



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Isaiah 61

Message for the Week: The Gift of Brokenness

Sunday, December 8

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

When you hear the word restoration, what comes to your mind?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Isaiah 61](#) out loud.

(Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

What things does God/The Lord do in verses 1-3? Make a list. What do you notice about your list?

How do God's actions impact people, communities, and nations in verses 4-11? Make a list. What do you notice about your list?

Where else in the Bible can we hear the words found in Isaiah 61:1-3? Hint = check the gospel of Luke...somewhere in the first 5 chapters. 😊. What is the connection between these two passages?

How has the work of God impacted your own heart and life? What are the results of God's work in your life?

In verse 9, what do people see and acknowledge when they look at God's people? What do people see and acknowledge when they look at you/us?

Take Away:

What is a main point or key message that you learned, understood, observed, or experienced that you are taking away with you from your group's reflections on the bible passage or your group's conversations today?

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Who in your group needs prayer today? Who in your group will you pray for?

Pray this prayer together:

Father, Advent is a promise of not being alone. It is a promise that God is with us and cares for us. Often life leaves us feeling like we are on the outside in our spirit. You promise to replace that with freedom, release, comfort, and favor. All of these are gifts from you. May we know the reality of these gifts and may they be on full display in our life to the glory of your splendor. AMEN

"Try It" - Putting our Faith into Action:

In our text for this week, The Sovereign Lord comes to do a variety of different things for his people. Which of these things do you need the Sovereign Lord to do in your heart and life? Allow Him to do them.

Isaiah 61 - New International Version

61 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,^[a]
² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,
³ 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.
⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.
⁵ Strangers will shepherd your flocks;
foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.
⁶ And you will be called priests of the Lord,
you will be named ministers of our God.
You will feed on the wealth of nations,
and in their riches you will boast.
⁷ Instead of your shame you will receive a double portion,
and instead of disgrace you will rejoice in your inheritance.
And so you will inherit a double portion in your land,
and everlasting joy will be yours.
⁸ "For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
In my faithfulness I will reward my people
and make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹ Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed."
¹⁰ I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.

Footnotes

- a. [Isaiah 61:1](#) Hebrew; Septuagint *the blind*

Isaiah 11:1-10 - The Message

A Green Shoot from Jesse's Stump

11¹⁻⁷ The Spirit of God, the Master, is on me because God anointed me.

He sent me to preach good news to the poor, heal the heartbroken,

Announce freedom to all captives, pardon all prisoners.

God sent me to announce the year of his grace—

a celebration of God's destruction of our enemies—

and to comfort all who mourn,

To care for the needs of all who mourn in Zion,

give them bouquets of roses instead of ashes,

Messages of joy instead of news of doom,

a praising heart instead of a languid spirit.

Rename them "Oaks of Righteousness"

planted by God to display his glory.

They'll rebuild the old ruins,

raise a new city out of the wreckage.

They'll start over on the ruined cities,

take the rubble left behind and make it new.

You'll hire outsiders to herd your flocks

and foreigners to work your fields,

But you'll have the title "Priests of God,"

honored as ministers of our God.

You'll feast on the bounty of nations,

you'll bask in their glory.

Because you got a double dose of trouble

and more than your share of contempt,

Your inheritance in the land will be doubled

and your joy go on forever.

⁸⁻⁹ "Because I, God, love fair dealing

and hate thievery and crime,

I'll pay your wages on time and in full,

and establish my eternal covenant with you.

Your descendants will become well-known all over.

Your children in foreign countries

Will be recognized at once as the people I have blessed."

¹⁰⁻¹¹ I will sing for joy in God,

explode in praise from deep in my soul!

He dressed me up in a suit of salvation,

he outfitted me in a robe of righteousness,

As a bridegroom who puts on a tuxedo

and a bride a jeweled tiara.

For as the earth bursts with spring wildflowers,

and as a garden cascades with blossoms,

So the Master, God, brings righteousness into full bloom

and puts praise on display before the nations.