

# Your Pride and Bitterness Will Destroy You

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles, if you would, and turn with me to Esther chapter 5. Esther chapter 5, and we're going to see just a wonderfully exciting story this morning. Everybody knows the story of Esther, I'm sure by now, has become pretty commonplace to you.

But here's what's going on. Esther is a Jewish girl. Her cousin, kind of stepdad, is also a Jewish guy. And in the kingdom, Haman hates the Jews because he hates Mordecai, and he wants him dead.

And so they have now passed a proclamation that on a certain day, every Jewish person, man and woman, boy and girl, young and old, it doesn't matter who you are, babies, everybody that's Jewish will be killed.

Now behind the scenes, that's a big deal. Because God has this eternal plan that will bring through Abraham, through Isaac, through Jacob, he will bring the Messiah.

He will bring the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, through the line of those Jewish people. And all of a sudden, somebody wants to extinguish them, but God's not about to allow that to happen.

[ 1 : 11 ] And so in the story, in the story, as Haman makes his move, God is moving. Behind the scenes, God is at work. And so God's going to stop that.

So now the rule has been passed. And Mordecai has understood there's only one way we're going to solve this problem. Esther, who is a Jewish girl, and nobody knows it yet, she's married to the king.

So she needs to go in and talk to the king. And if she could talk to the king, maybe the king would do something to save the Jewish people. So when Mordecai tells Esther that, Esther said, well, not as easy as you think.

There's a rule here that I'm not even allowed to see my husband without him inviting me. And it's been over 30 days that he hasn't invited me to come in and speak to him.

And so she says, I don't know. If I step in there, he'll just have me killed. Right there in the doorway, he could have me killed. And he said, well, lady, it doesn't matter. We got to do something. We're all dead anyway.

[ 2 : 07 ] So you better figure out what we're going to do. And she said, well, let's get everybody to fast. Fast. Let's ask everybody to ask God for me, that God would help me be able to do that. And so she fasted.

And on about the third day of this fast, she sends word, today's the day. And she gets all decked out. She puts on her royal garment. She puts on her perfume. She dresses up. She puts on her crown.

And she knows that she is about to step into the throne room where the king is sitting. And she walks in the door and steps just inside the courtyard and just stands there. And the king looks around and notices her.

And he lifts his scepter. And she touches the end of the scepter. And he says to her, good to see you. You can have anything you want up to half the kingdom.

You know, I don't know if they ever really meant that. But when they said that, it was like, you can have anything you want within reason. Kind of like when you tell your grandkids they can have anything you want. And they do think they get the kingdom. Amen. And so she said, well, all I'd like to do is could I invite you and Haman to come over for a banquet.

[ 3 : 07 ] I want to prepare a special banquet for you. And the king said, well, so what you want me to do is come to a banquet and have a nice meal. And she said, yeah, I'm going to fix it up really nice for you.

He said, well, okay, we do that. Haman, get ready. We're going to her house. Haman is so excited. He is like, man, I am special. And he gets up and he's ready to go home.

And as he walks out of his office, he comes across the corridor and there is Haman. Now, everybody's supposed to bow down to Haman. Or there's Mordecai. And everybody's supposed to bow down to Haman when he comes in the room.

You got to show respect where respect is due. It's kind of like independent baddest pastors sometimes. They just really demand it. Bless God, you will treat me this way and you will talk to him. So he walks across the hall. And when he does, Mordecai just sits there.

You know, go on by. Doesn't bow to him. Doesn't stand up and show him any respect. And he is so mad. He is furious. God, I'm going to take him out. But he says he held it back in.

[ 4 : 03 ] And he got home and he sends word to call his wife and all his buddies. And they all come over to the house together. When they get to the house, he says, let's talk. And they get to the house and they start to, he said, I just need to tell you all, man, I am somebody.

You guys know me. I am the man. I am the man. You see how much money I got and all the kids I got. By the way, the king, the king, he has promoted me more than he has emails in his kingdom.

