

I Will Go
The Eager Volunteer
Isaiah 6:1-

January 14, 2024

HDBC

Going is a part of life. For most of us **going** is an everyday thing. Work, school, church, stores, parks, friends, relatives, meetings, ballgames, concerts, theaters, restaurants, etc. For many of us it seems we are always **on the go**. So, what's the most important factor when going? Not speed, route, transportation. The most important thing when you are going is the **destination**. In *The Polar Express* the conductor says **One Thing About Trains: It Doesn't Matter Where They're Going. What Matters Is Deciding to Get On.**

That may sound great in a movie, but I strongly disagree. I know it's a metaphor for life, but it sure sends a terrible message. It **does matter** where you're going. So, let me to encourage you to reject the notion that you have to be going just to be going. In this series, I will challenge you **to go**, but **to go with a purpose!**

The Bible has a lot to say about going. Not only are there narrative passages that simply tell where people happen to be going, there are many places where God calls **people to go**. Some are natural and expected, while others are rather strange and unexpected. Some are easy and others hard. A few examples.

Phillip was called to share Jesus with an individual on a desert road.

Nathan was called to confront a powerful king about his sin.

Abraham was called to leave home without knowing his destination.

Deborah was called to lead an army to war.

Hosea was called to marry a prostitute as an object lesson to others.

Jonah was called to preach to a city full of dangerous and violent people.

Esther was called to risk her life to advocate for others.

Our focus in 2022 was ***I will serve.***

Our focus in 2023 was ***I will pray.***

Our focus in 2024 is ***I will go.***

Please keep serving and praying, even as we are thinking about going.

Let me be really clear at the start of this year and the start of this sermon series. When we talk about **going**, we are not simply talking about going on a mission trip. That is part of it, but it is not nearly all of it. It could be to **walk across this building and serve** in the nursery or some other ministry. It could be to go to your neighbor with batch of cookies, just to connect. It could be to go to a local ministry and offer to help. So, what do we mean in the phrase ***I will go?***

I will go wherever God calls me to go, whenever He calls me to go, to do whatever He calls me to do.

This is not **deeper-level Christianity**. This is not for super-saints. This is the essence of following Jesus. This is not some next-level commitment that is only for those who are feeling super spiritual. I want you to understand that this is basic-level Christianity. This is the base expectation for every believer. My goal this year is that more of us will embrace this truth and become much more responsive to the call of God when He says **Go!**

To get us started I'm going to show you some of the characters in the Bible who were called to go and do. We'll learn from their victories and their defeats. We'll consider what they did well and how we can also do well. We'll learn from what they did poorly and attempt to avoid those same mistakes.

This morning I want to begin by considering Isaiah, ***the eager volunteer***. He did not wait to be drafted. He heard of a need and volunteered. **Isaiah 6:1-8.**

1. The Vision of the Lord (1-4)

Isaiah had a rare view of the glory of God, and it changed his life.

1) The Place

The Lord was seated on his throne, a king ruling over his kingdom. Reminder that God is the sovereign controller of all things.

Notice that the Lord is on his throne, but **also inside the temple**. The timing of this is important. This happened in the year of King Uzziah's death. Uzziah had been struck dead for burning incense unlawfully in the temple. Now he was out of the way. God had once again filled the temple with His presence. Let me point out that the sins of people can hinder the fulness of God's presence when His people gather.

The train of his robe filled the temple. That is what He wants to do in us. We are the temple of God and He wants to fill us with his presence.

2) The Praise

Isaiah not only saw the presence of God, but he witnessed the praise to God. Seraphim are an order of angels. It was their privilege to fill the presence of God with praise for God.

The language suggests two groups of angels, hovering near the throne and expressing rounds of praise to God in perfect sync with each other. Almost like two choirs alternating praise to God in some kind of synchronized way. The focus of their praise was the holiness of God.

The praise was so powerful that it shook the foundations of the temple. There is power in the presence of God, and especially when praise is being expressed to Him.

2. The Sinfulness of Isaiah (5-7)

This vision caused Isaiah to look inward. He took some personal inventory. He was suddenly and without warning in the presence of the perfect, holy and pure God. When he compared himself with God, he quickly knew that he fell far short of the moral perfection found in God. When you have an encounter with God, it should cause you to look inward and do a personal inventory of your own condition. When you do, you will find the same thing Isaiah found. He was in big trouble! What did he do?

1) The Confession of Sin

He confessed his personal sin, and he confessed the sins of his nation.

Woe is me – Expression of sorrow, grief and despair. Hopelessness

I am ruined – Completely destitute and separated from God.

Unclean lips – The angels were praising God with pure lips. He couldn't.

But notice what happened next. True confession leads to forgiveness.

2) The Forgiveness of Sin

Because Isaiah confessed, he was forgiven. God is so ready to forgive. He wants us to experience His grace and forgiveness. He is simply

waiting for us to confess and repent. We must own our sins. We can't excuse them, hide them or ignore them. We must be honest with God. When we do, He brings forgiveness. That's the meaning of the actions of the angel in taking the hot coal and placing it on the lips of Isaiah.

3. The Eagerness to Go (8)

I love the way this story goes. Isaiah, who has been forgiven by God, has a deep desire to serve God. Upon learning of a need, Isaiah immediately raised his hand, stepped up to the front of the line and volunteered.

Like the kid in the classroom who is eager to please the teacher who has asked for a volunteer. With both hands raised they continue to say ***pick me, pick me, pick me.*** Let me go to do your will. I love that enthusiasm, that eagerness to go.

Now watch this. Isaiah had **no details about where, what, how or how long.** He just knew someone needed to go, so he volunteered. **To use the phrase I learned from Bethan Davis, *he put his "yes" on the table.***

Jerry and Armentia Adams put their **Yes** on the table 24 years ago. They answered the call to go to a place of service and leadership that they had never known. They answered the call to go to a very hard place, Bulgaria. Even after an extremely difficult time, they answered the call to go again and again and again. I want you to hear Armentia's testimony. What was true of them, can also be true of you.

Play video testimony of Armentia.

Where might God be calling you to go?
To the altar to surrender your will to His?
To a place of ministry in our church?
To join a short-term mission team?
To surrender to full-time ministry?
To go to the Bible and prayer on a daily basis?
To join an E-Group this next session?

David Ayres was just sitting in the stands with his wife, enjoying a hockey game, when he saw the goalie go down. At 42 years old, and 15 years removed from a kidney transplant, his dreams of playing professional hockey were long gone. The closest he came to professional ice was driving the Zamboni on the practice rink and serving as an on-call emergency goaltender, in the extremely rare event that both goalies were injured during the game. Usually, that just means a free ticket to the game and dinner for David and his wife.

After the first goalie went down, David left his seat to get half-dressed in his hockey gear. Then his phone started blowing up with text messages: another collision had occurred, and the backup goalie was injured too. It was David's turn to step into the spotlight. He said later, "I've been on this ice many times without fans. Put fans in the mix and it's a whole different game, obviously. But hey, once in a lifetime, I'll take it."

Things didn't start well when the first two shots he faced went right into the back of the net, but a teammate encouraged him: "Just have fun. We don't care if you let ten goals in." David said that was a turning point. He stopped the next eight shots to secure the win. The Hurricanes' coach said, "He just gave us an incredible memory." David goes down in history as the oldest goalie in NHL history to win his debut. David said, "I'd love to see somebody else in the league get the same opportunity. So would every fan."