

MYSTERY



Blessed Are Who?

This is the Story/Service Guide for Day One. The complete Guide is available online at bannerblue.org.



Day One: Esther the Courageous Queen

Key Beatitude: Blessed are **the merciful**, for they will receive mercy.

Key Scripture: Esther 1 - Esther 10

Guiding Question: How do we do we make sure everyone has access?

Overview: Today the kids will learn about Esther and help to create an accessibility plan for your home to help them understand today's beatitude.

Learning Objectives:

- Because Esther and Mordecai were from a different country and had a different faith, they were treated differently and sometimes that treatment was mean or threatening.
- Esther and Mordecai never gave up faith that God was with them.
- Esther could have hidden her faith and been safe but instead she stood up for what she believed and for her family.
- Jesus has taught us to create a world where people who are different are loved and appreciated.
- Faith in Jesus means that we no longer have to fight one another, we can always find a way to live together. In this way we are all blessed more than can be measured!

Intro Learning Activity: Handicapable

Supplies Needed:

- Handicap Sign Sheets (provided with this guide)
- Markers

Instructions:

1. Give each kid at least two copies of the handicap sign sheet (included at the end of this day's section) by printing them off or by drawing your own. Remind the kids that someone who has a handicap may be



different but is definitely a beloved child of God. In fact that person is probably capable of things that they are not.

2. Challenge the kids to imagine that Esther or another amazing queen or princess was in a wheelchair. Maybe that queen had an accident or was born needing a wheelchair. Encourage the kids to decorate their first handicap sign as if it were for royalty. They could add a crown, horses, jewels, golden wheels, or anything they can think of.
3. Encourage the kids to decorate their second sign as imaginatively as possible. They could make the wheelchair look like it has rockets, or sits on top of a mountain, or make the person in the wheelchair an astronaut in a spacesuit or a deep sea diver. They could use symbols like hearts, the peace sign, the cross, a dove, or flowers.
4. Also encourage the kids to write a phrase of support such as:
 - "Respect the chair!"
 - "Super Capable!"
 - "Spot reserved for the most awesome."
 - "Jesus loves you."

Remind the kids that Jesus wants us to make sure that everyone is protected and loved just as they are.

Video: Esther the Courageous Queen

Use the video provided online (coming in early June) to familiarize the kids with the story of Esther. Here are some questions to go along with the video:

- What type of religion did Esther and Mordecai practice?
- What special position in the kingdom did Esther gain?
- Did Mordecai receive a reward for saving the emperor?
- Why was it dangerous for Esther to go to the emperor for help?
- Why did Esther go to the emperor even if she could have been killed?



Service Learning Activity: Accessibility

Make an accessibility plan for your home so that you are ready to show hospitality to anyone who shows up at your door.

Supplies Needed:

- Computer Paper
- Markers
- Walker (optional)
- Wheelchair (optional)
- Crutch/Cane (optional)
- Blindfold (optional)
- Computer Printer (optional)

Questions to ask the kids while you're serving together:

- What are some reasons why a person can't walk?
- How do people who can't walk for those reasons get around?
- Who uses a wheelchair to get around?
- Who uses a walker to get around?
- Who uses crutches to get around?
- How do we show others who get around differently that they are included?

Instructions:

1. Draw a map of every floor of your home.
2. On the map identify all the most important parts of your home for a guest: entrances/exits, bathroom, place to sleep, place to eat.
3. Next have the kids consider how you would make your house accessible to each of the following people. Accessible means that they could get to and use each of the most important places you identified in step 2.
 - A person who is blind.
 - A person who is in a wheelchair.
 - A person who is deaf.
 - A person who uses a walker.
 - Anyone else you can think of.



4. Help the kids to draw or write their plan onto the map of your home that they have created. Stairs are probably the hardest thing to figure out. It's up to you whether you want to focus on the ground floor of your home, which might eliminate the need to think about stairs. Unless, someone would have to use stairs even to get into your house! Just make sure whatever plan you come up with includes access to the house itself, a bathroom, a place to sleep, and a place to eat. Saying that a person would just have to stay outside does not cut it!!!
5. *Optional:* With adult supervision, have the kids test out your plan by using a blindfold or, if you have access to these things, a wheelchair, walker, crutches, or cane.

Lesson Reflection: For someone who is considered different, being included means a lot. Jesus wants us to create places where everyone is automatically included regardless of what differences they have. Esther had to fight to be included. She was not a person in a wheelchair or using a walker but as a Jew in Persia she was seen and treated differently. Her people were in danger because of who they were. Jesus helps us not just to make sure that others aren't in danger but also that they are included and appreciated for who they are. Jesus' beatitudes teach us to live so that others are not just treated fairly but loved.

