

✍ Where does God call you to courage in your life this week?

✍ With which of these three women do you most identify?  
Why?

**Praises, Prayers and Answers**



May 12 & 13, 2012

**Three Stories from the Book of Esther**

**INTRODUCTION:** Not everyone has a mother they remember well. So:

✍ Share your favorite memory of a woman who impacted your life positively.

### I. The Story of **Vashti**

*On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him - Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Carcas - to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at. Esther 1:10-11*

A Woman of **Character**

**A.** Questions concerning abuse:

1. Why do abusers **abuse**?
2. What affect **does it have**?
3. Can abused **women recover**?

✍ What did the nobles fear about independent women like Vashti?

 In your home, how are decisions made when you can't agree?

 Where in your life are you working on character issues?


- Obeying authority
- Mutual respect
- Sharing
- Other

## II. The Story of Zeresh

*His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Have a gallows built, seventy-five feet high, and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai hanged on it. Then go with the king to the dinner and be happy." This suggestion delighted Haman, and he had the gallows built.*  
Esther 5:14

A Woman of Cowardice

 What do you think was Zeresh's motive in her advice to Haman?

 How often are you tempted to advise others with what they want to hear rather than what they need to hear?

*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.*

Ephesians 5:22

A. Submission does not:

1. Disengage your brain.
2. Compromise your convictions.

3. Discount your feelings.

4. Conceal your capabilities.


 Which of these invalid ways of submitting have you utilized in your relationships?

B. Submission does:

1. Honor.

2. Respect.

3. Recognize roles.

 Which of these ways of submitting is easiest for you? Most difficult? Explain why.

## III. The Story of Esther

*"Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."*  
Esther 4:16

 When have you used fasting in your spiritual life? How long? For what purpose? With what result?

A Woman of Courage

*For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And **who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?***  
Esther 4:14