



Understanding Spiritual Growth with Mental Health Challenges

3-day devotional for your
mental health journey.



GRACE ALLIANCE

HEALTHY SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR MIND

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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 spiritual growth in mental distress.

The Bible is full of stories of people's suffering and God's response. As we see communities and individuals experience painful circumstances and mental and emotional anguish, God responds with miracles, through simple means, or with His reassuring love and presence (mental and emotional fortitude). We see a faithful God who wants to help (Isaiah 30:18) and people who grow in their faith (spiritual growth) as they go through pain and suffering (Psalm 40:1-5).

In the New Testament, Paul is honest and validates his painful experiences as a minister, even mentally and emotionally (2 Cor. 1:8-9). Paul responds with faithfulness and trust in a relational, good-working God who provides life within the pain, not afterward. You can read more about this in our [various blog articles](#), where we share how our relational "God of comfort" translates into everyday mental health experiences.

This mental health journey may feel like a constant frustration that will not depart, much like when the Apostle Paul prayed for God to remove his "thorn" disrupting his life (2 Cor. 12:9). However, Jesus revealed Himself as a grace sufficient within his weakness, a power and strength that worked in Paul's weakness. Thus, Paul said he would "boast in his weakness." In other words, he would accept his condition as an "in Christ" empowering experience.

In trial or distress, God desires for us to know He is with us, in constant belonging, to do good within the challenge – all the way through. Throughout the challenge, the will or purpose of God is to do good (beautiful) work in us. We are His beautiful masterpiece.

Like Paul, we can experience spiritual growth when we experience uncertainty, pain, and mental and emotional challenges. During these times, we will see a relational God who is in communion with us and His will to do good work in us (Phil. 1:6, 2:13; Eph. 1:3). God is not distant, but rather, with His Spirit, He is with us and helps us grow with a resilient grace. Spiritual growth impacts our whole-being growth. Interestingly, studies even reveal that after a personal crisis or loss and various challenges, people experience growth in life meaning, spiritual openness, and altruism. Various studies also show us that we see more remarkable mental health recovery and overall mental well-being among those who trust and feel connected to a good and benevolent God. Other views that present a God as harsh and distant do not improve mental health; they make it worse.

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 the good and beautiful work God does in us through our challenges.

DAY 1: God richly provides ongoing strength.

God is not stingy or withholding anything good from His children. God is liberal in giving what is good, loving, grace-filled, etc. This does not always come in the form of material or physical relief but something much deeper and more intimate. This explores the concept of a good God, positioned by His Spirit within us, to liberally give us a **divine boost or “dynamic” strength** of internal fortitude in the face of any discomfort or danger. This divine fortitude is given directly within us to reframe our sense of being or our mind (consciousness and awareness) to influence our thoughts and choices. In the face of “fear,” God is abundant to see us through, and His love is at rest within us.

Breathe, Ask, and Explore - Read Ephesians 3:16-21.

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.

Psalm 84:11; John 16:27; 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, 9:8; Hebrews 2:16-18

DAY 2: God provides and maintains peace in uncertainty.

The concept of “**peace**” has a couple of meanings. One meaning involves peace between God and us (Romans 5:1) or with one another with no divisions by ethnicity or class (Ephesians 2:13-22). The other “peace” is from **communion in and with Jesus in uncertainty**. The context of this peace is having or being at rest in Jesus (relational). From this rich communion (Holy Spirit), peace is given, not earned through works. This is the same peace Jesus possessed in overcoming the temptations and challenges of this world; it is a gift from Him for us in our challenging lives. No matter our mental health challenges and where we are on our mental health recovery journey, His Spirit can bring us a new calm, rest, and confident perspective (peace) in and through our challenges and uncertainties.

Breathe, Ask, and Explore - Read John 14:25-27 and 16:32-33.

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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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.

Psalm 29:11; Isaiah 54:10; John 14:25-27; Romans 15:13; 2 Thessalonians 3:16

DAY 3: God provides enduring hope within our challenges.

The concept of **hope** is knowing the fulfilled and anchoring love, forgiveness (blameless), and freedom in and through Christ (Hebrews 6:18-20). The other concept is a **faith type of hope**, in which God empowers us to endure life's challenges now that we are positioned “in Christ” and “Christ in us.” God does not design painful circumstances or illnesses to test or tempt us and see if we are faithful (James 1:13). Instead, it’s the opposite; God is with us, empowering us to persevere, endure, and grow from the challenging experience, which increases our hope. Any challenge – including mental health – tests or proves who we truly are and what we have in and with Christ. It is not proving ourselves to God. In the fire, gold may melt to be formed into something beautiful, but it is still gold (Romans 8:28-29).

Breathe, Ask, and Explore - Read Romans 5:1-5.

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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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.

Luke 21:19; Romans 15:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; James 1:12-17

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