

The Thinking Christian in the Age of AI

Knowledge is abundant. Wisdom still demands discernment.

A practical biblical framework
for using powerful tools with discernment.

RECEIVE. EXAMINE. TEST. JUDGE. ACT.

Who is doing the judging?

Open an AI conversation. Ask it what a difficult passage of Scripture means. Seconds later, the screen fills with history, Greek words, and a confident conclusion.

You copy the answer. Repeat it to someone else. Begin to defend it.

But whose reasoning are you defending? Did you read the passage in context? Check the sources? Could you explain why the conclusion follows?

AI, or artificial intelligence, gives you powerful tools for explaining, researching, comparing, and creating. It can help you examine questions that once seemed beyond your reach. It can also give a false answer the appearance of authority.

The danger begins when you accept that authority without examination. You carry the conclusion forward while leaving its evidence unchecked. Convenience becomes dependence. The tool supplies the answer, and you surrender the judgment.

This guide exists to help you keep that judgment active. It draws on Scripture, then gives you a method for checking claims, exposing assumptions, and using AI to deepen your understanding. You will practice it on one worked example.

The more powerful our external intelligence becomes,
the more important our internal discipline becomes.

The principle of this guide

Use the power. Keep the responsibility.

What are you doing when you think?

For this guide, thinking means working through a question: making connections, examining reasons, testing possibilities, and revising a conclusion. These are practical distinctions, not a complete theory of the mind.

Knowledge

You know what a passage says. You can locate it and identify its words.

Understanding

You can explain how its words fit the argument, why a conclusion follows, and where the evidence stops.

Wisdom

You judge and act faithfully in light of what you understand. Your conduct bears the weight of your knowledge.

A man can quote an instruction about honesty, explain its meaning, and still lie. Remembering, understanding, and obeying are related. Each asks something of him.

Try this after an AI explanation: close the answer. Explain the reasoning in your own words. Name the evidence. Identify the uncertainty. If you cannot, return to the part you have not understood.

A borrowed conclusion becomes understanding only when you can account for it.

The prudent man pauses

Solomon gives the reader a discipline:

The simple believes every word: but the prudent man betakes himself to after-thought.

Proverbs 14:15 | Brenton Septuagint

After-thought means returning to what you have heard and considering it. The prudent man leaves room between hearing a claim and accepting it.

Begin with one sentence. What exactly is being claimed? A quotation? A historical fact? An interpretation? A recommendation? Each needs a different kind of evidence.

A quotation needs its source. A historical claim needs testimony or records. An interpretation needs a reasoned reading of Scripture. A recommendation needs an account of its purpose and consequences.

Then examine your own response. Did you welcome the answer because it was well supported, or because it agreed with you? Would you demand stronger evidence if it challenged your position?

Give welcome answers the same scrutiny as unwelcome ones.

Test what you receive

Paul writes:

Do not despise prophecies, but test all things. Hold fast to the good.

1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 | Berean Literal Bible

Paul places testing beside the reception of prophecy. The instruction demands examination and the retention of what is good. Here we apply that discipline to claims made through a modern tool.

Testing begins by naming what could expose an error. If a quotation differs from the named edition, check the edition. If a conclusion depends on one isolated verse, read the surrounding argument.

Ask for the strongest reason against your interpretation. Then inspect that reason yourself. A machine can invent a weak objection and make your position look stronger than it is.

Several AI answers agreeing with one another are not several independent witnesses. They may repeat the same source or the same mistake. Trace the claim back to its evidence.

Confirmation collects agreement. Testing puts a claim under strain.

Discernment requires use

But solid food is for the mature, the ones by constant use having trained the senses for distinguishing both good and evil.

Hebrews 5:14 | Berean Literal Bible

Hebrews addresses people who should have progressed in understanding the oracles of God. Maturity includes trained discernment. Constant use matters.

Apply that discipline when you study with AI. Read the passage before asking for an explanation. Write a provisional understanding. Name what you cannot yet explain. Then use the tool to help investigate those gaps.

Afterward, record what changed and why. Perhaps you corrected a quotation, abandoned an assumption, or found that the evidence remained incomplete.

Put the answer under examination. Follow its reasoning. Check its evidence. Explain why you accept or reject it. Use the machine to bring difficult questions within reach, then do the work of judging what it gives you.

Each answer gives you another occasion to exercise discernment.

Wisdom has a visible life

Solomon writes:

The ways of fools are right in their own eyes; but a wise man hearkens to counsels.

Proverbs 12:15 | Brenton Septuagint

Correction costs something. You may have to withdraw a claim, change an article, or admit that you spoke before checking.

James describes wisdom by its character:

But the wisdom from above is indeed first pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and of good fruits, impartial, unhypocritical.

James 3:17 | Berean Literal Bible

A sharp argument can serve vanity. A correct quotation can be used dishonestly. Ask what you intend to do with the answer. Are you seeking understanding, or ammunition against someone you resent?

Pray. Hear counsel. Accept correction. Examine the fruit of your conduct. Reasoning belongs within that life of faithfulness.

Wisdom is visible in what you do with what you know.

Put the machine to work

Explain

Ask for a plain explanation of an unfamiliar term. Then restate it and check the source if the meaning matters to your argument.

