

Am I Good or Bad



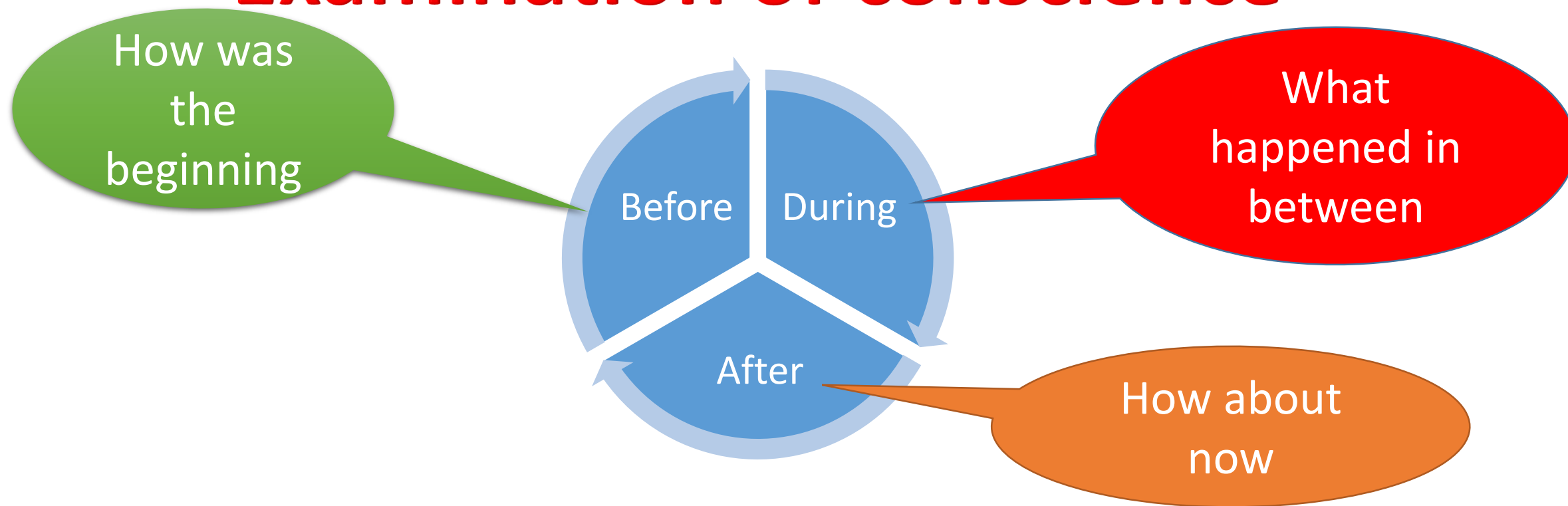
Preparation for Easter

With Fr. Lawrence Muthee, SVD

The prodigal Sons

Luke 15:11-32

Examination of conscience



Who is better?

The younger brother



The elder brother

Verses 11: A certain man had two sons

- It is not told in the parable but we assume that the father and his two sons lived a good life until some juncture.
- You and I too have certain junctures in our lives up and until when things were ok.
- We were happy, and all was going on well.
- We were enthusiastic about our mission.
- We had no ill sentiments about anyone.
- We valued those around us and felt at home.
- But something happened and all changed.



Vvs 12: The younger one said to the father: give me the portion of estate which would go to me

- Why the younger son?
- May be he felt small before his big brother
- May be the big brother bullied him
- May be he did not enjoy any more being at home with his father and brother
- May be someone advised/incited him to demand his inheritance and leave
- In many traditional cultures, a son cannot ask for inheritance. It would be tantamount to wishing his father dead.
- Have I been in the position of the younger son at any time?



Vvs 13. He sold everything and left to a distant land

- He had planned it all
- He separated himself from his family
- He did not even say why he was leaving or where he was going
- We too may have left long time ago from our families or our congregations and gone to a distant country – do I feel belonging?
- Sometimes our best friends and confidants are not the people we live with.
- Some left their vocations long time ago. Married people who live as though not married, religious people who live secular lives.



