



grow. pray. study.

June 7, 2026 *A Beautiful Life is Formed When We Remember*

Scripture: Psalm 125:1-2, Matthew 6:25-26 (NRSV)

No Shortcuts: Faith Grows Through Consistent Practice

MONDAY 6.8.26 Psalm 17:1-8, 2 Peter 3:18

Diego Maradona: "When people succeed, it is because of hard work. Luck has nothing to do with success."

World Cup soccer games start June 11. But the qualification process took three years—the first matches were on September 7, 2023. Players had been developing their skills for a decade or more before that. Pastor Hamilton wrote about practices that lead to the beautiful life God offers: 'If you make these practices a part of the daily rhythm of your life... they will play a key role in helping you grow in your faith.' * Daily practice is how we remember—how we keep God's presence fresh in our hearts, so God shapes our actions.

- Maradona was right—success doesn't just happen, and neither does a beautiful Christian life. You wouldn't expect any World Cup player to have started playing a month ago after attending a workshop about the sport. Similarly, Peter called Christ's followers to 'grow in grace.' One inspiring sermon or intense weekend retreat, though valuable, cannot produce a mature Christian. What practices most keep your faith growing? What's one practice you could add to your daily rhythm this month?
- In Psalm 17, the writer asking God for help said, "My steps are set firmly on your paths; my feet haven't slipped." Scholar John Goldingay noted that asking God for deliverance only makes sense if we actually rely on God "rather than looking to other gods—in Western culture, we ourselves might be the god on which we rely." ** What helps you trust a doctor, mechanic, or friend? Where might you be relying on yourself when God invites you to rely on him? What deepens your trust in God?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for honoring me with a place in your holy family. Show me the areas where you call me to grow deeper and give me the discipline for daily practice. Amen.

* Hamilton, Adam, *The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life* (p. 8). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.

** John Goldingay, *Psalms for Everyone, Part 1: Psalms 1–72*. Westminster John Knox Press, p. 53.

Good Soil: Faith That Bears Lasting Fruit

TUESDAY 6.9.26 Luke 8:11-15

Cristiano Ronaldo: "Talent without working hard is nothing."

Scholar Eugene Peterson described American culture: "Our attention spans have been conditioned by thirty-second commercials.... It is not difficult in such a world to get a person interested in the message of the gospel; it is terrifically difficult to sustain the interest. Millions of people in our culture make decisions for Christ, but there is a dreadful attrition rate." * Jesus' parable showed he would have agreed with Ronaldo—talent without hard work is nothing.

- Jesus ended the parable describing those whose seed grew: they "hear the word and commit themselves to it with a good and upright heart." One scholar noted that the word "commit" showed "true faith is both spoken and practiced." ** How do your ongoing choices and actions show your commitment to Jesus' message? What's the difference between believing the gospel and committing your life to it?
- Jesus said the seed that grew produced a harvest "one hundred times" what was planted—echoing Isaac's blessing in [Genesis 26:12](#). As one scholar noted, "Even if most seeds don't produce, the harvest is still worth the effort of planting." *** Jesus focused more on the beautiful results of what grew than on what didn't. How can Jesus' focus on the harvest, not the losses, encourage you to keep planting good seed in your own life and in the lives of others?

Prayer: God, prepare the soil of my heart to receive your word deeply. Grow a bountiful crop of your love, purity, goodness, and compassion within me. Let me be full to bursting with the fruit of your Spirit. Amen.

* Peterson, Eugene H, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society* (The IVP Signature Collection) (p. 10). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

** Richard B. Vinson, study note on Luke 8:15 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 125 NT.

*** Richard B. Vinson, study note on Luke 8:8 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 125 NT.

Don't Grow Weary in Doing Good

WEDNESDAY 6.10.26 Galatians 6:7-10

Lionel Messi: "It took me 17 years and 114 days to become an overnight success."

Yesterday we read Jesus' parable that taught the importance of being good soil in which the seed God plants can grow strong and fruitful ([Luke 8:11-15](#)). In today's reading, the apostle Paul used a variation of that image. He pictured us as farmers, who need to be careful what we plant in the soil of our lives. Messi was right—"overnight success" usually takes 17+ years. Paul made the same point about spiritual harvest: remember to keep sowing faithfully, and the harvest will come.

- Verse 9 acknowledged that doing good takes focused effort. As one scholar explained, Paul used two verbs: one emphasizing "losing interest" (becoming "spiritless") and the other "becoming discouraged or relaxing one's efforts." Paul knew this was a real spiritual hazard. Have you ever gotten tired of doing good? What drained your energy? What helped renew your commitment to bear good fruit by blessing others?
- Scholar N. T. Wright wrote a stirring challenge: "These characteristics.... are hard to acquire and hard to maintain.... They only appear where there has been a steady habit of prayer and self-discipline; even then they may take a while to show.... Wisdom comes 'from above'. Pray for it. Persevere." ** What "steady habits of prayer and self-discipline" have most helped you persevere in doing good? Paul called us to "work for the good of all whenever we have an opportunity." Where can you do good right now?

Prayer: Lord God, I face dozens of choices each day. Give me clear vision to sow seeds that produce a good harvest. Help me not grow weary in doing good. Make us both pleased with the harvest. Amen.

* Daniel C. Arichea, Jr. and Eugene A. Nida, *A Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Galatians*. New York: United Bible Societies, 1976, p. 152.

