

WELCOME TO ANIMATE!

This Facilitator Guide will help you make the most out of the videos and the Journal. As you prepare to dive into this session, keep these things in mind:

- You know your group best. Adjust the activities as needed based on the interests, questions, and background of group members.
- Get ready for creativity. The Journal is meant to be a right brain experience. Think of the animate experience as a journey through the content with many stopping points based on the questions, wonderings, and interests of the group.
- You don't have to know everything. As a facilitator, you don't have to be the expert, or even agree with everything the speakers say. Be ready to spark conversation and see where this takes the group as you explore these ideas together.
- Social media can help. Think of ways to use social media and other online tools to keep the conversation going. How about a Facebook group, a Twitter hashtag, or posts on Instagram or Pinterest?

SESSION FLOW IDEAS

To get each session started, try this structure:

- Recap previous animate sessions or other learning experiences.
- Update the group on any between-session reflections or research.
- Explore the content on the first Journal spread.
- View the video.
- Dive into the rest of the Journal content together.

SESSION TITLES

GOD | FAITH IS A QUEST

RELIGION | SPIRITUALITY IS NOT ENOUGH

JESUS | THE REVOLUTION OF LOVE

SALVATION | ABUNDANT LIFE NOW







CROSS | WHERE GOD IS

BIBLE | A BOOK LIKE NO OTHER

CHURCH | AN IMPERFECT FAMILY

ICON WATCH

Look for these icons that guide you in activities.

-  GROUP ACTIVITIES WITH QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO HELP ANIMATE CONVERSATION.
-  INTRODUCTORY AND OUT-GOING THOUGHTS TO SET-UP THE SESSION AND TO KEEP INTERACTIONS GOING BETWEEN SESSIONS.
-  LEADER TIPS: IDEAS TO HELP FACILITATORS FACILITATE.
-  FACTOIDS: INFORMATIONAL TIDBITS TO SPICE UP THE CONVERSATION.
-  QUOTES FROM THE VIDEO AND ELSEWHERE TO GET FOLKS THINKING.
-  FOOTNOTES: EXTRA BACKGROUND MATERIAL TO MAKE YOU SOUND EVEN SMARTER.



SALVATION | ABUNDANT LIFE NOW
SHANE HIPPS

ARE WE WILLING TO WAKE UP TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE
25550 DAYS WE HAVE ARE ACTUALLY THE MAIN COURSE?

FOR BEST RESULTS

- Reproduce the Facilitator Guide in landscape format on 11x17 paper.
- Reproduce the Journal pages in landscape format on 8.5x11 paper.
- For both resources, use a color copier.

Mark Scandrette brought us into the Jesus Dojo to explore the Jesus way. Today, Shane Hipps offers us images of salvation as we think about what happens during and after this life on earth. Shane invites us to consider the fundamental questions surrounding this “strange, beautiful, mysterious thing called existence.”

SET THE ROOM IN A “TIME-LY” FASHION. Decorate with a variety of clocks, watches, and hourglasses all over the place. Consider playing music in the background such as “Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?” by Chicago, “Salvation is Here” by Lincoln Brewster, or the old gospel hymn “When the Roll is Called Up Yonder.”

START A VISIBLE STOPWATCH in the room when you begin the session and let it run the whole time. See if anyone remembers to mention or notice it during class. You may have also noticed that each spread has an “Easter egg,” a number that counts toward Shane’s 25,550. The clock is ticking even as you meet.



Tell the story of Paul and Silas in prison from Acts 16:16-40; then have another person read Acts 16:28-31 aloud.

- What is the jailor asking for?
- When will he get it?
- Will it matter when he wakes up the next morning? Why or why not?
- Does the “household” get a choice in the matter? Why or why not?

ANCIENT PRISONS WERE HELLHOLES. THEY WERE VERY CROWDED. USUALLY, THEY WERE LOCATED BENEATH GROUND LEVEL AND DIDN'T HAVE ANY LIGHT. PRISONERS WERE GIVEN VERY LITTLE, VERY POOR FOOD AND WERE SURROUNDED BY DISEASE. SUICIDE RATES WERE HIGH. IT'S TOUGH TO IMAGINE A WHOLE LOT OF SINGING DOWN THERE, BUT PAUL AND SILAS SANG!

Look at the Journal together. Give group members a chance to share a time when they've heard or experienced a conversation like this one. Some Christians believe they know the exact path to salvation. Others aren't so sure. Talk together about your group's ideas about salvation. Bring some ideas to share that your group might not have heard before.

