

# Hometown: On a Mission

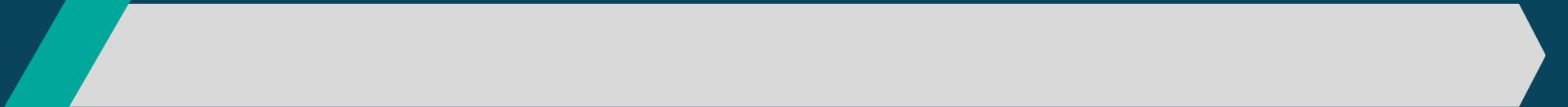
Our mission as Christians,  
our mission as a church






# Mission Statement

**At Hometown we exist to connect people with God, with each other, and with the community**




# The Punchline

In a world where we can connect with anything anywhere, connect with God who is everything everywhere

A large teal chevron graphic pointing to the right, located on the left side of the slide.

**“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.**




**You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.**

# True Connection

- ★ Jesus is the vine and we are the branches
- ★ God wants us to be strong and healthy
- ★ Have the best connection


# Best Connection





If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.





As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

# Establish a Connection


- ★ Accepting Jesus and starting a relationship with Him
- ★ This starts in your heart
- ★ Believe you have sinned and Jesus paid for that

# First Date: Establish a Connection



OR



A large teal chevron graphic pointing to the right, located on the left side of the slide.

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

# Strengthen the Connection

- ★ Continue to live with God
- ★ Weak connections break or fray
- ★ Make a strong connection

# WHAT'S A STRONG CONNECTION?



# How We Strengthen The Connection

- ★ Prayer
  - Talk to God
- ★ The Bible
  - Let God talk to you
- ★ Live
  - Things that make God proud

## Wrap Up

- ★ Maybe you need to establish a connection with God
- ★ Maybe you need to re-establish a connection with God
- ★ Maybe you need to strengthen your connection with God



## Audio file

[Connect With God Audio.mp3](#)

## Transcript

It's a new season. There's a lot of stuff. There's a lot of stuff to look forward to. I'm probably a football guy. I'm excited for the NFL kicking off in the Packer game today. I ask what we're looking forward to in fall because we are kicking off our fall here at hometown today with Holy Guacamole and the tacos and everything. We're also going to kick off a little miniseries for the next three weeks. We will be in our mission statement. At hometown. So I want you to make sure to come back each week here. Each of the three different parts, they're all important to give us off. I want to start with our mission statement. What it is, whether you've been with us before or you never have, just need a reminder. Here is how our mission statement at hometown. At hometown, we exist to connect people with God with each other and with the community. So what we're trying to do is do these things as a church. We think it's important as a church to connect in all these ways, connect being the big word. So what we're going to do in the next three weeks is break it down in a section by section, connecting with God, then with others. Than with the. Community. But what I love about this statement is that while it's for our church and we wrote it for hometown, it really relates to our mission and what we should do as Christians as well we should. Do these things individually. We're called to live out this mission as Christian, so and today we're going to start with connecting with God. So the first part I think is the biggest part connecting with God. Here's kind of our. Client today in a world where we can connect with anything, anywhere, connect with God, who is Everything Everywhere. So in the world we can connect with anything, anywhere, right, cell phones, e-mail, texting, apps, everything. I can message with my brother who lives in Indonesia very easily, right? We can stay connected but make sure to connect with God who is Everything Everywhere. Right. So we're going to make sure that we can connect well with God. So let's dive right in. We have kind of 1 main passage. I'm going to jump around some different scripture today. The one that is bookmarked on some of your Bibles there that will throw up here is kind of my theme passage. This will be John, 15 versus one through 4 can use your Bibles apps anything you want, I will. In the NIV translation. So here's John 15 verses one through 4. This is Jesus speaking says I'm the true vine. My father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit. Well, every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I. Have spoken to you. Remain in me. As I also remain in you, no branch can bear fruit by itself, it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. All right, so again, this is kind of our theme passage. And what he does here, Jesus uses this imagery of vine and branches. Jesus being the vine, us being the branches. So for us to produce fruit to be healthy, to be strong, we need to be connected to the vine, that vine, that is Jesus. And notice the wording. Jesus uses the true vine. The right vine. He's the best vine because they're going to be other things in this world that will feel like a vine that will be like a good one, whether it's career or well. Or anything else in your life that might seem like a good vine to really attach to, Jesus says I am the true vine. I am the sturdy vine. The best thing to be connected to. God wants us as branches to be strong, to be healthy and to bear good fruit. And it takes being connected to the right vine. It takes having. That best connection to do that? So as I'm writing about connections this week, I was thinking about connections. Obviously now I am old enough

