







IDENTITY



This week we're thinking about identity.

Take a moment to pause and look in the mirror. What do you see? What do you like? Are there things about yourself that you don't like?

Christians believe that God made everyone, and more importantly, that God loves everyone. No one is perfect, but each person is unique and special.

Here are some of the things God says about you in the Bible. He says you are:

ENOUGH	Colossians 2:10 (NASB)	FREE	Galatians 5:1 (NIV)
FORGIVEN	Acts 13:38-39 (NLT)	GIFTED	1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)
WONDERFULLY MADE	Psalm 139:14 (NIV)	CHOSEN	John 15:19 (NIV)
PRECIOUS	Isaiah 43:4 (NIV)	A MASTERPIECE	Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)
LOVED	Jeremiah 3:13 (NIV)	A CHILD OF GOD	1 John 3:1 (NIV)

Take a moment to look at the words that God says about you. Take some time to pause and be still and let them sink in. Which words stand out to you? You could write those words on your mirror, or on post-it notes and stick them where you will see them this week, to remind yourself of the truth of who you are!

DEVOTION 1 – LOVED

Romans 8:38-39 (MSG)

Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing,

None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely nothing can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.

REFLECTION

God's love for us is completely reliable and absolutely trustworthy. There is nothing we can do to make God love us any more, and nothing we can do to make him love us any less. God loves you!

APPLICATION

Think back to some of the words we looked at yesterday. You are gifted, wonderfully made, a masterpiece! He created you in his image, and everything he created is good! Can you take a moment to think about some of the things God loves about you? Maybe you could write them down and add them to the post-it notes you wrote yesterday.

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, that you love me unconditionally. If I doubt myself today, or start to compare myself to others, help me to remember that I am unique, that you created me, you love me and you delight in me! Thank you! Amen

DEVOTION 2 - SEEN

1 Samuel 16:7 (NLT)

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

REFLECTION

This verse comes from where Samuel is choosing the next king for God's people. He knows which family the king will come from, but not which son. He looks at the eldest son and immediately assumes he is the one! God has other ideas, and it's David, the youngest son, who is chosen. It is easy for us to get caught up in the culture around us that places so much emphasis on what we look like, what we wear, the image we present. God is much more interested in who we are on the inside, on what is going on in our heart.

APPLICATION

What a relief it is that, when we talk to God, we can be completely honest and tell him what is really going on in our heart. Maybe there are things going on that you don't want to tell others about. You can tell him. Maybe you need help with changing some things. You can ask him for his help. Why not take a few moments to do that now?

PRAYER

Thank you, Father, that I don't have to worry about my image with you. Thank you that you see what's really going on, and you love when I come to you honestly and talk to you about everything that is happening in my life. Help me to take the time to do that each day. Amen

DEVOTION 3 - KNOWN

Psalm 139:1-5 (NLT)

O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me.
You know when I sit down or stand up.
You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.
You see me when I travel and when I rest at home.
You know everything I do.
You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord.
You go before me and follow me.
You place your hand of blessing on my head

REFLECTION

How amazing is it that God knows everything about me! Wherever I go and whatever I am doing, however I am feeling, he knows me! I might sometimes feel I need to pretend with other people. With God I can just be myself. I am enough!

APPLICATION

Take a few minutes and listen to *Who you say I Am* by Hillsong Worship Which lyrics really speak to you today? You could add them to the notes around your mirror if it helps.

PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, that you see me, you know me and you love me. Thank you that my identity is found in you and in who you say I am. Help me today to remember the truth of who I am in you.

WORRIES & ANXIETIES

PRAYER STATION

Breath Prayers

This week we are going to learn about using breath prayers to help us pray. These are prayers you can use at home, in school, during exams, in the streets or wherever you want to to help you pause and focus on Jesus.

Stop and take some deep breaths in and out.

Once you have slowed your breathing we can use some phrases from scripture to help us pray.

You pray the first line as you breathe in and the second line as you breathe out.