- When have you heard the word “salvation”?
- What does salvation mean in your life?
- What ideas about salvation are you sure about? Unsure about?

THE WORD “SALVATION” APPEARS BETWEEN 120 AND 180 TIMES IN THE ENGLISH BIBLE, DEPENDING ON WHICH VERSION YOU READ. IN THE NRSV, “SALVATION” OCCURS 124 TIMES. IN THE ESV, IT APPEARS 178 TIMES.

THE HEBREW AND GREEK WORDS THAT ARE TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH AS “SALVATION” OFTEN MEAN RESCUE FROM SOME KIND OF PERIL. SEE BIBLESTUDYTOOLS.COM AND OTHER ONLINE CONCORDANCES AND LEXICONS FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Salvation isn't easily definable. It's not something you can see, touch, or feel. In fact, it's even difficult to explain. Shane gives us some salvation images to consider. Give your group some time to sketch or write about some salvation images or experiences in their Journals. Then engage the questions:

- How would you describe the moments of salvation in your life?
- What do those moments suggest about what you believe it means or, even, doesn't mean to “be saved?”



SPEND SOME TIME WITH SHANE.

His own story is wider than the testimony he gives here about his knot and his dad's prayer. And messengers matter for our hearing of messages. How does Shane fit into the group's stereotypical image of evangelist or "salvation guy?"



Watch the video together.

But before you do, introduce the video with a quote from Shane: "Why am I here? What is the meaning of my life? Is this all there is? What happens when it's over? It's the thing that makes us different from the dolphins and donkeys, we are actually conscious of the fact that we are alive and one day, we know we will return to the dust." Start another stopwatch when it begins. Be ready to stop it when Shane finishes.

- How does Shane picture salvation?
- When does Shane see salvation happening?
- How do Shane's ideas about salvation interplay with your own beliefs?
- Is all of this what the Philippian jailer was seeking? Is it what you and people you love seek? Why or why not?



SHANE'S EMPHASIS ON SALVATION

as present tense reality may be new to some of your people. In fact, it may be distressing! Be ready for and welcome distress and dissent. Guide the conversation in a healthy direction by asking people to share their own thoughts and opinions and by keeping an open table for all ideas.



It's time to offer some reflection time for your group members. You and each person in the room have personal reasons for being a part of a small group. Perhaps some of these reasons have to do with salvation, perhaps not. Point out that Shane used to pitch Guinness and Porsche as a marketing guy.

- Do you think Shane's career change has anything to do with the way God untangles his knots? Why or why not?
- What have you given up to be here with this group? Why?
- Knowing what good things you're sacrificing to be here, why are you here?

SHANE HIPPS CAME TO MINISTRY FROM THE WORLD OF HIGH-END ADVERTISING. SO IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT HE HAS A KNACK FOR UNPACKING THE DEEPER LAYERS OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE. FOR SHANE, THERE IS MORE TO OUR IDEAS ABOUT SALVATION THAN JUST WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE. HE SAYS, "SALVATION IS NOT JUST A ONE-TIME PROMISE FOR WHEN WE DIE. IT'S A MOMENT-BY-MOMENT POSSIBILITY WHILE WE LIVE."



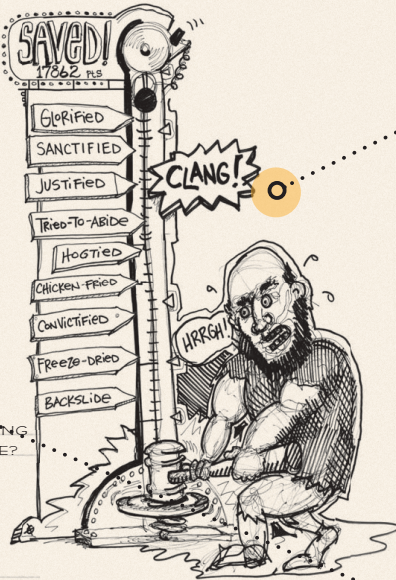
- MORE SHANE TRIVIA
- TEACHING PASTOR AT MARS HILL BIBLE CHURCH IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, WHICH MEETS IN A FORMER SUPERMARKET.
 - WORKED AS AN ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE ON ACCOUNTS LIKE GUINNESS AND PORSCHE.
 - WENT TO SEMINARY AS A CALVINIST AND IS NOW A MENNONITE.
 - WEARS VIBRAM FIVE FINGERS WHEN HE RUNS.
 - BA FROM TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY.
 - MDIV FROM FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

- SHANE'S BOOKS:
- FLICKERING PIXELS: HOW TECHNOLOGY SHAPES YOUR FAITH.
 - SELLING WATER BY THE RIVER: A BOOK ABOUT THE LIFE JESUS AND THE RELIGION THAT GETS IN THE WAY.

