

# UNLIKELY SAINTS

## Esther

1. Who is your favourite hero in a movie or fairytale? In their story what did they have to risk for the greater good?
2. Would someone summarize the story of Esther for the rest of the group?
3. In the Esther narrative, Mordecai took a stand based on his faith – he refused bow and worship Haman. Have you ever had to take a stand like that? How did that turn out?
4. Mordecai's refusal to bow down to Haman resulted in Haman lashing out against all of the Jews. One man's disobedience to the governing authorities caused the suffering of many people. Read Romans 13:1-7 and Acts 5:27-29. Wrestle with the tension here. Was Haman wrong for refusing to obey Haman? What do you think you would have done?
5. Read Esther 3:12-4:3. Has God ever allowed threat of trouble in your life to drive you to Him? If so, what did you learn through the experience?
6. Read Esther 4:8. What was Mordecai asking for Esther to do? Compare Esther 4:8 with Esther 2:10. Why the sudden shift in Mordecai's instructions? How would you have felt if you were Esther listening to Mordecai's request?
7. Read Esther 4:13-16. What do you think of Mordecai and Esther's conversation? What does it show us about their trust in God? Mordecai's advice to Esther was wise and timely. How did it change Esther's perspective? How might we express faith in God in the circumstances in which he has placed us?
8. What do you think is Esther's greater purpose?
9. God used a national crisis to change the direction of Esther's life. Sometimes God uses troubles to change our direction. Share a time when God used hard times in your life to change your focus and direction.
10. Why do you think God is never mentioned in the book of Esther? It as an "Invitation to look for God's activity." How might that encourage us when our plans are interrupted, or we experience hardship? Does it give us hope when we can't see what God is doing? How does the story of Esther personally encourage you today? What do you want to remember?