Winning the War in Your Mind: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life

The battle for your life is won or lost in your mind. Your thoughts will control you, so you have to control your thoughts. With those provocative words, pastor and bestselling author Craig Groeschel tees up the purpose of his book *Winning the War in Your Mind: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life*. The value of this book is found in the combination of its insights and its practical steps of application. The reader is constantly provided a pathway for personal implementation.

Take a look at these Book Notes to whet your appetite for the wisdom you will find pack into this must-read book.

Title: Winning the War in Your Mind: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life

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Book Description:

Are your thoughts out of control—just like your life? Do you long to break free from the spiral of destructive thinking? Let God's truth become your battle plan to win the war in your mind!

We've all tried to think our way out of bad habits and unhealthy thought patterns, only to find ourselves stuck with an out-of-control mind and off-track daily life. Pastor and *New York Times* bestselling author Craig Groeschel understands deeply this daily battle against self-doubt and negative thinking, and in this powerful new book he reveals the strategies he's discovered to change your mind and your life for the long-term.

Drawing upon Scripture and the latest findings of brain science, Groeschel lays out practical strategies that will free you from the grip of harmful, destructive thinking and enable you to live the life of joy and peace that God intends you to live. *Winning the War in Your Mind* will help you:

- Learn how your brain works and see how to rewire it
- Identify the lies your enemy wants you to believe
- Recognize and short-circuit your mental triggers for destructive thinking
- See how prayer and praise will transform your mind
- Develop practices that allow God's thoughts to become your thoughts

God has something better for your life than your old ways of thinking. It's time to change your mind so God can change your life.

Book Quotes:

Our lives are always moving in the direction of our strongest thoughts. What we think shapes who we are. LOCATION: 317

In ten years, we will each look in the mirror, and someone will stare back. That person will be shaped by the thoughts of today. LOCATION: 333

The life we have is a reflection of what we think. LOCATION: 334

If you think you're trapped, if you believe there's a lock on the door, you've bought into a lie. And it is the lie, nothing else, that is holding you back. Yet if you identify that lie, then you can remove it. You can replace it with the truth and be free. Your liberation is a simple two-step process: Remove the lie. Replace it with truth. LOCATION: 394

But no, your mind is a battlefield, and the battle for your life is always won or lost in your mind. LOCATION: 401

Your mind is a war zone, and you are under attack. It's critical that you become aware of the fight. You cannot change what you do not confront. If you ignore the battle, you lose the battle. LOCATION: 407

You cannot change what you do not confront. LOCATION: 411

One more time, because this point is crucial: a lie believed as truth will affect your life as if it were true. LOCATION: 443

Satan's strategy to win the battle for your mind is getting you to believe lies. If you believe a lie, it will hold you back from doing what God's calling you to do. LOCATION: 506

If you feel like a victim, you'll think like a victim, and the direction of your life could be one of misery. But if you believe that by the power of Christ you can overcome, then with his help you can. LOCATION: 529

Consider this: Who you are today is a result of your thoughts in the past. Who you become in the future will reflect what you think about today. LOCATION: 530

The battle for your life is won or lost in your mind. Your thoughts will control you, so you have to control your thoughts. LOCATION: 578

Know this: You cannot defeat what you cannot define. You have to identify the lie that has become a stronghold for you. You must realize the negative impact it's had on you and others. LOCATION: 668

Unfortunately, Satan's lies are easy to believe. Why? Part of the reason is that because of sin, we have a flawed internal lie detector. God warned us: "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jer. 17:9). "There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death" (Prov. 14:12). LOCATION: 759

If Satan's primary weapon is lies, then our greatest counter-weapon is the truth of God's Word. Not just reading the Bible but learning to wield Scripture as a divine weapon. LOCATION: 764

Remember, you are in a battle. The battle is for your mind. Your entire life, Satan has been trying to bait you so he can entice you with lies that will capture and imprison you. Now it's time to go on the offensive. Time to get God's help to capture the lie. LOCATION: 829

You get the pattern now, but here are a couple more in a concise template: Lie: "I'm a victim; nothing good ever happens to me." Truth: "If God is for us, who can be against us? . . . In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom. 8:31, 37). Declaration: "God tells me that I am not a victim but a

victor in Christ. I am an overcomer, and 'I can do all this through him who gives me strength'" (Phil. 4:13). LOCATION: 872

If we want to win the war in our minds, we have to be willing to rewire our thought patterns, rewire our brains. LOCATION: 975

Every thought you have produces a neurochemical change in your mind. Your brain literally redesigns itself around that thought. LOCATION: 980

Your brain is designed to look for patterns and create neurological pathways to help you keep thinking the things you keep thinking and doing the things you keep doing. LOCATION: 999

