



**grow. pray. study.**

**June 28, 2026 A Beautiful Life is Given Away (GOAL!)**

Scripture: Philippians 2:3-11, NRSV

### **Crossing Boundaries to Share God's Living Water**

**MONDAY 6.29.26 John 4:4-15**

4 Jesus had to go through Samaria. 5 He came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, which was near the land Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his journey, so he sat down at the well. It was about noon.

7 A Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink." 8 His disciples had gone into the city to buy him some food.

9 The Samaritan woman asked, "Why do you, a Jewish man, ask for something to drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (Jews and Samaritans didn't associate with each other.)

10 Jesus responded, "If you recognized God's gift and who is saying to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would be asking him and he would give you living water."

11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you don't have a bucket and the well is deep. Where would you get this living water? 12 You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave this well to us, and he drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life."

15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will never be thirsty and will never need to come here to draw water!"

Abby Wambach: "Leave the jersey in a better place."

For athletes like Wambach, "the jersey" symbolizes their team. Jesus aimed to leave his "team"—his nation, his world—in a better place. Judeans of his day despised, even hated, Samaritans. The quickest route from Jerusalem to Galilee was through Samaria, yet most Jews took two extra days through Perea, east of the Jordan, to avoid Samaria. Jesus didn't physically "have to" go through Samaria. He purposely crossed several limits: ethnic (Samaritan), gender (men didn't publicly talk to women they didn't know), and social (she came at noon, likely avoiding the other village women).

- Jesus' choice to go through Samaria—and to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation—bore witness to God's settled longing for peace among God's children. He intentionally crossed boundaries others avoided. Where in your daily living do you see injustice or division? What might it look like to follow Jesus' example by purposely going "out of your way" to confront division and build bridges?

- Jesus offered the woman “living water” that quenches thirst forever. As scholar William Barclay noted, this wasn't a casual offer but “nothing less than a Messianic claim” echoing the prophetic vision: “They shall not hunger or thirst” (Isaiah 49:10). \* The woman thought of a natural spring that would spare her from daily trips to the well. Do you mainly want Jesus to make your life easier? Or do you want “living water” to make you whole, so the world sees Jesus in you? How does using Jesus for convenience differ from letting him change you for the world's sake?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, keep me from chasing convenience and an easier life. Guide me to your work, no matter how hard, that I may bear witness to your love for humanity. Make me willing to go out of my way for the sake of the world. Amen.

\* William Barclay, *The Gospel of John—Volume 1 Chapters 1–7* (Revised Edition). Westminster John Knox Press, p. 154.

## **Resurrection to Mission: “You are Witnesses”**

**TUESDAY 6.30.26 Luke 24:44-48**

44 Jesus said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. 46 He said to them, “This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.

Bobby Robson: “What is a club in any case? Not the buildings or the directors or the people who are paid to represent it.... It's the noise, the passion, the feeling of belonging, the pride in your city.”

In the World Cup, teams embody their nation's hopes, pride, and identity. After the crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus taught his disciples to see the big picture: their entire history as a people—from Moses to the Psalms—pointed to their ongoing mission. They were to preach to all nations that in Christ there is repentance and forgiveness of sins, salvation and justice. Our mission, like a true club's identity, isn't about “the buildings or the directors or the people who are paid to represent it”—it's about the life found in Jesus' resurrection.

- Jesus said, “You are witnesses of these things.” Your personal story of the progress of changing your heart and life is powerful to the non-religious and nominally religious people you interact with—wherever you live, work, or play. In what specific ways can you share your story of a changed heart and life with those around you? Who in your daily life might be ready to hear what God has done, and is still doing, for you?
- Scholar N. T. Wright noted that the story went well beyond individual redemption: “The Bible always envisaged that when God finally acted to fulfil all the promises made to Abraham, Moses and the prophets, then the whole world would be brought into the embrace of God's saving and healing love.” \* The mission isn't just personal salvation—it's God's healing love embracing “all nations.” What's one specific step you could take to more fully take on your part in Jesus' mission to embrace the world in God's healing love?

**Prayer:** God, keep me alert for chances to faithfully share the story of your son's life, death, burial, and resurrection. Give me courage when afraid, confidence when unsure, passion when indifferent. May I make you proud as I share my personal story of a changed heart and life. Amen.

\* N. T. Wright, *Luke for Everyone*. Westminster John Knox Press, p. 300 (Kindle edition).

## Spirit-Powered Witness Wherever, Whenever

### WEDNESDAY 7.1.26 Acts 1:3-8

3 After his suffering, he showed them that he was alive with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days, speaking to them about God's kingdom. 4 While they were eating together, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised. He said, "This is what you heard from me: 5 John baptized with water, but in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6 As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, "Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?"

