

# Are you a good person?

Do you consider yourself to be a good person? Well if you do you're not alone. But most of us differ, however, on the definition of "good." The Bible says that the Ten Commandments are God's standard for goodness. He measures us and will judge us on how well we keep them. Let's take a look at the commandments and see how well you're doing.

1. "You shall have no other gods before Me."

Do you love God with all your heart, soul and mind? The Bible says that if we love anything or anyone (including ourselves) more than we love God we are setting our affections on the gift rather than the Giver. If you have failed to love God with all your being then you are guilty of breaking the first commandment.

2. "You shall not make yourself an idol or any likeness of what is in Heaven above or in the earth beneath or in the water under the earth; you shall not worship them or serve them."

Have you made a god with your hands, or in your own mind, one you're comfortable with? A god that suits your perception of what God ought to be like?

If so then you are guilty of idolatry! Do you think the Creator and Judge of the universe will casually overlook your refusal to worship Him on His terms? Does the law of gravity cease to exist because you wish it so? God has promised that He will not turn a blind eye to the sin of idolatry, nor leave idolaters unpunished. The Bible says: "...idolaters shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

3. "You shall not take God's name in vain."

Have you ever used God's name as a cussword? If so then you've treated the God who "formed you in the womb" as a worthless thing. You have profaned His Name.

Do you imagine that on Judgment Day He will have forgotten your blasphemous speech? Certainly not! Jesus said: "I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of Judgment." (Matthew 12:36).

4. "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy."

God commanded that the seventh day of the week (Saturday) be a day of rest. God rested from His Creation work on this day. How does this commandment apply to you? The Bible says that those who respond in faith to the person and finished work of Jesus Christ enter into God's eternal rest: "...for we who have believed (in Jesus) do enter that rest," and also, "he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His." (Hebrews 4:3,10).

Will you come to Jesus for rest? He said, "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt 11:28). Are you tired of working for your salvation?

The Lord God rested on the Sabbath from all His creation works. Likewise the Bible commands you to cease from your works, repent of your sins and trust in the eternal rest offered by the Son of God. The prophet Isaiah declared: "All of our righteous acts are like filthy rags." (Isaiah 64:6).

5. Honor your father and mother."

As much as is within us, we need to honor our parents. Do you obey your parents? Do you express your gratitude for them? The Bible issues a severe warning to those who dishonor or take advantage of their parents! To dishonor our parents is a terrible sin and the bible includes it in the same category as arrogant and greedy people! "In the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents.." (2 Timothy 3:2)

6. "You shall not murder."

You probably believe you're safe on this one, right? You've never killed anyone, but wait, what does Jesus say? "You have heard that it was said to those in ancient times, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' (empty head) shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire." (Matthew 5:21-22)

Murder, like all sin, begins in the human heart. God alone sees your thoughts and nothing is hidden from Him. "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." (1John 3:15, NKJV).

Have you ever been enraged with someone that you said, "I could just kill them"!! Well the Scripture says these are murderous thoughts and are an affront to God's moral law which highly values human life. Thus, you are deserving of hell where according to Jesus Christ there will be "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

7. "You shall not commit adultery."

Jesus said, "I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matt 5:28). If you lust after a man (or a woman), then the Bible says you've already committed adultery in your heart. You've offended God's holy nature and His standard for purity. And because of this, you have an appointment with the Judge when you pass from this earth: "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27). And also, "Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor 6:9) Those of you who are unmarried are also under obligation to keep this commandment. If you have sexual relations outside of marriage, the bible calls you a "fornicator." This is also a violation of God's Law and a sin serious enough to damn you for all eternity.

The Bible says: "No fornicator has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." (Ephesians 5:5). If you're involved in viewing pornography this commandment applies to you as well. On an appointed day in the future, your every evil thought will be revealed and exposed to God's light!

#### 8. "You shall not steal"

Have you ever stolen anything, even a small item? If so then that makes you a thief and numbered among the "wicked" God will judge. Listen to what your future punishment will look like if you do not repent of your sins: "Upon the wicked He (God) will rain coals, fire and brimstone, and a burning wind." (Psalm 11:6).

