him.

[23 : 06] And so, when the Spirit of God begins that process of conviction, he's showing us here that we've denied Christ his rightful place in our life.

And that old Adamic nature within us becomes irritable and edgy. Amen? Yeah. You ever felt at home and comfortable when the Spirit of God brought conviction?

You ever had any sleepless nights? Yet at one and the same time, it will seek to produce the most plausible arguments and justifying its own illegitimate activities.

That's what the Spirit of God, have you ever tried to talk yourself into what your sin was being okay? Yeah. Yeah. Well, it's not really that bad.

What do we usually do when we do that? How do we usually do that? How do we usually justify our sin? That's it, exactly. Yeah. We compare it to somebody.

[24 : 07] Man, I'm not at all nearly as bad as Mike is. Amen? Thank you, Lord. One of these days I'm going to sneak up behind him at work and just watch him and listen to him and see what he says on those plumbing jobs.

I'm glad you're there. You see, I never used you. Could you? You should have called. I would have told you I was busy studying for Esther. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

But that's what the Spirit of God does. It, you know, it wants to justify ourselves, or justify itself for what we've allowed it to do.

And for some silly reason, we let it justify itself. Amen? Amen? Thank you. All right. I thought I was by myself here.

Something told Haman that he could expect no mercy at the hands of Mordecai once Mordecai had gained the ear and the confidence of the king. And the flesh knows that it cannot bluff its way out of a direct encounter with the Holy Spirit.

[25 : 12] It can only echo the words of Ahab to Elijah in 1 Kings 21 20. Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And the Spirit of God replies as did Elijah to that, I have found thee because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord.

Now, Esther 7 verse 2. And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine. Can you imagine the pellets of sweat coming on Haman's face here?

What is thy petition, Queen Esther? And it shall be granted thee, and what is thy request? And it shall be performed even to the half of the kingdom. Now, tremendous time here for Esther, but recognize something here.

Even though she's been to this point acting in obedience to Mordecai, the Holy Spirit, her total commitment had not brought her into direct conflict with Haman. Still parading around the palace. Nice guy, but she knows who he is and knows what he is at this point. But what she's done in obedience to Mordecai has not brought her into conflict with Haman until this point.

[26 : 31] now, she shared the palace with him, living within the same four walls, beneath the same roof, exchanging courtesies. But from now on, there was to be no more compromise.

Wow. No more compromise. Recognize that. Got to come to a point well, that happens in our life. No more compromise with the flesh. Haman had to be named, exposed to the king, as he had already been exposed to Queen Esther. Judgment pronounced by Mordecai had to be echoed in the presence of the king now, and in the very face of the enemy.

From this moment forward, there could be no turning back. It was the point of no return. for Esther here. Haman held his breath, no doubt.

Waited to see what it is that Queen Esther is going to say here. If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.

[27 : 52] Now, what in the world? King has to be really baffled here. Let, because remember she's not revealed that she's a Jew up until now.

Let my life be given me and my petition and my people at my request. For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, slain, and wiped out of existence.

Now, I would imagine at this point, King Ahasuerus is about to put two things, two and two together here. All right, the only thing King had to realize about a death sentence was what Haman told him about this people called the Jews whose laws are going to be detrimental to the laws of the kingdom.

He realizes now, Esther is saying to him, I'm Jewish, I'm a Jew, I belong to this race of people, and we're condemned to die, and we need some relief, and the only one that can bring that relief is you, O King.

Now, if we had been sold for bondmen and bond women, I would have held my tongue, for our affliction is not to be compared with the damage this will do to the King.

[29 : 19] Now, not only had the King become kindly disposed toward Mordecai, but now Haman recognizes and realizes that the Queen, the one he thought favored him above everything, was identified with his archenemy Mordecai.

Yeah, his adopted daughter was Esther. Well, that people whose God-given laws were in such direct conflict with those that had their origin in Haman himself.

