

Moral System Threshold

A concise field manual for sincere seekers who want to know whether an alleged Christian moral system is already a coherent system, or whether it is still relying on a source, reaction, or conclusion that has not yet supplied enough architecture.

Use this tool before making the larger case. It slows the conversation down at exactly the point where hidden assumptions usually do the most work.

Clarify before debating

Separate source from system

Carry the setup into the next audit

The key value

Many people can name scripture, conscience, God's nature, or flourishing before they can explain how moral meaning, truth, authority, access, obligation, scope, and correction actually work. This manual treats that gap as clarifying, not embarrassing.

Best used by

Sincere seekers, careful Christian apologists, discussion partners, teachers, and anyone who wants a cleaner first-pass before a more adversarial debate begins.

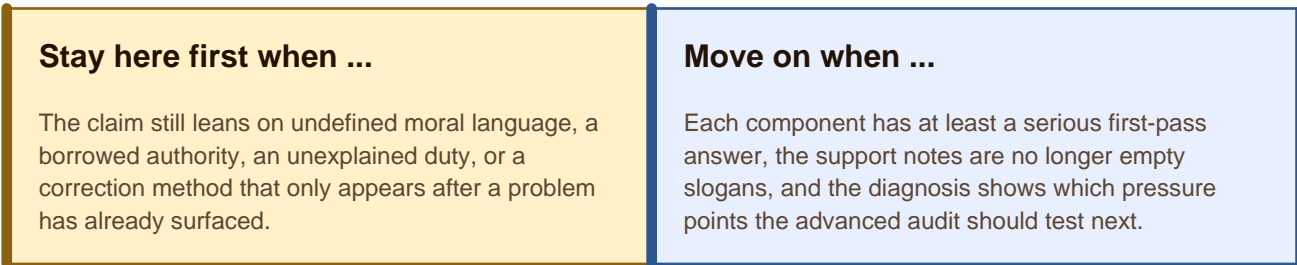
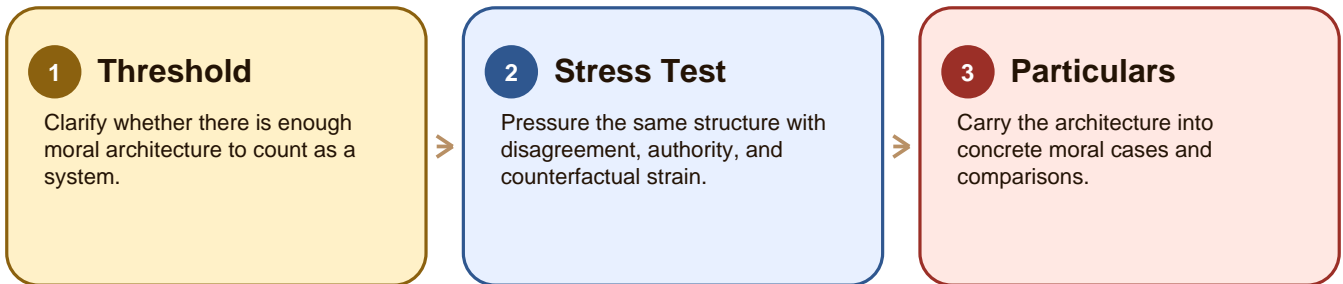
What it does not claim

The page does not prove a worldview false, replace moral reasoning, or settle Christianity by itself. It only asks whether the claimed moral view has enough visible structure to count as a system at all.

SEQUENCE

How it fits the morality pipeline

The threshold page is intentionally preliminary. It should make the later tools sharper by making the hidden assumptions visible first.



What the later tools add

Stress Test: pushes the same structure through disagreement, authority strain, and counterfactual pressure.

Moral Particulars: asks whether that same structure can survive real cases without special pleading or improvised exceptions.

WHY IT MATTERS

Why sincere seekers benefit from this tool

The most common moral mistake in apologetics is to move too quickly from a favored conclusion to the language of moral certainty without first showing the structure that would make that certainty intelligible.

- It helps a person distinguish between a moral source and a moral system.
- It surfaces exactly which missing component is doing too much hidden work.
- It turns vague disagreement into a concrete architectural question.
- It lowers the heat of a discussion by replacing personality friction with structured clarification.

The distinction to keep in view

A rule source is not yet a full moral system. A sincere seeker may have real convictions, a trusted text, and a strong moral sensibility while still lacking a public account of truth, access, obligation, case guidance, scope, or correction.

ROUTES

What the route selector is really doing

The route selector is not a verdict. It tells the tool which kind of pathway is supposed to be carrying the claim, so the tool can test the most relevant structural weakness first.

Route family	What it includes	What the tool especially checks
Authority routes	Divine command, Scripture, God's nature, Church tradition	These routes must show why the authority counts as morally trustworthy rather than merely inherited, powerful, or familiar.
Inner routes	Holy Spirit, Conscience	These routes must show how ordinary people can publicly access the standard and resolve disagreement.
Practical routes	Reason / natural law, Harm / flourishing	These routes must show both what makes the claim true and why it binds as obligation rather than advice.
Hybrid route	Hybrid / mixed route	This route must say which parts of the blend are load-bearing and how they work together without quiet contradictions.

