

Intro: What do you do when you face a hopeless situation...Something that simply CANNOT be changed?
 ~Dr gives you a diagnosis that is hopeless ~Finances are at a place where you cannot find a way forward
 ~Relationship is over...Brokenhearted ~Boss calls and says...We are going to have to lay you off
 ~Maybe YOU are the boss...and you have to be the one to share the bad news!

That is where we are in the book of Esther today...The small problem (Haman) has been dealt with: but BIG problem still there

Quick Review:

- Jews living in captivity under Babylonian rule
- King X_____ got rid of his first wife, E_____, a young woman of Jewish nationality elevated to be Queen
- (Bad guy) H_____ Gets upset at M_____ (good guy) and determines to destroy not only him...all Jews
- Xerxes is duped into agreeing to allow Haman to exterminate Jews, a plan, date and time are set
- Mordecai, cousin of Esther, asks her to intervene...she agrees...but reminds him...her life is on the line if she does!
- She, her family, friends, all the Jews in Susa...fast...3 days
- Esther goes to King, he welcomes her...2 feasts...She asks for help...King Xerxes furious, Haman executed

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Unexpected Deliverance

1. Some Things In Life Cannot Be Changed.

8:1-8

When we start Chapter 8 of Esther everything LOOKS good on the outside, but the reality is, the Jewish nation is still at risk

- Ch 7: Haman hanged
- 8:1 His estate given to Esther
- 8:2 Mordecai given the signet ring of the King: *Authority of the King to act!!!*
- 8:2 Mordecai is appointed as manager of Estate *Untold riches for He and Esther*

But: Here is the problem

- The Edict from the king is STILL in force...Jews still at risk
- 9 or 10 months from now...It is open season on the Jews...anyone can kill them and take their belongings! LEGAL
- 8:8 That law cannot be changed! Even the King himself cannot rescind it! It stands on the book!

Applic: I had something happen on Tues nite/Wed am that has never happened to me before: I had a dream Woke up Weeping

Here is my dream: Time for church to start, walked in...5 or 6 people: Looked in, thought where is everyone
 A guest family walked by, Mom, Dad, 2 kids, sat down: Music started and I saw lean over and say: Where is everyone?
 I turned and looked around...down hallway to Food Court, saw the whole church...laughing talking...coffee
 Making way toward sanctuary, but it was too late...family already slipped out back and were gone

I found myself running to crowd, to YOU, and saying...Don't you get it...What we do is so important...not just about us!

*Don't you remember...People without Jesus...die...spend eternity separated from God... There is NO hope apart from Jesus
 Once we miss the opportunity to tell them about Jesus...we may never have that opportunity again!*

Here is my point:

- Not "Be on time for worship" though that's important
- It is: Remember...what we do...is not about us! God blesses us, provides for us, grows us, loves us here
- But...what we do as a church...it is really about leading people to Jesus!

"RTBC is committed to loving people by leading them to Jesus and encouraging them grow through worship and service to others"

WHY?

Hebrews 9:27 *"...man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment..."*

Listen: WE live in a world that is "in between" just like the beginning of Ch 8 of Esther

Everything LOOKS good...but judgement is coming.

IF we aren't careful, we can fall into the trap of thinking...Oh...Finances OK, Health OK, Job OK, Church OK

But here is the reality: People without Jesus die and spend eternity without Him...And that CANNOT be changed!

Like Esther, you can beg, and you can plead, and you can cry, you can ask...Not going to change!

- ~Your family member ~Your Co Worker ~Your Neighbor
- ~Your friends at school ~Your teammates ~Your husband, wife, children

Maybe it is YOU that should be concerned about: Maybe you have never found forgiveness of sin: Stand there wo Him

Without Jesus...there is no hope...and that CANNOT be changed...And the day of judgment is appointed just as sure as Jews

2. God Can Rearrange The Unchangeable! 8:-13

The problem you face might not be CHANGEABLE but it IS REARRANGABLE!

God doesn't have to change it...He might choose to "rearrange it!"

He Can...AND SOMETIMES He does change the unchangeable: (Just this week I got an email...said...Dr don't know!)

