

## A spiritual check list

This list is meant to be an aid to memory and confession. Do not let it discourage you or make you feel God doesn't love you if you aren't well-nigh perfect. Paul said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rome 13:10). Our love to God and man is imperfect. God's love to us sinners is always perfect. John says, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9 Once confessed and turned away from the sin is gone. If you need help to find forgiveness or to overcome sin, ask a mature, discreet Christian to help you in confidence. "To fear the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov.8:13). Ask the Lord to give you a hatred for sin seeing what it has done to the Lord and to others.

### First & Second Commandments

What do I fear more than God - failure, the future, trouble, a lower standard of living, war, old age, persecution, sickness or death?

Have I denied my faith out of fear of people? Have I placed people's opinions above God's?

Have I loved God above all things or have my business, possessions, my house, money or career been more important- to me than God?

Have I become obsessive through some desire? Have I idolized a person? Is my family or a certain person everything to me? Do they take the place in my heart that belongs to God?

Is there some loss I cannot get over (a person, my home, possessions)?

What in my life do I rely on - on my ability, my relationships, my respectability or my past spiritual experiences?

Did I lose my trust in God when he seemingly left me without help?

Do I forget to be thankful to God?

### Third Commandment

Have I only named the Name of the Lord with reverence, or have I used it lightly (as a manner of speaking such as "O God", "Jesus Christ", "Crikey", "Good Lord", "Christ" etc.)?

Do I use bad language?

Have I taken a false oath?

Have I spoken in a frivolous tone of voice about spiritual things, the Bible or the Lord or accepted it without saying anything when it has happened in my presence?

### Fourth Commandment

How do my Sundays or free time look? Do I go to church or do I let myself be kept away for superficial reasons?

Do I look for fellowship with spiritually alive Christians?

Do I hear and read the Word of God faithfully or seldom and unfaithfully; or do I read it out of habit?

Do I listen to God in quiet or do I avoid God speaking to me by throwing myself into work or pleasure?

Do I spend any part of Sunday in any way which is unhelpful to my spiritual life?

Do I plan my free time so that time for God is included?

Do I give hospitality to others, especially those who are lonely? Do I visit the housebound?

### **Fifth Commandment**

(NB. It is recognised that some parents have been very poor role models and have hurt their children in various ways. Those on the receiving end of such treatment may need to seek help to find healing for themselves and forgiveness for their parents).

If your parents have done their best to bring you up well, ask yourself the following questions:

Have I always been thankful to them both in word and willing deed?

Have I been a joy to them and prayed for them?

Have I looked down on them or made them ashamed of me?

Have I borne with the peculiarities of their age with love, or have I let them feel my lovelessness?

Have I been rude to my parents?

Have I made them angry or unhappy so that they become upset, or even ill?

Have I spoken despisingly about my parents to friends?

Have I (as a child) always obeyed parents and teachers?

Do I realise that I must give account to God for all those that He has entrusted to my leadership and care?

Have I taken care of their spiritual lives?

Have I had enough time for them?

Have I set a good example to them?

Have I been too strict or too indulgent?

Have I been severe, unloving and lacking in understanding?

Have I shown favouritism?

Have I been resentful over some wrong doing?

Have I respected the authority of those placed over me or have I not carried out their orders or annoyed them?

Have I broken the law?

Do I respect public property?

Am I proud and conceited?

### **Sixth Commandment**

Have I brought about the death of some person (or been the indirect cause of it)?

Have I killed unborn life, or consented or helped in it?

Have I been involved in any senseless killing in the world of nature?

Have I attempted suicide?

(NB. Murder is the ultimate act of hatred or lack of love. Lack of love is also involved in the next few questions)

Have I endangered myself or others on the road?

Have I taken poor care of my health?

Have I given physical and spiritual help to the poor, the oppressed and to people in trials and temptations? Or have I been indifferent in the face of their needs?

Do I recognize in myself an unwillingness to sacrifice for others?

Am I closed up, irritable, unloving and unthankful in thought, word or deed, or do I always try hard to see and love Christ in my neighbour?

