

WHEN THOUGHTS MULTIPLY

The Comfort That Finds You in the Tangle

Pastor Carl Toti | August 30, 2026

SCRIPTURE

"In the multitude of my anxious thoughts within me, Your comforts delight my soul."

Psalm 94:19 (NKJV)

"Whenever I am anxious and worried, you comfort me and make me glad."

Psalm 94:19 (GNT)

REFLECTION

About a century ago, people started planting a fast-growing vine called kudzu across the South. It was beautiful, it grew quickly, and it helped stop erosion. It worked a little too well. Nobody asked the second question: what stops the vine? Kudzu doesn't just grow — it forks. One shoot becomes two. Two become eight. Eight become a hundred. Before long, the barn disappears. The telephone pole disappears. Drive through the Deep South in July and whole hillsides look like something out of a horror show, buried under green.

Three thousand years before kudzu ever covered a hillside, a Hebrew poet reached for a rare word to describe what was happening inside his own mind — a word carrying the idea of thoughts that divide, branch, and multiply. He wasn't simply saying, "I've got a lot on my mind." He was describing something that multiplies inside a person: one thought becomes two, two become eight, eight become a hundred, until you can no longer see the original problem underneath everything your mind has grown around it. It's 3:17 in the morning. Your body is in bed, but your mind has left the building. The psalmist didn't have a smartphone or social media, and his mind was still eating him alive. But watch what he says next: he does not say his comfort arrived once the thoughts disappeared. He says God's comfort met him *in the middle* of the multitude, while the branches were still there.

1. One Thought Never Travels Alone

Psalm 94 isn't about vague feelings. The psalmist is watching real injustice — the vulnerable being crushed while the wicked prosper — and asking God, out loud, "How long?" It's under that kind of real pressure that his thoughts start to multiply. Multiplying thoughts are not evidence of weak faith. They are what a mind does when it's carrying more uncertainty than it knows how to process. Some of us have spent years treating a racing mind as proof we don't trust God enough. Scripture never asks the psalmist to apologize for his thoughts. God simply meets him among them.

Big takeaway: A multiplying mind is not a measure of your faith. You don't have to untangle every thought before God will meet you.

2. God Meets You in the Tangle

Notice exactly where comfort shows up in the verse: not after the thoughts clear, but in the multitude of them. Not "when I finally got my thoughts under control," but right there, in the middle. And the word used for God's comfort is tender — closer to a parent delighting over a frightened child than to a

clinical fix. God doesn't wait at the edge of the tangle for you to clean it up. He steps into it and delights over you right there, thoughts still branching and all.

***Big takeaway:** You don't have to present God a cleaned-up version of yourself. He meets you in the actual tangle, not the tidy one you were planning to show Him.*

3. The Cross and the Comforter

This truth is fulfilled most fully in Jesus. In the Garden of Gethsemane, His soul was, in His own words, "exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death" — sorrow surrounding Him on every side. Three times He asked the Father the same question a different way, His thoughts circling and returning. And then Scripture records something easy to read past: an angel appeared and strengthened Him. God didn't remove the cup. He sent comfort into the middle of the anguish while the cup remained. That same week, Jesus promised His followers He would not leave them as orphans — that the Father would send another Comforter to live inside them permanently. The Holy Spirit doesn't visit the tangle once and leave. He takes up residence inside it and stays.

***Big takeaway:** Jesus faced His own multiplying sorrow and was met with comfort in it, not after it. Because of Him, that same Comforter now lives permanently inside every believer's tangled thoughts.*

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, my thoughts multiply, but You are not afraid of the tangle. Meet me in the multitude — not after I clear it, but in the middle of it. Let Your comfort delight my soul. I don't have to fix everything to be found by You. The vine does not win. You do. In Jesus' name, amen.

WHEN THE BRANCHES START GROWING

Name it. Put words to the actual thought instead of letting it stay a fog. Ask, "What exactly am I afraid of right now?" You cannot address a thought you refuse to identify.

Test it. A thought entering your mind doesn't make it true. Ask: Is this true? Is this happening now? What has God actually said? This is how you stop one "what if" from forking into ten.

Return it. Turn the thought into prayer instead of rehearsing it. If it comes back ten times, hand it back eleven. Comfort was never meant to be found by winning the argument in your head alone.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Where in your life have you been treating a racing mind as evidence of weak faith, rather than bringing it to God as it is?
2. What would it look like this week to talk to God *in* the tangle, instead of waiting until your thoughts feel settled?
3. Which of the three steps — Name it, Test it, Return it — do you most need to practice the next time your thoughts start branching?

NOTES & JOURNALING
