

NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

STEVEN FURTICK

CRASH THE
CHATTERBOX

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

ABOVE ALL OTHERS



Praise for
Crash the Chatterbox

“Pastor Steven has written the best book I’ve ever read on overcoming the lies that hold us back. If you read this prayerfully and take the truths of *Crash the Chatterbox* to heart, God will help you win the battles in your mind and become the person He created you to be.”

—CRAIG GROESCHEL, lead pastor, LifeChurch.tv, Edmond, OK;
author of *Fight*

“Crafted around four powerful confessions, *Chatterbox* unearths, exposes, and refutes lies and half truths all of us are tempted to believe about ourselves. Steven’s direct writing style will keep you engaged. His insights will make you think. But most important, these four confessions will free you to embrace the life God has called you to live.”

—ANDY STANLEY, senior pastor, North Point Church, Alpharetta, GA;
author of *Enemies of the Heart*

“I believe God’s truth. I want to live God’s truth. But sometimes I have a hard time hearing God’s truth when negative inside chatter and self-doubt run like a ticker tape through my mind. Pastor Steven’s vulnerability, biblical insights, and practical advice make *Crash the Chatterbox* a resource I will turn to again and again. This book can be a game changer for you.”

—LYSA TERKEURST, *New York Times* best-selling author; president
of Proverbs 31 Ministries

“Every one of us at some point deals with fears and self-doubt, with internal conflict about whether we are good enough or successful enough, or whether our past will forever haunt our future. Be inspired and encouraged as you discover what God really says about you in *Crash the Chatterbox*.”

—BRIAN HOUSTON, senior pastor, Hillsong Church, Sydney, Australia

“On the pages of his brilliant new book, my friend Steven teaches us how to block out the toxic lies of the Enemy and instead let the truth of God become the soundtrack to our lives. Don’t let all the chatter get the best of you. Read these pages, and be strengthened in Christ.”

—MATT REDMAN, Grammy Award-winning songwriter and worship leader

“Steven Furtick unlocks powerful stratagems for silencing the inner critic that entangles the believer in a quagmire of self-doubt, fear, and unbelief. *Crash the Chatterbox* is a study in course correction with hard-won lessons for rediscovering, reenergizing, and reengaging your God-given dreams.”

—T. D. JAKES, *New York Times* best-selling author; bishop of The Potter’s House, Dallas, TX

“Steven Furtick’s new book is an insightful and readable approach to the daily barrage of destructive thoughts we all experience. You will be encouraged and empowered as you discover what God thinks of you and how that affects every facet of your life.”

—JUDAH SMITH, lead pastor, The City Church, Seattle, WA; *New York Times* best-selling author of *Jesus Is _____*.

“When we use our weaknesses to strengthen our faith, we turn our greatest liabilities into weapons in the hands of Christ. I love how my friend Steven Furtick humbly reveals his own struggles as he strives to crash the chatterbox in his life. Don’t count yourself out just yet; your struggle is only the starting place of God’s purpose in your life.”

—MARK BATTERSON, lead pastor of National Community Church, Washington DC; *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Circle Maker*

“It’s time to break out and fight back. Don’t be held in bondage anymore. Let Steven Furtick help you crash the chatterbox and silence the voice of insecurity in your life. You were created for more. Now take your place in the center of God’s calling.”

—CHRISTINE CAINE, founder, A21 Campaign; best-selling author of *Undaunted*

“Often the most crippling negativity we hear comes from our own mind. In *Crash the Chatterbox*, Steven Furtick offers an effective antidote. In a refreshing and relatable style, he lays out the strategy to overcome the inner critic that hinders us from hearing the voice of God, receiving His glorious affirmation, and accomplishing His perfect will.”

—ROD PARSLEY, World Harvest Church, Columbus OH; *New York Times* best-selling author of *Culturally Incorrect*

“What you’re getting in *Crash the Chatterbox* is the reassuring and honest feedback from a great friend. It may not be what you wanted to hear, but it will definitely help you get where you’re going.”

