

“The Bible repeatedly compares the Christian life to being ‘aliens and strangers’ on earth whose ‘citizenship is in heaven,’ but many of us struggle to keep Christ at the center of our identity. Mabel Ninan’s beautifully written *Far from Home* serves as a guide to rediscovering our core identity in Christ. It’s a message the church desperately needs.”

—**Matthew Soerens**

US director of church mobilization and advocacy, World Relief, and
coauthor of *Welcoming the Stranger* and *Seeking Refuge*

“Mabel gives us her vibrant, challenging, and uplifting personal journey as an immigrant in a foreign land. This book will enlighten the Christian of their personal identity in Christ and show that our true home resides with our Father in heaven.”

—**Dr. Bryan Loritts**

author of *Insider/Outsider*

“‘I am an immigrant.’ Mabel Ninan begins *Far from Home* with this simple yet profound declaration. With a heart ready to serve, eager to connect through genuine fellowship, and willing to see the world as a citizen of heaven, this reader responded, ‘Me too!’”

—**Xochitl Dixon**

writer for *Our Daily Bread* and author of *Different Like Me* and
Waiting for God

“*Far from Home* is for every person who’s longed to put down roots. Through the author’s immigrant journey, we learn to make our home with God wherever we happen to live.”

—**Monica Schmelter**

host of Christian Television Network’s *Bridges* and coauthor of the
Messy to Meaningful books

“By sensitively sharing her heart about her identity struggles as an immigrant, Mabel does more than draw out our empathy. She sets us up to understand our own immigrant status as Christians on this planet. Come away from this amazing work with your priorities in their proper place, knowing more assuredly than ever that heaven is your real home.”

—**Dr. Sharon Norris Elliott**

founder/CEO of AuthorizeMe Literary Agency, Life That Matters
Ministries, and Milk & Honey Life Retreats

“As Christ followers, we are all sojourners longing for our heavenly home. Whether you have experienced long-term global exposure or never left your home state, you will enjoy and grow from Mabel’s candid description of her intentional-yet-unexpected cultural journey, her heart through it, and most of all, the God behind her spiritual depth.”

—Stephanie Rousselle
founder of *Gospel Spice* Ministries and
host of the podcast *Gospel Spice*

“Being myself an immigrant to the US, far from family and the familiar, and having resided in several strange abodes, I found *Far from Home* riddled with ‘me too’ moments. An inspiring read, especially to those far from home and those experiencing homelessness physically, emotionally, or spiritually.”

—Ifueko Fex Ogbomo
prize-winning poet and storyteller, Nigerian immigrant, and author
of *Yellow Eyes Gone White!*

“Beautifully transparent, Mabel Ninan shares her personal insight from a unique experience of immigration. Inside the stories of uprooted people, we discover the heart of God. This book is a beautiful reminder of our citizenship in His kingdom.”

—Christine Abraham
founder and executive director, Bible Café Ministries

“In *Far from Home*, Mabel Ninan uses her own story as a foreigner in many unfamiliar places to remind all of us who feel ‘stuck between two worlds’ that our citizenship and identity are not ultimately rooted in a place but in a person. As we seek a city that is to come, we will all feel homesick, but Mabel reminds us that God is at work in us and through us wherever we are.”

—Gary Anderson
lead pastor, Abundant Life Christian Fellowship,
Mountain View, CA

Far *from* Home

Discovering Your Identity
as Foreigners on Earth

MABEL NINAN

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*I dedicate this book to my parents, Samson and Mallika.
I am who I am because of your love and sacrifice.*

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INTRODUCTION

I am an immigrant.

My story began in 2008 when my husband and I moved from India to the United States as newlyweds, excited about starting a new chapter in our lives. I felt confident, equipped, and ready for adventure.

About four months after landing on US soil, the excitement faded. Feelings of loneliness and loss engulfed me. With no family to lean on and no community to belong to, I felt cast adrift. I had to come to terms with living in an unfamiliar land. People looked different. Surroundings were strange. The language felt alien even though I grew up speaking English in India.

I had never lived in a place where I stood out. In my homeland, I was simply another brown, Indian girl. In America, however, I was an anomaly. This affected how I perceived myself. I also had to contend with the issue of anonymity. I had to start rebuilding my life from scratch because my slate had been erased clean. So clean that it wiped out my self-esteem and self-worth.

