

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*For the Sake of Allah: Sincerity in
Every Deed*

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

For the Sake of Allah: Sincerity in Every Deed

The First Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّ أَصْدَقَ
الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ
بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help, and we seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger. To proceed: the truest speech is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ, the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ
الرَّحِيمِ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي * وَيسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي * وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي * يَفْقَهُوا
قَوْلِي *

We praise Him, and we send blessings upon His noble Messenger. To proceed: I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed; in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. My Lord, expand for me my breast, and ease for me my task, and untie the knot from my tongue, that they may understand my speech.

Sūrah Ṭā Hā (20:25 to 28)

Dear brothers and sisters, **assalāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.**

The Question That Decides Everything

Before a single deed of ours is weighed on the Day of Judgement, before its size is measured or its difficulty is counted, one quiet question will be asked of it: for whom was this done? Brothers and sisters, this is the question that decides everything. Two people may stand in the same row of prayer, give the same coin in charity, fast the same day, and speak the same words of truth, and yet one of them rises with a mountain of reward while the other rises with nothing at all, because the One who judges does not look at the form of the deed but at the heart that carried it. We live in an age obsessed with how things appear, with the photograph of the good deed more than the deed itself, and so this morning we must return to the foundation that the world has nearly forgotten, the foundation of doing things purely for the sake of Allah.

Allah did not create us to drift through our days collecting praise and possessions. He told us plainly why we are here, in a verse that strips life down to its single purpose. He said:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ *

And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.

Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt (51:56)

Everything else in our lives, the earning, the eating, the marrying, the building, was made to serve this one purpose, that we worship Allah and turn our faces to Him. But worship is not accepted simply because the limbs performed it. It is accepted when it is offered to Allah alone, untouched by the desire for the eyes and tongues of people. This pure offering has a name in our religion. It is called *ikhlaṣ*, sincerity, and it is the soul that gives life to every act of worship. A deed without sincerity is a body without a soul, beautiful perhaps to look at, but dead.

Actions Are Judged by Intentions

Our religion is built upon this principle so firmly that the scholars placed the hadith which contains it at the very front of their books, considering it a third of all knowledge. ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى. فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ.

Actions are but by intentions, and every person will have only what he intended. So whoever migrated for Allah and His Messenger, his migration is for Allah and His Messenger. And whoever migrated to gain something of this world or to marry a woman, his migration is for that which he migrated to.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1, Muslim 1907 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

Look at the example the Prophet ﷺ chose, brothers and sisters. Two people leave Makkah and make the same long, dangerous journey to Madīnah. From the outside their migration is identical, the same road, the same hardship, the same destination. Yet one of them arrives with a migration recorded for Allah and His Messenger, while the other arrives with nothing of the sort, because his heart was set on a worldly gain. The deed was one. The intention split it into two completely different deeds. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said that deeds without sincerity are like a traveller who fills his bag with sand: it weighs upon him and brings him no benefit. The intention is what transforms the ordinary acts of our lives, our work, our sleep, our meals, our care for our families, into worship that draws us nearer to Allah. The merchant who earns to feed his family for the sake of Allah is worshipping. The same merchant who earns only to be called wealthy is merely tiring himself.

The Command to Make the Religion Sincere

Allah did not leave sincerity as a virtue for the elite few. He made it the very thing He commanded of all people in every age. He summarised the message of every Prophet in a single verse:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ *

And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, making the religion sincerely for Him, inclining to truth, and to establish the prayer and give the zakāt. And that is the upright religion.

Sūrah al-Bayyinah (98:5)

Making the religion sincerely for Him. This is the heart of what was asked of every nation before us and of us. And the believer is taught to declare that not only his worship but his entire life and his very

death belong to Allah. Allah commanded His Messenger ﷺ to proclaim a statement that every one of us should make our own:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ * لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ
أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ *

Say, indeed my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds. He has no partner. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.

Sūrah al-An‘ām (6:162 to 163)

Reflect on the reach of this declaration, brothers and sisters. It is not only my prayer that is for Allah, but my living and my dying, the whole span of my existence from the first breath to the last. As-Sa‘dī, may Allah have mercy on him, explained that this verse gathers all of a servant's affairs and devotes them to Allah alone, so that he becomes a man whose worship, whose habits, and whose final moment are all turned in one direction. This is what it means to live for the sake of Allah. It is not a feeling that visits us in Ramadan and leaves us in Shawwāl. It is the orientation of an entire life, so that whether a person is praying or working or resting or raising his children, his face is turned toward his Lord.

