

A bonfire of logs is burning brightly on a sandy beach. The fire is the primary light source, casting a warm glow. In the background, the ocean waves are visible under a sunset sky with orange and blue hues. The silhouettes of trees are on the left.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

Isaiah

JON KEHRER • 12 SESSIONS

**NEXT
LEVEL**  **ONLINE**

OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 1: Rebellion (Isaiah 1, 5)

① Think about some of your experiences with the book of Isaiah in the past. What challenges or issues have you had getting into the book? What benefits, if any, have you found in studying it in the past?

② Read Deuteronomy 4:15-31. What kinds of things does God want the people to do in the future? What do you notice about the way Moses tells the story of the exodus from Egypt?

◦ "Idolatry" essentially means "worshiping anything besides Yahweh." Do you think this was a problem for the people of Israel? List some times when Israel practiced idolatry.

③ Why do you think the people are compared to Sodom and Gomorrah here?

④ God seems to urge the people here to meditate on his Word. For the people in Isaiah's day, that meant the Torah, or the Law, the books we call Genesis through Deuteronomy. Why did God want the people to really meditate on this Word?

◦ What would it look like in your life to meditate on the Torah?

⑤ Do you ever have a hard time admitting to your rebellion against God? Think about some of the sins you've committed in the last month. Are you willing to admit them and bring them to God? What would it look like for you to have a time of confession?

◦ Read James 5:16. What does this have to say about owning up to our own sin?

⑥ All of us have things in our life that make rebellion against God an easier choice. Think about some of those in your life, and list one practice you could adopt to help to keep yourself from rebelling against God in the future.

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 2: Transformation (Isaiah 6)

- ① **When was the last time you were in awe of something? What happened?**
- ② **Recall some of your most powerful encounters with God in your life. What made those moments so unique or transformational?**
- ③ **What about Isaiah's experience in Isaiah 6 resonates with you?**
- ④ **Read 2 Corinthians 3:17-4:6. How do God's presence and power change us?**
 - How has your experience with God's presence and power changed you?
- ⑤ **Read Revelation 4:1-11. What similarities do you notice between this and Isaiah 6?**
 - How can texts like Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4 change how we think about ourselves and our role in God's world?
 - What difference would it make in our lives if we accepted some of those changes in our thinking?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 3: Presence (Isaiah 7)

- ① Think about moments in the last year when you found it most difficult to trust God. What thoughts, feelings, or fears were most present in those moments?

- ② Matthew quotes Isaiah 7 when he talks about the birth of Jesus. While the virgin Mary conceiving is an incredible miracle, the bigger emphasis in Matthew 1 seems to be on the meaning of his name, “Immanuel.” What is the significance of Jesus bearing this name?

- ③ Read Matthew 28:20. Matthew’s Gospel begins and ends with this theme of God’s presence. How does God’s presence change the way we live?

- ④ What would a normal day look like for you if you chose to trust God’s presence in everything?

- ⑤ What are some of the biggest barriers you face to trusting God’s presence in the face of your life’s threats?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 4: Light (Isaiah 8-9)

- ① Have you ever been really scared in the dark? What happened?
- ② What are some of the darkest emotional or spiritual moments you've experienced in life?
 - How has God's light shone up in the midst of the darkness in your life?
- ③ The name of the child in Isaiah 9 is supposed to point to the character of God. He is called Wonder-Counselor, Warrior-God, Lasting-Time-Father, and Peace-Prince. Which one of these titles resonates most with you today? Why?
- ④ Read 2 Corinthians 4:5-6. How does Jesus bring light?
- ⑤ Is it ever easy to forget that God brings light to our darkness? How could you remind yourself of his light this week?
- ⑥ Oftentimes, we don't plan for seasons of darkness; they come on us suddenly. What can you do today to prepare your heart to trust in God in the midst of whatever darkness may come your way?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 5: Feast (Isaiah 24-25)

① Have you ever been frustrated by the evil in the world? Describe some of those moments.

② Do you ever struggle with the way the Bible talks about God's judgment? What about it makes it difficult to accept?

③ In Isaiah 25, God seems to abolish death. Why do you think "death" is the enemy here?

◦ How does the image of God wiping tears from faces impact our view of God?

④ Read Mark 6:30-44. How does Jesus' feeding the crowd help us understand something about the character of God?

⑤ What would it look like for you to believe wholeheartedly that God was going to prepare a wonderful feast for us in the end? How would that change your actions this week?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 6: Garden (Isaiah 34-35)

① What are some of the most beautiful landscapes you've ever seen? If you could choose one natural site or wonder in the world to see today, what would it be?

② Why do you think God used the picture of a garden to describe a rich and full life?

③ Read Revelation 18:1-8. What fate awaits the cities of the earth who rebel against God?

◦ Now read Revelation 19:1-3. Why does the multitude celebrate? What echoes do you hear in these verses of Isaiah 34?

④ Why does the wilderness rejoice in Isaiah 35? What other biblical passages come to mind when you think about "rejoicing"?

⑤ Think about a story from the ministry of Jesus that connects with Isaiah 35:5-6. How were Jesus' actions good news for the people who experience his healing?

