

ALI 313: Walking on the Spiritual Path

Session One

Read and Ponder

O my God! Through the variety of Your signs (in the world of being) and the changes in states and conditions, I realised that the purpose is to make Yourself known to me in everything, so that I would not ignore You in anything.

Dua e Arafah

Agenda

- Understanding Spirituality
- 4 Principles of Spirituality
- Outcomes of the Spiritual Journey
- Some reminders

Spirituality - Man's Perfection

Man's final perfection is a stage in his life called 'living close to God' . . .

The general way to this type of perfection is that worship and piety should dominate all aspects of one's individual and social life.

Infinite perfection is attainable when linked to the origin of absolute perfection – God.

**Quotes from 'Theological Instructions
Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi**

4 Principles of Everyday Spirituality

- Connect to God
- Work on yourself
- Maintain relationships
- Think of the Hereafter

1) Connect to God

a) Through Dhikr

Dhikr of Allah connects a person to Allah.

Allah says in Hadith al Qudsi:

أَنَا جَلِيسُ مَنْ ذَكَرَنِي

I am the companion of one who remembers Me

We seek company of those who mean much to us. Being in the company of the Holy Prophet (s) or the Imams is a dream for us. But they are the servants of the Almighty. Imagine being in the company of the Almighty Himself!

Understanding Dhikr

- ❖ Many people understand Dhikr as verbal. But it actually has more to do with the heart.
- ❖ Dhikr is to remember Allah and be connected to Him. It is not restricted and has no limits.
- ❖ Dhikr is to remember His qualities and His actions.
- ❖ Dhikr depends on the knowledge and *Ma'rifat* of the person. When a person remembers someone he thinks of what he knows about him

b) Through everyday actions

Each physical action of the human should be accompanied by a spiritual reminder.


- **eating/drinking**: gratitude, ask for blessings and protection.
- **sleeping**: ask for blessings and protection.
- **looking into the mirror**; ask for good nature
- **combing hair**; removal of worries
- **bathing**; purification from sin
- **putting on clothes**; gratitude, blessings, piety
- **putting on perfume**; scent of good character

2) Work on Yourself

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۖ
لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

O you who believe! take care of your souls;
he who errs cannot hurt you
when you are on the right way;

Sura Maidah, 5:105



1) Know yourself – your strengths and weaknesses. Your goal in life.

2) Work on yourself – enhance your strengths and improve your weaknesses. Focus on your goals.

3) Strive for perfection.

4) Inspire yourself.

3) Maintain Relationships

How can you recognize yourself, your soul, without social experiences? The vices of the soul can only be recognized and removed when interacting with others.

Arrogance and humility, anger and self discipline all carry meaning when experienced in relationship with others.

Society trains the individual, nurtures internal growth and provides opportunities for spiritual progress.

A spiritual person:

- strives to pass along the peace and tranquility he feels to others in society.
- integrates love for the Divine with daily life and environmental surroundings.
- radiates love and mercy to all creatures
- is holistic, integrated and relevant

4) Think of the Hereafter

The human being was created for the Hereafter not for this world. Keep the goal in mind.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلَاقِيهِ

O human being! You are in continuous search towards your Lord, until you meet Him

Sura Inshiqaq, 84:6

There is no real comfort for a believer until he meets Allah. Until then, comfort can be found in four things:

- 1) **Silence** – through which he becomes aware of the state of his heart and soul, regarding that which is between him and his Lord.
- 2) **Seclusion**– which will save him from the trials of the time, both apparent and hidden.
- 3) **Hunger** – through which he deadens his desires and whisperings.
- 4) **Waking up early in the morning** – to illuminate his heart, purify his nature, and cleanse his soul.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a), *Mizan al Hikmah*

Outcomes of the Spiritual Journey


Changes in a person who walks on the Spiritual Path:

- 1) Strong love of God
- 2) Complete Devotion to God
- 3) Entrance into the world of light
- 4) Insightful Knowledge
- 5) Strong support from God
- 6) Inner Peace

Some Reminders

Nothing will cool my burning thirst
but reaching You
quench my ardour but meeting You
damp my yearning but gazing upon Your face
settle my settling place
without closeness to you.

Imam Zaynul Abidin (a)



My God! Make me completely cut off
from all else but You
and enlighten the vision of our hearts
with the radiance of looking at You
until the vision of our hearts
penetrates the veils of light
and reaches the Source of Grandeur

Munajaat Sha'baniyya

None of My servants can seek proximity to Me
By that which is dearer to Me
than things that I have made obligatory on him.
Then, with the performance of *nawafil*
(the recommended acts)
he continuously attains proximity to Me
so that I love him.
When I love him
I will be the ear with which he hears
The eyes with which he sees
and the hand with which he strikes.
If he calls Me, I will answer his call
and if he makes a request, I will grant it.

Hadith al Qudsi