

The Gathering Community Group Guide

Brave // Week 6 // Expose the Enemy

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Esther 7

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. TAKE TIME BEFORE GROUP TO GO OVER THIS GUIDE.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

Finally, after a multitude of chapters and a couple of banquets, Esther pulls off the biggest reveal of the book and exposes the enemy, Haman, for who he really is. It's exhilarating and full of tension, and the whole process reminds of some things that are good to be aware of if we're going to be brave like Esther and expose the enemy:

1. **If we're going to expose the enemy, we need to know who the enemy is:** I spent some time this past week with a veteran of the Vietnam War, and he told me that the hardest part of that war was not having a clear enemy. Sometimes as followers of Jesus, we forget who the enemy is and we go around exposing people instead of the real enemies: the world, the flesh and the devil. Ironically, "other people who don't agree with me and get on my nerves" isn't mentioned in Scripture as an enemy.
2. **If we're going to expose the enemy, we need to know who's got our back:** I can't speak for you, but I'm not going into a fight with an enemy without knowing who's with me, and just like Esther took her enemy to her king, so do we, because ultimately, if someone is an enemy of God's children, then they've made themselves an enemy of his, too. God will protect his throne, his kingdom and his kids.
3. **If we're going to expose the enemy, we need to accept that there's a price to pay:** The chapter ends with the king's wrath being appeased because Haman was killed. Obviously, our King isn't a madman looking for a pound of flesh, but if we're his enemy, there is a price to pay, and either we're going to pay it, or we're going to accept that Jesus did on the cross.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- What, if any, is your takeaway from this week's message?
- Read Ephesians 6:12 and discuss the following question: if the Bible clearly states that our enemy isn't other people, why is it so easy to fall for the lie that it is? What are the damages that we suffer if we live our lives believing that our struggle is against "flesh and blood?"
- One of our enemies is the world. How can we enjoy life and yet not give our allegiance to a corrupt worldview? What insight do we gain from Romans 12:2; Galatians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 10:2-5?
- One way we can expose the enemy of our flesh is by living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). While we may still have fleshly desires, how does the Spirit help us to live victoriously and not GRATIFY those desires? What do we learn from Galatians 5:24-25?
- Do we have to defeat Satan (see Colossians 2:15)? What are we told to do (look up Ephesians 6:11 and 1 Peter 5:9)? How did Jesus resist Satan in Matthew 4:4, 7, and 10? What is the only offensive weapon that we've been given in our armor (see Ephesians 6:17)?
- What enemies are you facing right now? What about our culture/nation? Read Psalm 34:19; Psalm 91:7; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9; and Philipians 4:6-7 and then expose them to the King in prayer.