Behavior modification doesn't work, because the focus is only on modifying behavior. You don't get to the root of the problem, which is the thought that produces the behavior. To be more specific, the problem is the neural pathway that leads to the behavior. LOCATION: 1146

Thinking I can change a behavior just by removing the behavior is absurd. The behavior isn't the root problem. The neural pathway that leads me to the behavior is the problem. If I stop a behavior, it will come back, unless I remove the lie at the root of the behavior, and replace the neural pathway that leads me to the behavior. LOCATION: 1161

Throughout part 1, we learned how to remove the lie and replace it with truth. Now let's discover how we can create a new neural pathway, or to put it another way, dig a new and helpful trench. This is going to help us rewire our brains and renew our minds. LOCATION: 1164

We know that the only antidote for a lie is truth. That's why our first tool was the Replacement Principle: Remove the lies, replace with truth. The antidote for a negative neural pathway is a new neural pathway. Instead of living in a rut, you can create a truth trench that runs deeper, diverting the flow of your thoughts from old pathways to new ones. LOCATION: 1170

To stop the lies and replace them with truth, we need to look to God's Word. Remember, that's the weapon God gives us for the battle we are fighting. His truth is what can set us free, and we are going to choose specific Bible verses to create a new neural pathway that applies directly to our problem. Using his Word, we will create a trench of truth. LOCATION: 1177

Psychologists and others who study how our minds work talk about the law of exposure. The law of exposure says that the mind absorbs and reflects what it is exposed to the most. Basically, if we allow a thought into our minds, it will come out in our lives. LOCATION: 1258

More than two thousand years ago, our thoughtology professor Paul taught us that same truth when he wrote, "Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace" (Rom. 8:5–6 NLT). Paul taught that if you allow a thought into your mind, it will come out in your life. So if you want to change your life, you have to change your thinking. You need a new declaration. LOCATION: 1260

We need to be diligent about what we allow into our minds! Why? Because what consumes our minds controls our lives. LOCATION: 1265

If you want to change your life, you have to change your thinking. LOCATION: 1267

Eastern meditation is an emptying of your mind. What I'm suggesting—what the Bible calls for—is the

opposite. Christian meditation is filling your mind with God's truth, being strategic and deliberate about what you allow into your mind. We make the law of exposure work for us instead of against us. We win the war in our minds by creating a solution for our mental ruts: trenches of truth that work with the way our brains work. LOCATION: 1271

You should start your day in God's Word, digging trenches of truth and finding your declarations. Then write it, think it, confess it until you believe it. LOCATION: 1369

Zig Ziglar said, "Repetition is the mother of learning and the father of action, which makes it the architect of accomplishment." LOCATION: 1389

The journey to your destiny starts with your thoughts. The right thoughts lead to the right life. LOCATION: 1391

Don't give up. Keep moving forward. Write it, think it, confess it until you believe it. You are rewiring your brain. God is renewing your mind. Then one day something will click. You will be fluent in truth. Automaticity. You will have changed your thinking, and it will change your life. LOCATION: 1411

Studies show that cognitive bias can impact a person's view of God. Your relationship with your earthly father often colors how you perceive your heavenly Father. If you had a good dad who was involved and full of compassion, it will be easier to view God as relational and caring about the details of your life. If you had a father who was absent or abusive, you are more likely to think of God as distant and disinterested. Same God. Different filter. LOCATION: 1499

That's why it's so important to think about what you think about. You cannot defeat an enemy you cannot define. LOCATION: 1508

Social psychologists have a name for taking control of how we perceive things. They call it cognitive reframing. It's when we learn to identify and correct irrational thinking. We could say this happens when we unbias our bias. LOCATION: 1526

You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control how you frame it. LOCATION: 1541

The third tool to change your thinking is the Reframe Principle: Reframe your mind, restore your perspective. (The first tool is the Replacement Principle: Remove the lies, replace with truth. The second tool is the Rewire Principle: Rewire your brain, renew your mind.) Reframing has changed my thinking and changed my life. Reframing your past—and preframing your future—will change your life. LOCATION: 1563

We find what we are looking for, and we reframe by looking for God's goodness. LOCATION: 1696

When we reframe what happened in our yesterdays, that changes our todays. We are able to experience life without the old, negative cognitive bias and start seeing through the lens of God's goodness. LOCATION: 1750

Our runaway negative thoughts can spiral out of control and lead our lives in the wrong direction. LOCATION: 1843

