

Faith & Reason | Christ Pearls

Come Follow Me

August 3 - 9, 2026

“Thou Art Come ... for Such a Time as This”



Acrostic - E.S.T.H.E.R: Positioned by Providence, Prepared Through Fasting, And Called to Courage

Brief Overview

This week's Come Follow Me study focuses on Esther and how this book reveals the way the Lord works through circumstances that may initially appear accidental, ordinary, or even threatening. Esther did not begin her story as someone who appeared destined to influence an empire. She was an orphaned Jewish woman living among covenant people scattered throughout Persia. Regardless, a series of seemingly unrelated events brought Esther into the royal household at the precise moment her people faced destruction. Our study focus emphasizes this pattern of divine design, inviting us to consider how the Lord places His disciples in particular relationships, responsibilities, and circumstances where they can bless others.

The central question for us, therefore, is not merely, *Why did Esther become Queen?* The deeper question is, *What would Esther do with the position she had been given?* Her story teaches us that

divine placement requires spiritual preparation, courageous action, humility, wisdom, and faithful remembrance. Through the acrostic E.S.T.H.E.R., we discover how ordinary disciples may become instruments in the hands of God “*for such a time as this.*”

E - Embrace Your Divine Placement

Anchor verse: Esther 4:13-14 - *Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*

Esther did not choose the circumstances that shaped the beginning of her life. She did not choose to lose her parents, live as part of a displaced covenant community, enter the Persian royal court, or become queen under such complicated circumstances. Yet Mordecai helped her recognize that her present position might involve more than personal advancement or royal privilege. She may have come into the kingdom at the precise moment when her influence may be required to preserve the lives of others. A parallel we see with Joseph in Egypt.

Divine placement does not always mean that every painful circumstance was directly caused by God. It means that God is quite capable of meeting us in our own circumstances we may not have chosen and transforming them into opportunities for covenantal faithfulness. Our own history may explain where we've been, however, it does not disqualify us from what our Heavenly Father is asking us to do now. Esther's orphanhood did not cancel out her purpose or influence. Her exile did not place her beyond God's reach. Her position within a pagan empire did not prevent her from becoming an instrument of deliverance.

Sometimes, we search for our purpose and meaning in distant places while overlooking the people already standing before us. Our family, congregation and community fellowship, recovery community, workplaces, friendships, ministry responsibilities, and even our own personal wounds may place us near someone we are uniquely prepared to reach. The question is not only, ***Where would I rather be?*** It is also, ***Whom has the Lord placed within my reach where I am?*** Embracing our own divine placement means becoming spiritually attentive to the responsibility hidden within our present circumstances.

S - Seek the Lord Through Fasting

Anchor verse: Esther 4:15-16 - “*Go, gather together all the Jews ... and fast ye for me.*”

Esther did not rush from fear directly into action. Prior to entering the presence of the King, she called the Jewish community in Shushan to unite in fasting. She and her attendants fasted as well. The crisis was personal because Esther's own life was at risk, but it was also communal because the lives of her people were being threatened. Therefore, she refused to face the moment through political position, personal charm, or human strategy alone. She sought spiritual strength through collective sacrifice and dependence upon God.

Fasting is never a way to manipulate the Lord into granting our desires, and it was not a way to manipulate the Lord into granting Esther's desired outcome. She entered into a purposeful time of fasting as an expression of humility, surrender, unity, and trust. Recognizing she was not able to control how the King may respond; she was able to prepare carefully, approach with courage, and

make her request with wisdom. Yet she had no guarantee that the golden sceptre would be extended. Fasting helped her move from the illusion of control into faithful dependence. It prepared her heart to do what was right even when the result remained uncertain. The lesson manual similarly connects Esther's fast with trusting and relying upon the Lord.

Our most important decisions ought to never be powered by mere anxiety, urgency, or emotional reactivity. There are moments when we are to pause, gather spiritual strength, seek personal revelation, and invite trusted individuals to fast and pray with us. Fasting does not ever remove responsibility; it prepares us to carry out the responsibility given with greater humility. It helps us surrender appetites, fear, pride, resentment, and self-reliance so that our decisions may be shaped by the will and purpose of our Heavenly Father rather than the pressure of the moment.

T - Take Courageous Action

Anchor verses: Esther 4:16; 5:1-2 - *"I will go in unto the king."* | *"Esther ... stood in the inner court."*

Esther's fast eventually had to become necessary. Spiritual preparation was not a substitute for stepping into the inner court. Esther understood the danger clearly. Anyone who entered the king's presence without being summoned may be subject to death, unless the king extended the golden sceptre. She did not deny the risk, minimize the consequences, or pretend that she was unafraid. After the fast, Esther put on her royal apparel, entered the court, and stood where the king could see her. The king then extended the sceptre, and Esther was permitted to approach.

Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is the decision that faithfulness matters more than fear. Esther's declaration, "If I perish, I perish," was not reckless despair. It was the surrender of the outcome after she had prepared herself spiritually and accepted her responsibility. She could not know whether she would survive, but she knew that silence would leave her people exposed. Courage meant moving forward without possessing complete control over what would happen next.

There are times when prayer must lead us into a difficult conversation, a needed boundary, an honest confession, an act of advocacy, or a stand for truth. We may pray for courage while continuing to avoid the place where courage is required. Esther reminds us that eventually we must enter the court. Faith becomes visible when we take the next right step while trusting God with the consequences. We do not need to feel completely fearless. We need to become willing to obey faithfully.

