

THE BIG IDEA: God's qualification of you is more powerful than any limitation on you.

The Take-Off

Today is the day that I've equally anticipated and dreaded since the beginning of our series in Esther 10 weeks ago. It's the day when I try to wrap up 10 weeks worth of truths and Big Ideas into one easy to remember takeaway. And so, just in case you've joined us on the last day of the series, allow me to give you one final recap of what we've seen as we've journeyed through Esther and learned about being brave:

We live in a world of bad kings who make bad choices that can affect us badly.

King Xerxes was one of them, and his choices were motivated by his desires and caused all kinds of hurt.

But even good people make bad choices, and God is able to redeem them. Esther and Mordecai are two of them.

We've seen that there are sharks in the water, people who should have the theme song from Jaws play when they walk in the room because they want nothing more than to destroy us, and when that happens, it forces us to reveal who we are and it requires that we approach the throne of our king for help

Maybe the biggest lesson we've seen to this point is that even when we stop fighting God, we don't stop fighting because there is an enemy, and we need to allow God to position us as far upstream as he wants in order for us to influence the course of culture around us.

Once there, we fight, but not for victory. As children of the kingdom of Jesus, we fight from victory courageously, unselfishly and with humility.

1. **The Disney lie we've all bought even though we know it isn't true**
 - a. I love the honesty of the Bible, the way it doesn't try to hide the hard stuff
 - b. After an amazing story like Esther full of epic twists and turns, chapter 10 reveals that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Can you relate?
 - c. For all that happened, the bad king in chapter 1 is still the bad king in chapter 10
 - d. That's hard for us because we live in a Disney culture that truly believes that if we hang in there long enough, no matter how bad it may get, eventually we'll live happily ever after
 - e. But sometimes, that's not the way it works
 - f. The end of Esther is much more likely. We have great moments of triumph and yet, at the end of the day, it feels like we're still stuck with the same old situations. Same boss, spouse, bank account, etc.
 - g. Remember how Xerxes was at the beginning?
 - i. everybody served his desires
 - ii. wanted to bring out his trophy Queen
 - iii. agreed to Haman's plan for The Purge because he wanted all that blood money
 - h. Now, at the end, he hasn't changed on bit
 - i. still recording all his mighty deeds in the book of annals
 - ii. claiming all the credit for raising Mordecai to greatness
 - iii. taking everyone in the empire to get the money that he didn't get when Haman's plan failed
2. **It's only confusing if we think we're God**
 - a. It's easy to feel like, "so what?" - to wonder what the point was, isn't it?
 - b. We've seen a powerful, sovereign, limitless God and so we think that should make us limitless, too
 - c. All throughout the story, Esther and Mordecai faced limitations
 - i. she was an orphan
 - ii. she was poor
 - iii. they were Jews
 - iv. he was forgotten
 - v. he was misunderstood
 - vi. he was conspired against
 - vii. she was more property than person
 - viii. he was a day and she was months from death
 - d. But at the end of the book, Mordecai and Esther still face a limitation. So do we.
 - e. For them it was Xerxes. For us it's any number of things: our sin, our past, our doubts, our inability.

- f. It can be so confusing to try and understand how we could still face limitations when God is limitless, but it's only confusing if we think we're God, and that goes back to the very first thing we learned when we started this series: we need to be brave, stage a coup, and kick ourselves off the throne of our lives!
- g. Limitations are frustrating, but not when you understand what Mordecai and Esther came to know: there may be limitations on me, but there's a sovereign, unlimited God who is greater than my limits.

3. What to do when the best we can do is murder and stutter

- a. Let me show you a biblical example before we start to wrap this Brave series up
- b. Back in Exodus chapters 3 and 4, there was a man called by God to deliver a nation
- c. But he had some limitations: he was a murderer, and he stuttered (Exodus 4:10)
- d. As long as he focused on what limited him, he'd never see what a limitless God could do through him
- e. But the story of Moses shows that God doesn't call the qualified, he qualifies the called, and it's proof of what a limited Esther and Mordecai learned in their story, too.
- f. **God's qualification of you is more powerful than any limitation on you.**
- g. That's our Big Idea, too, for this morning and probably for the whole series.
- h. It's what I want you to take away from the past 10 weeks.
- i. Our limits may not go away, but they won't get in God's way.
- j. All it requires is giving our limitations to him and trusting his sovereignty to work through them.
- k. "Hey, Moses. What's in your hand?"
- l. God asks the same of us, and when we give him what we have - limitations and all - he does the amazing

The Landing

As we land this series, I want to take the time to show you a modern-day illustration of this principle. I trust that it will tie all of what we've learned together, and then I'll close it up at the end.

[Video - Stuttering comedian gets golden buzzer]

This is the gospel that we've seen in Esther, isn't it?

A poor orphan girl turned Queen stands before a king facing death and he extends life instead.

The Jews face extinction and instead have a celebration

At the cross, God faced our greatest limitation - sin - head on and "pushed the golden buzzer" to give us access to the king

The key to breaking through your limitations isn't trying to see yourself as limitless, but to see that you serve a God who is, and he can place you anywhere he wants to in order to bring life to others around you.

He's called you, he's qualified you, and **God's qualification of you is more powerful than any limitation on you.**

Let's pray.