I mean, I am the man. He has advanced me and he's promoted me. You're not going to believe this last one. But even his wife, when she invites her husband for a special banquet, wants me there.

But I can't stand it. That Mordecai, he will not stand up and show me respect. And no matter how good I got it, no matter how good I got it, I want him dead.

I can't be happy. With all this going on in my life, I can't be happy. His wife said, well, honey, I tell you what, I got an idea. Won't you build a real tall gallows and just have him killed in front of everybody?

[ 5 : 07 ] Good idea. He's already going to die. He's already got his death sentence signed. Good idea. I'll have him killed. And so he builds the gallows. And that's where we end the story today. Come back next week.

You want the rest of it. Now open your Bibles if you would. And let's work through this chapter 5 if you would with me. But let me tell you before we start that this story illustrates several truths that are taught all through scriptures.

You should go home knowing and thinking about this as you go home. Number one, if you dig the pit, you fall in it. If you dig the pit, you fall in it. You could say it better for Esther, the book of Esther.

If you build the gallows, you're going to die there. But anyway, it doesn't say that. Look if you went at Psalm chapter 7 and verse 14. The Bible said, Behold, he travaileth with iniquity.

And he works with iniquity. And he conceives mischief. And he brings forth falsehood. He made a pit. And he digged it. And has fallen into the ditch which he made. He built a ditch.

[ 6 : 04 ] It hurt other people. And he fell in his own trap. His mischief shall return upon his own head. He did wrong. His wrong will happen to him. His violent dealings shall come down upon his own pate, on his own head.

That's going to happen in the story. If you were sitting at home and your kids started acting, you know, like mean and trying to treat people bad, you could say, let me tell you a story about a guy named Mordecai and a guy named Haman.

So you'll understand, son, if you lay a trap, you're going to fall in your own trap. So don't be laying traps because that's a dangerous thing to do. Because here's a perfect illustration of a truth that was taught in the book of Psalms. Another truth that's taught in this is God's always going to win.

God's always going to win. The Bible says in Proverbs 19, 21, there are many devices in a man's heart. You got a lot of thoughts and a lot of ideas and a lot of stuff you want to do. You got your own plans.

But the counsel of the Lord, it's the one that will stand. The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. You know, you can't. I'll just be honest with you. You're not winning out in the end. You might have a temporary victory today.

[ 7 : 03 ] You might get things your way today. You might live your way today, but before it's over, he is God and he will win. What he wants will happen.

Another truth that's told in here. You do know that it appears that people of power run the show. You would think that the king in Esther chapter 5 and the king and all of the book of Esther, he's the most powerful man in the world.

But here's what God says. Oh, I can put the king's heart in my hand and just turn it any way I want to. I'm the king. I'm the God. I'm God. And I can direct kings. You think the president has all the power?

You think the Congress has all the power? You think the judges have all the power? We can talk to God and God can direct king's hearts. Look at what the Bible says in Proverbs 21, 1. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water.

He turns it whithersoever he will. God is in charge. Charge. You need to understand something. You may flippantly have a relationship with God.

[ 8 : 04 ] You may come to church when you feel like it. You may worship when you feel like it. You may give your money. You may honor God. You may worship God. Just whenever you feel like it because it's like I'm being nice to God. But let me give you a hint.

Here it comes really deep. He is God. That's a big word. He's the creator of the universe. He's the owner of the universe. He is the judge of the universe.

And his will will take place. Last one before we jump into our chapter. Pride will destroy you. It's pretty hard to live in the United States of America and not be proud.

It's pretty hard to live in Alpharetta area. And for all you guys that want to say Duluth and Cumming and Roswell and Johns Creek and wherever it is you live. It's pretty hard to live in that area.

Anywhere close to this church, it's pretty hard to live here. Without getting proud. I've been in countries in Africa where they literally don't know if they're going to eat today.

[ 9 : 08 ] I've been in countries. I've been in South America. I've been in Peru. At a time when a man, I buried a boy who they were starving to death.

