

*“For Such a Time as This”*

The OT story of Esther is a real life story of the providence of God. God used a young beautiful Jewish woman named Esther to providentially save her people from the destruction of their enemies. She lived in a crazy world that had a crazy lust to destroy her people, but God so sovereignly orchestrated her life that she was in position to intervene and intercede on Israel’s behalf.

Esther was an orphan — she lost both of her parents to death at an early age, and was raised by her relative Mordecai. And in the course of time, according to God’s careful plan, Esther became Queen. And while the enemies of the Jews were positioning themselves to destroy Esther’s people, Mordecai said to her, *Perhaps you have attained royalty for such a time as this.* And indeed she had, for as the story unfolds we clearly see that God prepared her *for a time of deliverance of the nation of Israel.*

I believe in the sovereignty of God. With all of my heart, I believe in His sovereignty. I believe that He is supernaturally superintending all of the events on earth to fulfill His ultimate purposes for good. Even in a fallen world that is marred and marked by sin and by the devastation of sin, God is using good and evil to fulfill His perfect will. He works with what He’s got, and what He’s got is a messed up world, which will continue to be messed up until His kingdom comes, so what God does is He uses evil for good, and ultimately good will prevail.

Bob and Delores Allen and their family and Kathy and I and our family fully believe in the sovereignty of God. We believe with our entire beings that Jason and Lindsay were born to die for His glory and for their eternal blessing and for your eternal benefit.

We believe that it is within God’s sovereign will to use Jason and Lindsay’s lives, deaths and resurrections to providentially deliver some of you from the penalty of sin, so that for you hell will be canceled and heaven will be guaranteed — and it’s already happening; we are beginning to hear stories of salvation.

We believe that it is within God’s sovereign will to use Jason and Lindsay’s lives, deaths and resurrections to providentially deliver some of you from the power of sin so that for you are sanctified, set apart from sin, so that you are clean and usable for the higher kingdom purposes that God has in mind for you.

We believe that. We believe God is being glorified throughout this country and people are being delivered because of the tragic yet timely deaths of two of God’s choice servants. We believe that they were prepared. We believe that they were ready. We believe that Jason and Lindsay were born *for such a time as this.*

(Baby Lindsay) When Lindsay was a baby Kathy and I began praying for her salvation, her sanctification and her future husband. Again, believing in the sovereignty of God, we knew that God had a little boy out there somewhere in mind for Lindsay — but we had no idea it would be this » (Goofy Jason).

And to be honest, we weren’t ready for a guy who was comfortable living in tents and working on rivers and climbing on rocks. (Jason and Lindsay) But God was not only preparing Jason for Lindsay and Lindsay for Jason, he was preparing us to better understand Jason *and* Lindsay and the life that God was preparing for them to live.

And seven hours away in a spiritually rich region of the country in Zeeland, MI, another family, a godly family, was praying. (Young Jason) And at five years of age, a little boy announced to his parents that he was going to be a Christian missionary. Eight years before his salvation, he was already being prepared for service.

And when Lindsay was about ten (Young Lindsay), she thrilled us with the announcement that she

too was feeling led by God to serve Him in missionary work. And in both homes, one in OH and one in MI, and in both churches, FBC and IBC, God was raising up two children with a passion for Him and for His work.

Then God brought them together in Beckley, WV. Jason had graduated from ABC and was living with Ben and Kerry while working the Gauley River. Ben and Kerry's apartment was located across the road from the college while Lindsay was a student at ABC. And one day Lindsay came to visit her sister and she met Jason.

And it didn't take long for them to know that God had made them for each other. Jason had recently told his parents that he resigned himself to never marrying because he understood the kind of life God was calling him to, and the girls weren't interested; then he met Lindsay ... and he couldn't believe it! (Lindsay's tent) A beautiful young woman who can live in a tent and who did live in this tent last summer!

