



Walking The
Tightrope

Esther 5:1-14

“Walking a tightrope” phrase

- To be in a difficult situation in which something bad could happen if you make a mistake
 - You have to deal with a difficult situation, especially one involving making a decision between two opposing plans of action
 - It takes skill, balance, timing, patience, courage

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- C. S. Lewis said about the importance of being loyal to a cause that is greater than ourselves; He likened that quality to a person's chest. "What we need are people with chests", guts

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- Mother Teresa spoke before an audience in sophisticated Washington D.C., she addressed a deep concern of hers: the abortion issue
 - As a pro-abortion president sat behind her and a pro-abortion congress sat in front of her she boldly announced, “Send Me your babies!”

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- Esther has finished her fast. She has sought the Lord and gained confidence in Him, His way and His timing
 - She waited on Him
 - **Isaiah 40:31 NLT** But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.
 - She came away with a plan of action

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- There are 4 things that happen when we wait
 - We gain new strength as our conviction becomes clearer
 - We get a better perspective on what we are dealing with and how to approach the issue
 - We store up extra energy unless you allow worry to drain it
 - We will deepen our determination to persevere

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- It's easy to think waiting is waste
 - Nothing is going to change, nothing is happening
- **Isaiah 41:10, 13 NLT** 10 Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. 13 For I hold you by your right hand— I, the Lord your God. And I say to you, 'Don't be afraid. I am here to help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.'

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- It's easy to think waiting is waste
 - Nothing is going to change, nothing is happening
- **Psalms 32:8-9 NLT** 8 The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. 9 Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

This describes where we find Esther tonight

- As Esther prepares for her finest hour, she must wait, think, pray, stay quiet, fast, and listen in her heart and soul

A calm, wise, confident plan

- **Esther 5:1-2 NIV** 5 On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. 2 When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

A calm, wise, confident plan

- No king ever intimidated God, no matter how wealthy his treasury, how extensive his kingdom, or how powerful his army
 - God demonstrated that with Pharaoh in Exodus
- God can handle anyone-your husband, wife, kids, pastor, the person who gives you grief, your ex-mate the person who made promises to you then broke them
- God can handle intimidating situations

A calm, wise, confident plan

- Esther is doing what has never been done before, she is standing tall and confident in the Lord, whatever He brings
- She stands confident and touches the top of the scepter, making a connection to the king
- This was a sign of honor and submission
- She has put on her royal robes, she comes as the queen with all her dignity and honor, with humility

A calm, wise, confident plan

- **Esther 5:3 NIV** Then the king asked, “What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you.”
- The king knows something is deeply bothering Esther, so he exaggerated to show his desire to take care of whatever is bothering her

A calm, wise, confident plan

- Now seems to be a good time to unload on the king Haman's plan
 - But the queen knows the ways of the court and what is proper
 - If she unloads now without Haman being there it will prompt the king to investigate and give Haman time to alter his plan

A calm, wise, confident plan

- Now seems to be a good time to unload on the king Haman's plan
 - It would also give the king a chance to talk to his counselors all around him
 - You don't talk about personal matters when the king is on the throne

A calm, wise, confident plan

- Esther isn't in a hurry, nor is she revengeful because she has been waiting on the Lord
- We hurry at times, jump ahead and do rash things, shoot from the hip, run off at the mouth, sit and fret
- When we have sufficiently waited on the Lord, He gets full control of our spirit and we are more like a hand in God's glove

A calm, wise, confident plan

- **Esther 5:4 NIV** “If it pleases the king,” replied Esther, “let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him.”
- While she was fasting, she was also preparing two feasts
- She stayed preoccupied with God

A calm, wise, confident plan

- She doesn't point a finger at Haman, rush ahead and tell the king what is troubling her, doesn't play on his emotions or try to manipulate him
 - She very calmly says, "I've planned a banquet, and I'd love to have you and Haman attend."
 - "Great idea", the king says, "Banquets are my thing."
(She knows this)

A calm, wise, confident plan

- **Esther 5:5 NIV** “Bring Haman at once,” the king said, “so that we may do what Esther asks.”
- God is full of surprises, but it takes a sensitive spirit to see them, to be jolted by them

A calm, wise, confident plan

- The walk of faith is designed to be a walk of adventure, filled with periodic and delightful surprises
 - Are you still open to the unexpected?
 - Like when you want God to take care of your mate and he ends up taking care of you
 - Are you willing to shift agenda for God to have His way?

