

WORTH the WAIT:

The Future According to God

Watch the news or browse the internet for long enough, and you'll naturally wonder what hope remains for us. From political corruption and misinformation to violence and oppression, this world seems lost and broken beyond repair. But in the Old Testament book of Isaiah (ch. 60-66), God shared His vision of a more hopeful future in which captives will be set free, darkness will give way to light, and those who mourn will be comforted.

At The Story, we believe that God's promises remain as true as ever today and that His new world is still on the way. That's why, even though we see this world as it is, we hold fast to the hope we have in Jesus Christ. Because of his life, death, and resurrection, the best is yet to come. Join us for five Sundays starting April 27 as we explore Isaiah 60-66 and why the promises of God are *worth the wait!*

April 27, 2025 - Part 1 - The Light of Life

What events or headlines have made you feel hopeless about the future of this world?

Why is the *resurrection* of Jesus (as opposed to his birth, his teachings, or even his death) the chief cornerstone of the Christian faith? (see 1 Corinthians 15:14-19)

In *1st Corinthians*, a letter the Apostle Paul wrote around AD 53, he reminded the Christians there of a 4-part statement of faith that he'd taught them during his prior visit to Corinth:

1 Cor 15:3-8 - For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: 1)that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 2)that he was buried, 3)that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 4)and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

What does this statement tell us about the foundational beliefs of the first Christians, and why does it matter to us today?

The first Christians all believed that Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures*. We have plenty of examples of Old Testament passages pointing to his death, such as:

Isaiah 53:3-9 - "He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain... Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed... the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all... he was led like a lamb to the slaughter... He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death..."

They also believed that Christ was raised from the dead on the third day *according to the scriptures*. In Isaiah 53:10-11, the prophet wrote:

- **Isaiah 53:10-11** - "...though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied... my righteous servant will justify many and he will bear their iniquities."

Given Isaiah's prior prediction that the Servant/Messiah would be assigned to a grave (v.9), how does this passage point to the resurrection?

Throughout the Old Testament, what do the recurring themes of "darkness" and "light" represent? What is the relationship between "light" and "life"?

- **Genesis 1:3-4** - And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.

In the last seven chapters of Isaiah (60-66), the prophet envisioned God’s plan for the future, beginning with the Messiah’s resurrection from the dead, and he once again analogized the *Light of God with Life*:

Isaiah 60:1-3 - “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.”

How does this prophecy point to Jesus Christ, and specifically his resurrection?

On multiple occasions, the New Testament refers to Jesus as a source of light.

John 1:3-4 - Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

Jesus also referred to himself this way:

John 8:12 - When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

We all face a choice every day to remain in darkness, or to step into the light of Christ. **Practically speaking, what would it look like to step into the light of Christ, and what difference would that choice make in the everyday course of your life?**

Your Notes:



Partnership Course Starts This Week

Come learn more about The Story's history, beliefs, and ministries, and become an official Partner (our version of membership) at our three-week Partnership Course, starting this Wednesday, 4/30. Register on thestory.church/events



Today is Outreach Sunday!

Stop by our Outreach tables out front to learn how you can get involved with one of our awesome Strategic Partners in Houston and beyond! You'll learn more about these ministries and be able to sign up to serve with them.



Vacation Bible School

Registration is open for this year's Vacation Bible School, happening June 23-26th from 9am to noon daily for children ages 3 through 5th grade! Visit thestory.church/vbs to learn more and register today.