

Sermon Notes: May 3, 2026

[Lectionary Readings](#)

Focus: Philip the disciple

I am going to spend my sermon time looking at Philip the disciple in the Gospel of John. This Philip is not to be conflated with another Philip in Acts of the Apostles.

There are four points of contact with this disciple in the Gospel of John.

- Chapter 1, Nathaneal thinks Philip is all little looney to be talking about this guy he met (Jesus). Without debate, Philip brought Nathael to “come and see.”
- Chapter 6, Phillip is not sure how they are going to feed 5000 people. He gets busy serving once Jesus gets the feast going.
- Chapter 12, Greeks ask Philip to take them to see Jesus. He walks them to Jesus.
- Chapter 14, Philip asks Jesus for more insight at the Last Supper. He sort of gets an answer. Jesus says if you have seen him you have seen the Creator. Philip was brave enough to ask what everyone else was thinking.

My big take away (s) from the life of Philip:

- When you don't know the answer, walk with those who don't know either.
- When you are not sure how things are going to work out, serve alongside your fellow pilgrims.
- When people want your help, give it to them.
- When you need answers, ask – with God's help you can develop the ability to act for yourself, your community and God – day-by-day.

For us, Philip can be a model for action and care. He chooses action over answers. **“Today you, tomorrow me”** Back in 2010 a reddit user posted a story about hitchhikers and his car breaking down. I consider it a perfect story (I DID NOT WRITE THIS):

“Just about every time I see someone I stop. I kind of got out of the habit in the last couple of years, moved to a big city and all that, my girlfriend wasn't too stoked on the practice. Then some something happened to me that changed me and I am back to offering rides habitually. If you would indulge me, it is long story and has almost nothing to do with hitch hiking other than happening on a road.

This past year I have had 3 instances of car trouble. A blow out on a freeway, a bunch of blown fuses and an out of gas situation. All of them were while driving other people's cars which, for some reason, makes it worse on an emotional level. It makes it worse on a practical level as well, what with the fact that I carry things like a jack and extra fuses in my car, and know enough not to park, facing downhill, on a steep incline with less than a gallon of fuel.

Anyway, each of these times this garbage happened I was DISGUSTED with how people would not bother to help me. I spent hours on the side of the freeway waiting, watching roadside assistance vehicles blow past me, for AAA to show. The 4 gas stations I asked for a gas can at told me that they couldn't loan them out 'for my safety' but I could buy a 1-gallon one with no cap for \$15. It was enough, each time, to make you say dang, like 'this country is going to hell in a handbasket.' But you know who came to my rescue all

three times? Immigrants. Mexican immigrants. None of them spoke a lick of the language. But one of those dudes had a profound effect on me.

He was the guy that stopped to help me with a blowout with his whole family of 6 in tow. I was on the side of the road for close to 4 hours. Big jeep, blown rear tire, had a spare but no jack. I had signs in the windows of the car, big signs that said NEED A JACK and offered money. No dice. Right as I am about to give up and just hitch out there a van pulls over and dude bounds out. He sizes the situation up and calls for his youngest daughter who speaks English. He conveys through her that he has a jack but it is too small for the Jeep so we will need to brace it. He produces a saw from the van and cuts a log out of a downed tree on the side of the road. We rolled it over, put his jack on top, and bam, in business. I start taking the wheel off and, if you can believe it, I broke his tire iron. It was one of those collapsible ones and I wasn't careful, and I snapped the head I needed clean off.

No worries, he runs to the van, gives it to his wife and she is gone in a flash, down the road to buy a tire iron. She is back in 15 minutes, we finish the job with a little sweat and cussing (stupid log was starting to give), and I am a very happy man. We are both filthy and sweaty. The wife produces a large water jug for us to wash our hands in. I tried to put a 20 in the man's hand but he wouldn't take it so I instead gave it to his wife as quietly as I could. I thanked them up one side and down the other. I asked the little girl where they lived, thinking maybe I could send them a gift for being so awesome. She says they live in Mexico. They are here so mommy and daddy can pick peaches for the next few weeks. After that they are going to pick cherries then go back home. She asks if I have had lunch and when I told her 'no' she gave me a tamale from their cooler.

So, to clarify, a family that is undoubtedly poorer than you, me, and just about everyone else on that stretch of road, working on a seasonal basis where time is money, took an hour or two out of their day to help some strange dude on the side of the road when people in tow trucks were just passing me by. Wow...

But we aren't done yet. I thank them again and walk back to my car and open the foil on the tamale because I am starving at this point and what do I find inside? My \$20 bill! I whirl around and run up to the van and the guy rolls his window down. He sees the \$20 in my hand and just shaking his head no like he won't take it. All I can think to say is 'Por Favor, Por Favor, Por Favor' with my hands out. Dude just smiles, shakes his head and, with what looked like great concentration, tried his hardest to speak to me in English: *Today you.... tomorrow me.*

Rolling up his window, drove away, his daughter waving to me in the rear view. I sat in my car eating the best tamale of all time and I just cried. Like a little girl. It has been a rough year and nothing has broke my way. This was so out of left field I just couldn't deal. In the 5 months since I have changed a couple of tires, given a few rides to gas stations and, once, went 50 miles out of my way to get a girl to an airport. I won't accept money. Every time I tell them the same thing when we are through:

'Today you.... tomorrow me.' *u/rhoner (user on Reddit)*

Ask God, act for God, and pay it forward to others. What you know is far less important than what you do and how you show care. In doing so, Philip would be impressed that you are following his example.

Todd