I didn't even know this. They were literally starving. And at night, the dad would punch his children in the stomach to take away the hunger pains. Which is like dumb as a rock.

I know you're sitting there going, what? I know. But he died. He gave him internal injuries. Almost got charged for murder. And I found out because I asked the brother.

I said, what in the world happened? And he said, well, you know, dad probably over punched him. But we live in luxury. We drove up here in nice automobiles.

We're wearing nice clothes. We live in nice homes. We turn the air conditioner on when we want. We turn the heat on when we want. Very few of us have ever wondered in our entire lives where the next meal was coming from.

[10:08] Pride. That's what the Bible says. Proverbs 16, 18. Pride goes before destruction. And a haughty spirit before a fall. Haman, your pride is going to destroy you.

Your being lifted up in pride is going to destroy you. Proverbs 16, 18. A man's pride shall bring him low. But honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.

So, Haman, he's just so eat up with himself. You know what pride is, don't you? It's the opposite of humility. You know what humility is? Humility is not thinking about yourself less.

It's not thinking about yourself. Humility is thinking about the other person. Humility is thinking about the Lord. Pride is thinking about me. Pride is thinking about me. What makes me happy? By the way, much of our marriage problems in this room are caused by pride.

I deserve a better husband. I deserve a better wife. I deserve better parents. I deserve better children. I deserve. That's Haman, right? Haman's like, man, I got everything.

[11:11] But one thing I don't have and I can't get over that. It's eaten me alive. I deserve it. I deserve it. You treat me differently than you treat me. I deserve that you respect me more than you respect me. I deserve.

I deserve. I deserve. And that leads to him going low. And before the story's over, Haman will be dead. Go with me if you would now to Esther chapter 5.

And let's work our way through there. Keep your Bible open. And I hope you have a Bible in your hands. I hope you take an ink pen and mark some things as you go through. Esther chapter 5 and verse 1. Now it came to pass on the third day that Esther put on her royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the king's house over against the king's house.

And the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house over against the gate of the house. I want you to write this down in the Margie Bible maybe. Esther risked her life.

You know she's about to die. But she risked her life. That's what's happening in this story. If she goes in and talks to the king, she very likely may die. But before she risked her life, she prepared herself.

[12:17] Before she risked her life, she prepared herself. If you would look at Esther chapter 5 and verse 1, it says, it came to pass on the third day. On the third day of what? On the third day of her getting every Jewish person she knew to fast.

They've been going without food. They may have been going without water. And they have been crying out to God. Oh God, if you don't do something, we're all going to die. God, we need you.

We need you. God, please. And on the third day when everybody's been doing that, she says, I'll go in. She's been fasting and praying. Only that she is now dressing appropriately.

Look at you in Ephesians 5.1. That Esther put on her royal apparel. You got to understand, you read that and you think, well, what's the big deal? She put on her royal apparel. You know what you do when you're in real trouble and you know you're about to die?

You know what you do when you hear the cancer word or when your marriage is falling apart or when your kids are messing up or when your life is in a mess? You know what you do? You kind of get in a fetal position.

[ 13 : 19 ] You don't want to take a bath. You just want to lay in the fetal position. Oh, my life's horrible. You know, come on, be honest. You don't want to take a bath. You don't want to brush your teeth.

You don't want to see anybody. And if you do, it's like, oh, you're not going to believe what I'm going through. She could have gone in to see the king like that, but it probably wouldn't have gone over too good. The king doesn't like things that make him sad.

The king doesn't like things that upset him any. And so instead of doing that, Esther goes in the back room. She's been fasting three days. She puts on her fancy clothes. She puts on her makeup.

She fixes her hair. She puts on her crown. She puts on her perfume. And, buddy, she is decked out. She is ready. And she walks in to the palace, not whining, not crying, not complaining, not trying to make all kind of racket about what's going on.