Allah Looks at the Heart

Because the deed is judged by what lies behind it, the Prophet ﷺ taught us where the real reckoning takes place, and it is not in the places we are tempted to polish for show. He said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ.

Indeed, Allah does not look at your outward forms or your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and your deeds.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from Abū Hurayrah **Hadith No:** Muslim 2564 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Allah does not look at your form, the impressive appearance, the polished image, the carefully arranged reputation. He looks at the heart that beats beneath it. This is at once the most comforting and the most frightening truth, brothers and sisters. It is comforting because it means the small servant whom no one notices, the poor woman who gives a single date with a sincere heart, the labourer who whispers a prayer in an empty room, may stand higher before Allah than the famous and the wealthy. And it is frightening because it means the grand deed performed before crowds may be utterly empty if the heart behind it sought the crowd and not the Creator. This is why the early Muslims laboured over their hearts more than their limbs. They knew that a small deed with a sincere heart outweighs a great deed with a corrupted one, and that a person could carry his good works all the way to the scales only to find them scattered because they were never truly for Allah.

The Sincerity of the Prophet and His Companions

If we wish to see what a life lived purely for the sake of Allah looks like, we look first to the Messenger ﷺ. He had every reason the world recognises to be content, for Allah had forgiven him his past and future and granted him the highest station, and yet he stood in prayer through the night until his blessed feet would swell and crack. ‘Ā’ishah, may Allah be pleased with her, once asked him why he burdened himself so when Allah had already honoured him, and his answer revealed a heart that worshipped for love and gratitude alone, not for any reward it still needed to earn.

أَفَلَا أَكُونُ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا.

Should I not be a grateful servant?

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from al-Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 4837, Muslim 2819 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

Look at the purity in that answer, brothers and sisters. He did not worship to gain something he lacked, nor to be seen, nor to be praised. He worshipped because his Lord deserved to be worshipped and thanked. This is the summit of sincerity, that the servant gives Allah his worship simply because Allah is worthy of it, the way the most generous gift is the one given with no expectation of return. And his Companions drank from this same spring. When Abū Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, gave away his wealth for the sake of Allah, he held nothing back, and when he was asked what he had left for his family, he did not boast of his sacrifice. He gathered his entire trust into a single word.

I have left for them Allah and His Messenger.

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, may Allah be pleased with him, when asked what he had left for his family after giving his wealth

This is a heart that has stopped calculating, a heart that has handed everything to Allah and found, in that surrender, a wealth no money could buy. The Companions were not stronger than us in body. They were stronger than us in sincerity, and that is the whole secret of their greatness.

The Three Who Were First Cast Into the Fire

Of all the warnings the Prophet ﷺ gave about insincerity, none is heavier than the hadith he related from his Lord about the first three people judged on the Day of Resurrection. Listen carefully, brothers and sisters, because these were not idle people. They performed the greatest deeds a person can perform. Abū Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that the first of people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who died as a martyr.

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ النَّاسِ يُقْضَىٰ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ اسْتَشْهَدَ، فَأُتِيَ بِهِ فَعَرَفَهُ نِعَمُهُ فَعَرَفَهَا، قَالَ: فَمَا عَمِلْتُ فِيهَا؟ قَالَ: قَاتَلْتُ فِيكَ حَتَّى اسْتَشْهَدْتُ. قَالَ: كَذَبْتَ، وَلَكِنَّكَ قَاتَلْتَ لِأَنْ يُقَالَ جَرِيءٌ، فَقَدْ قِيلَ. ثُمَّ أُمِرَ بِهِ فَسُحِبَ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ حَتَّى أُلْقِيَ فِي النَّارِ.

Indeed, the first of people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who was martyred. He will be brought forth, and Allah will make known to him His blessings, and he will recognise them. Allah will say, what did you do with them? He will say, I fought for Your cause until I was martyred. Allah will say, you have lied. Rather, you fought so that it would be said, he is bold, and so it was said. Then it will be ordered that he be dragged upon his face until he is cast into the Fire.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from Abū Hurayrah **Hadith No:** Muslim 1905 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Then the Prophet ﷺ continued with the second man, one who had learned knowledge, taught it, and recited the Qur'an. He too will be reminded of Allah's favours, and he will say that he studied and taught and recited for the sake of Allah. And Allah will say to him, you have lied. Rather, you studied so that it would be said, he is a scholar, and you recited so that it would be said, he is a reciter, and so it was said. He too will be dragged upon his face into the Fire. Then comes the third, a man whom Allah had enriched and given every kind of wealth, who spent it generously. He will say that he left no path in which Allah loves money to be spent except that he spent in it for His sake. And Allah will say, you have lied. Rather, you did so that it would be said, he is generous, and so it was said. And he too will be cast into the Fire.

