



Courageous Priorities
(What do you value?)
(Esther 1)

September 2, 2018

Series Summary: Once you have courageous conversations, make changes, create new plans and build the wealth you need. The next step for you is to set new courageous priorities.

Priorities Defined: Look at the root word, “prior.” It is what takes precedence, rank or position in your life. It is what you say goes first in your life.

Five Questions That Will Help You Identify Your Priorities

1. What are your **definitions**?
2. What are your **values**? (**What are non-negotiable life rules?**)
3. What are your **goals**? (What exactly are you working towards?)
4. What is your **timetable**? (How long do you have to get to your goal?)
5. What are your current **results**? (Have your past priorities worked?)

I. The King’s Priorities and His Results
(Esther 1, NKJV)

1. The King Valued His Possessions (He showed them off for 108 days or 3.6 months)

- 1 Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this was the Ahasuerus who reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Ethiopia), 2 in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the citadel, 3 that in the third year of his reign **he made a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces being before him—**4 when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty **for many days, One Hundred and Eighty Days in all.**

2. The King Valued His Alcohol and His Wife’s Beauty More Than Her Dignity

- 10 On the seventh day, **when the heart of the king was merry with wine**, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, 11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she was beautiful to behold. 12 But **Queen Vashti refused to come** at the king’s command brought by his eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.

3. The King Valued the Advice of Those Close To Him

- 1:13 Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times (for this was the king’s manner toward all who knew law and justice, **14 those closest to him being Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan**, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who had access to the king’s presence, and who ranked highest in the kingdom):
- 15 **“What shall we do to Queen Vashti**, according to law, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus brought to her by the eunuchs?” 16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: “Queen Vashti has not only wronged the king, but also all the princes, and all the people who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.

Note the results of these priorities:

1. **His marriage was destroyed.** They convinced the King to divorce her without giving her a voice. She was not allowed to tell her side. (**Esther 1:19**)

19 If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she.

2. He regretted his decision once he was sober (Esther 2:1)

- Over-time he regretted his decision, but his alcohol induced values had **destroyed his wife's life options and their marriage.**
- After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her. (Esther 2:1)

Question: What can you see now that alcohol would not let you see earlier in your life?

II. Mordecai's Priorities and His Results

1. He valued his orphaned cousin Esther (Esther 2:5-7)

- v5 In Shushan the citadel there was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai the son of **Jair**, the son of **Shimei**, the son of **Kish**, a Benjamite. 6 Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. 7 And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, **his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother.** The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

Note: She comes from a long line of faithful men she could name

- Her uncle's father was Jair
- Her uncle's grandfather was Shimei
- Her uncle's great grandfather was Kish

Question: Can you name the faithful men in your family that value you?

2. He valued the King (Esther 2:21-23)

- 21 In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, two of the king's **eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands** on King Ahasuerus. 22 So the matter became known to Mordecai, who told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. 23 And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

3. He valued his people (Esther 4:1)

- When Mordecai learned all that had happened, **he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth** and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry.

Closing: Your priorities will show up in the things and people you value. What do you value?

Next Time: Courageous Priorities, Part 2 (What are your goals?)

- Your definitions determine how you see things. Your values determine what you invest in. Your goals determine what you should prioritize.

Big Thoughts Down the Road:

The Impact of Your Priorities On Your Life
(This was a personal message for me)

1. You look like what you do first (except for unexpected illnesses)
2. You sound like what you read
3. You live in the harvest you planted
4. You are limited by your willingness to set priorities
5. Your priorities are ultimately controlled by you