

THE BIG IDEA: Jesus took your place so he could give you grace.

The Take-Off

When I say, “The Big Reveal,” what comes to your mind?

Maybe something unnerving, like a wardrobe malfunction during a Super Bowl halftime show.

Maybe you think of shows where people come home to find a total makeover.

Maybe you think of physical makeovers and the day that families are surprised by a loved one’s new look.

But whatever you think of, Big Reveals either cause us to hold our breath or they take our breath away.

Sometimes, they do both.

This morning, we’re going to find a big reveal in Esther 7, and I just want to share a few observations that we can make in Esther’s story and hopefully help all of us see some parallels to our own.

The overarching theme of this chapter

1. **If we’re going to expose the enemy, we need to know who the enemy is**
 - a. I got to spend some time with a veteran of the Vietnam War this past week
 - b. He shared that the hardest part of that battle was not having a clear understanding of the enemy
 - c. The kid that sold you food in the market could be the same kid who tried to blow you up that night
 - d. We can’t expose what we don’t know, and so just like Esther clearly called out Haman, I want to help us clearly call out our enemies.
 - e. The Bible mentions 3:
 - a. the world - 1 John 2:15-17
 - i. not the physical world we live in or the people in that world
 - ii. the spiritual worldliness that makes a godless world my goal
 - iii. external temptations
 - b. the flesh - Galatians 5:16-21
 - i. flesh refers to our sinful nature
 - ii. Mark Driscoll defines it as “our fallen internal resistance to obey God”
 - iii. if the world is external temptations, then the flesh is internal temptations
 - c. the devil - 1 Peter 5:8
 - i. best way to defeat him is the same way Jesus did in Matthew 4 - know and quote Scripture!
 - ii. if the world is external temptations, and the flesh is internal temptations, the the devil would be demonic temptations
 - f. We could spend the rest of the day talking about how to defeat these enemies, but a lot of that will take place this week in Community Groups as you talk through the questions on the back of your note sheets
 - g. But let me sum this section up some critical observations:
 - a. people aren’t mentioned as an enemy, not even the ones “who don’t agree with me and bug me”
 - b. many Christians are way too quick to blame the devil when what they’re really struggling with is the world around them or their flesh within them
 - c. when we know the enemy and we expose the enemy, it’s not time to be cute - be direct!
 - i. call a spade a spade
 - ii. Esther 7:6 / Esther didn’t hold back “this vile Haman”
 - iii. stop calling your enemy a “weakness,” a “struggle,” or a “bad choice”
 - iv. call it sin and expose it
 - h. Now, before we go into a full-on political, anti-everything hand clap on that, let me show you the next thing
2. **If we’re going to expose the enemy, we need to know who’s got our back**
 - a. Esther didn’t broadcast this news about her enemy to the media or on her blog
 - b. She went straight to the king, and we’d be smart to learn from her
 - c. Nobody goes into a fight without first knowing who is going with him
 - d. We’ve got to know who’s got our back [show picture of baby with dog]
 - e. Esther was smart enough to make sure she had the king on her side
 - a. if I’ve found favor, if it pleases your majesty
 - b. spare my life, my people
 - c. we’ve been sold and attacked

- f. Esther knew this proud king would be furious with anyone who attacked him through her
- g. When she finally exposed the enemy - Haman - she knew the king had her back
- h. So does your king!
 - a. Psalm 140:12
 - b. Proverbs 22:22-23
 - c. Proverbs 23:10-11
 - d. Jeremiah 51:36
 - e. Romans 12:17-19
- i. Like Esther, we need to learn to leave room for the king to step in and defend us against our enemies

3. If we're going to expose the enemy, we need to accept that there's a price to pay

- a. This weekend we celebrate Memorial Day, and it's a time for our nation to honor the memory of countless men and women who for years understood the same thing that Esther did: when there's an enemy, someone is probably going to die.
- b. There's a price to pay in order to expose and destroy our enemies, whether it's Haman, the world, the flesh, the devil or another country attacking freedom
- c. Please notice that what satisfied the wrath of King Xerxes was the death of Haman
- d. Now, our King isn't a bloodthirsty madman, but sin demands a price, and either we're paying it or we're accepting by faith that Jesus paid it on the cross
- e. Romans 5:6-11
 - a. Esther didn't seek the death of Haman, but she also didn't volunteer to die in his place
 - b. She was willing to die for her people, but Jesus died for you and me when we were his enemies (v. 10)
- f. The beauty of the gospel isn't that enemies of the King are called out, but that enemies of the King are made children of the King because of the death of the King.
- g. Jesus took our place, not just to save us, but to change us.
- h. No longer his enemies, we've become friends of God because of the grace of God.
- i. Jesus paid the price to make us family, and that changes everything.

The Landing

Jesus took your place so he could give you grace.

Think about that. You and I were enemies of the King, exposed for the sinners that we were, and as the king pronounced the death sentence, Jesus stepped in and said, "Wait. I know that the presence of an enemy means that someone has to die, and I'll be that person."

He exposed us, and then he chose us anyway.

That is grace, and I want to close out this morning giving you the chance to respond to it.

Let's pray.