Because of my husband's job, we hopped from one place to another, never staying too long in one place to put down roots. California. India. New Jersey. India. New Jersey. India. Arkansas. India. California. Feelings of homelessness and homesickness became my companions. I longed for stability and permanence.

The transition from native to foreigner, from insider to outsider shook the foundation of my identity and faith. Born and raised in a Christian home in India, I arrived in the US as a thirty-year-old Christ follower, taught to rely on God through times of transition. Why, then, did the change disorient me? Why was Christ not enough for me? What was my purpose in life?

My struggles broke me down and brought me to my knees before the throne of God. I surrendered my questions and worries

to Him. I saturated my mind with Scripture. I spent more time in His presence, desperate for solace and direction.

Intimacy with God refreshed my parched soul and restored joy in my life. The biggest transformation, however, was the renewing of my mind.

I gained a new perspective. I recognized the truth of what it meant to first be a citizen of heaven, regardless of where I had pitched my tent here on earth. I discovered how to find my identity, inextricably bound to Christ. I was a child of God before I was Indian or Indian American, I was loved and approved by Him. God confirmed that I was in fact, an immigrant in my very soul, a sojourner on earth. How could I really feel at home in this world, and how could any earthly home give me stability and security?

Embracing my biblical, immigrant identity changed everything.

Despair and discontent turned into joyful passion to serve God. I wanted to model Jesus, who came to the earth as a migrant, dedicated to fulfilling His God-ordained mission.

My immigrant identity gave me an eternal perspective, turning my eyes away from my circumstances and desires and fixing them on God's will for me. This new way of thinking inspired me to live for God, not myself. I realized the purpose of my earthly sojourn was to accomplish God's purposes.

Knowing my permanent home is with Jesus in heaven has brightened my days. His perfect and unchanging love for me fuels my homesickness. Thoughts of my promised inheritance and glorious future make hope bloom during dreary times. A better city awaits me. Better times are ahead.

If you are saved, you are a child of God and a stranger on earth: "Live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear" (1 Peter 1:17). If you are a disciple of Jesus, you are not of this world: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it" (John 17:16). And this earth is not our home. You are a citizen of heaven: "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20).

While you read this book, I pray the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit will remind you of your eternal identity in Christ. You are

loved and set apart by God to further His kingdom on earth. The Holy Spirit walks alongside you on your pilgrimage, as helper and guide, enabling you to participate in God's plans and glorify His name.

I hope these biblical truths instill in you an unquenchable thirst for fellowship with God and encourage you to chase after God's heart. I hope your eyes are opened to the limitless spiritual blessings that are yours as a citizen of God's kingdom. I hope you find comfort and strength to persevere in faith, looking ahead to that day when you will be united with God.

My desire also is the truth about our identity as foreigners will inspire us to transcend our differences and unite around our calling as Christians.

Far from Home is a practical guidebook to encourage and motivate you on your pilgrim journey, as you embrace a life that will not just survive but thrive as the curse of the temporal gives way to the promise of heaven.

In this book, I draw parallels between my experience as an Indian American immigrant and a spiritual immigrant to draw lessons about what it means to truly live as a citizen of heaven. To explain some of the biblical truths, I take a deeper look at the lives of the mighty patriarchs of our faith, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and others who lived on the road, pitching their tents often in foreign cultures and countries.

I've structured this book around challenges that immigrants wrestle with the most, which broadly fall into three main categories: identity, home, and community. Each of these three sections is broken down into chapters. To help you internalize the message of this book and apply the learnings to your life, I have included reflection questions, action steps, and a prayer at the end of each chapter.

I wrote *Far from Home* so you will lean into your identity as a citizen of heaven, embrace your pilgrim journey on earth, and live with joy, meaning, and hope.

You, too, are an immigrant, just as I am.

Section One

Identity



CHAPTER 1

Change and Identity

But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Psalm 102:27

January 2010. I opened my eyes on a typical wintery morning in New Jersey and fought back the dread while I watched my husband pack his laptop. Through the gap in the window blinds of our apartment in Jersey City, I saw the sky unpacking snow on everyone and everything below. People in the streets were on the move, walking and driving hurriedly, as though they could not wait to escape the snow.

My husband kissed me on the forehead and whispered goodbye before leaving for work. Simon looked fresh and happy, ready to take on another new day. I forced myself to smile back and waved him goodbye. Oblivious to the sorrow fermenting in my mind, he smiled at me when he shut the door behind him.

