

Esther: An Agreeable Queen
Sunday School Lesson 8
Personality and God's Purpose
Esther 4
8/2/2020

Introduction: In this week's lesson, we are going to examine how God can use the personality of an agreeable person. This is the type of person that is comfortable going with the flow. He is very easy to get along with, and he is generally known as a laid-back person. Confrontation is greatly despised by the agreeable person, and he will go to great lengths to avoid it at all costs. As a result, this person tends to have many acquaintances and few enemies. However, this person differs from the expressive person in that his friendships are based upon his agreeable nature as opposed to an expressive personality. The resulting difference is that the expressive person creates enemies that he may try to pacify; whereas, the agreeable person rarely makes an enemy to begin with as he avoids situations that would cause a problem with another person. For our Biblical example this morning, we are going to look at Queen Esther. While she is known for taking a stand for the Israelites and being their deliverer, her stand was done with some reluctance. It went against her personality, and it was only with the help of Mordecai that she was able to have the courage to go before the king with her problem. Mordecai encouraged her that God had raised her up for such a time as this. God created Esther for a very specific purpose. She was an unlikely hero for Israel. Let's study how Esther's personality helped her complete the purpose that God had for her.

I. ESTHER'S PERSONALITY HELPED HER TO BE IN A POSITION TO REACH SOMEONE THAT OTHERS COULD NOT REACH. (ESTHER 1:12-22; 4:12-14)

- A. Notice that Esther reached a king who was very particular and untrusting (Esther 1:12-22).** King Ahasuerus was furious when Queen Vashti refused to go along with his drunken and foolish idea. He wanted to show her off to all of his friends. After her refusal, he sought counsel on how to deal with her. He decided that he would banish her from his presence, and he would find himself a new queen who was more worthy than her. There would be tremendous pressure placed on this new queen to get along with the king, as he would naturally be untrusting and leery of anything that the queen did. Additionally, a dispute with two queens would look very poorly for the king, so it was vital that he found the right person to marry. To make matters more challenging, Esther most certainly did not want to marry a heathen king. How could she possibly overcome her resentment for the king and find a way both to get along with him and even to gain his trust? For most, this would have been a very difficult task. Yet, the Lord had created Esther for this purpose. She was going to reach this cold and ungodly king. Her agreeable personality helped her to navigate the challenges she faced with this king.
- B. Notice that Esther was the only one who had access and the ability to reach the person needed to deliver Israel (Esther 4:12-14).** When Haman's plot was discovered, there was only one person who was in position to appeal to the king. That person was Esther. Even still, Esther did not have the proper authority to go before the king. Mordecai was convinced, though, that she would be able to successfully appeal to King Ahasuerus. He knew that Esther had found favor in the king's sight. He knew that she had worked hard not to initiate the king's wrath. He knew that she was very agreeable with the king. When we look at her approach to King Ahasuerus, we can see the care that Esther took to keep a good relationship with the king. Consequently, she was successful in bringing the petition before the king. Those who are agreeable may find that they are able to reach those whom others are not able to reach. They can reach those who are especially hard. They can reach those who are especially untrusting. They can reach those who seem unreachable.

II. ESTHER'S PERSONALITY HELPED HER TO BE A CUNNING ADVERSARY AGAINST THE WICKED AND DECEITFUL OPPOSITION. (ESTHER 9:24-25; 5:10-14)

- A. Notice that Haman was a very powerful and deceitful opponent of Mordecai and the Jews (Esther 9:24-25).** Haman was a very shrewd man. He had risen through the political ranks and gained the trust of the king. He finally reached the pinnacle of all of his efforts when he was appointed to a position higher than any of the princes of the king's palace. Haman enjoyed the reverence that was paid to him by others. He was a very prideful man. That's why he hated Mordecai so much. Mordecai refused to bow himself down to Haman. He explained that his reasoning was that he was a Jew. When Haman heard this, he determined to destroy all of the Jews. He was careful to present the situation to the king, and the king signed off on the destruction of the Jews. Haman was a calculating man. He was not someone you wanted to have against you. He would certainly plot to have you arrested or killed. He was a very powerful and deceitful opposition to the Jews.

