

**When God Seems Silent**

This week's sermon, delivered by a guest speaker, explored the theme "When God Seems Silent" through the lens of Esther 2:1-4. The message emphasized that even in periods of apparent divine silence, God is still actively working behind the scenes. It challenged us to examine our responses during these times, particularly in regard to our decision-making, the counsel we seek, and our trust in God's ongoing plan.

**Takeaways:**

- Beware of prideful decisions when God seems silent. We must be cautious not to fill God's silence with worldly distractions or self-serving choices.
- Choose your counsel wisely. The people we allow to speak into our lives during quiet seasons can significantly impact our spiritual journey and decisions.
- Know that God's plan is still in motion, even when He seems distant. We're encouraged to trust in His providence and perfect timing.
- As we navigate our own seasons of perceived silence from God, let's remember to look to Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith." May we use these times to deepen our trust, refine our choices, and carefully consider the voices we allow to influence us.

Stay encouraged, Rise City. God is always at work, even when we can't see or hear Him clearly.

## Here's a 5 Day Devotional Based on This Weeks Teaching

### Day 1: Trusting God in Silence

#### Reading: Psalm 46:1-11

Devotional: In times when God seems silent, it's easy to feel abandoned or forgotten. However, as we learned from the story of Esther, God is always working behind the scenes, even when we can't see or hear Him. Psalm 46 reminds us that God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Take time today to reflect on moments in your life when God seemed distant. How did He prove His faithfulness in those times? Remember, just as in Esther's story, God's silence doesn't mean His absence. Practice being still and knowing that He is God, trusting in His sovereign plan for your life.

### Day 2: Choosing Wise Counsel

#### Reading: Proverbs 13:20, 15:22

Devotional: King Ahasuerus made poor decisions based on unwise counsel from those around him. These proverbs highlight the importance of surrounding ourselves with godly wisdom. Consider the people in your life who influence your decisions. Are they leading you closer to God or further away? Reflect on how you can intentionally seek out mentors and friends who will sharpen your faith and challenge you to live out the gospel. Commit to being that kind of wise counsel for others as well.

### Day 3: Overcoming Pride

#### Reading: James 4:6-10

Devotional: Pride was a significant downfall for King Ahasuerus, leading him to make decisions that pleased himself rather than seeking what was right. James reminds us that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Take an honest inventory of areas in your life where pride might be hindering your relationship with God or others. Confess these to the Lord, asking Him to cultivate humility in your heart. Consider practical ways you can submit to God today, resisting the devil's temptations toward pride and self-centeredness.

### Day 4: God's Providence in Preparation

#### Reading: Romans 8:28-30

Devotional: Even when we can't see it, God is always working to prepare us for His purposes. In Esther's story, God was orchestrating events long before she became queen. Romans 8 assures us that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him. Reflect on seasons of waiting or preparation in your own life. How has God used those times to shape you? Trust that even now, He is preparing you for future opportunities to serve Him. Ask God to give you patience and faith during times of seeming inactivity, knowing that He is always at work.

### Day 5: Finding Satisfaction in Christ

#### Reading: John 4:13-14, 6:35

Devotional: King Ahasuerus had everything the world could offer, yet he was deeply unsatisfied. His story reminds us that true fulfillment can only be found in Jesus. In these passages, Jesus offers living water and the bread of life that truly satisfy. Consider areas in your life where you've been seeking satisfaction apart from Christ. How can you turn to Jesus to meet those deep longings of your soul? Spend time in prayer, asking God to help you find your ultimate satisfaction in Him alone, trusting that He is sufficient for all your needs.

**Practical Applications:**

This week, set aside 15-30 minutes each day for silent reflection and prayer. Use this time to listen for God's voice and direction.

Evaluate your close relationships. Are they helping you grow spiritually or potentially hindering your growth? Consider how you might nurture relationships that encourage your faith.

Choose a Scripture verse about God's faithfulness (e.g., Lamentations 3:22-23 or Hebrews 13:5). Memorize it and reflect on it daily, especially in moments when God seems silent.

Identify one area in your life where you might be relying on "unwise counsel." Commit to seeking godly wisdom in this area instead.

Practice looking for God's work in unexpected places this week. Keep a journal of where you see His hand, even in seemingly "worldly" situations.