

Why spend time in Esther right now?

That's a good question. Something every preaching pastor is constantly thinking about and mulling over is: Where do we turn? Where do we go next? Once we're through with this book (or this topic) what is the next one?

As we look at God's Word, there are so many different options. Do we just open and go? Do we just turn to the table of contents, close our eyes and put our finger down? I guess those are ways to do it, but I don't know of any pastor who works like that. Intentionality is key!

We need to be aware and sensitive to the realities that are happening around us and pastorally, our job is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:12). To not just speak to the easy things but to open God's Word and allow it to do what it does so effectively: Equip us to live for Jesus during this period that God has put us here (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

SO WHERE DO YOU GO? Old Testament? New Testament?

We can glean SO MUCH from the books of the New Testament with its vast array of principles, doctrine and practical application for how to live the Christian life. Likewise, with the Old Testament. As we dig into the historical record of men and women from ages past, in the years before Messiah. Often, we see testimony of "what not to do" as men and women choose rebellion and disobedience to God and reap the consequences of those life decisions. But there are also the many faithful accounts of men & women choosing to shun the trappings, conveniences, vices, rewards and accolades of a sinful world and instead choose faithful obedience to Yahweh, the One True God.

Though the examples are flawed (cause we all are, right?) they are plentiful: Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (to name a few)... as well as the courageous individuals that we see here in the book of Esther: Esther & Mordecai.

The reason for such a journey is to continue to get to know our awesome God in a more complete way. To understand in greater depth of insight His WORD to us AND how best to live our Christian life out in the day in which we live.

It's worth recognizing and validating the fact that we ARE living in trying times. Many are having their Christian paradigm challenged in a way it never has before. (That's not necessarily a bad thing, though it might be uncomfortable.) We might look at our world and no longer see it as a place we recognize. You might wonder what the heck is going on & look at a future that seems increasingly unclear, uncertain and confusing.

That is why it is a good time to spend some time in the book of Esther. An Old Testament book that has heroes and villains (much like the day we're living in) and paints a very clear picture about living in a time of UNCERTAINTY, DOUBT and CONFUSION ...yet in the midst of those things, we see God's goodness and the willing obedience and faithful courage of God's people. In the midst of all that is going on, we must continue to put our hope and trust in our God. Esther can help us with that.