Within six weeks Jason was asking me for Lindsay's hand in marriage. I couldn't believe it! Are you kidding me? And, man, was he nervous. And when Jason is stressed, his voice gets loud. After he asked if he could talk to me, he said in a loud voice, *I am so nervous!* as he went to the kitchen to get a glass of water. And I'm thinking, *Ut-oh!* It was God's will; God brought them together; it's just that God hadn't told me yet.

Well, to make a fairly long story short, I didn't say no, but I didn't say yes either, but later on after we got to know Jason better, and the mind of God, I did say yes.

Jason and Lindsay were two people who loved the Lord — they were passionate for Christ; and they loved their families, their friends, their church families; and they loved people who were hurting and who needed the healing grace of God applied to their hearts. Jason was passionate about sharing his saving faith — it was a simple yet vibrant faith that simplified his life, and he was passionate about sharing that faith — and Lindsay was passionate about sharing her caring heart — she had a heart full of love, and she was passionate about sharing her heart.

But they were not stuffy—shirt Christians! They were whitewater rafting guides (Boat on the car)! They were rock climbers (Jason climbing a rock)! And they knew how to have fun to the glory of God!

And they were at their best when they were with their Christian friends of like mind. They were at their best when they were serving the Lord whom they loved by serving young people, like at Rock-N—Water. And they were at their best when they were together.

They were so professional and mature in how they handled their relationship at the camp. But those who knew them best knew of their love for each other and how their love was subtly expressed from time to time.

The last weekend of their lives on earth came at the end of the camping season. They had one week left before Lindsay was to fly home to finish preparations for their marriage, so they decided to visit San Francisco together. Lindsay had told her mom that she wanted to see the city before she came home » (SF shots).

These pictures are from an undeveloped roll of film that the detectives found among their possessions on the beach — we regard them as a precious gift of God.

On that day, they were taking in the sights of the city, and as the day was coming to a close, they headed north on Route 1 to take in the beauty of the coast and to find a “safe” place to spend the night before returning to camp and to work the following day.

God gave us another gift — these notes also were found among their possessions » (Beach Picture, which they took) Lindsay wrote: *The sun is going down in the horizon, and all I see is the beams shining*

*on the cliff face, and I know that God is awesome. I look around and I see His creation all around me. Jason wrote: As I stir this Mac & Cheese I think to myself what a wonderful life. I've just spent two awesome days with my fiancée, Lindsay. Can life ever be so perfect? Only with a person who is so great. God gives me this privilege in life and He has given me a wonderful woman to enjoy it. How precious is that!*

Jason and Lindsay were enjoying God's creation and each other as they worshipped the Lord that evening on the beach. They were faithful to God, they were pure (did you pick up on the fact that there was no sexual assault—Lindsay was found sexually clean. I'm so proud of them both — Jason for protecting Lindsay's purity and Lindsay for her conviction to stay pure until marriage), they were worshipping, and they went to sleep in that state of faithfulness, purity and worship, (Heaven) and they woke up in the arms of Jesus Christ! And I say to you this evening, WHAT A WAY TO GO!

Bob and Delores and Kathy and I believe that Jason and Lindsay were at the peak of their Christian experience, and that they were ready — more ready than most of us! So don't weep and mourn for them. Grieve as we grieve —our loss is huge — it's hard for us to contemplate going on in life without those two who so wonderfully graced our lives with their presence — we love Jason and Lindsay! And we will miss them so much!

But don't weep for them — Jesus came to that beach that night, and carefully, lovingly, graciously took them in His arms and took them with Him to their eternal home in heaven prepared by the Lord Jesus Himself.

And as they were approaching heaven's gates, and the glory began to shine on their faces, and then when they looked into the adoring face of the One who was lifting them up, oh the thrill that filled their souls! And as they soared toward home, they began to laugh and laugh and laugh!

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ found Jason and Lindsay faithful to the end! Not perfect, but faithful. We believe Jesus when He said *the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father* (Matthew 13:43).