—PERRY NOBLE, senior pastor, NewSpring Church, Anderson, SC;
author of *Unleash!*

“I love Steven Furtick’s commitment to a purpose that is greater than his problems. In *Crash the Chatterbox*, Steven helps us see that our greatest barrier is the very bridge God uses to take us to our divine purpose.”

—KERRY SHOOK, founding pastor of Woodlands Church, Houston, TX;
coauthor of the national bestsellers *One Month to Live* and *Love at Last Sight*

“The Enemy’s greatest fear is that you’ll discover who you really are, what you’re really worth, and where you’re headed. Steven Furtick amplifies the call of God in your life so that you can crash the chatterbox of the Enemy’s lies and move forward with confidence in Christ.”

—JENTEZEN FRANKLIN, senior pastor, Free Chapel, Gainesville, GA;
New York Times best-selling author of *Fasting*

“There are only a handful of Christian leaders in my generation who preach the Word of God with as much passion and conviction as Steven Furtick. In *Crash the Chatterbox* you will be encouraged by a committed man of God who is gifted at bringing God’s truth to life. Through Steven’s determination to follow God wholeheartedly, you will find the strength to chase after God’s calling for you.”

—ISRAEL HOUGHTON, Grammy Award–winning songwriter
and worship leader

“If you’ve ever felt the sting of a critic or the discouragement of that voice of doubt in your head, then you need to crash the chatterbox and renew your mind. This book will teach you how to shut out the noise and start living your purpose.”

—DR. JACK GRAHAM, pastor, Prestonwood Baptist Church, Plano, TX

“In a world where we are bombarded by countless voices that influence our every step, it’s often difficult to discern the voice of truth. Pastor Steven Furtick shows

us how to surgically cut through the chatter and hear the voice of God. This book is a must-read!”

—STOVALL WEEMS, lead pastor, Celebration Church, Jacksonville, FL;
author of *Awakening*

“I have rarely read a book with as much personal transparency and honesty as I found in this book by Steven Furtick. If you want to get out of your own way and move forward in God’s plan, *Crash the Chatterbox* is for you.”

—KEVIN GERALD, lead pastor, Champions Centre Church, Tacoma, WA

“In *Crash the Chatterbox*, Steven Furtick helps readers understand the volatile nature of listening to the wrong voices in our lives. And with humor, insight, and clarity, he reveals what it takes to open up the lines of communication with the only voice that truly matters—the voice of God.”

—ED YOUNG, pastor, Fellowship Church, Dallas, TX;
author of *Sexperiment*

“I admire Steven Furtick’s refusal to allow anything to push him off the path God has placed before him. In *Crash the Chatterbox* he lets us into the struggle that he’s faced embracing his calling. His transparency and honesty will give you the courage to fight on.”

—CLAYTON KING, president, Crossroads Ministries;
teaching pastor, NewSpring Church, Anderson, SC

“In *Crash the Chatterbox*, Steven Furtick gives us a how-to guide to actually apply the truth of how God feels about us so we can live empowered lives.”

—BIL CORNELIUS, author of *Today Is the Day*; founding pastor,
Bay Area Fellowship, Corpus Christi, TX

“Steven Furtick’s willingness to be vulnerable makes the truth he is relaying easy to digest. If you’re tired of circling around the same struggles, you will find an accessible off-ramp to a freer life in *Crash the Chatterbox*.”

—JOHN BEVERE, cofounder of Messenger International;
author of *Relentless*

NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

STEVEN FURTICK

CRASH

—  THE  —

CHATTERBOX

HEARING GOD'S VOICE
ABOVE ALL OTHERS



MULTNOMAH
BOOKS

Excerpted from *Crash the Chatterbox* by Steven Furtick Copyright © 2014 by Steven Furtick. Excerpted by permission of Multnomah Books, a division of Random House, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or reprinted without permission in writing from the publisher.

CRASH THE CHATTERBOX

PUBLISHED BY MULTNOMAH BOOKS

12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. Scripture quotations marked (AMP) are taken from the Amplified Bible. Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. Scripture quotations marked (MSG) are taken from *The Message* by Eugene H. Peterson. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NKJV) are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Details in some anecdotes and stories have been changed to protect the identities of the persons involved.

