

SIFAH LECTURE SERIES

Those Whom Allah Loves: Becoming Beloved to Your Lord

A practical lecture — knowledge you can act on

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SIFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Those Whom Allah Loves: Becoming Beloved to Your Lord

The greatest treasure a heart can seek is the love of Allah — and He has told us plainly whom He loves.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Deepest Longing You Rarely Speak

My dear brother, my dear sister, let me begin by asking you something honestly. If I walked through this room and asked every single one of you what you want most from this life, I know the kinds of answers I would hear. One person would say wealth, another would whisper health, another would say a righteous family, a good marriage, a successful career, safety for their children. And every one of these answers is real, and every one of these longings is understood. But I want you to look a little deeper tonight. I want you to search your own heart, past the wealth and the health and the success, and I want you to find the thing that lives underneath all of it.

Because if you search honestly, you will discover a longing so deep that you may never have found the words for it. It is the longing to be *loved by Allah*. To know, with certainty, that the One who made you, the One who holds the heavens and the earth in His grip, the One in whose hand your very soul rests, looks upon you and **loves you**. There is no honour above this. There is no success beyond this. Every other prize of this world is a candle; this is the sun.

And think about what it means for a life. When Allah loves a servant, He guides that servant through the confusion of this dunya. He protects him from what would harm him. He forgives him when he stumbles. He answers him when he calls. He places love and acceptance for him in the hearts of the people who walk this earth, so that a person is loved without ever begging for it. And then, in the Hereafter, He prepares for that servant a place of honour near Him that no eye has seen and no ear has heard. So tonight, let us set aside every other question, and let us ask the one that matters more than all of them: *whom does Allah love, and how can I be among them?*

He Did Not Leave You to Guess

Here is the mercy that I want to settle in your heart before we go any further. Allah, in His infinite wisdom, did *not* make His love a hidden lottery. He did not make it a secret known only to a chosen few, whispered in some cave to a special saint. He did not leave you standing in the dark, wondering if you are loved or hated, guessing at your fate. Instead, again and again, across the pages of His Book, He told us plainly, in His own words: *I love such and such people.*

Think about how extraordinary that is. The Lord of the worlds names the very qualities that draw down His love, so that any servant who wishes to be beloved to his Master need only open the list that Allah Himself provided, and start walking toward it. It is as if a king announced to the whole kingdom exactly what he loves in a servant, and then flung open the palace gates. My brother, my sister, the gates are open. Tonight we are going to walk through them one by one, because each of these qualities is a door, and behind every door is the love of Allah.

WHAT IT MEANS

That Allah Loves at All

Before we walk through those doors, pause with me and marvel at the very fact that Allah loves. The love of Allah is a real attribute of His, true and befitting His majesty. It is not, as some tried to reduce it, a mere figure of speech for His reward. No. He loves, truly. And He is loved, truly, by the hearts of His believing servants. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote that the love of Allah is the very *spirit* of every act of worship. A worship empty of love, he said, is a body without a soul. You can move the body of prayer through its motions, but without love it is a corpse going through the shapes of life.

And how does the servant reach this love? Not by wishing alone. Ibn al-Qayyim explained that Allah has mapped the road. First you draw near through the obligations He commanded, the things He made compulsory, for there is nothing more beloved to Him than what He obligated. Then you draw nearer and nearer with the voluntary acts He loves, the extra prayers, the extra charity, the extra remembrance, until, as the Prophet ﷺ related from his Lord, Allah loves that servant, and becomes the very hearing with which he hears and the very sight with which he sees, guiding his limbs and answering his call. The love of Allah, then, is not a distant prize dangled before the few. It is a journey with clear steps and clear doors, and He invites *you* to walk it.

وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ
 عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى
 أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ وَبَصَرَهُ
 الَّذِي يَبْصُرُ بِهِ

My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what I have obligated upon him. And My servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary acts until I love him. And when I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears and his sight with which he sees.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6502 · Authenticity: Sahih

THE FIRST DOOR

He Loves Excellence and God-Consciousness

The first quality Allah named is *ihsan*, excellence, the beauty a believer brings to everything he does for Allah. Listen to how simply He said it in His Book.

وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good.

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:195)

And what is this excellence? The Prophet ﷺ defined it in the most beautiful words ever spoken about worship, on the day that Jibril came, in the form of a man, to teach the religion in front of the Companions. He asked about ihsan, and the answer transformed a single act of worship into a state of the heart.

أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ

It is to worship Allah as though you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then He surely sees you.