to remember dial-up Internet. OK, who's with me? Yeah, in the room, right. Remember that. Ding, Ding, Ding, Ding, Ding kind of noise that it makes is it's trying to connect. When when we first got it and it's like, oh, it's going to do it. Is it going to connect? Is it going to fail? It'd be super slow. It took forever. I'd be like mid conversation on AOL or MSN Messenger and then it would drop. And where to go? Right? All this stuff. Well, now connections have improved over. Years, they just spent the last year in my neighborhood digging up the ground everywhere to put in fiber Internet because it's super fast and all these high speeds, it got stronger, faster, more reliable. So now we don't have to worry about missing our favorite influencer on Instagram. Or like, we can not drop the show or streaming on Netflix or Peacock. It's all good. We stay connected. To our Internet. Why? Because we're using the best connection we have. I don't know anybody still using dial-up because there's better connections. We have these best connections we can have. If you're using dial-up, that's fine, no judgment. But maybe, no, no, mark, wouldn't Mark's enough of a tech guy to have a better connection than that, right? Mark yeah, Mark works from home and he works in like a very technical job he has. Probably better. In Earth than most of us. So how do we get this best connection with God? Want to break this down in two parts? I think there's two big ways we're going to establish a connection. We're going to strengthen a connection, so let's start with establishing a connection. I'm going to read Romans 10/9 through 13. It says this. Paul wrote this letter to the Romans. If you declare with your mouth, Jesus Lord, believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. You will be saved. First, with your heart that you believe and are justified, it's with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved as Scripture says, anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame. But there's no difference between Jew and Gentile. The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him. For everyone who calls the name of the Lord will be saved. Establishing that connection with Jesus is accepting Jesus and beginning a relationship with him says it starts in your heart. It's like I know this in my heart. I believe this in my heart that Jesus died for. Me and he. Rose from the grave, defeating death. He died because we are sinful. People and we would be separated from. Him this sin. That we have in our lives sustained on. Our lives kept him. Separate from us, but he came. He paid for our debt, our ransom, our cost. Whatever word you want to use. He paid for it, and then he defeated death by rising. So now we can spend eternity with. We want to be able to have eternity with God in heaven. It's fantastic to be with God forever. So we established the connection by accepting this and accepting Jesus, believing in your heart of hearts that you have sinned, you will sin again, but by the grace of God, your slate is wiped clean and you can begin a relationship with God that lasts for eternity. So establishing a connection to begin a relationship. I was working at a coffee shop this week. I think it was Monday when I was out there and I work with Ryan, who's here a lot and we're sitting at a coffee shop. And like how I work. I'm writing these and I work for a while and I have to let my head clear. So I'll kind of look up and look around. I like to people watch quite a bit and like, I make up stories about everybody in my head. I'm like, I turn and we're sitting by the window and I look outside and I just start laughing. And I think Ryan's probably like mid. Story to me? He's. Like what? Like there's this couple out there and they're so giving me first date vibes because you can see them. They're across the table and the guys kind of doing this thing. He's kind of smiling, looking down like sheepishly telling the story and thinks it's totally working and the girls are over here kind of backing her. She's smiling and nodding really attentively. It's like a first date right? And 1st dates usually go one of these two ways. You got the smile on the thing or you got the. Ohh what am I doing here? How do I get out of here right? Now this this one I saw seemed to be. Going that way. So I hope it works for him, but the idea is. That first date to see if you can establish a connection to start a relationship is their connection. Their relationship starts by starting with a connection, so establishing a

connection with God is how our relationship starts with him. Believe it in your hearts. Say it with your words. That is the first step and the best step, and maybe that's where you are today and that's. But it doesn't end there either, right? We establish it, but it doesn't end if we look at our passage about the vine and the branches. Jesus says many times and even later on in that chapter remain in me. Remain in me. Remain in me. Keep that relationship going. Strengthen that connection with God, Colossians 2, six and seven. So says, excuse me. So then just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord. Continue to live your lives in him rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Paul writes this letter to the churches and says continue to live in him. This is not a one. And done thing. It's great to accept him and establish that connection. That's awesome. But he says, strengthen your connection, keep it going. Continue to live with him, and I cannot stress the importance of this and not because there are so many things out there that will try to weaken. Or fray, or even just completely break our connection with God. It could be struggles in your. Personal life that does. Pain or heartbreak or bad things that have happened. There may be other people in your. Life. That just really. Challenge will you believe challenge your faith? These things can all have potential. To kind of work away and whittle away at our connection with God, so we want to be strengthening connections. Why? Because these strong connections don't break. A couple weeks ago, Joel was playing with his toy. She has my daughter. This toy is his stretchy hand thing, almost things that she's stretching it out now. Toys aren't made like they're used to, right? They break toys from my they are still intact, but she's got this one that she pulls and she's swinging it around and naturally it breaks because not supposed to be played with like this. And she's all distraught like God. Broke it, broke the piece, broke off. And her older brother Jeremiah, being the sweetheart of a Big Brother, is like I'll. Put it back together for you. So he's like, OK, I'll do it. And he suggests using tape. Well, this is a stretchy thing. You can guess what happens with tape the second she. Starts swinging around. We had a weak connection between the parts, so we have to have this brainstorming session of like, OK, what are we going to use? And he's like, oh, let's think about it, Dad. And eventually we go through a few things. He talks it out and we land on hot. Glue which you can see up there. We tried that and it's actually still together by some miracle today. It is still together, probably haven't played with it as much, but why it's stuck together because we strengthen the connection between those two parts. That needed to come together. So we need to be strengthening our connection with God so that we stay connected no matter what comes at us, right? It's like, OK, we need to strengthen it. This is all great in theory. How the heck do we do it? Let's talk about that part. How can we strengthen our connection and we can strengthen our connection as individual Christians and followers of Jesus, and we do this as a church. So let's take a look, I'm going to take a little bit of a cue from our event today to talk about strengthening your connection with Jesus, kind of in the way of like a Taco. Right. So a Taco, if you're familiar, has you have three parts. OK, I used to watch a lot of cooking. Shows the chef named Ron Sanchez, who said your Taco has. Kind of your vessel, your tortilla, your lettuce wrap. Right. You have that going on your bowl. Then you have your filling your protein, your chicken, your steak, whatever you're putting in it, which shows our question yesterday on Facebook, and then you have your garnish like you're topping your salsa. So have these three parts. We'll have three waves that we can strengthen our connection with God and much like how the parts of a Taco can come in various different. Forms right? Corn or flour tortillas? Different meats, different salsas. But those parts are all there. Same thing with strengthening our connection with God. We have these three things we can do them in different ways, but I think they all help us strengthen it. So let's start right. So we have our tortilla. Right, so this is I like flour tortillas. That's the way I roll. This is going to be like prayer. We'll start with prayer. This is our vessel here. Talking to God, individual prayer