She walked into the palace in royal apparel. She didn't come in in sackcloth and ashes. That's what Mordecai's had on. Mordecai's been out in the street throwing dirt on himself and ashes on himself.

[ 14 : 20 ] And he's been ripping his clothes. And he's wearing the clothes that say to everybody, I'm hurting. But she doesn't do that. She doesn't come in in anger and rebellion. That Haman, I hate him.

I want him dead. He wants to kill my people. She doesn't come in like that. She comes in all decked out. She's prayed up. And she's all prepared. Not whining, complaining, and begging. Look at Ephesians chapter 5 verse 1.

Look at what she does next. She stands. She doesn't grovel. She doesn't fall on the floor. She doesn't start beating her chest and crying and ripping her clothes. The Bible says, and stood, Ephesians chapter 5 verse 1, and stood in the inner court of the king's house.

She walked in. She wasn't even supposed to be there. It's illegal to be in the room. She walks in the room and just stands, all decked out and all pretty. Now, you know, it's very likely the king is not even paying attention. He's signing those bills that come across his thing.

He's putting his seal of his ring on those bills. He doesn't even know Esther's a Jew. He doesn't know what's going on. He's being manipulated by all the people that work with him. We've already seen the guy's kind of a dingbat.

[ 15 : 24 ] I think sometimes you get that high up in leadership you might be. But anyway, here he is. And here he is. And he doesn't know what's going on. And she steps in and stands there. She did not have the rights you think of a wife having.

I'll just tell you, my wife goes and comes where she wants to. In our house, the next time she walks in the room, I'll say, do you have my permission? Hold here, touch my step. If I don't hold my step, I'm going to kill you right there on the spot.

I think she'd say, oh, you'll be dead first. While you sleep tonight, it will be over. She stood. She did not grovel. She did not cower.

And she knew full well she was in danger of dying. But she did what she had to do. She risked her life. Now, before I go to the next verse, I would like to talk to you just a second.

How do you enter the courts of our king? We have a king, too. King Jesus. Can I get an amen there? By the way, you came here today to walk into his courts.

[ 16 : 23 ] This church isn't his courts. And I'm certainly not that king. We're all here today to say, we're here to worship you. We're here to worship you. We're here to recognize you. We're here to magnify you. We're to lift our voices in song and sing and tell you how wonderful you are.

We are here to worship. So let me ask you, did you prepare yourself before you came today? I mean, you're here to meet with God. You're here to get with other believers and sit in a room and say, together, we worship you.

Together, we lift up our hearts. Together, we sing to you. Together, we want to hear from your word. Together, we give offerings to you. We are here for you. That's what we came to church for.

Say amen. Come on, that's the truth, isn't it or not? Huh? How'd you prepare yourself? Did you get alone with God and ask him to speak to you? Before you ever got here this morning, did you get alone with God and say, God, I'm fixing to go to your house.

And we're all going to sit in a room and do what you told us to do. We're going to pray together. And we're going to sing together. We're going to give offerings together. We're going to hear the Bible. God, I need to hear from you. Or did you just get up and flippantly put your clothes on and flippantly walk into the church?

[ 17 : 26 ] And basically, your attitude is, bless me if you can. Did you prepare? Did you quieten your spirit and prepare to focus on the word of God? Or did you pull up in the parking lot still fighting with your wife?

Well, that one's rough. Amen? Betty and I never fight arriving at church. We come in two cars.

Solved that one. Amen? Back when we were, back in our early days of our marriage and early days of my ministry, it was like Sunday morning is the morning to fight. I'm the preacher.

I've got to get up there and act like God's in touch with me. And I'm here to bless you. And I got my heart focused on God. I got my heart focused on you. And at the house, Betty's like, where are the shoes? Why can't we find the kids' shoes?

I'm like, I don't keep up with kids' shoes any day of the week, much less today. Well, you ought to. You don't do your work all week long. You just have been. And then we get in the car and on the way to the church. Y'all never have done this.

