

# PHILIPPIANS 4:8 THOUGHT TEST GUIDE

*A simple, biblical way to return your mind to truth*



## A SOUND MIND COUNSELOR

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# PHILIPPIANS 4:8 THOUGHT TEST GUIDE

**Introduction:** Research indicates that the human brain generates nearly 70,000 thoughts each day (Alpert, 2025). Scripture reminds believers not to trust their own hearts but instead to walk closely with God so they may experience the renewing of their minds. Spiritual battles often begin in our thoughts, and thank God we are not left without guidance—He has given us a practical way to evaluate our thoughts and realign them with His truth.

Philippians 4:8 is not just a Bible verse to memorize; it is a *filter*, a *framework*, and a *spiritual practice* for redirecting your mind toward biblical thinking that reflects God’s character and His promises.

*“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are **TRUE**, whatsoever things are **HONEST**, whatsoever things are **JUST**, whatsoever things are **PURE**, whatsoever things are **LOVELY**, whatsoever things are **OF GOOD REPORT**; if there be any **VIRTUE**, and if there be any **PRAISE**, think on these things.” — Philippians 4:8*

This guide will help you slow down, examine your thoughts, and intentionally redirect them toward what is true, holy, and life-giving. Below are eight God-given filters, along with their definitions, examples, and steps to help you reshape your thoughts in real time. As you practice testing and aligning your thoughts to God’s Word using the Philippians 8 thought test, your mind will be renewed, whereby you will receive the promise found in Philippians 4:9: “the God of peace shall be with you.”

## 1. TRUE — What Is Real, Not Imagined

**Definition:** What is real, fact-based, and aligned with God’s Word — not imagined or led by emotions.

### Examples:

**Before:** “Something bad is definitely going to happen.”

**After:** “Right now, nothing bad is happening. God is with me in this moment.”

**Before:** “I’m worried this situation will fall apart.”

**After:** “The truth is I don’t know the future — but God is already there.”

### Guided Practice:

#### Step 1 — Name the Thought:

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

#### Step 2 — Test the Thought:

- Is this thought based on facts or feelings?
- Does it align with God’s truth or my fears?
- Am I imagining outcomes I cannot see?

#### Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 2. HONEST — What Is Sincere and Undistorted

**Definition:** What is sincere, whole, honoring to God, and free from shame, distortion, or self-condemnation.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “I shouldn’t feel this way. I’m failing.”

**After:** “Honestly, I’m struggling — and God meets me with compassion.”

**Before:** “If I trusted God more, I wouldn’t worry.”

**After:** “Honestly, I’m worried — and God invites me to bring that to Him.”

**Guided Practice:**

**Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Is this thought honoring to God?
- Is it worthy of respect?
- Does it reflect the character of Jesus?
- Is it shaped by eternity or by fear?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 3. JUST — What Reflects God’s Fairness and Character

**Definition:** What aligns with God’s righteousness, trustworthiness, and fairness — not worries or assumptions.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “God must be condemning me.”

**After:** “God is just. He guides me; He does not condemn His children.”

**Before:** “I’m worried God is disappointed in me.”

**After:** “God is faithful and just — His heart toward me is steady and kind.”

**Guided Practice: Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Does this thought reflect God’s character?
- Is it right in God’s eyes, not just my emotions?
- Is it shaped by fear or trust?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 4. PURE — What Is Unpolluted by Fear or Worry

**Definition:** What is holy, Christlike, clean, and unpolluted by fear, lies, or spiraling thoughts.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “My mind keeps replaying the worst-case scenario.”

**After:** “I choose to focus on what is steady and unpolluted by fear.”

**Before:** “Worry keeps taking over my mind.”

**After:** “I can gently redirect my thoughts toward what is peaceful and pure.”

**Guided Practice: Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Is this thought holy and Christlike?
- Does it come from sincere motives?
- Does it glorify God or magnify fear?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 5. LOVELY — What Is Beautiful, Gentle, and Life-Giving

**Definition:** What is beautiful, gentle, peace-giving, and reflects God’s goodness — not your mind’s worst-case scenarios.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “Everything feels dark and heavy.”

**After:** “There is still beauty and goodness in my life — I will look for it.”

**Before:** “It probably won’t work out.”

**After:** “God has been good to me — I will remember all He’s done for me.”

**Guided Practice: Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Does this thought bring peace or heaviness?
- Does it demonstrate Christian hope?
- Does it draw me closer to God?
- Does it reflect His goodness?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 6. OF GOOD REPORT — What Is Hopeful and Faith-Filled

**Definition:** What is encouraging, hopeful, and aligned with God’s faithfulness — not fear’s predictions.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “This is going to turn out badly.”

**After:** “There is also a good possibility that God is working something beautiful.”

**Before:** “I’m worried this will end in disappointment.”

**After:** “God has a history of redeeming things — hope is reasonable.”

**Guided Practice: Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Is this thought encouraging or discouraging?
- Does it show confidence in the Lord?
- Would this thought please God?
- Is it grounded in faith or fear?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 7. VIRTUE — What Shows Strength, Courage, and Growth

**Definition:** What shows strength, courage, and evidence of God at work in you — even when fear or worry is present.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “I can’t handle this.”

**After:** “God is strengthening me. I’m showing courage even in small ways.”

**Before:** “Worry makes me feel weak.”

**After:** “God’s strength is made perfect in my weakness — I can trust Him.”

**Guided Practice: Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Does this thought reflect Christian courage?
- Does it show spiritual growth?
- Does it honor the work God is doing in me?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

## 8. PRAISE — What Is Worthy of Gratitude and Worship

**Definition:** What is worthy of gratitude and worship and represents God’s character.

**Examples:**

**Before:** “Nothing is working.”

**After:** “God has been faithful before. I praise Him for what He’s already done.”

**Before:** “Everything is falling apart.”

**After:** “God has carried me through every season — He will carry me now.”

**Guided Practice: Step 1 — Name the Thought:**

Write down the fear, worry, or “what if.”

**Step 2 — Test the Thought:**

- Does this thought lead me to praise?
- Does it remind me of God’s faithfulness?
- Does it stir gratitude instead of fear?

**Step 3 — Change the Thought Based on Truth:**

Rewrite the thought so it aligns with Scripture and what is actually true.

**Think on these things.**

**Reference**

Alpert, J. S. (2025). *A selection of fascinating facts about the brain and heart. The American Journal of Medicine, 138(6), 921–922.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjmed.2024.11.017>