

A Cry at the King's Gate

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon calls believers to recognize their divine purpose and intercede for a society in need, drawing lessons from Esther's story.

Duration: 39:31

Scripture: Esther 4:1

Topics: "Intercessory Prayer", "Spiritual Awakening"

Description

This sermon delves into the story of Esther in the Bible, focusing on the pivotal moment when Mordecai cried out at the king's gate, leading to Esther's courageous decision to approach the king for the sake of her people. The message emphasizes the importance of going beyond personal comfort and routine religious practices to intercede and pray for others, seeking God's mercy and intervention in a time of societal crisis and spiritual awakening.

Transcript

I want to talk to you this morning about a message entitled, The Cry at the King's Gate. The Cry at the King's Gate. It's from the book of Esther, chapter 4, if you want to go there in your Bibles with me this morning.

And Father, I thank you, Lord, for the touch of heaven in this sanctuary. I thank you, Lord God, for the anointing of your Holy Spirit on all of us who are gathered here today before you to open your word and to unlock something of your heart that you are choosing to speak to us. God Almighty, would you give us the ears to hear it? Would you give us the hearts to embrace this moment in which we're living, to embrace your will for us, God? Even though in the natural it can look to be the least desirable option, but yet, God, your ways are not our ways, and your thoughts are not our thoughts.

Your ways are higher than our ways, and your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. And so help us today, God, to understand. Help me, Lord, to speak this.

Give us hearts to hear it. We put all of it into your hands, Lord. We are your people.

We are the light that you said is to be set upon a hill in this season. So give us the grace to occupy our place, to do it righteously and rightfully. And we thank you for it.

In Jesus' name, amen. Esther chapter 4, beginning to read in verse 1. Now when Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry.

He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews with fasting, weeping, wailing, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. So Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, and the queen was deeply distressed.

Then she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth away from him, but he would not accept them. Then Esther called Hathag, one of the king's eunuchs, whom he had appointed to attend her. And she gave him a command concerning Mordecai to learn what and why this was.

So Hathag went out to Mordecai and the city square that was in front of the king's gate. And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasury to destroy the Jews. He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go into the king to make supplication to him and to plead before him for her people.

I love the part in the book of Esther where cousin Mordecai said to her, who knows but that you were brought into the kingdom for such a time as this. Have you ever thought of that? Have you ever realized that there is no happenstance with God? He is in control of all things from beginning to end. He's never taken aback by situation, never taken by surprise.

And he chose to have you and me born into this world, into this city, into this country, or wherever it is you live, at this time for a divine purpose. Now the book of Esther has its beginning telling the story of a young girl who was brought into proximity of the king for a purpose, like you and I, that she didn't yet fully understand. We were born again.

When we turned to God, we turned from our sin. We trusted Christ and his sacrifice to be the whole source of our forgiveness. And when we did that, we who were alienated in our minds from God, and we were distant from God, eternally separated from God, were brought in the proximity of the king of kings and the Lord of lords.

We were covered. We were given a beautiful garment, as it is. We were allowed access to him.

But it was a purpose that many of us don't fully understand in the body of Christ. First Corinthians chapter 2, verses 9 and 10, the apostle Paul says, the eye has not seen nor the ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love him. But God has revealed them to us through his spirit.

Now, there had to be an inner stirring in Esther's heart, just the way there is in many of ours today, that she was being led towards a deeper purpose than she could naturally see and understand. I know that if you know God, you have these inner whispers, as I did when I was a young believer in Christ, that are too preposterous to even believe. That God has a purpose and a plan that's way outside of our natural ability.

It's outside of our influence. It's outside of our own intelligence, our own scope of our self-view of what we think we are capable of accomplishing. But these whispers keep coming.

And just like Esther tried to put a different set of garments on her cousin Mordecai, we try to push these whispers away and give them another appearance or maybe water them down. But God has destined you and I for a divine purpose in this moment in which we're living. And I'm trusting that the Holy Spirit is stirring that in your heart.

I don't think I'm saying something strange today. I think many of you know this. You understand this.

There's something in your heart that's telling you that you have a purpose deeper than what you have fully realized that your life is all about. And so it's just a whisper in the beginning. And just like Esther did, we carry on from day to day in the body of Christ.

We learn our new responsibilities as she had to being brought in as a new bride to the king and frequently meeting with the king, new believers in Christ. We go to church. We study the Bible.

