

25-0720a Transcript

25-0720a - *Taming the Overthinking Mind*, Tom Freed

Bible Readers: Mike Mathis and Roger Raines

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Taming the Overthinking Mind

Transcript (0:03 - 20:21)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader: Mike Mathis

Philippians 4:6-8 - (0:03) The first scripture reading is taken from Philippians, the fourth chapter, verses six through eight. (0:14) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving (0:24) let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, (0:35) will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (0:43) Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things (0:50) are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, (1:01) if there is any virtue, if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things. (1:11) That completes the reading of God's Word. (1:15)

2nd Reader: Roger Raines

2 Corinthians 10:5 - (1:19) Good morning. I'll be reading from the second book of Corinthians, chapter 10, verse 5. (1:29) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, (1:36) and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. (1:44) This concludes this reading. (1:45)

Transcript

Preacher: Tom Freed

(1:50) Good morning. (1:52) Good to see everybody. Good to see our visitors. (1:56) We don't have a preacher right now, so we've got a handful of guys taking turns.

(2:00) And like Jim said, we have our old preacher joining the rotation again, so about six guys doing it. (2:10) My sermon today is called Taming the Overthinking Mind. (2:17) Every day many of us engage in a habit that consumes our energy and peace, overthinking.

(2:25) Sure, we all have experienced this. (2:29) God has blessed us with incredible minds capable of creativity, problem-solving, and reflection. (2:37) Yet too often we fill these minds with thoughts that lead us astray.

(2:43) I confess this is a struggle for me too. (2:47) Like many of you, I often dwell on thoughts that aren't beneficial. (2:52) Fears, regrets, or worries that steal my joy.

(2:56) Instead of focusing on God's blessings, we fixate on our problems. (3:01) Anxieties and what-ifs. (3:04) Money problems.

(3:06) Political unrest. (3:07) Past mistakes. (3:09) Failed relationships.

(3:11) The list goes on. (3:14) Especially nowadays with politics and everything else going on in the world. (3:19) Plus our own problems and issues.

(3:22) Our minds are flooded with thoughts. (3:25) Research suggests we have between 6,000 and 70,000 thoughts daily. (3:33) I don't know if 70,000 is accurate, but maybe some of us think that much.

(3:39) That sure is a lot of thoughts. (3:43) A staggering amount of mental activity. (3:46) But what's more concerning is what these thoughts contain.

(3:52) Studies show that 80% of our thoughts are negative and 95% are repetitive. (3:59) Recycling the same worries day after day. (4:03) It's like our minds are stuck on a loop.

(4:06) Playing the same negative songs. (4:09) Keeps us trapped in stress and fear. (4:13) Isn't that true? (4:14) I know I do this.

(4:15) I have one or two negative thoughts that I keep going on in my head over and over. (4:22) That's why probably so many people are depressed. (4:26) It's enough to drive you crazy thinking the same thing nonstop.

(4:32) Another study found 85% of us, what we worry about never happens. (4:39) Of the 15% that do, 79% of people found that they handle it better than they expected (4:47) or learned a valuable lesson. (4:51) This means 97% of our worries are baseless.

(4:56) Rooted in a pessimistic view that doesn't align with reality. (5:04) These unfounded worries don't just burden our minds. (5:07) They exhaust our bodies, increase stress, and distance us from God's peace.

(5:15) That's so true. (5:16) How often do we worry about something so much and then when it actually happens it isn't that bad? (5:22) I know this has happened to me plenty of times. (5:24) Seems like a lot of us worry about everything.

(5:29) No wonder God commands us to let go of worry. (5:32) In Philippians 4, 6-7 we read, (5:35) Do not be anxious for anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, (5:44) present your request to God. (5:47) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, (5:52) will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

(5:58) So the Bible is right again. (6:00) It says, don't worry about anything. (6:04) You know, we can cast our worries on the Lord.

(6:08) Jesus reinforces this in Matthew 6-27. (6:12) Can any of you, by worrying, add a single hour to your life? (6:18) Worrying doesn't change our circumstances. (6:20) It only robs us of the peace and strength that God offers.

(6:26) That's a good point. (6:28) Can you add any time to your life by worrying? (6:33) Worrying really isn't beneficial at all. (6:37) It really doesn't add to us.

(6:38) It only stresses us out. (6:42) We've all fallen into the trap of overthinking. (6:45) Whether it's a health scare, a strained relationship, or a work challenge.

(6:51) I've been there. (6:53) Caught in a cycle where the negative thought replays every few minutes. (6:58) Draining my energy and focus.

(7:01) Overthinking spirals. (7:03) Pulling us away from the present moment where God is active and working. (7:08) It leads us to dwell on the worst case scenarios.

(7:12) Our fears, failures, or imagined catastrophes. (7:16) It's like running on a hamster wheel. (7:19) We expend energy but go nowhere.

