

Self-Examination According to the Ten Commandments

Use the following questions as a guide for self-evaluation.

First Commandment

Thou shall have none other gods before Me (Deuteronomy 5:7).

Have I believed in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God in Three Persons?

Have I acknowledged God as the Lord, the Source of all good things, the Savior of my soul and body?

Have I loved God with all my heart, mind, soul and strength?

Have I constantly had the thought of God in my mind and the fear of God in my heart?

Have I failed to trust in God and His mercy? Has my faith in God been shaken by skepticism or doubt?

Have I complained against God in time of adversity?

Have I been thankful for God's blessings?

Have I questioned or doubted the holy tenets of the Orthodox Faith?

Have I asked God to strengthen my faith?

Have I despaired of God's mercy or help?

Have I prayed to God every day, morning and evening?

Have I prayed with zeal?

Have I always attended Divine Services whenever possible?

Have I missed any of them without good reason?

Have I tried to serve God and keep His commandments?

Have I preferred religious books over others? Have I, in fact, read them?

Have I read atheistic or heretical books out of sinful curiosity?

Have I attended the meetings of heretics and schismatics?

Have I willingly contributed to charitable causes and to the Church? Have I given a sacrificial portion of my resources?

Have I neglected my duties to God through fear of ridicule or persecution?

Have I denied that I am a Christian?

Have I denied any teaching of the Orthodox Faith?

Have I given way to superstition?

Have I consulted astrologers, fortune-tellers or spiritualists?

Have I put myself before God?

Have I forgotten or neglected the most important thing in life, that is, preparing for eternity?

How will I answer God if I have given myself up to vanity, sloth, pleasure and carelessness?

Second Commandment

Thou shall not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them ... (Deuteronomy 5:8,9a).

Have I made an idol of any person or thing?

Have I given to any one or to any thing the worship that is due to God alone?

Have I put God first? Or have I given first place to: accumulation of money, acquisition of property, amusement or entertainment, food and drink, clothes, self-adornment, attention to myself, eliciting praise, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, spending time in distractions, obsession with myself or with other persons or things?

Have I been distracted from God by a passion for watching television or movies, attending the theater or playing games of one sort or another?

Have I been so anxious about myself, my family or my friends that I have neglected God, failed to serve Him and not carried out what is required of me by the Church?

Have I given too much attention to my home and its furnishings, its decoration and repair?

Have I paid too much attention to a car, truck, van, boat or other vehicle of travel? Have I been irreverent during Divine Services, let my attention wander or been insincere?

Have I neglected to receive Holy Communion regularly?

Have I received the Divine Gifts without due preparation?

Have I made an idol of myself?

Have I made an idol of some passion? love of money? gluttony? sexual obsession? anger?

Have I allowed a passion to take possession of my heart?

Have I read the Holy Scriptures regularly?

Have I read books that would be spiritually nourishing?

Have I set before myself the holy life of Jesus my Savior and tried to imitate Him?

Have I called on Him to help me?

Have I read the lives of the Saints and tried to imitate their virtues, especially those of my Patron Saint?

Have I asked for their prayers and their strength?

Third Commandment

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain (Deuteronomy 5:11).

Have I profaned the name of God in any way?

Have I been thoughtless or irreverent with the name of God?

Have I used the name of God in a curse?

Have I treated something holy as a joke, or joked about holy things?

Have I grumbled toward God or even renounced Him at any time?

Have I shown due respect to the clergy and the faithful or hindered them in their work?

Have I shown respect for all other people?

Have I prayed absent-mindedly or inattentively?

Have I cursed anyone or anything?

Have I sworn a false oath?

Have I broken an oath or a promise?

Have I entered into any sinful or unlawful contract or made such a promise?

Have I given in to despondency?

Fourth Commandment

Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee (Deuteronomy 5:12).

Have I failed to attend Divine Services on the Lord's Day or on a Great Feast Day without just cause?

Have I kept others from attending Divine Services?

