

Examining your heart and speech

Thinking about how you have responded to conflict, read the definitions and verses below, then honestly examine your words and your heart before the Lord. Note the words or heart attitude that describe how you have responded sinfully. Use this exercise to discern how you have sinned, and what you need to confess to God and others in order to be reconciled.

Gossip: I have talked about others behind their backs; betrayed a confidence; or stirred up dissension.

Prov 16:28 A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.

Prov 20:19 A gossip betrays a confidence.

Prov 26:20 Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.

Grumbling & Complaining: I have murmured or muttered, harbored secret displeasure; complained, been negative or whined about circumstances.

Jas 5:9 Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

Php 2: 14 Do everything without complaining or arguing.

Falsehood: I have exaggerated or used deceit, telling partial or distorted truths.

Eph 4:25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Slander: I have used malicious words, engaged in backbiting, and telling tales to harm.

Mat 15:19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

James 4:11 Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

1Pet 2:1 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.

Worthless talk: I have used unwholesome, or “rotten” words that put people down.

Eph 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Reckless words: I have used hurtful and destructive words aimed at another.

Prov 12:18 Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Backbiting: I have been sly, cunning and revengeful in my language.

Prov 25:23 As a north wind brings rain, so a sly tongue brings angry looks.

Gal 5:15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

❑ **Judging motives:** I have attributed evil intention to others based upon my assumptions; claiming to know the purpose or motivations of another's action or words.

Luke 6:37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Rom. 14:10-13 You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written: "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.'" So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. herefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

1Cor 4:5 Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

❑ **Following people, before God:** I have made loyalty to a person or group the issue, rather than the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. 3: 1-9 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly-- mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour. For we are God's fellowworkers; you are God's field, God's building.

❑ **Fear of man:** I have responded or failed to respond out of fear for what others might think of me or do to me instead of out of reverence and obedience to God.

Prov. 29:25 Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.

Is. 43:1 But now, this is what the LORD says — he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

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