** Wright, N. T., *Early Christian Letters for Everyone* (The New Testament for Everyone) (p. 25). Westminster John Knox Press. Kindle Edition.

Faith: Disciplined Pursuit of Christ's Prize

THURSDAY 6.11.26 Philippians 3:10-14

Pelé: "Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing."

After every World Cup, people ask winning players and coaches, "To what do you attribute your team winning the championship?" The answers usually cite hard work and a shared focus on the goal.

"Easy" is not the road to special achievements—in soccer or in life. The apostle Paul described his walk of faith as a determined, forward-looking, life-long pursuit of "the prize of God's upward call."

- Paul was writing to the Philippian church from prison ([Philippians 1:12-14](#)). Even from there, he said his singular goal was "the prize of God's upward call in Christ Jesus." Paul focused on being like Jesus, confident that goal would lead him to God's ultimate reward. How has "God's upward call" motivated your disciplined pursuit of becoming Christ-like? What does that pursuit look like in your daily life?
- Winning the World Cup is amazing. But Pelé—a **three-time** World Cup winner—said about his young fans: "I have a great responsibility to show them not just how to be like a soccer player, but how to be like a man." Your faith says you're on life's ultimate championship team. Paul shared a key trait: "I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me." Paul didn't deny his history but remembered God's promise to define his future. Do any failures, old identities, or regrets from your past limit your present? How can God's loving presence more strongly define your future?

Prayer: O God our Father, help me press forward toward your upward call. Let nothing from my past hinder me from being who you've called me to be. Amen.

* Quoted in SI Flashback: "Soccer's greatest genius." *Sports Illustrated*, dated June 1, 1999.

Remember Jesus, Our Example in Endurance

FRIDAY 6.12.26 1 Peter 2:11-12, 21-24

Mia Hamm: "The vision of a champion is bent over, drenched in sweat, at the point of exhaustion when nobody else is looking."

Mia Hamm captured something Peter had seen in Jesus: champions endure "when nobody else is looking." Yet Peter didn't limit Jesus to only a good example but also alluded to [Isaiah 53:5](#) as he declared that Jesus "carried in his own body on the cross the sins we committed"—that is, that Jesus bore our guilt in a way that verified our forgiveness. When we falter, one key to finding the strength to follow Jesus' example is to trust that we do not have to bear that weight—Jesus already bore it for us.

- Peter strikingly said believers are "immigrants and strangers in the world." How does living as a citizen of God's kingdom in a world that's not your true home shape your daily choices? In what ways does Jesus' example of self-giving love and courageous endurance inspire and shape your life? Which parts of his example feel beyond your reach? How can the Holy Spirit's power help you live differently?
- What burdens of guilt or wounds disrupt your peace? Peter showed that the early Christians treasured Isaiah's promise that "by his wounds we are healed." In what ways have you experienced Jesus' forgiveness and healing? How can you remember that Jesus' healing is a reality, and let it more fully form your life?

Prayer: O Jesus, form me and free me with your healing, peace, and freedom from guilt. Thank you that your death revealed the depth of your self-giving love. Energize me to follow your example through the power of your Spirit. Amen.

Endurance Through Faith's Pioneer and Perfecter

SATURDAY 6.13.26 Hebrews 11:39-12:3

Sir Alex Ferguson: "Hard work will always overcome natural talent when natural talent does not work hard enough."

As Hebrews listed many examples of faith, it pictured an athletic stadium with the faithful of every age as spectators cheering us on. Like soccer players in a packed World Cup stadium, we run knowing we are not alone. There was no whitewashing of the world's brokenness. God was with all of them, but while some faithful lives had superb outcomes, others met terribly tragic earthly fates. Sir Alex Ferguson's insight about "hard work" captures the essence of what Hebrews said about the life of faith. Endurance, not talent, wins the race. The ultimate "win" was not now, but in "a better country...a heavenly one" ([Hebrews 11:16](#)). Endurance forms you to be the type of person God calls you to be. Scholar Kenneth Schenck noted that Hebrews 12:1's "So then" draws the conclusion: "The audience needs to persist in faith and continue on their journey, just like the examples of faith in Hebrews 11. Like an athlete, they need to get rid of all their extra weight, especially sin." **

- Hebrews 11:39-40 said we don't always see God's promises come true in this life—at least not fully. We wait for eternity. Some give up on faith because they aren't willing to wait. Paul wrote to Christians in Rome (living under hostile emperors) about hope's importance in forming faithful lives ([Romans 8:18-25](#)). When have you had to wait longer than you hoped for a divine promise? What promises are you still waiting for? What gives you faith as you wait?
- Hebrews called us, as we live our lives, to "fix our eyes on Jesus, faith's pioneer and perfecter," who "endured the cross." Hebrews showed how remembering forms us. We remember those who ran before us. We remember Jesus, faith's pioneer. Remembering gives us strength to keep running. What helps you 'fix your eyes on Jesus' during the errands and duties of regular life? What is one formative practice you could adopt to keep your gaze on him every day?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, when life goes well, I forget I need you. When things go badly, I think you've abandoned me. Help me run the race with eyes fixed on you—through both the light and dark days of my life. Amen.

* From <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/346052-the-grace-of-god-means-something-like-here-is-your>.

** Kenneth Schenck, study note on Hebrews 12:1 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 450 NT.

Prayer Requests – cor.org/prayer *Prayers of peace and comfort for:*

To **Elsa Moneymaker**, following the death of **John "Bob" Moneymaker** (husband), who passed away on **5/30/2026**.