Brothers and sisters, sit with the terror of this hadith. These three did not abandon prayer. They did not steal or oppress. They performed the three deeds the Ummah praises most: martyrdom, knowledge, and charity. The scholar memorised the Qur'an. The rich man fed the poor. The soldier gave his very life. And yet all three were the first dragged into the Fire, because somewhere along the way the deed quietly turned away from Allah and toward the praise of people. If insincerity can ruin martyrdom and scholarship and generosity, what must we fear for our own small deeds? This is why the most knowledgeable of the Companions feared hypocrisy in themselves. The danger is not in the size of the deed. The danger is in the secret turning of the heart toward other than Allah.

Riya: The Hidden Shirk

This silent corruption of the deed has a name. It is called *riyā'*, doing acts of worship to be seen and praised by people, and the Prophet ﷺ feared it for this Ummah more than he feared the great and obvious sins. He gave it a name that should make every heart tremble. He called it the lesser shirk.

إِنَّ أَخَوْفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمُ الشِّرْكَ الْأَصْغَرَ. قَالُوا: وَمَا الشِّرْكَ الْأَصْغَرُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟
 قَالَ: الرِّيَاءُ.

Indeed, the thing I fear most for you is the lesser shirk. They said, and what is the lesser shirk, O Messenger of Allah? He said, showing off in worship.

Source: Musnad Ahmad, from Maḥmūd ibn Labīd **Authenticity:** Ḥasan (graded by al-Albānī)

He called it shirk, the association of partners with Allah, because the one who shows off has quietly taken the eyes of people as a partner in a worship that belongs to Allah alone. It is called the lesser shirk because it does not expel a person from Islam as the worship of idols does, but do not let the word lesser deceive you, for the Prophet ﷺ feared it for the best of his Companions. And he warned that Allah will deal with the one who shows off in a fitting way, exposing on the Day of Judgement the very thing he hid for the eyes of people.

مَنْ سَمِعَ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ، وَمَنْ يُرَائِي يُرَائِي اللَّهُ بِهِ.

Whoever does a deed to be heard of, Allah will expose his true intention before the creation, and whoever shows off, Allah will show his reality.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from Jundub **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 6499 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

Brothers and sisters, in our time the danger of *riyā’* has grown enormous, because never before has it been so easy to display our good deeds to so many people so quickly. A man gives charity and the temptation is to photograph it. A woman recites Qur'an and the temptation is to record it. A person fasts, prays at night, helps a neighbour, and a small voice whispers, let people know. There is nothing wrong with a believer being seen doing good when the heart is sincere and the aim is to encourage others, as Allah praised those who give openly and secretly both. The danger is the deed done for the eyes, the worship whose true audience has become the crowd. So examine your heart before the deed, during the deed, and after it. Imām Ahmad and the scholars before him struggled with this all their lives, for the soul loves to be praised, and the cure is to keep returning the deed to Allah, again and again, until He alone is the one we wish to please.

The Scholars on the Reality of Sincerity

The early Muslims understood that sincerity is a narrow path between two pits, and one of the most precise descriptions of it came from al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyād, may Allah have mercy on him, a worshipper whom even the rulers of his time revered. He weighed the matter so carefully that he warned against both abandoning a deed for people and performing it for them.

Abandoning a deed for the sake of people is riya', and doing a deed for the sake of people is shirk, and sincerity is that Allah saves you from both of them.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyād, may Allah have mercy on him

Consider how exact this is, brothers and sisters. If you leave a good deed because you fear people will see you and call you a show-off, you have still let people decide your worship, and that is riya'. And if you perform a deed because people are watching, that is the very thing we have been warned against. True sincerity is to act as though people did not exist at all, neither performing for them nor abstaining for them, but living entirely before Allah. Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, may Allah have mercy on him, observed that the one who truly knows Allah and knows people will find people utterly powerless to benefit or harm him in what matters, and so his heart is set free to worship for his Lord alone. That freedom is the sweetest fruit of sincerity, that a person no longer lives a prisoner of what others think, but a servant of the One whose opinion is the only one that will matter on the Day we are raised. I say these words of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for indeed He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

I say this statement of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Closing of the First Khutbah

The Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his Companions. O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.

