

# Understanding Identity in Christ with Mental Health Challenges

3-day devotional for your  
mental health journey.



**GRACE ALLIANCE**

HEALTHY SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR MIND

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## **Understanding identity in Christ with mental health challenges.**

**A 3-day devotional to help reframe distress into grace and rest in God.**

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Mental Health Grace Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that cultivates healthy solutions for hearts and minds through a simple and innovative approach with biblical truths, scientific research, and practical tools.

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## Intro: Understanding our new relational identity in mental distress.

Think about this: our identity is always tied to our relationships. Whether it be our family, friends, or significant other, our identity is always connected to how we relate with others. For example, when our closest friend describes who we are to others who don't know us, they will share about the friendship. They will naturally describe our character and nature and maybe add some personal stories within the context of relational knowing.

Studies in memetics and mirror neurons show how we often influence each other's identities and behaviors. Our identity is reinforced (and strengthened) by sharing and participating in safe, trusting, and loving relationships. In confident and healthy relationships, we grow and mature in who we are and how we act.

In the same way, our identity in Christ is a new relational identity. Identity in God is always connected to its intimate source: a connected, inseparable, and loving relationship with Jesus. As this divine, confident, and healthy relationship influences our lives (who we are), we grow and mature, reflecting the beauty of this bond. As we look at Jesus and experience the peace of this relational belonging, we will see the true sense of who we are (identity) and experience the peace of this inseparable union (2 Cor. 3:18).

**In trial or distress, God reminds and strengthens  
who we (truly) are, not what we're not.**

When we encounter unfortunate circumstances, experience mental or emotional distress, or feel weak and make mistakes, we generally judge or condemn ourselves. However, in these situations or experiences, by His Spirit, God reminds us of our new and inseparable relational identity (and all the benefits within this loving connection, Rom. 8:1-3).

Not only does He remind us of who we are, but He also provides us grace-strength to endure and even grow within our various challenges. He is forever committed to the relationship ... who we are (identity) matures and grows (Rom. 5:1-5).

Most of all, God always reassures us that we belong in an inseparable, loving, and divine union with Him. No matter our mental or emotional distress, challenge, or diagnosis, our belonging in Christ is never questioned. God is always there. This is why our resources encourage that our mental health challenges are **a condition** we can learn to navigate to improve our well-being, **not our true identity**.

As you explore and use this short devotional, let it help you see all the favor, value, worth, and love you already have, not something you have to earn through performance from God. Let it help you rewrite and discover a new grace story about who you are. Use it as a discovery tool to learn about your new relational identity.

## DAY 1: Grace made us complete in Christ.

The word “**complete**” means filling up, leveling up, and fully satisfying. Jesus is the fullness of God’s love, forgiveness (blameless), and freedom made “**complete**” in us. It does not mean we are morally or physically perfect; we have a new state, position, and relational identity in Christ. Mental health challenges do not negate this. Even with mental health challenges, we are growing within our relational and “complete” identity (favor in God), not trying to earn more of it.

### **Breathe, Ask, and Explore - Read Colossians 2:9-10.**

Before reading, take a few slow breaths to relax. Then, ask the Lord to give you loving discernment and understanding of the scripture.

### **Reflect on the meaning.**

Briefly write down your initial thoughts, ideas, images, or questions that come to your mind.

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### **Experiment with the new ideas.**

Describe how you might incorporate this idea in your life today (e.g., a simple reminder when feeling low, before a work meeting, school assignment, attending an event, or running errands).

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### **Share your insights.**

Is there someone you know who also needs this encouragement? You can share and pray it for them.

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### **Explore other helpful scriptures.**

Ephesians 1:3, 7; Hebrews 8:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 5:1

# DAY 2: Grace made us strong in Christ.

The “**strength**” we receive from Christ is given in relationship and accessibility. This doesn’t mean you won’t experience challenges or difficult life circumstances. Instead, as you encounter challenges, you are experiencing them “in Christ” – relationally connected and with full access to His enduring grace, support, and love. The Scriptural idea is that He doesn’t just wait to see how we do in our extreme challenges but provides within them. Thus, confidently drawing near to God in our challenges means "communicating " and "connecting” without limitations. Within any mental health challenge, we are “in Christ,” relationally and with full access to enduring love and grace.

## **Breathe, Ask, and Explore - Read Hebrews 4:14-16.**

Before reading, take a few slow breaths to relax. Then, ask the Lord to give you loving discernment and understanding of the scripture.

## **Reflect on the meaning.**

Briefly write down your initial thoughts, ideas, images, or questions that come to your mind.

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## **Experiment with the new ideas.**

Describe how you might incorporate this idea in your life today (e.g., a simple reminder when feeling low, before a work meeting, school assignment, attending an event, or running errands).

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## **Share your insights.**

Is there someone you know who also needs this encouragement? You can share and pray it for them.

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## **Explore other helpful scriptures.**

John 10:27-30, 14:27; Romans 8:37-39; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 1 John 5:4-5

## DAY 3: Grace made us belong in Christ.

Throughout many of the New Testament letters, the Apostle Paul often uses constant phrases like “**in Christ,**” “**Christ in you,**” and “**in the Lord**” to describe the relational identity of these new believers (churches). This “in Christ” means that our new relational identity is a “union” and “belonging” in God that is inseparable. Whatever Jesus has, He shares and unites them with His own, us (riches of glory). Whether we feel it or not, no mental health challenge can negate this new constant reality, this new belonging “in Christ.” This belonging is “**complete**” in us.

### **Breathe, Ask, and Explore - Read Colossians 1:25-28.**

Before reading, take a few slow breaths to relax. Then, ask the Lord to give you loving discernment and understanding of the scripture.

### **Reflect on the meaning.**

Briefly write down your initial thoughts, ideas, images, or questions that come to your mind.

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### **Experiment with the new ideas.**

Describe how you might incorporate this idea in your life today (e.g., a simple reminder when feeling low, before a work meeting, school assignment, attending an event, or running errands).

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### **Share your insights.**

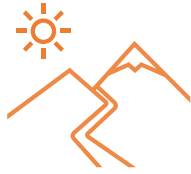
Is there someone you know who also needs this encouragement? You can share and pray it for them.

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### **Explore other helpful scriptures.**

John 14:20; Romans 8:10; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:4-7, 3:17; 1 John 3:24

## How can the Grace Alliance help?



**The journey toward mental health is a strength-based and whole-health (holistic) process of change that focuses on rebuilding and restoring life, relationships, and purpose.**

The Grace Alliance's mission is to provide simple and innovative Christian mental health resources and programs for families and individuals experiencing mental health challenges and to equip the Body of Christ with active community support and leadership tools.

Our [Living Grace](#), [Redefine Grace](#), [Living Hope](#), and [Family Grace](#) workbooks cover many of these topics in an introductory manner. Our [Thrive workbook](#) explores these topics in an in-depth, whole health (i.e., holistic) step-by-step course or process for mental health recovery, resilience, and wholeness. [You can also find a group near you.](#)

For access to more free e-books, devotionals, blog articles, and resources with responses to many challenging mental health and faith questions, mental health recovery and wellness tips, biblical mental health encouragement, and more. visit our website:

[www.mentalhealthgracealliance.org](http://www.mentalhealthgracealliance.org)