Vvs 14a: After he had wasted everything in loose living

- “All that comes easy goes easy.”
- He had not sweat for the money.
- He had no plan for his life.
- He wanted to be free.
- He did not think about the future.
- He was ignorant and did not know that one day the money will be finished
- How many times we have made foolish decisions without thinking about tomorrow?



Vvs 14b: A great famine occurred in that region and he began to be in need

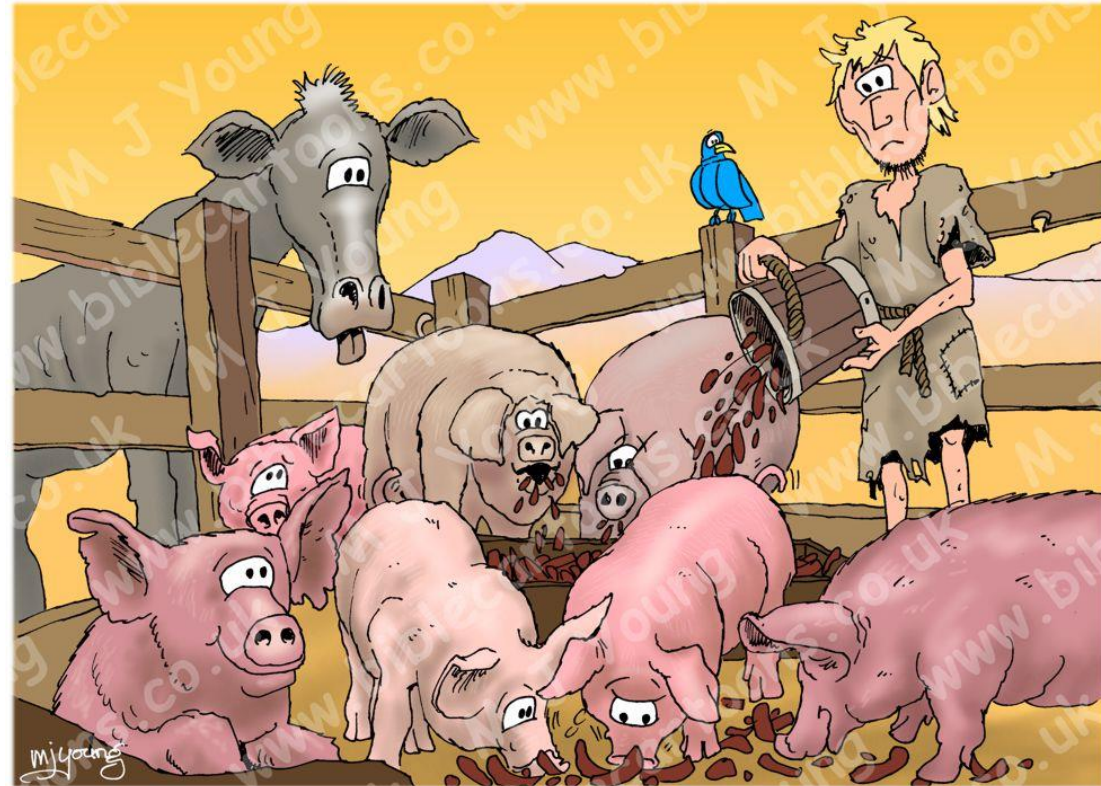
- Things changed all over sudden.
- All his new “friends” left when the money finished.
- He did not think about the future.
- He was blinded by his ignorance
- Now he is in trouble and he has nothing even to eat.



