

# ALI 634: Principles of the Spiritual Journey

Session One

## Quote for Reflection

Spiritual traits constitute the soul's primary character and intentions, to which actions are subservient, make up its secondary character.

# Defining the Spiritual Journey

- A quest for God.
- A movement from the outward to the inward.
- To polish the soul so it can reflect the image of God.

[Spiritual Practices are] a reminder of the eternal covenant made between God and man by virtue of which man remains in quest of the Divinity as long as he remains truly human. The man who remembers this pact and his own true identity remains ever faithful to his nature, hence faithful to his quest for the Divinity, for that Divinity which is already present at the centre of his being.

Precisely because it is a message of the eternal to what is permanent and abiding within man, Sufism, like other authentic spiritual ways, is perennial and remains engraved in the very texture of the human soul. Men come and go but Sufism remains immutable and transcendent like the vault of heaven, reminding man of the immortality and beatitude that are his in principle and could become so in fact through Divine grace and his own spiritual effort.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

<https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/explorations/teachers/seyyed-hossein-nasr/quotes>

# Requirements

Certain qualities are required for the spiritual journey.

These can be acquired through;

- reflection on the self
- constant vigilance
- supplicating for help from Allah.

# Sincerity - Ikhlas

Ikhlas is a secret from my secrets  
and I place it in the heart of my servant  
who is my beloved.

Hadith al-Qudsi, quoted by the Prophet (s)

Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, page 249, hadith # 24

# Sincerity

Certainly there is a reality of every truth and a servant cannot reach the reality of Ikhlas unless he doesn't like people to praise him for the actions he has done for the sake of God.

Holy Prophet (s)

Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 72, p.304, hadith # 51

To persevere in an action until it becomes sincere is more difficult than performing the action itself and sincerity of action lies in this that you should not desire anyone to praise you for it except God Almighty and intention supersedes action. Lo, verily, intention is action itself.

Imam al-Sadiq (a)

Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 2, kitab al- iman wa al-kufr, bab al-'Ikhlas, hadith # 4



# Understanding Ikhlas

- 1) Seeing only God in all things.
- 2) Free from the taints of otherness and egoism.
- 3) Leaving the habitat of the self to migrate to God.
- 4) Being the same in solitude and in company.

God-seeking and self-seeking  
cannot go together.

Imam al-Khomeini  
*Forty Hadith*