Am I willing to take the first step in reconciliation? Or do I give room to hatred and thoughts of revenge?

Have I nourished anger, resentment and dislike against others?

Am I bad tempered? Do I grumble?

### **Seventh Commandment**

Have I had wrong sexual relationships with, people outside of marriage ~ fornication, adultery, homosexuality - perhaps only secretly in my thoughts?

Am I conscious that I am responsible to God for my body?

Have I secret sexual problems? Are my thoughts and wishes pure? Have I kept my eyes from impure looks?

Have I carried on suggestive conversation and told dirty jokes?

Have I done everything to create a clean moral atmosphere around me?

Have I been clear and decisive in every temptation, or have I played with temptation?

Have I turned decisively away from, bad influences (bad films, TV, magazines, books, pictures, news stories about sexual crimes or wrong sexual activities) and from dangerous friendships?

When something goes wrong in my relationship with my partner in marriage, in whom do I first look for guilt?

Am I always ready to forgive?

Have I been faithful in my marriage in thought, word and deed? Am I wholly committed to my partner?

Am I completely honest in my marriage or do I have secrets? Have I confessed any sexual sins to my partner (unless that would definitely result in some worse evil - seek advice on this)?

Do I do things which my partner does not like and which create anger and hurts?

What have I done to give joy to my partner?

(If divorced) have I repented of my side of the causes of the divorce? Am I as right as possible with my former partner and family?

(If single) do I accept my single state as coming from God's hand, whether or not I later marry?

Am I sensible in relating to married people of the opposite sex, by relating to the couple rather than the individual of the opposite sex?

### **Eighth Commandment**

Do I respect other people's belongings? Do I have something in my possession, which does not belong to me? To whom do I have to return something?

Have I been honest in completing my Tax Returns?

Have I embezzled money or goods that were put in my charge?

Have I taken part in dishonest business?

Am I reliable in planning my spending and not wasting money?

Have I wronged someone e.g. my employers in that I have done a poor job for my money; been a bad timekeeper;  
or taken excessive breaks?

Have I not given someone proper wages and so taken advantage of them?

If not in paid employment (redundant, housewife, retired) do I plan or waste the time the Lord has entrusted to me?

Do I practise proper care over my possessions e.g. *my* home? Or am I slovenly or extravagant?

Is my giving too small?

Am I willing to sacrifice financially?

Have I stolen a person's good name by taking the credit for what they have done (even by my silence)?

### **Ninth Commandment**

Do I tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

Am I sincere, straightforward and honest in my behaviour?

Have I told a lie which I have not since put right?

Have I given others occasion to lie or encouraged them to lie?

Have I flattered people in order to make myself popular?

Have I respected the honour of others or have I spoken ill of another person or said something about him that was not true?

Have I repeated gossip about others or condoned it in my hearing?

Have I spoken about the bad side of another person without a compelling reason to do so?

Have I ruined someone's reputation by slander? To whom do I need to apologize?

Do I stand up for those who are being slandered?

Have I tried to bring peace with my words and tried to turn everything for the best?

Have I kept secrets which were entrusted to me?

### **Tenth Commandment**

Am I content with what I have or do I always want more?

Have I set my heart on anything it is not God's will for me to have?

Am I resentful about others being promoted beyond me or being more successful and popular than me?

Am I greedy, including in eating and drinking?

Do I waste money and foster covetousness by gambling?

Do I compare myself unhelpfully with other people?

Do I suffer because I do not have the same gifts and abilities that they have?

Am I vain - paying too much attention, to my cleverness and appearance?

What is my attitude towards inheritances?

Is my work something I can offer in worship to God or am I making money in something which dishonours the Lord?

### **Conclusion**

All of us will have ticked some of the points listed in this article. Now is the time to seek god's forgiveness. We may first need to ask forgiveness from people concerned, and in some cases, make restitution. We may need to ask for help from a Christian counsellor. In cases of crime we may need to go to the police. It is vital to reach the stage of a clear conscience before God and other people.

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