Vvs 15: He went to feed pigs

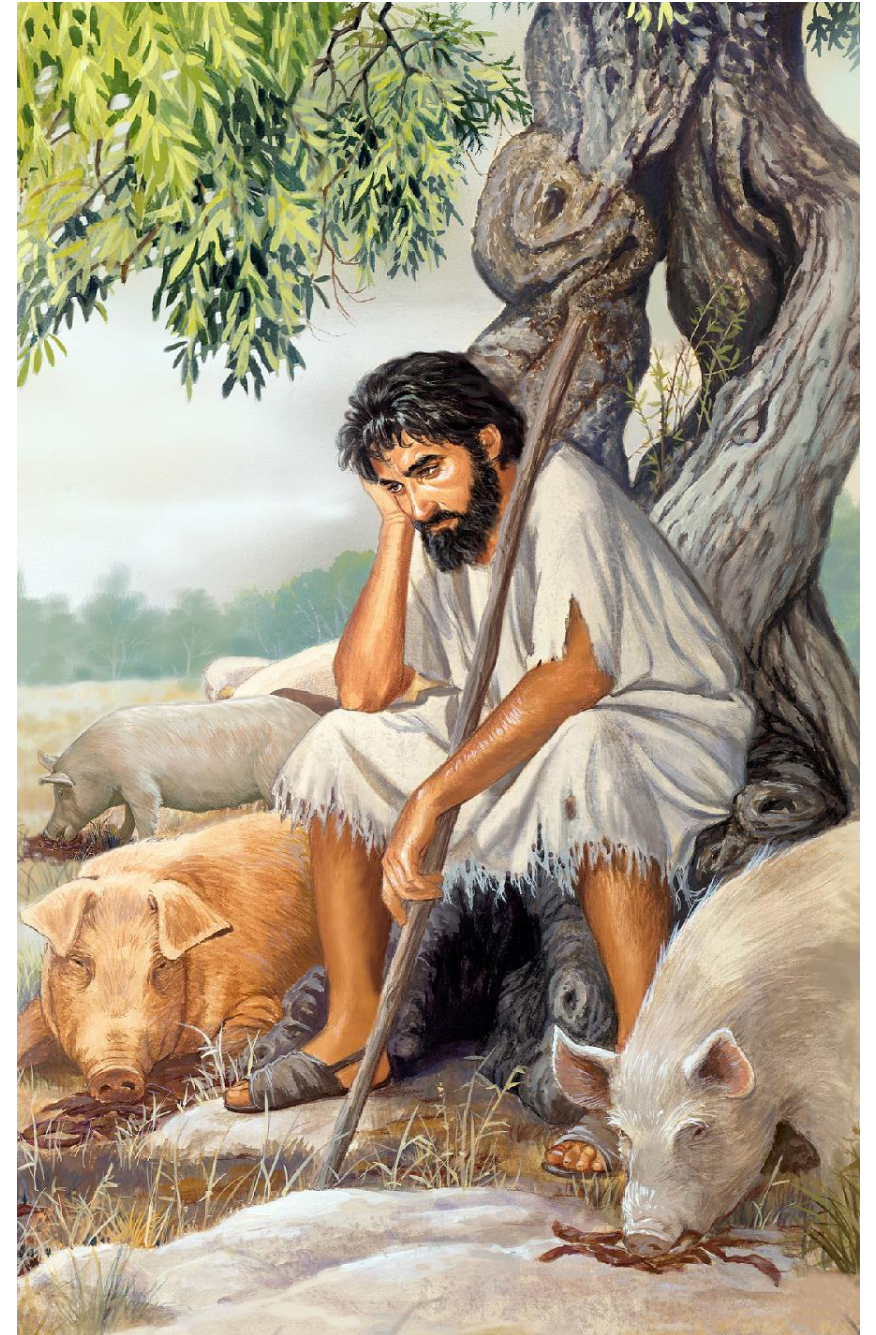
- What a shame?
- Pigs are regarded dirty.
- How humbling it was for him?
- He never thought that he could be in this position.
- He thought he new it all.
- All the esteem is gone.
- He is now worse than the pigs.
- He is no longer royal/noble.
- We can also lose our dignity.
- Who am I?