Hardcover ISBN 978-1-60142-456-3

eBook ISBN 978-1-60142-458-7

Copyright © 2014 by Steven Furtick

Cover design by Ryan Hollingsworth

Published in association with the literary agency of Fedd & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 341973, Austin, TX 78734.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC, New York, a Penguin Random House Company.

MULTNOMAH and its mountain colophon are registered trademarks of Random House LLC.

The Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file with the Library of Congress.

Printed in the United States of America

2014—First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

SPECIAL SALES

Most WaterBrook Multnomah books are available at special quantity discounts when purchased in bulk by corporations, organizations, and special-interest groups. Custom imprinting or excerpting can also be done to fit special needs. For information, please e-mail SpecialMarkets@WaterBrookMultnomah.com or call 1-800-603-7051.

For Holly

####

Every chatterboxer needs a Mickey and an Adrian.

You are both to me.

CONTENTS

Introduction: Chatterboxing 1

Chapter 1. Subverting the Sabotage 7

SECTION 1. GOD SAYS I AM

Chapter 2. Cancel the Audition 21

Chapter 3. God Likes Me Too 35

Chapter 4. Who Told You That? 49

SECTION 2. GOD SAYS HE WILL

Chapter 5. So What If... 65

Chapter 6. At the Bottom 79

Chapter 7. What Are You Doing Here? 95

SECTION 3. GOD SAYS HE HAS

Chapter 8. Finishing the Devil's Sermons 115

Chapter 9. Counterfeit Conviction 127

Chapter 10. The Divine Reminder 143

SECTION 4. GOD SAYS I CAN

Chapter 11. Keep Rolling 157

Chapter 12. The Expectation Gap 171

Chapter 13. The Parable of the Passport 187

Conclusion: Pound the Ground 203

Calling All Chatterboxers 211

Discussion Questions 213

Notes 221

Acknowledgments 225

INTRODUCTION

Chatterboxing

I wish I had a little devil on my left shoulder. I could flick him off and tell him to go to hell. Then I could fist-bump the angel sitting on my right shoulder and get on with doing all the things God has called me to do.

That would change everything.

I'd discover an unshakable confidence. It wouldn't be borrowed from the ever-changing assessments of others. I would instinctively offer my weaknesses as a platform for God's power instead of typecasting myself as someone God couldn't use due to my endless character flaws.

I'd be unstoppable because the devil wouldn't be able to dominate my mind with the kinds of fears that control me a lot of the time. Then I would be able to move forward in faith without being scared of failure or rejection or the sacrifice required to obey God.

I'd never again be paralyzed by condemnation or bullied by feelings of unworthiness. And at the end of each day I'd go to sleep in perfect peace because I'd be finishing the day with no shame, no regrets, no need to sew any fig leaves to conceal anything.

I'd be nearly immune from discouragement, because I would stop wondering if the sky was falling every time I faced a new challenge. I'd see my biggest obstacles as my greatest opportunities...and all the other stuff you read on Starbucks cups.

Unfortunately, there's no devil on my shoulder.

What's worse, there's no angel either.

Instead, I've got this ceaseless war going on inside my heart and my head. I'm waging it every millisecond of every minute of every hour of every day—nights, holidays, and weekends too.

####

I wake up every day to the crow of the chatterbox.

Here's a transcript of my internal dialogue from a recent morning. It's a

real-time example of the kind of chatter that can derail my day before it even gets started. Sometimes over the most ridiculous things you can imagine.

The thoughts are flying so fast now that I can't keep track, much less sort them out and put them where they belong. Thinking about these thoughts at all only seems to feed them. That's why they keep overpowering me, because I keep feeding them. I know this, but it never stops me from doing it. Not this time, not ten years ago, and it won't be any different ten years from now, I'm beginning to believe.

This is so stupid. I'm being so stupid.

It's only a light bulb.

A burned-out light bulb has turned into a mini-midmorning meltdown in my mind, and I can't find the switch to shut it off. The meltdown, I mean, not the light bulb.

So I'm standing in the shower, and the light bulb is out, and it's like the sky is falling.

