

The Women Who Knew . . .

Huldah, Miriam, Deborah, Abigail, Esther, Hannah and Sarah

Session 5 - Esther: For Such a Time As This

Talkback with Pastor Farl

Esther 4

- 1) Discuss how Queen Vashti's behavior (Esther 1:1-2:4) not only opens the door of opportunity for Esther, but is itself daring and dignified. Although the literature has obvious overtones of humor, what is the serious message about gender exploitation?

They Knew Something

- 2) Esther is a bit of a reluctant hero! What are some of her initial excuses and fears? What do you suppose finally causes her to develop a plan of action and step out with risk-taking resolve? In the case of Esther, what did she know?

Jesus and the Women

- 3) In Matthew 15:21-28, Jesus encounters a woman of remarkable faith. Describe the elements of *risk* within her petition. Comment also on her *persistence* (cf. Luke 18:1-5). When have you ever been so bold in seeking wellness for someone else?

Go Deeper

- 4) Whether it's racial prejudice or sexual discrimination, the Book of Esther speaks a strong word of judgment. In what ways does your faith community defend suffering, persecuted folks who some may say are not "our own" people? What does Mordecai's claim in 4:14 suggest about God's intention to bring *deliverance* (one way or another) for victims of oppression?