(7:23) Exhausted and far from God's peace. (7:28) Also, we blow problems out of proportion. (7:32) Turning a molehill into a mountain that feels insurmountable.

(7:37) I've done this plenty of times. (7:39) A simple problem or something has gone wrong in my life. (7:44) And I've blown it way out of proportion like it's the end of the world.

(7:49) And as research confirms, most of what we worry about never happens. (7:54) And the rest often turns out better than we feared. (7:59) I've seen this plenty of times in my life.

(8:02) Situations I stressed out over endlessly turned out to be blessings in disguise. (8:09) You know, all those things we worry about when we actually go through it a lot of times, it's not bad at all. (8:16) Even plenty of times it turns out to be great and beneficial for us.

(8:21) Why do we torment ourselves with these repetitive negative thoughts when so much is beyond our control? (8:30) Overthinking doesn't just steal our peace, it distracts us from trusting God's sovereignty. (8:40) God doesn't leave us trapped in this cycle. (8:43) Philippians 4, 6-7 offers a clear path.

(8:48) Don't be anxious, but pray, give thanks, and trust God for peace. (8:55) Telling ourselves to stop thinking about something often backfires. (9:00) It's like trying to not picture a pink elephant.

(9:03) I'm sure you've all tried that experiment where you tell yourself not to picture something. (9:10) That's all you do is picture it. (9:12) The harder you try, the more you think about it.

(9:16) Instead, God invites us to redirect our thoughts through prayer and surrender. (9:22) Verse Peter 5-7 says, (9:25) Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. (9:30) Prayer is powerful.

(9:33) When we bring our worries to God, He replaces our anxiety with His peace. (9:39) A peace that guards our hearts and minds like a shield. (9:43) All goes further in Philippians 4-8, urging us to focus deliberately.

(9:49) Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. (10:06) There are so many good things to think about. (10:09) So many spiritual things.

(10:11) But instead, most of the time, we focus on the negative thoughts. (10:16) Our minds are free to choose what we dwell on. (10:21) We can shift from negative loops to thoughts of God, God's truth, goodness, and promises.

(10:27) The good thing is we can't always control what thoughts enter our minds. (10:33) We can choose to discard the thoughts that pop in or think about whatever we want. (10:39) You know, there's a million things we can think about.

(10:41) It's up to us. We can choose to do it. (10:46) This isn't about denying reality, but seeing it through the lens of faith.

(10:53) Trusting God's plan, even in uncertainty. (10:57) Isaiah 26-3 promises, (11:00) You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. (11:09) Taming our thoughts is hard, but with God's strength it's possible.

(11:15) It's time to stop letting destructive thoughts rule our minds. (11:24) Breaking free from overthinking requires intentional, practical steps rooted in faith. (11:31) Here are some ways to start.

(11:35) Evaluate your thoughts. (11:37) Ask, does this thought serve me? (11:40) Does it align with God's truth? (11:43) If not, let it go. (11:45) 2 Corinthians 10-5 says, (11:48) Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

(11:54) Also, we can flip the negative to positive. (11:57) Transform negative thoughts into opportunities for hope. (12:01) For example, if you lose your job instead of thinking, I'm doomed.

(12:06) Consider, God has a better plan for me. (12:11) Or, this is a chance to pursue what I love. (12:14) It takes practice, but you can use that to flip any negative thought into a positive one.

(12:22) Jeremiah 29-11 reaffirms this. (12:25) For I know I have plans for you, declares the Lord. (12:29) Plans to prosper you and not to harm you.

(12:32) Plans to give you hope and a future. (12:37) Use a positive affirmation. (12:40) When worry strikes, repeat a biblical truth or affirmation.

(12:45) Try all is well. (12:48) God is working everything for my good. (12:51) And I am safe in His hands.

(12:54) This echoes Romans 8-28. (12:58) And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him. (13:04) Who have been called according to His purpose.

(13:08) That's one of my favorite verses. (13:11) Anytime anything bad happens or what we think is negative, (13:15) as a Christian you know that everything works for your good from God. (13:21) God's working for our best interest.

(13:23) But we can't see the future. (13:26) We don't know what God has in store. (13:28) But a lot of negatives turn into positives.

(13:32) A lot of the things I thought were the worst things that happened to me in life turned out to be the best. (13:39) In the future where God has blessed me and turned my life around. (13:44) We can also surrender through prayer.

(13:48) When anxiety creeps in, pause and pray. (13:51) Be honest with God about your fears. (13:55) And pair your prayers with thanksgiving for His faithfulness.

(13:59) Psalm 55-2 says, (14:02) Pastor cares on the Lord. (14:04) And He will sustain you. (14:06) He will never let the righteous be shaken.

(14:09) Practice presence. (14:12) Overthinking pulls us into the past or future. (14:17) But God meets us in the present.

