

Just a simple question. How does one make himself worthy of the gods? It's a lot harder than some people think--although Heathenry doesn't teach that one minor slip-up means the gods consider us unfit and in need of "saving". The acts and attitudes I'd consider "worthy" by Asatru standards: * Loyalty to and respect for the gods--treating them as one would treat a close friend or relative (whether or not one has a patron). Rituals may not be as important in our religion as in some others--but holding blots, keeping vows, and speaking up when our religion is mocked or misrepresented count for something. * Loyalty to and respect for the human beings closest to us (blood-kin, friends, and others with whom we have chosen to associate ourselves). This doesn't mean treating those people as infallible or serving them like slaves (though people with jobs *ought* to care what their bosses say!) . It does mean tolerating small mistakes and differences, listening to their advice if it's reasonable, treating them politely, not spreading vicious rumors or breaking promises we could have kept without serious harm. * Respect for the land and all beings (natural and supernatural) inhabiting it. This includes not only small ritual acts, but also such common-sense acts as recycling and not littering. * Generous and fair treatment of those outside that close community--at least those who have not done us harm, or who have made amends for the wrong they *did* do. This leads into the next point... * Willingness to support ourselves and others depending on us. Support doesn't have to mean living off the land and handcrafting everything; and the people depending on us do not necessarily have to be related by blood or marriage. As long as someone uses the skills they have to make ends meet and helps community members who need it most, that's ethical by Asatru standards. * Willingness to face our fate courageously, if it cannot be changed despite our best effort. Though the lore stresses courage in personal combat most, many of us struggle with serious problems in peacetime; some of those problems don't entail risking bodily harm, either. * Dealing justly with others who have done wrong--making them face the consequences of their actions, judging them fairly, and allowing the chance to make amends when that is possible. This also includes facing the consequences of one's *own* misdeeds. * Living moderately--as long as something is not inherently harmful, neither asceticism nor over-indulgence is a Heathen ideal. ---- Ingeborg S. Nordén (runelady@chorus.net </cgi-bin/compose?curmbox=F000000001&a=66406e31221fef1fa66e67d593cc6789&mailto=1&to=runelady@chorus.net&msg=MSG1034817789.121&start=914468&len=4486&src=&type=x>)