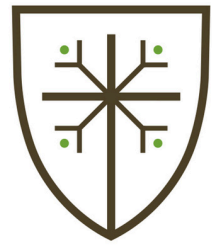


# GOD ON THE MARGINS

*A story of Jonah, Habakkuk, and Esther*

# SERMON NOTES



November 9, 2025

## SERMON INFO

### TITLE

“The Courageous Bride”

### PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

### TEXTS

Esther 4:1-2, 8-5:1  
Colossians 3:12-15, 17  
Luke 8:16-17

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What times and places in your life have you found it hardest to bear the name of God and to resist the temptation to hide who you belong to?
2. As Tim has said before, our identity is not made in crisis but revealed. What practices help to reinforce our identity as those bearing the name of Christ when we aren't in times of crisis?

## SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Josh looked at the heart of the crisis in the book of Esther where we see how, despite the absence of his name, God is actually at work.

### Clarifying Crisis

As we saw previously, Haman has convinced the King to kill the Jewish people in Persia for his own financial gain. The shadow of that threat is looming here in chapter four. Mordecai is shaken to the core. These kinds of life-threatening crises tend to clarify what our primary fundamental identity is. For Mordecai, as the shell of his life is ripped apart, he course corrects and goes back to basics. We see him in sack cloth and ashes - biblical language for a posture of repentance, humility, and poverty of soul. He is repenting of his hypocrisy. Just as he told Esther to hide her Jewishness from the King, he too has chosen to hide behind a Persian name. They both have hidden, ignored, and subdued the fact that they bear God's name.

But now, God is at work “un-hiding” them. Now, from a place of repentance, Mordecai is certain that God will bring a deliverer and is urging Esther to go to the King, bearing God's name, on behalf of his people.

### Divine Coordination

In this crisis, we see how God is working personally on Mordecai and Esther even as he is working through them to bear his name and save his people. Esther has been placed in this role for just this right time. God is coordinating against her hypocrisy and Mordecai's.

God's sovereign grace always seems to follow a strange, upside down path. Grace always overcomes our failures and is never dependent on our successes. It always comes as a gift. And when the hypocrite comes to Christ, he sees the one who so perfectly bears the name of God that he can say “when you see me, you have seen the Father.” And he gives that name to us.

### Courageous Bride

The only cure for the hypocrite is to be unhidden and exposed. We tend to think of a confession as a sign of failure or defeat. But in reality, confession is a triumph of the soul falling on the grace of Christ. Esther turns to repentance and fasting for three days. And when, after three days she rises from a place of death, she is a changed, courageous woman. Esther represents not only God's people at that time but also the Church now as she approaches the King's throne with boldness. Esther has access to the king. She has been given the royal robes fit for his presence. By faith in Christ, we also have been brought up into the inner court of God himself. We too have been placed in our particular time and particular place to bear God's name to the kings of this world.