

THE DEFINING MOMENT

Scripture used: [Esther 4:12-14 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon addressed our current unprecedented time of challenges, with the pandemic, civil unrest, racial turmoil, and the economic recession. The decisions we make today will have long-term ramifications. We're alive today for a reason. Now is our defining moment: a time to catch our breath and decide how to move forward.

KEY POINTS

- 1) We have to accept being instruments of God when we ponder what happens next. When we ask lofty questions about the purpose for our entire lives, we can be met with silence. God's purpose for us is often "in the moment." We are in a specific season, and need to think about the kingdom now. Maya Moore, star player in the WNBA, put her winning career on hold to advocate for a prisoner who had been convicted in an unusually cruel and harsh way. We have to let go of wanting to know the story of the whole book of our lives, and, instead, we need to figure out how we can be faithful in the chapter, or even the page. Whether you are a schoolteacher weighing school reopening or a parent facing many more months of homeschooling, your sense of purpose for this time and moment provides a reason to keep going. The resolute decision during an isolated moment can become transformational for a lifetime.
- 2) God's purpose is revealed through the decisions we face, whether we lean in or step away, whether we choose safety or risk. Our scripture tells the story of the powerful Persian King Xerxes, who threw an opulent celebration to display his wealth and authority. He wanted more: he insisted on exhibiting his wife, Queen Vashti, as a trophy. She refused in an #MeToo moment in antiquity. She claimed her own purpose and power, which was to host a banquet for the women of the court, act as a mentor and role model to fellow women. She had been used as a tool for too long, had acquiesced, and was finally shaking up her "organization", family, and marriage. The King banished her but her integrity was intact.
- 3) Was Xerxes all bad? Is anyone all good? The King Xerxes was later a blessing to Israel. His bad traits came with some good ones. And, even our heroes have flaws and struggles. Anybody can be redeemed in the hands of God. And, beware of pride that assumes that we are wholly "good" and others are "bad."
- 4) There is a cost to everything but God has our backs. Esther is a Jewish exile who has suffered great loss and suffering. She gets swept up in the beauty pageant to replace Queen Vashti. She shows gumption, takes a chance, has the audacity to make herself available. She stands out and finds favor. She's crowned. The improbable becomes reality. She bears witness to the fact that we have to do our part (apply to that school, to that position, seek a relationship with this person) and let God do His part to shift the odds in our favor and unlock doors for us. Defining moments are shaped by our decisions.
- 5) In Chapter 3, Mordechai refuses to compromise his values in order to fit in, to be part of the popular crowd. He declines to bow down to someone unworthy. He surrenders control to God, seeks and obeys His call. He could have been powerless but instead is steadfast in his faith and agency.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Do you consider this time in your life a "defining moment"? Why or why not?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - [Esther 4:14 \(NIV\)](#) reminds us that we are invited to participate with God in defining moments of our lives, and we are exactly where God wants us to be "for such a time as this." How has God been impressing upon you your purpose in this moment? Consider the unique role you play in your family, in your community (at NBCC and otherwise), and at work/school. Is God asking you to take a step forward (like Esther) or to take a stand on something (like Vashti)?
- 3) **DO** - As you think your purpose in this defining moment, which is most difficult for you: surrendering (to God's leading in your life), seeking (taking a risk for something new), or obeying (refusing to compromise)? Share with your Life Group how God is calling you to take a next step. Join us for Part 2 next Sunday, and invite someone God has placed in your life that needs to hear this message!