



STARTING OVER

NEW IDENTITIES.

There's no way around it. Life is hard.

One of the most common reasons people don't do hard things is one simple but crippling word: **fear**.

When Esther approached her king, she was approaching possible death. How did she possibly find the bravery to do this?

Well, Esther knew she was a child of God. She knew she could approach her heavenly King with confidence. She knew He would listen and love and help her go forward to her earthly king in boldness and with purpose.

If we place our identity in Christ - seeing ourselves as redeemed, loved, and purposeful people - we know, like Esther, that our King will listen and love and help us go forward in boldness and with purpose. Fear may still be *present*, but it does not *stop us*.

You are in Knoxville, TN for a reason. You are in your job for a reason. You are in whatever situation you are currently in for a reason. What is God calling you to? Who is disconnected to Him? Who needs some love or some hope or a friend?

Our Christ-centered identity allows us to say, "I will not live in fear anymore. Perhaps I was made for such a time as this."

IN THE BIBLE.

Esther 4:13-17

Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: “Don’t think for a moment that because you’re in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. 14 If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?”

15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: 16 “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.” 17 So Mordecai went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

Romans 8:14-17

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Galatians 2:20

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

QUESTIONS.

1. What kind of hard things have you encountered/are you in the midst of?
2. In the Esther 4 verses, how did she prepare for her hard thing (approaching the king)?
3. Why can we go to God confidently? How might that affect your life?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?