When the World is Broken
Made for This Moment, Week Two

There is a lot wrong with the world in which we live.

- Global threats like hunger, water shortages, climate change, war, oppression, inequality, poverty, and a lack of education.
- Spiritual issues such as
  - Pluralism - When many religions are tolerated, but what isn’t tolerated is any religion claiming exclusivity, like Christianity.
  - Secularism - When we, as a society, begin to relegate any religious thought to a dark corner.
  - Hedonism - When an extreme, self-serving attitude permeates humanity and we live to consume whatever we want without limit.

What if you could just fix it all?

Here’s one plan...

![Laboratory Troubleshooting Flowchart](image)

But we all know that duct tape and WD-40 won’t fix all of our current issues.
The book of Esther presents us with a world like ours. Our problems aren’t new. They’re actually very old. Persia was ruled with an iron fist by a prideful dictator. The wealthy few were extremely wealthy while most other people lived in extreme poverty. Women were denigrated and children were unvalued. Brutality was commonplace.

The book opens with King Xerxes hosting a six month drunken brawl to celebrate himself.

**Esther 1:3-4 NLT**

In the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. He invited all the military officers of Persia and Media as well as the princes and nobles of the provinces. The celebration lasted 180 days—a tremendous display of the opulent wealth of his empire and the pomp and splendor of his majesty.

At the end of the celebration, he asks for Queen Vashti to come and entertain the men with him with her beauty. She refuses, which launches the king into a rage. After consulting with his nobles, he sends a letter to the entire kingdom with the news that Vashti is no longer Queen and is now banished from his presence forever, and...

**Esther 1:22 NLT**

That every man should be the ruler of his own home and should say whatever he pleases.

That’s the world in which Esther lived.

- She was essentially a victim of human trafficking as a Jew.
- Xerxes asserted a kind of domineering patriarchy as the rule of law.

And then add to this the brutality of Haman’s plan to annihilate the Jewish people in a sweeping act of genocide.

From Esther, we learn about what to do when the big moment comes in which we must choose God’s purposes over our own comfort.
At first, Esther was unwilling.

We find out that Esther had been hiding her identity...

**Esther 2:20 NLT**

Esther continued to keep her family background and nationality a secret. She was still following Mordecai's directions, just as she did when she lived in his home.

And then when Mordecai first pled with her to speak to the king to spare the lives of the Jews, she responded with trepidation.

**Esther 4:11 NLT**

All the king's officials and even the people in the provinces know that anyone who appears before the king in his inner court without being invited is doomed to die unless the king holds out his gold scepter. And the king has not called for me to come to him for thirty days.

**And Esther comes around.**

**Esther 4:14-17 NLT**

Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: “Don’t think for a moment that because you’re in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?”

Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.” So Mordecai went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

And from this exchange, as Mordecai and Esther show that their faith is growing, we learn some big lessons about what to do when the world is broken...

1. **Decide to be part of the solution.**
That doesn’t mean you can solve ALL the problems. But you can be part of the solution to one or to a few problems.

We have plenty of analysts and commentators to point out the problems, and very few who are doing the actual work of solving problems.

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2. Work for good from where you are.

I loved this from Sharon Hodde Miller...

> Esther's first response to Mordecai was "I have not been called." (4:11)

His response: Your position, your privilege, IS your calling.

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Whatever you have in terms of power, position, prosperity, or prestige, it’s at your disposal for good, or for evil. Decide to do good.

Why? Because… **Found people find people. Redeemed people bring redemption to people. Healed people heal people.**

We are all stewards of the grace and mercy and forgiveness that God has bestowed on us.

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3. Speak with boldness for God’s purposes.
It’s not about you, it’s about him and his purposes. So when you see people hurting or oppressed, it’s right to speak up.

4. Put it all on the line for what you believe in.

Perhaps the most powerful thing Esther said ways, “If I must die, I must die…”

What are you holding onto? Your life?

Luke 9:24 NLT

If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

Give ALL of your availability, your energy, your passion, your resources to the causes you believe in, especially when those causes are connected to eternity and to securing a brighter destiny for people through the good news of the gospel!