[ 18 : 25 ] And then just as we pull in the parking lot, I go, stop it. I've got to preach. God, forgive me. I've got to get my heart right. Walking in the door, I'm like, God, please do something in me today. I know that's never happened anywhere in this room.

Do you remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit and his prompting in the service? I'd really like to know this. How many of you are here right now saying, man, I want God to deal with me? You know, can I be honest?

Can I just be honest with you as a pastor of almost 45 years? I think the majority of you are like, well, he's got another 20 minutes.

We'll be out of here. Go ahead. Say what you got to say. Yep. Esther's an interesting story. Whether God deals with my heart or not, I'm doing my duty. In a minute, we're going to go eat. In the old days, it used to be mama had a roast on.

And nowadays, we're going to go to a restaurant somewhere. We're not sensitive. We didn't come dressed in humility and surrender. We came in pride and rebellion. Did you come whining and crying and complaining?

[ 19 : 25 ] Or did you come worshiping and glorifying him? Do you prepare before you come to his house? Or you just go through the motions? We want God to do a work in our lives.

But not enough to ask him. Not enough to open our hearts. Not enough to come to church with that in mind. Go with me if you would, Esther chapter 5 and verse 2. In Esther chapter 5 and verse 2, the Bible says that it was so when the king saw Esther, the queen, sitting in the court that she obtained favor in his sight.

And the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter. She was shown respect, grace, favor when she stepped into the room.

She walked in knowing that she might die, but the king accepted her. She went to the king and the king accepted her. I just decided to separate this one so you'd think about it with me.

I didn't go to the king. The king came to me. You ought to get a hold of that one. I didn't have to go looking for the king and ask him if he'd let me in. The king said, I love you for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.

[ 20 : 35 ] But have everlasting God loved you. God cares about you. God sent his son to die on a cross for you. We didn't come to him hoping to be received. He came to us in mercy and grace.

We didn't risk our lives to get him. He gave his life to get us. Go with me if you would to Esther chapter 5 and verse 3. She prepares her request. She prepares her request.

The Bible says in 5.3, the king says to her, well, what do you want, Queen Esther? What's your request? I'll give you up to half of the kingdom. She put forth a request that showed honor and respect to the king.

Could I just get you to come? I want to serve you and I want to serve the chief counselor. And Esther chapter 5 and verse 4. If it seemed good to the king for you and Haman to come to the banquet, I prepared for you.

I'm not just preparing supper. I'm preparing a banquet. I'm preparing all the stuff that goes with it. And there's only two honored guests. That's you two. And I'd like y'all to come.

[ 21 : 39 ] The king brought Haman to Esther's banquet in chapter 5 and verse 5. The king knew she wanted something. The king knew she wanted something. So in chapter 5 and verse 6, the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine.

This guy likes wine. Been messing up with wine. Ever since the first part of the book? He likes wine. He's been messing up with it. She's giving him that. And he says to her, what's your petition? I'll give it to you if it's half the kingdom.

Her kindness was beginning to win the heart of the king. And the king promises her, I'll give you anything you want. And so she says, I just want another banquet. You like this banquet?

You like the drink? You like the food? You like the music? You like the decorations? You like everything I've done for you? I'm trying to honor you, trying to respect you, trying to make you out to be the big man you are. You're the king. I'm doing real good to you.

What do you want? Could I do this again? That's chapter 5 and verse 7. My petition and my request is verse 8. If you are pleased with me, if I found favor in your sight, please do this.

[ 22 : 40 ] Come and let me do another banquet for you. She was wise in how she approached the king. I wonder how wise we are when we approach our king.

Christianity today does not recognize him as a king. Christianity today recognizes a genie in a bottle and you just stroke the bottle and he comes out and says, I'll give you three wishes.

What do you want? That's not the king. That's not the God of the Bible. Did you come demanding that God please you? Or did you come say, God, I want to do what pleases you?

Did we come humbly serving? Or did we come haughtily expecting? And manipulating God to do something for us? Honest question. When's the last time you prayed to God and said, I just want to please you?