We believe Jesus when He said to the faithful steward, *Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master* (Matthew 25:21). We believe Jason and Lindsay heard those words from their loving Lord: *Well done, My good and faithful servants! Welcome to your reward! We believe! We believe!*

In December 1666, Hugh MacHale, a very young servant of Christ was brought to his trial for his faith in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was given just four days to live and then marched back to the prison. And in the crowd on the streets, many were weeping that one so young and so gallant should have only four days more to see the sun shine. But there were no tears in the eyes of this brave soldier of the cross. *Trust in God!* he cried to the crowd as he marched past. *Trust in God!*

And then suddenly he saw a friend of his standing on the edge of the crowd, and he shouted to him, *Good news; wonderful good news! I am within four days of enjoying the sight of Jesus, my Savior!*

*Good news; wonderful good news! Jason and Lindsay are there enjoying the very presence of the One who died to make them live! They are with Jesus, their Savior and their Lord!*

Bob and Delores, Deanna and Bill, Elizabeth and Howie, Vanesia and the rest their family, Kathy and I, Kerry and Ben, and the rest of our family, we believe! We are trusting in God! And we would invite you to do the same!

Can I share with you some of the truths that are pillars for our lives in a time like this? Here are *things as they really are* according to our unfailing faith in Jesus Christ and in His inerrant Word.

*First, Jason and Lindsay were born "for such a time as this."* They were born to die young but to live forever, having now been *swallowed up by life indeed!*

Not all of God's choice servants live a long life on earth » the founder of our faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, died young. The prophet of God John the Baptist died young. The Lord's apostle James was martyred for his faith. Antipas, of Revelation 2 was killed early.

Young Hugh MacHale, Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Keith Green, and more recently Martin Burnham, Roni and Charity Bowers, just to mention a few among thousands who have had the privilege of dying young for the glory of God.

Add Jason and Lindsay to that roll call of faith — not everybody is ready; not everybody is up for that high and holy call, but they were, for they were born *for such a time as this*.

*Second, they were ready!* Years ago these two dedicated believers in Christ gave their lives to Jesus. As Jim Elliot, that young martyr of the 1950s once said, *He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep (his life) to gain what he cannot lose (eternal glory with the Lord)*. They were ready.

*Third, it was their appointed time.* Hebrews 9:27 says, *And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment...* We believe in God's sovereignty. We believe that our children were safe, and that nothing could touch them, that no evil could harm them, until it was their time, and then God lifted the hedge of protection, because it was His time for them to come home!

And our children believed that too. They were on—the—edge type people because they believed they were safe until their appointed time. And I submit to you that *they were safe!* And that there is no safer place in the universe than in the center of God's sovereign will. The prophet Isaiah declares the word of the Lord: *"I, even I, am the Lord, and there is no savior besides Me. It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed. Even from eternity I am He, and there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?"* (Isaiah 43:11-13). God acted, because it was time.

*Fourth, God is good!* We simply live in a fallen world where bad things happen to all people including God's people. We're not immune to tribulation. But since God is sovereign, He uses evil for good!

Remember the OT story of Joseph, when he was sold into slavery by his older brothers and taken to Egypt. He was bought by Potiphar and placed in charge of his estate, until Potiphar's wife falsely cried "rape" and he was thrown in prison.

Eventually he was released and became the prince of Egypt. And years later when his brothers come begging for forgiveness, he said to them, *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.*

Satan meant this event that has indelibly touched all of our lives for evil, *but God means it for good to bring about this present result, to save people from the penalty of sin and from the power of sin.* So on behalf of the Allens and the Cutshalls, I declare to you with all of the authority of God's Word that God is good!

*A fifth truth that is pillaring us up: God sovereignly chose us and prepared us for such a time as this.* And we feel greatly honored that the Lord trusted us with this heavy cross.

The Allens and the Cutshalls and our two church families and our extended family and Rock—N—Water camp are being tempted by the evil one but tested by the Lord, and we are determined to be found faithful.

