

**Devotional Guide**

**June 1-6, 2026**



# **Connections That Change Everything**

Speaker: Mike Kleven, Lead Pastor

***Connecting to Jesus brings you home to God and your family: the true home where you have always belonged. The message reveals our shared experience of being dead in trespasses, far off, and without hope. But God, rich in mercy and love, makes us alive together with Christ and seats us in heavenly places by grace through faith. The cross tears down hostility's wall, forming one new people—strangers becoming family in God's household. As new creations, we are now ambassadors entrusted with reconciliation.***

## **How to Use This Guide:**

Set aside 10-15 minutes daily. Read the Bible, reflect on the thought, answer questions, pray, and take the action step. Commit to this for growth—journal insights and share with a friend for accountability.

# Day 1: Our Stories of Not Belonging

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:17

The sermon opened with a gas-station worker in International Falls who panicked, “I’m sorry... I’m always in the way... I’m always a problem,” and the story of a fifth-grade girl nicknamed “Little Itch.” These painful narratives mirror our own. We all carry stories that tell us we don’t belong—dead in trespasses and sins, far off, strangers without hope.

Yet the Big Idea reminds us that connecting to Jesus changes everything. In Christ the old has passed away; the new has come. Small moments of feeling out of place are invitations to run to the home we were made for.

## **Reflection Questions:**

1. What does Ephesians 2:1-3 reveal about our natural condition?
2. Which illustration from the sermon felt most like your own story?
3. Where do you still carry a “not belonging” narrative?
4. How does knowing the old has passed away give you hope?
5. What does the Big Idea mean for how you see yourself today?

**Prayer Prompt:** Lord, thank You that my story doesn’t end with isolation. Forgive where I’ve believed I don’t belong. Make me alive in Christ and draw me home. Amen.

**Action Step:** Journal one lie you’ve believed about yourself and replace it with the truth of Ephesians 2:1-3 and 5:17. Share it with a trusted friend.

## Day 2: The “But God” Moment

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 2:4-7

After painting the dark picture of our condition, Paul writes two life-changing words: “But God...” Being rich in mercy and because of the great love with which He loved us, God made us alive together with Christ. The sermon highlighted how this mercy, love, and grace provide what we could never earn. We are not only forgiven—we are raised up and seated with Christ in heavenly places.

The Big Idea comes alive here: Connecting to Jesus brings you home. In daily struggles or feelings of defeat, remember that God’s “But God” moment is still speaking over your life today.

### Reflection Questions:

1. Why is “But God” the turning point in Ephesians 2?
2. How have you experienced God’s rich mercy in your own life?
3. What does it mean to be “seated with Christ” right now?
4. Where do you need the “But God” truth to speak louder than your circumstances?
5. How does this shift your view of the Big Idea?

**Prayer Prompt:** Father, thank You for Your rich mercy and great love. When I feel far off, remind me of the “But God” moment that brought me home. Amen.

**Action Step:** Write “But God...” on a note card with Ephesians 2:4-5 and place it where you’ll see it daily this week.

# Day 3: Saved by Grace Through Faith

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 2:8-10

**Devotional Thought:** The sermon explained that faith is more than right beliefs—it is believing allegiance to Jesus as Lord. By grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works He prepared beforehand.

The Big Idea is not earned but received: Connecting to Jesus brings you home. This frees us from striving and invites us into joyful obedience. In a world that measures worth by performance, grace declares you already belong.

## Reflection Questions:

1. What does Ephesians 2:8-9 teach about how we are saved?
2. How is faith “believing allegiance” different from just believing facts?
3. What good works might God have prepared for you this week?
4. Where do you still try to earn your place instead of receiving grace?
5. How does this truth make the Big Idea personal?

**Prayer Prompt:** Jesus, thank You for saving me by grace through faith. I pledge my allegiance to You as Lord. Lead me into the good works You prepared. Amen.

**Action Step:** Choose one “good work” God may have prepared (helping, encouraging, forgiving) and do it today as an act of allegiance.

# Day 4: The Cross Breaks Every Wall

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 2:14-16

## **Devotional Thought:**

The cross did far more than forgive sins—it broke down the dividing wall of hostility and created one new people in place of the two. The sermon showed how Jesus reconciles us both to God in one body through the cross, killing the hostility. Strangers become family in God’s household.

The Big Idea rings true: Connecting to Jesus brings you home to God and your family. In a divided world, this truth calls us to live as one new people united in Christ.

## **Reflection Questions:**

1. What does the cross accomplish according to Ephesians 2:14-16?
2. What “walls” still divide people in your world?
3. How does the cross make strangers into family?
4. Where do you need to tear down a wall in your own relationships?
5. How does this deepen your understanding of the Big Idea?

**Prayer Prompt:** Lord Jesus, thank You for breaking down every wall through Your cross. Make me a peacemaker who lives as part of Your one new family. Amen.

**Action Step:** Reach across one dividing line (race, politics, background) with kindness or a conversation this week.

# Day 5: New Creation and the Ministry of Reconciliation

**Bible Reading:** 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

**Devotional Thought:**

In Christ we are a new creation. God reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. The sermon declared that we are now ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us: “Be reconciled to God.” Having found our true home, we are sent to invite others.

The Big Idea moves from personal rescue to mission: Connecting to Jesus brings you home—and sends you to bring others home too.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What does 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 say about our new identity?
2. How does being a new creation change how you see your past?
3. What does it mean to be an “ambassador” in everyday life?
4. Who might God be asking you to carry the message of reconciliation to?
5. How will the Big Idea shape your relationships this week?

**Prayer Prompt:** Redeeming God, thank You for making me new. Fill me with Your message of reconciliation and give me courage to be Your ambassador. Amen.

**Action Step:** Pray for one person who feels far from home and look for a natural way to share hope in Jesus.

# Day 6: Living as Family in Your True Home

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 2:19; John 3:16

## **Devotional Thought:**

Review the week: From feeling like outsiders to being fellow citizens and members of God's household.

The Big Idea—Connecting to Jesus brings you home to God and your family: the true home where you have always belonged—now becomes our daily reality. God's love motivated everything so that we might live freely, love boldly, and invite others into the family. Celebrate your homecoming and keep the door open for others.

## **Reflection Questions:**

1. What does Ephesians 2:19 promise about our new status?
2. How has this devotional guide changed how you see belonging?
3. What was your biggest insight from the week?
4. Where will you live out the Big Idea outward this coming week?
5. How can you celebrate being home in God's family today?

**Prayer Prompt:** Loving Father, thank You for bringing me home. Help me live as part of Your family and invite others to the table. Amen.

**Action Step:** Tell one person this week about your true home in Jesus and invite them to church or a conversation. Review the guide weekly for ongoing momentum.



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