So, within a matter of minutes now, the king would come to realize the assassin's knife was pointed at the heart of the palace, and Esther, whom he loved, would fall prey to this commandment, published at Haman's behest.

back in 313 of Esther, to destroy, to kill, to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children, and women, in one day.

Now, Haman had to persuade the king, for he already had persuaded the king, that such a commandment was necessary, because of what the law of the people of Israel, the Jews, how contrary that was to the law of the kingdom.

[30 : 51] Now, but, of course, those laws were only there to satisfy Haman's pride. If he had only talked to the king, persuading him that this has got to stop, that Mordecai has to hang.

All right? But look at chapter 7, verses 5 through 7. Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto the queen, Who is he?

Who is this guy that's done this? And where is he that durst presume in his heart to do so? Oh, don't you imagine that Haman's shaking in his boots at this point.

Esther said, the adversary and the enemy is this wicked Haman. Boy, she didn't cut any slack, did she?

She didn't beat around the bush. Not only did she point her finger at Haman, she said, it's this wicked Haman. He's a wicked man. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

[32 : 01] And the king, arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath, went into the palace garden, and Haman stood up to make requests for his life to Esther the queen, for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

That's one way of putting it, huh? Now, the enemy had not been unmasked, and now the issue for the king is quite clear. He's going to have to make a choice here.

He had to choose between Haman and Esther. So it was the moment of truth, as it is for every human soul to whom has come the revelation of the Holy Spirit, through the human spirit of the wickedness of sin.

That's what the Spirit of God does in our heart. It brings us to that realization of what it is and where it is. I had occasion just yesterday to speak with someone, someone that was just troubled, professed to know Christ, churchgoer, not here, churchgoer, but had a real unsettleness in their heart.

So I told them that you need to determine what the Spirit of God is doing. Is he convicting of sin?

[33 : 34] or is he convicting of the fact that you're not really his? That you've not really entered into that salvation experience?

So I told them, go get along with God and just get it settled with him. Your heart's to the point right now with the Spirit of God speaking to your heart and you can yield to him because he's brought you to that point.

So they did. Everything turned out well. Amen? So that's what we've got and that's what we've got to allow the Spirit of God to do. again, even though, you know, don't think for a moment that the moment we get saved, God's going to put a, just wipe a magic wand over our head and go plang and everything is rosy and will completely satisfy the will of God forever.

It doesn't work that way because the natural man, the flesh, is still there. And so we've got to be aware of the fact of those times when the Spirit of God brings conviction to our heart and mind. I'm talking about believers now that have settled the fact that they have been saved. The Spirit of God will convict us of our sin and we can recognize in that, okay, the Spirit of God is saying something to my heart, bringing conviction to me.

[35 : 09] I've got to find out what it is. Sometimes there are occasions when we don't know that we've actually sinned against God the way the Spirit of God sees it.

Yeah? It's like when Mike is doing plumbing work and that pipe wrench slips and that pipe is sitting there and that thumb just for some reason wants to meet against that pipe.

I've been born once. Yeah. Yeah. And Mike may have, don't know this to be the case, but Mike may have may have uttered words something other than amazing grace.

Yeah? Amen? Yeah. Yeah. God bring conviction. Say, God, I'm sorry. Then he starts singing amazing grace. Yeah. Yeah.

But you see what I'm saying? Yeah. God wants us to be sensitive to the work of the Spirit of God so that we can allow him to do that work of making the change in our lives and in our hearts that that he wants to do.

[36 : 25] And of course, Romans chapter 7 deals with that and we'll look at that next week. All right? Because we need to take a good look at that and make the application up to our lives.

It's good to see all these things. It's good to allow the Spirit of God to speak to us about all this. But realize it does and accomplishes very little if we don't make the personal practical application of it to our life.

Amen? So that's my prayer for us is that as we're studying this and as we go along, God will indeed speak to your heart, whatever your particular condition is spiritually and your particular need is, that God will speak to your heart and you can say, all right, God, I see that and so I just yield to you in this.

Yeah. Yeah. That's my desire. Amen? Amen? Amen? Thank you.