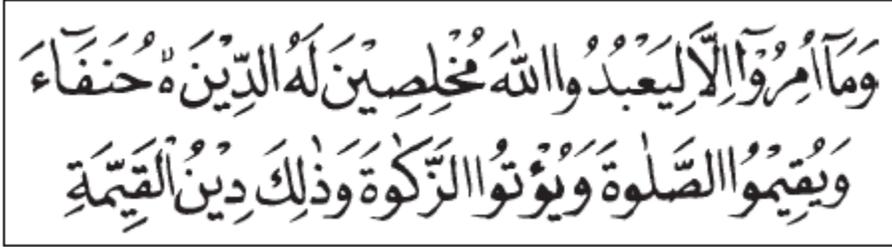




NIZAMIYE MOSQUE COMPLEX

"Where heart and mind meet"

FRIDAY SERMON - 6 : HOW TO GAIN IKHLAS - 1



Ikhlas lexically means refining, purifying, separating and removing impurities.

Ikhlas means, for an individual, to be closed to anything except Allah Almighty's orders, requests and grants in worshipping. It means to keep secrets in the relationship between **the slave and the Creator**, in other words, to fulfill his duties and responsibilities because He wants them, to aim His consent while fulfilling them and to turn toward His otherworldly courtesy. It is regarded as one of the most important qualities of the purest, loyal people.

Ikhlas is a deed of the heart and Allah (swt) values man based of the tendencies of his heart:

"He does not look at your shapes and outward appearance; He looks at your hearts and the tendencies of your heart." (Muslim, Birr, 33)

Ikhlas is a magical credit that Allah (swt) granted to clean hearts, that makes little things big and shallow things deep and that makes limited worshipping unlimited so much so that man can demand the most expensive things in the markets of the world and the hereafter with it and is valued in the places where people crawl thanks to it. The Messenger of Allah (saw) states the following due to this mysterious power of ikhlas:

"Be sincere in your religious life; few deeds will suffice." (Munawi, Faydul-Qadir, I, 216)

"Always try to do your deeds with ikhlas because Allah accepts only sincere deeds." (Munawi, Faydul-Qadir, I, 217)

Thus, the Prophet warns us to base our deeds on ikhlas. **Ikhlas** is a secret between the slave and the Creator; Allah (swt) has placed this secret in the hearts of His beloved slaves.

It is necessary for man to realize why ikhlas is so important and to demand sincerely to be able to attain that level of belief **in order to practice ikhlas with its real meaning**. For, the people who have not realized the importance of ikhlas may seek power in the worldly



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values and pursue them in order to have a position in the community. Fame, glory, wealth, beauty, academic career or prestige are the things that those people seek. However, none of them can make man gain a permanent power or prestige in the hereafter in its real sense.

What is necessary in order to gain ikhlas and to preserve it:

- 1. Fear of Allah** is the most important means that enables man to increase his ikhlas. A person who realizes the greatness of Allah, that there is no power except Him and that the one that created the universe out of nothing, that takes care of all living beings and shows mercy to them is Allah is affiliated to Allah with a deep love. He understands that his real friend in the world and the hereafter is only Allah (swt) and hence the one whose consent is necessary to seek is only Him. Along with this strong love, he fears Allah.

"... Then fear Allah, and know that ye will surely be gathered unto Him." (al-Baqara, 2/203)

Allah (swt) tells people that they need to fear Him in the verse above.

Fearing takes place when a person avoids the attitudes that Allah rendered haram and is not pleased with and when he fulfills His orders without any laziness. A sincere person who fears Allah (swt) knows what attitudes He will not be pleased with and steps into action to correct them. For instance, if his soul has a tendency and weakness toward worldly possessions, he notices it. In that case, he uses his wealth in the way of Allah in order to overcome that weakness.

- 2. One of the responsibilities of a believer is to attain a level of belief that can appreciate Allah as it is necessary** by being aware of the fact reminded in the verse below:

"No just estimate have they made of Allah, such as is due to Him: On the Day of Judgment the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand: Glory to Him! High is He above the Partners they attribute to Him." (az-Zumar, 39/67)

To be able to appreciate Allah (swt) can be attained by knowing Him with all of His names and to see and realize the manifestations of those names in his life all the time. For, man can fear Allah and attain a sincere belief only if he can realize Allah's greatness.

A person who can appreciate Allah (swt) as it is necessary knows that there cannot be any power except Allah and does not fear anyone except Him. He knows that nothing will happen unless Allah wishes, which enables him to worship by turning to Allah only. When he wants to do a good deed, he does it not because of fearing the reactions of people but because he does not want to act contrarily to Allah's order. Similarly, when he decides to give up doing



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something, he does not give it up thinking that people will get angry with him but in order to attain Allah's mercy and avoid His wrath.

3. A person who wants to show the most sincere attitude in everything he faces needs to seek **"Allah's consent as much as possible"**. This order of Allah is reminded through the following verse with the phrase **"strive as in a race in all virtues"**:

"... so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to Allah..." (*al-Maida, 5/48*)

The following is stated in another verse:

"Then We have given the Book for inheritance to such of Our Servants as We have chosen: but there are among them some who wrong their own souls; some who follow a middle course; and some who are, by Allah's leave, foremost in good deeds; that is the highest Grace." (*Fatir, 35/32*)

As it is stated in the verse above, there are some people who **'follow a middle course'** among believers and who are **'foremost in good deeds'**. A sincere Muslim is foremost in good deeds. He works very hard in order to display the attitudes with which Allah will be pleased and tries to be a righteous slave by using everything he has.

4. A person who wants to gain ikhlas needs to be aware of this fact: **man should expect the rewards for what he does in the world only from Allah**. If a person does something for anything except Allah's consent, mercy and Paradise, his ikhlas is broken and he is led to insincerity. If a person serves in the way of Allah for years with this thought, he will not have gained ikhlas in its real sense unless he does them for Allah's sake only. Only the deeds of worship that he does without adding anything except Allah's consent can gain him great rewards and thawabs.

Allah (swt) states in the following verse that deeds of righteousness will be given 'a magnificent reward':

"Verily this Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable), and giveth the Glad Tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward." (*al-Isra, 17/9*)

Badiuzzaman Said Nursi attracts attention to the fact that ikhlas can be obtained when man becomes happy with what Allah gives him and shows contentedness:

"... One should also take as one's guide the quality of *preferring others to oneself*, the same quality of the Companions that is praised in the Quran. For example, when giving a present or performing an act of charity, one should always prefer the recipient to oneself, and without demanding or inwardly desiring any material reward for religious service, know one's act to be purely Allah's grace and not impose a sense of obligation on men..."



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"This world is a place of service; it is not a place of rewards. The rewards, fruits and lights of righteous deeds are in the hereafter. To want those eternal fruits in this world means to make the hereafter subject to this world. The sincerity of that righteous deed is broken and its light disappears. Those fruits are not demanded and intended. If they are given, man thinks that they have been given for encouragement and thanks Allah."