As soon as I stepped into the shower, I noticed, for the third time, that the middle bulb was out over the sink on the other side of the bathroom. Now that I'm in the shower, stranded, phoneless, how am I going to put in Evernote that the light bulb is out? With my pathetic attention span, what are the chances I'll remember to replace the light bulb after I get out?

I definitely don't have time to change the light bulb—I'm already going to be ten minutes late for this meeting. If there's no traffic. I'm always running late for meetings. I'm a late person. It's because I hit the snooze button three times every morning, because I'm spiritually apathetic. Pastor Mickey used to get up at 5 a.m. and spend two hours with God, and he said, "He who runs from God in the morning will scarce find Him throughout the day." They should put that on a Starbucks cup too.

Either way, God is gone for the day, and it's not even 9 a.m. And now I'm running twelve minutes late, and the light bulb is still out.

I'm screwed.

And who am I kidding? Even if I had time to change the light bulb, yeah, right, like I have a clue where Holly keeps them. Now that's really pathetic. What would people think if they found out about that one: the woman changes all the light bulbs around that house! What kind of example am I setting for my kids?

Did I even pray with the kids last night? the night before that?

Dunno. But I did Instagram that sunset shot with the kids at the creek last Friday. So there's that.

"Cock-a-doodle-do." The chatterbox informs me that I'm *fourteen* minutes late...and I suck as a person.

I'm feeding the machine, and it's eating me alive.

And the chatter will continue to race through my mind until I decide to downshift and put things back in perspective: *Calm down, Furtick. It's. Just. A. Light bulb.*

Just like that, if only for a split second, the chatterbox gives way. And I get on with my day.

Unfortunately, it won't be long until the chatterbox sounds off again. Probably next time about something much more serious than a light bulb. So much doubt, panic, raw impulse, and bogus conjecture stream through my mind. My soul sometimes feels like a Twitter feed where I'm following a million of the most annoying people ever, and I can't find the Unfollow button.

####

But God is faithful to speak too. His voice rises from the pages of His Word, which is the exact expression of His will. He speaks, not only on Sunday mornings in the sanctuary where the congregation is gathered, but also in the stillness of His works scattered across the night skies. His Spirit speaks with promptings that are not audible—often they are much louder than that—always in perfect harmony with the Scriptures and always resounding with perfect wisdom.

And in every season of my life, God has sent reminders to confirm that He has perfectly designed me and totally enabled me for everything He's called me to do. Sometimes He'll do that through a simple picture, song, text, or conversation that rings with affirmation for days.

Other times, at critical junctures, God has spoken dramatic words of encouragement over my life.

A few years ago I was on a plane headed home, and I looked out the window during the descent. The sunset seemed to be painting the skyline in neon orange, illuminating the city where I had just moved to start a church. It was a glowing visual that set the scene for God to speak to my heart: *This is your city. I've called you here to pour out your life for My cause. Be confident, because everywhere you set*

your foot belongs to Me, and you belong to Me, and together we're going to take this city for My glory.

I'm sure my translation of this conversation isn't word perfect, because you know how tricky cross-cultural communication with God can be. Plus, I can't find the notebook where I frantically scribbled every word of those impressions.

The part I'm sure of is that I heard God encouraging me at a time when I really needed it. We were only a couple of months into getting our new church off the ground. I needed some reassurance, and God delivered.

And it was His voice piercing through the roar of my doubts that lifted my perspective. It was just enough to keep me moving forward in faith.

####

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions.

Is it possible to be the kind of person who can be distracted to the point of utter despair by a blown light bulb and still hear God calling you to do great things as you stare down at your city through a sunset?

Can God's voice coexist with maniacal chatter—within the same person?

And how can I silence the voice of the enemy *when the enemy is in me*?

Can you relate to this contradiction?

I used to think that someone who struggled with the kinds of weaknesses I deal with daily was useless to God. I felt so often like I was drowning in internal dialogue I couldn't control. It had been the soundtrack of my life for as long as I could remember. I had hoped these problems would finally be fixed when I became a committed Christian. And I hoped for it again each time I experienced spiritual highs along the way in my journey of faith.