We pray. We learn our new duties. We learn our new place in Christ.

We learn a new language, really, for many. Have to begin to understand what righteousness means and sanctification, the omnipotence of God, all these great big words that we're teaching now at 1 o'clock here in this church. And we learn this place.

And then everything goes on fairly routinely, sometimes for a long, long time. And you know the tragedy of it all is that it's in the human nature that when we become familiar with something, we can actually become bored with it over time. We become bored with prayer.

We become bored with even going to church. Thank God. I don't sense that here this morning with a lot of people.

But it is a dilemma. That's why marriages fall apart. They start with such love, and then they just become distant.

People go to work. They love their new job. They'll brag about it.

They'll boast about it. They'll talk about how challenging it is. Give it five years.

And then suddenly, they're looking at their watch. They're trying to get out. They find it boring.

It's just something in the fallen nature of all of us. And so Esther went on. And I'm sure it was a wonderful beginning.

But something happened over time. And she began to be more distant from the king. She was aware of the distance that was being created between her and her husband.

And then suddenly, one day, a cry came to her, or news of a cry at the king's gate came to her. It says, when Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes. He put on sackcloth and ashes.

He went into the midst of the city. And he cried out with a loud and bitter cry. And he went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

It's a cry that I'm beginning to hear in my spirit. It's the cry of people going to bed at night and having no hope for tomorrow. It's the cry of those who are in our streets looking for justice, but they're not quite sure what justice really is supposed to look like.

It's the cry of the wife whose husband, she suspects he's becoming unfaithful to her and vice versa. It's the cry of children, so many who have been raised without proper guidance. They've been told there is no God.

They're out in the streets, and they don't see a future. They don't see a hope. It's a cry that might not be audible, but it is at the king's gate.

And you and I are now, if you are sensitive to the spirit, you're becoming more aware of it all the time. It was a cry of a people. It was Esther's people at this time who were under the curse of the law of death.

The law had been passed, a law which was going to allow the enemies of the people of God to plunder them, to take away their strength. It represented that in Esther's day, but in our day, it represents this law of sin and death that seems to be unabated now, going throughout society, destroying homes, destroying lives, destroying minds, destroying children in their mother's womb, just destroying. It's a law of destruction.

It's a law of death. It seems to have the preeminence. And society seems to be so powerless to stop this death and destruction that seems to be going forth with a newfound vigor and enthusiasm.

And suddenly, one day, she's simply going about her business, just as you and I are, going to church like we do, going to prayer, perhaps, like we do. And suddenly, a report comes to her of a cry at the king's gate. It's a cry that's calling out, help us, help us.

Esther, you are where we are not. We are not clothed in the royal robes that have been given to you. We are not allowed access into the king.

We can cry, but only from a distance. You see, society around us can only cry from a distance. They do not have access to the throne of God the way you and I do, as the bride of Jesus Christ.

It's the cry of a society that says, Esther, for heaven's sake and for our sake, don't leave us behind. Don't get so comfortable in your newfound position. Or don't get so bored with your purpose that you forget that the rest of us are still under a sentence of death, though you may escape, as she may have thought, because of where you are.

We are not escaping. This sentence of death is here. It's permeating our streets.

It's permeating our culture. And you have access to the king, Esther. Don't forsake us.

It's the cry of a nation. It's the cry of our cities. It's the cry of our youth.

It's the cry of every single mother who doesn't know how she's going to feed her children. It's the cry of everyone who's got a bottle of pills beside their bed, and they're contemplating taking the whole thing because they don't see a future. It's the cry of a society.

It may not be audible, but God hears it. We may not hear it, but God hears it. We get the report, but God hears it.

God hears the cry. God hears. It's the cry of the people who are coming.

They're trying to cry out to God, but they can only get so close. They don't know how. They have no access.

They say, we are dressed in sackcloth, and those who are wearing sackcloth are not allowed up beyond this gate that bars us from the inner court of the king. But Esther, you have access to the throne of the king. But Esther says, well, but you don't understand, you see.

She sends back word to Mordecai, and she said, everyone who approaches the king and has not been called is put to death except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go into the king for 30 days. You see, Esther's the type of a Christian in this generation, a believer, who says, but you don't understand, you see, my relationship with the king isn't what it used to be.

We've kind of cooled off. As a matter of fact, he hasn't even been speaking to me recently. It's been 30 days.