7 Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Johan Cruyff: "When you play a match, it is statistically proven that players actually have the ball 3 minutes on average. So, the most important thing is: what do you do during those 87 minutes when you do not have the ball?"

Cruyff's soccer insight points to something crucial: you aren't only a witness for Jesus when you "have the ball." Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would give his followers power to bear witness to God's work in the world. The mighty wind that is the Holy Spirit ([John 3:7-8](#)) enables Christians to be full-time witnesses of God's great love. The disciples' asked: "Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?" They wanted political restoration. Jesus offered no timeline, but a clear call to be Spirit-empowered witnesses. The kingdom comes through changed lives, not political victories.

- God didn't leave us on our own. The Holy Spirit empowers us to be living extensions of Jesus' ministry in today's world. But God, not us, controls that work. As one scholar noted, "The Holy Spirit is God/Christ powerfully, mysteriously, sometimes quietly and unobtrusively at work in and through the church." \* Are you asking for the Holy Spirit to guide you and work through you? How might you stay open to the Spirit's quiet, unobtrusive work in your daily life?
- The "end of the earth" could be anywhere—your office, your favorite restaurant, your health club or your neighborhood, as well as Malawi or a tornado-torn town in another state. When have you seen and regretted missing a chance to share? Where are the one or two places you can most effectively share your faith story? Which friend, family member, or co-worker might join you in this mission?

**Prayer:** God, give me chances to share my faith story with others. Show me where you are already at work so I can join you in your work. Help me remember that my power comes from the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

\* G. F. Hawthorne, article "Holy Spirit" in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & Its Developments*. InterVarsity Press, p. 496.

## Sharing Hope With Respectful Humility

THURSDAY 7.2.26 1 Peter 3:8-16

8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, sympathetic, lovers of your fellow believers, compassionate, and modest in your opinion of yourselves. 9 Don't pay back evil for evil or insult for insult. Instead, give blessing in return. You were called to do this so that you might inherit a blessing. 10 For those who want to love life

and see good days

should keep their tongue from evil speaking

and their lips from speaking lies.

11 They should shun evil and do good;

seek peace and chase after it.

12 The Lord's eyes are on the righteous

and his ears are open to their prayers.

But the Lord cannot tolerate those who do evil [Psalm 34:12-16].

13 Who will harm you if you are zealous for good? 14 But happy are you, even if you suffer because of righteousness! Don't be terrified or upset by them. 15 Instead, regard Christ the Lord as holy in your hearts. Whenever anyone asks you to speak of your hope, be ready to defend it. 16 Yet do this with respectful humility, maintaining a good conscience. Act in this way so that those who malign your good lifestyle in Christ may be ashamed when they slander you.

Lionel Messi: "I prefer to win titles with the team ahead of individual awards or scoring more goals than anyone else. What's more, I'm more concerned about being a good person than being the best football player in the world."

We call defending and giving evidence for the Christian faith "apologetics." Like Messi, our aim isn't individual glory but playing our part on a winning team. 1 Peter saw what Messi recognized: character matters more than achievement. The best "apologetic" isn't winning arguments but being ready to support our faith candidly, confidently, and with compassionate humility.

- Christian faith involves both belief (what we hold to be true) AND lifestyle (how we live what we believe). The two should support each other—our actions backing up our verbal claims. Would your lifestyle back up your verbal claims of Christianity? What might it cost to let your faith shape your lifestyle? What story might others tell about you—and how does that story align with what you believe?
- How do Christians defend their faith without becoming either bland (just blending in) or arrogant (lecturing others)? Scholar N. T. Wright described "the fine line between sinking without trace into the surrounding culture, on the one hand, and adopting a stand-offish, holier-than-thou approach on the other." Peter's answer, drawing on Psalm 34: "seek peace and chase after it." \* How easy or hard do you find it to remain respectful and humble when your faith is challenged? What helps you respond with grace rather than defensiveness?

**Prayer:** O Lord, in my passion to defend my Christian faith, help me remain humble to all I meet. Let your loving kindness flow through me as I represent you to the world around me. Amen.

\* N. T. Wright, *Early Christian Letters for Everyone*. Westminster John Knox Press, p. 89 (Kindle edition).

## Philip and the Ethiopian: Welcoming the Excluded

FRIDAY 7.3.26 Acts 8:27-38

27 ... Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) 28 He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. 29 The Spirit told Philip, "Approach this carriage and stay with it."

30 Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you really understand what you are reading?"

31 The man replied, "Without someone to guide me, how could I?" Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him. 32 This was the passage of scripture he was reading:

Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter  
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent  
so he didn't open his mouth.

