

GUIDELINES: THE "THINK AND DO" LIST

Renewing your mind is accomplished by God (*Philippians 2:13*) and is essential for you to mature in Christ (*Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10*). You should endeavor to view every situation from God's perspective (*Philippians 4:4-9; Colossians 3:1-3, 15-16*) and to be obedient to God's Word in every circumstance (*John 14:23-24; Philippians 4:8-9; Colossians 3:17; James 1:25*). Renewing your mind is linked to putting off the practices of the old self, with its sinful actions and desires and, in its place, putting on the new self which leads to maturity in Christ (*Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:8-10*). Remember that your thoughts, speech, and actions are all deeds (part of the "doing level" of your problems) and are indicators of what is in your heart (*Matthew 15:18-20a; Mark 7:20-23*).

For further teaching on renewing your mind, see: RENEWING YOUR MIND (Lesson 7, Pages 6-7).

The purpose of the "THINK AND DO" LIST (Supplement 10) is to help you plan *now* to have a biblical thought life and to have a biblical plan to overcome temptation. In essence, this list is a supplement to the **VICTORY OVER FAILURES WORKSHEET** (Supplement 8) as it applies to your sinful thoughts and resultant actions. It is a contingency plan designed to help you deal with your thought life. Listed below are some guidelines to help you develop your personal "THINK AND DO" LIST.

I. It is important to develop a "THINK AND DO" LIST in order to:

- A. Establish a new, biblical pattern for thoughts and actions in areas where you have been tempted and have previously sinned (*e.g., anger, worry, disagreements, child-discipline situations, being unfaithful in daily responsibilities, etc.*) (*Romans 6:13; II Corinthians 10:5; Colossians 3:2, 5-15; Titus 2:11-12*).
- B. Plan ahead for times when you know that trials (temptations or tests) may very well come (*e.g., upcoming major surgery, major events, or decisions in your life, projected absences from your normal responsibilities of daily life, etc.*) (*Proverbs 3:5-6, 16:3; I Corinthians 10:13*).
- C. Live blamelessly before God and others rather than for self, even in the areas sometimes unseen by men (*Psalms 44:20-21; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:12-16; I Peter 2:12*).

II. As you develop your "THINK AND DO" LIST, include the following:

- A. Recognize the circumstances, responsibilities, and relationships in which you have developed a habit of unbiblical thoughts and actions.
 1. **In the left-hand column (Labelled "My Temptations and Sinful Thoughts")** - List the time(s) of day or circumstances when you know you are tempted to sin in your thought life. Remember that even the smallest amount of time that you do not think biblically is still sin (*James 4:17*). It is not a matter of degree or length of time that determines whether you sin; rather, it is anything that is not done God's way (*i.e., not according to the Scriptures*) (*I John 3:4b, 5:17a*).
 2. **In the center column (Labelled "What I Should Be Thinking In This Situation")** - Corresponding to all the qualities listed in *Philippians 4:8*, list specific thoughts that you ought to have in your times of temptation. This means that instead of dwelling only on the temptation or on the problem, you must think about the solutions that God's Word gives to deal with your present circumstance. Do

not merely list "nice, good" things to think about that ignore the problem; instead, list specific things you should be thinking in this particular circumstance. List the specific truths from Scripture that apply in this situation for hope and change. Also list what God's Word tells you is true about the Lord, His provision, and His work in your life within this particular circumstance (*Psalms 19:14; 119:9, 50, 92, 101, 105, 143; I Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:8-9; James 1:2-4*).

3. **In the right-hand column (Labelled "What I Should Be Doing As A Result of My New Biblical Thinking")** – Based on the biblical perspective gained from your study in the center column, develop a specific plan of action to deal with this situation. Remember, it is not your responsibility to change others or to manipulate the situation (*Ezekiel 18:20; Romans 12:9a*); rather, you are to do your own responsibilities to glorify the Lord (*Colossians 3:17, 23-24*) and to bless others (*Romans 12:9-21; Colossians 4:5-6; I Peter 3:8-12*).
- B. Carry your **"THINK AND DO" LIST** with you as long as necessary to help you develop a pattern of dealing with temptations in a biblical manner.
 - C. The moment you recognize temptation, begin to practice your biblical plan for dealing with your thoughts. If necessary, pull out your **"THINK AND DO" LIST** to help you remember your plan.

