

Examination: The 10 Commandments

The Exercise: 3 Steps

The following pages contain the “details” for what one might examine oneself for sin ... using the 10 Commandments as a guide.

Step #1. Conduct a reasonably quick reading/review of the below listed “details” with regard to the 10 Commandments.

[While doing so put a mark in the margin for “anything” that (even in the least) ticks your conscience as possibly applying to you.]

Step #2. In a deliberate fashion go back over each of the items you have marked. Ask the Holy Spirit to make clear your guilt ... and to what degree.

Write at least 1 statement in your journal about each marked item.

Step #3. Then confess ... *in whatever way you choose*. Or ... simply reiterate your confession(s) of times past.

[Dallas Willard: “Jesus knew that we could not keep the law by **trying** to keep the law. To succeed in keeping the law one must aim at something other and something more. One must aim **to become** the kind of person from whom the deeds of the law naturally flow. The apple tree “naturally” and easily produces apples because of its inner nature. That is the most crucial thing to remember ... “

[I am aware of the danger of “easy confession” --- so I do my best to make this altogether different ... such that my confession lead me to become all the more serious about true repentance going forward ... especially with regard to recurring/habitual sins.]

The Examination

The Details:

[Exodus 20: 1-17 NIV] “And God spoke all these words:

2 “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

3 “You shall have no other gods before me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Considerations-

- resentment towards God
- neglecting to nourish and protect one’s faith
- tacit approval of worldly ways of denying God
- loving something (anything) more than God
- allowing the world’s ways to influence my choices more than God

- engage in superstitious practices that in a way replace God (horoscopes, fortune tellers, etc.)
- involvement in the occult
- put oneself in authority above the Word of God (even in minor ways)
- hypocrisy in terms of belief vs. what’s said, written, inferred or acted out

- hypocrisy in terms of what’s said, written, inferred or acted out as being in agreement with one’s true inner belief ... when it’s not

- remaining silent and not rejecting anything opposed to sound faith
- misleading another about the faith
- publicly joining groups ardently opposed to Christianity
- spiritual sloth
- neglect of prayer
- ingratitude toward God
- excessive attraction to things
- idolatry (worshiping false gods such as giving honor to a creature in place of God)

- undue superstition
- hypnotism
- divination
- sacrilege (profaning the holy)
- undue belief in materialism

7 “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

Considerations-

- used any of God’s names in cursing, blasphemy, etc.
- spoken about the faith with great irreverence, hatred, defiance
- disrespectful behavior, speech, etc. in a church
- use of vulgar, suggestive or obscene speech
- belittling others in speech

- listened/enjoyed music that was irreverent or blasphemous to the faith
- watched/enjoyed movies, TV, etc. that was obviously anti-God, an affront to my own belief
- continued/encouraged relationships with others holding disdain for the faith
- blamed God for my own failings
- committing perjury, lying under oath

- taking false or unnecessary oaths
- misusing or desecrating the Bible, or any others' things specifically set aside for the acknowledgement or worship of God
- breaking vows or promises to God

8 “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Considerations-

- neglecting to take a Sabbath's rest weekly, and then truly resting
- causing others to desecrate/ignore the Sabbath
- neglect, trivialize, treat casual/lightly, rushing through prayer and all that is contained therein in the broad subject of our prayer responsibilities
- the importance of a regular meditation in the Scriptures as an avenue to basic Christian character development
- providing and being seen as a leader in the instruction in the faith of one's spouse, children, grandchildren and any others responsible for
- reverence in and for church services and all activities of a spiritual nature that portent to lift the name of Jesus
- one's personal worship ... adoration
- interest in and excitement about the places of God, things going on that elevate Him, movies/shows/TV/books about Him

12 “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

Considerations-

- obeying all that parents reasonably ask
- show disregard for parents wishes, display contempt for them, and/or disdain for their very being
- neglect parents needs in old age or in time of need
- harboring hatred or resentment towards parents
- unwillingness to forgive parents

- bringing shame upon parents
- disrespect for educators, community leaders, etc.
- living in humble obedience to those who legitimately exercise authority over me
- breaking any just laws
- praying for and with children
- neglect of children as regards food, clothing, shelter, education, discipline and care
- provide for the spiritual education and welfare of children and raising them in the things of God
- being a Godly example in all respects for children
- forgiveness towards each child
- continuously exercising love towards children as years pass

13 “You shall not murder.

