

Study Series: Difference Makers

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Lesson Title: “Purpose in Your Palace” (pp. 118-130)

Session 10

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**The main point of this lesson is:** Difference makers strive to use their influence for the glory of God and the good of others.

**Focus on this goal:** To help adults embrace the influence they have for the glory of God and the good of others

**Key Bible Passage:** Esther 4:13-16

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

**Invite** participants to look around the meeting space and identify the purpose of different items they see. **State:** *We might feel like everything and everyone else in the room has a purpose except us. Many people struggle with feeling or identifying their purpose in this world.*

**Request** a volunteer read the first sentence of the Difference Maker Declaration (p. 66). **Assert:** *The question isn’t whether we have a purpose, that’s a given. The question is whether we will put forth the effort to discover our purpose and use our influence for the glory of God and the good of others.*

**Identify** the goal of this session (p. 129).

Step 2. Seeking Purpose

**Read** the first Day One paragraph (p. 118). **Assert** this is a God-given feeling. **Consider** why Christians have an advantage in the struggle to determine our purpose.

**Request** a volunteer read the third Day One paragraph (p. 118). **Explain** all believers have a general and personal purpose. **Request** participants identify from Day One (p. 118) the general purpose of every Christian.

**Discuss** Day One, activity 1 (p. 118). **Examine** what living out one’s general purpose might look like specifically at home, work, church, and the community.

**Write** the equation from Day One (p. 119) on a large writing surface and **state** this is how the author explains believers can determine their personal purpose. **Guide** the group to describe the character of believers who know and live out their God-given purpose.

**Consider** why we might get stuck on the skills portion of this equation. **Draw** attention to the Day One pull quote (p. 119).

**Ask** how our setting impacts our purpose. **Urge** adults to prayerfully review Day One, activity 2 (p. 120) this week.

Step 3. For Such a Time as This

From Day Two (p. 121), briefly **summarize** Esther 1–2. **Discuss** Day Two, activity 1 (p. 121). Evaluate whether contemporaries would have considered Esther a likely candidate to be a difference maker.

**Relate** Haman’s plan to wipe out the Jewish people and Mordecai’s appeal to Esther. **Invite** responses to Day Two, activity 2 (p. 122).

**Request** a volunteer read Esther 4:13-14. **Declare:** *In God’s providence, Esther had godly character and a beauty that landed her in the palace. She is a model for how to leverage our influence for God’s glory and others’ good.*

Step 4. Strive for the Palace

**Ask** if participants agree with the first sentence of Day Three (p. 123) and why.

**Ask:** *Does it make you uncomfortable to read that you are to have ambition? Why?* Use Day Three remarks (pp. 123-124) and activity 2 (p. 124) to **contrast** worldly and godly ambition.

**Ask:** *First Thessalonians 4:11-12 says to make it our ambition to lead a quiet life, while the author says we should “strive for a consequential place in the palace” (p. 123). How do we reconcile those?* **Declare:** *The call to pursue our palace refers not to pursuing a specific setting, but an attitude of excellence that leverages our influence in whatever setting God has placed us.* **Issue** the challenge from the last paragraph of Day Three (pp. 124-125).

Step 5. Once You’re in the Palace . . .

Use remarks in Day Four (p. 125) to **analyze** what often happens to believers when God places them in a palace. **Determine** “moats” we might build. Describe how we become just a category when we shift to protective maintenance.

**Discuss** the second question from Day Four, activity 1 (p. 126). **Declare:** *We must determine not to worry about preserving our position in the palace, and we must remember whose purpose it is we’re fulfilling.*

**Discuss** Day Four, activity 2 (p. 127).

Step 6. Risk It All

**Request** a volunteer read Esther 4:15-16. **Ask:** *Do you think Esther was demonstrating faith or fatalism? Explain your reasoning. What can we learn about being a difference maker from this young girl?*

**Read** the pull quote of Day Five (p. 128). **Ask:** *Can we really be difference makers if we don’t reach that determination? Explain.*

**Read** the last paragraph of Day Five (p. 128). **Urge** adults to prayerfully consider Day Five, activity 2 (p. 128).

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

**Read** the first two sentences of the Difference Maker Declaration (p. 66). **Remind** adults: *Being a difference maker doesn’t always happen with grand gestures; it can be as simple as sitting at tables with diverse groups of people. At other times it might call for us to have ambitions of great influence. Either way, whether we leverage our influence in small and unseen ways, or large and visible ways, our ambition is to work for God’s glory and others’ good.*

**Invite** participants to read the Difference Maker Declaration aloud in unison as your closing prayer.

After the Session

**Contact** participants and **affirm** the skills you see in them and the ways they are leveraging their influence as difference makers.