But the beat went on.

Yet everything changed when I began to realize *God has given us the ability to choose the dialogue we believe and respond to*. And once we learn how, we can switch from lies to truth as deliberately as we can choose the Beatles over Miley Cyrus on satellite radio.

Choosing to believe this, moment by moment, and acting on it is the most important habit you will ever develop.

It is the key to pressing ahead and doing God's will anyway, even as you are bombarded with thoughts, feelings, and even facts about why you can't do it.

Why you shouldn't do it. And why you'll never be able to do it. Why you're too dysfunctional, too petty, too immature, too melancholy, too impulsive...

I'm now awakening to the reality that we can access the power of God's promises to constantly crash the system of our broken beliefs. I'm learning how to overpower the shouts of the Enemy by bending my ear to the whisper of God's supernatural truths about my identity in Him and His strength in me. This isn't something I did once and now it's over or something I can afford to do occasionally when it's convenient. It requires constancy. It's the only way I know to be the father, husband, leader, friend, and believer that God says I already am, the kind of person I am straining to believe I can become.

Winning the war of words inside your soul means learning to defy your inner critic. But that's easier said than done. And I think many times, as believers, we sense we are losing this war. But we don't know what to do about it because we don't know where to find the weapons, and we wouldn't know where to aim them if we did.

In other words, we feel powerless to crash the chatterbox.

And now would probably be a good time to explain exactly what I mean by that.

Subverting the Sabotage

Beware of no man more than of yourself;
we carry our worst enemies within us.

—CHARLES SPURGEON

I'm losing myself, I'm stuck in the moment
I look in the mirror, my only opponent

—JAY-Z

The term *chatterbox* is my way of representing the lies we believe that keep us from accurately and actively hearing God's voice.

So how can we even begin to understand this invisible chatterbox?

It's quite complicated, as you can imagine. But we have to start somewhere.

Jesus said that when the devil lies, "he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."¹ However, as I said in the introduction, our most immediate problem isn't the devil on our shoulders but a deeper reality about the condition of our hearts and minds. To blame all our wrong thinking solely on the devil is to ignore obvious practical considerations, scientific facts, and most important, other clear biblical teachings.

Like this one: the apostle Paul talks with great openness about something that is at work within him, waging war against his mind and making him a prisoner.² Here's one of the greatest Christians who ever lived, talking about an enemy within that is terrorizing his freedom in Christ. And in doing so, he doesn't mention the devil. Rather, he talks about what's happening in his mind.

Because it's in the mind that the transmission of God's plans for our lives either succeeds or fails.

I read online that the average person has more than sixty thousand thoughts per day, and over 80 percent of these thoughts are negative. Is that accurate? I don't know. Honestly, the website seemed sketchy. And I'm no expert in the science of the subconscious. The other day I saw an R.E.M. anthology called *Part Lies, Part Heart, Part Truth, Part Garbage*. That pretty much sums up my understanding of the way the human mind works. And I don't want this to turn into a Wikipedia article about neuroscience.

But let's think together about the possibility that 80 percent of our thoughts are not only devoid of any power to help us but actively work against us. When we allow our thoughts to go unchecked, a steady drip of lies cements the wrong patterns within our minds, building a Berlin Wall of bad beliefs.

I wonder how much of its forty-eight-thousand-word quota your chatterbox has already filled today?

Did you hear it in the closet while you were getting dressed, telling you that it doesn't matter what you put on, that nothing will look good on you because you're too flabby, too bony, too pale, too old, or, in a single word, defective?

Did you hear it in the office where you work or in the home where you raise your children, telling you there's no point in trying so hard because no one ever notices anyway?

Do you hear it loudest at the end of the day, when the mistakes and regrets and missteps can bounce around the room unobstructed by progress or perspective?

You sounded really stupid when...

How will you ever recover from...

Why would anybody want to be around a person like you, who...

God must be awfully disappointed in the way you...

Sounds Like

There's a word to describe this kind of barrage. I came across it for the first time recently. I'll share it with you now—it can be our word of the day.

logorrhea 1. pathologically incoherent, repetitious speech. 2. incessant or compulsive talkativeness; wearisome volubility.