Considerations-

- killing another
- negligence resulting in the death of another
- involved in abortion, directly or indirectly (through advice, encouragement, providing money, or facilitating it in any other way)
- seriously considering/attempting suicide

-supported, promoted, or encouraged the practice of assisted suicide or mercy killing (euthanasia)

-deliberately desired the killing of another
-unjustly inflicted bodily harm on another
-threatened another with bodily harm
-verbally or emotionally abused another
-gossiped, slandered or in any way put down another

-hated another, or wished him/her evil
-been prejudiced or discriminating towards another because of their race, color, sex or sexual orientation, nationality or religion
-joined/supported a hate group
-purposely provoking another via teasing or nagging
-unwillingness to serve spouse

-recklessly endangered own life or health by own actions
-driven recklessly or under influence of alcohol or drugs
-abused alcohol, drugs, etc.
-sold or given drugs to others to use for non-therapeutic purposes

-immoderate use of tobacco
-over-eating or immoderate use of food or drink
-encouraged others to sin via giving scandal
-encouraged sin in others via advice, taking them to inappropriate places, dressing/acting immodestly, etc.

-caused serious injury of another by criminal neglect
-indulged in unjust anger
-refusal to control temper
-bitterness or contempt towards spouse
-undue quarreling

-willfully hurting another
-unforgiving of others (especially when mercy or pardon were requested)
-sought revenge or wished bad on another
-delight in seeing another get hurt or suffer
-cruel treatment of any animals, causing them to get hurt or suffer

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife

Considerations-

- neglecting to practice and grow in the virtue of chastity
- given in to lust (desire for sexual pleasure unrelated to spousal love in marriage)
- deprived spouse of marital rights without just cause
- claimed my own marital right without concern for spouse
- willfully entertained (gave in to) impure thoughts

- purchased, viewed or made use of pornography
- sought out, watched or promoted movies and television that involve sex and nudity
- read immoral books, magazines, etc.
- listened to immoral music/jokes, etc.
- viewed any immoral television or other media

- committed (or mentally gave self over to, fantasied, etc.) the act of adultery
- committed (or mentally gave self over to, fantasied, etc.) the act of fornication
- committed (or mentally gave self over to, fantasied, etc.) the act of incest
- committed rape

- engaged in any manner of homosexual activity
- engaged in sexual foreplay (petting/excessive touching) reserved for marriage
- any other inappropriate words, thoughts or actions with one other than my spouse
- preyed upon children or youth for sexual pleasure (pedophilia)
- engaged in prostitution or paid for the services of a prostitute

- seduced someone or allowed myself to be seduced
- made uninvited/unwelcome sexual advances towards another
- purposely dressed immodestly

15 “You shall not steal.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Considerations-

- stealing (taking something not belonging to me against the reasonable will of the owner)
- envied others on account of their possessions
- neglecting to live in a “spirit” of Gospel poverty and simplicity
- neglecting to give generously to others in need
- not considering that God has provided me with money and goods such that I might use them to also benefit the needs of others

- allowing myself to become conformed to a consumer mentality (buy, buy, buy, throw away, waste, spend, spend, etc.)
- neglect to practice the corporal works of mercy
- deliberately defacing, destroying or losing another’s property
- cheating on tests, taxes, sports, games, in business, etc. (thereby gaining what doesn’t belong to me)
- squandering money in compulsive gambling
- making a false claim to an insurance company (or to anyone wherein I will become advantaged)

- failing to honor my part of a contract
- failing to pay a living wage
- failing to give a full day’s work (working hard) for a full day’s pay
- taking for personal use time (or anything else) that rightly belongs to my employer
- failing to make good on a debt

- overcharging another
- taking advantage of another’s hardship or ignorance
- misused natural resources

16 **“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.**

Considerations-

- lying
- knowingly and willfully deceiving another
- perjured self under oath
- gossiped
- ”white lies” (which of course there are none - just what we might call them)

- leaving out important things/facts such as to mislead or give a different impression
- exaggeration as to falsify what’s being said
- committed detraction (destroying a person’s reputation by telling others about their faults)
- slandered another (lies about another in order to destroy reputation)

- libeled another (writing lies about another in order to destroy reputation)
- rash judgment (assuming the worst of another based on circumstantial evidence)
- failing to make reparation for a lie or for harm done to a person’s reputation
- failure to speak out in defense of another when appropriate
- betraying another’s confidence through speech, deed, or in writing

“A true Christian weeps not over the consequences of his actions (sins), but he weeps because he has offended and disgraced his Heavenly Father!

When we sin, we are attacking the Father’s right to be God in our lives.”

Allen Carr