When we allow ourselves to eat with pigs, we lose value, respect, esteem, no one wants to be associated with us.
- Over indulging in anything is eating with pigs



Vvs 17: And returning to his senses

- Problems have woken him up.
- He begins to think about home and how good life was there.
- He compares his status now and that of the slaves at home. It is worse.
- The freedom he wanted turned out to be slavery.
- We too need to regain our senses.
- He is feeling so low.
- He recognizes his mistakes. He does not pass blame to anyone but himself.
- He wants to go back and say sorry.



Vvs 18-19: He prepares himself to ask for forgiveness

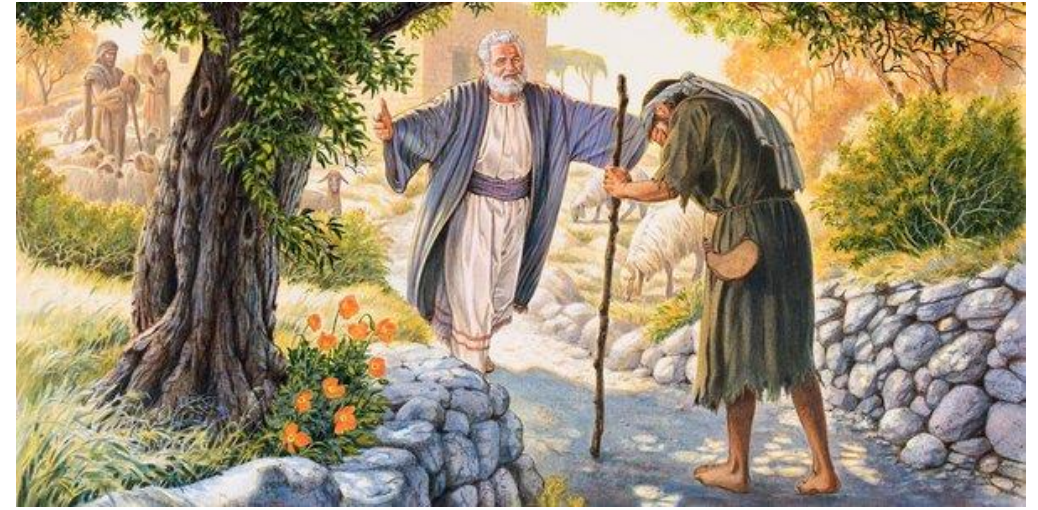
- He is now repentant.
- His hard headedness has been smoothened.
- He knows he has lost his inheritance for good.
- He can no longer claim back his position as a son.
- He is a total stranger.
- But he thinks better to be a slave at home than suffer in a foreign country.
- He is ready to live as a slave.

Stop overdrinking, get back to your senses before it is too late. If you will not, you will have no one but yourself to blame



Vvs 20-21: The encounter with his father

- The father saw him from a far distance and runs to meet him.
- The old man runs – this was a taboo. He has been waiting for him.
- He hoped that one day he would return to him alive.
- He never got peace because of him.
- He is happy to see him, he recognizes him immediately.
- This is how God cares about us. He is a loving father.



Vvs 22-23: The father decides to restore him to his dignity as a son

- The father knew he had repented.
- He had forgiven him already.
- **Robe** – restoration of his dignity, he was almost naked – Adam and Eve. Our sins exposes our nakedness and we are ashamed even to come before God.
- **Ring** – restoration of his royalty as a son and not a slave
- **Shoes** – to alleviate the pain, he has walked in trouble for so long.
- **Feast** – he has returned home. God is not happy that we perish Ez 18:23



Go back home
My friends!

