

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!*

May 4, 2025 - Part 2 - God's Not Done

What did Jesus mean when he said, "It is finished"? What is "it"?

What situations or circumstances in your life (or in the world around you) have caused you to feel like things in this world aren't what they should be?

In today's message, we're exploring God's plans for the future of this fallen world according to the Old Testament prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 61:1-3 - The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

Who is the "speaker" in this passage? How do we know this?

Luke 4:14-22 - Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips.

What big idea did Jesus convey when, after reading from Isaiah 61, he said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing?" What was he saying about himself?

Why did Jesus stop part-way through Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah, instead of reading all of Isaiah 61:1-3?

What is Jesus coming back to do? (See Isaiah 61:2-3, starting with "...and the day of vengeance")

How does that make you feel: *assured* or *afraid*? Both? Neither? Why?

At first, the people in Nazareth were amazed by Jesus and his message. But then, as he continued speaking, something shifted:

Luke 4:22-30 - “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked. Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’ Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.” All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

What caused the people in Jesus’ hometown to turn on him, and what can Christians today learn from their mistake?

IT IS _____, BUT GOD’S NOT _____

As we wait for Jesus’ return, we live in a world defined by suffering and brokenness. **How is it possible (and helpful) to think of our present pain as a gift from God?**

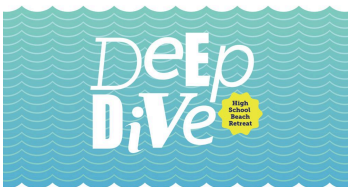
What does it mean to you, personally, that Jesus is coming back to redeem our pain?

Your Notes:



Graduation Sunday - May 18th

On this day, we'll recognize students stepping up into the next level of kids or students programs at both the 9:45 and 11:05am services, and honor our Graduating Seniors at the 11:05am service. Visit [thestory.church/events](https://www.thestory.church/events) to register your child.



High School Beach Retreat

All students entering 9th-12th grade in Fall 2025 are invited to join us for Deep Dive from Monday, June 30 to Wednesday, July 2! Our students will enjoy some fun in the sun and take a deeper dive into their faith! Register: [thestory.church/events](https://www.thestory.church/events)



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](https://www.thestory.church/vbs) to learn more and register today. You can also register to volunteer or donate supplies on that same link.