POSTURE

How to use it charitably

- Ask, "What is doing the work here?" more often than, "How can I defeat this view?"
- Treat missing structure as an invitation to clarify, not as an automatic confession of bad faith.
- Use one component at a time. The tool is strongest when it narrows the question instead of widening the conflict.

BASIC FUNCTIONS

How to move through the page

The tool works best as a four-pass intake screen. Each pass is short, but together they expose whether the architecture is actually present.

1. Choose the grounding route

Select the route that is supposed to carry the moral claim: divine command, scripture, God's nature, Holy Spirit, conscience, church tradition, reason / natural law, harm / flourishing, or a hybrid blend.

2. State the claim in plain language

Write the moral claim as the user would actually say it. This keeps the page tied to the live position rather than to a perfected reconstruction.

3. Mark the eight components

For each threshold component, choose Missing, Asserted, or Substantiated and then name what support is actually doing the work there.

4. Read the diagnosis and handoff

The diagnosis tells you what kind of structure is really present. The handoff carries the same setup into the Moral System Stress Test.

RATINGS

How the three ratings should be read

Missing: the component is not really present yet

Asserted: named or implied, but still thin, circular, vague, or borrowed

Substantiated: explained with enough support to do real work in the system

Important numerical rule

A selected Substantiated rating only counts numerically as substantiated when the grounding note is present. If the support box is empty, the tool treats that component as Asserted for the counts, diagnosis, readiness label, summary, AI prompt, readiness map, and stress-test handoff.

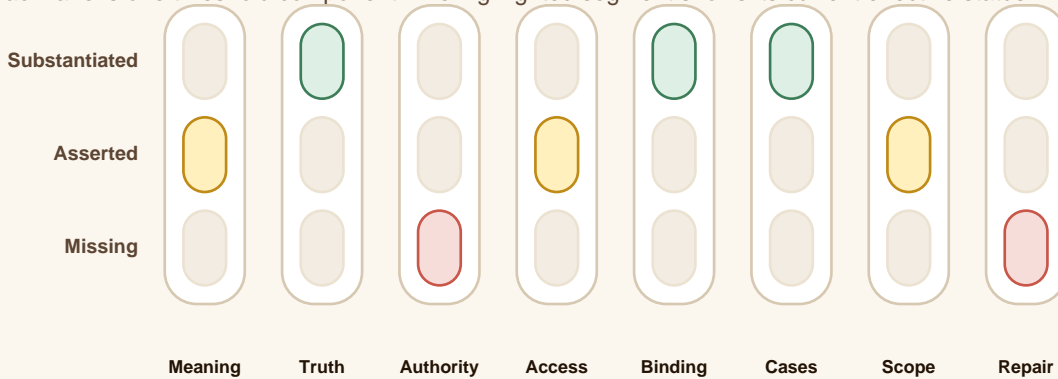
READINESS MAP

What the compact graph is for

The readiness map is intentionally lightweight. It is not a prestige chart. It gives a quick visual of which of the eight components are still missing, merely asserted, or actually substantiated so the user can spot the bottleneck at a glance.

Sample threshold readiness map

Each lane is one threshold component. The highlighted segment shows its current effective status.



How to interpret the map and collapse risks

Each vertical lane stands for one threshold component. The highlighted segment shows its effective status, not just the button that was clicked. Collapse labels are translation labels, not insults: they name what the view is functioning like while that component remains weak.

How to repair and iterate

Return to the relevant component and answer its question with actual support rather than a conclusion. The threshold result can be carried into the Stress Test, brought back again for revision, and then pushed forward into Moral Particulars.

HANDOFF

What the page preloads into the next audit

Threshold state	What carries forward
Missing	Not preloaded into the Stress Test
Asserted	Preloaded as strength 1
Substantiated	Preloaded as strength 3
Grounding note	Carried forward as an optional note
Claim and route	Passed forward so the user does not rebuild the same starting setup

A good preliminary tool should not make the user rebuild the same argument three times. Carrying the claim, route, notes, and effective strengths forward makes the later audits feel like one continuous inquiry rather than three disconnected pages.

Reverse handoff for revision

If the Stress Test exposes a hidden assumption, the current claim can be sent back into Threshold so the weak component is repaired rather than quietly ignored. That keeps revision visible and disciplined.

Forward handoff into particulars

When the structure survives threshold and pressure, the same setup can move into Moral Particulars so concrete cases inherit the same architecture instead of a new ad hoc explanation.

What handoff does not replace

The transfer saves setup, not reasoning. Each next page still requires fresh argument, fresh case analysis, and a willingness to revise the earlier story if the later pressure exposes a gap.

EIGHT COMPONENTS

The eight threshold components at a glance

Each component answers a necessary question. If the component is weak, the tool names what the view currently collapses into.

