

# MENTOR



WEEK 5

# FOR LIFE

## CAN'T HELP MYSELF

In 2016, the Guggenheim Museum commissioned a work of art called *Can't Help Myself*. This installation, enclosed in a glass room, featured an industrial robot with a giant brush attached to the end. The robot's task was to keep a red viscous liquid from escaping its reach. The liquid continually poured and spread, forcing the robot to try and keep up its unending task.

The robot has dance moves to appeal to the crowd. However, as time went by, the robot slowed down due to wear. It had less time for dancing. Finally, in 2019 the robot stopped after losing too much hydraulic fluid. This slow and steady decline caused an emotional outpouring of videos on social media.

Stepping into today's passage, this installation reminds us that unless Jesus returns in our lifetime, death will come to us all. We can't help ourselves. The question is not "Will we die?" It's "Did our lives matter?"

ESTHER 4:8-17

<sup>8</sup>Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people. <sup>9</sup>And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. <sup>10</sup>Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say, <sup>11</sup>"All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days."

<sup>12</sup>And they told Mordecai what Esther had said. <sup>13</sup>Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. <sup>14</sup>For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" <sup>15</sup>Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, <sup>16</sup>"Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." <sup>17</sup>Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

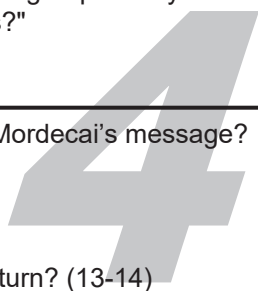
Prayer is a spiritual discipline where we talk to God. God is less about getting our way and more about conforming our hearts to God's. Maybe you've given it a try, but struggled not knowing what to say. Although there's no "right" words, thinking in categories may help to organize and structure our prayers.

The QR code offers an introduction to a method called the A.C.T.S. prayer model. If you would like to get started praying or just try something new, scan the QR code.



## DISCUSSION

What are some of the areas and groups that you're a part of in "such a time as this?"



ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

1. How did Esther respond to Mordecai's message? (11)

2. What did Mordecai say in return? (13-14)

- His warning:

- His challenging thought:

3. Describe Esther's response. (16)

4. Describe Esther's overall change in response to Mordecai's warning. (15-17)

INTERPRETATION

5. Based on the discussion, what does God most prize for you to be used by Him? What would that practically look like?

APPLICATION

We all face dark days, but you don't need to walk through them alone. You have people in your corner who are ready to pray for you in challenging times. Talk to your Coach today!

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## STUDY NOTES

### NOBODY'S FOOL

Missionary martyr, Jim Elliot, famously said, *"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."* Jim and four other missionaries died at the hands of those they were trying to reach with the Gospel. It should be noted that these five men had at least one gun when they were speared to death. One of them shot into the air hoping to scare the natives. They had agreed to this plan if trouble came their way for a simple reason, *"The natives are not ready for heaven. We are."*

Last Week, we saw Mordecai's obedience to God's Law in the Ten Commandments brought a decree of genocide for the Jews. We'll see that even in mourning, Mordecai had faith in God's deliverance. However, the mentor had to convince his young mentee that although she faced a high risk, full dependence on the Lord brought a far greater reward than just living.

Esther 4 opens with Mordecai hearing of the decree and going to the King's Gate in mourning, wearing sackcloth and ashes. Esther sent one of her servants, Hathach, to find out what why Mordecai acted as he did. ***Mordecai gave Hathach a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her.*** Mordecai also issued instruction, a ***command to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people.***

After receiving the message, Esther sent Hathach back to ***Mordecai*** saying, ***"All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days."*** In other words, Esther said, "I can't go talk to the king unless he asks for me otherwise the law says I will die."

### MENTORS MUST LAUNCH MENTEES

Esther's message probably brought much heartache to Mordecai. Of course, she was correct and her fear was warranted. He knew what he needed to ask her to do, that no "safe" option existed for any of them. ***Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not***

***think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews."***

Mordecai grieved, but he had hope, ***"For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish."*** Mordecai fully believed deliverance will come from somewhere, but that Esther had the opportunity that it might come through her. If she squandered her platform, Mordecai warned that negative consequences may exist as well. He then speculated, ***"And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"***

Time only marches forward. Tomorrow will never bring the preparation you desire to accomplish something great. You have time *now* to invest in eternity. Who knows whether you have not come into your school for such a time as this—or into that locker room, or into that job, or into wherever you find yourself. You might be the only follower of Jesus in a given space at a given time. That means you're a Kingdom Ambassador for "such a time as this."

### LAUNCHING MENTEES REQUIRES FOLLOWING GOD'S PURPOSE

Esther saw the wisdom in her mentor's words. She sent a ***reply***, ***"Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."*** Esther's words weren't hopeless or fatalistic. They were matter of fact regarding the truth of the situation. These actions may cost her life, but it will have been worth it.

It's here in this moment that the entire story of the book of *Esther* pivots. The events and circumstances for Esther and Mordecai were increasingly bad, from Esther's conscription into the king's harem (The word marriage was never used. This was no royal wedding), to the threat of genocide for the Jews. The moment Esther asked her community to humble their hearts in prayer and fasting, the circumstances will continue to elevate.

You are perfectly placed for such a time as this. God doesn't need your money, your smarts, your athleticism, or any such thing. He desires your humility and your surrender that you may be used by him. Your obedience may come at a high cost, but you are nobody's fool.