

Message #10

Esther 5:1-8

Proverbs 25:11 says, “Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances.”

The clear implication of this proverb is when dealing with people, there are right ways and times to approach certain situations and there are wrong ways and times to approach certain situations.

Imagine what it would be like to have to go before a manager and convince him not to destroy you or your people. You can’t afford to make one mistake in timing, actions or words. Do one wrong thing at this meeting and you will lose your life. That is the pressure that faced Esther as we come to chapter five.

ESTHER ULTIMATELY ACCOMPLISHED HER OBJECTIVE FROM A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE BECAUSE OF HER PREPARATION, HER PLAN AND HER PATIENCE .

There is no question that God was behind this whole plan; but from a human perspective, Esther does everything right in order to make her sales pitch and accomplish her objective.

Here is a textbook example of how to succeed in any area of life, including spiritually. Here is the right way to win when the stakes are high.

HEADING #1 – The preparation of Esther. 5:1

Way #1 - She prepared herself spiritually. 5:1a

Esther had all Jews from Susa fasting on her behalf, and she herself had fasted. For three days she was faced with the possibility of her own death. She knew a lot depended on her and she knew that a critical key to success was her own spiritual condition.

Before any of us dare approach the King of Kings and request things, it is mandatory that we check our own spiritual condition. God has specifically said He will not answer the request of one who is not spiritually right with Him (Micah 3:4). The decision to answer prayer ultimately is God’s; but if we want to increase our chances for a positive answer, it is critical that we see that our spiritual life is in order, just like Esther.

Way #2 - She prepared herself physically. 5:1b

Esther knew the king had two major weaknesses, both of which she will use to increase her chances for a positive answer—1) Good wine; 2) Beautiful women.

Her clothing would have been expensive and exquisite.

All of us can learn some very practical lessons from this:

- 1) The better you look, the more you increase your odds for success with high-ranking people.
- 2) It is not wrong or vain to do what you humanly can to increase your odds for success.
- 3) We will all appear before the King and we should make our lives as beautiful as possible as we prepare for that day.

HEADING #2 – The permission of the king. **5:2-3**

The first hurdle Esther needed to get over was the hurdle of appearing before the king, unasked or unannounced and not lose her life. According to Persian law, if any man or woman came before the king unannounced, if the king held out the scepter, he/she would live; if he didn't, he/she would die. King Ahasuerus was pleased by Esther's presence and beauty and he extended what we may call the "scepter of grace" to her and she lived.

She was so pleasing to him that he offered her half of the whole kingdom. There is no question that rank does have and should have a large percentage of compensation and remuneration. Esther was a faithful, loyal, beautiful woman of God and twice in this context Ahasuerus says he is prepared to give her 50% of the entire kingdom (**5:3, 6**).

Those who are faithful and loyal to God and those who make their lives beautiful in the sight of God are those heading for major compensation and remuneration someday when they get before the King. Jesus Christ will give great rewards and a high level of compensation for those who appear beautiful in His sight.

HEADING #3 – The plan of Esther. **5:4-6**

Esther knew that the king loved wine-drinking banquets, so she invited Ahasuerus and Haman to one she had prepared. Esther knew of the risks involved in these banquets, for it was a banquet which caused Vashti to be denounced as queen and caused Esther to be promoted.

There is much speculation as to why she wanted Haman present. Her ultimate purpose for this banquet was to expose and eliminate Haman from his diabolical plot.

Esther at this point could have tipped her hand, but she decided that the timing wasn't just right yet.

HEADING #4 – The petition of Esther. **5:7-8**

It is not known for sure why Esther, from a human perspective, requested one more banquet before she made her request. Perhaps she was thinking that one more party certainly is something the king would enjoy.

Perhaps she was trying to buy more time so she could have a little more courage. Certainly the fact that she asked these two to come to another banquet would raise the level of curiosity and expectancy and it would also build Haman's ego and pride.

What we do know is that God was in Esther's decision to delay. It will be this very delay that God will use that very night to speak to the king's heart (i.e. 6:1-3).

When we are after an objective and when we are right with God, we need to give God time to work.

There are times when we should immediately act, but there are also times when we need to wait awhile.

There are many lessons to be learned from this text:

- 1) Before battle we should carefully prepare ourselves spiritually and physically.
- 2) Before we make requests we should make ourselves look as presentable as possible.
- 3) Before making requests we should purpose to do something the leader likes.
- 4) There are times when confrontations should be made in the presence of the opponent and the leader.
- 5) God's timing will always wind up being the best timing.
- 6) The highest stake of all is eternity. It is worth risking everything for, including your very life.