It's the type of a believer who's here today, says, well, wow, I wish you'd have brought me this message 15 years ago, 20 years ago, or 12 years ago. Man, I was at every prayer meeting. My relationship with God was hot.

I heard his voice every day, and I came to prayer. I got up, and I prayed in the morning. I prayed at night, and I said, and it was a love relationship.

It was so powerful. I love you, Jesus. And Jesus would tell me back, I love you, too.

And we would just, it was awesome. But over time, we kind of just seemed to drift apart. And now, I don't even know how to pray anymore.

I don't know how to approach the king, and he's not speaking to me. So this has come to me at the worst possible time. You see, there's a cry now in the nation.

There's a calling out, I believe. It's an unspoken thing. People don't know, but they're calling out to the church.

Will you pray for us? Will you intercede for us? Will you go to the throne of God for us? We can't go for ourselves. Would you go for us? But the church responds back and says, in effect, well, wow, I wish you'd have called out in 1960, during the Jesus movement, or in the 70s. But you see, we've been on a, we've kind of been distant.

We don't hardly have any prayer meetings anymore, even in the body of Christ throughout the nation. And now, you're calling out to us to pray. But it's been a long time since we've prayed.

Esther could have even felt unlovely, undesired. Maybe in her heart, she would be thinking, I missed something. Maybe there's some flaw in me that's caused them to draw back.

I could have made a difference once, but how can I do it now? I mean, there's no passion in my prayer anymore. There's no power in my prayer. I haven't even heard him say, I love you, in so long.

I've even found it hard to tell him I love him. It's just the way it is. Mordecai, you couldn't have come to the gate at a worse time, if only you'd done this a couple of years ago.

And sometimes, as believers in Christ, we can feel helpless. We can feel unlovely, unwanted, when in reality, the distance we're feeling is because God is drawing us to something deeper in our relationship with him. You know, every good marriage becomes a partnership.

It starts out. That's why I always tell people when I counsel in this church, when I do counsel, it's important that the person you're marrying is your best friend before you get married. If you're just simply infatuated with each other, you know, it's possible to love somebody you don't like.

And that happens. Then suddenly, the distance comes. The familiarity sets in.

And you know, the sweet little nothings that you whisper are just suddenly becoming farther and farther apart. And you end up at opposite ends of the table, thinking, I don't even like this person. I once loved them, but I don't even like them now.

And it's so important that you marry your best friend. It's so important that you know you have similar goals, you have values, you have the same heart, that you can envision yourself sitting in your latter years in a rocking chair together in a living room somewhere and enjoying each other's company, because that's the way it's going to go eventually. Folks, we've got a lot to learn in these things.

Esther did what all of us should do. She found some friends who would fast and pray with her. And she said, I'm going into the king.

But it's going to be different now. It's going to be a partnership. It's going to be different.

I'm not going in just to say, I love you, and to hear him say, I love you. No, I love you more. No, I love you more.

I'm going in beyond that. I'm going into the king. But this time, it's not for my sake, but it's for the sake of others.

And if this pathway costs me everything, then so be it. You see, this is sometimes why God will allow a distance. There is no distance.

Now, first of all, let me settle it. There is no distance between you and Christ. It's only a perception in your heart.

But he will allow you to feel that. He loves you as much as he ever has. You're still the apple of his eye.

Nothing has changed. Don't let the devil lie to you. He still died for you because he passionately loves you.

Nothing has changed. But he's looking to you, he's looking to me as the Church of Jesus Christ in this generation and saying, I want something deeper from you. I don't want you just coming in to tell me you love me.

I'm looking for a partnership. I'm looking for a bride that will rule and reign with me, not just in eternity, but will have a measure of that flowing through her life here in time as well. I'm drawing you to something deeper.

And finally, Esther found that place when she went in and said, I'm going in. And I'm going to pray this time. But it's not going to be for me.

I'm not even looking to save myself. I'm not looking for some blessing in my life. I'm not looking for my own provision, my own security, my own safety.

I'm going in to the throne of the King for the sake of people who are under a law of death. I'm going in for their sakes. And if the prayer I pray costs me my life, so be it.

That is a bride that rules and reigns with Jesus Christ. That is a person who can go to the throne and move the heart of the King. I'm not here looking to have some kind of a personal enhancement of character, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

I'm coming in now because there are children in the streets that are defenseless against the powers of hell that are set out to slaughter them. I'm here because families are being destroyed. I'm here because things that were once held sacred are being thrown overboard into the sea of forgetfulness.