God was not in the wind. God was not in the earthquake. God was not in the fire. Silence, then a whisper. God was in the whisper. But why would God whisper to Elijah? When you are overwhelmed and feeling anxious, if you listen for his voice, you'll find that God is whispering to you. But why? Why does our God whisper? He whispers because he is so close. And he whispers to draw us close. Think about it: When you are sitting next to a loved one and they whisper in your ear, what do you do? You lean into them. And you listen closely. LOCATION: 1949

When you've had enough, God is enough. LOCATION: 2001

Why is being mindful of God's presence so critical? What I'm about to tell you may seem offensively simple, but it's indescribably important. Are you ready? Don't miss this. If you forget God is there, you won't talk to him. Simple, right? (I warned you.) But it's true. When we don't focus on God's presence, we don't pray. Instead we go it alone. We find our thoughts moving in the wrong direction, and our lives quickly follow. LOCATION: 2032

Let this game-changing truth sink in: If it's big enough to worry about, then it's big enough to pray about. If it's on your mind, then it's on God's heart. LOCATION: 2040

Prayer works. Prayer changes things. Perhaps more important, prayer changes you. Prayer changes your brain. LOCATION: 2095

Your life is always moving in the direction of your strongest thoughts. Worrying and toxic thinking will change your brain and move your life in a direction you don't want to go. Prayer changes your brain and moves your life in a positive direction. LOCATION: 2110

Prayer is deciding to turn to and surrender our feelings and control of our lives to God, trusting his promises and power. That's what we're going to do. We are going to pray in faith. LOCATION: 2126

Get a box. It doesn't have to be fancy or big: a small Amazon box or a shoebox. Now write, "God" on the box. Every time you have a worry, burden, temptation, or runaway crazy thought, write it down on a slip of paper. You might write: I'm afraid I'm going to get fired. My seventeen-year-old son worries me sick. I want to get on my phone and go to websites or social media I know I shouldn't. I can't pay all these bills. What's going to happen with my mother? I want to smoke so bad. I'm never going to change. I'm angry with my spouse constantly. Write them down and put them in your God box. When you do, pray, "God, I am trusting you with this. I know you are in control. I know you are bigger than this. This is not a thought I want to think, so I am giving this to you." Once you pray and put the problem in the box, go on with your life…From that point on, if you decide you want to worry about whatever it was, go to the God box, take it out, and tell God, "I don't trust you with this. I am going to take it back from you." When you read that last sentence, you probably thought, I could never say that to God, but every time we worry or panic, that is what we're saying to God. LOCATION: 2146

Your circumstances may be bad, but your God is still good. He is near, his promises are still true, his love still unconditional, his grace still amazing, his timing still perfect. You may not like the what of what's going on, but you can still praise God for the who of who he is. LOCATION: 2200

It's time for us to fix our thoughts on God, to give him praise for who he is, regardless of what he may or may not be doing. When we praise him, he will show up. When he shows up, it will change our thinking. If we change our thoughts, we change our life. LOCATION: 2231

Don't just look at what's wrong. Look at what's right. Maybe take a minute to write down all the good things. Literally count your blessings and thank God for them. A change of perspective leads us to praise God. And praising God changes our perspective. LOCATION: 2302

As we near the end of our journey, I hope you walk away understanding that your thinking determines so much. Your life always moves in the direction of your strongest thoughts. What consumes your mind controls your life. LOCATION: 2353

You will use the four tools God has given us to fix our thoughts and win the war in our minds: (1) the

Replacement Principle, (2) the Rewire Principle, (3) the Reframe Principle, and (4) the Rejoice Principle. LOCATION: 2425

1. You will remove the lie and replace it with truth. We know we have an enemy who is seeking to destroy us. His weapon is the lie. Our weakness is believing lies, and if we believe a lie, it will affect our lives as if it were true. LOCATION: 2427

2. You will create new trenches of truth. Our brains have neural pathways—mental ruts we created through repeatedly thinking the same thoughts—which trigger our automatic response to external stimuli. To stop a behavior, we need to remove the lie behind it and replace the neural pathway. We dig truth trenches. How? You renew your mind with God's truth. As you internalize Bible verses, they will become your new way of thinking and responding. LOCATION: 2430

3. You will reframe and preframe. We cannot control what happens to us, but we can control how we perceive it. We all have cognitive biases that cause us to see things in ways that do not reflect reality. But we have the power to do cognitive reframing, changing how we view the past and the future. LOCATION: 2436 4. You will change your perspective through prayer and praise. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by everything that is happening, but when we've had enough, God is enough. Not only is God enough; God is near. We stay mindful of his presence. When we do, it leads us to pray. Instead of worrying, we put all our fears in our God box, trusting his love and provision for us. Praying changes our brain, as does praising God. We praise him for the who of who he is, even if the what is not what we want. As we praise God, he shows up and gives us peace of mind. LOCATION: 2438