



Week 1 Study Sheet

Think About What You Think About

Key Verse Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2 ESV

Introduction “I have a million thoughts running through my head!” I am sure you have made or heard this declaration at some point in your life. A million little thoughts may be a bit of an exaggeration, 6,000 to 70,000 thoughts per day is more accurate. That is roughly 50 thoughts per minute, four of which could be considered big ideas. Your brain is an amazing organ. It works 24/7 without breaks. Constantly firing the neurons at 200 to 500 hertz (Hz), or cycle per second, it is the fastest-working part of your body.

Yet, with all this information flying and neurons firing, we don't often take time to think about what we are thinking about. If we are not intentional with our thoughts, our brain can route incoming information to create negative habits and overwhelming feelings that can quickly overpower us.

In all of this, guess who can outrun that 500 Hz neuron firing negative thoughts in your head? God. Yes, he can because he is the one who formed and knitted your brain together. Let's dive into how God can help us navigate through our thoughts and dwell on the good things that he has in store for us.

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1. Share one word that best describes how you feel in this current moment.
2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, help us to rejoice in hope, be patient through suffering, and be authentic with our struggle with you and others.

Read [Romans 12:1-13](#)

- Discuss**
- What words or phrases stick out as you read this passage?
 - How can conforming to this world cause our thoughts to mislead us?
 - What are ways to allow God to transform your thoughts?
 - How can the gifts of the body help you with your thoughts?
 - How has God gifted you to help others?
 - How has genuine love and hospitality helped you with your thoughts?
 - How can you help others with your love and hospitality?

Practice Meditate or focus your thoughts on Scripture and allow God to deeply connect you to his Word. Christian mediation focuses the brain on connecting with God in a deeper way. There are helpful prompts that you can use to help you refine this spiritual practice. Spend time this week reading and meditating on Psalm 139



Week 2 Study Sheet

U.F.O.'s

Key Verse We pull down every proud obstacle that is raised against the knowledge of God; we take every thought captive and make it obey Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5 GNT

Introduction Imaginations can be vivid. Our minds can be filled with technicolor dreams and images of other earthly places. Our thoughts can be intense, organized with lists, spread sheet formulas, or unending 1s and 0s. Where does your mind tend to go?

Even though our minds may wander in different ways, we've all faced the point where the thought in our mind didn't align with reality. Maybe you're a doomsday thinker, where the narrative in your mind forms around the worst possible outcomes. Maybe you are a sunny sky person, always thinking everything will work itself out. Really, most of us are situational responders. Past experiences always build our present and future narratives.

Our personal narratives can often be untrue. These false narratives are harmful when they lead us to act sinfully. Instead of being led by the Spirit, we can easily overreact. Paul reminds us to capture these thoughts and submit them to Jesus to have his response to every situation (2 Corinthians 10:5). Have you overreacted to a situation based upon an untruth in your own mind? What changed when you submitted your thoughts to Jesus?

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2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, help me to capture my thoughts, and allow you to speak into them so that I may only hear your voice and not the voice of others.

Read [Psalm 77](#)

- Discuss**
- Does the Psalmist offer a pattern for reflection or repeated words?
 - How can sharing our emotions in prayer to God transform our way of thinking?
 - How can the act of seeking God in times of distress, provide comfort and relief when we are battling our own mental battles?
 - How can a thought of appreciation help keep us from building false narratives?
 - How can remembering God's work through the Scripture help us with our overreacting thoughts?

Practice Meditate on the narratives in your mind and ask God to help you see what is untrue. Max uses the term U.F.O. to help us see the harm of false narratives. An **U**ntruth leads to a **F**alse Narrative that creates an **O**verreaction (U.F.O.). Allow Psalm 77 to guide your meditation. When an untruth in your mind becomes evident, replace it with God's truth and his Word.