I closed my eyes and held my blanket closer. A wave of cold crept into my soul. I felt completely alone, not just in the apartment, but also in the city, in the country. No family. No friends. I sighed. No purpose.

Why should I wake up? Who is waiting for me? I drifted in and out of sleep.

Trapped in an unending cycle of loneliness and despair, I had nowhere to go.

But I traveled in my mind. I explored memories of a life I lived a few months, a few years ago, in a faraway land . . . India. A land of spices and religions, ancient customs and traditions, and hundreds of languages and cultures. My birthplace and home. Being there felt a lifetime ago.

My eyes still closed, I went back in time to my childhood in Hyderabad, a bustling city nestled in southern India. My sister and I had completed our homework for the day after returning from school and rushed outside to play hopscotch with other children from our neighborhood. An hour went by, maybe two, before Mom hollered at us to come back inside the house. It was dinner time. Sweaty, thirsty, and exhausted, Joy and I raced back home to devour the rice, *dal* (lentil soup), and potato dish that Mom had prepared.

Rooted in One Place

We were a comfortably settled and modest middle-class family. My dad worked as a bank teller during the day and moonlighted as a singer in the evenings and during weekends. My mother had been a stay-at-home mom until we were middle schoolers. Then, she went back to school, earned her master's degree in education, and became the principal of a school. Only about a year younger than I, my sister also was my best friend, playmate, partner-in-crime, and worst enemy.

Our family occupied the first floor of a two-story house in a small, gated community for nearly twenty years. At the center of this neighborhood, surrounded by two- and- four-story houses, was an empty lot of land that the children claimed as their playground. An old-fashioned well and an ancient, gigantic neem tree marked our neighborhood as one of a kind.

Neighbors were not just people who lived near me. They participated actively in my life. I was so close to the family next door—our kitchens were separated by a common door—that I picked up their language, Bengali, and conversed with them in their mother tongue. They nicknamed me “Bonny” and Joy “Puthush.” The family that lived below us loved, fed, and patiently tolerated Joy and me as we transformed from energetic toddlers to unpredictable teenagers. Our neighbors stood by us through sicknesses and sorrow and celebrated our birthdays and baptisms. They were surrogates for extended family.

As for my literal extended family, my parents' lives crisscrossed with their siblings', creating a web of relationships that cocooned

my childhood years. My sister and I spent our weekends and holidays hanging out with cousins at an aunt or uncle's house.

If it truly takes a village to raise a child, then my church was at the center of my village. From the ages of three to twenty-five, I called a local Methodist church home. Members of this small church lived within a radius of one to two miles. Familiarity, acceptance, and Christ-like love made this church a safe place for me. In a country where Christians were the minority, having Christian friends who shared common interests and passions fostered solidarity and community.

I was deeply rooted in the same soil, same geographical area for almost three decades of my life. Hyderabad was my world, my fishbowl. Family, neighbors, classmates, college friends, work colleagues, and ministry coworkers congregated in this tight space, leaving their fingerprints all over me and shaping my identity and worldview. I swam without worry in the security and comfort of my fishbowl. Neither predators nor tsunamis threatened the status quo.

In summer 2008, after a dreamlike whirlwind of a romance that lasted less than a year, I married Simon, and within three months, followed him to America. (Immigrants and foreigners commonly refer to the US as America.)

And everything changed.

Uprooted from Home

I became a trailing spouse, a term defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as “the husband or wife of an employee who is sent to work in another country.” Simon's company assigned to him a project with a client based in Southern California. We arrived in Redondo Beach, a suburb of Los Angeles, in October 2008.

At first, I approached the opportunity with enthusiasm. As a lovestruck newlywed, I looked forward to the adventure of starting life together with my husband in a foreign country. I was keen to see the world-famous sights of America: Disneyland, Statue of Liberty, Niagara Falls, and the Grand Canyon, among many. I hoped to explore new places and make new friends. I embarked upon my

journey to the West with an open mind, brimming with optimism and excitement.

Little did I know that the thrill would be short-lived. As months passed, I started to feel the real impacts of migration. The pain, brought on by the magnitude of change, became inescapable. Almost everything in my life had been replaced or removed. Surroundings were different and unfamiliar. I did not have any friends. Nor did I have a church community. Family was thousands of miles away. I wasn't prepared to handle the deluge of changes.

The stress of being uprooted became palpable when winter brought more winds of change. Christmas was in the air. Dark clouds of homesickness settled on the one-bedroom beachfront apartment that Simon and I called home in Southern California.