- Esther asks for the edict to be changed: 8:3-5
- Xerxes says it cannot be changed
- Xerxes offers a different solution!
- He allows them to write a NEW edict...as it seems good to them!!!
- They find a way to rearrange the problem that protects them!
- Assemble and protect yourselves! 8:11-13

Illus: I have seen that happen over and over again! God REARRANGES what He Doesn't CHANGE!!!

Health: Sometimes rearranges the diagnosis: We don't know what happened!
Sometimes he rearranges the solution: Oh, we are going to do this instead!
Sometimes he rearranges your heart...gives you grace to get through it...even to the point of death
(I cannot count the people I have talked with over the years whose life totally changed by diagnosis of death!)
Home live better...Children, Spouse, Friends, All gather to celebrate their life:
Eternity changed: Diagnosis opened their eyes spiritually...now in Heaven Because of it!
You say: Couldn't God have done it a different way...Maybe he tried 1000 different ways...that only one work

I have watched God do that over and over!

Work: Lose Job: He provides a better one! Lose relationship: God reveals...this wasn't right!

Finances: Don't know how it will work...God makes it work!

It doesn't have to change...sometimes what needs to happen is for things to be rearranged!

Ro 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

3. God's Way Forward Through The Unchangeable Is Usually Costly. 8:11; 9:2, 9:5, 9:6, 9:16

- They were given the right to protect themselves: But it meant they had to go to war!
- They assembled and fought: and they won! 500 enemies slain, 300 enemies slain, Kingdom 75,000 killed
- But this is what I want you to see: It was COSTLY!
~They had to fight
~I'm confident...though the scripture doesn't say...There were some casualties! Injuries, Pain associated with battle

KEY: God usually sees fit to allow us to "fight our way forward!"

Sometimes we are able to see His hand move...and it is totally Him, costs us nothing

But **USUALLY** we have to be engaged...we have to fight the battle...we have to pay the price, suffer the cost

- *When the children of Israel got the promised land: They had to fight for it*
- *When Paul was spreading the Gospel in the Roman empire...he fought every step of the way*
- *When Elijah faced down the prophets of Baal, He fought a huge battle*
- *When Gideon delivered the people of Israel...Fought a battle outnumbered hundreds to one!*
- *Heb 11 tells us of the cost of those who have gone before us! 11:32-12:2*
It cost them to follow God...and it costs us as well!

APPLIC: Mt 11:12 *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.*

- Where are the "forceful" men and women of God that values the souls of the lost more than their own comfort?
- Where are those who are "forceful" enough to make themselves and everyone around them uncomfortable?
- Where are those who are passionate about knowing Jesus and making Him known to others?
- I believe our church is just a little too comfortable, a little too complacent, a little too laid back
- No one would describe us as "forceful" ...or forcefully advancing the Kingdom of God
- We are so concerned with being polite, and being accepted, and being gentle...that we gently pave the way to hell!
- We (including me) stand quietly by the side and say...oh, you need to consider Jesus
(If house is on fire...wouldn't say "Oh, consider leaving!" Or, See car coming, "Consider stepping out of way!")

Applic: We are in a WAR for the souls of men and women and boys and girls...and the stakes are eternal...We need to fight!

REFLECTIONS ON ESTHER 8-10

1. Some things cannot be changed: People without Jesus spend eternity separated from God

That means your friends, your neighbors, your family, your coworkers

Could mean YOU

If you are here and you have never received the forgiveness of your sin...you can today...

Cost you...Pride, Humility, Admit: I am a sinner...and I need Jesus!

2. It might not be changed...but it can be rearranged!

The wages of sin is death...but the gift of God is eternal life

Price can be paid by another: On the cross Jesus made rearranged all of eternity for those who will believe

3. It is going to cost you something...Are you willing to pay the price?

- Are you willing to come and say: I need Jesus. I need forgiveness. I need my life renewed..rearranged His way!
- We need some people willing to pay any price, make any sacrifice necessary to bring people to Jesus
- Our family, Our friends, Our coworkers...they NEED us to step up...and tell them about Jesus
- Are you paying the necessary price...if so...its time to rearrange your life in keeping with God's plan