



*The #1 catalyst for spiritual growth is reading and reflecting on the Bible.  
Use these questions for personal study or as part of a community group experience.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**5/13/2018**

This week is all about trust in God's unfailing love. When it doesn't look like God is present or working in your situation, there is hope because of God's character.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What did God reveal to you through this Sunday's message?
2. What action or step do you feel God calling you to take and apply from Sunday's message?
3. What is one element of God's character that you discovered?
4. Have you experienced a time when God felt absent? What was the context of the experience?
5. How would you describe the feeling of God's absence or presence? What does it look like? What effect does it have on you?
6. Pastor John began his message with Psalm 13. Take a moment to read that Psalm. Have you experienced something similar during a time in your own spiritual journey? When?

7. What does this Psalm reveal about the journey of faith?
  
8. If you found help, support or encouragement during that time, where did it come from?
  
9. Why do you think the psalmist maintains trust?
  
10. Out of the story of Esther, what stood out to you most? Are there areas of her story that you can relate to?
  
11. Esther 1:4-12 sets the stage by highlighting the pride, power and prominence of the Persian King Xerxes. God's people, the Jews, are in a foreign land under the rule of a godless king. Are there times in your daily context that you feel your faith is out of place or that God is not welcome?
  
12. How do you react during these moments?
  
13. What hope do you have during these times of God's felt absence?
  
14. Are you currently in a time of feeling separated or distant from God? Share with those in your group or someone close to you how they could pray for or support you as you take this journey.

### **Closing Prayer**

Father, God, there are often times when you feel absent and the cards are stacked against us. Thank you for the story of Esther and Psalm 13, which teaches us something about who you are in the midst of real life challenges. Help me to trust you through the process. To find moments of peace knowing that in all things you are working. In Jesus name I pray, amen.