Week 3 Study Sheet

Uproot and Replant

- Key Verse** Be very careful to keep your mind safe. The thoughts that you think make you the person that you are.
Proverbs 4:23 EASY
- Introduction** One of the worst feelings in the world is stepping on a fire ant hill. If you have experienced this, you know the feeling. A sudden fire starts to spread from your toes to your head. You peer down to see what seems like hundreds of little red and black dots swarming your feet and legs and you immediately start running and swatting. Maybe you haven't had to deal with ants on your feet, but you have probably had to deal with A.N.T.s in your mind.
- In his wonderful children's book, *Captain Snout and the Superpower Questions: How to Calm Anxiety and Conquer Automatic Negative Thoughts*, Dr. Amen helps children and adults deal with the negative thoughts that come to our mind so quickly. Getting to the root all comes down to one question, "is that 100% true?" Often our negative thoughts come upon us in absolutes, disparity, and extremes. Our mind can go to a threat level 10 before we even try to take a small breath and allow truth to guide our reaction. Try checking every A.N.T. with this simple question - "is that 100% true?"- and allow the Spirit of God to uproot and replant every automatic, negative, thought.
- Check In** Take a moment to think about what you are thinking about. This is an exercise that can be done alone with God, with a family member, or within a small group (allow each group member to share briefly, thank each person for sharing before moving to the next person):
1. Share one word that best describes how you feel in this current moment.
 2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
 3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.
- Pray** Lord, my negative thoughts overwhelm me. Please direct me to your truth and help me gain your perspective on my life.
- Read** [Philippians 4:4-9](#)
- Discuss**
- What words, phrases, or thoughts stand out as you read this passage?
 - How can rejoicing in the Lord help us uproot negative thoughts?
 - How do gentleness and kindness help us replant true thoughts?
 - What positive things can we dwell on to help us with negative thoughts?
 - What should we practice and what will be the outcome?
- Practice** Uproot and replant the A.N.T.s in your mind this week. Whenever you or someone around you spits out an automatic negative thought, ask the simple question, "is this 100% true?" Ask God to help you gain a different perspective and reveal his truth in your life.



Week 4 Study Sheet

When You Feel Overwhelmed

Key Verse “All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.” 1 Samuel 17:47 NIV

Introduction A properly functioning dam brings a lot of security to an area. It creates a lake that can be used for recreation, used to power a generator, and even provide a new road to cross what used to be a busy river.

However, when heavy rains fall over the dammed-up area, the security of the dam can be overwhelmed. Water in the lake might rise and spill over the structure, the generators could over run themselves trying to process the extra water, and the road could be overwhelmed by the added water overflowing the dam.

Can you relate to this image within your own mind? Have you experienced moments like this in your life? Life can be overwhelming at times. David encourages us, “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.” (Psalm 24:1-2 NIV) God established everything around us. When we feel overwhelmed, we can trust the one who created all things to help us with all things.

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2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, the world around me feels overwhelming, help me to take courage knowing that you fight the battles for me.

Read [1 Samuel 17:25-51](#)

Discuss

- What phrases or words stand out as you read this story?
- What feeling is overwhelming the Israelites?
- How does David address the problem?
- What parts of David’s story can help us when we feel overwhelmed?
- What truth can you remember and apply from this story to help you the next time you feel overwhelmed?

Practice Write down the thoughts that overwhelm you and talk to God about them. David trusted in the Lord with all his battles. What battle are you facing this week? Search through the Psalms and find a Psalm that speaks to the situation that feels overwhelming in your life. Pray that Psalm over your specific situation throughout the week.