The best part about our new word? It's pronounced law-*guh*-REE-uh. I'll let you make your own "sounds like" association.

Seriously, could there be a more fitting term to describe the way the chatterbox spews lies and garbage in our minds? It's a voice that drones on and on, always intimidating, always insinuating.

The chatterbox wants to inundate us with logorrhea. To wear us out until we don't want to try or until we have no idea what to do or how to answer our growing list of doubts and deficiencies.

And it's not just what this chatter says that makes it dangerous.

It's what it keeps us from hearing.

Most people go through life thinking God never speaks to them when in fact He's always speaking. To everyone. Always directing. Sometimes warning. Sometimes affirming. But we hear so little of what He says because our consciousness of His voice is obscured by our mental static.

What guidance was God trying to give you today that you didn't hear because it was buried by negative noise?

What wisdom did God want to share about your future that you missed because the logorrhea was too loud in the background?

You see, when we learn how to crash the chatterbox—to overpower the Enemy's lies with God's truths—we're not simply learning to think more cheerful thoughts or adopt a more pleasant disposition or find our happy place or improve our lot in life. There's much more at stake than that.

Brennan Manning wrote a line that perfectly describes what happens when the chatter gets the best of us: "Great deeds remain undone and the possibility of growth into greatness of soul is aborted."³

Think with me about the two parts of this double-edged warning.

"Great deeds remain undone..."

When lies are not confronted, callings are not fulfilled.

I'm not going to give you the "Don't die with your music in you" speech

(at least not this early on), but I do want to ask a few reflective questions as we get started.

- At this point in your life, what great deeds are in danger of remaining undone because of lies that were planted in your past or fears that are looming in your future?
- Is there a throb or an ache because of a sense of purpose in your heart that remains unfulfilled? What weeds are growing in the cracks of some of the God-inspired ideas you've abandoned?
- How many contributions that God created you to make for His glory are still wrapped in good intentions because they've been neutralized by spiritual hesitation?
- What great deeds that God wants to accomplish in your future are absolutely dependent on your decision to confront these lies right now?
- What desperate needs are crying out to be met all around you that God cannot meet through you unless you confront the lies and discover the courage to fulfill your calling?
- How are the people closest to you—your kids, parents, spouse, friends—suffering because of the lies you believe?

The saddest part is, we'll never know all the great deeds that remain undone as a result of the undetected and unchecked lies in our lives. Most of us die with our music still in us. (Now look what you've made me do.)

My previous book, *Greater*, issued a call to an understanding that God is ready and willing to achieve a kind of greatness through our lives that is beyond human reach. *Crash the Chatterbox* is about using that understanding to short-circuit the thoughts and patterns that the Enemy employs to disrupt the greatness God has initiated.

“...and the possibility of growth into greatness of soul is aborted”

God is the only person who can be simultaneously 100 percent task driven and 100 percent relationally focused. That means He is equally concerned about what He's doing in me and what He's doing through me. In fact, it's the work He does in me that prepares and empowers me for the work He desires to do through me.

Through Jesus, God has gone to the most extravagant lengths possible so

that He might know you and make Himself progressively and vividly known to you. He wants to show you things about who He is and who you are that flesh and blood cannot reveal and that trials and tribulations cannot diminish. He longs to communicate with you in tones, pitches, and frequencies that this world is not wired for, to fill you with affirmation that your soul has been thirsting for.

The chatterbox is the part of you that jams these signals, often in a way that's hard to pinpoint.

In his book *The War of Art*, Steven Pressfield writes about overcoming the battles that block creativity. He gives a systematic breakdown of what he calls “the Resistance”—the force that prevents us from getting the things done we're meant to do. He describes the effects like this:

We feel like hell. A low-grade misery pervades everything. We're bored, we're restless. We can't get no satisfaction. There's guilt but we can't put our finger on the source. We want to go back to bed; we want to get up and party. We feel unloved and unlovable. We're disgusted. We hate our lives. We hate ourselves.⁴

This may be an extreme description, but I'm sure you've felt this way, or close to it, before. We all have.