I'm here because there's a society crying out for hope and vision and a future. And they're not going to find it anywhere but in God and God himself and God alone. Yes, it's a place of trepidation.

It's the kind of a prayer meeting that not too many of us want to go to. When we go towards the King and we realize it could cost us our lives, we go towards the King and the prayer that's in the center of our heart is not my will but thy and be done. Realizing that if we fully embrace the will of God, it could be a very physically unpleasant experience for us where that will of God is going to lead us.

But it was in that place of being abandoned to the will of God for the sake of others that she found favor, wisdom from heaven. Incredible wisdom was given her. She learned to walk in the spirit.

She wasn't hasty to try to, in other words, she didn't try to, when you read the story, you realize she didn't go for the goal right away. But she took time. She waited on God.

She waited for the proper moment. But in that place, she found the power to rewrite the law of death into a law of life. If you and I are willing to pray, if we're willing to put our lives, our freedom, everything we are behind that prayer, God wants again because he never changes.

He's the same yesterday, today, and forever can put into our hands the power to rewrite a season of death into a season of life. I believe that with all my heart. You and I can experience a spiritual awakening in our generation.

We can see our cities revived. We can see our children in prayer meetings. We can see our schools vowed in prayer again.

We can see athletes praying on the field before, during, and after a sporting event. We can see God come and do what only God can do if we are willing to go to the throne for their sakes now, if we're willing. I love the fact that, and I can envision it with my mind, that the Lord God put a quill in her hand and she was able to take this law of death that was taking away the testimony of God, the power of God, the life of the very society around them, and she was able to rewrite that law with her cousin Mordecai into a law of life, into a law of strength, into a law where people could stand up and gain the victory that was theirs and is ours today because of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Now, history tells us that she became a co-regent with her husband, unheard of in the Medo-Persian Empire because she began to write laws. She began to have authority. She actually became a co-ruler.

That's what the king, I believe, had always been looking for. That's what he longed for. Not just somebody who just came into his court just to whisper a few sweet little words and go out again.

That's perhaps why the distance had come for a season. I wish I had a wife, a bride, that would rule and reign with me. I wish I had a bride that would intercede.

I wish I had a bride that would show deeper character for others, for the sake of others, than what I have seen so far. You see, you and I are called to more than Sunday religion. We're called to reign with Christ.

You are, and I am. Let me just read to you from Psalm 149. The scripture says, Praise the Lord.

Sing to the Lord a new song and his praise in the assembly of saints. Let Israel rejoice in their maker. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.

Let them praise his name with the dance. Let them sing praises to him with the timbrel and harp. For the Lord takes pleasure in his people and he will beautify the humble with salvation.

Let the saints be joyful in glory. Let them sing aloud on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouths and a two-edged sword in their hand to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute on them the written judgment.

This honor have all his saints. Praise the Lord. The psalmist is saying, Would be to God that those who belong to God would understand the spiritual authority that we have, that we would rediscover it again in this generation, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

They are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself above the knowledge of God, having the power to bring every thought into obedience to Christ when our obedience is fulfilled. When we have chosen the way of God, when we have decided, God, I'm not sitting as an observer on the sidelines and watch a whole generation swallowed up of death, a whole generation lose heart, lose hope, lose strength, a whole generation being taught that evil is good and good is evil. I'm not sitting on the sidelines any longer.

I'm gonna take the authority that is mine. I'm gonna go to the throne of God and I'm gonna believe that just as that scepter of a Medo-Persian king moved towards Esther, how much more will the scepter of God's mercy move towards me as I begin to pray? My constant prayer now for New York City is a simple one. Lord Jesus Christ, if people in New York City end up in hell, let it be because they chose it, not because they didn't know.

Make a way, oh God, that every man, woman and child in this city can hear about the depth of your love, the beauty of your cross, the wondrousness of your salvation, the greatness of the life that you promised not only in time but forever for those who turn to you. Let them hear about it and let hell tremble. Give me the power to bind their kings and bind their nobles.

Give me the power to stand before the throne of God and take into captivity these powers and principalities of wickedness that dwell in high places. Oh God, let not this nation be given over to darkness. When you are still the light and you still have more power than the whole world's nuclear arsenal put together, multiplied by a million, you're still more powerful than all of it.