A Reminder Carried Home

Dear brothers and sisters, in the first khuṭbah we learned that the question which decides the fate of every deed is, for whom was it done? We saw that we were created to worship Allah alone, that actions are judged by their intentions, and that Allah looks not at our forms but at our hearts. We trembled at the three who performed the greatest of deeds and were yet the first cast into the Fire, because their hearts had turned toward the praise of people, and we learned to fear *riyā'*, the hidden shirk. Now the question is the most important of all: how do we actually live for the sake of Allah, here, in our homes and our work and our phones? Let us turn the warning into a way of life.

What Allah Replaces, He Replaces With Better

Before we speak of effort, let us speak of the promise that makes the effort easy, for the one who gives up something for Allah always fears, in a corner of his heart, that he is losing. The Prophet ﷺ closed that door of fear forever. He promised that nothing is ever truly lost when it is left for the sake of Allah.

إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَدَعَ شَيْئًا اتَّقَاءَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَّا أَعْطَاكَ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا مِنْهُ.

Indeed, you will never leave anything for the sake of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, except that Allah will give you something better than it.

Source: Musnad Aḥmad, from Abū Qatādah **Hadith No:** Aḥmad 23074 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Carry this promise in your heart, brothers and sisters. The lower income you accept to escape the unlawful, the relationship you sever because it draws you away from Allah, the comfort you abandon to wake for Fajr, the harsh word you swallow for the sake of His pleasure: none of it is lost. Allah does not take from a sincere servant without giving him something better, whether in this world, or in peace of heart, or stored for him on the Day when he will need it most. The one who understands this gives for Allah with an open hand, because he knows he is not losing a thing. He is exchanging the lesser for the greater with the most generous of all who give.

How to Live for the Sake of Allah Today

The first field of sincerity is our worship itself. Let there be deeds between you and Allah that no human being ever sees, for these are the truest proof of where your heart stands. A prayer in the depth of the night, a charity slipped quietly into a hand, a tear shed in private over your sins: guard a portion of your worship that has no audience but Allah. The Prophet ﷺ told us that among the seven whom Allah will shade on the Day when there is no shade but His is the one who gives charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has spent, and the one who remembers Allah in private until his eyes overflow. These are the people of sincerity, and the hidden deed is its surest sign.

وَرَجُلٌ تَصَدَّقَ بِصَدَقَةٍ فَأَخْفَاهَا حَتَّى لَا تَعْلَمَ شِمَالُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ يَمِينُهُ، وَرَجُلٌ ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ خَالِيًا فَفَاضَتْ عَيْنَاهُ.

And a man who gives charity and conceals it so that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given, and a man who remembers Allah in private and his eyes overflow with tears.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from Abū Hurayrah, part of the hadith of the seven shaded by Allah **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 660, Muslim 1031 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

The second field is to let your love and your hatred, your giving and your withholding, be governed by Allah and not by your ego. So much of our anger is for ourselves, and so much of our friendship is for our own benefit. The Prophet ﷺ taught that the one who orders these feelings around Allah has completed his faith.

مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِلَّهِ، وَأَبْغَضَ لِلَّهِ، وَأَعْطَى لِلَّهِ، وَمَنَعَ لِلَّهِ، فَقَدْ اسْتَكْمَلَ الْإِيمَانَ.

Whoever loves for the sake of Allah, hates for the sake of Allah, gives for the sake of Allah, and withholds for the sake of Allah has perfected his faith.

Source: Sunan Abī Dāwūd, from Abū Umāmah **Hadith No:** Abū Dāwūd 4681 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan

This same ordering of the heart transforms our daily work, brothers and sisters, the place where most of our waking hours are spent. The believer who goes to his job, his shop, or his business with the

intention of earning lawfully to support his family, to keep himself from begging, and to have something to give in charity, has turned eight hours of labour into eight hours of worship. The teacher who teaches sincerely, the doctor who heals sincerely, the driver and the trader and the labourer who fear Allah in their dealings: all of them are upon the path of Allah while the world thinks they are merely earning a living. But let the merchant beware the opposite, that his trade becomes a performance for status, his generosity a display for reputation, and his honesty a mask worn only while customers are watching. Sincerity in the marketplace is to be the same man when the camera is off as when it is on, to give full measure when no inspector will ever check, and to remember that the One who sees the secret of the scale is the One before whom the final account is settled.