time and my encouragement with prayer and individual prayer is don't over complicate it. Prayer should be like Nike. Just do it, OK? I think sometimes we can get in our heads that I gotta. Pray the exact right. Thing exact right. Wait. No, just stop. And talk to God.

Do it.

Because connections grow with communication, you can talk to God about anything. There is nothing too big, nothing too small, nothing too medium for God. So talk to him individually. And then as a church, we want to pray together when our small groups get together. If there are things that people need prayer for, we can pray together, more voices, more prayers that never hurts. So pray individually, praise a group if you need people to pray for you, there is a prayer page on our website. You can feel free to. Go to and fill out the prayer form we. Would love to pray for. All right, so we have that. So we're going to pray, right? So we had our tortilla. OK, put that there. Now we got filling. Is my favorite part. This is some? Of my feeling OK, this is out there today.

That's good.

Beef, I have a BBQ style beef.

All right.

There it goes. All right, so the filling, this is reading the Bible, letting God talk to. You let God. Fill you we believe the Bible is the living, breathing word of God. And we have it so accessible to us, there are Bibles on your table if you need a physical Bible, please just take one of those. We would love for you to do that if you need. Also, on phones, computers, tablets, free apps abound. They. Are all over the place OK? So go ahead and just take out the word in. Let it come into you. And if you're unsure about something that you read, ask, feel free to ask me. Ask Julie. Ask one of our leaders, and then pray about. It too, we. Would love to talk to you about what you're reading, and it's OK to be confused or have questions about what you're reading. I've been through the entire Bible in my life and I still get questions. The point is, letting God trying to fill us. We're trying to read it. We're taking it. If you have nowhere to start, you're like, I don't know. OK. I want to read the Bible. Where do I go again? Talk to one of us. Also, there is a page on our website that says resources. There are Bible reading plans on there that are free that you. Can follow to help you get going. But the point is, let God talk to you through his words. We can be filled by what he says to us, just like how that tacos fill. Then finally. We got to have the garnish right, we got nice tomato salsa here that will go on the Taco too. I also like a good green Verde salsa. Those are good. But that garnish, the final part, is just live. Live for. In Romans 14 it says if we live for God we. Belong to God. Living for God is doing things that pleasing. Living in a way that pleases him not behaving in ways that don't honor him, the way we treat people, the language we use, what we look at, what we watch, what happens in our minds. Than we do things for him helping those in need, showing kindness, giving grace, speaking truth. This is living for God, living a life that he'll be proud of. You will make mistakes. I do all the time. We'll make mistakes. But the point is we're trying to live for him. And living a life for God is super fun to do with other people.

Right.

We have other people in this room that we can live our life for God for next week. We're going to talk about connecting with others and kind of having some life together. So come back and hear that part because that is super awesome too. But it still starts with connecting with God. We want to connect

with God. Maybe you're in the place this morning where we need to establish that connection for the first time. That's great. I would love to talk to you about that if you want to do that. Maybe you're in a place like. OK, I kind of need to reestablish it. It's frayed quite a bit. And you need to do that. That's OK place to be. Maybe it's gotten a little weaker than you'd like. It's OK to be there, but recognize it. Maybe your connection, like man, it's great. Like I'm in a real good spot right now. I'm in a great spot and I want to just keep strengthening that connection. That's also an awesome place to be. OK. Because in any three of those, we're realizing that we need a connection with God, that that connection is important because we're in a world where we can connect with anything, anywhere we want to make sure that we are connecting with God. Was Everything Everywhere? Let's pray. Got to thank you for today that we can come together and just be together and guys, we're going to head out and hang out in just a little bit here. God, I pray that would be on our minds and our hearts is still connecting. As we wrap up and we go about our weeks and our days and this fall that we would focus on connecting with you and establishing a connection with you God and growing it and remembering that being connected to you is the best connection. That we can. Have got so we thank you again for this morning your.