Source: Sahih Muslim: 8 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

Let that sink in. To worship as though you see Him. Imagine your next prayer prayed like that, transformed by the awareness of who is standing before you. Imagine your charity given not carelessly, tossed with one hand while your mind is elsewhere, but made beautiful by sincerity. Imagine your work, your job, your dealings, your promises, all done as one who knows the eye of Allah never leaves him. The *muhsin*, the person of excellence, is never content with the bare minimum. He brings beauty and presence to everything, because at every moment he is conscious of his Lord.

And walking hand in hand with excellence is *taqwa*, the God-consciousness that guards a person in private exactly as it guards him in public. Allah declared in more than one place that He loves the people of taqwa, the *muttaqin*. And the Prophet ﷺ gave us the simplest, most portable formula for it that we could ever carry.

اتَّقِ اللَّهَ حَيْثُمَا كُنْتَ، وَاتَّبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ تَمَحُّهَا،
وَخَالِقِ النَّاسَ بِخُلُقٍ حَسَنٍ

Be conscious of Allah wherever you are, and follow a bad deed with a good deed to wipe it out, and treat people with good character.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhi: 1987 · **Authenticity:** Hasan

Wherever you are, he said. In the crowd and in the empty room. On the busy street and behind the locked door. When a hundred eyes are watching you and when no eye is watching but the eye of Allah. My dear brother, my dear sister, so much of who we truly are is revealed in that private hour when no one is looking. The one who carries the consciousness of Allah into every corner of his life, especially the corners no human ever sees, has taken hold of the very quality that Allah named as beloved to Him. Excellence and God-consciousness together are the foundation of the whole house of Allah's love.

THE DOOR OF HOPE

He Loves the One Who Keeps Coming Back

Now I want to give you a quality that should fill every sinner in this room, and that means all of us, with a hope that lifts the chest. Because there is a lie we sometimes believe. We imagine that Allah loves only the spotless, only the perfect, only those who have never fallen. And so when we fall, we feel disqualified, exiled from His love. But Allah revealed something so much more merciful than our fears. He told us that He loves the ones who *keep returning* to Him after they fall.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

Indeed, **Allah loves those who are constantly repentant**, and He loves those who purify themselves.

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:222)

Look closely at the word Allah chose. He did not say He loves the one who repents once. He said the *tawwabin*, a form in the Arabic that means those who return again and again, who turn back every single time they slip. Do you understand what this means? It means the very act of returning to Allah, even after falling a hundred times, even after the same sin a hundred times, is itself something that Allah loves. The sin is hated, yes. But the turning back is beloved. The falling is dark, but the standing up is light.

This is why Shaytan is such a liar. After you sin, he leans in and whispers, you have gone too far now, there is no point in returning, He is done with you. And it is a lie from the first word to the last. The truth is the opposite of the whisper: your returning is the very thing that earns the love of your Lord. And Allah does not merely tolerate the one who returns, does not merely accept him with a cold nod. Listen to how the Prophet ﷺ described the reaction of Allah to a servant coming home.

لَلَّهِ أَفْرَحُ بِتَوْبَةِ عَبْدِهِ مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ سَقَطَ عَلَى بَعِيرِهِ وَقَدْ أَضَلَّهُ فِي أَرْضٍ فَلَاةٍ

Allah is more joyful at the repentance of His servant than one of you who, having lost his camel in a barren desert, suddenly finds it again.

Source: Sahih Muslim: 2747 · Authenticity: Sahih

Picture the man in the story. He is alone in an empty desert. His camel has wandered off, and on that camel is his water, his food, his only means of survival. He searches, he calls, he finds nothing. Finally,

exhausted and hopeless, he lies down beneath a tree to die, certain the end has come. And then he opens his eyes, and there is the camel, standing right over him. Can you feel the explosion of joy in that man's chest? The Prophet ﷺ told us that this overwhelming, life-restoring joy is only a faint shadow of the joy of Allah when His servant turns back to Him.

And notice the mercy of how Allah joined two things in that single verse: the ones who keep returning, and the ones who purify themselves. Because the person caught in a cycle of sinning and returning might begin to feel forever stained, forever dirty before his Lord. So Allah pairs the love of the returner with the love of the one who cleanses himself, as if to say: every sincere repentance is itself a washing. When you return, you do not crawl back filthy. You come back *cleansed*, and I love you in that cleansed state. The sinner who keeps returning is not a hopeless case dragging himself before a reluctant Lord. He is a beloved servant whom Allah is forever washing clean and forever drawing near. And this purification, the Prophet ﷺ taught, is no small matter.

الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ

Purification is half of faith.

