

MENTOR



FOR LIFE

DON'T JUST DANCE

A Scottish proverb says, “If you don’t have blood on your kilt you’re just a dancer.”

Obedying the Lord has a cost. For example, consider the what it took for you to have the Bible in your hands. Many of us have multiple copies in different translations. God’s Word, spoken into history, has been translated and transported from the ancient Near East into our language and our country through the blood of martyrs. God, the Holy Spirit, didn’t just inspire the Word, he has and is preserving it and spreading it all over the world. Much of this has been accomplished by obedient men and women who valued God’s Word more than their very lives. In other words, if your obedience has no price tag, if it has no cost, it calls into question the value of your faith. Are we dancing or fighting?

The 2nd of the Ten Commandments says not to bow to idols. In today’s passage, Mordecai refused to bow in spite of the king’s command. That obedience to God had a higher cost than he probably even realized. But, Mordecai wasn’t there to dance...

ESTHER 3:1–11 (SELECTED)

¹ After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite... and set his throne above all the officials who were with him. ² And all the king’s servants who were at the king’s gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage... ³ And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury. ⁴ But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus...

⁸ Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king’s laws, so that it is not to the king’s profit to tolerate them. ⁹ If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king’s business, that they may put it into the king’s treasuries.” ¹⁰ So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman... ¹¹ And the king said to Haman, “The money is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

When Satan tempted Adam and Eve in the garden, he appealed to their pride, “to be like God.” It’s fair to say that a heart of pride is the root of all human sin from Genesis 3 onward. But, is all pride sinful?

Is it sinful to take pride in accomplishments, in your team, in your school, etc? The answer is definitely maybe. Scan the QR code for insights on how to answer this question. Spoiler alert, the real question is, who are those things you celebrate exalting? If the answer is you, that’s a problem.



DISCUSSION

What’s something fun or funny that you’re passionate about that others don’t seem to be as interested in?

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

1. How did Haman respond to Mordecai and why? (5-6a)

2. What 3 things did Haman say about the Jews? (8a-c)
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3. How did the king respond to Haman’s plan? (10-11)

4. Why might Haman take his anger out on all Jews when only one offended him? (6)

INTERPRETATION

5. What are some possible consequences you might face living sold out for Christ now and as you look to the future? (Would any of these things cost too much?)

APPLICATION

One of the main things we want you to realize through this study is that you’re not too young to do or be anything we’re discussing. Don’t believe me? Talk to your Coach today!

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STUDY NOTES

PRIDE

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). How many times have we seen athletes and teams written checks with their words that they couldn’t cash with their actions? Too many times the scoreboard failed to agree with the boasting before the game began.

Hardly any person in all of Scripture captures the essence of Proverbs 16:18 more than the man we meet in today’s passage—**Haman the Agagite**—the villain of our story. Although we don’t have a clear reason why, the **King promoted Haman and set his throne above all the officials who were with him**. Again, we don’t know why, but **all the king’s servant bowed down and paid homage to Haman** because **the king had commanded it**.

Apparently, Haman had something about him that Xerxes really appreciated to make him second in command for all Persia. However, it wasn’t enough to have the authority. He wanted to be *recognized* for having the authority.

As a Jewish man in obedience to the Ten Commandments, **Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage... And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury**.

A mature believer in Christ has two courses of action when dealing with hurt feelings or this kind of offense. They can let it go—applying the mercy they’ve received in the Gospel to their own situation. Or, they can humbly confront in truth and grace seeking reconciliation. Haman’s pride did not allow him to confront Mordecai directly. Those with weak character often act in spite, rather than seeking resolution. Haman’s pride had been injured to the degree that his fury extended beyond Mordecai and **Haman sought to destroy all the Jews**.

MENTORS MUST LIVE UNDER OPPOSITION

Obedience to Christ means we do not follow the patterns of this world—we do not live according to the flesh. Some people take that desire to live in obedience to God as a personal attack. Haman’s fragile ego couldn’t handle that Mordecai’s allegiance could extend beyond his own authority. Guess what, if you ever want to live and work in this world, you’re going to have leaders just like this too! You’ve already met some fragile egos at school, at work, or maybe even in the locker room.

Like a slithering snake, Haman appeals to the king’s ego as well, **“There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king’s laws, so that it is not to the king’s profit to tolerate them. If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed.”**

Haman sweetened the pot by offering to replenish the king’s treasury from previous wars, **“If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king’s business, that they may put it into the king’s treasuries.”**

Haman was a slick political operator and manipulated the king like a mound of clay. The bait was placed and the king bit— **the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman... And the king said to Haman, “The money is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.”**

THE OPPOSITION MAY SEEM OVERWHELMING

Mordecai had personally offended the right-hand-man to the most powerful person in the world. His obedience set into action an order for an Empire-wide genocide. Not only were the Persians commanded to hunt and murder the Jews, participants could then legally plunder their wealth.

Haman cast lots (think, rolling dice) to discover when this event would take place. The lots “just so happened” to dictate that the genocide would happen 11 months from the decree. After 11 months of coveting and planning, greedy Persians would leave no place to hide for the remaining Jews.

Where is God when evil appears to be winning? Maybe you’ve got some situations in life where you think, “Why should I be faithful to Christ when it’s the other people who (fill in the blank).” In this dark moment, little did anyone know, God had other plans. In 11 months, instead of defeat, the Jews would be exalted. Instead of annihilated, the Jews would be celebrated.

Our walk with Christ isn’t just a stroll through the park. We ain’t just dancing and sometimes we get dirty. There’s a cost to obedience. The good news is that we don’t have to face these things on our own. We need the help of mentors (and mentees) to shoulder the load. Often, the challenges we face aren’t unique to us. Our mentors have been there before. Most of our problems aren’t quite as extreme as Mordecai’s, but even if they were, you need people in your corner because we just never know how God is at work.