

The End of the Beginning: Who Do You Belong To?

5-Day Devotional



1

ENDINGS CREATE QUESTIONS

LIFE DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE

- What do I do now?
- Where do I go from here?
- Is there a way forward?
- Even in our faith walk—an ending creates questions.
- Good Friday felt like an ending to the disciples.
 - Now what?
 - Are we in danger?
 - Is this over?
- Thomas left, Judas took his life, and the rest of them hid in fear.
- Endings create uncertainty.

"Every ending creates questions... but in the Kingdom of God every ending signals a beginning."



2

GOD PROVIDES ANSWERS

JESUS SHOWS UP IN OUR UNCERTAINTY

- The resurrection of Jesus caused a recalibration.
- 40 days later, Jesus ascended—but promised something new for every believer: the Holy Spirit.
- Even with the promise there was uncertainty.
- If it was me, this is an "oh no" moment—can I actually do this?
- God knew our questions were coming and gave us the gospels—the very words of Christ—to guide our way.
- Those who see they need help are the ones who receive help.
- Jesus shows up in the lives of those who are uncertain.

"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."
Matthew 9:12



3

WE ALL BELONG TO SOMETHING

OUR ALLEGIANCE SHAPES OUR LIVES

- A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.
Matthew 10:24-25
- We all bind ourselves to someone or something—and take our cues from them.
- The fruit of our affiliation is how we conduct our lives.
- By their fruit you will recognize them.
Matthew 7:20
- Jesus invites us to be like him. You can't be him, but you can be like him.
- When you don't feel like you belong—he knows.
- You are his... you are important... you belong here.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? ... So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."
Matthew 10:29-31



4

BAPTISM: THE MOMENT JESUS CLAIMS US

YOU BELONG TO HIM—FOREVER

- In baptism, Jesus claims you as his own.
- It is the moment you say yes—and Jesus says, "You are mine."
- Baptism is a public declaration of belonging.
- You are united with Jesus in his death, burial, and resurrection.
(Romans 6:3-4)
- It's not about what you do to earn a place—it's about what Jesus has already done for you.
- Once claimed, you belong to him—forever.

"You are his... you are important... you belong here."



THE JOURNEY: FROM QUESTIONS TO A NEW BEGINNING



QUESTIONS
Life doesn't make sense



SPIRITUAL NEED
Leads to growth



GOD'S WORD
Provides guidance



BELONGING
You are his



BAPTISM
Claimed by Jesus forever



A NEW BEGINNING
A better way forward

SAME QUESTIONS. A WISER WAY. BECAUSE JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING.

Day 1: Every Ending Holds a Beginning

Reading: Acts 1:6-11

Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Devotional: Endings are disorienting. The disciples had walked with Jesus, watched Him die, witnessed His resurrection, and now stood watching Him disappear into the clouds. Every instinct told them this was loss. But God was already writing the next chapter. The same is true in your life. The job that ended, the relationship that closed, the season that finished — none of these are the final word. God specializes in beginnings that grow out of what feels like endings. Today, instead of fixating on what has closed behind you, ask God to open your eyes to what He is already building ahead of you. The story is not over.

Reflection Questions:

- What ending in your life has felt final but may actually be the start of something new?
- How can you practice trusting God in the uncertainty between an ending and a new beginning?

Practical Application: Write down one ending you are currently grieving. Beneath it, write the words: "God is not finished." Place it somewhere you will see it throughout the day.

Day 2: The Gift of Spiritual Need

Reading: Matthew 9:10-13

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Devotional: There is a quiet trap in the spiritual life: the belief that maturity means having all the answers. But Jesus consistently moved toward people who knew they needed help, not toward those who were confident they had everything figured out. Spiritual need is not a sign of weakness — it is the very condition that keeps us open to growth, to grace, and to God's voice. The person who admits uncertainty creates space for God to speak. The

person who claims to have it all figured out has already closed the door. Today, your questions are not a problem. They are an invitation.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of your faith have you been tempted to stop asking questions?
- How does acknowledging spiritual need actually draw you closer to God rather than further away?

Practical Application: Identify one spiritual question you have been afraid to ask. Bring it honestly before God in prayer today, and sit quietly for a few minutes, open to whatever He may stir in you.

Day 3: What You Belong To Shapes Who You Become

Reading: Matthew 10:24-25

“The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!”

Devotional: Every person belongs to something. This is simply how human beings are wired. We absorb the values, attitudes, and behaviors of whatever we give our deepest loyalty to. If that loyalty belongs to status, we will do whatever it takes to protect our image. If it belongs to a political identity, we will cut down others to defend it. But if our deepest loyalty belongs to Jesus, we will begin — imperfectly, gradually — to reflect His patience, His compassion, and His peace. The fruit of your life tells the story of your allegiance more honestly than any label you wear. Today, let the fruit do the talking.

Reflection Questions:

- When you look honestly at your words and actions this past week, what do they reveal about your deepest allegiance?
- What would it look like practically to make Jesus your primary identity rather than a secondary one?

Practical Application: Review your social media activity or conversations from the past week. Ask yourself honestly: does this reflect someone who belongs to Jesus? Make one concrete adjustment today.

Day 4: Come Into the Light

Reading: John 3:19-21

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Devotional: Hiding is exhausting. Keeping up appearances, defending positions, managing perceptions — it drains the life out of a person. Jesus offers a radically different way of living: come into the light. Not to be shamed, but to be freed. When we stop hiding the shadowed parts of our lives and bring them honestly before God, we no longer have to spend energy holding the house of cards together. There is nothing left to protect. There is only the simple, restful truth that we are loved children of God. The light is not a threat. It is the place where we finally get to exhale.

Reflection Questions:

- What part of your life have you been keeping in the shadows, even from God?
- What would it feel like to bring that into the light and simply rest in being known and loved?

Practical Application: Spend time in honest, unguarded prayer today. Tell God something you have been reluctant to say out loud. No performance, no polished language — just honesty.

Day 5: You Are Worth More Than Many Sparrows

Reading: Matthew 10:29-31

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Devotional: On the days when you wonder whether you truly belong, whether God actually notices you, whether your doubts have pushed you too far out — remember the sparrow. God's attention is not reserved for the impressive or the spiritually polished. It reaches all the way down to the most ordinary, overlooked creature. And if that is true of a sparrow, how much more is it true of you? Your baptism was not a transaction that expired. God laid a claim on you that uncertainty cannot undo and distance cannot dissolve. You are not forgotten. You are not on the outside looking in. You are His, and He is not letting go.

Reflection Questions:

- When do you most often feel like you do not belong or are not noticed by God?
- How does the image of God's awareness of every sparrow change the way you see your own value to Him?

Practical Application: The next time you feel forgotten or disconnected, say these words aloud: "I am known. I am claimed. I belong to God." Let that declaration interrupt the doubt before it takes root.