QUESTIONS OF SALVATION HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION FOR GENERATIONS. WE CONTINUE TO ASK OURSELVES BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW WE ARE SAVED AND WHAT PART, IF ANY, WE PLAY IN OUR OWN SALVATION. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

IS SALVATION SOMETHING WE CAN GAIN AND LOSE?

IS SALVATION A GIFT? HOW IS IT GIVEN, RECEIVED?



shane hipps says that when jesus was talking about eternal life, the kingdom of god, or the kingdom of heaven, he most often used the present tense.

IN JOHN 6, AFTER A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN JESUS AND THE AUTHORITIES, DISCIPLES START TO LEAVE JESUS' GROUP. HE ASKS HIS TWELVE, "DO YOU WANT TO GO AWAY AS WELL?" BUT PETER ANSWERS, "LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO? YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE" (JOHN 6:66-68). CONCLUSION: WHATEVER YOU GAVE UP TO BE HERE AT ANIMATE, YOU ARE IN THE RIGHT PLACE!

ZACCHAEUS WAS A "CHIEF TAX COLLECTOR," OR A PERSON WHO BOUGHT RIGHTS FROM THE ROMAN EMPIRE TO GOUGE THE JEWISH PEOPLE DURING COLLECTION. HE DID THIS THROUGH A TEAM OF REGULAR TAX COLLECTORS. (THINK OF THIS LIKE THE HEAD OF A PRIVATE WASTE REMOVAL COMPANY AND HER/HIS INDIVIDUAL GARBAGE COLLECTORS.) THAT'S WHY HE WAS "VERY RICH."

Sarah Rollens writes, "Greek authors, Roman authors, rabbinic writings, and even ancient documentary papyri demonstrate that tax-collectors were routinely despised . . ." ("Jesus and the Tax-Collectors: Relative Deprivation and Status Crystallization among the Followers of Jesus," in *Prandium: Journal of Historical Studies*, <http://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/prandium/article/view/16218>).



In the video, Shane invites people into rethinking the salvation of God. Talk about stereotypes such as of preachers who offer salvation, like tent revivalists and televangelists. There are also some pretty negative (and sometimes well-deserved) attitudes. Perhaps some in your group have experienced these personally.

- What are some positive and negative affects of popular teachings about salvation?
- If you were to take a whack at the "Salvation" carnival game, how high would your "dinger" rise?
- How well does this illustration line up with typical views on salvation?
- How do passages like James 2:14-26 challenge the stereotypes about salvation?



Read the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-11. Invite your group to sing "Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man" if they know it. Laugh about "a wee little man" and other lyrics of this silly song. Then notice that "salvation" comes up here. Jesus says, "Today salvation has come to this house."

- What does he mean?
- When does salvation seem to start happening in this story?
- Do you think Zacchaeus gained future salvation by changing his practices? Or is the response of Zacchaeus really what Jesus meant when he talked about salvation?



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?

