

**Intro:** Who is in charge story? “You are NOT!” (Fm God’s Mysterious Ways by Jane Roach pg 11)

THAT is the entire story of Esther Ch 1...in fact the story of Esther as a whole...in just three short paragraphs!  
Esther 1 is all about WHO is in charge...in theological terms, “Who has the right to rule?”

What we discover in Esther 1...and in the book as a whole...is that the one we THINK is in charge, really isn’t!

*That is true for Xerxes, Vashti, Haman, Esther, Mordechai...every person in Esther*

*AND...it is true for you and I as well!*

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### 4 Don’ts We Need To Learn From In Esther 1

#### 1. Don’t Forget Who Ultimately Is In Charge Of Everything. Ch 1:1-12

- From the outside looking in it appears as if Xerxes is the one who is ruler of everything!  
~127 provinces (all but Greece) ~6 month long banquet ~Displaying his wealth, splendor glory  
~Every material trapping of wealth/power ~Gold, silver, precious stones ~Wine w/o limit
  - Historians think probably planning a war to conquer the only significant part of the world he knows he doesn’t control
  - The word King, Queen, Royal is used in EVERY verse but two! 20 of 22 (Power and rule on display)
  - He controls a kingdom that makes laws that even HE cannot reverse! (vs 19) ...comes into play later in story...
- BUT...**from the very beginning of the story we see something...Xerxes doesn’t have control...He has the ILLUSION of control!
- His wife...refuses to obey his summons! The rest of the world might...but not her! (Vs 9-12)
  - He isn’t smart enough to know what to try to control (kingdom) and what to leave the heck alone! (angry wife!) MEME
  - His counselors give him probably the WORST advice in the history of mankind...and he follows it! (Wine? Vs 10)  
~Ban her permanently ~Tell the WORLD about it
  - He tries to do something that NO ONE can do...COMMAND respect! (Earn it, Deserve it, Ask for it: Can’t demand it)

**Applic:** Xerxes was confused about what we are often confused about.

~God is the one who is in charge:

Prov 21:1 “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.”

John 19:11 “Jesus answered, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.”

#### 2. Don’t Confuse Knowledge With Wisdom. Ch 1:12-23

This is a major mistake that the king and his advisors made in their situation, and it is one we often make as well.

- Knowledge is having a grip on the facts. Being able to correctly recite what is appropriate in the situation  
~Experts in matters of law and justice (Knew the law of the Medes and Persians) Rule a vast kingdom  
~They knew the King: Access: Knew he was ANGRY and wanted to do SOMETHING vs 12 (Xerxes blew up)  
~They THOUGHT they knew what would happen when word got out Vashti didn’t come: (Disrespect vs 17)  
~They THOUGHT they knew what would happen when they issued the edict! (Respect/Rule vs 20-22) VOTE ON IT?
- Wisdom is KNOWING HOW TO USE KNOWLEDGE CORRECTLY!  
~They had Knowledge of ALL kinds of things  
~I would argue...they didn’t have very much wisdom!  
~A wise man would have said: Wait til the morning...Cool down...Let wine wear off...Think about it

**Applic:** Here is the key: Found when you compare vs 12 with what you find in 1 Chronicles: Very similar, 1 significant difference  
1Chronicles 12:32 “men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do”

Here is what you notice when you read these two passages side by side in the Hebrew

- Esther 1: They understood the times (Knowledge)
- 1Chronicles: They understood the times (exact same Hebrew word) AND they knew what to do! Word for wisdom  
Knew: To understand the MEANING of something, to GRASP it, to Have WISDOM to do right!

**Applic:** Pr 14:12 “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”

Yes it is GOOD to get counsel...BUT..Be sure you get WISE counsel!

~Men who have been at a party for last 6 months...not so much!

~Just because someone is good at running the kingdom...doesn’t mean he is going to be wise in dealing with his home!

~Be very careful who you go to for advice! Make sure they fully grasp what is going on...and are wise!

#### 3. Don’t Be Confused About What Makes Up True Success. Ch 1

- When you get to the end of Ch 1 it APPEARS that Xerxes has been successful.  
~He has pulled off the party of the CENTURY  
~He has impressed everyone (Probably planned the next great war!)  
~He has pulled all the leaders of his vast Kingdom together...and they have agreement on what to do vs 21  
~He has put Vashti “in her place” and “solved” that problem!  
~He has issued a decree that will insure that every man will be respected in his own home! (RIGHT?)  
~He has issued a decree that will insure that every man is “ruler” in his own home!(CAUSE THAT’S ALL IT TAKES!)