God Almighty. This is the cry of my heart. It's the cry of God's heart for his church.

There can't be a spiritual awakening. And listen, folks, if you don't know that we need a spiritual awakening by now, then you need a spiritual awakening. And there will never be an awakening without prayer.

And there will never be prayer that has any effect if it's self-focused. The prayer that will have an effect in this generation is a prayer that goes into the throne of God and say, Lord, show me what to do. Push back this law of darkness.

It's a type of prayer that takes authority as the bride of Christ and say, Lord, you've said that we're going to rule and reign with you for all of eternity. But God Almighty, you've also given us power now to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the powers of the enemy. And you said nothing would by any means hurt us.

You told us that we would have tribulation in this world, but you also told us to be of good cheer for you had overcome this world already. You told us to the Apostle Paul that we're already more than conquerors through Christ who loved us. You told us that there's no wall that can be built.

There's no valley that can be dug. There's no power and principality. There's no angels that can appear in the heavens.

There's nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is ours in Christ Jesus. You told us that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. You told us that this perfected love of God being embraced in our hearts would cast all fear out of our lives.

You told us these things, oh God. So if I perish, I perish because I'm already eternal, already loved, already secure. If this physical body perishes, so be it.

But I'm not sitting on the sidelines and giving a generation over to darkness. I'm gonna pray. I'm gonna pray, and then I'm gonna pray.

I'm gonna pray the prayers of someone who rules and reigns with Christ. I'm gonna read it, I'm gonna believe it, I'm gonna declare it. Whatever happens is up to him.

The song of Solomon, which I've always believed, is a type of Christ in his church. The bridegroom says, oh, my dove, in the secret clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff. In other words, oh, my beloved bride, that still is hidden, or you've found refuge in something that is short of what I have for you.

Let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet and your voice is pure. Your voice is sweet and your face is lovely. Don't be silent anymore.

Don't buy the lie of the devil that I don't want to see you at my throne, says the Lord. I wanna give an altar call this morning for every Esther, every person that says, pastor, you've been in my prayer meeting. I don't know how you got there, but you've heard my prayers.

You've been in my house. You've heard my complaint on the subway. This is me you're talking about.

I am the person who feels like, I wish I had heard this 10 years ago. It's gotten cold. No, it's not cold, it's just what it used to be is cooling off, and what it is going to be is going to take you into a whole different

place in God.

If you haven't been out to prayer yet, Tuesday night, we had a prayer meeting last Tuesday night like I don't know if I've ever seen in my lifetime. Presence of God came here when people get together and we're not here to pray for ourselves, we're here to pray for this generation. And when we began to pray, it's as if the presence of God just came into the sanctuary and there was a roar of faith came out of the people.

I really feel in my heart just to give an altar call for those who say I'm going in. I don't know what this is gonna look like, I don't know where it's gonna lead, but I'm going in and I'm going in for the sake of others. I'm going in for people that are marching on our streets.

You know, you can do a lot of those things. I mean, you can march in the streets for justice, you can sign petitions, you can call up congressmen, you can do all of this stuff. And I suppose some good comes from some of it.

But I want you to take note that historically, the only people that really made a difference, the people that made a difference are the people who went in, fasted and prayed, and approached the king. Those are the people who made a difference. I'm sure there are people in the cities, it was a huge empire that were signing petitions, marching in the streets, petitioning their councilmen or whatever.

And I suppose some good was done, but the law was not rewritten by them, it was rewritten by a few people, fasted and prayed, and one girl, one girl went into the king's presence and said, if I perish, I perish. I want you to think seriously about this, because you and I don't know what this is going to mean in our lives. But I know one thing that it will mean if we make that choice, others will have eternal life with God because of it.

That is for sure. Father, I thank you with all my heart today, Lord, for your presence here. This is a divine moment in history.

This is a moment where you say, as you once did through the prophet Isaiah, come, let us reason together. This is a moment where we hear a call that doesn't come from the flesh, it comes from the spirit. This is a moment as intense as the moment of our salvation.

When we have to choose between life and death, this time not for ourselves, but for others. God, would you help us not to be cowards? Would you help us, Lord, to care? Would you put love in our hearts if it's not there? Would you do in us what needs to be done so that we can make a difference in this generation? And we know, we know that Esther saved her own family by reaching out to save others. We know historically that happened.

