

Unit 3 Preassessment Answer Key

Obedience, Honesty, and Justice

1. What is the relationship between civil authority and God's Law?
 - The relationship between civil authority and God's Law is that civil authority deals mostly with what we cannot do to another person or to society, and God's Law of Love deals with how we *should* act toward other people and toward society. Civil authority provides the minimum guidelines for getting along with our fellow citizens and staying out of trouble. God's Law provides the way for us to live in true harmony and peace with our fellow citizens, whom we are called to love as our neighbors.
2. Have society's laws ever been unjust? What would be a Christian response to an unjust law?
 - Yes, society's laws have been unjust, such as laws that permitted enslaving another person. A Christian response to an unjust law would be to work to change it and to educate lawmakers and fellow citizens about why the law is unjust. Another Christian response would be to disobey the unjust law while it is in effect, to refuse to obey a law of society that goes against God's Law.
3. How is our role as citizens informed by our Christian faith? What responsibilities do Christians have toward the government of the country they live in?
 - Our role as citizens is informed by our Christian faith in such a way that we follow God's Law first and foremost. Our faith informs and guides our efforts to live as productive citizens contributing to our country's well-being. Christians have the responsibility of actively participating in the government of their country to whatever extent they are able and helping the government to develop just and moral laws.
4. What is the obligation of the state to its citizens?
 - The obligation of the state to its citizens is to protect the common good. The state must provide for the welfare of its citizens but not at the expense of their liberty; it must not oppress them or force them to obey unjust laws. The state must operate in an open way that allows citizens to understand its workings and provides an avenue for change to these workings when necessary.
5. What attitudes does honoring one's parents require? What actions should follow from these attitudes?
 - Honoring one's parents requires an attitude of respect, obedience, and understanding. We should respect our parents' authority and their role as loving caretakers. We should obey their requests and their rules, understanding that they make these rules because they love us and want to help us live well. Obeying our parents, speaking respectfully to them and about them, and loving them in return are actions that should follow from these attitudes.



6. What kinds of situations challenge mutual respect among family members?

- Situations in which parents do something wrong, in which children deliberately disobey or disrespect their parents, or in which family members support opposing sides of an issue (whether family-related or not) challenge mutual respect among family members. These kinds of situations challenge family members to find a deeper foundation for their respect for one another, to root it in real love instead of in superficial compatibility. These situations challenge family members to forgive one another and reconcile their differences in order to return to a relationship of mutual respect and love.

7. How would you support the statement “to deny God is to deny truth”?

- To deny God is to deny truth, because God is truth. To deny God is to deny the Creator who made us and who has a plan for us. There is objective truth in this world, and it can only come from an all-powerful, ever-loving God. Therefore, to deny God in his love and mercy is to deny truth itself.

8. What did Jesus mean when he proclaimed that whoever lives the truth lives in the light?

- When Jesus proclaimed that whoever lives in the truth lives in the light, he was referring to being united with God as being in the light. When we live in the truth, we live in God’s light because we live according to God’s Word. When we live in the truth, our path is in the light. It is clear to us, so we do not have to wonder what is right because God’s love will guide us.

9. How can teenagers share with others that the ultimate truth is found in God’s saving love and that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

- Teenagers can share these truths with others by the way they speak and act. Teenagers can witness to God’s saving love and to the person of Jesus Christ through their own kind actions and honest, respectful words. By showing true, profound respect for other people as children of God and for the truth as living in God, teenagers can share with others the ultimate truth: God.

10. What are the results of living an honest life? What are the effects of lying?

- The results of living an honest life are being known as a trustworthy person, knowing self and others better, being closer to God, and being at peace with the truth and the choices we have made. The effects of lying are worrying about being caught, continuing to lie in order to cover our tracks, growing more and more distant from God (because we have rejected his Law and his guidance) and our neighbor, and trying to rationalize the choices we have made. Living an honest life can bring us peace and joy and help us to see more clearly how to follow God, while lying can cause us to rely more on ourselves than on God and to distrust our neighbor.



11. How can sins against the Eighth Commandment harm another's reputation?

- Sins against the Eighth Commandment can harm another's reputation by leading people to believe something that simply is not true about a person. "Bearing false witness" against our neighbor, or lying about them, includes telling something that we are not sure is true and telling something that might be true but is harmful to the person we are talking about. These sins can harm a person's reputation by changing what other people think of a person or helping people form preconceived notions about a person they do not know personally.

12. What do the Seventh and Tenth Commandments tell us about the role of material possessions in our lives?

- We should not steal. We should not covet our neighbor's goods. We need to put material possessions in their proper perspective in our lives. We cannot serve two masters; we are not saved from sin and death by what we own but through the grace of God. We must practice detachment from material goods. No person should have wealth that exceeds their material needs while others lack the material goods to sustain a life with dignity. Envy and greed allow possessions, popularity, and power to take the place of God in our lives.

13. What did Jesus teach about poverty and wealth?

- Jesus makes clear at least four things in his teachings on poverty and wealth. First, poverty is not a sign that God is displeased with someone. Second, God has a preferential concern for those who experience poverty. Third, lust for wealth is a danger to our spiritual welfare; it causes us to trust in money and material possessions for our happiness rather than trusting in God. Fourth, wealth is to be shared with others, especially those in need. God wants the bounty of creation to be shared fairly and justly among all people, not hoarded by a few.

14. Describe the two feet of social action and how they are related to each other.

- The two feet of social action are works of service and works of justice. Through works of service or charity, we try to alleviate the needs of others. For example, in practicing the Corporal Works of Mercy, we might give food to the hungry, visit the imprisoned, clothe the naked, or visit the sick. Through works of justice, we also help to alleviate these needs by working to change unjust social structures. For example, we work to change social attitudes or business and governmental policies that keep people hungry or poor. Works of justice are more long term and complex to deal with. Both service and justice are necessary in our response to social injustice.



15. Give several examples of how justice can be applied to contemporary social issues.

- Many contemporary social issues require just solutions: care for the Earth, labor issues, racism, and immigration are some important ones. In caring for the Earth, we must make protecting the environment ahead of corporate profits. We must be sure that workers earn a living wage and have adequate benefits like vacation time and health care. Laws and attitudes that contribute to racism must be changed. The human rights of immigrants must be protected and their basic human needs provided for.

16. Describe two virtues that strengthen us against the temptation to be greedy and envious.

- We can fight against the temptation to be greedy and envious through the virtues of goodwill toward others, being humble, and trusting God for our needs. In practicing the virtue of goodwill, we wish what is best for another. We can practice this virtue by praying for another person's happiness, especially when we are feeling envy toward that person. Through the virtue of humility, we recognize that we cannot earn God's love and that material possessions are not a sign of God's favor. The virtue of trusting in God removes the fear that we will not have what we require for our basic necessities.