In: Be Still

Out: And know that I am God (Psalm 41:10)

In: Come

Out: Lord Jesus (Revelation 22:20)

In: I give you my worries

Out: For you care for me (Based on 1 Peter 5:7)

In: I give you my burdens

Out: You give me your rest (Based on Matthew 11:28)

In: Do not be afraid

Out: I will help you (Based on Isaiah 41:10)

DEVOTION 1 - PEACE

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

REFLECTION

We can take hope that God knows us deeply. He knew that we would need his peace and he left us his Holy Spirit to be with us and give us peace. So during exams, when things are difficult, we can trust and rely on his peace.

APPLICATION

Take a moment out of your day to use one of the breath prayers from the creative prayer station that stands out to you today.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I thank you that when you left earth, you left us your peace. I thank you that you know my thoughts and my feelings, so today I give you my worries and fears. I receive your peace. Help me to notice your peace today. In your precious name, Amen.

DEVOTION 2 - CARED FOR

Luke 12:27-28

Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you.

REFLECTION

God loves you and he cares for you. There is nothing that is too small or too big for God to handle. You don't have to strive and hold all of your worries inside. Instead we are given an opportunity to give all of our thoughts and feelings back to God.

APPLICATION

Go find a bit of paper and write and draw your worries down. Once you are ready, pray to God and tell him about the things on your heart. After this, tear up the bit of paper to show that you have given them to God and then choose one of the breath prayers to end your time of prayer.

PRAYER

Father God I thank you that you care about me. I thank you that you sustain me and that nothing is too big or too small for me to bring you to. Just like you care for the lilies and how they grow, help me to notice the ways that you care for me today. Amen.

DEVOTION 3 - COURAGE

Joshua 1:9

I hereby command you; Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go

REFLECTION

Joshua, his family and his community had been in the wilderness for 40 years. They have had to trust in God for food and shelter and protection. Here, God is releasing them to enter new land, however Joshua is about to become the leader. Here God is encouraging Joshua that he won't ever leave him or forsake him and that God will fulfil his promises to his people. This God is the same God who loves you. He will not leave you or forsake you. The journey may surprise you, but God will go with you.

APPLICATION

Being courageous means that we are motivated by our hope and faith in Jesus rather than our fears. What is something that you are hoping for? Is there an active step you can take today to make that hope a reality? Before you take this step take a moment to use one of the breath prayers from the beginning of the week to pray and focus your eyes on God.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, help me to be strong and courageous. Where my knees are shaky, will you strengthen them, when fear causes me to stumble, will you pick me up, and will you help me to do your will in my life. Lord Jesus, help me to follow you like Joshua did. Amen.

RELATIONSHIPS

PRAYER STATION

Go and find a bit of paper, a pen and something to use to colour in with.

Instruction: Take a pen and a piece of paper. Begin to draw a randomly moving continuous line, without taking the pencil off the paper until it is covered with lines, swirls and shapes.

As you are doing this, read through the bible passage slowly.

"The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance." 1 Corinthians 12:25–26 God has created you, and you have a part in his plan. You are not insignificant and you have a unique part to play in community. As you think about this, pick a few colours that represent you – your personality, your character, your skills, your gifts and colour in some of the shapes. As you do this, take time to speak to God about how he has made you. Make sure to leave some spaces for later in the week.

DEVOTION 1 - LAMENT

Genesis 2:18 (NLT)

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

REFLECTION

Right from the start, from the very beginning of time, God meant for us to do life with other people. But sometimes it can feel like we are on our own. It's especially hard if we feel like we are the only Christian in our family or in our school. We know God is with us, but it's so good having other people around us to support us and just do life with us.

APPLICATION

Maybe today, you're feeling that you're on your own. Maybe there are friendships that are broken and you don't know what to do. Take a few moments to tell God how you are feeling. He loves when we come to him honestly and can be sure that if we come near to God, he will come near to us. (James 4:8) And if you don't have the words, sitting with him quietly is OK too.

PRAYER

Father God, Thank you that you created us to be in good relationships with you and with one another. When I feel alone, please bring the right people around me. When I need help can you give me your boldness and courage to ask others for help. God will you fill me with your love so that I can show that to others when they are feeling lonely too. Thank you that you are always with me. Help me to know your presence with me today. Amen.

DEVOTION 2 - GOD IS WITH YOU...

