

## PART Five: ICNU // Esther

### //INTRODUCTION//

We are in week Five, the final week of our series, "ICNU." Over the past five weeks we have been looking at various stories in the Old Testament that all have the common thread of: God sees in us what we sometimes do not yet see in ourselves. This week we are going to be looking at the story of Esther. Esther is the only book of the Bible that never mentions God. Nonetheless, God is still a part of the story, named or unnamed, and He uses Esther and Mordecai in the salvation of His people. God saw in Esther (just like He does in me and you) a person who is where she is for an urgent missional reason.

### //WEEKEND REWIND//

As you have had time to reflect and think about this past week's message, what are the things that either challenged you or caused you to take action in your own life?

### //WEEKLY REVIEW//

Read Esther 4:1-17

Esther risked her life by coming before the King. Her courageous act gives us a model to follow in approaching a difficult or dangerous task. While the book of Esther does not mention God by name or title, His presence fills the pages. Esther and Mordecai believed in God's care, and because they acted in the right time, God used them to save His people. When we face challenges in life, we need to seek to know what God wants us to do and then act on it, having confidence He will do His part. We don't know ahead of time how He will accomplish His will. But we can trust God and prepare to be surprised by the ways He demonstrates His trustworthiness.

1. *"God seeks to use the stories of ordinary people to bring radical hope to our world."* How has God either prepared you to use or has used your story to bring hope to a friend, family or co-worker?

### //DISCUSSION QUESTIONS//

2. Who in your life might God be speaking through currently?

**SUGGESTED ANSWER:** Jesus can speak through secular stuff, my non-Christian friends, tragedies, things that aren't overtly "Holy" or "Church Related."

- Maybe you don't feel like God's had an ICNU moment with you, but He's been trying to: through other people.
- Look for opportunities for God to use "Mordecais" in our lives to speak into us.

### 3. What are you currently putting off till 'someday?'

**SUGGESTED ANSWERS:** When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape." Esther fears for her life if she approaches the king without permission; and yet even if she doesn't act, her life is still on the line, just for a different reason. God doesn't want us to put off His call on our lives for "someday." Someday can be the most dangerous word in the world.

Don't underestimate the power of the word someday.

- Someday, I'll *go back to school*.
- Someday, I'll find a *better job*.
- Someday, I'll *get in shape*.
- Someday, I'll *start my own business*.
- Someday I'll start working on my *marriage*.
- Someday I'll *reconcile* with that person I used to be close with.
- Someday I'll *give my life to Christ*. Not today, but someday.

We all have someday stories, don't we? Many times, most times, I'd say, someday never comes.

- Someday I'll invite my neighbor to church.
- Someday I'll be the parent my kids so desperately need.
- Someday I'll get some help for my drinking problem, my depression, my addiction.
- Someday I'll tell them how much they mean to me.

Instead of using the someday excuse, Esther received and embraced a better word: TODAY.

4. "*God puts us in positions and places so we can help others.*" Who has God placed in your life to tell them their ICNU moment?
5. "*God has an ICNU moment for all of us.*" As we conclude this five-week study what is the ICNU moment you believe God has for you?

### **//MOVING FORWARD//**

You are WHO you are; you are WHERE you are, for such a time as this. You are at your school, in your family, in your neighborhood, in your community, in your workplace, with your friends for such a time as this. Someone needs God's love; someone needs Jesus' touch in their life through you. Today. God is challenging you to step into action, and to live out your faith with reckless abandon. Your ICNU moment is today.

### **//CLOSING PRAYER//**

Take time to pray together and for each other as a group. Also, pray that God would give each person in your group the strength and courage they need to step out in faith and live out their ICNU moment.

### **//CHANGING YOUR MIND//**

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." **Ephesians 2:10** [NIV]