The third field is the home, where sincerity is hardest because it is least seen and most repeated. Brothers and sisters, the father who provides for his children, the mother who wakes through the night for her infant, the spouse who is patient with a difficult day: when these ordinary acts are done with the intention to please Allah, they become a continuous worship that fills the scales. The Prophet ﷺ taught that even the morsel of food a man places in his wife's mouth is a charity for which he is rewarded. So do not let the smallness or the repetition of these acts fool you. Renew the intention, and a lifetime of caring for your family becomes a lifetime of worship.

The fourth field is patience, for Allah tied even our endurance of hardship to Him alone. When the test comes, the betrayal, the loss, the slow grinding difficulty, the believer does not merely grit his teeth. He offers his patience to Allah as an act of worship, and Allah Himself describes this in His Book.

وَأَصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ *

And be patient, and your patience is only through Allah. And do not grieve over them, and do not be in distress over what they plot.

Sūrah an-Nahl (16:127)

The Disease of Loving This World

There is one disease that, more than any other, pulls the heart away from sincerity, and the Prophet ﷺ named it for us with startling clarity. He foretold a time when the Muslims would be many in number yet weak and scattered, swept along like foam on a flood, and when he was asked the cause, he gave a single word.

حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا وَكَرَاهِيَةُ الْمَوْتِ.

It is love of this world and dislike of death.

Source: Sunan Abī Dāwūd, from Thawbān **Hadith No:** Abū Dāwūd 4297 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan (graded Ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī)

Love of this world is the soil in which insincerity grows, because the one who loves the praise, the wealth, and the comforts of this life will inevitably begin to perform his religion for the sake of those things. The cure is not to abandon the world but to put it in its place, to hold it in the hand and not in the heart, as the Prophet ﷺ advised when he said to be in this world as though you are a stranger or a traveller passing along a road. The traveller uses the road, takes what he needs from it, and keeps his eyes fixed on the destination. Live like that, brothers and sisters, and sincerity becomes natural, because a heart that is travelling to Allah does not stop to perform for the people it passes.

Between Hope and Fear

Let no one leave this place despairing, thinking that because *riyā'* is subtle, no deed of his is safe. Brothers and sisters, the very fact that you fear insincerity is itself a sign of sincerity, for the hypocrite never worries about hypocrisy. The presence of a thought of showing off does not ruin the deed if you fight it and turn back to Allah. The Companions felt these whispers and struggled against them, and so will we. Do not abandon a good deed because Shayṭān whispers that you are showing off, for that is a trap to rob you of the deed entirely. Rather, perform it, fight the whisper, and offer it to Allah. And to the one who has lived for show for many years, the door is wide open: renew your intention this Friday, repair what you can, and let the rest of your life be lived for the One who sees what no eye sees. Walk toward your Lord on the two wings of hope in His mercy and fear of His displeasure, and ask Him, who alone can set the heart straight, to make you sincere.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One who knows the secrets of the hearts.

O Allah, make our deeds sincere for Your Face alone, and do not let us seek with our worship the praise of any of Your creation. O Allah, purify our hearts from showing off, from love of fame, and from the love of this world that corrupts our intentions, and let the hidden of our affairs be better than the seen. O Allah, accept from us the deeds we have done sincerely, and forgive us for those we corrupted, and replace whatever we have left for Your sake with what is better. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, unite the hearts of the Muslims upon truth, and grant relief, healing, and victory to our oppressed brothers and sisters in every land, for You are the All Powerful and they have none besides You.

O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small, and forgive our brothers and sisters who have passed on before us. O Allah, grant us beneficial knowledge, hearts that truly fear You, and sincerity in our private moments before our public ones. O Allah, make the best of our deeds their last, and the best of our days the day we meet You, and let the final word upon our tongues be the testimony that there is no god but You. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Final Reminder

Remember the command of your Lord, the command of justice and excellence with which Allah closes the affair.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ *

Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.

Sūrah an-Nahl (16:90)

So remember Allah, the Most Great, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His favours and He will increase you. And turn your whole life, your living and your dying, to Allah alone, and establish the prayer.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