God, I just want to please you. God, it's all about you. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth in my life as it is in heaven.

[ 23 : 46 ] God, your will. We come not humbly serving, but haughtily expecting. When was the last time you humbled yourself in prayer before him? Now, Haman can't get over his pride.

Go with me if you would to Esther chapter 5 and verse 9. He just can't get over his pride. He's been blessed. He's been blessed. God, it reminds me of us. Almost all of us have more complaints than praises.

We have more complaints than praises. It's like we know we got all this good stuff, but we're still missing. Something. Something. My mama, my aunt, my cousin, my car, my whatever. Esther 5, 9 says, Haman went forth, Haman that day, joyful, with a glad heart.

But when he saw, Haman saw Mordecai, he was full of indignation. His pride and bitterness made him focus on the one that hindered his happiness.

Mordecai will not show me respect. The queen shows me respect. The king shows me respect. The kingdom shows me respect. There's only one guy anywhere around that doesn't respect me like I want to be respected, and I'm fed up with it.

[ 25 : 02 ] But he refrains himself, if you would, in 5, 10. Look at Esther 5, 10. He refrained himself. Kept his mouth shut. That was a new one for Haman. He kept his mouth shut, and when he got home, he sent and called for his friends and serish.

He wants to hurt Haman, but he's able to hold his hatred until he gets home. Because he wants to go home and revel in his greatness. He calls his friends and his wife, and he starts to brag.

Esther 5, verse 11. And Haman told them of the glory of his riches. Would you underline that? Haman got home. He said, honey, bring all of my best friends here to the house.

I want you to just imagine this banquet. I mean, the Bible says, let another man's mouth praise you and not your own. The Bible says the lips of a fool will swallow him up, and Mr. Haman is fulfilling all those prophecies.

And he gets in there, and Haman says, hey, God's glad you came to the banquet tonight. Check me out. I need you to look at me. This is my wife.

[ 26 : 04 ] Got her here. Got you and my friends here. So everybody can focus on me tonight. Everybody focus on me and what I want. Look how much money I got. Look how I am doing so well.

Look at all my children, verse 11. And look at all the ways the king has promoted me and advanced me above all the princes, his own kids. I'm above them.

I'm the man in the kingdom. I am the man. Y'all enjoying the banquet? Pass him another bottle of wine. Let me talk to y'all a bit more about my riches. Esther 5, verse 12.

Even the queen is being good to me. I mean, you know, everybody, this whole kingdom, one guy doesn't do good, but everybody else. The king's good to me. The people are good to me. Even the queen wants me to come to a banquet.

Esther 5, verse 12. Yay, Esther the queen. She won't let anybody else come to her banquet but me and the king. I'm invited.



[ 27 : 10 ] Before I continue on to our last point here. What are you allowing to hinder your joy? What's the fly in your ointment?

What's the hair in your soup? What is it that keeps you pouting and whining? Because if we backed up and thought about it, boy, God's been good to us.

If he's been good to you, say amen. I mean, you've lived as long as you've lived. He's given you a good spouse. He's given you good children. He's given you eternal life. He's given you the word of God. He's given you a good church. He's given you good friends. God's been good to us.

But we still feel ungrateful. We don't say thank you as much as we whine. We still live complaining.

We're like old Haman. We still look at how God's failed us in some areas. Instead of saying, glory to God. My children are healthy.

[ 28 : 08 ] Glory to God. My children didn't die. Glory to God. He's provided. God, you are wonderful. I'm here to worship you today. Instead of that, we're like, I got a prayer request. I got a prayer request.

My life's not all that good. There's a Mordecai in my life. There's something in my life that makes me want to be a gripe. One of the things I dislike most about being a pastor, hadn't had to do much here because all of you are so young, are funerals.

You know, funerals. There was this family in Adikipa. They were very poor. The husband was a jerk. I mean, a real jerk. She was sick and dying.

