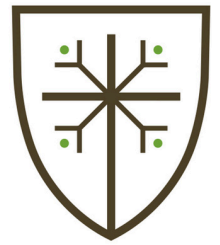


# GOD ON THE MARGINS

*A story of Jonah, Habakkuk, and Esther*

# SERMON NOTES



October 26, 2025

## SERMON INFO

### TITLE

"God in Hiding"

### PREACHER

Rev. Brent Baker

### TEXTS

Esther 2:1-11, 15-18

1 Corinthians 2:6-9

Matthew 16:24-26

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We often hear of Esther in the context of her courage later on in the story. How can her change from compliance and concealment to courage give us hope in the way God can act in and through us?
2. Talk about a time in your own life that God seemed to be silent but was really working through a series of mistakes and coincidences..

## SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Brent began the third and final book in our sermon series - the book of Esther. The book takes place in a world that is hostile to God's people, but, as we will see, God never abandons them.

### Culture

The king in the book of Esther (whom we will refer to as Xerxes for simplicity's sake) desires to take every opportunity to flaunt his wealth and status. He throws a lavish feast in his own honor that lasts six months and an afterparty that lasts another week. Everything is opulent and extravagant and there is no constraint. It is all appearance over substance and possessions over character. But when a drunken Xerxes orders his queen, Vashti, to be brought to him, she refuses which unleashes a string of events that culminate in a shamelessly debased search for a beautiful woman to replace the queen. This scene begs the question, "How is a follower of God supposed to live in a depraved culture like this?" Are we to disengage and retreat from the world? Or are we to live counterculturally, winsome and courageous, staying in and presenting a different way of life? Or do we follow Esther's example in the early part of the book, that of compliance.

### Compliance

The route of compliance that Esther initially takes is marked by assimilation into the culture, giving up and giving in. We are introduced to her with two names - her Jewish name, Hadassah, and her Persian name, Esther. She is secretly Jewish but publicly Persian. We also see in her a life pattern of pleasing. She hides to protect herself and it works for awhile. She pleases the king more than any other.

Esther is not the only one hiding in concealment. There is no mention of the name of God in the entire book of Esther. But God's silence does not imply absence, inability, or indifference. It is a particularity about God that he is active in hiddenness. His sovereignty rules even in the shadows.

### Coincidence

In the case of Esther, God doesn't show up in large and magnificent ways as he does elsewhere for the people of Israel. Instead, he uses a string of strange coincidences and mistakes to provide for and protect his people. God can bring good out of even the madness of the world and the mistakes of men. All the coincidences will be used for Esther to rise to a place where she can protect God's people against a powerful enemy. Sometimes God's work is concealed in the seemingly ordinary and sometimes dark provinces of our life.

We see God working through a string of coincidences in the week leading up to Jesus' crucifixion. The events of Holy Week play out one after another leading to the cry of his Son on the cross - why have you forsaken me? But if none of those things had happened that seemed like God's silence, we would remain dead in our sins and without hope. God worked through them to secure redemption for his people.