

GOD PERFECT WK 6// SOVEREIGNTY

INTRO//

- Hey Faith Students! Welcome to the best night of the week!
- Tonight we're closing out our series: "**God Perfect**"
 - We've looked at different characteristics of God, and how he is perfect in each one
 - Character
 - Justice
 - Promises
 - Correction
 - Wisdom

ILLUSTRATION//

- Who struggles with not being in control? (Tell a story about how you may struggle with not being in control: rollercoasters, parents bad at driving, etc.)

TRANSITION//

- Many of us struggle with giving God (or anyone) control
 - It ultimately comes down to lack of trust
- **The presence of suffering doesn't equal the absence of God**
 - Doesn't mean He lacks power, it means He has a plan + purpose so much greater than we can see at the moment
- Tonight I want to look at a story where this is perfectly illustrated:

CONTEXT//

- Tonight we're going to look at a story you're probably familiar with, the story of Esther
- The story of Eshter wasn't the cute, veggietale or disney princess story we envision
 - We see early on she had no parents
 - **Esther 2: 7-8** "This man (Mordecai) had a very beautiful and lovely young cousin, Hadassah, who was also called Esther. When her father and mother died, Mordecai adopted her into his family and raised her as his own daughter. As a result of the king's decree, Esther, along with many other young women, was brought to the king's harem at the fortress of Susa and placed in Hegai's care"
 - Won't get into all the details but we then see she went through a lot to become queen and didn't even want to be queen
 - There's a lot of brokenness and pain just in the first 2 chapters of Esther's story
 - And we don't see God mentioned anywhere

TENSION//

- As we read this story we can wonder "where is God?"

MAIN POINT// WHEN WE KNOW GOD'S CHARACTER IS PERFECT, WE CAN KNOW + TRUST HIS PLAN IS TOO

- Esther's cousin/father figure Mordecai, had favor with the King (and ultimately God) and began to be promoted and loved by King Xerxes
 - **Esther 3:5-6** "When Haman saw that Mordecai would not bow down or show him respect, he was filled with rage. **6** He had learned of Mordecai's nationality, so he decided it was not enough to lay hands on Mordecai alone. Instead, he looked for a way to destroy all the Jews throughout the entire empire of Xerxes."
 - So this was Haman's plan:
 - **Esther 3:8-10** "Then Haman approached King Xerxes and said, "There is a certain race of people scattered through all the provinces of your empire who keep themselves separate from everyone else. Their laws are different from those of any other people, and they refuse to obey the laws of the king. So it is not in the king's interest to let them live. **9** If it please the king, issue a decree that they be destroyed, and I will give 10,000 large sacks of silver to the government administrators to be deposited in the royal treasury." **10** The king agreed, confirming his decision by removing his signet ring from his finger and giving it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. "
- Despite being in danger, Mordecai sees exactly where God is
 - Him and Esther would talk regularly, and he encourages Esther to go before the King and reveal she's Jewish and ask to protect her people
 - **Esther 4:13-14** "Don't think for a moment that because you're in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. **14** If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?"
- The people begin to fast + pray and Esther prepares to do what Mordecai suggested
 - **CONTEXT:** Despite what you may think and what makes sense, in that time/ culture the queen couldn't just show up unannounced or whenever she wanted to the king
 - Had to be specifically called
 - That's why she tells Mordecai she could be killed, but she's willing to do it to save her people
- Esther goes on to eventually meet with the King and tell him the truth
 - Expose Haman's lies, deception and who she truly is
 - The king is frustrated, angry he was deceived and tricked by Haman
 - He has Haman put to death and Mordecai takes his place
- **Esther 8:15-17** says "Mordecai left the king's presence, wearing the royal robe of blue and white, the great crown of gold, and an outer cloak of fine linen and purple. And the people of Susa celebrated the new decree. **16** The Jews were filled with joy and gladness and were honored everywhere. **17** In every province and city, wherever the king's decree arrived, the Jews rejoiced and had a great celebration and declared a public festival and holiday. "
- Mordecai + Esther were blessed, and their people were saved!
 - Despite evil at work in the world, which is a result of sin being in the world, God is still present and still in control!
 - **The presence of pain doesn't equal the absence of God**

- God will sometimes use pain/evil for His purpose!
 - **Joseph- “what you meant for evil the Lord turned for good”**
 - **Romans 8:28**
- Esther being queen was no mistake or accident
 - God isn't mentioned in the book once, Yet the entire story points to the sovereignty of God and that He had a plan despite none of it making sense at first, and it seeming like God was distant
 - Sometimes it may seem like God is distant in your life, but trust He is working!
 - God works behind the scenes!
 - **When we know God is perfect, we know His plan is perfect too**
 - We've studied the characteristics of God over the last 6 weeks, and we see He is truly PERFECT in everything
 - When we know God is perfect, we can trust + know His plan is perfect, no matter what it looks like!

CLOSE//

- Be encouraged that God is sovereign and in control! And even though we will experience pain in this life, we can trust + know God is present + in control, and his plan is perfect!

RESPONSE//

- **Praise God:** for what He's done in your life and that He is good + trustworthy
- **Pray:** Ask God to take control and surrender whatever situation, burden or thing you may be worried about, and trust He is good and perfect, so His will is good + perfect.
 - If we can trust God's character, we can trust God's sovereignty
 - **When we know God is perfect, we know His plan is perfect too**