<p>Moral Meaning</p> <p>Defines what moral words mean before using them as if they already carry objective content.</p> <p>Question: What do you mean by wrong, good, duty, and obligation?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Vocabulary without content</p>	<p>Truth Maker</p> <p>Explains whether moral claims can be true and what in reality makes them true.</p> <p>Question: What makes a moral claim true beyond preference, power, or agreement?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Preference or power</p>
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<p>Authority Check</p> <p>Explains how a claimed authority is recognized as morally trustworthy without circularity.</p> <p>Question: Why trust the claimed moral authority as good before simply obeying it?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Obedience without moral test</p>	<p>Moral Access</p> <p>Gives accountable agents a usable method for knowing the standard and checking disputes.</p> <p>Question: How can ordinary accountable people know the standard and resolve disagreement?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Hidden standard</p>
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What these first four components govern

These first four components determine whether the moral vocabulary is stable, whether the claims can be true, why the route is authoritative, and how accountable people could know the standard instead of merely inheriting the conclusion.

EIGHT COMPONENTS

The second half of the threshold architecture

These later components matter because a moral system has to guide cases, define scope, and repair mistakes rather than merely declare ideals.

<p>Binding Force</p> <p>Explains why the claim binds rather than merely advising, rewarding, or warning.</p> <p>Question: Why ought anyone comply even when doing so is costly or unrewarded?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Practical advice</p>	<p>Case Guidance</p> <p>Shows how the system decides actual cases and ranks duties when they conflict.</p> <p>Question: How does the system decide hard cases before the preferred answer is known?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Abstraction without decisions</p>
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<p>Consistent Scope</p> <p>States who is bound and applies the same standard to like cases across persons and times.</p> <p>Question: Who is bound, and why are like cases treated alike across people, eras, and groups?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Special pleading</p>	<p>Correction Method</p> <p>Explains how mistaken interpretations are identified and revised without ad hoc convenience.</p> <p>Question: How does the system detect and repair mistaken moral judgments?</p> <p>If weak or absent: Ad hoc revision</p>
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Worked example: a scripture-centered claim

Thin version: "Christian morality is coherent because scripture says so." That usually remains a rule source with hidden assumptions until Authority Check, Moral Access, and Case Guidance start doing real work.

Stronger version: define what the key moral terms mean, explain why scripture counts as morally trustworthy, name how disagreement is resolved, and show how hard cases are decided before the preferred answer is simply assumed.

DIAGNOSIS LOGIC

How the page classifies the current result

The tool uses the effective component statuses and route family to determine the diagnosis. The ladder below states the logic as directly as possible.

Effective outcome	Exact condition
Threshold met -> Candidate moral system	All eight components are effectively substantiated.
Below threshold -> Conclusions without architecture	Asserted + substantiated total 3 or fewer components.
Below threshold -> Rule source with hidden assumptions	Authority route selected, but Authority Check is not effectively substantiated.
Below threshold -> Intuition-led outlook	Holy Spirit or Conscience route selected, but Moral Access is not effectively substantiated.
Below threshold -> Practical framework	Reason / natural law or Harm / flourishing route selected, but Truth Maker or Binding Force is not effectively substantiated.
Below threshold -> Abstract value language	Case Guidance is not effectively substantiated.
Near threshold -> Local code under revision	Case Guidance is substantiated, but Consistent Scope or Correction Method is not effectively substantiated.
Near threshold -> Partial moral architecture	The view has passed the route-specific gates above, but one or more components still remain merely asserted.

NEXT MOVE

What each band should lead you to do

- **Below threshold:** do not lean harder on confidence. Fill the weak component that is carrying hidden weight, then reassess before moving into the advanced audit.
- **Near threshold:** continue to the Stress Test, but expect scope, correction, or asserted-only components to become the pressure points very quickly.
- **Threshold met:** the question is no longer whether you have a moral system at all, but whether that system survives authority checks, disagreement strain, and hard particulars.
- **Iteration is normal:** let the later tools send the claim back here when a hidden assumption is exposed. Revision is a feature of the sequence, not a sign that the threshold page failed.

A good closing question for sincere seekers

If this page exposes a gap, the most constructive next move is not, "So your view is false." It is, "What would have to be added here for the claim to count as a stable moral system rather than a trusted source with hidden assumptions?"

QUESTIONS AND CAUTIONS

Three common misunderstandings

Does a missing component prove the whole view false?

No. The threshold tool is about structural coherence, not final truth. A weak result means more architecture is still needed before the claim should be treated as a full moral system.

Can a sincere Christian still fall below threshold?

Yes. Sincerity explains posture, not architecture. A person may deeply trust scripture, conscience, or spiritual guidance while still lacking a public account of meaning, access, scope, or correction.

What counts as real substantiation?

Enough explanation and support that the component can bear disagreement without quietly borrowing another unargued premise. In this tool, an empty grounding note is a warning that the answer is still asserted rather than carried.

Why keep the collapse labels?

Because they show that a gap is never neutral. When a component is weak or absent, the alleged system starts functioning like something else: preference, inherited authority, abstraction, or ad hoc revision.