When our minds and hearts are being assaulted by the suggestions and lies of the Enemy, we often don't even know what's causing our funk or what's behind our frustration. We just know we're stuck in a cycle of spiritual self-sabotage.

Undetected Undertones

One day I was trying to make a mental list of the lies that were driving some of the dysfunction in my life. The exercise turned out to be much more complicated than I had anticipated. And I'll tell you one reason why: the thing that makes deception so effective is that you can't detect it.

The chatterbox doesn't preface its lies with an announcement: *Attention! The thought you're about to think is absolutely toxic, designed to lead you away from the good and perfect will of your loving heavenly Father.*

Instead, like a distortion pedal, the chatterbox manipulates the truth.

So it won't sound like this: *Perhaps you should take steps toward spending more focused time reading your Bible, because God has so many promises and truths He wants to reveal to you today.*

More likely it will sound like this: *If you really loved God, you'd spend more time reading your Bible, like people do who have their priorities in order.*

Both of these statements contain a seed of truth. The seed is *I'm not reading my Bible enough. I should read it more.* Yet the essential messages couldn't be more opposite.

Listen to the undertones of the second statement compared to the first.

The first statement is rooted in a spirit of affirmation: *God desires to speak to you.* And it is presented in the form of an invitation—to come into His presence and receive the good things He has to offer. It suggests a realistic course of action: you don't have to reinvent your life overnight—just make some *steps toward* your destination.

The second statement is rooted in the spirit of condemnation: *You don't really love God.* This is a gross exaggeration and misinterpretation of the motivations of your heart. And it's followed by an accusation: *Other people love God more than you do. You don't measure up; you never have, and you never will.*

Why do we let ourselves talk to ourselves this way? Maybe because the internal dialogue is happening much faster than our current level of training has enabled us to defend against. The Enemy has quick hands that land swift, accurate blows.

Also, sometimes perhaps we stand by passively, waiting for God to fix the issues that He's called us to fight in His strength. If we're going to overcome the thoughts that hold us back, first we have to give up the hope that they'll ever go away. Every second you spend wishing God would take away a struggle is a forfeited opportunity to overcome.

And even though the fight against chatter is guaranteed to be a grueling one, with no end in sight, you have to fight back. Your spiritual life depends on it.

Because the voice you believe will determine the future you experience.

Rhythm and Response

Now, when I start talking about voices like this, you might think I'm slipping into some pseudopschoanalytical mode. But isn't this how the scriptural story

begins—with conflicting voices? The rhythm of Creation is marked by call and response.

As we read in Genesis, it started with light:

- “God said, ‘Let there be light.’” *Call*.
- “And there was light.” *Response*.⁵

The very first chapter of the Bible establishes a cadence of communication that declares the creative potential of the voice of God. The illumination of everything we see started with something God *said*.

On the other extreme, an altogether different voice—the voice of the serpent in the garden—introduced temptation and sin into the world. A Puritan named Thomas Watson put it this way: “It was by the ear, by our first parents listening to the serpent, that we lost paradise; and it is by the ear, by hearing of the word, that we get to heaven.”⁶

This juxtaposition of truth with lies is front and center throughout Scripture:

- God’s voice speaks with precision and power, inviting us into a way of life that is truly life.
- Opposing voices seek to draw us out of His presence through seduction and deception.

The Enemy’s goal is to lure us into accepting his lies and limitations at face value. When we do, our faith will only work in fits and starts. The lion’s share of the good things that God has planned for us will remain out of reach. And the fruit we bear for God’s glory will be minimal.

The prophet Isaiah issued an invitation that still stands today: “Hear, and your soul shall live.”⁷ That is the invitation I believe God is issuing to us in the pages ahead.

And I declare: the lies of the chatterbox are about to meet a fifteen-million megawatt surge of God’s power. If that sounds a little violent for your taste, consider these words from the apostle Paul, who gave us permission to “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and...take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”⁸

Because, thankfully, spiritual warfare isn’t hand-to-hand combat. God has given us supernatural weapons that have “divine power to demolish strongholds.”⁹ We crash the chatterbox by launching a counterattack through which we leverage the advantage we have as God’s children: heaven’s perspective.