December in India was such a busy time that our calendars exploded with activities and appointments. Like most Christians in Hyderabad, we ushered in the Christmas season by putting up a giant, star-shaped paper lantern in front of our house and decorating our Christmas tree.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas, the kitchen buzzed with the busyness of a restaurant kitchen. My mother spent days whipping up large quantities of traditional Christian goodies such as *rose cookies* (rose-shaped fried donuts) and *murukulu* (fried lentil snack) and baking Christmas cakes. On Christmas day, our neighbors each received a small round cake, one per family, and so did other friends of the family.

Local churches brought their own unique flavor to Christmas by hosting family nights, community events, musical programs, or theatrical productions. The young people of our church participated enthusiastically in mission-based programs throughout the city. The preholiday celebrations culminated in a grand church service that took place either on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning.

Our non-Christian neighbors joined in our festivities without complaining about the commotion caused by loud carolers who showed up at our doorstep at odd hours of the night during the holiday season. They did not consider it impolite to drop into our

home uninvited on Christmas day to hang out with us. Christmas was, by far, a community affair rather than a family affair.

My first Christmas in America was devoid of the people, traditions, and customs intrinsically tied to Christmas for as long as I could remember. Our Californian apartment was eerily quiet and deserted. No large tins of *rose cookies*. No guests at home. Though the streets outside were lit up with hundreds of lights and lamps and Christmas trees, Santa and reindeer inflatables, and nativity scenes appeared at every turn and corner, all I could see and feel was emptiness and gloom.

In December 2008, I came face-to-face with the reality that I had left behind more than a country. I felt the sharp pangs of being separated from the socket of home and familiarity. The pain cut to the core of my inner being. The inevitable crisis of identity stared right at me and I had to deal with it.

Identity Crisis

Identity is fragile, easily shaken or wrecked by relationships and experiences. The realization of who we are gives our life meaning and purpose. Our identity helps us find community. It feeds our self-worth and promotes our self-esteem. It helps us navigate the difficult terrain of life and determines how we respond to adversity and injustice. Knowing who we are and being secure in our identity also impacts our ability to raise a strong and healthy family. A strong and secure identity lays the foundation for a productive and joyful life.

For most of us, the search for identity is implicit and lifelong, something we don't even realize we are doing, even as every little action adds to our journey of self-discovery. Identity quest also can be deliberate, specific, and urgent.

Either way, the journey we take to find ourselves, though difficult, is inescapable and important and most often prompted by changes in the status quo.

Migration or displacement is only one of several reasons that can trigger an identity crisis. Sometimes, we don't have to physically move at all to feel displaced and disoriented. Feelings of not

belonging or being accepted can thrive even in the minds of those who are firmly rooted in one place. Maybe the people we have loved have walked out on us. Maybe a sudden illness or injury has limited our ability to work and serve. Maybe someone we trust to protect us has harmed or abused us. These experiences can make us question ourselves. We may wonder if we are worthy of being loved and accepted, if our lives are meaningful, or if we even matter to anyone.

Migration Is a Stressor

My identity crisis surprised me, as I had not anticipated that migration would take a toll on me. I remember longing to travel and see the world as a young girl. I wanted to explore the world and experience new cultures. I believed, naively, that settling in America as a thirty-year-old adult would not be difficult. Imagine my surprise when I found myself struggling to adapt to life in a foreign land.

My upbringing in India was less traditional. I did not dress in *salwar-kameez* all the time and enjoyed eating a variety of cuisines, not just Indian. Reading American literature and watching American TV shows made me aware of Western culture. I grew up in urban India, where English was widely spoken. Immersing oneself in a culture, however, is not the same as knowing a culture and studying about it through books and TV. Assimilation requires courage and openness, a certain level of comfort with change and adventure, and a willingness to make mistakes and learn from them.

I was too afraid to fumble and stumble. I knew the language, but I was unfamiliar with the nuances in social mores and etiquette. Simple transactions at grocery shops and malls involved polite exchange of pleasantries: “How are you?” “Thank you,” and “You’re welcome.” Indians are quite matter-of-fact with their daily dealings, eliminating the need for small talk or even polite smiles. What Indians consider impolite—for instance, calling someone older by their first name—is culturally appropriate in America. Eating with fingers is unthinkable and unhygienic by American standards. In many countries, including India, eating with hands is the norm.

