

WINNING THE BATTLE IN YOUR MIND: REFRAME YOUR PAIN!

Scripture used: [Romans 15:23-25 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

This is Week 4 of our series “Winning the Battle in Your Mind.” In Week 1, we learned about the importance of replacing. We are bombarded by more than 500 negative thoughts per day on average, and they wear us down. Replace negative thoughts with God-given truths about who we are as His children. In Week 2, we talked about the importance of rewiring. God has given us amazing brains that are capable of adapting as we leverage the “mighty power” Paul describes in [Ephesians 1:19 \(NLT\)](#) to work redemption in our minds. In Week 3, guest Pastor Tony Williams told us about resolve. His story of determination in the face of serious illness gives us all hope. We must hold onto God’s truth even when bad things are happening and we are tempted to despair. Replace. Rewire. Resolve. And now, in Week 4, we learn about reframing. This is the process of looking for the good in life, which is a powerful spiritual discipline. Of course, we know that bad things happen. Reframing is not about ignoring the bad, but looking for the good. Pastor Hurmon shared his own story, describing the traumas he suffered as an infant, a child, and as a young man. He often couldn’t see the larger picture, which was God’s amazing plan for his life. Now he can stitch together these various traumatic events into a tapestry that blesses others. Each of us needs to go through this process of training ourselves to see the good. Reframing is a key step to unlocking the blessings of a life lived in harmony with God’s will!

KEY POINTS

- 1) **We will see whatever we look for.** This is what we are learning from the latest research into how the brain works. When we fixate on certain kinds of things -- for example, negative experiences -- then our brain will search for them. We are basically telling the brain that something is important, so our brain wants to make sure we get the important stuff first. This wouldn’t be a problem if we tended to think about good things, but unfortunately we mostly think about the ways we have been hurt, wronged, or mistreated.
- 2) **Today’s troubles come from yesterday’s traumas.** We all live with narratives about our life. This is a story we tell ourselves about who we are, why we’re here, how we should live, and what we expect. Many of us struggle on a daily basis because our personal narrative has become too dark, especially during COVID. It’s actually not what happens to us, however horrible things may be. It is the story we tell ourselves that really matters.
- 3) **Look for God’s hand and providence.** Looking for the good is a discipline. We must practice it everyday. There are God-given threads that connect our experiences no matter how far off-track we are. When Paul wrote about his plans in [Romans 15:23-25 \(NLT\)](#), he had no idea that he would be arrested and imprisoned for years. He had no idea that he would arrive in chains!
- 4) **Look for unexpected collateral goodness.** When Paul did get to Rome, he was chained up with other people for eight-hour shifts. Three times a day people rotated, giving Paul an incredible opportunity to share the gospel. He used his imprisonment to spread the Good News to hundreds of people, which he realized when looking back on the experience in [Philippians 1:12-13 \(NLT\)](#). That is the ultimate reframing. Rather than collateral damage of the bad events in the world, Paul saw the collateral goodness that came from faithfully preaching God’s word and trusting in the Almighty’s plan.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - COVID has exaggerated many of life’s worst aspects. We are dealing with increased isolation, anxiety, fear, and doubt. In the midst of all this trauma, however, there is an undeniable truth. God loves us, and His son conquered death so that we can have eternal life. Nothing in this world is so negative that it can steal the joy of God’s people who can expect an eternity of His loving embrace. This is the ultimate reframing! What everyday feeling do you need to reframe in this season?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Philippians 1:12-13 \(NLT\)](#) and Paul’s example. Pastor Hurmon’s affirmation for this week is “God, empower me to look for and to see Your conquering grace and collateral goodness!” Reflect on your life with that lens of redemptive grace. Our reflection question is “What incident or past pain will you reframe by looking for God’s conquering grace and collateral goodness?”
- 3) **DO** - Next Sunday, November 7th at 3:00 PM (Pacific) 6:00 PM (Eastern) is a wonderful opportunity to spread the facts about COVID. The U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy will join us for a virtual panel discussion “Let’s Talk: An Online Faith-based Conversation.” [Register now!](#)