



## The Purpose – Lesson 2

### Entering the Hard Places With Confidence

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*Read Esther 5*

*Why me? Why here? Why now?* These are questions we often ask God when He calls us to be brave in less-than-ideal situations, when we wake up on that third day and **it's time to take a step of faith and move from the preparation stage to actually doing the hard things for God.** But Esther steered away from doubt and drama, and instead responded courageously with, "Then I will go."

**From preparation to service. Coming out of our comfort zones and walking into the hard places.** Surely we don't want to look back on our lives and realize that in all of our hiding and avoiding and wishing hard things away, we missed out on key opportunities to be used by God. At some point we actually have to get up, show up, and with much wisdom and trust in the One who holds the world in His hands, engage in the hard places He has called us to.

**How can we confidently enter the hard places God has called us to, and become women that God can use?** Together, let's learn from Esther Chapter 5:

- 1. A woman God can use in the hard places is willing to take that brave first step...** It's one thing to *say* you'll do hard things, but it's quite another to take that first step and stand in the "inner court," risking it all. At the beginning of Esther 5, we see her *entering in* to approach the king. A woman God can use does more than just talk. After [proper preparation](#), she turns ideas into action, follows through with her commitments, and doesn't let fear stand in the way of her taking that first brave step, *because she knows that the battle is the Lord's (Prov 21:31).*
- 2. A woman God can use in the hard places knows when to speak and when to remain silent...** The Bible is packed full of verses that talk about the tongue and its power. It has the potential to be used for good, but there is also great danger in speaking many words (Prov. 10:19). I find it beautiful, refreshing, and convicting that as Esther enters the inner court of the king's

palace, she wins the favor of the king *without even speaking a word*. A woman God can use knows when to speak and when to remain silent, *because she knows it is God alone who has the power to move in the hearts of kings (Prov. 21:1)*.

**3. A woman that God can use in the hard places earns respect instead of demanding it...** In Esther 5, we see a stark contrast between the way Esther appears before the king and the manner in which Haman handles Mordecai's irreverence to him. Esther is humble, deliberate, and wise in her approach, while Haman responds with pride, wrath, and vengeance. A woman that God can use earns respect instead of demanding it, *because she finds her identity and worth in Christ instead of from the things of this world (Col. 3:3)*.

**4. A woman that God can use in the hard places knows that God's purpose for her life isn't just about her...** The favor that is on Esther's life to this point is really extraordinary. This girl has gone from orphan to Queen, and in chapter 5, Xerxes is willing to offer her even up to half of his kingdom. But Esther doesn't settle for comfort, and she's not easily swayed by fame and riches. Esther remembers the task to which she has been called, and she remembers the lives that are at stake. A woman that God can use knows that God's purpose for her life isn't just about her, ***because she remembers a world in need of a Savior (1 Cor. 15:57)***.

### **Conclusion:**

It's one thing to prepare to be used by God, but it's quite another to take that brave step into the hard places when God says "Go!" The good news is that with the Lord on our side and our eyes fixed on Him, we can go forward in great confidence. A woman God can use in the hard places steps forward in action, is wise in her interactions, and is God-, others-, and Great Commission-focused.

### **Reflect:**

- Are you resisting in any area where God is asking you to step out and take action? Pray and ask God to help you identify what is holding you back, confess any misplaced fear/idols, and ask Him to increase your faith and confidence in His provision as you take that first step.
- In what specific ways can you earn the respect of others? Would others consider your current approach humble and wise, or prideful and demanding?
- Spend time searching your heart to evaluate what you treasure most – comfort or obedience; worldly or eternal riches; praise from God or man. Where do you need to surrender worldly expectation/gain in order to be more effectively used by God?