

Sermon Discussion Questions | August 20, 2017

Dying to Self, Living to God Esther 2 & 5

1. This week's sermon focused on the circumstances surrounding Esther. We looked at chapter 2 specifically. What were some of the things going on Esther's life at this time?
2. Pastor Jim pointed out that what we are seeing is not Esther's life, it is the life of Esther. He explained that life was happening to her. Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? What was going on and how did it feel?
3. Around chapter 4, verse 14 the story starts to take a different direction and it hinges on one question. What was this question and why was it so important?
4. Esther's story changed when she understood that moving from "having life happen to you" to "living our life" cannot be done in our own strength. In understanding that, her decisions started to look a lot like Jesus' as he prepared for the final act of his ministry on earth. How so? What were the key similarities discussed by Pastor Jim?
5. When we see Esther declare, "If I perish, I perish," we see a reflection of what Jesus will say in the garden, "Not my will, but your's be done." We are seeing God's call for us to die to ourselves. Pastor Jim highlighted verses like Mark 8:34-35 and John 12:24-26 as examples of this call. What has this call looked like in your own life? What other verses come to mind when you think of the call to die to self?
6. So where are you on this journey of dying to self? What is your reaction to this teaching? Are you struggling with letting go of control, even to the point of death? Share honestly and ask for help, prayer and support.

This is what it means to be a Christian- to follow Christ in the example that he set, being obedient to God even to the point of death so that God can give you new life- life filled with Jesus' resurrection power. Close your time together by proclaiming this truth and praying for each other.