As a new immigrant, I became more and more aware of my “otherness.” Socially, I felt awkward and uncomfortable as I navigated through everyday activities.

Back home, I blended in. Here, I stood out.

Back home, I was in the majority. Here, I was the minority—by far.

Back home, I belonged. Here, I just didn’t fit in.

Migration stripped away everything that defined me, making me feel worthless and insignificant.

I emigrated to America determined to support my husband’s career, but I grieved the loss of my own. When we first came to America, Simon worked on a time-bound project in Southern California that could last anywhere between six months to a year. I hesitated to settle for a temporary job. Since I had come to the US on a dependent visa—as the spouse of someone who was authorized to work—I had to apply for a work permit, and the process could have taken months. Not having a driver’s license severely restricted my choices even more. I used to pride myself on being an independent and self-made woman in India, but I grappled with being dependent on my spouse and not being employed in my new country.

My self-worth and self-esteem nosedived.

Before leaving India, I had been hired by a chain of fitness studios to handle their business development. I was involved in a vibrant youth ministry at my home church, mentoring young people. My friendships, in the workplace, church, neighborhood, and community, that were cultivated over time and trials, were my safety net, as well as great sources of joy and fulfillment.

I found myself in a foreign country where, all of a sudden, nobody knew me. Worse, nobody knew *about* me. My history, both good and bad, did not matter. Anonymity wiped my slate clean, socially and professionally.

Over the next few years, I followed my husband from one American city to another because of work assignments that lasted between six to eighteen months in each city. I attempted to fill the void in me with fun and frolic, but I couldn’t shake off an underlying melancholy and emptiness. I fought every day to mimic the joy

and cheer that I had previously so freely exuded. Not knowing what to do with myself and how to adapt to such a big change shook the foundations of my identity.

The process of adapting to another culture, or acculturation, compounded my crisis further. I felt like a mediator, constantly negotiating terms of contract between two warring voices in my head—the Indian voice, trying to hold on to my Indian values, and the immigrant voice, cheering me on to embrace American culture. Letting go of deep-rooted aspects of my ethnic and national identity made me wonder who I was becoming.

I turned into someone I didn't recognize. Was that a good thing, or not? I certainly had no way of telling.

Coping with Crisis

A few months into my life as a new immigrant in California, finally fed up with pitying myself, I resolved to make the most of my situation. *Life can't be so bad! I live in Los Angeles, the land of entertainment. I can certainly find things to see and do.* I tried to make the best use of my time when my husband went to work.

I went on long walks along Redondo Beach as often as I could, allowing the ocean to temporarily wash away my troubles. I watched hours of American TV (*Jerry Springer! Cheaters!*) with shock and fascination. During the weekends, my husband and I spent time discovering the new city we had come to call home. We sampled new restaurants in the area and took mini-vacations out of town.

A dance studio located within a short distance of our residence offered a variety of dance lessons. I did not let the abysmal public transport of Los Angeles keep me from staying connected to the one thing that gave me great pleasure and in a profound way linked me to my previous role in my home church as a choreographer—dancing. I took dance lessons three times a week, eager to learn as much as I could and also determined to use my time productively.

I also signed up to help with shelter dogs. I wrote emergency preparedness documents for a local nonprofit so I could feel useful and validated. I volunteered to write articles on fitness for an upcoming youth fitness center. Researching and writing on health

topics took my mind away from my identity crisis, which was deepening and widening at a fast rate beneath the surface.

No matter what I did, however, my problems did not disappear. The more I immersed myself in work or entertainment, the more I realized that they were never going to hold the answer to my problems. Deep down, I was aware of a God-shaped hole in my life. All I had to do was run into God's arms, barefoot and messy, like the prodigal son who returned home to his loving father.

But I didn't return home to my Father.

I roamed aimlessly, thinking I could figure things out on my own. I ignored the still voice that kept reminding me that only an intimate relationship with God could fill the void in my soul and offer the right perspective on the changes happening around and within me.

Trusting God with Change

Changes, both big and small, sudden and planned, have the extraordinary capacity to disorient us. Even the strongest of Christians can wrestle with the storms brought on by unforeseen or difficult circumstances. The sudden death of a spouse, the loss of a child, the breakup of close relationships, a rough period of financial insecurity, the loss of a job, a divorce, and other life-altering events disrupt the status quo. Changes can test the sturdiness of our identity and shake the pillars of faith that define our relationship with God.