Have I done unnecessary work on Sundays or on Great Feast Days?

Have I violated the sanctity of the Lord's Day or Great Feasts by unwholesome or frivolous activities?

Have I distracted others from keeping these days in a godly way?

Did I pray at home if I was unable to attend Divine Services on the Lord's Day or a Great Feast Day?

Did I make every effort to worship "in spirit and in truth" while I was at a Divine Service?

Did I allow myself to be distracted by worldly concerns at a Divine Service? to judge others? to think of unwholesome or frivolous things?

Did I make the effort to come to Divine Services on time?

Have I diligently kept the fasts of the Church?

Have I caused anyone else to violate the fasts or tempted anyone to do so?

Have I fasted properly in my heart, realizing a hunger for God and life in Him, rather than legalistically, just to fulfill the letter?

Fifth Commandment

Honor thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which

the Lord thy God giveth thee
(Deuteronomy 5:16).

Have I been disrespectful to my parents or inattentive to their advice and concern for me?

Have I been lacking in love for them?

Have I withheld love from them?

Have I disobeyed them?

Have I neglected them or failed to help them?

Have I cared for my parents in their illnesses or old age?

Have I deceived my parents or caused them pain by my words or actions?

Have I prayed for my parents and other relatives?

Have I prayed for the repose of my parents and other relatives who are departed?

Have I done my duty toward my family?

Husbands: Have I sacrificed my life for my wife?

Wives: Have I been obedient to my husband?

Have I encouraged peace and mutual respect among the members of my family?

Have I been responsible toward my spouse, children and others who depend on me for help, counsel, guidance or support?

Have I been wanting in love for my spouse or harmed her/him in any way?

Have I set a good example for my children?

Have I tried to rear my children in godliness?

Have I disciplined them with patience? or in anger?

Have I been overindulgent with my children?

Have I been stingy with any members of my family or with others?

Have I neglected my godparents or failed to honor them?

Have I neglected my godchildren or failed to instruct, guide or encourage them in the Orthodox Faith?

Have I worked for my employer honestly and diligently?

Have I treated fairly and respectfully all who worked with me or who are under my supervision?

Have I respected and prayed for the civil authorities?

Have I honored those who are older than I?

Have I shown respect for all others?

Have I mocked anyone or made fun of him?

Have I respected the clergy of the Church and prayed for them?

Have I criticized them or mocked them?

Have I been embittered against them, especially when they chastised or corrected me?

Have I honored God as my Father, the Church as my Mother, and other human beings as my fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters?

Sixth Commandment

Thou shalt not kill (Deuteronomy 5:17).

Have I killed another person, or have I contributed to the death of another person?

Have I had an abortion or given support or encouragement to someone else to have one?

Have I wanted another person to die?

Have I wanted any type of harm to come to another person or group of people?

Have I tried to kill myself or thought seriously about doing it?

Have I caused injury to another person?

Have I caused injury to myself through smoking, overindulgence, drinking too much alcohol, taking drugs or too much medicine or through evil and intemperate living?

Have I given way to anger?

Have I cursed anyone or hurt anyone with unduly harsh words?

Have I been cruel to anyone?

Have I ignored someone who needed help or failed to defend someone who was being treated unjustly or cruelly?

Have I failed to respond to those who are in need: to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the imprisoned, the homeless, the ill, the troubled, the afflicted, the depressed or those with other needs that I could help?

Have I harmed someone spiritually by leading him into temptation to commit spiritual death through heresy, schism or by some other sin?

Have I shown malice or hatred toward another person?

Do I bear any malice or resentment or hatred in my heart toward anyone else?
Have I failed to forgive anyone or harbored evil thoughts against anyone?
Have I mistreated animals or destroyed or harmed any living creature unnecessarily?

Seventh Commandment

Neither shalt thou commit adultery (Deuteronomy 5:18).