*You are lucky boy
Do not run away again*

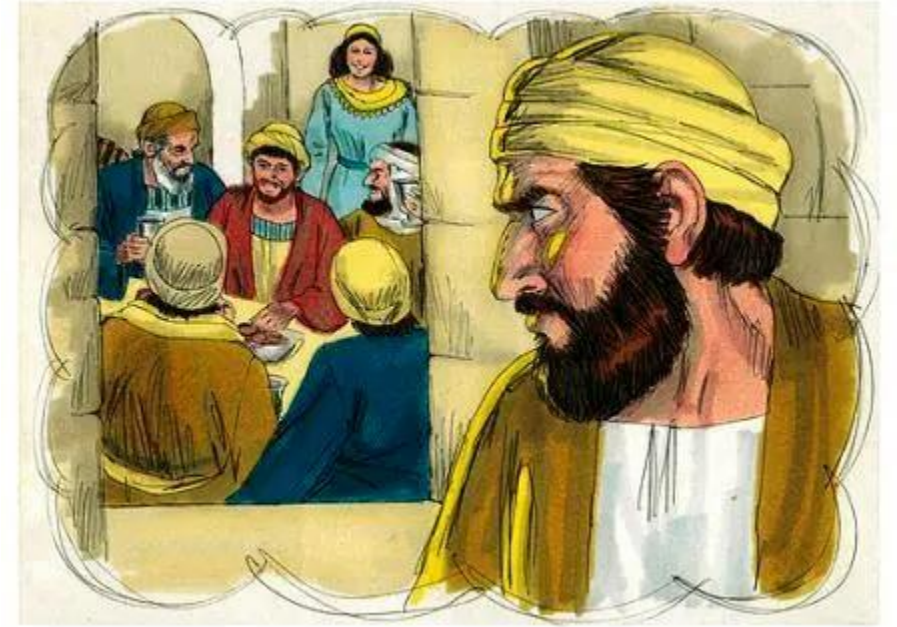
Vvs 23: Feast

- The father and the slaves celebrates the return of the lost son.
- He was like dead and now is alive.
- What a joy?



Vvs 25-32: The elder son

- He was away when the brother came.
- After learning it was his brother who had returned he refuses to enter.
- He had a grudge against him.
- Unlike the father he was not ready to forgive his brother.
- He even rejects him as his brother
“this son of yours” (vs 30)
- He was not happy also being at home
“you never gave me even a young goat”



Are you and I the elder son?

- Many times we are the elder son.
- We do not accept others.
- We suffer in silence and hold grudges with others.
- We pretend to be ok when we are not.
- He has never been ok ever since.
- The return of the younger brother exposes the hatred and grudge of the elder son.
- How can we change?

Speak it up
Do not get
Stomach woods
sister



What do you see?



The graves

In life we have many graves. Some graves we dig and enter ourselves, other graves others dig and lure us to enter, others we are forced to dig and enter ourselves or someone else digs and forces us to enter.

- The **bad choices** we make in life due to *arrogance, pride and ignorance* are grave we dig and enter ourselves. To get out of these we just need to make up our mind.
- The graves others dig and lure us to enter are bad *companies, friendships and relationship* that we insist on keeping. We end up messed and mixed up. **To get out we need to break up with those people**

- The graves that others forces us to dig and enter are **situations that we get involved with** without our consent but for some reasons we are not able to refuse. Many of these are dug by our family member or **community members and best friends** – abortion, stealing from the congregation coffers, doing drugs, etc. To get out we need to accept to be different.
- The graves that others dig and force us to enter are situations where we **inherit positions** with a lot of mess already done by or **predecessors**. To get out we need to clean up the mess.

- When graves are new and decollated they do not scare anyone. However, after a few days no one is willing to open them.
- Jesus, entered the grave and came out alive after three days. He know how to get out alive. If we give him a chance in our lives he will help us out of the graves

What do you see?





