

## Pastor's Winter Book Club 2022

*Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*

By Rachel Held Evans

### Session #6

**February 9 at 6pm on Zoom and February 10 at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall**

For Session #5 Read "The Water" and "Gospel Stories"

**Zoom Link for Wednesday, February 9 at 6pm: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84865582248>**

Or use meeting ID: 848 6558 2248

### Opening Prayer

#### Warm up question:

What are some of your favorite stories from the gospels? Is there one encounter someone had with Jesus that always moves you? Why do you think that story strikes you the way that it does?

#### "The Water"

1. What was surprising about how the author retold the scripture contained in John 4?

#### "Gospel Stories"

*Every Christian gets a testimony; every Christian gets a "Gospel according to..."*

*The church is not a group of people who believe all the same things; the church is a group of people caught up in the same story, with Jesus at the center.*

2. What challenged you or resonated with you from this chapter? What did you highlight or hope to discuss?
3. When did you first encounter Jesus? Even if it was in childhood, try to recount as many details as possible. What did Jesus look like, sound like, smell like, taste like? What about the message or the presence of Jesus first struck you as "good news"?
4. What do you think of the author's point that "it strikes me as fruitless to try and turn the gospel into a statement when God so clearly gave us a story—or, more precisely, a person." Agree or disagree? What might be gained by rendering the gospel into a single declaration and what might be lost?
5. What does it mean—to you personally, to the church, and to the world—that "Jesus didn't just come to die; he came to live"?
6. Why are you a Christian?

## Read Acts 8:26-40

<sup>26</sup>Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) <sup>27</sup>So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup>and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it."  
<sup>30</sup>So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup>He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup>Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. <sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." <sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" <sup>38</sup>He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. <sup>40</sup>But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

7. What do you notice about this scripture?

8. According to this story, what is the good news?

### Creative Interaction with Scripture:

One of Jesus' favorite methods for describing the Kingdom is through simile, riddle, and metaphor. (The Kingdom is like a treasure buried in a field, like yeast mixed into flour, like wheat growing in weeds, like a net catching an abundance of fish, etc.)

Artists: illustrate the most compelling of these images with a sketch or two.

Writers: add your own images to the mix, drawing from your own experience and modern culture, beginning each one with, "the Kingdom is like..."

### Sharing Joys and Concerns

### Closing Prayer

For Session #6 read "The Sea" and "Fish Stories"