

## Sermon Based Study - Gateway Groups, Merced

"Bond Together/Grow Together"

**For the week of 1-8-2023**

### For You as the Teacher/Host

Remember to begin each Small Group session with a word of prayer. Please keep in mind that the purpose of this curriculum guide is to cultivate a deeper relationship with the Lord and each other through conversation that intentionally engages the weekly message.

**Quick Review** Discuss the message briefly. Did anything challenge or confuse you?

**\*Opener Question or Activity:** Describe when you had to make a decision in a split second. Did you enjoy the experience? How did "time" impact your decision?

**Sunday's Main Scripture Text:** Acts 17:24-26, Ephesians 2:10 "Time"

**Digging Deeper:** *(Teachers/leaders, feel the freedom to not ask every question)*

Break your people up into 3 groups having each group read one of chapters 2, 3 and 4 of Esther. After this, each group should summarize what has happened so as to get a perspective on Esther, Mordecai and King Xerxes(Ahasuerus).

1. Look at Esther 4:12-14. What was Esther risking? How did she get past her fear?
2. How did Mordecai show he cared for Esther, while sending her on this potentially fatal mission? Why did Mordecai put her in this position?
3. Mordecai uses the phrase, "For such a time as this." That time was a time of fear and uncertainty. God brought victory. While you aren't in a royal position(vs. 14), what have you experienced that is like this?
4. Pastor Al spoke on "Time" Sunday. How did Esther and Mordecai step into their "time" through this passage? What are the potential areas in your life where you are being called to step into your "time" today? In church? In work? Etc.?
5. Read aloud Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Look at the variety of things that have their time. Which of these do you need? Which are not for you at this time?
6. From what you sense and know about church, are any of these relevant to where we are as a church now? Specifically, Gateway in this time and place.

**Apply it today:** Looking back over this week's teaching, what is most important for you to remember and why? How will you grow in the area you have identified?