



ENTER God's presence

Psalm 13

For the director of music. A Psalm of David

- ¹ How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
- ² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?
- ³ Look on me and answer, Lord my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
- ⁴ and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.
- ⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
- ⁶ I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.

- **Pray Thanks and Adoration**
- **Pray: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**, your ways are often hidden in this world and it is easy to think that you are absent or missing in action. Open our eyes to see, and our ears to hear so that as we reflect on your living word, we may be alert to seeing you at work in surprising ways in the world and people's lives. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.



SHARE life together

1. **Share your highs and lows from the last week?**
2. **What is something in your life that you look back on and say, "I never saw that coming?" Was it a positive or negative experience?**
3. **When has God felt absent or silent in your life and what did you think or feel in that moment?**

Pray for each other

Week beginning:
Sunday 7th August 2022

Worship series:
GOD'S SILENT SOVEREIGNTY
#1 When God seems Absent



VERSE for the week
But Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality just as Mordecai had told her to do, for she continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up.

Esther 2:20



REMEMBER this week

**Don't mistake God's silence for his absence.
God is present and working in the world through completely ordinary events.**



LISTEN attentively

4. **How did you go with last week's goals?**
 - **Were you able to share what you discovered?**

Read Esther 1-2 in your own Bible or online at Bible Gateway [here](#)

5. **Retell the story in your own words.**
6. **What is challenging/confusing about this text?**
7. **Look at the characters in these two chapters? What do you learn about King Xerxes, Queen Vashti, Mordecai, Esther?**
8. **What motivates each of their decisions?**
9. **What do we discover about God in these chapters?**



GROW deeper

10. **Every decision we make has consequences. How have decisions you have made in one moment affected future outcomes in your life?**

In the book of Esther, the Jews are a religious minority living in a dominant culture that has completely different views on almost everything. It's not dissimilar to what we face in Australia today. The question that arises is how do we as a Church and individuals relate to that culture? Do we withdraw, assimilate, protest, critique?

11. **What does it mean to you to live faithfully in a post-Christian culture?**
12. **What do you hear God saying to you personally through Esther 1-2?**



LIVE purposefully

MAKE IT REAL:

13. **How will you apply what you have learned? What are two changes or goals that you that you will commit to as a result of hearing this Word from God in your own life?**

- a. _____
- b. _____

Who are you going to share your discoveries with this week?

- **Name:** _____ **Pray for them each day**
- **Name:** _____ **Pray for them each day**
- **Name:** _____ **Pray for them each day**

Plan your weekly devotions or **download the Church Central app** for the daily **LifeWay Devotions**



PRAY intentionally

- **Praise God** that he is constantly at work behind the scenes even when he doesn't seem active or present. **Thank Jesus** for revealing to us in his life how God is working for the good of his people through ordinary events and circumstances of our life. **Ask the Holy Spirit** to make you more aware of God's providential actions and care in your life through ordinary and mundane circumstance of life.
- **Pray for your actions and the people you are going to share with.**
- **Pray for the mission of LifeWay especially Westside as they prepare to begin mainly music and Illawarra as they discern the flight path God is calling them to journey down towards the Vision 2030 Beyond Limits strategy.**



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

[Name], God is present and active in your life. Amen.