

Faith That Thinks: Following Jesus With Mind and Purpose

Focus:

God calls us not just to believe, but to think—to pursue wisdom, not passivity—in how we live, work, study, and choose.

The Call to Love God With Your Mind

Scripture:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
— Matthew 22:37

Ask:

- Do I love God with my mind in my career decisions?
- Do I love God with my mind in my daily habits and education?

Biblical Example: Daniel

Daniel faced whether to conform to Babylonian culture or remain faithful. He *intentionally* chose to honor God by refusing the king’s food (Daniel 1:8). This was a thoughtful, deliberate act, showing he loved God with his mind by applying faith to practical daily decisions.

The Danger of Unthinking Faith

Scripture:

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
— Romans 12:2

Ask:

- Am I living like the world or allowing Christ to renew my mind?
- Do I examine my beliefs and lifestyle through God’s truth?

Biblical Example: Paul

Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9) shows radical renewal of mind—he examined and rejected his old worldview. Throughout his letters (e.g., 2 Corinthians 13:5), Paul challenges believers to test their faith actively, not accept beliefs passively. Paul *modeled* a faith that continually examined itself and sought God’s truth.

Thinking About Work & Study

Scriptures:

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...” — Colossians 3:23

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him...” — Proverbs 3:5–6

Ask:

- Do I pursue education and career as worship to God—or just for status, money, or approval?
- Do I acknowledge God in my goals or just ask Him to bless what I’ve already chosen?

Biblical Examples:

- Nehemiah prayed and sought God’s guidance before approaching the king and rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls (Nehemiah 2:1–8). His faith was active and intentional, trusting God rather than rushing blindly.
 - Solomon asked God for wisdom instead of wealth or long life, valuing God’s understanding above worldly success (1 Kings 3:9–12). Both show *thoughtful dependence* on God in work and learning.
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Thinking About Daily Choices

Scripture:

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise...”
— Ephesians 5:15–17

Ask:

- Am I careful or careless in how I live day-to-day?
- Do I pause and reflect or just repeat the same habits without thought?

Biblical Example: Ruth

Ruth intentionally left her familiar culture to follow Naomi, demonstrating faithful daily decisions grounded in trust (Ruth 1–4). Her careful choices led to God’s blessing and her place in the Messianic line. Ruth *modeled* wisdom and faithfulness in everyday life, showing the power of thoughtful living.

Jesus’ Invitation to Thoughtful Discipleship

Scripture:

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost...”
— Luke 14:28

Ask:

- Have I counted the cost of following Jesus?
- Is my faith intentional or accidental?

Biblical Example: Jesus Himself

Jesus explicitly calls people to count the cost of discipleship, explaining that following Him means denying self and taking up the cross daily (Luke 9:23). This shows faith is a deliberate, thoughtful choice, not casual or accidental.

Examples of Those Who Lived Self-Denial and Sacrifice:

- Abraham left his homeland and was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, trusting God fully (Genesis 12; 22).
- Moses gave up royal luxury to lead God's people through hardship (Hebrews 11:24–27).
- Esther risked her life by boldly approaching the king to save her people (Esther 4:16).
- Paul endured imprisonment, beatings, and eventual martyrdom for the gospel (2 Corinthians 11:23–27).
- Jesus left heaven's glory to suffer and die on the cross, modeling ultimate self-denial (Philippians 2:5–8).

Reflection:

These lives show that following God often means sacrifice, surrender, and trusting beyond comfort or certainty. Counting the cost is not just mental—it's a lived reality of choosing God's kingdom above all else.

Closing Prayer

Lord, I don't want a shallow faith.
Teach me to love You with all my mind.
Guide me in how I think about my future, my habits, and my everyday choices.
Make me a person who asks what is *Your* will—not just what feels good or looks right.
Amen.

Summary

- Faith is not blind trust, but a **pursuit of wisdom rooted in God's truth**.
- The Bible calls for active, thoughtful faith applied to all parts of life—work, study, daily choices, and discipleship.
- Biblical examples show faith that **questions, chooses, and commits intentionally**.