*Sixth, God is being glorified — there is something even more important than the physical lives of our two children — God's glory!*

Their deaths were not in vain — God is being glorified, and we will trust Him, we will reverence

Him, we will worship Him! Lindsay wrote in her *Purpose Driven Life Journal*, *God wants me to know that I have a purpose and that He is preparing me for that. It's all about God! So stop living for myself and live for God. Live for things in heaven, not on earth.*

God is being glorified, in heaven by our children, and on earth by how they lived and died and by us! Because we believe with Jason and Lindsay that it really is all about Him! And we worship Him!

*Seventh, as Christian parents who adore their children and deeply grieve our loss, we are satisfied in Christ! Life is hard, but God is good! And we know that peace that the Holy Spirit inspired apostle talked about in Philippians 4 » Be anxious for nothing, pray about everything with thanksgiving, and the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (4:6—7).*

And 2 Corinthians 12:9 when Jesus said to Paul, *“My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in your weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.* His grace is enough. His peace is realized.

Listen, what you are seeing in those of us who have been hit hardest by this is not us somehow pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps. We don't have the human strength to do what we are doing and to be what we are being —what you are witnesses of is totally a God-thing.

Bob Cook of Youth for Christ often said *If you can explain what's going on, God didn't do it!* We can't explain what is going on in us and to us and through it. God is doing it.

God said to Ezekiel, *“Son of man, stand up on your feet that I may speak with you!” And as He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard Him speaking to me (Ezekiel 2:1—2).* There is one reason and one reason only we are doing what we are doing and saying what we are saying and being what we are being — the divine power of our great and gracious God is setting us on our feet, and we are satisfied in Him.

*Eighth, Satan is a punk! He is a powerful foe, and I respect his power, but in Christ he is a defeated foe! And I do not fear him.* I realize that I am no match for him in human strength, but in the strength of the Lord, we need not fear. He used an utterly evil coward to try to mess with our faith, but he can't mess with it, for, as Jason would say, *we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength.* Ephesians 4:26-27 says, *Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.* Bob and Delores and Kathy and I vowed early on while still in CA that Satan was not going to win any battles in our hearts!

Warren Wiersbe has written, *What life does to us depends on what life finds in us, and that is where the grace of God comes in.* Because of grace, what life is finding in us is peace and faith.

Satan is a loser, he's a chump, and in Christ our children have won, we are winning, we are determined to continue to win so help us God.

*The ninth truth we are trusting: God will set the record straight.* David prayed in Psalm 26, *Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.* In Hebrews 10:30—31 it reads, *For we know Him who said, (“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* And 1 Peter 3:12, *For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.*

So we can actually pity the murderer, for he does not have to deal with the pitiful anger of little hate-filled parents, but rather he must face the living God whose face is against him.

So if you are angry, don't stay angry. Don't move into the territory that belongs to God. For believe me, God can handle this. So join us in fully trusting the Lord to set the record straight » *His eyes are on the righteous; His face is against the wicked.*

*A final truth I would like to share with you: we believe Jason and Lindsay were martyred for Christ — not that they were killed for their faith — we don't know the motive — but we do believe they died for Christ, that Satan took them out because of Christ.*

*Calvin Miller writes, Christians are defined as people who are hungry for God. They are hungry to please Christ. Martyrs are not necessarily those who are hungry to die. They are merely souls with an excessive appetite to please Christ. They would rather please Him by having to die than disappoint Him by selling out on key issues of obedience.*

This is what I believe about Jason and Lindsay: they were martyrs in that they were souls with an excessive appetite to please Christ. They would rather die than disappoint Him. And they did die for Christ and in Christ. And we couldn't be any more pleased and proud of them than we are right now.

So this is how we will live — the Allens and the Cutshalls and all who choose to follow our faith: The Lord Jesus said in Mark 8:34-38, If anyone wishes to come after Me (to be His disciple, a true follower of Christ), he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with His holy angels.