A calm, wise, confident plan

- **Esther 5:6-8 NIV** 6 As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, “Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted.” 7 Esther replied, “My petition and my request is this: 8 If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king’s question.”

A calm, wise, confident plan

- She could have done everything today that she's going to do tomorrow, but she is trusting God's timing
- God has some plans for after this that Esther knows nothing about
- This also puts the king in the position where he must act upon her request since he is coming again for that specific purpose

A proud and sinister response

- **Esther 5:9-10 NIV** 9 Haman went out that day happy and in high spirits. But when he saw Mordecai at the king's gate and observed that he neither rose nor showed fear in his presence, he was filled with rage against Mordecai. 10 Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home. Calling together his friends and Zeresh, his wife

A proud and sinister response

- Haman comes out of the palace bursting with pride and ego, and he runs into Mordecai – the Jew who will not respect him
- Mordecai knows God is at work, so he is not afraid of Haman at all
- With everything going right in Haman's life, this Jew is causing him fits of rage

A proud and sinister response

- **Esther 5:11-12 NIV** 11 Haman boasted to them about his vast wealth, his many sons, and all the ways the king had honored him and how he had elevated him above the other nobles and officials. 12 “And that’s not all,” Haman added. “I’m the only person Queen Esther invited to accompany the king to the banquet she gave. And she has invited me along with the king tomorrow.

A proud and sinister response

- He tells everyone who will listen about the greatness of Haman
 - He tells everyone what he is worth
 - You would think he would be satisfied but at the height of his proudness he remembers Mordecai

A proud and sinister response

- **Esther 5:13-14 NIV** 13 But all this gives me no satisfaction as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate." 14 His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Have a pole set up, reaching to a height of fifty cubits, and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai impaled on it. Then go with the king to the banquet and enjoy yourself." This suggestion delighted Haman, and he had the pole set up.

A proud and sinister response

- Haman loves the idea and he quickly hired men to construct a pole 75 feet tall to impale Mordecai on

Four principles for dealing with difficult situations

- When preparing for an unprecedented event, wait on the Lord before getting involved
 - What waiting for the work God does in us is as important as what we are waiting on
 - He works on our patience, circumstances, others
 - If we plunge in, if we run ahead, we foul up His better arrangements and plans

Four principles for dealing with difficult situations

- The bigger decision, the longer the wait
 - Don't get in a hurry, especially if it's unprecedented
 - Don't try to take things in your own hands
 - Restrain the tendency to “move things along”

Four principles for dealing with difficult situations

- The bigger decision, the longer the wait
 - When dealing with an unpredictable person, count on the Lord to open doors and hearts
 - **Proverbs 16:17 NLT** When people's lives please the Lord, even their enemies are at peace with them.

Four principles for dealing with difficult situations

- When working through an unpleasant situation, trust the Lord for enduring patience
 - Think of the patience of Esther
 - In situations that are unpleasant, timing is as important as action, sometimes more so
 - Pace yourself, have patience, wait for the situation to become bearable and workable

Four principles for dealing with difficult situations

- When standing against an unprincipled enemy, ask the Lord for invincible courage
 - This is what happened to Esther as she recognized God working
 - She sensed a growing invincibility and courage, even in the presence of her mortal enemy

As I think of Haman's hatred for the Jews, I thought about Jesus

- They put Jesus on a pole to die
 - More people hated Him than loved Him
 - More cheered than wept
 - More applauded when he died then mourned

As I think of Haman's hatred for the Jews, I thought about Jesus

- They put Jesus on a pole to die
 - Yet He prayed, "Father, forgive them. They do not know what they do."
- This is to be our mindset when dealing with difficult, unprincipled people

As I think of Haman's hatred for the Jews, I thought about Jesus

- Jesus didn't die because the crowd hated Him, or the Roman government decided it
- He died because the crowd needed a Savior and He was the only man ever qualified to stand in the gap
- And so do we
- Not just to be saved
- But to be able to live like Esther and Mordecai



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Tightrope

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