



**Personal & Group Study Guide:** October 16, 2022

**Message Series:** FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS: *A Vision for The Story's Future*

**Message Title:** A Time to Be Bold

**Series Intro:** Seldom does a moment in time bear lasting significance for many generations to come, but we are living in such a moment right now. In recent years we have seen seismic shifts in our cultural, political, and religious landscapes that have led us all to wonder what we can do today to secure a better world for our children tomorrow. Will we settle for more of the same? Or will we stand up and see that God has appointed us for such a time as this?

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Think about a time when you took a significant personal risk to do something extraordinary. Why did you do it, how did it turn out, and what did you learn from the experience?

Many stories in the Bible describe the defining moment in a person's life, when God called them to take a leap of faith to do His will (ex., Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Joshua, David, Mary, Paul, etc.). Which biblical story of extraordinary faith stands out to you, and why?

One amazing faith story in the Old Testament is centered around a young, Jewish girl named Hadasseh (aka *Esther*). **Read Esther 2:1-18.** What stands out to you about this part of Esther's story? What clues do you see that suggest Esther may have been more of a glorified trafficking victim than a willing contestant in a royal beauty pageant?

The refusal of Esther's relative, Mordecai, to bow before the king's official, Haman, set into motion a series of events that threatened the Israelites' very existence (see *Esther 3:1-6*). The only person who could possibly undermine Haman's evil plot was Esther, so Mordecai encouraged her to rise to the occasion. **Read Esther 4:1-15.** What did Mordecai ask Esther to do on behalf of the Jews? Why was Esther afraid at first? And what was her ultimate response?

When you consider the state of the world today, and what our church has to offer, what makes our mission so important? What is at stake here?

What fears or uncertainties sometimes keep Christians from doing what needs to be done and saying what needs to be said "for such a time as this"?

Throughout the New Testament, especially in the book called Revelation, Jesus is described as a groom who will one day claim his bride (the Church) and they will dwell together in perfect love forever. How might it change the way we look at our church's mission if we really understood that to invite someone to "church" is to invite them into the greatest, truest love story ever told?

With this in mind, what are you willing to risk so that lost, lonely, and broken souls may be found, loved, and restored by the powerful love of Jesus Christ?