H — Humble the Heart Before Pride Destroys It

Anchor Verses: Esther 5:9–13; 7:9–10 - *"Yet all this availeth me nothing."*

Esther and Mordecai demonstrate covenant courage, but Haman reveals the destructive power of pride and uncontrolled anger. Haman possessed wealth, influence, royal promotion, social standing, a large family, and access to the king. He had even been invited to dine privately with the king and queen. Yet none of it satisfied him because Mordecai would not rise and honor him. One man's refusal consumed Haman so completely that every other blessing became meaningless.

Pride narrows our vision until one wounded expectation becomes larger than every evidence of grace. Haman did not simply want respect; he demanded reverence. He did not merely resent Mordecai; he allowed his resentment to grow into a plan to destroy an entire people. His anger expanded because his pride continually told him that his humiliation was unbearable and that vengeance was justified. The gallows he prepared for Mordecai eventually became the place of his own downfall.

Haman's story invites us to examine what we allow to control our emotional life. Are we unable to enjoy what God has given because one person failed to affirm us? Are we rehearsing an offense until resentment begins shaping our identity? Are we demanding recognition, apology, agreement, or submission before we will experience peace? Humility does not pretend that wrongdoing is acceptable, but it refuses to allow wounded pride to become the ruler of the heart. What we refuse to surrender may eventually become the instrument of our own spiritual destruction.

E — Exercise Wisdom in Timing and Speech

Anchor Verses: Esther 5:4–8; 7:3–6 - *“Let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.”*

Esther possessed courage, but her courage was governed by wisdom. She did not enter the court and immediately released every detail of the conspiracy in one emotional outburst. She invited the king and Haman to a banquet and then requested that they attend another. When the appropriate moment arrived, she made her appeal clearly and personally. She identified herself with the endangered people, described what had been decreed against them, and finally named Haman as the adversary responsible for the plot.

Wisdom is not cowardice, manipulation, or avoidance. Wisdom considers timing, setting, audience, language, and purpose. Esther understood that speaking truth effectively sometimes requires more than possessing the correct information. It requires discernment concerning how and when that truth should be presented. She did not dilute the seriousness of Haman's actions, but neither did she allow panic to dictate her approach. Her words were measured, direct, and focused upon preserving life.

Disciples of Jesus Christ are called to speak truth, but we are also called to speak with wisdom, grace, and self-control. An accurate statement delivered recklessly may create unnecessary resistance. A difficult truth spoken only to humiliate someone may reveal more about our pride than our courage. Esther's example invites us to ask: What outcome am I seeking? Am I speaking to protect, restore, warn, or advocate—or merely to discharge my anger? Courage gives us the strength to speak. Wisdom helps us speak in a way that serves truth rather than ego.

R — Remember the Lord's Reversal and Rejoice in Deliverance

Anchor Verses: Esther 9:20–22 - *“From sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day.”*

The story of Esther moves through a series of dramatic reversals. The man marked for execution is honored. The man seeking honor is exposed. The gallows prepared for Mordecai receive Haman.

People marked for destruction are given the opportunity to stand for their lives. Mourning becomes gladness, fear gives way to rest, and the threatened community establishes a recurring memorial of its deliverance.

Mordecai instructed the Jewish people to remember their deliverance through the annual observance of Purim. Their remembrance was not meant to remain private or sentimental. They celebrated through feasting, sharing portions with one another, and giving gifts to the poor. Deliverance produced generosity. The memory of what they had survived became a reason to strengthen community and care for those who possessed less.

We also need practices of faithful remembrance. When the crisis passes, we are often tempted to return quickly to ordinary life and forget how the Lord sustained us. Spiritual remembrance protects us from pride because it reminds us that we did not deliver ourselves. It also protects us from despair because past faithfulness becomes evidence that the Lord can meet us in future uncertainty. We remember properly when gratitude becomes worship, testimony becomes encouragement, and received mercy becomes mercy extended to others.

Summary of Thought

Esther's story is not merely about a courageous queen living in an ancient Persian court. It is about what happens when a disciple recognizes that privilege carries responsibility, preparation must eventually become action, and personal safety cannot always remain the highest priority. Esther was positioned within reach of the king, but position alone did not save anyone. She had to identify with her people, seek spiritual strength, confront fear, act with wisdom, and place her life in the service of others.

Her story also warns us that influence can produce very different outcomes depending upon the condition of the heart. Esther used her position to preserve life. Haman used his position to satisfy pride and destroy those who offended him. One surrendered influence to a purpose larger than herself; the other used influence to enlarge himself. The contrast invites us to consider what our own authority, platforms, relationships, experiences, and spiritual gifts are producing.

Esther's willingness to place her life at risk for her people also reflects a deeply Christlike pattern of intercession. This should not be forced into a one-to-one allegory, but it naturally directs disciples toward Jesus Christ, who did not merely risk His life but willingly gave His life to deliver us. Because we have received grace through Christ, we are called to become people who step toward the threatened, speak for the vulnerable, resist destructive pride, and use whatever influence we possess to bless and preserve others.

Application and Takeaways

- **Your present circumstances may contain a responsibility you have not yet recognized.** Ask whom the Lord has placed within your reach.
- **Prepare spiritually before responding emotionally.** Some decisions require fasting, prayer, counsel, and the surrender of control.
- **Courage must eventually become action.** Identify the inner court you have been avoiding and take the next faithful step.

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- **Guard your heart against Haman's pattern.** Do not allow wounded pride, resentment, or the desire for recognition to consume every other blessing.
 - **Speak truth with both courage and wisdom.** Consider the right timing, setting, purpose, and spirit.
 - **Remember deliverance through generosity.** Let the mercy you have received become encouragement, service, and care for others.

The enduring question of Esther is not simply whether God has brought us to a particular moment. The question is whether we will recognize the moment, prepare our hearts, and faithfully answer the call:

Who knoweth whether thou art come to this place, this relationship, this responsibility, and this season—for such a time as this?