



9. ESTHER: CROSS-CULTURAL COURAGE



How can we cross over to the other side?

What are the difficulties or hinderances?

How can we be united despite of our differences?

Acknowledgement of Country

This land is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here. We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation, traditional custodians of this land under God. We commit ourselves again to working for reconciliation in this land.

Review (5 min)

Movie "The Matrix"

- Choice to pursue truth, Neo vs Cypher

Ruth' cross-cultural Choice (Ruth 1:1-18)

- Ruth and Oprah's choice

Sharing Time (10 min)

- What makes us divided?
- Share with your group about your own experiences of crossing over boundaries that normally make you separated from others.

Discussion with "Remember the Titans" (10 Min)

In the early 1970s, two schools in Alexandria Virginia integrate forming T.C. Williams High School. The Caucasian head coach Bill Yoast (Will Patton) of the Titans is replaced by an African American coach Herman Boone (Denzel Washington) from North Carolina. Tensions arise when players of different races are forced together on the same football team. Many of these tensions are eased during the two-week training camp in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Throughout the camp and the season, Boone and Yoast's black and white players learn to accept each other, to work together, and that football knows no race. As they learn from each other, Boone and Yoast also learn from them and in turn, the whole town learns from the team, the Titans. As the season progresses the team's success caused the community to accept the changes. After the Titans' perfect season, the team and the city were closer than ever.

Background: Courage to cross over

- What was it like in 1970s in Australia?
- How different was it compare with this American situation?

Cultural Groups

- Identify different groups in the story.
- What does it take to get to know each other?

Conflicts and Relationships

- What can ignite a fight between two groups?
- What can unite two different groups?

Cross-Cultural Approach

- Would you take a risk to cross over?
- What can you see as difficulties in order to cross over?

Discussion with Bible Story



Esther 4:5-17

5 Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why. 6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate. 7 Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. 8 He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to urge her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people. 9 Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. 10 Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, 11 "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the

inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.” 12 When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai, 13 he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. 14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?” 15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: 16 “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.” 17 So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions. (NIV)

Background Story: (BC 483-473)

King Xerxes(BC 485-464)

- > Haman got the power
- > Mordecai didn’t kneel down
- > Haman orders to kill all Jews.

Esther’s Cross-cultural Courage(30 min)

Questions for Group Discussion

Background: Esther’s Courage

- Read the Bible readings from Esther 4
- What words or verses touched your heart?

Cultural Groups

- Identify different cultural groups in the story
- How did Jews maintain their religion in Captivity?

Conflicts and Relationships

- What made Haman wanted to kill all Jews?
- How did Mordecai reacted to Haman’s plan?

Cross-Cultural Approach

- Esther did choose to cross over the royal taboo (law), do we have similar rules?
- How Mordecai’s fasting and prayer would help Esther?

Question Time (15 Min)

Next Study: Tue. 18th July, 1pm or 7:30pm(Hybrid)
Study 10. Daniel’s Cross-cultural Faith (Daniel 1:7-15, 6:13-16, 19-23)

With Video clip from “Indiana Jones, the Last Crusade”

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