(14:21) Matthew 6-34 reminds us, (14:24) Therefore do not worry about tomorrow. (14:27) For tomorrow will worry about itself. (14:30) Each day has enough trouble of its own.

(14:35) So this is more great advice. (14:37) The Bible has the best advice in the world. (14:40) Don't worry about tomorrow.

(14:42) Don't worry about the past. (14:45) You know, there's enough going on every single day. (14:47) Enough to worry about.

(14:48) Why worry about the future? (14:52) Engage in worship, reflection, or simply notice God's creation. (14:57) Anchor yourself in the moment. (15:01) Also journal gratitude and truth.

(15:05) Write down one thing you're thankful for (15:07) and one Bible verse that speaks to your situation. (15:11) This shifts your focus to God's provision and promises. (15:17) Seek community.

(15:18) Share your struggles with trusted friends or your church family. (15:23) Galatians 6-2 encourages us to carry each other's burdens. (15:29) Community reminds us we're not alone.

(15:31) The Bible says confess your sins to one another. (15:37) It helps to get it off your chest. (15:42) Rest in God's protection.

(15:44) Proverbs 18-10 declares, (15:48) The name of the Lord is a strong tower. (15:50) The righteous run to it and are saved. (15:53) God's presence is our refuge, (15:56) shielding us from the storms of overthinking.

(16:00) Let me share a story about Sarah who had a big problem with anxiety and depression. (16:08) She used to lie awake at night, (16:10) overwhelmed by worries about her job, family, and health. (16:15) The constant mental churn left her exhausted, (16:19) distant from God, and unable to enjoy life.

(16:22) Unable to enjoy life. (16:25) One day, Sarah started a simple practice. (16:27) Whenever she caught herself spiraling, (16:31) she'd write down one thing she was grateful for in one verse, (16:35) like Philippians 4-6-7, (16:37) to remind her of God's peace.

(16:41) Over time, this habit transformed her perspective. (16:46) She began to see God's hand in her life, (16:49) and her mind found rest. (16:52) Sarah's story shows us that taming the overthinking mind is possible (16:57) when we can lean into God's word and presence.

(17:02) Brothers and sisters, our minds are a battleground, (17:05) but we do not fight alone. (17:08) God equips us with His armor, (17:11) including the helmet of salvation. (17:14) The helmet protects our minds, (17:17) reminding us that our salvation in Christ (17:19) secures our eternal future, (17:22) no matter what trials we face.

(17:26) That's the ultimate thing to have you not to worry, (17:29) knowing that no matter what happens in this world, (17:33) we're promised heaven if you're a Christian. (17:36) 1 John 5-11 assures us, (17:40) and this is a testimony, (17:42) God has given us eternal life, (17:45) and this life is in His Son. (17:49) For Christians, this truth brings ultimate peace.

(17:52) No matter how chaotic life becomes, (17:55) nothing can snatch us from God's hand. (17:58) John 10-28 (18:01) If you're struggling with overthinking, (18:03) surrender your worries to God. (18:06) He promises to deliver us from our afflictions.

(18:11) Psalm 34-19 (18:12) The righteous person may have many troubles, (18:17) but the Lord delivers him from them all. (18:21) If you haven't yet accepted Christ, (18:24) know that true peace is found only in Him. (18:28) John 16-33 says, (18:31) In me you have peace, (18:33) in this world you will have trouble, (18:35) but take heart, I have overcome the world.

(18:39) Without Christ, the battle against overthinking (18:42) lacks the anchor of eternal hope. (18:45) With Him, we have victory. (18:50) Taming the overthinking mind isn't about willpower, (18:53) it's about trusting God's power.

(18:56) Let's commit today to surrender our worries, (19:00) redirect our thoughts to what is true and lovely, (19:03) and rest in God's peace. (19:05) If you're a Christian struggling with anxious thoughts, (19:09) bring them to God in prayer. (19:11) He is faithful to guard your heart and mind.

(19:15) If you've never accepted Christ, (19:18) today is the day to find true peace. (19:22) Acts 4-12 declares, (19:24) Salvation is found in no one else. (19:27) For there is no other name under heaven given to mankind (19:31) which we must be saved.

(19:34) No matter what the world tells you, (19:36) the world tells you that God is the same in every religion. (19:41) And it doesn't matter what you practice, (19:43) what you believe, (19:45) as long as you believe in God. (19:48) But this says there is salvation in no other name but Jesus.

(19:51) No other religion will be accepted. (19:55) As we close, I invite anyone who wants to accept Christ (19:59) or needs prayer for their struggles to come forward. (20:04) Our congregation is here to support you.

(20:08) Let's leave this place transformed, (20:10) trusting in God's power, (20:13) anchored in his presence, (20:15) and filled with his peace. (20:17) May we go forward with a renewed mind, (20:19) ready to live for his glory. (20:21) Amen.