

DEEP PREP GUIDE

MOVE | DECEMBER 14 | BIG GOD STORY

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 61:1-11

BOTTOM LINE

God comes for us, and we move for God.

MEMORY VERSE

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.

LIFE APP

Find someone who needs the Good News.

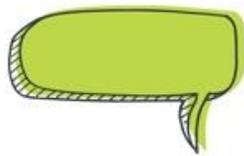
If you follow me on Facebook or Instagram (or have just heard me speak), you know that I am a huge fan of motivational quotes. Sometimes I use them to motivate students, and other times I just hold onto them for myself in my own inspirational journey. Last summer, those two “worlds” combined and I came across one that spoke to me individually, and it also helped me challenge a student come on the BWCA Adventure Trip last August. Here was the quote:

There’s no growth in the comfort zone; there’s no comfort in the growth zone.

It’s pretty pithy. Needless to say, it was said quite a bit in and among our BWCA student community last August. Rightly so, it pushed us to see that we need to move beyond where we are right now if we want to step into a new reality, whatever that reality ultimately is for us.

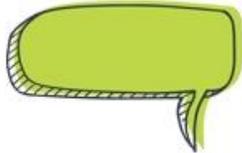
One of the constant struggles of the Christian Church is the comfort of staying where we are, in and among ourselves. Our text in Isaiah 61 pushes us to see how we need to MOVE to bring our message of hope and wholeness to hurting people. Our heart message last week was about the work God needs to do in us so that we can then move and bring the message out to others. The reality is, it’s a constant work and rework that God does in our community to call us out to be a community of Christ-followers, but to seek to move that community outward to people who are not yet fully immersed in the family of God.

What if we were transformed to be that community on the MOVE?



TENSION

The tension that we all feel is real. It's easy to stay where we are right now. It's easy to settle into what's known and comfortable. Even being transformed, it's easy just to hold onto that transformation ourselves. Students can come up with a myriad of reasons why they don't feel empowered to "carry the message" of God's Good News to their friends + family. It may be shame, it may be timidity. It may be just a lack of understanding of what God expects of us.



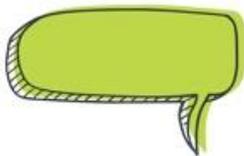
TEXT [CONTEXT]

Seeing Isaiah as a two-part book (chapters 1–33 and 34–66) with an overarching theme leads to a summary of its contents like the following:

The book opens by setting out the themes of judgment and restoration for the righteous. God has a plan which will be realized on the "Day of Yahweh", when Jerusalem will become the center of his worldwide rule. On that day all the nations of the world will come to Zion (Jerusalem) for instruction, but first the city must be punished and cleansed of evil. Israel is invited to join in this plan. Chapters 5–12 explain the significance of the Assyrian judgment against Israel: righteous rule by the Davidic king will follow after the arrogant Assyrian monarch is brought down. Chapters 13–27 announce the preparation of the nations for Yahweh's world rule; chapters 28–33 announce that a royal savior (a messiah) will emerge in the aftermath of Jerusalem's punishment and the destruction of her oppressor.

The oppressor (now identified as Babylon) is about to fall. Chapters 34–35 tell how Yahweh will return the redeemed exiles to Jerusalem. Chapters 36–39 tell of the faithfulness of King Hezekiah to Yahweh during the Assyrian siege as a model for the restored community. Chapters 40–54 state that the restoration of Zion is taking place because Yahweh, the creator of the universe, has designated the Persian king Cyrus the Great as the promised messiah and temple-builder. Chapters 55–66 are an exhortation to Israel to keep the covenant. God's eternal promise to David is now made to the people of Israel/Judah at large. The book ends by enjoining righteousness as the final stages of God's plan come to pass, including the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion and the realization of God's Kingdom.

Isaiah 61 is nestled into a very particular theme of the book: God's restoration is at hand and the call of Israel to be a people on the MOVE to be and bring God's Good News to the world.



TRUTH

In another part of my life (Tim), I share my story of addiction/recovery from drugs and alcohol. I learn a lot from my recovery community about what it means and looks like to carry the message of recovery to those still struggling. Here's the basic truth about what is shared: I share what life used to be like, what happened, and what life is like now. When I speak on my story of recovery, it's always from my perspective, and it's my story of recovery. It looks different for everyone, but the message is still the same. Recovery can make life different (and ultimately better) for people.

I think this can be a model for how we imagine life among God's family in Christ. God's Good News is that we are not abandoned, and that Jesus has come to bring and be Good News to those who are on the outside, not knowing they are looking into anything possibly being different for their future. God comes for the least, the lost, the left out and its God's invitation to all of us to be and bring Good News to those still hurting.

How can your students move to BE and BRING the message of God's hope and wholeness to their world?