This doesn’t mean the chatter will end.

It just means that we'll have something stronger—and louder—to override it every time it starts.

####

It may help to think about it this way.

Currently, as I write, I'm listening to a worship album by Hillsong United on my iPhone. It's a pretty mellow album, so it does the trick to help me concentrate. I'm listening through my noise-canceling headphones. They're a real gift from God, because my wife is just across the room, talking to three of our female church staff members. I don't know what they're talking about. Maybe a pressing leadership or motherhood issue, maybe *Downton Abbey*, or maybe how they can't wait to read my next book that I'm working on so hard over here. Most likely *Downton Abbey*.

The point is, I don't know. They're less than fifty feet away from me, and they're talking, talking, talking; yet it doesn't bother me a bit. Doesn't interrupt me. Doesn't hinder my progress, isn't breaking my flow.

As long as I keep my headphones on and turned up loud, they can chat away, employing their conversational gifts to the fullest, and I'm cool in my own world. I'm tuned in to something different.

I want to be careful here to avoid any comparison between my wife and the chatterbox. It's just an analogy. But in the pages that follow, I want to show you how to do this same thing—block out noise—on a spiritual level.

Quiet the Riot

This book is built on four confessions. They are meant to function like noise-canceling headphones for your mind, heart, and soul. These are truths about God and truths about you that come straight from God's Word. The term *confession* has many connotations, but literally it means "to say with" God. So by filling our spiritual ears with these four declarations of truth, we receive and respond to what God says about who He is and who we are in Him.

Each of the four confessions will target one of the main areas in which the Enemy uses chatter to corrupt our souls and weaken our faith. And with the Spirit's help, we'll blow the lies of the chatterbox to smithereens.

The confessions are life-giving, faith-increasing statements that are designed for you to repeat in your heart and mind, even rehearse out loud. You can play them from the time you wake up and the chatterbox starts blasting reveille until the chatterbox starts trying to sing you to sleep at night with lullabies and lies, replays and regrets.

They're not magical statements, but they produce miraculous results when actively applied.

You may want to take a moment to get familiar with these four confessions, because they'll shape the foundation of the book, and hopefully they'll become a foundational part of *you* by the time we're finished.

Confession 1: *God says I am.*

Overpowering the lies of the Enemy in your insecurities

Confession 2: *God says He will.*

Overpowering the lies of the Enemy in your fears

Confession 3: *God says He has.*

Overpowering the lies of the Enemy in your condemnation

Confession 4: *God says I can.*

Overpowering the lies of the Enemy in your discouragement

The changes these confessions will incite in our lives are revolutionary. Not because the confessions are fancy or brilliant, but simply because they are *powerful*. And they are *God's truths*. In His hands and with your cooperation, they are little sticks of dynamite that will turn skyscrapers of harmful thinking into piles of rubbish.

Knowledge without application won't do the job, though. So we won't dwell too long on mere facts or theories. Instead, we become liberated from lies as we actively embrace the ways God wants to reimagine and re-create our hearts. In the process we are joined with Him as He aligns our lives with these new realities.

So are you ready to reload your listening device? Let's ask God to clear the

space we need so that in the pages that follow we can receive the truths we encounter at the deepest level possible.

The first truth is this: *When it comes to hearing God's voice, identity always comes before activity.*

And that's a spiritual secret the chatterbox was hoping you'd never discover.



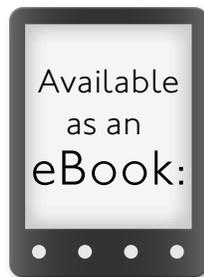
WATERBROOK MULTNOMAH
PUBLISHING GROUP
A DIVISION OF RANDOM HOUSE, INC.

Want to keep reading? You've got options:

Purchase a copy direct from the publisher or from your favorite retailer:

BUY NOW

Download a copy for your eReader and keep reading right away:



amazonkindle

Google
books

iBooks

nook
by Barnes & Noble

And More...