

Words of Life

(July 12, 2007)

The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor. And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a holiday. Then many of the people of the land became Jews, because fear of the Jews fell upon them.

Esther 8:16,17

The book of Esther is one of the books of the Bible we love to read because it ends the way we like stories to end. The verses above take place near the end of the book, and as you can see the Jews, the main characters of the story, have gladness and joy and celebrate with a feast and a holiday. Sounds great, doesn't it? It's like some of the old movies where good things happen to good people and everyone lives happily ever after. I don't know about you, but sometimes I just need a good "feel good" book or movie to read or watch. One in which good wins out over evil and you walk away with that warm fuzzy feeling. I used to hate those movies that left you hurting inside. I think I am still permanently scarred from watching "Old Yeller" as a young boy. I cried and cried when that old mangy dog had to be put down because he had rabies. I remember thinking, "that's just not right to make you fall in love with a dog, then kill him right there on the big screen!" What's wrong with those directors and producers? Why couldn't the dog get better and everyone be happy?

If you are in need a fantastic "feel good story" read the book of Esther. It's an amazing account of how God takes a young orphan girl and elevates her to queen of the land. It is a story of how there is a powerful and wicked adversary who by trickery is able to pass into law a plan to annihilate by execution all the Jews. It is the story of how God's people go into deep mourning and weeping over the impossible situation confronting them. It is the story of how God intervenes in miraculous ways and uses the obedience of Esther to save an entire nation. And it is the story of how good wins out over evil and how there is joy and gladness among the people of God. It is one of those stories that will leave you feeling good and right after you read it because it ends up the way we want all good stories to end.

But there is more to the book of Esther than you might think. After you have read this brief book, realize that you haven't just read the story of Queen Esther and the salvation of the Jews. You have read the story of your own life. I have never met a single Christian who can not relate to the ups and downs of the book of Esther for it is the picture of a life lived for Christ. It is a life that will go through deep valleys and cross high mountains. It is a life that will come under attack and find itself in impossible circumstances. And it is a life, if lived by faith, that will be witness to the faithfulness and miraculous power of God.

As you reflect over the book of Esther be assured that the same God will do the same thing for you.....He does not change (Malachi 3:6). Be assured that He will deliver you from the trials you are in the middle of, no matter how overwhelming they may seem (Galatians 1:3,4). Trust that He will turn that which the devil wanted to use for evil into good in your life (Romans 8:28). And believe that He will take the mourning and weeping in your life and exchange it for beauty and joy (Isaiah 61:3).

This is the story of Esther and it is the story of your life and of my life. Read it, but not from a distance. Make it personal to you. The God we serve today is the same. He will do for you what He has done for her.

Pastor Ted

The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

John 6:63