Organize

Supply passages or documents. Ask AI to separate quotations, claims, inferences, and unanswered questions.

Compare

Ask how two interpretations account for the same passage. Require evidence for each, including the strongest difficulty each faces.

Challenge

Ask which assumptions your conclusion depends on. Supply your reasons so the criticism addresses your actual position.

Locate

Ask for primary sources: the original work, record, or testimony behind a claim. Open them. A reference is a lead until you have checked it.

For biblical work, name the translation. For this guide: Brenton Septuagint for the Old Testament and Berean Literal Bible for the New Testament. Ask the tool to say when it cannot access an edition.

Give the tool a task you can inspect.

Watch one answer get tested

Illustrative example: a Christian asks whether Philippians 4:13 promises success in every goal. An unverified answer says, "Yes. Faith guarantees that you can achieve anything you set your mind to."

1. Name the claim

The answer claims a guarantee of success. That is stronger than a general claim about receiving strength.

2. Open Scripture

I have strength for all things in the One empowering me.

Philippians 4:13 | Berean Literal Bible

Read Paul's preceding words:

I know also how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In everything and in all things, I have learned the secret also to be full and to hunger, also to abound and to be deficient.

Philippians 4:12 | Berean Literal Bible

3. Compare claim and context

Paul names hunger and deficiency alongside abundance. The proposed guarantee of success fails to account for the conditions he explicitly describes.

The surrounding verses put pressure on the answer.

Follow the evidence to a conclusion

4. Expose the assumption

The unverified answer turned "all things" into "every goal I choose." That expansion needed support. It supplied none.

5. Test a better reading

Paul describes contentment in changing material circumstances. Ask whether the proposed interpretation explains both hunger and abundance. Then read the whole chapter to check the argument.

6. Judge within the evidence

A grounded conclusion: Paul speaks of strength amid the circumstances he has described. This passage supplies no guarantee that every chosen ambition will succeed.

7. Act and record

If you repeated the unverified answer, correct it. Save the passage and the reason for the correction. Leave wider questions about prayer and providence for their own investigation.

This example teaches a habit: separate the quoted words from the inference drawn from them. An accurate quotation can still carry an unsupported conclusion.

Check the bridge between the evidence and the claim.

Ask questions that do work

For a passage

Examine this passage and its surrounding argument using [named translation]. Separate what Scripture explicitly says from interpretive conclusions. Compare the main readings and the evidence for each. State what you have verified and what you could not access.

Reusable prompt

For your own argument

Here is my conclusion and the evidence behind it. Identify its strongest and weakest parts. What assumption does it depend on? What evidence would challenge it? Give the strongest objection, and explain whether my reasons answer it.

Reusable prompt

For a quotation or historical claim

Locate the primary source for this claim. Give the exact location and accessible link. Distinguish quotation from paraphrase. If you cannot verify it, label it unverified and do not reconstruct missing wording.

Reusable prompt

If a term remains unclear, ask for one concrete example. If an answer sprawls, ask for the claim, evidence, and uncertainty in three short paragraphs.

A better prompt improves the investigation. You still check the result.

When the machine is wrong

A hallucination is an AI answer containing invented or incorrect material presented as fact. It can be a false date, a fabricated quotation, a nonexistent book, or a real source that does not support the claim.

Check the source in three steps

Existence: does the source actually exist?

Wording: does it contain the quoted words?

Support: does the surrounding argument support the conclusion?

If the tool cannot open a source, ask it to identify the gap. Treat the claim as unverified until you can inspect the evidence. "I cannot verify this" is a useful result.

Watch for three reasoning failures: a verse detached from its context; a conclusion broader than its evidence; and a disputed interpretation presented as an established fact.

Correct the exact error. Ask the tool to rebuild the answer from verified material. Requesting "more confidence" or another polished explanation leaves the original problem untouched.

When verification fails, pause the claim.

Receive. Examine. Test. Judge. Act.

Receive

Write the claim in one sentence. Notice what attracts you to it.

Examine

Open the source. Read the context. Separate quotation from explanation.

Test

Expose the assumption. Consider the strongest objection. Ask what would change your mind.

Judge

State what the evidence supports. Name what remains uncertain. Hold the conclusion open to correction.

Act

Apply what you have learned faithfully. Correct errors you passed on. Seek counsel when the decision demands it.

Before closing your next AI conversation, complete three lines:

My conclusion: ...

The evidence I checked: ...

What I still need to examine: ...

The machine grows more capable. Practice becoming wiser.

Sources and further reading

Old Testament quotations follow Brenton's Septuagint. New Testament quotations follow the Berean Literal Bible. Linked chapters provide the surrounding context.

Brenton Septuagint:
Proverbs 14:15 - examination.
Proverbs 12:15 - counsel and correction.

Berean Literal Bible:
1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 - testing.
Hebrews 5:14 - trained discernment.
James 3:17 - the character of wisdom.
Philippians 4:12-13 - worked example.

AI accuracy and source verification
Documentation on incorrect answers, fabricated references, and checking sources.

The framework and prompts put these disciplines into practice. The worked example demonstrates how to examine a claim against Scripture and its surrounding context.

Next reads

Ancient Wisdom is the Only Weapon Left
Start here: Kingdom Code

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