

# **Reverence For God**

God has made a special commandment out of the natural duty and obligation of respecting His name. That this should be necessary sometimes strikes us as very strange. God is a Father, Provider, Protector, Preserver of us all; He became Man and died for us on the Cross, He resides in the tabernacles of our churches to be near us, and He wants to reward us all with a happiness that will never end.

On the basis of these things we are bound to love God with all our heart and soul and mind and will, and love is diametrically opposed to disrespect, irreverence, scorn and contempt in using a lover's name. A good mother does not have to command her children not to abuse her name; a worthy father has never been known to have to implore his sons to speak respectfully of him. Yet such is the perversion of human nature in regard to God that He has to make a special commandment that His creatures may not take His name in vain.

The chief forms of irreverence against God are blasphemy, unnecessary swearing, perjury, cursing, and profanity. The questions below deal with all these things according to the guilt they involve.

## **I. Mortal Sins**

1. Have I denied any of the attributes of God, e.g., saying that He is not all-powerful, all merciful, all just, etc.?
2. Have I said that I did not believe in God's providence, either directly by denying that He watches over all who love Him, or indirectly by saying that it is necessary to sin to avoid certain hardships?

3. Have I spoken with contempt of God, or of Christ, or of the Holy Eucharist, or of the Passion of Christ?
4. Have I deliberately expressed the wish that there was no God, so that I could sin without fear of punishment?
5. Have I accused God of cruelty, injustice, discrimination against me, because of some sorrow I had to bear?
6. Have I wished evil to God—for example, that He would be forgotten by men and offended more frequently?
7. Have I spoken slightly or contemptuously of the Mother of God, or of the saints, or of monks, nuns, and priests as such?
8. Have I ridiculed the Sacraments or the Mass or any other holy ceremony?
9. Have I said that God did not and could not have inspired the Bible, or that there are things in the Bible that need not be believed?
10. Have I said that Christ did not found the Church, or that He has not preserved it from error?
11. Have I said that God expects too much of an individual by imposing the Ten Commandments on him?
12. Have I stated that any one of the commandments of God or precepts of the Church cannot be observed by ordinary folk?
13. Have I said that I owed nothing to God and therefore did not need to go to Church or practice any religion?
14. Have I denied the miracles of our Lord, or attributed them to deceit or natural causes?
15. Have I sworn falsely at a public trial, deliberately telling a falsehood when I had taken an oath to tell the truth?

16. Have I lied about important matters to which I had to swear in drawing up a statement or answering a questionnaire, e.g., pertaining to insurance, getting a position, taxes, etc.?
17. Have I sworn to God that I would keep a certain promise or perform a certain work when I did not intend to do so at all?
18. Have I deliberately called upon God to witness the truth of a lie that I told someone in private life?
19. Have I sworn to God that I would do something gravely unjust, like defrauding a neighbor, taking revenge, hurting someone?
20. Have I deliberately cursed a human being, which means seriously wishing or asking that God condemn his soul to hell or visit some other grave misfortune upon him?
21. Have I twisted the words of Christ or of the Bible into an obscene or evil form?
22. Have I, as a parent or guardian, blasphemed or cursed or sworn falsely before my children or even to my children?
23. Have I encouraged others to commit any of the above sins?

## **II. Venial Sins**

1. Have I used the name of "God" or "Christ" or "Jesus" or "Lord" as a byword, or as an expression of impatience, or in jest?
2. Have I spoken, not maliciously, but profanely and irreverently, of any holy thing?

3. Have I sworn, i.e., called upon God to witness the truth of what I was saying, when there was no serious reason for so doing, when the matter was trivial or foolish, even though I told no lie?
4. Have I used the language of cursing against inanimate things, or against animals, or against human beings even though I did not really wish the damnation of these last?
5. Have I permitted myself to acquire the habit of using God's name profanely, or of swearing or cursing almost without realization of what I was saying?
6. Have I laughed at others' profane use of God's name or other irreverent speech, as if I thought it amusing and wanted them to continue?
7. Have I neglected to correct a child subject to me, when the child used irreverent or profane language?
8. Have I permitted my children to go about with companions who made frequent use of profanity?
9. Have I repeated the profanity of others as something amusing and clever?