

Small Group Study Guide – **Member Guide**

For the weekend of 9.26.2010

Esther 4 and Matthew 28:18-20 – Appointed to Love Our World

Introduction

This weekend at the Summit, we are beginning a short series on Loving our World. The sermons will remind us that every follower of Jesus is appointed to be involved in the mission of God. Esther's story highlights how God sovereignly weaves the events and circumstances of our lives to present us with opportunities to advance his mission. Like Esther, God has uniquely positioned you in life to reach others with the gospel. Matthew 28:18-20 reminds us that missions isn't the job of a select few who have a special calling or skill-set. The mission of God is something that all disciples of Christ are privileged and mandated to carry out.

Note: The small group study guide is designed to work in partnership with the weekend message. So each week you should work through this guide, take notes during the sermon, and come prepared to discuss both of these in your group.

Break the ice

Have you ever gone to another city or country on a missions trip? What did this experience teach you about how God can use you? How did this trip alter your lifestyle?

Hypothetically, if you decided to become a missionary today, where would you go and why? How would you be useful to God's mission in that community?

Dig Into the text

Read Esther 4:1-17 and look at your notes from the sermon. What was unique about Esther's position? What do you see as unique about your position in our community?

Look at the messages passed between Mordecai and Esther in verses 12-17. What stands out to you about Mordecai's faith? What stands out about Esther's faith?

Turn to Matthew 28:16-20. Why has Jesus been given "all authority"? Why is this critical for the disciples (and us) to know as they (we) spread the gospel?

What is a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Apply it to your life

Who is your Mordecai? Be practical: how can your small group encourage each other to carry out the mission of God?

How can you/are you investing your life in disciple-making right now?

How is the mandate from Matthew 28:18-20 more easily accomplished in community rather than individually?

Prayer Guide

- For the next 21 days, there will be a prayer guide that corresponds to the “Loving our World” sermon series. You can find this guide on the EQUIP blog on www.summitrdu.com (look at the bottom of the main page).
- Here’s an excerpt from the prayer guide to use at your group this week:

We tend to do everything other than the one thing Jesus told us to do. This passage gives Jesus’ mission to those who follow him: to make disciples by leading people from all nations to believe in Jesus and then seeing them grow to love and obey Jesus. This shouldn’t appear easy. In fact, it should appear almost impossible. But Jesus bookends this command by giving his disciples a comforting promise: he has all authority (v. 16) and he will be present with them to help them carry out their mission (v. 20). It’s in this passage that we not only see **WHAT** we should give our lives to (making disciples of Jesus) but also **HOW** that’s even possible (Jesus is present to make that possible). As you pray for the groups, remember the need for churches to not only see people come to Christ, but to grow in Christ as well:

- Thank God for including us in his mission and for giving us what we need for it.
- Pray for opportunities to make more disciples of Christ.
- Ask God to grow us in our obedience as followers of Christ.