Have I committed the sins of adultery or fornication?
Have I committed the sin of masturbation?
Have I had any sexual experiences outside of marriage?
Have I done anything impure alone or with any other person(s)?
Have I engaged in bestiality, transvestitism, sodomy or any other abnormal sexual practice?
Have I degraded myself or another person in any way?
Have I forgotten or ignored human dignity?
Have I been immodest?
Have I lived in an improper way with anyone else?
Have I read or looked at immoral, suggestive or pornographic books, magazines, pictures, websites, movies, tapes, dances, plays or performances?
Have I entertained impure thoughts or fantasies? Have I been unfaithful to my spouse through impure thoughts or fantasies?
Have I looked at any person or thing in an impure way?
Have I spoken or listened to impure or suggestive language, dirty jokes or lewd songs?
Have I eaten or drunk too much? Have I tempted others to do so?
Have I associated with bad companions?
Have I been a to unsavory place?
Have I been lazy, idle or wasteful of time?
Have I tempted others or led them to commit sinful acts or to entertain sinful thoughts?
Have I tempted others through my own immodesty or through suggestive language or actions?
Have I been unfaithful to any trust?
Have I betrayed the confidence of anyone

else?
Have I judged any other person?

Eighth Commandment

Neither shall thou steal (Deuteronomy 5:19).

Have I stolen anything or wished to do so?
Have I stolen by fraud, deception or conspiracy?
Have I kept anything that did not belong to me?
Have I stolen by not rendering a service for which I was compensated?
Have I tried honestly to find the owner of lost articles I found, when it was reasonable to do so?
Have I cheated or defrauded anyone?
Have I accepted or purchased stolen goods?
Have I disposed improperly of the goods of another?
Have I paid my debts in a timely way?
Have I lived within my means?
Have I lived extravagantly or wastefully?
Have I been selfish with what is entrusted to me?
Have I been miserly in soul?
Have I shared with others?
Have I been stingy?
Have I given to those in need?
Have I given a sacrificial proportion of my goods to the Church for God's service?
Have I been honest and upright in my dealings with others?

Ninth Commandment

Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor (Deuteronomy 5:20)

Have I slandered anyone?
Have I lied?
Have I added to or taken away from the truth?
Have I made careless statements or spoken evil of anyone? Have I betrayed the confidence of another person?
Have I criticized others?
Have I rejoiced in the failings or downfall of

others?

Have I covered my brother's shame as
Shein and Japheth covered their father
Noah's?

Have I spread gossip or scandal?

Have I hurt the reputation of anyone else?

Have I concealed the truth or assisted in
carrying out a lie? Have I confessed to sins
I have not committed?

Have I confessed all the sins I have com-
mitted?

Have I failed to come forward to defend
another person when I knew lie was being
slandered or spoken against unjustly?

Have I tried to see the good in others?

Have I concentrated on the shortcomings of
others?

Have I engaged in idle chatter?

Have I spoken unnecessarily?

Have I laughed or acted frivolously?

Have I made a real effort to be truthful at
all times?

grace? physical or spiritual blessings?

Have I been greedy?

Have I been jealous of another person's
goods, money, appearance, success, love,
popularity, being loved by another or oth-
ers?

Have I concentrated my time, efforts and
thoughts on the things of the world rather
than on the things of the spirit?

Tenth Commandment

Neither shalt thou desire thy
neighbors wife, neither shalt thou
covet thy neighbors house, his
field, or his manservant, or his
maidservant, his ox, or his ass,
or any thing that is thy neigh-
bor's (Deuteronomy 5:2 1).

Have I envied others? either their lives or
their goods?

Have I desired anything that was an-
other's?

Have I damaged or destroyed the posses-
sions or property of others?

Have I desired things God has not given
me?

Have I been discontent with my life?

Have I held back anything due to another
because I wanted it myself or for any other
reason?

Have I hoped for the downfall of another so
that I might gain by it?

Have I failed to be gracious and generous
to anyone?

Have I wanted from God what I refused to
give to a fellow man: forgiveness? goods?