33 In his humiliation justice was taken away from him.

Who can tell the story of his descendants  
because his life was taken from the earth? [Isaiah 53:7-8]

34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, about whom does the prophet say this? Is he talking about himself or someone else?" 35 Starting with that passage, Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him. 36 As they went down the road, they came to some water.

The eunuch said, "Look! Water! What would keep me from being baptized?" [The best manuscripts of Acts do not contain what is printed as verse 37 in some translations] 38 He ordered that the carriage halt. Both Philip and the eunuch went down to the water, where Philip baptized him.

Mia Hamm: "Somewhere behind the athlete you've become and the hours of practice and the coaches who have pushed you is a little girl who fell in love with the game and never looked back... play for her."

Hamm played not from duty but from love—for "the little girl who fell in love with the game." Philip's meeting with the Ethiopian flowed from the same kind of love—his love for Jesus, not religious duty. Whatever led the Ethiopian to Jerusalem, he was curious about the sacred Hebrew Scriptures in Isaiah. But he needed help understanding what he was reading. Guided by the Spirit (not just human strategy), Philip ran to the carriage to help this seeking man find the meaning of the gospel message.

- Non-religious and nominally religious people need help making sense of what can be a confusing message. Like the Ethiopian, many are open and curious—they just need someone willing to come alongside and explain. Has the Spirit ever nudged you, like Phillip, to share when you hadn't planned to do it? Do you feel equipped to do so? If not, what could help you grow in confidence and capability? ([Click here](#) for ways Resurrection might help.)
- The eunuch was excluded from full temple worship under [Leviticus 21:18-20; Deuteronomy 23:1](#). \* But Isaiah—the book the eunuch was reading—said that eunuchs and foreigners should be welcomed ([Isaiah 56:3-8](#)). Philip's prompt baptism of this man carried out Isaiah's prophetic insight. The eunuch had been unwelcomed by other forms of Jewish faith, but "he is now being welcomed as a member of this new movement." \*\* How did this embody the church's mission? Who in your community has been made to feel excluded that the church is called to welcome?

**Prayer:** God, teach me how to listen closely for the Holy Spirit's whispering guidance. Help me have the courage to eagerly obey. Stir within me, Lord, a desire to better equip myself to help curious people make sense of the gospel story, and to welcome those who have been excluded. Amen.

\* F. Scott Spencer, study note on Acts 8:27 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 234 NT.

\*\* Craig Keener, study note on Acts 8:36 in *NIV, Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. Zondervan, p. 9921, Kindle Edition.

## **Go! Make Disciples—all nations, every day**

### **SATURDAY 7.4.26 Matthew 28:16-20**

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. 18 Jesus came near and spoke to them, "I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."

Pelé: "Enthusiasm is everything. It must be taut and vibrating like a guitar string."

Pelé saw enthusiasm as vital to winning soccer. How much more vital in sharing the world-changing message of Jesus? As *CEB Study Bible* scholars noted, "The central task given Jesus' followers is to *make* disciples, with going, baptizing, and teaching serving that central task." \* Resurrection's purpose statement, based on Jesus' commission, is "to build a Christian community where non-religious and nominally religious people are becoming deeply committed Christians." Revelation 2:4 warned early Christians not to lose "the love you had at first." You're called to be part of the greatest cause ever. That's something to be enthusiastic about—and Jesus will be with you every day!

NOTE: We don't go on our own authority or in our own strength. We go because Jesus, who has all authority, sends us. And Matthew said, "Some doubted," yet Jesus commissioned them anyway.

That's right—Jesus sends doubters too.

- As you go about the daily rhythms of ordinary life, Jesus said, prioritize disciple-making. To "make disciples" is to guide people to accept Christ's claims. People become disciples by joining the community of believers and submitting to Christ as Lord of their life. Teaching disciples means leading them toward obedience to Jesus, not just intellectually teaching doctrine. \*\* Jesus said, "Go." How's your "going," anyway? Is Christ Lord of your life? How is your Lord leading you to make disciple-making a priority, from conversations with someone you see every day to more formal, planned outreach activities?
- If your enthusiasm is lagging, remember how Jesus ended his commission: "I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age." What Matthew taught at the start of his gospel wasn't just for Christmas: "Jesus is 'Emmanuel,' 'God with us' (see [Matthew 1:23](#))." \*\*\* How will you and Jesus continue or expand your disciple-making through the rest of 2026?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I want to glorify you with my faithful, enthusiastic commitment to make disciples. Help me remember that you are always present with me as I live out your commission. Amen.

\* Eugene Eung-Chun Park and Joel B. Green, study note on Matthew 28:19-20 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 63 NT.

\*\* *NIV Bible Commentary*, Volume 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994, page 134.

\*\*\* Park and Green, *ibid*.