Source: Sahih Muslim: 223 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

THE DOOR OF THE TESTED

He Loves the Patient and Those Who Trust Him

My dear brother, my dear sister, this life will not spare you its trials. It spared no prophet and it spared no saint, and it will not spare you or me. So Allah, in His mercy, named among those He loves the ones who meet hardship with patience, the *sabirin*. And He named them at exactly the moment it was needed most. After the difficult day of Uhud, when the believers had tasted defeat and grief, when they had buried their loved ones and their wounds were still fresh, Allah comforted them with a reminder that their patience was not going unseen.

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ

And Allah loves the patient.

Surah Al Imran (3:146)

Understand what patience really is. It is not the resignation of a man who has no choice, the sullen surrender of someone crushed by circumstance. No. Patience is the *strength* of the one who chooses to hold fast to Allah when everything inside him is screaming to collapse. It is restraining the tongue from complaint against your Lord. It is keeping your trust in Him while the trial runs its full course, not knowing when relief will come, but holding on anyway. And of all the gifts Allah could give a human being, the Prophet ﷺ said none is greater or more expansive than this one.

وَمَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌ عَطَاءً خَيْرًا وَأَوْسَعَ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ

And no one has been given a gift better and more expansive than patience.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 1469 and Sahih Muslim: 1053 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

And walking hand in hand with patience is *tawakkul*, reliance upon Allah, for He named the *mutawakkilin*, those who place their trust in Him, among the beloved. Now hear me clearly, because this is misunderstood: to rely upon Allah is *not* to abandon effort and sit idle waiting for the sky to rain provision. Reliance is to take every legitimate means, to work and strive and plan, while resting your *heart* upon the One who alone controls the outcome. And the Prophet ﷺ painted the most beautiful picture of what this reliance produces.

لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ تَتَوَكَّلُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ حَقَّ تَوَكُّلِهِ لَرَزَقَكُمْ كَمَا يَرْزُقُ
الطَّيْرَ، تَغْدُو خِمَاصًا وَتَرُوحُ بِطَانًا

If you were to rely upon Allah as He truly deserves to be relied upon, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds, who set out in the morning hungry and return in the evening full.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhi: 2344 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

Watch the bird. It does not store granaries. It carries no worry about tomorrow. It goes out at dawn with an empty stomach and a heart full of trust, and it comes home at dusk full. But notice, my brother, my sister: the bird still *flies*. It works, it searches, it labours all day. It simply does not gnaw itself with anxiety while it does so, because its little heart rests on the One who feeds it. That is the balance we are called to live: take your means, then leave the outcome to Allah. And in that trust you will find a peace that the anxious, striving, sleepless world could never buy at any price.

THE DOOR OF CHARACTER

He Loves the Just, the Gentle, and the Beneficial

Here is something we must never forget: the love of Allah is not earned only on the prayer mat and in the private struggle. It is earned, profoundly, in how you treat His creation. Because Allah named among those He loves the *muqsitin*, those who are just and fair. Fair in their families, fair in their business dealings, fair in their judgements, fair even with those they dislike.

وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ^ص

And act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

Surah Al-Hujurat (49:9)

And how wide is the justice that Allah loves? So wide that He extended it even to those outside our faith who do not wage war against us, commanding kindness and fairness toward them, and naming His love for the just a second time.

لَا يَنْهَاكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ
يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

Allah does not forbid you from being kind and just toward those who did not fight you over religion nor drive you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

Surah Al-Mumtahanah (60:8)

Reflect on the breadth of that, my dear brother, my dear sister. The justice Allah loves is not reserved for the people who agree with you or who belong to your circle. It reaches the neighbour of another faith. The colleague who does not share your beliefs. The stranger in the marketplace. To be fair and kind even to those outside your circle, to refuse to let a difference of religion or opinion become an excuse for injustice, is a quality Allah declared, twice, that He loves. The believer who is scrupulously fair with everyone, friend and stranger and even opponent, is walking a road that Allah Himself praised in His Book.

And where will justice raise its people on the Day of Judgement? The Prophet ﷺ told us they will stand upon pulpits of light in the sight of all creation, those who were fair in their rule, in their families, and in everything placed in their care. Justice is not merely a social duty; it is a road to the very nearness of Allah. And alongside justice, Allah loves gentleness, *rifq*, in every dealing, for the Prophet ﷺ taught us something about our Lord that should soften every hard heart.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَفِيقٌ يُحِبُّ الرِّفْقَ، وَيُعْطِي عَلَى الرِّفْقِ مَا لَا
يُعْطِي عَلَى الْعُنْفِ

Indeed, Allah is gentle and loves gentleness, and He grants for gentleness what He does not grant for harshness.

