Small Group Discussion Notes
Esther- Week 3
A Greater Vision of Purpose
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Warm Up
On a very fundamental level the purpose of all followers of Jesus is to glorify God and enjoy him forever as we are reminded of in the Westminster Shorter Catechsim. What do you feel are some more specific purposes for your own individual life (think relationships, giftings, passions, vocations, etc.)?

Digging Deeper
Consider inductive Bible study as a tool for exploring Esther 4:1-17.

1. Observe – What do you notice in the text…What is the context? What is happening? Who are the characters? What ideas or words are being repeated? Spend time asking these types of questions.
2. Interpret – What is being said in the text…What is being communicated? Why is this passage important? What is the meaning of this passage? Take time to ask questions that go beyond observation and dig deeper into the text.
3. Apply – What do I do with this information…How does this impact my life? How does this impact my understanding of who God is? What can I take from this text and apply to my daily circumstances? Ask questions that get personal and help you to apply what you have learned.

Read Esther 4:1-17

Mordecai experiences great despair when he learns of the plan to destroy the Jews. Can you relate to such overwhelming grief? If so, how?

Take time to quickly research (Google can be a great help!) the practices of tearing clothing, wearing sackcloth and ashes. What stands out to you about these practices?

Why do you think Mordecai refuses the clothes Esther sent him (v. 4)?

What reflections do you have on Esther's response to what Mordecai has told her? Can you understand her hesitancy to approach King Xerxes? Why or why not?

What do you think Mordecai means in verse 14?

Why does Esther ask Mordecai to gather the Jews to fast for her?

It is becoming clear that the Lord has a very specific purpose for Esther in this season of her life. If you were Esther, how would you feel about such a significant purpose?

Next Steps
Do you think it's possible for us to lose sight of the purpose(s) of our life? Why or why not?
What realities of life might cause us to have a smaller or more limited vision of the purpose(s) of our lives? How might the realities of daily life impact the scope of our vision of purpose?

What can we do to be intentional about expanding our vision of purpose?

What purposes, whether short-term and situational, or long-term do you feel like the Lord is drawing your attention to currently?

Final Thoughts
God works in and through his people. He gives us purpose, but we need to be attuned to him in order to understand our purpose(s). Take time to pray about some of the purposes the Lord might be calling you to, and for an openness to step into those purposes when you become aware of them.