"THINK AND DO" LIST

Problem: _____

My Temptations and Sinful Thoughts <i>(Matthew 15:19; James 1:14-15)</i>	What I Should Be Thinking in This Situation <i>(Psalm 19:14; Philippians 4:8)</i>	What I Should Be Doing As a Result of My New Biblical Thinking <i>(Philippians 4:9)</i>

Problem: _____

"THINK AND DO" LIST- EXPLANATION

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<p>My Temptations and Sinful Thoughts <i>(Matthew 15:19; James 1:14-15)</i> <i>On a blank "THINK AND DO" LIST,</i> <i>follow the instructions below.</i></p>	<p>What I Should Be Thinking in This Situation <i>(Psalm 19:14; Philippians 4:8)</i> <i>On a blank "THINK AND DO" LIST, list</i> <i>what you should think in all areas below.</i></p>	<p>What I Should Be Doing As a Result of My New Biblical Thinking <i>(Philippians 4:9)</i></p>
<p>The Temptation of Sinful Thoughts: In this column, list the sinful thoughts you are tempted to think or ways in which you sinned in your thought life (<i>I Corinthians 11:31</i>) and confess them as sin to the Lord (<i>I John 1:9</i>).</p> <p>The Incident(s) in Which I Sinned: Describe the incident or occasion in which you sinned in your thoughts. List people involved, where you were, time of day, how long the incident lasted, and any other pertinent information. Remember to take full responsibility for your thoughts and not blame others. This will help you gain God's perspective on how your thinking influences your actions (<i>based on Ezekiel 18:20; I Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 4:15; James 1:13-14</i>).</p> <p>What I Did As a Result of My Sinful Thoughts: Describe what you did (how you spoke and acted) as a result of your sinful thinking (<i>based on I Peter 1:14-17</i>).</p> <p>The Times of Day or Occasions That I Am Repeatedly Tempted in This Way: If this is part of a repeated pattern, list times, locations, people, etc., when you are tempted and frequently sin in your thought life (<i>based on I Corinthians 11:31; I Peter 5:8</i>).</p>	<p>a) True: What is true of this situation and about yourself, from a biblical perspective? (<i>refer to I Corinthians 10:13; Galatians 5:17; Philippians 4:19; James 1:13</i>)</p> <p>b) Honorable: What can you do that will give most honor to the Lord? (<i>refer to I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 1:10; I Thessalonians 5:17, 22; Hebrews 4:14-16</i>)</p> <p>c) Right: What is the right way for you to respond to the temptation? (<i>refer to Psalm 119:11; Matthew 4:4-10</i>)</p> <p>d) Pure: What must you do to keep yourself pure in this situation? What steps should you take to flee from this temptation? (<i>refer to II Timothy 2:22; I Peter 3:8-16; I John 3:3</i>)</p> <p>e) Lovely: What lovely thing could the Lord be doing in your life through this very situation? What opportunities is God giving you to show His character to others? (<i>refer to Romans 8:28-29</i>)</p> <p>f) Of good repute: How can you follow the example of Christ in this situation as His ambassador? (<i>refer to II Corinthians 5:20; I Peter 2:21-23</i>)</p> <p>g) Excellent: What can you do to keep a clear conscience and show yourself blameless right now? (<i>refer to II Corinthians 1:12; Philippians 2:14-16, 3:13-16</i>)</p> <p>h) Worthy of praise: In this situation, for what can you praise the Lord? (<i>refer to II Corinthians 1:3-5; Colossians 3:16-17; Hebrews 13:15</i>)</p>	<p>In this column, write a specific step-by-step plan for doing all the things you determined to do in the second column. List even the simplest steps, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what to pray at the very time of temptation (<i>based on I Thessalonians 5:17; James 1:5</i>) • what verses to review for hope and perspective (<i>based on Psalm 119:11; Romans 15:4</i>) • what steps to take in solving the problem (<i>based on James 1:22-25</i>) • what you will do to get the focus off yourself (<i>based on Luke 9:23-24; II Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 5:16-17</i>) • what to do to bless the very people who are part of this situation (<i>based on Romans 12:14; Ephesians 4:29; I Peter 3:8-9</i>) • what you will say to give praise and give thanks to the Lord for His work in your life through this circumstance (<i>based on Psalm 34:1, 71:5-8; Ephesians 5:20; I Thessalonians 5:18</i>) • how you will do any correction in gentleness and what you will say that will be focused on restoration, not condemnation (<i>based on Romans 12:18; Galatians 6:1-4</i>)

"THINK AND DO" LIST- EXAMPLE

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 Problem: My husband comes home late on Thursday evenings

