

# Importance of **ONE**

The  
Importance  
Of One

Esther 4

- **Matthew 18:12-14 NLT** 12 “If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others on the hills and go out to search for the one that is lost? 13 And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he will rejoice over it more than over the ninety-nine that didn’t wander away! 14 In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father’s will that even one of these little ones should perish.

## **Our society honors the brightest, strongest, boldest, prettiest, biggest as they see it**

- We count success by the number of followers on social media, GPA, college accepted at, business we work at, assumed bank account, things we own
- It is easy to get lost if you are none of these or you see yourself as average

## **It is easy to underestimate the significance of one**

- What can I as one individual, with all my issues, contribute to the overwhelming needs of our world?
- You are you-the only you in all the world, unique, privileged and special

# It is easy to underestimate the significance of one

- Edward Everett Hale

I am only one

But still I am one.

I cannot do everything;

But still I can do something;

And because I can do something

I will not refuse to do the something that I can do

## **It is easy to underestimate the significance of one**

- You are the only person with your exact heritage, your precise series of events in the pilgrimage and sufferings of life that have brought you here
- You are the only one with your personal convictions, your makeup, your skills, your appearance, your touch, your voice, your style, your surroundings, your sphere of influence—you're the only you

## **It is easy to underestimate the significance of one**

- When I read God's Word, I don't find that many stories about great crusades and city-wide revivals and mass meetings where God's attention rested on an entire community.
- More often, I find individual men and women who made a difference, who stood in the gap and changed their times

## **It is easy to underestimate the significance of one**

- We see God's hand on the lives of individual who thought and said and did what was right regardless
- This is where we are at in the story of Esther

## **The Jews have been threatened with extermination**

- Wicked Haman has influenced King Ahasuerus with his promises
  - Because of this plan I have set up, it is possible for me to pour this money into your treasuries and for us to rid the land of these people who will not bow down and worship you as king

## **The Jews have been threatened with extermination**

- The last line in chapter 3 summarizes it best, “the city of Susa was bewildered (*in confusion*)”
- This was written into the Law and could not be changed
- Helplessness eroded into hopelessness among the Jew

## **The Jews have been threatened with extermination**

- Yet, in the midst of all of this, God was not sleeping
- In His sovereign plan He determined one person who would make a difference, stand in the gap

## Deep expressions of despair are appropriate for God's people

- **Esther 4:1 NLT** When Mordecai learned about all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on burlap and ashes, and went out into the city, crying with a loud and bitter wail.
- In the east sorrow has always been expressed visibly and vocally
- Here was one man not afraid to show his great need for God's intervention

## Deep expressions of despair are appropriate for God's people

- Mordecai was a believer in God's promise that God would never completely reject the nation of Israel
- He holds nothing back, his grief knows no bounds
- **Esther 4:2 NLT** He went as far as the gate of the palace, for no one was allowed to enter the palace gate while wearing clothes of mourning.

## **Deep expressions of despair are appropriate for God's people**

- Mordecai knew he would not be able to see the king and make his request known to him
- He was making himself visible to all, hoping someone would care and bring truth to this Law

## Deep expressions of despair are appropriate for God's people

- **Esther 4:3 NLT** And as news of the king's decree reached all the provinces, there was great mourning among the Jews. They fasted, wept, and wailed, and many people lay in burlap and ashes.

## **Deep expressions of despair are appropriate for God's people**

- Suffering brings people together
- Suffering never ruined a nation, hardship doesn't fracture families
- Affluence does, but not suffering
- It pushes everybody to the same level with the same goal: survival

## Deep expressions of despair are appropriate for God's people

- When hurricane Andrew blew across southern Florida one man said, “It blew down all our fences and we finally got to know our neighbors.”
- Notice one person, Mordecai, whose only claim was being godly and raising Esther to be a strong woman of God

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- **Esther 4:4 NLT** When Queen Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, she was deeply distressed. She sent clothing to him to replace the burlap, but he refused it

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- Now that she was part of the king's household, she was restrained from contact with the outside world
- She sent him new clothing to try and comfort him or because she saw this maybe as an embarrassment
- Mordecai refuses and Esther needs to know what is going on

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- **Esther 4:5-8 NLT** 5 Then Esther sent for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs who had been appointed as her attendant. She ordered him to go to Mordecai and find out what was troubling him and why he was in mourning. 6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the square in front of the palace gate.