Hebrews 4:14-16

So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

REFLECTION

During challenges in life, this passage from the bible encourages us to come boldly to God, the one who understands our weakness and our challenges and to ask Him to help us. When we ask God to help us He will show us kindness and compassion and He will be there for us.

APPLICATION

Are there some challenges in your life that you are facing this week that you would like to ask God to help you with? There is no topic too big or too small, whether that is exams, or friendships or anything else, we can talk to God about it. Take a moment to pause and if there is anything you want to ask boldly of God why don't you take a minute to write it down, and then speak it out loud using our guided prayer...

PRAYER

Dear gracious God, I thank you that you are not distant from me and that you say in Hebrews that you understand my weakness and my challenges. God I give you the things that are on my mind today (say them here) and I ask for your help with these things. Help me to rest in your kindness and compassion today. In your mighty name, amen.

DEVOTION 3 - THANKFULNESS

Philippians1:3-4

Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. 4 Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy.

REFLECTION

Paul was so thankful for his friends in the church at Philippi. They had helped him and supported him, been there for him in the good times and in the tough times. He loved the time he spent with them and wanted to see them again.

APPLICATION

Take a moment to think of the people that you are thankful for. Think about what they add to your life, what part they play. Maybe you could add some colour to your picture to represent what others add to your life, and maybe you could take time to pray for them, too! Maybe they are celebrating something this week, or maybe they are still sitting exams, take a moment to ask God to be with them and bring them peace.

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for friends and family. Thank you for the times they have been there for me and helped me. Help me not to take them for granted and show me how I can be a good friend to them, too. Amen.



PRAYER STATION

"Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!" Phillipians 4:4, NLT

This verse can feel really challenging, and that's because it is a challenge. Happiness is something we feel, but joy is something we practice. It's about lifting our eyes from the things in front of us and reminding ourselves that God is good, and that we can always rejoice in Him.

So this week we are going to practice joy. Grab your camera (or phone), step away from your studies for a moment and go outside. Take a photo of something that reminds you of God's goodness, and rejoice in Him.

DEVOTION 1 - JOY IN GOD'S GOODNESS

Psalm 19:1-2, NLT

The heavens proclaim the glory of God.

The skies display his craftsmanship.

Day after day they continue to speak;

night after night they make him known

REFLECTION

God shows us his goodness through the skies above us. Throughout history when Christians have looked at the sky they have been amazed at how great and wonderful the God who made them is. We can be joyful because the God who made all of these wonderful things also made us.

APPLICATION

Take your camera and look up. Take a picture which captures the beauty of the sky, maybe clouds, a sunrise or the stars at night. Rejoice in the wonder of the world that God has made.

PRAYER

God, I rejoice in the beauty of creation. You are great and mighty and your fingerprints are all around me. Help me to find joy in the wonders you have made.

DEVOTION 2 - JOY IN GOD'S PROVISION

Matthew 6:26 (NLT)

Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?

REFLECTION

We are reminded in nature that God sustains our lives and the life of the world around us. We should be joyful because God loves us and promises to provide for us. Through Him all things were made, and in Him all things hold together.

APPLICATION

Take your camera and go out into the world. Find an example of new life: a bird, or a river, or a plant coming up through the pavement. Take a picture of it, and rejoice in God who brings new life to all things.

PRAYER

God, I rejoice in your provision today. Thank you that you made the world, and even now you hold it together. Help me to be joyful, because I know that you will always sustain me. Amen.

DEVOTION 3 - GOD TAKES JOY IN YOU

Zephaniah 3:17 (NLT)

For the Lord your God is living among you.
He is a mighty saviour.
He will take delight in you with gladness.
With his love, he will calm all your fears.
He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.

REFLECTION

God also takes joy in us. We are his creations and he loves us. He promises us that His love will be there to give us peace and wholeness. We can be joyful, because God rejoices in us.

APPLICATION

Take your camera and turn it back towards yourself. Take a selfie, and as you do know that God also rejoices in you, his special creation.

PRAYER

Dear Lord God, I thank you that you are a mighty saviour. Thank you that you made me and you love me. Thank you that you love is what calms our fears. Help me to be joyful as you also rejoice in me.



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