This is how we will live: We are just pilgrims passing through to a better land. So we will deny ourselves, take up our cross, as heavy as it is right now, and we will follow Him — all the way our Savior leads us, we will follow, we will follow Him. Jason and Lindsay's lives and deaths and resurrections are not in vain — we will honor their faith and glorify their Lord by fully following Him.

How about you? How will you live in light of what God is doing through this great event in our lives? How will you honor them? How will you treat God?

Again Lindsay wrote in her journal, *I greatly desire to have many crowns to give my God when I get to heaven ... Nothing on earth matters in light of eternity. It is so easy to get caught up in the things of the world and forget what really matters ... How amazing that we have forever to spend with Christ. The more we worship and spend our lives for Christ on earth the better we can serve Him in heaven ... I sometimes think of myself as a pilgrim in a foreign land traveling through life. We are here temporarily. I should be less materialistic (from the girl who lived in a tent and under a tarp!) and give more to God. Don't waste time, she said, Don't waste time! Okay, sweetheart, I won't!*

One more entry: *Heaven will be a wonderful place of no suffering, hurt, loneliness; it's a great thing to look forward to.* It is a great place that she and Jason are enjoying this very moment.

So how are you going to live in light of how they lived and died and live again? Are you going to be changed or unchanged by Jason and Lindsay's lives and deaths?

Are you even saved from the penalty of sin? We are all sinners, you know. And we all need Jesus to save us from our sin. Are you saved? Have you asked Jesus Christ to save you and forgive you for the pain your sin has caused Him? If you are not saved, will you ask Christ to save you today?

Are you saved from the penalty of sin, you're a Christian, but you are not being saved from the power of sin? Is sin and selfishness strong in you? Are you satisfied with mediocrity?

If Christ came to take you home as suddenly and as unexpectedly as He took Jason and Lindsay, would He find you faithful? Would He be delighted with you or ashamed of you?

Listen, in light of what has happened to Jason and Lindsay, in light of what will happen to you, how are you going to live? How will the Lord find you when He comes for you?

Listen to the words of this writing, called *The Fellowship of the Unashamed*. A poster with these words on it used to hang on Lindsay's bedroom wall. This is how I think of Jason and Lindsay: *I am*

*part of the fellowship of the unashamed. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I won't look back, let up, slow down, or back away.*

*My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, and my future is secure. I am finished and done with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, mundane talking, cheap giving, and dwarfed goals.*

*I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I now live by faith, lean on His presence, walk with patience, live by prayer, and labor with power.*

*My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my Guide is reliable, my mission is clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, deterred, lured away, turned back, deluded, delayed or discouraged from the call of God.*

*I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.*

*I won't give up, shut up, let up, until I have stayed up, stored up and prayed up for the cause of Christ. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.*

*I must go until He comes, preach until all know, and work until He stops me. And when He comes to get His own, He will have no problem recognizing me. My banner is clear. I am a part of the fellowship of the unashamed.*

That's what it is going to be for us — Jason and Lindsay did not die in vain; the Lord Jesus did not die in vain — it's going to be all about Him until He takes us home.

How about you? How are you going to live? You are faced with a choice right now. How are you going to live? *I came to a fork in a yellow wood, and I took the road less traveled*, and that has made all the difference in the world. Choose today the road you will travel. Choose today whom you will live for — yourself or for Jesus Christ.

Please bow with me in prayer. With your heads bowed in a spirit of prayer, let me ask you, what decision are you making today? Even if you don't make a conscience decision today, you've made a decision. Please consider making the right one, the eternal one.

In just a moment, I'm going to pray, and then while the worship team leads in the song *Holiness*, I'm going to invite you to come to the altar and make a public decision for Christ. During the singing of the song, just come and pray, and we will have people come to pray with you if you have need of that. Remember our Lord's words: For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with His holy angels. Don't be ashamed of the Lord today. And don't be afraid to get out of your seat. You come and get things right with your Creator and your Redeemer. If the Holy Spirit is tugging on your heart, don't let Satan win this battle, come out of your seats to the altar to pray » (Pray) » Holiness