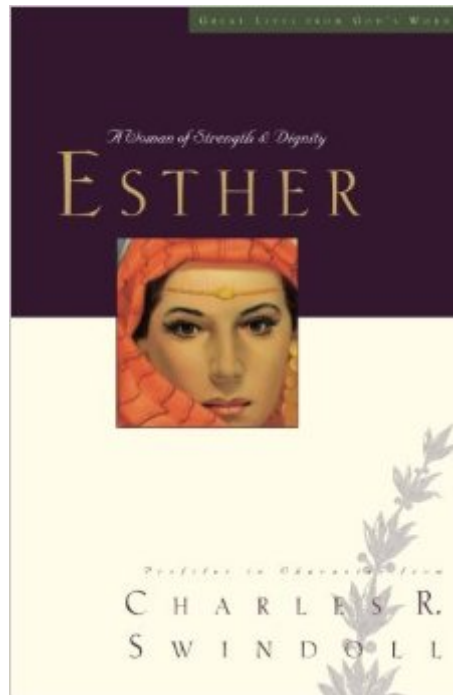


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# Esther: A Woman Of Strength And Dignity (Great Lives Series)



## Synopsis

Everyone loves a transformation story. Rags to riches. Plain to beautiful. Weak to strong. Esther's story is that, but it is much more. It is a thought-provoking study of God's invisible hand writing silently and unseen across the pages of human history. Perhaps most of all, Esther's story is the account of godly attributes like courage, dignity, wisdom, and strength?attributes that blocked an evil plot, overthrew an arrogant killer, and replaced terror with joy in thousands of Jewish homes. Author Chuck Swindoll interweaves the ancient, real-life story with insight not only into the virtues of Queen Esther, but also into how the qualities that formed and empowered her can be ours. Esther is the second volume of Charles Swindoll's best-selling series, which examines great lives from God's Word and reveals the strengths and weaknesses that make God's men and women both great . . . and human. Many of the most beloved biblical heroes were ordinary folks. Shepherds. Fishermen. Servants. Widows. Even harlots and petty thieves. One by one, they changed the course of history. Swindoll explains that these men and women did not become great in their own strength but were empowered by God when they surrendered their lives to Him. To live such a life that God considers great is within the reach of everyone who submits to Him.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The entire Great Lives Series are biographies on individuals of the Bible. They are wonderful books because they can be read at many different levels. This book, on Esther, is no different. On the

surface level one can read this book and learn a lot about Esther. The next level reveals the character of God, and another level teaches the reader application for their own life and relationship with God. This book is entirely about Esther, but doesn't have anything to do with Esther. Through reading this book one learns about Esther, her experiences, and the era she lived in. Yet what we are really learning are principles that remain constant for all people and all time. Some of these are: waiting on the Lord, the invincibility of God despite his invisibility, and self- constraint through the holy spirit. Like the parables Jesus used, the story of Esther's life is merely a tool God uses to portray His will. This is something Charles Swindoll has discovered, and I believe his intent in writing this book is to help us discover the same. One of the great aspects of this book is that it is part of a series and each book in the series addresses different lessons and characteristics of God. These books introduce life- changing application we might otherwise miss in our regular bible reading and therefore, can greatly enhance our time in God's word.

Swindoll continues his legacy of writing great books with "Esther: A Woman of Strength and Dignity". This is the second volume of the biographical series he has written on various Bible characters. In Esther, he describes the life of Esther and the Book of Esther which incidentally, is the only book in the Bible that never mentions God by name. However, when you read the Book of Esther, you can definitely see God working behind the scenes as the drama plays out. Among the important points covered in the book are: 1. Be quiet and know that God is God and be convinced that He is at work. 2. God is not in a hurry and is not a slave to the human clock (I particularly struggle with this one). 3. Some things are important enough for us to stand alone on. One person can indeed make a difference. 4. Stand alone and be courageous no matter what the cost! 5. God notices us when no one else does. God is impressed with a humble heart that comes to Him on His terms. 6. 2 things to consider when discovering how God works. 7. 3 principles for being sensitive to God's interventions. 8. God can break down any wall. No one, no matter how stubborn or strong-willed, can resist God and win. 9. 3 principles from the Book of Esther that we can learn for our lives. 10. 4 things that happen when we wait on God. Read, enjoy, and be encouraged to know that God loves you and knows what you're going through even when others do not! Recommended.

We are doing this as a Ladies Bible Study at our church and it has been wonderful. Swindoll does an excellent job in this character study, and he does in all of them. It really makes you think about what a difference one person, one woman can make when she stands for what is right and follows God's leadership.

Next month I am preaching a series on the book of Esther and purchased this book in hopes it would give valuable character insights. I will be honest and say that I was highly disappointed. This book is a surface level commentary to the BOOK of Esther but falls severely short of being anything close to a study on the PERSON of Esther. I have only read one other Swindoll book and it was a long time ago but it seems his tendency is to jump quickly to application. And that is fine. I believe our preaching must involve clear application. But for a seminary president and a volume that claims to be a character study, I found the emphasis on the application annoying. Especially, since I thought much of it was a stretch. Anyone who has studied Esther knows that it is the only book of the Bible that does not mention God (or prayer, worship, church) and contains no miracles. Apparently this is a problem Swindoll feels obligated to solve as he goes overboard to explain God into the story, even insisting spiritual maturity of Esther and Mordecai when there is nothing in the text that proves this and he provides no other sources. Not only does Swindoll lack the depth of a true character study, he also provides misleading information. At one point he equals the Jewish month of Adar to December (likely because it is called the twelfth month) even though this is not true and a quote he later sites contradicts him by correctly implying Adar would fall during February. He also gives great attention to the year of preparation for those in the contest to be the next queen. But he makes it sound like the women are simply putting on makeup for twelve month, failing to dig into any of the cultural practices for an event like this. I also thought his sources were lacking. Swindoll randomly and frequently quotes poems as his preferred source. These often are in reference to a principle or trait he is describing, not the story or person of Esther. The same is true of his use of Scripture. He quotes more from other books of the Bible than he does from the book of Esther, rarely in the context of supporting anything about the history or culture of the actual story of Esther. The chapters begin with conversation about a topic, dedicate a few pages to retelling part of the story of Esther, then make a conclusion about a positive trait of a person from the story (often not even Esther) and then the final half of the chapter is a listing of how you too can have these traits in your life. Again, application is important but I thought the applications given in this book were misguided and unsupported. Not to mention that they should not have been the dominating content of what was supposed to be a character study. This book was not terrible. It's just that I would consider it to be misleading and not helpful in the context I was hoping it would be. Based on the content of the book, I think it would be best served to be advertised as a self-help, Christian living book meant specifically for women. If you are looking for character or historical insight to compliment what you can gain just by reading the book of Esther, you will not find it here.

Even though I have read the book of Esther many times Mr.Swindoll brought out views and concepts that I failed to pick up in reading Scripture!! An excellent source of Scripture for the serious student ofThe Bible who wants to add to their knowledge and understanding ofthe Jewish woman called Esther....Highly recommend ã ã ã^â†

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