And I went to the house and I said, you ought to take her to the hospital. He said, I don't take her to the hospital. I ain't got no money to pay for the hospital. I said, can I take her to the hospital? So I took her to the hospital. I visited her in the hospital.

He didn't even visit his wife. His kids were living in rebellion. She loved God. She was the most godly woman in our church. She was a Peruvian, an African Peruvian, I guess you'd say, like an African American.

[ 29 : 07 ] She was an African Peruvian. She was, she, her family many years ago had been brought over slaves in the Peruvian. She was probably the most godly woman in our church. My wife used to pick her up every Sunday. And there she is dying.

And I'm the one that finds out she died. Her family's not there. I walk in the room and, and when I walk in the room, her bed's not there. And I go down the hall and I say, hey, y'all moved Rosa's bed. And they said, that's because she's not here anymore.

I said, well, where is she? They said, she died. I go home to see the, the, the, the jerk. I mean, the husband and the kids. And I tell them what happened. And I say, y'all going to have a funeral?

He said, I can't afford a funeral. So I paid for the funeral. My wife bathed the body. I'm making that up a bit. My wife and some ladies at church bathed the body. But you know what happens at the funeral, don't you? Everybody got grateful. They came in and opened the casket and tried to pull her out of it.

They squalled and cried and laid all over the top of her. All of a sudden they were grateful. But she was dead. That's how, that's how we act. How come you're not saying, thank you, Jesus.

[ 30 : 11 ] We need a national holiday to say thank you. And then we call it Turkey Day. We need a national, why do we need a national holiday? We got 365 days that he saved us.

We ought to be walking around here going, man, I got it good. God's been good to me. But you know, you can't be happy if there's a Mordecai in your life. Esther chapter five, verse 13.

No way for Haman to be happy till he gets all he wants. All he wants. Esther 5, 13. Yet all this avails me nothing. All this, my riches, my children, being advanced, being promoted, all the good is going on.

It's not worth a thing as long as I see that old Mordecai. I can't, I'm not happy. No matter how good life is, there's no joy.

There's a Mordecai in my life. So his wife says, well, I got some advice for you. She's his counselor. Chapter five, verse 14. She said to Sherry, she's wife and his friends and him, let a gallows be made of 50 cubits high.

[ 31 : 15 ] Go build a gallows to hang him on or impale him on the post or cut his head off. We're not sure what kind of gallows it is. And she said, make it 50 cubits high. That's 75 feet.

If you're all that upset, and this is the guy that's bothering you, why don't you build a gallows so high no one can miss it and put old Mordecai on there and kill the guy? That's what you ought to do.

And said, go tell the king. Be happy. Look if you would. Look if you would in verse 14. Go merrily. Go happily. Because, hey, your enemy will be dead.

And he said, that's good advice. I mean, when you're a whining gripper complainer, you can always get a wife or a husband that's a whining gripper complainer with you. One breeds the other.

Say amen. I meet people and say, my wife's got a bad attitude. And I say, well, everybody knows you too. I don't say that. I just think it. This council will lead to the destruction of her entire family.

[ 32 : 15 ] Let me tell you this. You're not supposed to know this because we're not there yet in the story. But he and all of his kids will be killed on his gallows. Don't tell anybody that. We'll get to that later on in the book.

She could have suggested to him, hey, man, don't you think we ought to be grateful? She could have said, baby, your friends are here. We're drinking.

We got the nicest house in town. We wear the nicest clothes. We got the nicest horses and carriages in the city. The king likes you. You're rich. You've said all that tonight. Can't you just be happy?

But her bitterness breeds more bitterness and his bitterness breeds more bitterness. And you can't get to the end of the bitterness. Can I remind you that Mordecai's already got a scheduled death date?

He's going to build a gallows to kill him on. He's already got a scheduled death date. That's like saying on July the 1st, you're going to die. But since you're going to die on July the 1st and everybody you know is going to die that day, I think I'll kill you on June the 1st.

