

FROM THE MINBAR

FAITH IS A WHOLE-LIFE-CONCEPT: HUMAN BEHAVIOR & ISLAM

Khutbah delivered by Imam Dr. Zijad Delic at SNMC on September 16th, 2011 corresponding to Shawwal 18th, 1432 H.

BACKGROUND

Indeed all praise is for God, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings of God be upon Muhammad (S), his family, Khulafai Rashidin, all his Companions, and all those who follow in their footsteps until the Last Day. All praise is for God! We praise Him. We seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We seek God's refuge from evils of ourselves and from our evil actions. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except God, alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (S) is His Messenger.

My dear brothers and sisters in Islam ~
As Salamu 'Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu.

INTRODUCTION

Faith of Muslims is not static – our faith is our Islam in action at all times. And it can only be measured or experienced through the degree of our commitment to Islamic principles and ethics – in action through our behavior.

And it should especially be done now after Ramadan – the month in which we have practiced our Din in its full sense and gained enormous energy and enthusiasm so that we could live our Islam sincerely and fully as we should so that the Almighty God be happy with us and those who live with us feel comfortable, secure and happy in our presence.

This whole-life concept of faith embodies belief in God, observance of His laws, and our ultimate accountability before Him for what we do in this life – all of our actions, big and small.

Faith requires that we mold our lives in accordance with God's commandments, as recorded in the Qur'an and exemplified by the life and teachings of His last Messenger, Muhammad (S).



Faith must therefore encompass our private as well as public lives, guiding us in all spheres of activity -- from the home and mosque to our social, professional and public presence in society.

Prophet Muhammad (S) once said: *“Faith has over seventy branches, the most excellent of which is the declaration that there is no deity but God, and the humblest of which is the removal of what is injurious from the road. And modesty is also a branch of faith.”* {Bukhari, Muslim}

RELATIONSHIP: FAITH&ACTION

When we think of Islamic formative principles in the way that Muhammad (S) expressed them in the foregoing Hadith, it is not at all difficult to perceive the all-pervading relationship between our belief in Almighty God and every action that we take in this world, including our care of the planet itself as we follow our environmental responsibilities.

To be authentic, then, faith must have a complete and positive effect on us – it

isn't something to be switched on and off for convenience.

Thus it goes without saying that Muslims must strive to reject and suppress attitudes, mannerisms, speech and behavior that are inconsistent with their belief system.

If a person does not act in accordance with his/her faith, this can indicate a lack of comprehension about what it truly means to conduct oneself appropriately (only Allah knows best what is in the heart, however).

Through reading the Qur'an and studying the sayings (Hadiths) of Muhammad, Messenger of God (S), we can more fully appreciate and understand the true relationship between character and faith (Iman); this awareness leads in turn to a greater understanding of Islam's essential relationship between character and behavior.

The Messenger of God said: *“I have been sent for the purpose of perfecting good morals.”* {Al Hakim}

In this Hadith, Muhammad (S) clearly states that a major task given to him by God was to show by example and instruction what comprises good morals and manners; that is, to show behavior consistent with the Islamic belief system.

This Issue 'From The Minbar' presents

⇒ FAITH IS A WHOLE-LIFE CONCEPT:
Human Behavior & Islam

⇒ In next issue: 'Family in Islam'

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In another Hadith, Prophet Muhammad (S) explained righteousness as being synonymous with good character: *"Piety and righteousness is being of good character."* {Muslim}

And in yet another example, the Messenger of God stressed the importance of good character on the Day of Judgment: *"There is nothing heavier in the scales [of merit] than good character."* {Ahmad, Abu Dawud}



In fact, when Almighty God described those who are successful as believers, He said: *"Successful indeed are the believers; those who offer their prayers with full submission, and those who turn away from vain talk, and those who guard their chastity... those who are faithfully true to their trust and to their covenants; and those who strictly guard their prayers. These are indeed the heirs who shall inherit the Firdaws (Jannah) and they shall dwell therein forever."* {Al Mu'minun 1-11}

On the other hand, when Muhammad (S) described the hypocrites – those who failed in their faith – they were also identified by their actions and behavior; such as lying speech, breaking trust with others, and so on.

Muslims must therefore return to their original sources of guidance for living – the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Messenger of God, Muhammad (S).

Indeed, our life and our behavior together should demonstrate a total implementation of both Qur'an and Sunnah.

THE QUR'ANIC CHARACTER

This is exactly how the Prophet Muhammad, God's last Messenger,

lived. When his wife 'Aisha (r.a) was asked about the character of her husband, she answered simply: *"His character was the Qur'an."* {Muslim}

What she meant was that his daily life was a total application of the Qur'an, or a witness to faith in action.

The Qur'an and Sunnah show us how to behave toward our own souls, our spouses, our children, our parents, our friends, our neighbors, our global brothers and sisters in humanity – even our enemies.

What then hinders our faith in action and what is the remedy?

DOING THINGS ON AUTO-PILOT

We often go through life doing things "on auto-pilot" without ever thinking about their consequences and how they affect our relationship to faith and belief.

We set personal goals in life, we take jobs, we study different academic and professional fields, we pursue hobbies, we cultivate friendships; and as good as many of these activities are, we rarely (if ever) stop to review them in the light of our faith.

By living life this way, we fail to consciously actualize our faith or determine where we are on the road to higher perfection before God.

The remedy for life "on auto-pilot" is to put on the brakes, slow down a little on society's highway, and make time to reflect on faith, to properly and fully understand its principles.

We know intellectually that faith covers all aspects of life: whether in prayer, general behavior, sustenance, family and societal relationships, attitudes toward those of different religious groups or people without faith, our respect for the environment, even in how and where we park our cars when shopping or attending the Masjid.

But do we also know the wholeness of this concept in our hearts? Do we always remember that there is some relationship between every act we do and our belief in Islam?

This reality must be ever-present in our minds so that faith-in-action motivates

righteous deeds toward all. If faith is not the prime motivator for acts that others might see as being "good" then our understanding and application of faith is defective, regardless of any praise we may receive.

CONCLUSION

It is important to remind ourselves once again -- and frequently throughout life -- that belief is the seed and source of our faith, and right behavior (Akhlaq) is its fruit.

Bottom line is that we can only truly enjoy the fruits of our belief through living our faith in action. Otherwise faith becomes the seed that never actualizes itself into fruits.

We pray to Almighty Allah to help us live our faith in action as well as bring in line our behavior and attitude with the principles of our faith!

We also pray that the Almighty helps us in guiding our children towards understanding of this great concept so that they too may live their faith fully.
Allahumma Amin.

AN ACTION ITEM

If YOU like this Khutbah and what we, at your SNMC, do, PLEASE:

Support our activities & projects

Please Donate ONE Prayer Spot for \$2,500 and be the ONE who will build the Masjid and the Center so that it could help us and our children maintain Islamic Identity and build strong Canadian National Identity, Insha Allah.



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