***Hey bro. what
happened to
you?***



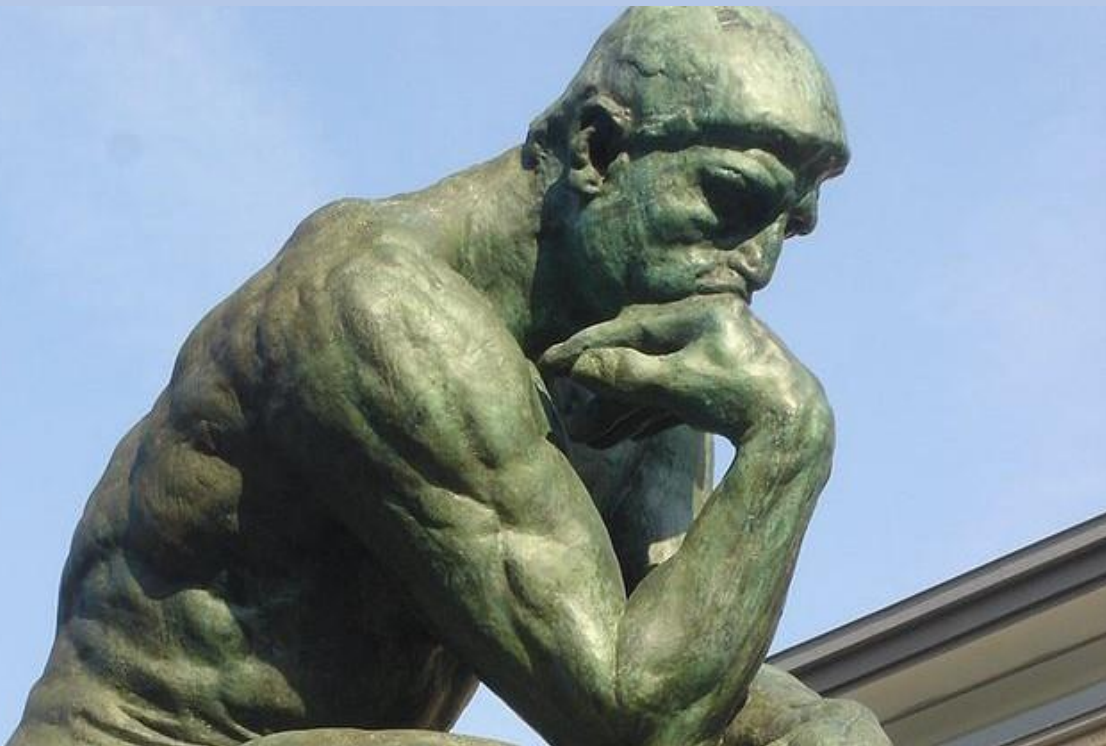
Eating with pigs

- The prodigal son in Lk 15:11-32, demanded his inheritance and left his father's home to a distance land without a plan.
- Later on, when he had wasted everything, he had no choice but to eat with pigs.
- May be he himself or someone else told him that out there things are better than home.

- How many people left their homes and are now eating with pigs?
- How many people left their vocations and are now eating with pigs?
- How many people lost their jobs because of pride and are now eating with pigs?

Throwing stones in the darkness

- **Lost enthusiasm** – Those who started very well in the ministry but somewhere the enthusiasm was lost. Now they are just there filling the position.
- **Envy and jealousy** – those who do not develop their talents and capacities but look at others with envy and jealousy that is eating them from inside. They never see anything good in others. They are bitter with themselves
- **Laziness** – those who do not want to get tired. They do not do anything tangible. They eat from the sweat of others. They are always behind
- **Gossips** – These are worse than the lazy people, they spread evil and hatred. They think they are better than others. They are like snakes with two heads



Am I good or Bad?

Have you struggled with this question in your thoughts, especially when you are trying to make sense of all the things happening in your life?

Well, there are two sides of the coins for this one



1. The first one has to do with individual conscience. What do you say about yourself. If the conscience is well formed and informed, you will find the right answer. However, if the conscience is erroneous and misinformed, you may end up with the wrong answer. If your conscience is uncertain, you will be **CONFUSED**
2. The second has to do with the people around you: You are either **GOOD** or **BAD** at any given time depending on **WHO is TALKING ABOUT YOU to WHO.**