



READY FOR THE BIG TIME

“If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. What’s more, who can say but that you have been elevated to the palace for just such a time as this?”
(Esther 4:14, NLT)

I had the privilege to caddie recently at a PGA Champions Tour Q-School qualifier. Though I have spent a lot of time around golf over the past 40 years, this event gave me so much appreciation for these PGA professionals who have decided to follow their passions and dreams. Here’s one big thing I learned: Every shot is so critical! When you play with handicaps, you have room to make errors. When you are playing scratch and any one stroke could make the difference between moving on and missing, you don’t have much room for mistakes. And that means pressure not only for the players but for the caddies as well.

The story of Esther is well-known among those who love Scripture. Its accounts include kings and queens, schemers and murderers, even an attempt at genocide. When this last matter arose—with Haman, the king’s official, planning to wipe out the Jewish people—Esther alone was positioned to intercede on behalf of the people. But even her chances of success carried great risk; she could be executed if she approached the king at the wrong moment or in the wrong mood.

We have all been faced with such challenging scenarios. Maybe life and death are not in our hands, but we often we must make a strong decision for right over wrong. And often, too, we must step up when the odds seem stacked against us and danger lurks.

As a caddie, I faced moments of indecision—not about what my player should do, but about whether I should speak up and tell him what he should do. *Is now the time for gentle encouragement or a hearty exhortation?* All the time these thoughts ran through my head. And this was only golf!

Right now, you may be confronted with a far more demanding task. God may have something for you to say or do, something that has BIG RISK written all over it. And yet you know that it’s now or never. The decision to do what he wants you to do must be made, and the action must be taken. Esther acted strategically but boldly. You should too. There is nothing of lasting value to be lost by doing what God sets before you to do.

Opening questions: Difficult challenges

Describe a time when it was exceedingly hard for you to choose to do the right thing. Would it be easier or harder now? Why?

Firm resolve

Read Daniel 1. How did resolve in adhering to what they knew to be God’s will encourage Daniel and the others to do the right thing?

How did they, like Esther, meld strategic action with boldness to do what was right? (You may wish to refer to Esther, chapters 5-7.)

What Scripture passages give you resolve in some of the challenges you are facing right now?

The necessity of good

Read Romans 12:21 and James 4:17. What compels us to do good?