

**A. Living in less than ideal circumstances**

1. Why is it important to not glamorise Bible stories? Why is it useful to think your way into a story? What difference does it make to the story of Esther?
2. How do you think Esther felt about being taken into a harem?
3. What was the difference between the circumstances Rahab found herself in and those in which Esther found herself? What lessons do we draw from this about our circumstances?

**B. The Unseen God**

4. What lessons do we learn about God's providence?
5. How do you feel when you read the whole story and see everything working for good? How does that help you to live in the middle of your circumstances?
6. What encouragement is there for us when we see ourselves as lacking influence or insignificant? What impact does that have on us as individuals and as a fellowship?

**C. Living for God whatever the circumstances**

7. Read Esther 4:9-14. What was Esther's initial reaction to the situation? How does Mark 8:34-38 tie in with this?

8. Esther was holding back for understandable reasons. In what ways can we give God less than 100% and why?
9. How do we see God's sovereignty in the book of Esther?
10. What are some wrong responses to the idea that God is sovereign?
11. If God is sovereign how are we called to live? How does Esther illustrate this?
12. How does Esther point us to Jesus? How does this help us in living for Christ? How does realising what we have in Christ help us?
13. Esther, Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah were all used by God in difficult environments where God was not honoured. What lessons do we learn from this about living for God in a godless culture?
14. In what ways could "And who knows but that you have come to this position for such a time as this" (4:14) apply to your life? What could we be doing to look for ways to use our position?