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- **Esther 4:5-8 NLT** 7 Mordecai told him the whole story, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- **Esther 4:5-8 NLT** 8 Mordecai gave Hathach a copy of the decree issued in Susa that called for the death of all Jews. He asked Hathach to show it to Esther and explain the situation to her. He also asked Hathach to direct her to go to the king to beg for mercy and plead for her people.

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- James Hastings, “Mordecai contemplated this bitter necessary. He gazed upon it till his eyes were a fountain of tears. He studied the situation till the iron entered into his very soul. Then he made his appeal to Queen Esther to stand forward as the savior of her people.”

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- **Esther 4:9-12 NLT** 9 So Hathach returned to Esther with Mordecai's message. 10 Then Esther told Hathach to go back and relay this message to Mordecai:

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- **Esther 4:9-12 NLT** 11 “All the king’s officials and even the people in the provinces know that anyone who appears before the king in his inner court without being invited is doomed to die unless the king holds out his gold scepter. And the king has not called for me to come to him for thirty days.” 12 So Hathach gave Esther’s message to Mordecai.

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- Now before you judge Esther remember you are surrounded by safety and acceptance
- It is easy to be brave when we're protected and secure, when we have nothing to risk

**People, even those close to you, will not be able to understand your grief and despair unless they are brought into it**

- If Esther obeyed Mordecai, she risked everything, even her own life
- Who knows how the king will respond when he finds out Esther is Jewish?

**God has positioned you, fashioned you, prepared you for ministry that of all the people on earth, you are best suited for it**

- **Esther 4:13-14 NLT** 13 Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: “Don’t think for a moment that because you’re in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed.

**God has positioned you, fashioned you, prepared you for ministry that of all the people on earth, you are best suited for it**

- **Esther 4:13-14 NLT** 14 If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?”

**God has positioned you, fashioned you, prepared you for ministry that of all the people on earth, you are best suited for it**

- This goes down in history as a “turning point speech”
- Mordecai’s reasoning
  - If you do nothing don’t think you will escape death
  - Even if we die, God is not limited to you or me, nor will He allow His people to perish

**God has positioned you, fashioned you, prepared you for ministry that of all the people on earth, you are best suited for it**

- This goes down in history as a “turning point speech”
- Mordecai’s reasoning
  - You are here, prepared for this moment
  - Stand! Speak! Die! But whatever you do, Don’t be silent

**God has positioned you, fashioned you, prepared you for ministry that of all the people on earth, you are best suited for it**

- **Esther 4:16 NLT** “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.”

**God has positioned you, fashioned you, prepared you for ministry that of all the people on earth, you are best suited for it**

- Some things are important enough to make us stand alone, even when friends don't understand, or coworkers disagree
- It matters to your character
- They summon us to stand up and be counted
- While we will not be able to respond to all events, the solution is not to respond to any of them

## Summary

- Not until we believe one person can make a difference will we be willing to risk
  - Chuck Swindoll, “Quit being so careful about protecting your own backside.”
  - Stop worrying about what others will think, you don’t answer to them

## Summary

- Only when we move from the safe harbor of theory to the risky world of reality do we actually make a difference
  - **James 2:18 NLT** Now someone may argue, “Some people have faith; others have good deeds.” But I say, “How can you show me your faith if you don’t have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds.”

## Summary

- It's the deed that connects us to reality
  - We are not rewarded for great evangelical theory, great theological theory, great moral theory
  - We are rewarded for the deed

## Summary

- God so loved that Christ came, a single person
- The question is not simply, what do you think about Christ?
- The question is what have you done about what you think?

# Importance of **ONE**

The  
Importance  
Of One

Esther 4