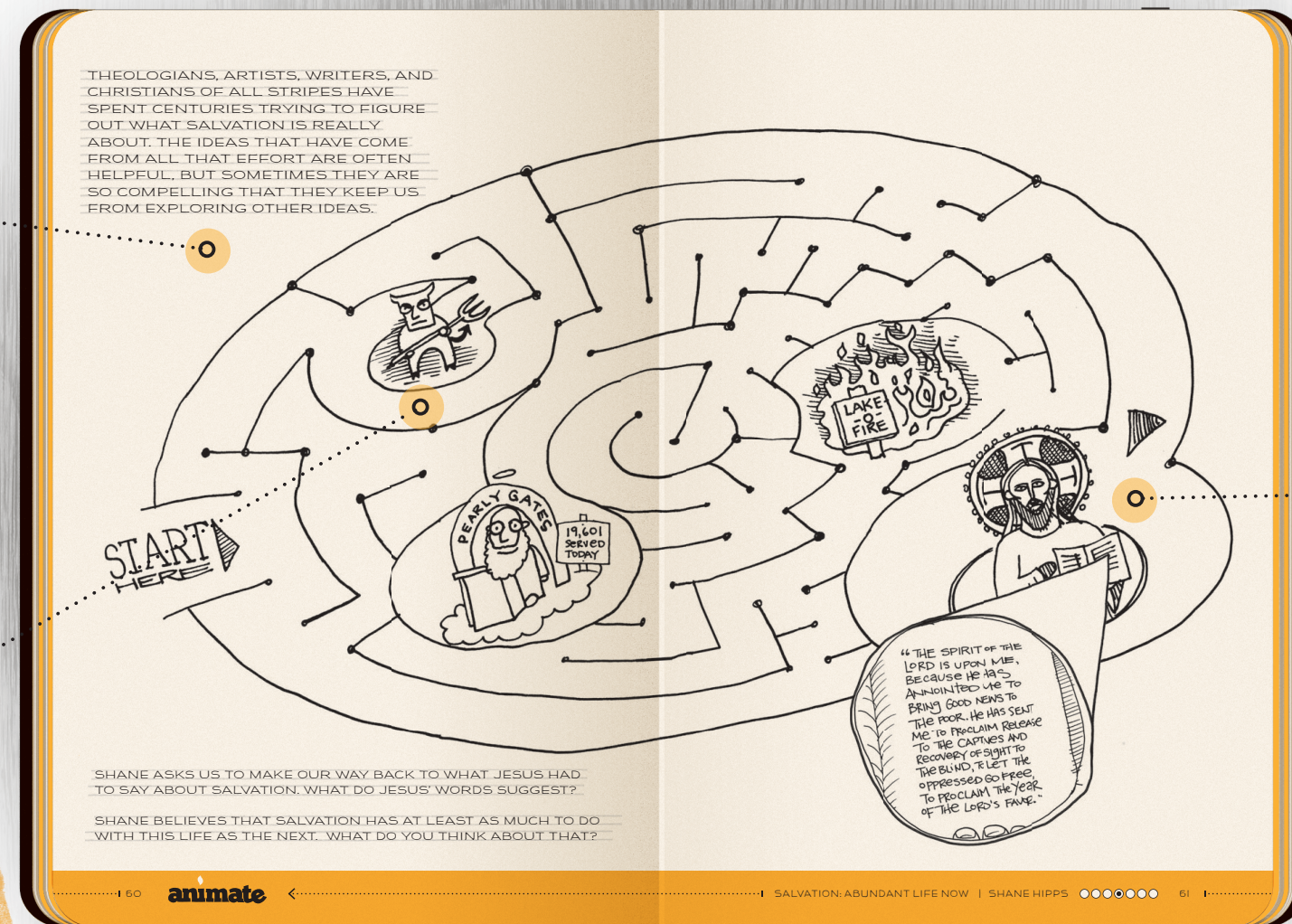
Shane compares it to the untangling of a knotted rope, the calm at the eye of the hurricane, the best course in a feast. The Journal urges us to find an alternative path toward an understanding of salvation.

- 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.

“

“FOR JESUS, SALVATION IS HERE AND NOW JUST AS MUCH AS IT IS THERE AND THEN.” —SHANE HIPPS

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Talk about what it means for us as modern day Christians that there are so many references to salvation in the Old Testament (pre-Jesus and pre-beliefs about an afterlife). Have the group open their Bibles to the verses quoted in the Journal.

- What did “salvation” mean in each of these passages?
- Compare these Old Testament ideas of salvation to salvation as it appears in Luke 1:77, Acts 13:47, Romans 1:16, as examples. What is the meaning of salvation in these New Testament places?

AROUND TWO-THIRDS OF “SALVATION” APPEARANCES IN THE BIBLE COME IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. THERE ARE OVER 50 REFERENCES IN PSALMS ALONE.



ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR HYMNS IN HISTORY EXPLORES THE WONDER OF ETERNAL AFTERLIFE IN THIS WAY: “WHEN WE’VE BEEN THERE 10,000 YEARS, BRIGHT SHINING AS THE SUN, WE’VE NO LESS DAYS TO SING GOD’S PRAISE THAN WHEN WE’VE FIRST BEGUN.” (JOHN NEWTON, “AMAZING GRACE”)

SHANE’S CHARACTERIZATION COVERS MOST OF JESUS’ REFERENCES TO ETERNAL LIFE AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, LIKE LUKE 17:20-21. OTHER TIMES, THOUGH, JESUS CLEARLY POINTS TO A FUTURE SALVATION OR KINGDOM OR ETERNAL LIFE AFTER JESUS COMES AGAIN, SUCH AS IN MARK 13:13 AND MATTHEW 25:31, 46.