My Temptations and Sinful Thoughts (Matthew 15:19; James 1:14-15)	What I Should Be Thinking in This Situation (Psalm 19:14; Philippians 4:8)	What I Should Be Doing As a Result of My New Biblical Thinking (Philippians 4:9)
<p>The Temptation of Sinful Thoughts: I tore down my husband in my thoughts, thought of revenge against him, judged him, and had thoughts of self-pity about my rights.</p> <p>The Incident(s) in Which I Sinned: My husband came home late again this past Thursday night. This seems to be a pattern on Thursdays, and I have not really talked with him about why he is late. (I have fretted, worried, fumed, and reviled my husband in my thoughts most of the past twenty times he's been late).</p> <p>What I Did As a Result of My Sinful Thoughts: I burned his dinner to "show him that I'm not a maid to cater to his whims." I snapped at him when he walked in the door, refused to kiss him, and gave him the silent treatment the rest of the evening. I criticized him openly in front of the children. I've asked his forgiveness, and I have greeted him kindly, (as per my plan in the VICTORY OVER FAILURES WORKSHEET). However, I still become upset and am tempted to give him the silent treatment. I really have a hard time for the 3 hours before he gets home.</p> <p>The Times of Day or Occasions That I Am Repeatedly Tempted in This Way: Every Thursday evening for two months and often during the week. I have made excuses to my</p>	<p>TRUE– It is true that my husband comes home late regularly on Thursday evenings. However, instead of just getting angry and judging my husband, I need to plan to discuss with him the reason for this lateness (Ephesians 4:25-26).</p> <p>HONORABLE – I need to formulate a plan for how I will ask him, so that I will have a forgiving spirit and not blow up at him while trying to solve the lateness problem (Mark 11:25; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6).</p> <p>RIGHT – Begin to deal with my thoughts when the temptation begins – 3 hours before my husband's arrival and not just before he walks in the door. Plan how I will greet him when he walks in by blessing him instead of tearing him down in my mind. (1 Peter 3:8-12).</p> <p>PURE/WORTHY OF PRAISE– Review my memorized Scriptures to gain perspective of what the Lord is doing in me. This will keep my mind pure with the Word, not just with my opinion of the situation (Psalm 19:8; 119:9,11). When possible, think of songs of praise to the Lord or listen to Christian music (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). To avoid lying to the children about why their father is not home on Thursday evenings, I will plan how to tell them their father is late in a loving manner without bitterness or being critical of their father (Romans 14:10, 13; Ephesians 4:15, 31).</p> <p>LOVELY/OF GOOD REPUTE – Plan how to show my husband a different response – one of patience, kindness, and loving concern – rather than the unkind one he has been receiving when he comes in (1 Corinthians 13:4-5).</p>	<p>When I realize that my husband will be late or when I think about it during the week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Pray. Ask God to help me control my thoughts, to give me the wisdom and grace to deal with this situation without sinning against God or my husband. Thank the Lord for His provision of strength to handle this opportunity. * Write what I will say to my husband when he arrives to avoid manipulating him or being unloving in my speech. * Sing Scripture set to music to remind myself of God's work in my life. Recite verses I have been memorizing lately (for example: Ephesians 4:29-32; Colossians 4:6; 1 Peter 3:8-12). * Write how I will ask my husband for help in solving the problem of his Thursday schedule. Ask if the lateness will be a regular occurrence on Thursdays. Ask the reasons for his lateness on Thursdays. Would it be possible to call me if he will be later than usual? Make alternate plans for Thursdays in the event that my husband's schedule will not change (I could feed the children earlier, and he and I can eat later). * If my husband is still not home, begin to do some extra responsibilities that I don't complete at other times (such as ironing, needlework, writing letters to relatives, etc.) I will also complete responsibilities that will bless my husband (such as housecleaning, ironing his clothes, etc.). * If appropriate this evening (after my husband has had time to eat his dinner and relax from his trip home), ask him if we can talk about what we can do together to

Problem: My husband comes home late
on Thursday evenings

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My Temptations and Sinful Thoughts (Matthew 15:19; James 1:14-15)	What I Should Be Thinking in This Situation (Psalm 19:14; Philippians 4:8)	What I Should Be Doing As a Result of My New Biblical Thinking (Philippians 4:9)
<p>children about their father's lateness. Now I even criticize him openly in front of the children.</p>	<p>EXCELLENT – Plan how to redeem time wisely while waiting for husband to come home (Ephesians 5:16). I will set aside time to pray for him (Philippians 4:6-7). Plan how to be the mother I ought to be to train my children in the ways of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 5:14, 12:11).</p>	<p>solve the situation that seems to lead to an unusual schedule on Thursdays. Ask questions to determine if our family schedule needs to be altered to allow for more flexibility on Thursdays. Work at solving the problem; don't attack husband.</p> <p>Every evening before bedtime, I will thank God for my husband, listing the blessings that are being provided for our family. During this prayer time, I will also thank God for giving me this opportunity to grow into a more Christlike wife.</p> <p>Ask God to help me use this experience to be the Christlike example to my children that I ought to be in word and action.</p>