

# The Personal Goodness Test

Let's look at God's law as the standard for moral goodness.

1. **You shall have no other Gods before Me**
  - a. Do you always love God with ALL your heart, soul, mind, and strength and always put God first? Y/N
2. **You shall not worship man-made images of Me**
  - a. Have you ever created your own version of God? (What kind of God would...? God would never... My God is a god of love so...) Y/N
3. **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain**
  - a. Have you ever used God's name as a curse word, even an "OMG" or "Oh God"? Y/N
4. **Keep the Sabbath day holy**
  - a. Do you set aside a day each week to honor and worship God? Y/N
5. **Honor your Father and Mother**
  - a. Have you done this perfectly? Y/N (The next 5 commandments might help your answer)
6. **You shall not murder**
  - a. Have you ever had hate in your heart towards someone else? Y/N
7. **You shall not commit adultery**
  - a. Have you ever looked at a woman with lust? Y/N
8. **You shall not steal**
  - a. Have you ever taken anything that doesn't belong to you? Even something small? Y/N
9. **You shall not bear false witness**
  - a. Have you ever told a lie? Y/N
10. **You shall not covet (envy, comparison)**
  - a. Have you ever desired more? Have you wanted what someone else has? Y/N

## How did you do? Wait, there's more!

"There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God." Romans 3:11

"All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one."  
Psalms 14:3

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23

"For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."  
James 2:10

"A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone." Luke 18:18-19

"For the wages (payment) of sin is death (spiritual, physical, eternal)..." Romans 6:23

## The verdict is in!

Are you INNOCENT or GUILTY? HEAVEN OR HELL?

**Here is the good news.**

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

How? REPENT (consciously turn away from what is wrong and towards what is right) and put your TRUST in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Surrender – Give up your rights to yourself and let God have his way

Then what? You are re-born of the Spirit, brought into union with the Father, adopted into His Sonship, you are declared innocent (Justification), and you begin a journey of being made holy like Christ (Sanctification).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Have you repented and put your trust in Jesus? What is holding you back?
2. What strongholds are getting in the way of a surrendered relationship with God? Examples:
  - a. I haven't fully embraced my destitute and need for God's grace
  - b. I've been a human doing instead of a human being (Being present with God)
  - c. Unrepentant sin in my life
  - d. Unresolved relationship issues with family or other loved ones
  - e. Hypocrisy (not practicing what I say I believe in across each area of my life)
  - f. Receiving or offering forgiveness
  - g. Unhealed wounds
  - h. Addiction
  - i. Holding on too tightly to material possessions
  - j. Pride/Independence
  - k. Physical, emotional, or mental health issues
  - l. Being obedient to divine nudges and ordinary opportunities

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Look under the hood (sober self assessment)
2. Confession (tell the truth to God) - Apology, Forgiveness, Redemption/Reconciliation
3. Ask for, and seek, interdependent relationships
  - a. A Mentor
  - b. Fellowship with at least one other believer (to start)
4. Discover God's word, pray with him, with others, invite God into every aspect of your life
5. Find an authentic community of Bible-believing people (i.e. Church)
6. Engage in battle against strongholds and practice surrender through ordinary obedience
  - a. It's about the direction, not the destination
7. BE present with God, GO to the most important need, watch what God will DO

## Forgiveness – It's not a feeling

Irritations do not require forgiveness, only negotiation

When one of you speaks or acts unkindly to each other, sincere apology and genuine forgiveness is required to restore the relationship

Remember, an emotional barrier is created which does not go away with time

Forgiveness removes the barrier, and lifts the penalty

When we sincerely apologize to God (confess), and request his forgiveness, he pardons us and will never again hold that failure against us

Forgiveness is not a feeling, but a decision to offer grace instead of demanding justice

Forgiveness opens the possibility for the relationship to grow

### Forgiveness does not:

- 1) Destroy our memory (e.g. "Forgive and Forget")
  - Wounds and hurtful memories are stored in the subconscious mind
  - Memories can leap from the subconscious to the conscious mind without being requested
  - How do we handle these painful memories? Take them to God, shine a light on them
- 2) Remove all the consequences of wrongdoing
- 3) Rebuild trust
- 4) Always result in reconciliation

Time alone will not heal relationship. Healing requires a decision to forgive. Forgiveness opens the door to the possibility of growth.

### What if the person who has offended me does not apologize?

- Lovingly confront them and let them know how the offense affected you
- Make a second and third attempt if necessary
- The refusal to apologize says, "I do not value this relationship"
- You may then release them, and your hurt and anger, to God

### Reflection Questions:

1. Is there someone you have not yet forgiven? What keeps you from doing so?
2. What barriers stand between you and someone you love? What will you do to remove the barriers?

## Apologizing – It's a sign of strength

The first step is confession (telling the truth and admitting we were wrong) and repentance (consciously turning away from what is wrong and towards what is right)

Marriages and meaningful relationships will not be healthy without apology and forgiveness

Time does not heal all wounds. Unloving words and actions create emotional barriers that don't go away on their own.

An apology is not always received as an apology to the other person. What they might receive is:

- I'm sorry (I got caught)
- I'm sorry but... (lack of ownership)
- I'm sorry if you were... (lack of insight or empathy)
- I'm sorry that you... (your problem, not mine)

Just saying "I'm sorry" does not qualify as apology

### The 4 steps of a sincere apology:

1. I'm sorry (Tell what you are sorry for)
2. I was wrong (Explain what was wrong about your behavior)
3. Will you please forgive me? (This demonstrates your sincerity and acknowledges the hurt)
4. I love you (These three words bring closure and healing)

### Questions that an apology will answer:

1. Do you understand how deeply your behavior hurt me?
2. Are you accepting responsibility for what you have done?
3. Are you demonstrating a desire to change?
4. What are you doing to make this right?
5. Do you love me? Am I a priority?

### Reflection questions:

1. Do you remember the last time you apologized? What did you say? How did it go?
2. Do you remember the last time someone apologized to you? Did it seem sincere? Did you forgive? Why or why not?
3. What would you like to hear in a sincere apology?
4. Is there anything for which you need to apologize? Why not do it now?