WOODVALE
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Connect Group Sermon Aligned Discussion Guide.

Series Title: Shifting a Nation
Key Scripture: Esther 4:14
Recorded Sermon: www.woodvale.ca/pastservices/v/shifting-a-nation
Date + Speaker: June 30, 2024; Pastor Mark Scarr

Starter:

Have you read the book of Esther, or a book based on it? What's your favourite part of the Esther story? How does that resonate with our lives today?

Discussion:

1. Understand the period you are currently in - **Esther 1:1-2**. King Ahasuerus and the kingdom were obsessed with power, money, and sexuality, and not godly at all. Can you see parallels in our world and society today? What are we obsessed with in our world today?

2. God wants to use you and I for such a time as this. We must understand the place where God has strategically planted us in Canada and Ottawa. Where has God placed you for such a time as this? Esther was placed in the palace for "such a time as this". What characterized those times? What are the times that we are placed in? In what ways can God use you in this time? How can you prepare and be ready to be used by God?

3. Understand the persecution that we are and will be facing (**Esther 3:8-18)** as we face a growing wave of intolerance for Christianity. In Esther's time, it was a growing wave of intolerance for God's people as well. In what ways do you see intolerance for Christian values? The Kingdom could not tolerate Jews because they had a different lifestyle and belief system? What lifestyle and beliefs make us intolerable in Canada?

4. Understand the position of influence that God has given you wherever you are – in our workplace, neighborhood, and school. What position has God placed you in? How can you exercise your influence? How do you make a difference in your workplace, school and city for God?

5. Understand the purpose that God has for you and your life. You were created with a mission, with spiritual gifts to be a mover and shaker for God. How can you discover God's purpose for your life? What gifts do you have? How can you use them in service to God?

6. We must understand the price to pay. There was a danger of death for Esther. What price could you be asked to pay for serving the Lord? How can you prepare for the price you could be asked to pay?

7. Understand the possibility of change in our nation (Esther 10:3) and the prayer that is needed (Esther 4:15-16). What are the possible changes we can believe and pray for?

8. How can we operationalize the 5 R's that Pastor Mark mentioned? Prayer- **Return** to our foundations, **Restore** our fundamental institutions, **Reform** our communities, culture and society, **Renew** our policies, **Run** for public office by being present in the gates of the nation, and **Repeat** the word for the next generation.

9. We must return to our foundations and first love. What foundational beliefs and practices might we return to?

10. We should not retreat but engage society by being present and participating in the conversations to reform our community, culture and society. What are the conversations? Where are they happening? How and what can you contribute to the conversations?

Prayer

Pray for wisdom for our leaders, and for strength and boldness for Christians in places of authority. Ask God to show you ways you can deliver on His purpose for you in the places and time where He has placed you.