⑥ There is a connection between trust and our future throughout the book of Isaiah. The message is consistent that we should trust God. How do you see this play out in Isaiah 35?

◦ What is one step you could take today to trust God more fully?

◦ In the original Garden of Genesis 2-3, the serpent introduced a temptation to not trust God. How are you tempted to not trust God in your life?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 7: Trust (Isaiah 36-37)

- ① Think of a time in your life when you were scared about what might happen next. What was the situation? What did you rely on to get you through the fear?

- ② In the ancient Near East, people believed that gods had territories. When the Assyrians come to Jerusalem, what do they say about Yahweh? How do they describe his power?

- ③ Hezekiah's response to the Assyrians is to pray. Is that always your reaction to frightening or devastating news? What makes it hard to pray in the face of threats?
 - Read Luke 22:39-46. How did Jesus respond when he faced perhaps the most threatening moment of his life? What do you notice about his words on the Mount of Olives?

- ④ What about God makes him trustworthy?
 - What about your circumstances makes it difficult to trust God?

- ⑤ What is something you can do to trust God more this week than you did last week?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 8: Hope (Isaiah 40)

- ① **Have you ever had a moment in your life when you lost hope? What was that like?**

- ② **If Isaiah is responding to the question, “Does God want to deliver?”, what is God’s answer in Isaiah 40:1-11?**
 - Read Matthew 3:1-3. How does the context of Isaiah 40 help us understand this text?

- ③ **Have you ever questioned God’s ability to act? How do the vignettes in Isaiah 40:12-26 help us understand God’s ability?**

- ④ **Do you ever struggle to believe that God will act? How does the language of Isaiah 40:27-31 help you understand God’s intentions?**

- ⑤ **Isaiah 40:31 notes that those who wait on the Lord renew their strength. In Isaiah, trusting in God looks like waiting. What are some areas of your life where you are waiting on God now?**
 - How would your life be different if you made an intentional decision to wait on the Lord?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 9: Worship (Isaiah 41, 44)

① Sometimes, it feels strange to think about people worshiping idols of wood, metal, or stone. Do you ever have a hard time understanding why someone would worship an inanimate object like that? What makes it difficult to understand it?

② What kinds of temptations towards idolatry do you face in your world?

③ Look at Isaiah 44:23-28. Make a list of the things God does to demonstrate that he is truly God. Then, make some observations about the types of things God does.

◦ How does the list in Isaiah 44 answer the question, “Are idols worth serving?”?

④ Read Revelation 5:1-10. What reasons are given for worship there?

⑤ What idols, “gods,” priorities, or items in your life compete for your worship of Yahweh?

◦ What types of moments in your life do you find are the most difficult to trust Yahweh with everything?

⑥ What is one thing you could do this week to demonstrate that you trust “the Lamb who has taken the scroll” (Revelation 5:7)?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 10: Suffering (Isaiah 53)

- ① Do you remember a time when you got caught doing something wrong as a child? What was that experience like?
- ② What are the two options for dealing with sin in the Old Testament?
- ③ Read Mark 14:22-25. What parallels are there with Isaiah 53?
- ④ How do Jesus' death and resurrection take care of our sin?
 - Why is it important to believe that Jesus takes care of our sin?
- ⑤ In Mark 10:42-45, Jesus redefines service for his disciples. How could you live out the model of Jesus in your own life this week?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 11: Peace (Isaiah 54, 57)

① What are the most common greetings in your culture? What is an odd or strange greeting you've heard someone use?

- Have you ever interacted with someone who greeted people by saying "peace"? Does "peace" feel like a normal greeting or a strange greeting to you?

② Read through Isaiah 57:1-13, making a list of the sins the people have committed. What types of things separate them from peace with God?

- Read Isaiah 57:14-21. What is God going to do on his own initiative?

③ Read Ephesians 2:11-12. What kinds of things separated people from God before?

- Now read Ephesians 2:13-22. What have we been given because of Jesus?

④ Sometimes, culture tells us to define our identity based on how we feel. God's Word tells us to identify our identity based on what God says about how he has made us and where he has placed us. How do you notice this difference in views playing out in your world?

- What do Isaiah 57 and Ephesians 2 have to say about my identity?

⑤ When is it hard for you to believe what the Bible says about your identity?

- What can you do this week to help remind yourself of the truth about your identity?

The Gospel According to Isaiah
Session 12: Shine (Isaiah 60, 58, 66)

① Have you had any experiences with legalistic religion in your life? How does this seem to keep us from God?

② According to Isaiah 58, God's desire is for us to develop rhythms that help us to hear his heartbeat. How might Isaiah's examples of fasting and Sabbath help us hear God?

③ In Isaiah, the focus seems to be on others being drawn to God shining through our transformation. How is this different from how you have thought about shining your light previously?

◦ Read 1 Peter 2:9. What seems to be our task as Christians?

④ What barriers do you think you might encounter as you try to establish better rhythms to hear from God?

⑤ How would your life change if you began to really believe that God just asked you to shine where he placed you?

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