



May 18, 2014
A New Name but
an Old Enemy
Esther 3

Leader option: *Sharing Your Story* as part of sharing God's story of grace and mercy.

Discuss: With what things do you often identify yourself: a job, a doctrinal or political position, a denomination, a role in the church, a hobby, a role within the family?

The story so far:

Esther's life so far has been remarkable. She was the orphan of Jewish exiles, was raised by her cousin Mordecai in Persia, a foreign and often hostile land. It *just so happened* that the first queen, Vashti was deposed. Esther *just happened* to be selected to be the queen of the realm. Mordecai *just happened* to hear about an assassination conspiracy against the king, saving the king's life. This event was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

At this point, a new character is introduced into the story: Haman the Agagite. Haman was given great authority by the king.

Read Esther 3:1-6.

[Q] What are the signs that Haman is an enemy of the Jews?

<p>Agagite: an Amalekite from the tribe of Agag. Centuries before, Israel defeated and executed King Agag (1 Samuel 15:32-33). The then king of Israel, Saul, was of the tribe of Benjamin (Mordecai's tribe).</p>

[Q] What are the signs that Mordecai is a man of principle and courage?

Read Esther 3:7-15.

[Q] What three words are used to describe what was commanded to be done to the Jews? (v. 13)

[Q] How is Haman like Jesus' description of Satan in John 10:10 and John 8:44? What does Haman lie about?

As we will see, Haman was ultimately defeated and judged. We also know that our enemies, Satan and the antichrist, will be conquered by Jesus Christ and thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:11– 20; 20:10).

Apply

How can Christians today boldly face the powers of evil? From the weekend message:

“the key to resisting and defeating the enemy of God is to know who you are in Christ!”

The apostle Paul uses the phrase *in Christ* or *in Him* 147 times in his New Testament letters. These phrases confirm our position in the family of God because we have put our faith in Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection to save us. Truly understanding and believing who we are *in Christ* directly affects our Christian growth.

Fill in your name in Colossians 2:9-10:

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and _____
has been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.*

[Q] What do learn about your identity according to Romans 8:31-39?

[Q] What are you facing?

- Fear
- Anxiety
- Worry
- Injustice
- People or groups who appear stronger than you
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[Q] As you face these things, share specific ideas on how will you remind yourself (and others) of who you are in Christ. How will you *marinate* your brain with God’s Word?

See more on your identity in Christ at valleycommunity.cc/identity.

Pray

Colossians 1:11-14:

¹¹ May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (ESV)

Stay tuned: The situation of the Jews in the Persian Empire is not hopeless, for God has two people prepared and in place —Mordecai and Queen Esther— and He is ready to act with an even greater power than the Persian Empire. God is at work protecting, preserving, and saving the Jews from destruction.