

## **A Method of Self-Examination** *Based Upon The Ten Commandments*

1. "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods but me."

*What other gods am I worshipping? (Hint: What do I think about when I first awaken each morning?)*

- a. Money?
  - b. Power?
  - c. Myself?
  - d. My own pre-conceived notions and prejudices?
  - e. My rights and privileges?
  - f. Pleasure?
  - g. My vocation?
  - h. Alcohol, drugs or other chemical dependency?
  - i. Sensual desires?
  - j. My family?
2. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, not the likeness of any thing that's in heaven above, or in the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them."

*What images am I building or worshipping?*

- a. A comfortable lifestyle?
- b. Wealth?
- c. A home that's a showplace?
- d. An automobile that others will envy?
- e. Possessions?
- f. Prestige?
- g. Reputation?
- h. Memberships, "belonging"?
- i. Inordinate nationalism?
- j. The Church rather than the Lord?

3. "Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain."

*How have I taken the Lord's name in vain?*

- a. Lukewarmness of faith?
- b. Irregularity of worship or praise?
- c. Taking for granted my call as a Christian to give sacrificially of my income for the work of the Gospel?
- d. Not exercising my gifts to God's glory?
- e. Not putting God first in my life?
- f. Unwillingness to do those things God wants me to do?
- g. Not being open to His guidance in my life?
- h. Unwillingness to witness to His love?
- i. Blaming God when things don't suit me?
- j. Cursing?

4. "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

*In what ways have I failed to follow the spirit of this commandment?*

- a. Not worshipping God regularly?
- b. Not spending enough time learning about God?
- c. Unwillingness to prepare for and participate fully in worship services?
- d. Not providing a day of rest each week for myself?
- e. Making it difficult for others (especially my family) to have a day of rest?
- f. Engaging in activities that detract from the sacredness of the Sabbath?
- g. Not spending other quality time with God?
- h. Unwillingness to develop a sense of holiness in my life?
- i. Not fulfilling ministries in and of the Church in which God would have me involved?
- j. Not inviting others to church?

5. "Honor thy father and thy mother."

*In what ways am I failing to honor my father and mother?*

- a. Am I taking good care of them?
- b. Do they know that I love them?
- c. Do I remember them on special occasions?
- d. Do I seek their advice and counsel?
- e. Am I living up to their reasonable expectations of me?
- f. Do I pray for them daily?
- g. Am I being a good steward of those intangible gifts and blessings that have been handed down to me by my parents?
- h. Am I teaching my children to respect their elders?
- i. Am I staying in touch with older members of my family?
- j. Am I showing adequate concern for the needs of older people?

6. "Thou shalt do no murder."

*What forms of murder have I committed?*

- a. Thinking evil thoughts of others?
- b. Engaging in acts of violence?
- c. Not adequately discouraging others (particularly children) from acts of violence?
- d. Not working for peace?
- e. Not bringing reconciliation to situations in which God would use me?
- f. Allowing my anger to get out of control?
- g. Murdering others with my tongue, such as through sarcastic remarks?
- h. Otherwise creating disharmony?
- i. Unwillingness to voice my concerns about what seem to be the murderous activities of others, as God convicts me in relation to such matters, even though other conscientious people feel differently (abortion, arms race, capital punishment, drug trafficking, euthanasia, etc.)?
- j. Thoughtlessness for the lives and needs of others?

7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

*In what ways do I violate the spirit of this Commandment?*

- a. Committing adultery in my heart through lustful thoughts, desires and looks?
- b. Exposing myself to opportunities for lustful thoughts and actions?
- c. Not fighting pornography and other factors that degrade human life?
- d. Not helping others (especially young people) understand their sexuality?
- e. Failure to reverence the body as the temple of God's Holy Spirit?
- f. Telling dirty jokes or engaging in stories that downgrade the sanctity of life?
- g. Not maintaining high moral standards?
- h. Failure to stand against anything that cheapens the value of life?
- i. Reading books, magazines and other materials of a sensuous nature or going to movies, plays, floorshows, etc. of a sensuous nature?
- j. Developing an unhealthy relationship with another person?

8. "Thou shalt not steal."

*In what ways do I steal from others?*

- a. Careless use or over-consumption of food?
- b. Careless use or over-consumption of natural resources?
- c. Not sharing what God has given me with others?
- d. Cheating on my taxes, expense account, or other trust relationships?
- e. Not doing my share of the workload in the community?
- f. Creating inconveniences or problems for others (robbing them of their rights, time, health or happiness)?
- g. Not providing adequately for my family?
- h. Insensitivity and lack of availability to others?
- i. Unwillingness to fight injustice and oppression?
- j. Not using my time wisely?

9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

*In what ways have I violated this Commandment?*

- a. Saying unkind things about another?
- b. Not defending others wrongly accused?
- c. Encouraging or even listening to gossip and slander?
- d. Unnecessarily thinking or speaking negatively about a person, even when true?
- e. Not loving my neighbor as myself?
- f. Not getting to know my neighbor?
- g. Not helping my neighbor and allowing him/her to reciprocate?
- h. Not bearing positive witness for my neighbor?
- i. Not bearing positive witness to my neighbor?
- j. Allowing my "neighborhood" to be too small (i.e., lack of concern for people in other parts of the world)?

10. "Thou shalt not covet."

*In what ways do I covet?*

- a. Envy things others have?
- b. Being jealous of another?
- c. Trying to "keep up with the Joneses"?
- d. Being inordinately discontent or ungrateful?
- e. Playing the "what if" game instead of getting on with life?
- f. Desiring an unattainable or unchristian lifestyle?
- g. Seeking personal gain at the expense of others?
- h. Making value judgments irrespective of faith guidance?
- i. Seeking goals that are not in accord with God's will for my life?
- j. So desiring the acceptance of others that I let it affect my behavior such as failing to speak the truth, in love?

## Prayers of Confession

### Seeking God's Forgiveness

O God, by my fault, my own most grievous fault, I have sinned against you and against my neighbor. Have mercy on me, Lord, and forgive my sins; for I ask it in the precious Name of your Son, my Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*~ or this ~*

I confess to Almighty God that I have sinned in thought, word and deed, in things done and left undone, and especially \_\_\_\_\_ . For these and for all other sins which I cannot now remember, I am truly sorry. I pray God to have mercy on me. I firmly intend amendment of life, and I humbly beg forgiveness. Amen.

*~ or this ~*

Most merciful God, I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what I have done, and by what I have left undone. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved my neighbors as myself. I am truly sorry, and I humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on me and forgive me; that I may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

*~ or this ~*

Almighty God, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men: I acknowledge and bewail my manifold sins and wickedness, which I from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against me. I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for thy Son my Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past; and grant that I may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.