

The great offer for you: The questions which follow may perturb you and bring you to your wit's end. The Apostle John declares, however, that "...the blood of Jesus [God's] Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:7-9). And Jesus Himself says, "He who comes to me, I will not cast out" (John 6:37).

Briefly read over these questions, and listen to the still, small voice of the Lord who says, "Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:19-20). And consider the plea of the Apostle Peter, who says, "humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you. Cast all your cares on Him, for He cares about you" (1 Peter 5:6-7).

THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF GOD

“Jesus answered, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’” (Mark 12:29-30)

Do you love the Lord with all you have, or only half-heartedly, casually, double-mindedly, or weakly?

1. **“I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have none other gods but me.”** (Exodus 20:2-3)

Which person or what thing is more important to you than God? What do you normally think about the first thing in the morning, in the middle of the day, and the last thing at night? Do you love God for anything other than a relationship with Himself?
(Psalm 1:1-3; Psalm 5:3; Psalm 42:5-8)

2. **“You shall not make for yourself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in the heaven above or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them, nor worship them.”** (Exodus 20:4)

Are you guided in your thinking and actions by superstitious ideas? Do horoscopes, fortune-tellers, channeling, spiritism, or magic arts influence your life or those who live with you?
(Deuteronomy 18:9-14; Acts 19:13-19; Proverbs 3:5-6; Matthew 7:7-8)

3. **“You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.”** (Exodus 20:7)

Do you use God's Name as anything other than a form of address or worship? Is your speech gracious and pleasant, generous in praise and kindness, or crude and harsh, using profanity or spreading gossip?
(Colossians 4:6; Matthew 5:21-23; Romans 12:14-21; 1 Peter 3:10-12)

4. **“Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day.”** (Exodus 20:8)

Do you gather regularly – especially on Sundays – with other Christians to pray, hear God's Word, and serve the Lord? Do you take enough time daily to communicate with God and read the Scriptures, or do you try to escape through over-work or media-watching/listening or computer/PDA use? Do you take time to relax or to enjoy wholesome recreation? Do you seek God's will in your planning of time and decision-making?
(Luke 4:16; Acts 16:13; Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Ephesians 5:15-16; Hebrews 10:25)

“Jesus said, ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Mark 12:31)

Do you love others as you would have them love you? Is your love for them “patient and kind...not jealous or boastful...not arrogant or rude...not insisting on its own way...not irritable or resentful...not rejoicing at wrong, but rejoicing in the right...bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)?

5. **“Honor your father and mother.”** (Exodus 20:12)

Are you committing primary energy to maintaining the primary relationships in your life? Are you respectful of those in authority over you, whether at home, school, work, church, community, or nation? Within or outside of your circle of family and friends, with whom do you have strained relations? Are there those individuals or groups of people to whom you are indifferent or towards whom you feel reproach or scorn? Are you pursuing the cause of justice and righteousness in and beyond the spheres of home, church, school, job, and community? (Luke 17:4; Ephesians 4:31-32; 1 Peter 5:13-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

6. **“You shall not murder.”** (Exodus 20:13)

Is there someone who may have wronged you, whom you cannot forgive, and towards whom you feel continuing resentment or bitterness? Do you try to help others, inwardly as well as outwardly, or are you primarily looking for ways to get ahead of or be superior to others? (Matthew 5:21-24; Matthew 6:12-15; Matthew 18:21-22; Philippians 2:3-4)

7. **“You shall not commit adultery.”** (Exodus 20:14)

Is God's commandment the standard for you in sexual matters, not only in relationships with others (sex outside of marriage), but also in regard to your own inner life (lustful fantasies, pornography)? (Matthew 5:27-28; Colossians 3:5; Romans 1:24-27)

8. **“You shall not steal.”**

Have you illegally taken something for your own or not returned something which you borrowed, or not reported something which you have earned? What do you possess that you don't really need, and that someone else might need? Do God and His Church receive their proper share of your earnings? (Luke 12:15-21; Ephesians 4:28; Matthew 25:31-46)

9. **“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”** (Exodus 20:16)

To whom have you lied? Whom have you condemned deliberately, falsely, or unkindly, either by spoken or written word? (Psalm 63:11; Revelations 21:8; Luke .6:37-42; John 7:24)

10. **“You shall not covet”** (Exodus 20:17)

Whom do you secretly envy because of their personal appearance, reputation, position, abilities, or possessions? Can you rejoice with someone who has more than you, or do you become bitter when you compare yourself with such a person? Are you ready to receive everything which comes to you in life as coming from God, even that which you do not understand or which is not according to your personal preferences? (Psalm 37:1-4; Galatians 5:26; Romans 12:15; I Thessalonians 5:18)

Your first step: Having read through all of the questions completely, now ask God to reveal those areas in which you have gone astray from Him and His ways. Concentrating on specific questions, write down your sins, very specifically. Now bring your confession in prayer to the Lord: admit your sin against Him and others; trust in His having paid the penalty on the Cross. Then repent: decide to change, and ask God for the power of His Spirit to live a new life, walking in His ways and in His Love. Many people will find it helpful to talk these matters over with someone who can offer spiritual counsel. May the love and mercy of God be yours in abundance!