Many of us, therefore, resist change with all our strength and faculties. Transitions can turn our lives upside down, making us feel less loved and more alienated, less significant and more worthless, less appreciated and more useless. We dislike being pushed into a period of unwanted and unwelcome change as it compels us to reinvent ourselves.

It is during these transitions, however, that we need God the most. To reaffirm our identity in Him. To keep our eyes fixed on our purpose. To find strength and encouragement to press on. But instead of holding on to Him, some of us find ourselves fighting our dependence on Him and wanting to take charge of the situation. Our instinct is to fix the problem ourselves. Our

natural response is to cry foul, hunker down, or stubbornly refuse to accept the change.

The Israelites, too, were inept at change management, even if the change was for their own good. Transitioning out of four hundred years of oppression into freedom should have made them grateful and solid believers. It did, but only for a short while.

Sojourning in the desert tested the mettle of God's people. Hunger and thirst, inhospitable terrain, unfamiliar surroundings, and a disintegration of their former lifestyle and habits stretched their faith in God. The Israelites threw tantrums, stamping their feet and shaking their fists at Moses and God. They incited God's anger by grumbling against Him.

Reminiscing on their days in Egypt as slaves, they had the audacity to think that their lives were better in Egypt than as free people delivered by the hand of God: "The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death'" (Exodus 16:3).

The freed people quickly forgot how they cried out to God in desperation, pleading with Him to deliver them from the Pharaoh's brutal regime. God had unleashed His power against Egypt and rescued His people by sending plagues and parting the Red Sea. Their deliverance sealed their identity as God's chosen people.

The Israelites were aware of who they were—a nation set apart for God, with a blessed spiritual ancestry and heritage. But an unknown future and nomadic living pushed them out of their comfort zone, making them anxious and insecure. Everything around them was different. They, too, were being transformed into a free nation, ready to occupy the promised land. However, the Israelites could not accept the change with gratitude and enthusiasm. They lacked faith in God's promises.

God Is the Only Constant in Change

God's people failed to see that though the land underneath their feet had shifted, the God in heaven, the God of their forefathers,

the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac, hadn't changed. God's nature and promises are immutable.

God is not human, that he should lie,
not a human being, that he should change his mind.
Does he speak and then not act?
Does he promise and not fulfill?
(Numbers 23:19)

All they had to do was focus their eyes on Him. His promise to make them into a great nation still stood true. And He would provide for them in the wilderness, gently leading and guiding them to Canaan, the promised land.

Like the Israelites, migration was the stressor that tested my faith and unleashed a crisis of identity. I took my eyes off God's unrelenting love and never-changing faithfulness, and obsessed over my ever-changing circumstances. By not looking upward and by looking too closely inward, I wandered deeper into the wilderness where the search for identity turned into a lonely and futile journey.

Staying focused on God's unchangeable nature is the only thing that can help us weather the storms of change and keep our identity intact in Christ. When we dwell on His steadfast love, His comfort and strength become real and present. His promises give hope. Fixing our thoughts on God, the only constant in a transient life, keeps us from being swept away by winds of change. A crisis of identity can become an opportunity, or a gift that sparks spiritual growth and creativity.

Reach In

1. How do you react to changes or transitions in your life?

2. What particular aspect of change do you struggle with or find challenging?

3. What change or event in your life is forcing you to alter your way of life or reinvent yourself?

4. When you look back at your life, can you identify situations or events that have impacted your identity?

5. Which verses from the Bible can you meditate upon to help you remember that God is the only constant in change?

Reach Out

Is there anyone in your family or circle of friends who is going through a difficult transition? Take some time out of your schedule to connect with your friend or family member and ask how she or he is doing. Remind her or him of God's unchanging faithfulness and promises.

Reach Up

Dear Father in Heaven,

I'm in awe of Your unchanging nature. You are the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You are the God who brought the Israelites out of Egypt through the miraculous parting of the Red Sea. You performed wonders to rescue Your people. You led them to the promised land and You kept Your covenant with them. You remained faithful to Your chosen people. I'm amazed and humbled that You are my God. Thank You for all the promises You gave me through Your Word. When changes rock my world, help me to stand on Your promises and not be shaken. May Your Word protect me and keep me secure. Help me to meditate on your steadfast love and great faithfulness in good as well as bad times. May I place my trust in Your character and not in people or places. As I encounter difficult changes and go through transitions, change me from the inside out so I become more like You.

Amen.