



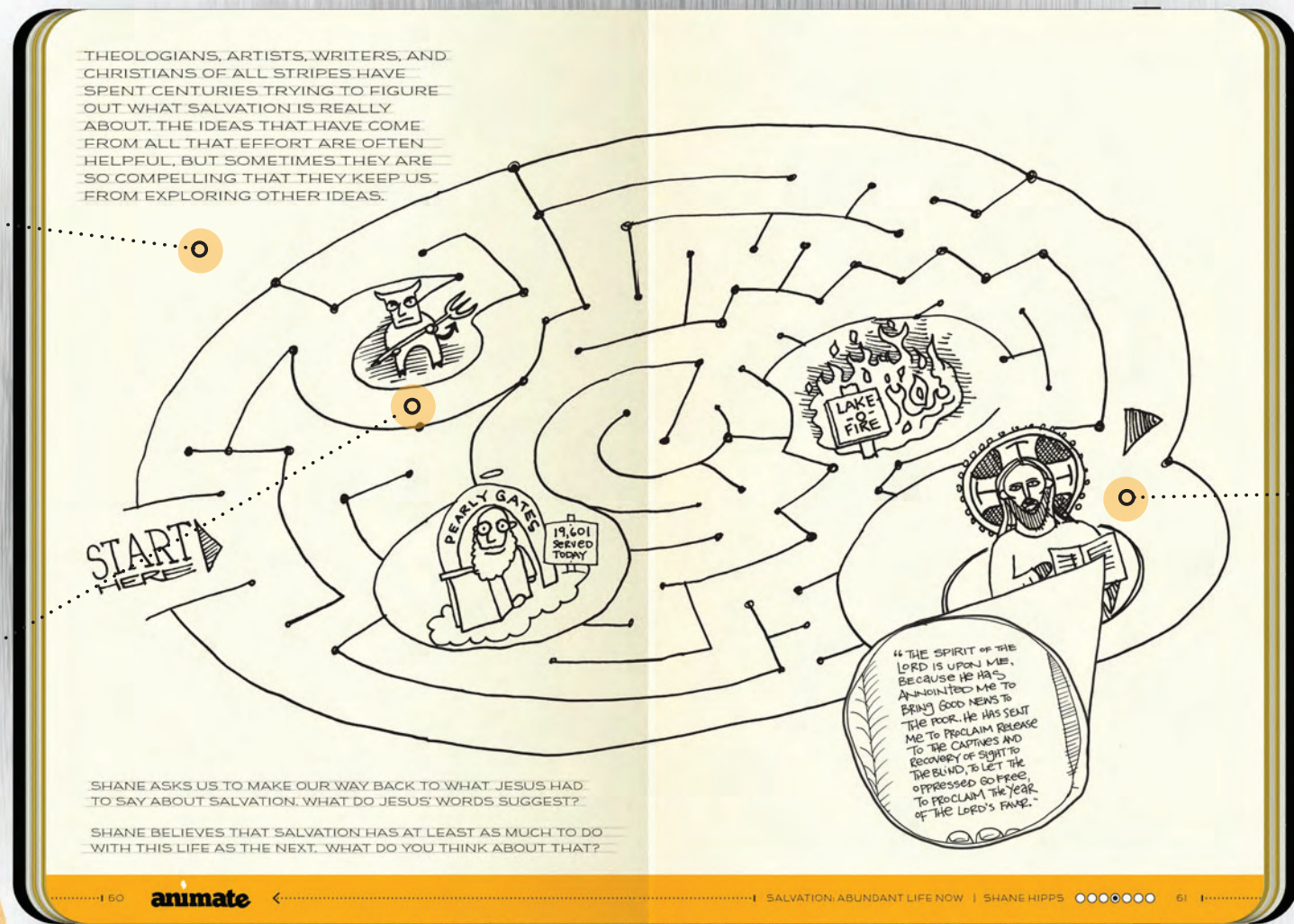
**USING A MAZE ILLUSTRATION,** this spread features Jesus' stated purpose from Isaiah 61 and Luke 4. The word salvation is not in these passages, but the message offered in them contrasts an "after death" fixation on salvation with what Jesus brings to the world. Invite the group to meditatively work the maze, before animating the conversation.

What does salvation in this life look like? Feel like? Sound like? Shane compares it to the untangling of a knotted rope, the calm at the eye of the hurricane, the best course in a feast. The Journal urges us to find an alternative path toward an understanding of salvation.

- How do you picture God's salvation now?
  - What are God moments like?
- Epiphanies, spiritual and emotional relief, a full experience of life—can these really be what Jesus meant by salvation? Why or why not?
  - Add some of your impressions of salvation to the maze.

This maze is full of dead ends when it comes to the doctrine of salvation. We can totally focus on NOT going there, but Jesus has a completely different focus for salvation in mind. When Jesus described his saving work by quoting from Isaiah, he offered us five ways to "work out" (Philippians 2:12b) our salvation in the here and now: good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed, the Jubilee year for everybody.

- How do these five matter to you?
- Should you read the conditions literally? Or spiritually? Why?
  - Do you see yourself helped here? How?
  - How do these five matter for the community around you? For people around the world?
  - Does it feel like Jesus is describing other people or all of us? Why?



IN LUKE 4, JESUS IDENTIFIES HIMSELF AS THE "ONE" ISAIAH 61 WAS TALKING ABOUT. THE DISTANCE BETWEEN JESUS' SELF-UNDERSTANDING (AUTHORITATIVE VOICE AND AGENT OF GOD) AND THE NAZARENES' ESTIMATE OF HIM (JOSEPH'S LITTLE BOY) ULTIMATELY GETS HIM INTO TROUBLE. IN LUKE, WE READ: "WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, ALL IN THE SYNAGOGUE WERE FILLED WITH RAGE. THEY GOT UP, DROVE HIM OUT OF THE TOWN, AND LED HIM TO THE BROW OF THE HILL ON WHICH THEIR TOWN WAS BUILT, SO THAT THEY MIGHT HURL HIM OFF THE CLIFF." (LUKE 4:28-29) OF COURSE, HE GOT AWAY, AS IT SAYS IN VERSE 30: "BUT HE PASSED THROUGH THE MIDST OF THEM AND WENT ON HIS WAY." AMAZING.

Jesus and Salvation. Have your group flip through the Gospels to find salvation scenes. If you get stuck, try these:

- A Samaritan woman who has just spoken with Jesus tells her townspeople, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" (John 4:29)
- A woman who was caught in adultery is rescued from a stoning and Jesus does not condemn her (John 8:10-11)
- Jesus describes new birth to Nicodemus (John 3:1-10)
  - Jesus retraces the steps of Peter's three denials by asking three times if Peter loves him (John 21:15-19)
  - Are these moments of salvation? Why or why not?

JESUS CHOSE THE "YEAR OF JUBILEE" AS THE FINAL IMAGE TO DESCRIBE THE KIND OF SALVATION THAT GOD SENT HIM TO BRING. THE IMAGERY COMES FROM LEVITICUS 25. THIS LAW OF MOSES DECLARES THAT EVERY 50TH YEAR, SLAVES SHOULD BE RELEASED, DEBTS SHOULD BE FORGIVEN AND LAND SHOULD BE RETURNED TO ITS ORIGINAL OWNERS. SHANE DRAWS ON THIS IMAGE FOR HIS UNDERSTANDING OF SALVATION AS LIBERATION IN THE HERE AND NOW.