- B. Notice that Esther was able to defeat Haman, and he never saw the defeat coming (Esther 5:10-14)** Esther invited Haman to a feast for herself and the king. When Haman received his invite, he was filled with great excitement and pride. He had never been invited to a feast by the queen. He looked forward to having another political ally. He went home and bragged to his wife and advisors about this invitation. He planned to use it as an opportunity to have Mordecai killed. Imagine the look on Mordecai's face when he discovered that Esther was in fact a Jew. Esther had been very cunning in how she handled the situation. She did not immediately accuse Haman before the king. She created the setting that she thought would be most agreeable to the king. She knew how fickle he could be. She knew that he was often given to great fits of anger. As a result, Haman was poetically hung upon his own gallows. He had been outsmarted by the queen. Notice that this was the queen's plan. She did not give the specific advice from Mordecai. He had only advised for her to intervene. Her dealings with others in the palace had prepared her for this situation. When it comes to the agreeable Christian, you must realize that you can be used by the Lord as a cunning adversary against the Devil and his minions.

III. ESTHER'S PERSONALITY HELPED HER TO FIND THE REAL PEACE THAT SHE SO GREATLY DESIRED TO HAVE. (PSALM 34:14; 1 PETER 3:11; ESTHER 4:13-14; 8:14-17)

- A. Notice that peace is a great thing for a follower of God to seek after (Psalm 34:14; 1 Peter 3:11).** As mentioned in the introduction, the agreeable person has a strong desire for peace. They hate contention. They hate war. They just want their life to be peaceful. Seeking peace is a good thing. As believers, we ought to seek and pursue after peace. We carry with us the Gospel of peace. We have great peace because we love God's Law. We ought to desire both internal and external peace with all men. That's what Esther wanted to find. She was an agreeable person who just wanted to live in peace. She wanted to make the best of the situation that she was in as a captive in a foreign land. She wanted to enjoy the life in the palace. She did not want to rock the boat. While the king could be difficult, her life could have been much worse. She had great wealth. She had prestige. She was living very comfortably. Certainly, we can understand her desire to keep the peace in the kingdom.
- B. Notice that the real peace came when she did her part to deliver the people from Haman's plot (Esther 4:13-14; 8:14-17).** Mordecai reminded Esther that there would not be peace if the Jews were attacked. Esther would not escape the destruction. Additionally, even if she did, there's no way that she could have lived in peace knowing what had happened to her own people. Thankfully, Esther listened to Mordecai, and she was able to find that real peace when her people were delivered. The agreeable person must understand that just agreeing does not lead to real peace. When she had real peace, she no longer had to live in hiding. The king knew who she was. She was able to proudly represent God's people. Of course, her personality also helped to keep that peace. Mordecai seemed like much more of a warrior. It's likely that he and others were ready to fight back for the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Esther did her part to find and keep that real peace. Blessed are the peacemakers (Matthew 5:9).

IV. THE AGREEABLE PERSONALITY ALSO HAS SEVERAL CHALLENGES THAT WE MUST BE AWARE OF. (2 CORINTHIANS 6:16; GALATIANS 5:7; MATTHEW 4:19)

- A. Notice that the agreeable personality must understand that it's impossible to agree with everyone. If you try to, you will have nothing left to stand on (2 Corinthians 6:16).** The biggest challenge for the agreeable person is pretty obvious. You cannot agree with everyone. If you do, then you really have nothing that you believe. You are always moving and shifting from one place to another. Consequently, there is no substance to you. There is nothing that you are standing on. A person without strong convictions will position themselves in a place of great wickedness, as there is no separation. There is no fight. It is not possible to agree with both sides in a time of opposition. You must choose one or the other. Man cannot serve two masters. An agreeable person will live a very vexed life if he tries to capitulate to all parties. He will be thrown with the wind. He is a double-minded man.
- B. Notice that the agreeable personality must be careful in their choice of whom to follow, and they must be diligent in checking the direction they're heading in (Galatians 5:7; Matthew 4:19).** While this is not always the case (Esther), the agreeable person is often a follower. He is okay being led by others. He often will not desire leadership, as he recognizes that as a position for too much conflict. He feels safe and shielded following after someone who is setting the direction. He is usually okay with the leader engaging in conflict, as long as there is not much expectation for him to battle. The danger for the agreeable person is that he may blindly follow a leader into a situation that the Lord would not be pleased with. He may allow a leader to cause him to compromise. Consequently, he must constantly examine the direction that he is heading in. He must always remember that the first obligation is to follow Christ.