GIVE YOUR GROUP PERMISSION

to share disagreements with Shane and with one another. Who are the “both/and” people? The “next-life only” folks? Is there a “this-life only” vote? Which salvation is more important to them? Why? Can the two coexist peaceably? Or will EITHER here-and-now OR there-and-then ultimately win? This could be a lively conversation!

C.S. Lewis writes, “Our life comes to us moment by moment. One moment disappears before the next comes along: and there is room for very little in each. That is what Time is like. And of course you and I tend to take it for granted that this Time series—this arrangement of past, present, and future—is not simply the way life comes to us but the way all things really exist. We tend to assume that the whole universe and God Himself are always moving on from past to future just as we do . . . God, I believe, does not live in a Time-series at all. His life is not dribbled out moment by moment like ours: with Him it is still 1920 and already 1960.” (Mere Christianity, pp. 146–47)

John Murawski’s Huffington Post article: “N.T. Wright Asks: Have Christians Gotten Heaven All Wrong?” does a good job of exposing popular misunderstandings about the Kingdom of God that have made their way into the Christian worldview (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/17/nt-wright-christian-heaven-is-wrong_n_1524117.html).



Many evangelists have used clocks very differently than Shane does: to count down the amount of time we have left to make a decision that will impact our afterlife. In other words, decision now, salvation later. Paul's words lend themselves to this: "Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near." (Romans 13:11-12) Divide up the group to read 2 Corinthians 6:1-3; Ephesians 5:15,16; 1 Peter 4:7-11; 1 John 2:15-17.

- How do these passages link up the concept of time with salvation?
- In what ways do they inspire us to "do" something with our salvation here and now?"



"DO WE RECOGNIZE THE MOMENTS OF SALVATION IN THIS LIFE? AND IF WE DON'T, WHAT MAKES US THINK WE'LL RECOGNIZE SALVATION IN THE NEXT? ARE WE WILLING TO WAKE UP TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE 25,550 DAYS WE HAVE ARE ACTUALLY THE MAIN COURSE?" —SHANE HIPPS

