

East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:

God With Us: Against All Expectations

Speaker: Pastor Keith Jenkins

Date: December 8, 2024

Introduction:

In this powerful sermon, Pastor Keith Jenkins explored how Jesus defied all human expectations about God's presence and kingship. He emphasized how God's sovereignty often works in ways that challenge our assumptions and expectations.

1. The Sovereignty of God:

Pastor Keith discussed how God's rule and wisdom often conflict with human expectations.

Discussion Questions:

1. How have you experienced God working differently than you expected?
2. What helps you trust God's sovereignty when circumstances seem chaotic?

Supporting Verses:

Psalms 115:3 - "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases."

Isaiah 55:8 - "My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: These verses remind us of God's absolute authority and wisdom.
- Theological Significance: God's sovereignty means His plans, not ours, will prevail.

- Application: We can trust God even when His methods don't match our expectations.

2. Jesus' Unexpected Entry:

Pastor Keith highlighted how Jesus' birth and life challenged people's expectations of the Messiah.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think God chose such a humble way to enter our world?
2. How does Jesus' humble birth challenge our own values and expectations?

Supporting Verses:

Isaiah 53:2-3 - "There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. He was despised and rejected..."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: People expected a powerful military and political leader.
- Theological Significance: God's power is often displayed through apparent weakness.
- Application: We should reconsider how we measure true greatness.

3. A Different Kind of Kingdom:

Pastor Keith emphasized how Jesus established a spiritual rather than political kingdom.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus' definition of kingdom differ from worldly kingdoms?
2. What challenges do you face in living by kingdom values rather than worldly values?

Supporting Verses:

John 18:36 - "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world."

Context and Reflection:

- Historical/Cultural Context: People longed for political liberation from Rome.
- Theological Significance: Jesus came to establish an eternal, spiritual kingdom.
- Application: We should seek transformation from within rather than external power.

Conclusion:

Pastor Keith Jenkins' message reminded us that God's ways often defy our expectations, but His sovereign plan surpasses anything we could imagine. While Jesus wasn't the king people expected, He was and is exactly the king humanity needs.

Reflection Questions:

1. What expectations of God might you need to surrender?
2. How can you better align your life with Jesus' model of servant leadership?
3. In what ways has God worked in your life that were different than you expected but proved to be better?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for your sovereign wisdom that often works differently than we expect. Help us to trust your ways even when they don't match our expectations. Give us grace to embrace Jesus' model of humble service and to value what you value. May we learn to see your kingdom as you define it, not as we imagine it should be. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

References:

Primary Sources:

"God With Us: Against All Expectations," East Hill Church, 12/08/2024. Delivered by Pastor Keith Jenkins.

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Collaborative Contributions:

LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided sermon notes and biblical passages.

LLM Training Data:

LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to April 2024.