[ 33 : 15 ] I'm just going to rush it up a little bit. Haman can now be happy because he will be able to soon publicly humiliate his enemy.

A couple of questions for you. When did it become all about what makes me happy? I just read an article within the last month where some people met with Christians in China, pastors in China that had been in prison all of them at least 10 years.

They had suffered in the past for Jesus. And they were talking to him and they asked these Chinese believers, what do you fear the most? And they said, United States prosperity, not Chinese persecution.

Chinese persecution makes believers real. American prosperity makes people false. When did it come about what makes you happy?

Can I just remind you, we're in a church. We came here this morning to open a Bible and to seek God. We came here for you to not be listening to me, but for you to be talking to him and listen to him talk to you.

[ 34 : 38 ] And I may be speaking and you may hear me with this ear, but on the inside, you're supposed to be saying, Oh God, teach me, grow me, build me, make me, take out my pride, save me if I'm not saved.

God, please do a work in me because you're here before him. He said, we're two or three are gathered together. I'll be in the middle of you. He's here. We didn't come that way.

We didn't come to worship a king. We came for the king to be our servant and make us a king. You don't know what gospel preaching builds the church?

It's prosperity gospel preaching. Tell me how God makes me rich. Don't tell me how to humble myself. Do you give good advice to your spouse?

This is one of the questions you ought to answer yourself if you've been in this chapter. When your husband or wife says something stupid, you need to tell him, that's just plum stupid. You need to honor God in this.

[ 35 : 39 ] You say, you can't say that. That's a bad thing to say. I know it's obvious you don't say it. I mean, your husband's making mistakes in his life and the leadership of his home, and he needs somebody to say, stop.

Your wife is making some bad decisions, and she needs somebody to say, stop. But you're more like, oh, Cherish, build a gallows. Kill the guy. Kill him. Kill him.

Kill him. That's the only thing keeping us from being happy. Kill him. What kind of woman's going around? Kill him. Good night. She ought to be on some wicked Western. Kill him. Kill him. Do you allow the bitterness and the anger and the pride to eat you alive?

That's what happens here. Haman will soon be dead. I mean, if anybody in the kingdom ought to be happy, it's Haman.

He's having a selfie party with his iPhone out and everything else. He called all of his friends over and said, tonight, everybody look at what I'm eating. Tonight, everybody look at how I'm dressed.

[ 36 : 51 ] Look at all my money. Look at all my kids. Look at all my prosperity. Look at me. He's doing that. And his pride's eating him alive. But he's so bitter and so angry.

He will soon die. And so will his children. Have you allowed your pride to keep you from humbling yourself before God?

Can I just confess to you, I have preached in a lot of places. You know, the hardest people get on their knees is if people got money. You know, the hardest church to get people to come to an altar in, people got money and pride.

Lift it up. I got money, by the way. So I'm not trying to throw off on you. I drove up in a nice vehicle. I live in a very nice house. I wear very nice clothes. God's been very good to me. But it's hard for us to humble ourselves.

And poor Africans that are going to starve to death, they'll humble themselves. They'll grovel before God. We're like, I don't need to grovel before him. Find me some kind of teaching that tells me he's good to me.

[ 37 : 58 ] He's the kind of God I deserve. Have you so focused on you and yours that you have no time for him or his?

There are wives in this room. You are not going to let God do his work in your life or in your husband's life. Because it is all about you. There are husbands in this room and you're not going to let God do a work.

God would do something in your life, but not going to happen. Because it's about you. There are children in this room that are being taught by their very parents. It's about you, son. It's about you, daughter.

It's about you, my children. When God in heaven is saying, lay down before me. Humble yourself.

Get on your knees. Admit you need me. Or you'll be like, oh, Haman. Consumed by your pride and your bitterness till it destroys you.

[ 39 : 05 ] There are people that will go to hell because they're too proud to admit they're sinners. They're too proud to admit they need God. Oh, God. Help us.

Help us. Help us. Help us. Help us. Help us. Help us. Help us.