#### 9. "You shall not lie"

Psalm 116:11 says: "All men are liars," and "a lying tongue...a false witness who speak lies" is one of seven things God hates. (read the sixth chapter of the book of Proverbs to learn the other things God hates). Just one "white lie" is enough stench in God's nostrils to rain down fire and brimstone upon your head, and a burning wind which never stops blowing.

#### 10. "You shall not covet"

Covet means to be greedy or materialistic. You lust for someone or something that doesn't belong to you. You say, "The grass is greener on the other side of the fence" Don't you know, the covetous will not inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor 6:10). Lack of contentment, an ungrateful heart, greedily longing after what doesn't belong to you! How will you escape God's fierce anger on Judgment Day? Listen to the warning of Jesus: "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15).

Even if you think you've broken only one or two commandments, you will still be guilty before Almighty God, as the Scripture says: "Whoever shall keep the whole law and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10).

Trying to justify oneself by keeping the ten commandments is a futile exercise. The bible clearly states: "By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight." (Romans 3:20). This means that all your "good deeds" and meritorious works give you nothing to boast about, at least not before God. You cannot and will not be justified by supposedly living a good life, or going to church, or even praying to God.

"But wait a minute" you say, "doesn't God love the sinner but hate the sin"? No, this is a lie. The Bible says that God is "angry with the wicked every day" (Psalm 7:11) and also, "You hate all workers of iniquity." (Psalm 5:5). If God didn't hold back and poured out His wrath on His own Son on the cross, (even though he was sinless), how much more will God punish lawless sinners on the appointed day? The truth is that the only thing keeping you from falling into the bottomless pit of hell is God's patience. He is waiting for you to turn for your evil ways. The apostle Peter wrote, "The Lord is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9). God is patient and merciful, but He will only wait so long before His wrath is kindled. So now that we've established your inability to keep God's commandments, your guilty status, and future punishment if you don't turn to Him, what are you going to do? The good news is that the Lord has provided a means of escape for you. He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to save you from your sins. Jesus was born of a virgin, He lived a sinless life. (thereby fulfilling for you the requirements of God's law). Jesus was crucified, died and was buried, and then rose again on the third day. The Bible states that if you repent of your sins and place your faith in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of your sins you will be saved. Jesus said, "I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (Matthew 9:13). The apostle Peter, in one of the first sermons after Christ's resurrection, said: "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19) And similarly, the apostle Paul preached repentance: "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man (Jesus) whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31).

"Repentance" means turning from your sins and self-love. Recognize that your "heart" is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." (Jeremiah 17:9). And that apart from the Lord you are hopelessly hell-bound. True repentance will be demonstrated by genuine sorrow for your sins and a desire to please God above all else. God promises, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18)

So will you repent and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ today? The Bible says, "Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." (Psalm 95:7-8). The Word of Life says: "Whoever calls upon the Name of the Lord will be saved." (Joel 2:32). When the Phillipian jailer asked the apostle Paul "what must I do to be saved"? Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." (Acts 16:30).

To "believe" means to trust in, rely on and cling to the person of Jesus Christ alone for salvation. (It does not mean to merely give intellectual assent to facts. Nor does it mean to be baptized or join a certain church).

The following prayer may be a helpful guide for you:

**"Dear God, I am deeply sorry for offending you with my sins. (name them). I understand that you alone are "good" and holy. Your moral law shows me how much I need your mercy and forgiveness. So please, right now, have mercy on me and forgive me. I repent of my sinfulness and turn to you to be my King and Savior. I put all my faith hope and trust in Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe He died for my sins and paid the penalty which I justly deserve. I believe He rose from the dead and that the blood of Jesus is sufficient to cleanse me from all my unrighteousness. Thank you Lord for hearing my prayer and having mercy on me a sinner. Amen."**

If you have prayed this prayer (or something like it!) your next step is to start reading your Bible and doing what it says.