We know that God, everything we do for others will be doubled back in triple measure and given to us. And so, Lord, we thank you that you will not leave us out as we refuse to leave others out. Help us, Lord.

Help us, oh God. All of us, Lord. Give us grace and give us strength.

In Jesus' name. Amen. We're at a critical juncture.

Listen to me. Listen very carefully. We are in danger as a society in losing the freedom of religion and speech.

There are godless elements in this nation that are emboldened now to go for their full agenda. And it's the destruction of everything that represents God and godliness. You have to understand that.

This is a sober moment. Esther. Please, take seriously the cry at the king's gate now.

Let's go in. Let's ask God to do something in us that will rewrite the law of death for somebody else into a law of life. We're gonna stand and we're gonna worship for 10 minutes or so.

And as we do, if you want to be that Esther, this could be, consider this the king's court. It's just a physical type. But I want you to get out of your seat and just come and say, I'm in, I'm going with God.

I'm gonna pray. I'm gonna throw my life in with my prayers. I'm going to believe God.

Just in the balcony, go to either exit as we stand, please. The annex as well. You can stand between the screens or make your way here, whatever you prefer.

But let's just say we're going in. We are going in. Young people, don't sell yourself short.

Older folks, don't believe that it's too far gone in somebody else's battle. Just come, please, please, just come. Say, Lord, give me the touch of heaven I need to pray.

Give me the heart I need to care. Give me the courage I need to not be a coward. God, do this for me, for the sake of your kingdom.

In Jesus' name. What the Lord would have us do is pray for mercy. It's so easy in this society that if you're letting the dominant voices govern you, it's so easy to find yourself on one side or the other of all kinds of issues.

And if you're not careful, you can wind up hating, even as a believer in Jesus Christ. That's not what we're called to do. We are agents of mercy.

We are ambassadors of mercy. We represent a kingdom where God wants to dispense mercy and where we ourselves have received mercy. That's who we are.

And so it's so important that we don't get snared by the thinking of this time. I remember I used to walk down 52nd here in the morning, coming into church and Saturday night, usually I would come in and stay at a little efficiency unit we have here. And there was a club next door where men dressed as women.

I think some of you remember that. And I found that not very appealing personally, but I found myself praying for mercy. I would walk by and instead of just judging people who are snared in sin, I would just say, God have mercy, God have mercy.

And I would point at people, Lord have mercy on this person, have mercy on that person. And I remember that Friday night preaching evangelistically and then a very, very attractive lady came to Christ and right down over here and wept at the altar. Some of you may remember this.

And the tears started flowing and just the person opened their heart to receive Christ and then reached up and took the wig. He reached up and took his wig off and laid it on the platform. And I thank God for that with all my heart.

I do with everything in me. We're a kingdom of mercy and it's so easy to get caught in our own prejudices and forget that people need Christ. It's so easy to become part of a massive divides that are hitting our whole society.

But Esther made the choice. She went into the throne and said, God, she petitioned her king, would you have mercy on these people? Will you have mercy? And some may in the natural have deserved what they got for what they had done, but she appealed for mercy and God gave mercy. And so father, we stand before you today as the Esther's of our generation.

God, we ask you for hearts to care. We ask you for a balanced thinking. Lord, that we can see everything from heaven's perspective, not man's Lord.

We ask God that you deliver us Lord from speaking words we shouldn't, being in places that are not edifying. Lord, being part of the problem and not part of the solution. We ask you Lord for the grace Lord to lay down our own agendas and just simply go to your throne and say, father, I'm here to appeal.

I'm here to ask for mercy. I'm asking for mercy for all people, people on both sides of a divide. I'm asking for mercy, Lord.

I'm not asking for judgment on anyone. I'm asking for mercy on all, on every person. And so father, that's who we are today.

Give us hearts to care Lord about the lost in this generation. Give us hearts Lord to rise above the clamor and the speech of this time. Give us hearts Lord to see it from all from the perspective of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Father, we thank you for this God. With all of our heart, we give you praise and glory. And thank you Lord that traditionally you take those that are weak.

You take those that are nothing and foolish Lord to bring to nothing those things that exist apart from God. Father, we just thank you for choosing us at this time. It's not a mistake Lord.

It's this time you've chosen us for. And so Lord, we thank you for it God with all of our heart. Give us the courage to go in.

And as Esther said, to pray if I perish, I perish. But I'm going in for the sake of others. Let it be God.

And we thank you in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.

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