Week 5 Study Sheet

When You Battle with Guilt

- Key Verse** But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins, because we can trust God to do what is right. He will cleanse us from all the wrongs we have done. 1 John 1:9 NCV
- Introduction** Guilt is a heavy bag to lug around. Would have, could have, and should have, are familiar feelings for many. Regret over an argument with your spouse, pain from a harsh word spoken to a loved one years ago, and embarrassment from envy expressed to a coworker, guilt can haunt us all.
- There was an extremely guilty person in the Bible. This person sought to kill the budding Christian movement early on. He sought orders to annihilate this radical sect and maintain Jewish orthodoxy. Can you guess who this figure was? It was Paul. One of the most prominent writers of the New Testament spent months of his life trying to destroy what he would later die for. If anyone would have guilt to deal with, it would be Paul. Yet, the means to his healing was his constant willingness to confess.
- He states, “For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.” (1 Corinthians 15:8-10 NIV) Paul doesn’t carry the guilt of his past because he confesses and allows the grace of God to wash over his life. We can do the same with our guilt. We can hand over the weighty case of guilt for the light ball of grace.
- Check In** Take a moment to think about what you are thinking about. This is an exercise that can be done alone with God, with a family member, or within a small group (allow each group member to share briefly, thank each person for sharing before moving to the next person):
1. Share one word that best describes how you feel in this current moment.
 2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
 3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.
- Pray** Lord, you promise that when we confess our sin, you are faithful to cast our sin as far as the east is from the west. Help me find peace in your promise to forgive me of all my guilt.
- Read** [1 Timothy 6:11-16](#)
- Discuss**
- What phrases, words, or thoughts stick out to you from this passage?
 - What actions can we take to help prevent us from dealing with guilt?
 - With what thoughts can we replace our guilt?
 - How does Paul encourage Timothy and the church at Ephesus to deal with guilt?
 - How can we allow God to rule over our guilt?
- Practice** Ask God to reveal anything you need to confess to him and others. Confession is a vital spiritual practice that helps us stay connected to God’s grace. Ask God to remove anything that would separate you from his love. Ask God to replace your guilt with hope and peace. Then allow God to bless and release your mind from assumed guilt.



Week 6 Study Sheet

When You Can't Find Joy

Key Verse I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. John 15:11 NIV

Introduction Our society's mental health is in a state of crisis. The numbers are staggering. In 2021, 42% of high school students "experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness." And 22% "seriously considered attempting suicide. The health of adults is gloomy as well. In 2021 two in five American adults reported symptoms of anxiety and depression.¹

Our society champions, behaviors, events, experiences, people, and substances that bring pseudo-joy. We value anonymity over relationships. In the constant comparison driving our world, our joy has been depleted. But for those who delight in the Lord, their joy is not found in the things of this world, but rather in things above.

Paul's encouragement provides a way out of despair, "No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it." (1 Corinthians 10:13 MSG) God can replace our thoughts of despair with the joy of the Lord.

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2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, help my joy to be full by acknowledging your nearness. Thank you for walking with me and giving me joy to face every day.

Read [Psalm 126](#)

- Discuss**
- What words and phrases stand out to you from this passage?
 - What things can take joy away from you?
 - How does this passage help us restore our joy?
 - What do you do to restore your own joy? How would you help someone else?
 - How does weeping sow seeds that will return in joy? How have you experienced this in your life?

Practice Take time every day this week to acknowledge the nearness of God. We often forget about the nearness of God. This can leave us feeling joyless. Ask God to fill your joy tank up with moments that remind you of his nearness.

¹Fact sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Announces New Actions to Tackle Nation's Mental Health Crisis.



Week 7 Study Sheet

When You Always Want More

Key Verse My God will use his wonderful riches in Christ Jesus to give you everything you need. Philippians 4:19 NCV

Introduction We all have a bunch of “stuff.” Our closets are full, our garages boast boxes instead of cars, and our email inboxes notify us constantly of the next great opportunity to buy more stuff. The world is geared toward stuff. The motivation for acquiring so much stuff is different for each generation. Older generations touched by the Great Depression and world wars hoarded stuff because they experienced what it was like to be without. Boomers faced the great comparison race that led them to want what everyone else had. Now, younger generations are engineered to want whatever they scroll across. Our minds are cluttered and focused on the stuff of this world instead of what we should desire. In this clutter, it’s easy to become fixated on what we want and forget what God wants. How can you declutter your wants and focus on what God wants for your life?