And it all LOOKS like success because our DEFINITION of success Is all off base!  
Success isn't how much you have...whether it is money or power or influence or things...even friends!  
The bumper sticker is WRONG...The one who dies with the most toys doesn't win!  
Just ask the rich fool Jesus taught us about: *"You FOOL...this very DAY your soul will be required of you!"*

- Andy Stanley has the best definition of true success that I think I have ever heard  
*"True success is when those who know you BEST love and respect you the MOST!"*  
~Xerxes and his princes and nobles, eunuchs and military leaders had accomplished a LOT of things at that party  
But I PROMISE you...TRUE SUCCESS WAS NOT ONE OF THE OUTCOMES!
- Xerxes had POWER, WEALTH, INFLUENCE all over the world  
~But he didn't have it where it really counted...He didn't have it at home! (Vashti, And Later Esther, no respect)

**Applic:** Men: I want to hit the pause button here...Ladies this is true for many of you as well, but this issue is an Achilles Heel  
Men: We often follow in the mistaken footsteps of Xerxes:  
We trade influence in our jobs, at our sports teams, with our friends, neighbors..EVERYWHERE in our life  
For the respect of our wives and children.

All too often we sacrifice the respect, love and care of our families for the pursuit of something that isn't important!  
Our ego's, our jobs, our hobbies, our sports, our friends: become the most important thing in our life  
All the while our MOST important relationships: Our marriages and our children are suffering  
This is one of the lessons of Esther we CANNOT fail to learn:  
DON'T BE CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT MAKES UP TRUE SUCCESS!

#### 4. Don't Assume Because You Can't SEE God's Hand That He Is Absent!

God may not be SEEN in the Book of Esther, but He is present everywhere!

~His name is NEVER used. Not even ONCE

~Prayer is NEVER mentioned...Not even ONCE

~He is never called on, referenced, attributed to or from what we can see thought about BUT HE IS EVERYWHERE!

Matthew Henry, the old commentator that has been around for over 300 years! In referring to Esther he says:

*"But, though the name of God be not in it, the finger of God is, directing many minute events for the bringing about of his people's deliverance."*

~He is present with them in their exile in a foreign land

~He is present with them in every single moment of danger throughout the book

~He is present with them in dozens of "circumstances" that one after the other fall in their favor.

~He is present when they can't imagine why He would allow something so awful as His people being offered to be killed

**Applic:** You see, when the danger and difficulties come, and we don't see evidence of God's hand...we doubt His presence  
But...He is ALWAYS there! That is the most repeated promise in the bible...I am WITH YOU!

Listen: David knew it: Psm 23: "Valley of Shadow of death..."

Moses knew it: Go to Pharaoh...I'll be with you

Joshua Knew It: Don't Be afraid, just like with Moses, I'll be with you

Peter knew it...Step in the water...I'll be with you

Paul Knew it...Go to the Emperor...I'll be with you

It's so very easy to doubt...to wonder...God...I don't see your hand...WHERE are you?

But NEVER be confused...Don't assume that because you don't SEE Him that He is absent!

If you are His child His eye is on you every single moment of the day...Never moves off of you

**CONCL:** As we begin our study of Esther...Get this piece settled in your heart: *"Who has the right to rule your life?"*  
Until you acknowledge, accept and welcome God's direction in your life you will be like Xerxes...Under an illusion!

- Have you forgotten who is in charge? Have you foolishly assumed that you are? Don't do it...Only lead to disaster
- Have you confused knowledge and information with wisdom? Getting advice from bad sources?  
Go back..make SURE that the ones that you are leaning on...are in touch with God...listening to Him
- Do you need to redefine success in your life? Have you been chasing the wrong things?  
Saw a meme once said its very sad to get to the top of the ladder and realize its against the wrong wall!
- Have you mistakenly assumed that because you can't see His hand God isn't present?  
Have you "counted Him out?" Assumed that He isn't paying attention....

If you need to make some adjustments to your life....now is the time...today is the day

Come and pray: God...YOU are in Charge: God YOU are the one I want to Hear from God I want success in YOUR eyes  
God, I know you are here "Im going to trust you...whether I can see you or not!"