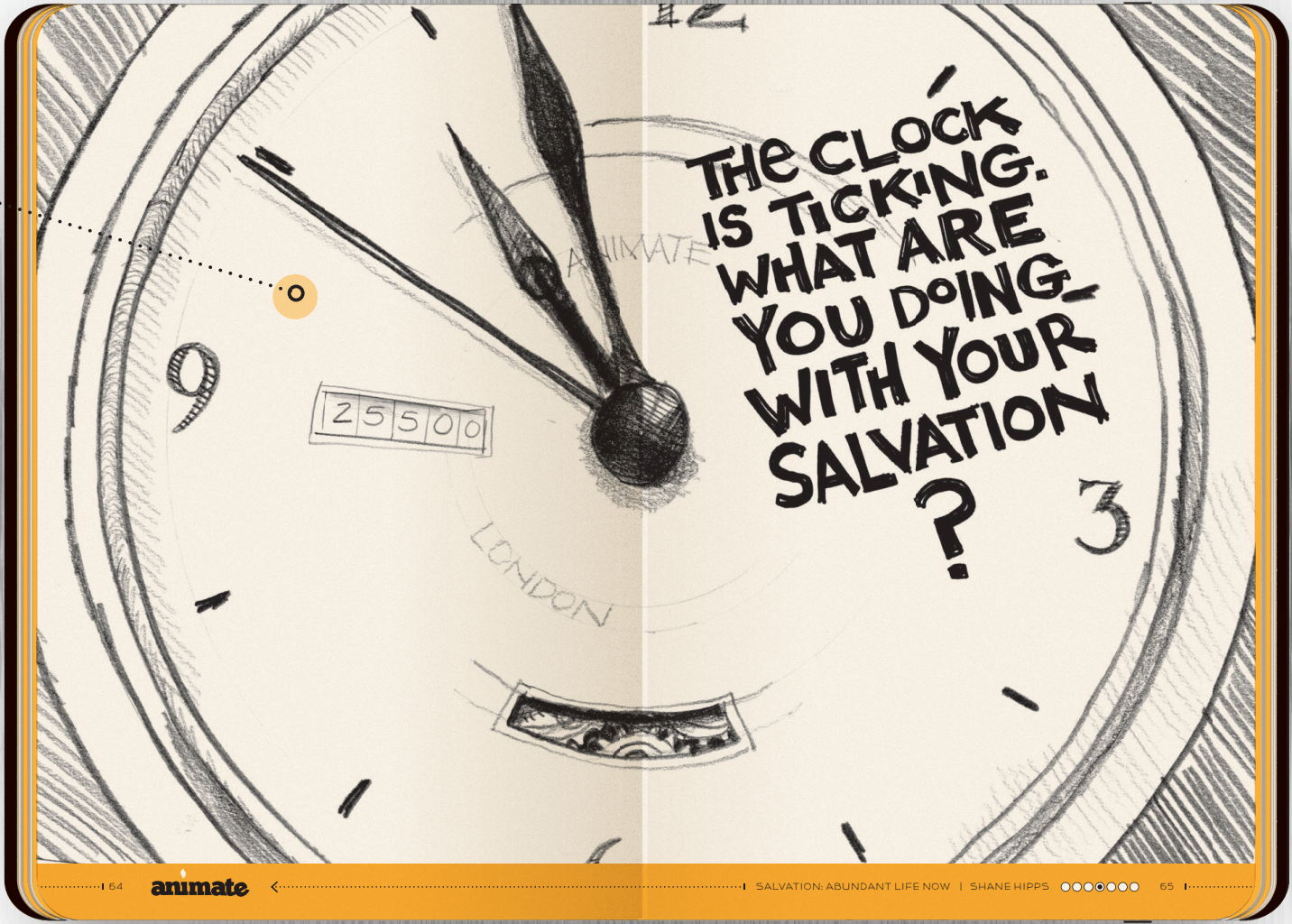


If you buy into Shane's idea that salvation is now, what actions do you take? Read Ephesians 4:26—5:2 together. Encourage group members to write some actions in their Journals. Ask them to sketch what they think it means to be "sealed for the day of redemption."

- When is the day of redemption? Now? Later? Or did we already miss it?
- How have you already seen salvation in your life? How will you recognize it in the future?



FUNNY TECHNICALITY: SHANE FORGOT LEAP YEARS. SEVENTY LIVED YEARS INCLUDE 17 OR 18 EXTRA DAYS, SO, TO QUOTE BILL MURRAY IN CADDYSHACK, "WE GOT THAT GOIN' FOR US, WHICH IS NICE."



"THE ETERNAL LIFE JESUS PROMISED CAN START NOW AND NEVER HAS TO END ... IT'S A CHOICE WE MAKE NOW, TO TRUST JESUS AND EXPERIENCE A PLACE WITHIN US OF UNFOLDING LOVE, OF BOUNDLESS PEACE, OF INDESTRUCTIBLE JOY ... MAYBE YOU'VE EXPERIENCED THAT KIND OF SALVATION ... MAYBE YOU'RE LONGING FOR THAT RIGHT NOW." —SHANE HIPPS



IF YOUR GROUP MEMBERS TRUST one another enough to risk sharing, this activity will rock! If not, you may want to have them draw or write their Before and After thinking into their Journals. It's possible that some of your group will choose to share publicly while others will keep theirs private.



Before and After.

In advance, prepare a big slab of cardboard for each person in the group. Provide big markers. Invite your group to quietly contemplate one moment when they experienced a feeling of salvation like Shane did when the knot in his chest released or when he was in the eye of the hurricane. Have them write that experience in code on one side of the cardboard. Then ask them whether they experienced salvation—a sense of God's rescue or change—in that moment. Have them write that experience in code on the other side. If they did not experience salvation, they can leave the second side blank. When everyone is done, put on good music about the love of God and invite all members of the group to show the before and after of their experience to everyone.

- What did you feel during your experience?
- Where do you think God was during this experience?
- How do you think your experience relates to salvation?
- What changed after your experience?
- What does "eternal life now not later" mean for you?

For some the ticking clock of this-life feels like a nightmare out of a Dicken's novel. The tyranny of time wants to make slaves of us all. Schedules, calendars, deadlines abound. Shane's message that we would grasp God's gift of eternal love in the here-and-now is liberating. Between sessions look for clues that God is directing "your moments and your days" as the old hymn says, into ways that can redeem time itself.

Before and After might look like this: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYqblUuiNhg&feature=share>