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3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, help me find contentment in what I have, who I know, and what I do. Help me to be faithful with the few things so that I may glorify you.

Read [Acts 8:9-25](#)

- Discuss**
- What phrases, themes, or words stand out to you in this passage?
 - What is it that Simon wants? Can you relate to his request?
 - Why would Simon’s desire conflict with God’s plan?
 - How can you discern if what you want conflicts with God’s plan for your life?
 - What should we desire? What should we give up?

Practice Go through all your “stuff” this week. Ask a simple question, does this bring me closer to God? If the answer is yes, don’t worry about it. If the answer is no, get rid of it. You can do this with your personal items and with all the digital items on your devices.



Week 8 Study Sheet

When Lust Lures You

Key Verse For God has not called us to be dirty-minded and full of lust but to be holy and clean. 1 Thessalonians 4:7 TLB

Introduction “Sex sells,” is a phrase that the Western world has exhausted. Sadly, the phrase is true. According to research, the sex industry is worth nearly \$3.3 billion dollars. Men and women spend roughly \$3,075.64 per second on pornography.² The lure of lust has become normalized. Sexuality is used like a drug to lure both men and women into extended screen time that blurs the lines of reality and decreases their ability to be relational.

The world has become numb to a healthy view of sexuality. At this time, only 43% of teens believe porn is bad for them to consume with 9 out of 10 boys and 6 out of 10 girls being exposed to pornography on a regular basis.³ While sex among teens is declining, the use of pornography has steadily increased leading to a misunderstanding of the purpose of sex.

With our minds constantly bombard, we must capture our thoughts and fix our eyes on things that connect us with God’s view of sexuality. If we start with acknowledging God’s authorship on sex, we can replace these unhealthy themes with God’s goodness and grace.

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1. Share one word that best describes how you feel in this current moment.
2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, let my eyes, my heart, and my mind only focus on what is pure and holy.

Read [2 Samuel 11](#)

- Discuss**
- What phrases, words, or ideas stand out as you read this passage?
 - What could have helped David not lust?
 - What other actions accompanied David’s lustful actions?
 - How can God help us with lust?
 - Has God given you ways to protect yourself against lust?
 - What can you replace lustful thoughts with?

Practice Bounce your eyes, yes practice bouncing your eyes this week. If social media prompts you to lust, stay off it. If watching TV causes you to lust, don’t watch it. Spend time this week finding ways to bounce your eyes away from lustful places.

²webroot.com

³covenanteyes.com



Week 9 Study Sheet

When Your Heart Needs Peace

- Key Verse** And God’s peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7 NCV
- Introduction** Where were you on September 11, 2001? Where were you on March 17, 2020? For most of us, our memories from the events that occurred on these dates stir up deep levels of emotion. Fear is probably the first and most intense emotion, followed by anger or anxiety. Historical events can rob us of peace and remind us of the frailty of life.
- Yet, for most of us, it’s the everyday life events that rob us of peace. The trauma of an accident, a past hurt from childhood, a current custody battle—we all face things that drain our peace. The anxiety war rages in our mind leading us to sleepless nights, harmful habits, or even isolation—separating us from God and others.
- Paul knew this feeling. He knew hard nights, that is why he penned, “God’s peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7 NCV) Are you currently experiencing a life event that is stealing your joy? Pause right now and invite the Spirit of God to replace fear with faith, and anxiety with assurance.
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1. Share one word that best describes how you feel in this current moment.
 2. Share why you feel this way and describe it briefly using a couple of sentences.
 3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.
- Pray** Lord, give me your peace, let peace that surpasses all knowledge rest within my heart, mind, and soul allowing me to hear only your voice.
- Read** [John 20:19-23](#)
- Discuss**
- What is the historical setting of this passage, what big events have just occurred?
 - How do you think the disciples felt before Jesus entered?
 - How do you think they felt after he left?
 - How has Jesus given you peace in a tough situation?
 - What role does the Holy Spirit play in comforting us?
 - What role does forgiveness play in peace?
 - What things steal peace from you? Why?
- Practice** Invite the Holy Spirit to bring peace to every area of your life. As you breath in say, “the Peace of the Lord be with me.” As you exhale, “the Peace of the Lord be with you.” Do this for several seconds every day and in moments of stress.



