



LECTIO VITAE COMPANION TOOL

The Truth Test

A practical guide to test what you believe and choose what nourishes your faith.

Your first reaction is a signal to investigate, not a verdict.

Slow down. Examine what is being offered. Choose a wiser next step.

READ LIFE DEEPLY. LIVE IT DELIBERATELY.

One claim. A wiser next step.

Use this guide when a teaching, claim or piece of advice needs a closer look.

Choose one belief that affects how you see God, yourself or another person. You can use the short worksheet for a five-minute first check, or work through the fuller questions. Evidence, counsel and reflection may require more time.

TASTE CAREFULLY

An appealing message can be false. A difficult truth can be good for you. Neither comfort nor discomfort settles the question. Test the claim, rather than simply trusting the feeling.

1. NAME WHAT IS BEING SERVED

State the claim plainly and identify its source.

2. NOTICE THE APPEAL

Recognize the fears, hopes and desires it touches.

3. CHECK THE INGREDIENTS

Examine evidence, context and the relevant teaching of the Church.

4. LOOK AT THE FRUIT

Consider what living by it produces over time.

5. GET ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

Ask a wise person who will help you examine it honestly.

6. CHOOSE A RESPONSE

Accept, investigate, wait or reject, with reasons you can explain.

The claim I want to examine

What am I being offered?

Separate the actual claim from the reaction it stirs in you.

In one sentence, what am I being asked to believe?

Who said it? Where and when? Record enough to find it again.

NOTICE THE HOOK

Does it flatter you, frighten you, promise secret knowledge or offer an easy answer? Does it challenge a habit you would rather keep? Those reactions tell you where to look more closely; they do not establish truth.

What makes this claim especially appealing or upsetting to me?

What do I want to be true? What am I afraid might be true?

A brief prayer: Lord Jesus, help me seek truth with humility, even when it costs me something.

What gives this claim weight?

Use the right reference point for the kind of claim you are examining.

FAITH AND FACTS

For claims about faith or morals, consult Scripture in context, the Catechism and the relevant teaching of the Church. For factual claims, examine the original source and evidence. A religious tone does not establish a factual claim.

What kind of claim is this: fact, teaching, advice, opinion or prediction?

What supports it? What challenges it? What context is missing?

Which source or Church teaching will I consult? Note the passage or section.

What remains uncertain? What could change my mind?

Keep the questions distinct: Is it true? Is it sound advice? Is it wise for me to act on it now? A claim can be accurate while a proposed response is unwise.

What grows from believing this?

Look beyond the promise, and invite someone else to help you see.

GIVE IT TIME

Look for growing charity, humility, patience, honesty and responsibility. Notice patterns of fear, contempt, secrecy or dependence. One pleasant feeling or one bad day proves little; observable patterns matter. Good outcomes alone do not prove every claim true.

When I live by this belief, what changes in my behavior and relationships?

Does it help me love God and neighbor, or feed pride, avoidance or fear?

Who can help: a spiritual director, priest, wise mentor or relevant expert?

What specific question will I ask? What might I be overlooking?

Choose someone who can disagree with you fairly. Bring the actual claim and its context, rather than only your conclusion.

Make a proportionate next move.

You can take truth seriously without forcing an immediate verdict.

ACCEPT

There is sufficient reason to believe it. Decide what, if anything, follows.

INVESTIGATE

Identify one missing source, fact or teaching to examine.

WAIT

Leave it unresolved while you seek counsel or observe the pattern.

REJECT

There is good reason to judge it false, misleading or unsound.

My response, and the reasons for it

One next action, and when I will take it

WHEN THE QUESTION REMAINS OPEN

Say "I do not know yet" when that is the honest answer. Avoid passing an uncertain claim along as fact. If you shared something inaccurate, correct it directly with the people who received it.

Three claims worth slowing down for.

These examples show the process, rather than supply a verdict for every situation.

A MESSAGE THAT FLATTERS

"If people question your spiritual insight, they just lack your faith."

Notice how the message makes disagreement feel like a defect in others. Ask whether it welcomes honest testing and correction. Bring the actual teaching to a trusted priest or spiritual director before letting it shape your relationships.

ADVICE THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GUILTY

"A good Christian never says no when someone needs help."

The desire to serve is good, but an unlimited demand may neglect your real responsibilities. Consider your duties, limits and the actual need. Ask a wise person to help you choose a generous, sustainable response.

A CLAIM THAT STIRS FEAR

"This proves something terrible is coming. Share it before it disappears."

Urgency can crowd out judgment. Find the original source, check its context and separate facts from predictions. Ask what responsibility you actually have. Waiting to verify may be the wisest next move.

TRY ONE OF YOUR OWN

Which example resembles a claim you have encountered? Use the next page to examine that claim. Work with the actual words, rather than a more extreme version of what was said.

The five-minute Truth Test

Copy this page for a first check. Leave room for further inquiry when needed.

NAME / What is the claim, and where did it come from?

NOTICE / What reaction or desire makes it persuasive to me?

CHECK / What supports it? What teaching or evidence needs checking?

FRUIT / What does living by it produce over time?

COUNSEL / Who can help me see clearly? What will I ask?

CHOOSE / Accept, investigate, wait or reject? Why? What next?

A first check is a beginning, not proof. Your first reaction is a signal to investigate, not a verdict.

RETURN AND REVIEW

Notice the aftertaste.

Return after a week, a conversation or a useful piece of new evidence.

Which claim did I examine? What did I initially decide?

What new evidence, context or counsel have I received?

Has my judgment changed? Explain why, including what remains uncertain.

What effect has this belief had on my choices and relationships?

CARRY THIS FORWARD

Keep one habit: pause before accepting, check the source, examine the fruit or seek honest counsel. Truth can challenge you and still nourish you. Let Christ form both what you believe and how you respond.

Lord Jesus, give me patience to test, humility to learn and courage to live what is true.