

**FINDING GOD
IN THE MESSINESS
OF LIFE**

Studies in Esther

~January 14-20, 2007~
“God Is in the Details”
Esther 6-7



Life Groups

Welcome to UPC's continuing study of the story of Esther entitled "Finding God in the Messiness of Life." Each week this discussion guide will help you reflect upon the Sunday sermon and apply its content to your life. If you miss a sermon, you can always listen to it online at www.upc-orlando.com.

LISTEN

Record your insights and observations from this week's sermon:

SHARE

- a) The story of Esther is an exciting one filled with humor, intrigue, twists, and surprises. Many movies are like that. Share about a movie you've seen that has a surprise ending or unexpected plot twist.

- b) Has there been a time in your life when you felt powerless and all seemed hopeless, but God used that hopeless situation for good or even turned the bad situation into a good one? If so, describe what happened:

REFLECT

- a) So often, we say that something happened "by chance" or that we were "lucky" about something. In Esther 6 & 7, what specific things take place that one might thoughtlessly ascribe to luck or chance? What's really going on behind and underneath these fortuitous circumstances?

- b) Read Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28, and Ephesians 1:11. In light of these three verses, does anything happen by pure chance? That is, does God concern Himself with just the "big" things, and let little details happen by chance? What are the practical implications of your answer?

- c) Proverbs 3:34 says, "God mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble." In Esther 6 & 7, how do we see God "mocking" Haman? How do we see Him giving grace to Mordecai and Esther?

d) What do you think: Does God have a sense of humor? What, if anything, do you find humorous in Esther 6 & 7? Do you know other stories in the Bible with a humorous slant?

e) Esther is more than just a good story about a queen coming to the rescue of her people. What is the bigger story here? (Hint: Read Genesis 3:15 and think about Satan's many efforts to stamp out the people of the promise! Who was Satan ultimately pursuing?)

APPLY

a) If God is in the details, how should your life be different?

b) Last week we learned about "the sin underneath the sin." Think about the things that worry, frighten, and make you anxious. What is "the sin underneath the sin" of worry and anxiety? Granted, we should worry about certain things (in the sense of being responsible and conscientious). But in light of this week's lesson, when a Christian is characterized by tension and worry, what's wrong?

c) What is one situation you feel powerless to change right now? Write it down. Feelings of powerlessness often lead to feelings of hopelessness and despair. What have you learned about God's nature and character this week that can help you trust Him more confidently?

d) Read the excerpt in the box below. What does this mean for you today?

“God is working out His eternal purpose, not only in spite of human and satanic opposition, but by means of them.” (A. W. Pink)