Week 10 Study Sheet

When You're Dealing with a Difficult Person

Key Verse [Jesus] gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born as a man and became like a servant. Philippians 2:6 NCV

Introduction It is easier to write off a rude person than to forgive them. Maybe it's a condescending coworker, the random guy who cut you off in traffic, or a roommate who always forgets to load their dirty dishes in the dishwasher. What is your first reaction to a person like this? Do you plot revenge? Do you think of ways to put them in their place? Do you just avoid them at all costs?

Sometimes harsh personalities hide wounded hearts. A difficult person may be a person covering up their own pain through their actions. In the moment, it can be hard to remember the right response. But when we calm our minds, we can remember that a difficult person is still a child of God. We can pray a blessing over them and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the right words and actions to respond to them.

Jesus had to deal with people who made false claims against him and despised him enough to crucify him. In all this, on the cross of his death he declared to his heavenly father, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34 NIV)

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3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray Lord, give my eyes to see and ears to hear what you see in people who are difficult. Help me to remember that you died for them and desire for them to know you.

Read [Matthew 5:43-48](#)

- Discuss**
- What words, phrases, and topics do you notice in this passage?
 - Why should we love our enemy?
 - How can you practically love your enemy?
 - How would you pray for someone who is persecuting you?
 - How do we reflect God by loving those who hate us or persecute us?

Read [Romans 12:14-21](#)

- Discuss**
- What words, topics, and phrases cause you pause as you read?
 - How can blessing those who persecute us transform how we view difficult people?
 - How can shared emotions (vs. 15) impact our emotional wellbeing, but also help others?
 - How does living in harmony with one another affect our mental health?

Practice Pray for someone you don't like. Pray for organizations that persecute the church. Find time this week to pray for God's blessing on your enemies. Keep record of God's work on your heart regarding difficult people.



Week 11 Study Sheet

A New Way of Thinking

Key Verse ...Fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5 Phillips

Introduction The way our mind works is a creative adventure. Only the fingerprints of God could design such an extravagant process. There is literally electricity to it!

The expanse of our mind is vast. It can wander to the depths of our soul, causing great sadness and gloom to overwhelm us. It can cause our body to be physically wretched, expressing on the outside the turmoil within. Yet, we also see the beauty in God's design for the mind. Thoughts that lead to invention. Minds set on curing cancer. Acts of compassion that can cancel out the wretchedness of man.

In Romans 12:2 NIV, Paul encourages us to renew our minds daily: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

J.R.R. Tolkien puts it this way, "All that is gold does not glitter, not all those who wander are lost; the old that is strong does not wither, deep roots are not reached by the frost. From the ashes of fire shall be woken, a light from the shadows shall spring; renewed shall be blade that was broken, the crownless again shall be king."⁴

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3. Share a moment from today or this past week that you are thankful for.

Pray "May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14 NIV)

Read [Psalm 139](#)

- Discuss**
- What words or phrases stick out to you as you read over this Psalm?
 - How can we allow God to search us?
 - What is our response as he interacts with us?
 - Where have you felt God the most in your life?
 - Are there moments you have felt like God was not nearby?
 - What do you think David is trying to explain to the reader in verses 7-12?
 - If God created us, how can he help us with our thoughts?
 - What has God revealed to you when you've asked him to search you?
 - What has God has revealed to you through this sermon series?

- Practice** Use these questions as you seek God to lead you and guide you through daily life:
- Where are you God, in this thought of mine?
 - God, is this thought from you?
 - God, how does this thought, point to your will for my life?

⁴J. R. R. Tolkien, "The Riddle of Strider", *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*