

Think It Over: This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

- What is one of your favorite children's Bible stories? What made it a favorite? Dave loved Noah's Ark, but when you think about what is going on, it actually isn't a nice bedtime story. Daniel and the Lion's Den is another one. We aren't suggesting that we don't tell children Bible stories, but how can we avoid allowing the kid's version of a Bible story lessen the impact of what is really going on? Take the time to read Esther 2:1-18 with the adult implications. What are those adult implications? What are we to do with them?
- Read the "God uses crooked sticks to make straight lines" section. Review the story of Samson and the two understandings that God does use crooked sticks to make straight lines. What is encouraging about that principle? What is concerning about it?
- Review the "Christ followers are living far from home in a world that is dangerous" section. Pick a couple of the passages and share what applications there are for your personal world. At first glance, the Jeremiah and Romans passages seem to be contradicting each other. What are Jeremiah and Paul trying to have us see? Which concept do you tend to lean towards at the expense of the other? Why do some people like black and white over messy and vice versa?
- Review the "God seems hidden, but He is not hiding" section. Any follow-up thoughts? (Remember, this was discussed in Esther: Part 1 on 1/23/22.)
- Think about Daniel's and Joseph's responses to their situations. Think about Esther in very similar situations. What do you think about the very different responses? Why is it easy to be an armchair quarterback and come down hard on Esther? How does that tendency show up in your life today? How do you navigate the tension between truth and grace?

Next Steps: How will you apply this week's Bottom Line in your life? Be specific.

Changing Your Mind: Choose one of the verses listed in the Message Guide and commit it to heart.



If you missed a message, visit www.scc.website or request a CD at Guest Services.



○ Not a _____

"For all those words which were written long ago are meant to teach us today; that when we read in the scriptures of the endurance of men and women, and of all the help that God gave them in those days, we may be encouraged to go on hoping in our own time."

Romans 15:4 Philips

Esther 2:1-18 NIV page 344

○ _____ uses _____ sticks
to make _____ lines.

²²The God-setting-things-right that we read about has become Jesus-setting-things-right for us. And not only for us, but for everyone who believes in him. For there is no difference between us and them in this.

²³Since we've compiled this long and sorry record as sinners (both us and them) and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us.

Romans 3:22-23 MSG

➤ Don't _____ being _____ by _____
with being _____ by _____.

Samson - see Judges 13-16

○ _____ doesn't equal _____.

○ _____ doesn't mean I'm _____ with God.

➤ Christ followers are living _____ from _____
in a world that is _____.

¹⁵We are only strangers traveling through this world, like our ancestors. Our time on earth is like a passing shadow, and we cannot stop it.
1 Chronicles 29:15 ERV

²When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down. When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end—³Because I am God, your personal God, ...your Savior. I paid a huge price for you...⁴That's how much you mean to me! That's how much I love you! I'd sell off the whole world to get you back, trade the creation just for you. ⁵So don't be afraid: I'm with you...
Isaiah 43:2–5 MSG

¹⁵Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. ¹⁶Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. ¹⁷The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity.
1 John 2:15–17 MSG

⁴This is the Message from God-of-the-Angel-Armies, Israel's God, to all the exiles I've taken from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵"Build houses and make yourselves at home. "Put in gardens and eat what grows in that country. ⁶"Marry and have children. Encourage your children to marry and have children so that you'll thrive in that country and not waste away. ⁷"Make yourselves at home there and work for the country's welfare. "Pray for Babylon's well-being. If things go well for Babylon, things will go well for you."
Jeremiah 29:4–7 MSG

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity...
Romans 12:2 MSG

²Don't change yourselves to be like the people of this world, but let God change you inside with a new way of thinking. Then you will be able to understand and accept what God wants for you. You will be able to know what is good and pleasing to him and what is perfect.
Romans 12:2 ERV

➤ God seems _____, but He is not _____.
(Esther part 01, 1/23/22)

Our _____ to see Him
isn't _____ of His _____.

¹⁵...These Scriptures are able to make you wise. And that wisdom leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by God. And all Scripture is useful for teaching and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching the right way to live.
2 Timothy 3:15-16 ERV

Bottom Line:

_____ sticks in the _____ of God
make _____ lines.

Daniel 1:8–9 NIV page 613

Genesis 39:2-4,6-8 NIV page 28

God's _____ is greater
than our _____.

¹...Shall we sin to our heart's content and see how far we can exploit the grace of God? What a ghastly thought!
Romans 6:1 Phillips

You can't _____ mess up God's _____.

Resources for this message include a series from
North Coast Community Church and University Reformed Church.

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps,
consider using the Think It Over section on the back.