Source: Sahih Muslim: 2593 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

Let me ask you something honestly. How much of the harshness in our homes would simply dissolve, how many of our arguments with our spouses and our children and our colleagues would evaporate, if we truly, deeply believed that Allah gives for gentleness what He withholds from harshness? That the soft word opens doors the hard word bolts shut? And the Prophet ﷺ raised the matter even higher, teaching us that the people most beloved to Allah are not necessarily the ones most secluded in their private worship, but the ones whose goodness overflows onto everyone around them.

أَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَنْفَعُهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ

The most beloved of people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people.

Source: al-Mu'jam al-Awsat of at-Tabarani: 6026 · **Authenticity:** Hasan

So the one who relieves a burden off someone's shoulders, who feeds the hungry, who comforts the grieving, who visits the sick, who benefits the people around him, is walking a direct highway to the love of Allah. Because, my brother, my sister, to be good to the creation of Allah is among the surest ways to become beloved to the Creator of it all.

THE ONE DOOR THAT GATHERS ALL

Following the Messenger ﷺ

Now we come to the one quality that gathers up all the others, the single door through which the love of Allah is most surely reached. And Allah revealed it as the very test of whether our claim to love Him is true or empty. Because it is easy, is it not, to say the words? Everyone says they love Allah. The sinner says it and the righteous says it. So Allah set down a measure, a scale, by which every claim of love is weighed.

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

Surah Al Imran (3:31)

The scholars called this the verse of testing, because it tests every claim of love against one single standard: the following of the Messenger ﷺ. Do you say you love Allah? Then here is how it will be proven, not by the tears in your eyes or the words on your tongue, but by whether you follow the one whom Allah sent. In his worship. In his character. In his dealings. In his whole way of life. And look at the fruit promised right there in the verse itself: Allah will love you, and He will forgive your sins. Both, at once.

Do you see how it works? The love of Allah is not earned by feelings and claims floating in the air. It is earned by walking the path the Messenger ﷺ walked. The one who truly loves Allah does not invent his

own private road to Him, does not craft his own religion by his own tastes. He follows the road the Prophet ﷺ carved out, and that road leads to Allah's love and Allah's forgiveness together. And this, my brother, my sister, is exactly why every single quality we have spoken about tonight, the excellence, the taqwa, the repentance, the patience, the trust, the justice, the gentleness, was taught and *lived* by the Prophet ﷺ himself. To follow him is to gather all of them into your arms at once.

LIVING EXAMPLES

Those Whom the Prophet ﷺ Named as Beloved

These are not abstract categories floating in a book, my dear brother, my dear sister. The Prophet ﷺ pointed to living men and women, breathing companions with names and faces, and told them, or told others about them, that Allah loved them. So that we might see with our own eyes what a beloved servant of Allah actually looks like. On the day of Khaybar, when the battle had dragged on long and hard, the Prophet ﷺ announced that the next morning he would hand the banner to a man who would be granted victory. And listen to how he described that man. Not by his muscle. Not by his lineage. But by love.

لَأُعْطِيَنَّ الرَّايَةَ غَدًا رَجُلًا يُحِبُّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، وَيُحِبُّهُ
اللَّهُ وَرَسُولَهُ

I will surely give the banner tomorrow to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger, and whom Allah and His Messenger love.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 3701 and Sahih Muslim: 2406 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

Do you know what the Companions did that night? They could not sleep. They tossed and turned, each of them quietly hoping in his heart to be the one, each of them praying that he might be the man whom Allah and His Messenger loved. Because they understood, with a clarity we often lack, that no rank in this entire world, no title, no wealth, no fame, could ever compare to being loved by Allah. When the morning came, the banner was given to Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him.

And there is another incident, so tender it makes the heart smile. A companion used to lead his people in prayer, and in every single unit he would recite, alongside another surah, the chapter of sincerity, *Qul huwa Allahu ahad*. When the Prophet ﷺ asked him why he clung to this one surah, the man answered simply that it is the description of the Most Merciful, and he loved to recite it. And the Prophet ﷺ did not merely nod in approval. He gave that man the most wonderful news a human heart could ever receive.

أَخْبِرُوهُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يُحِبُّهُ

Inform him that Allah, the Most High, loves him.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 7375 and Sahih Muslim: 813 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

Because this man simply loved a chapter that describes his Lord, Allah loved him. Do you see, my brother, my sister, how wide the door is? The love of Allah is reached not only through grand and famous heroic deeds, but sometimes through a quiet, sincere love for the words of Allah, a private attachment to Him that no crowd ever sees. The door is so much wider than we imagine, and it opens to whoever sincerely knocks on it.

THE SIGN

When Allah Loves a Servant

And what happens when Allah comes to love a servant who has walked toward Him through all these doors? The Prophet ﷺ lifted the veil for us and showed us a scene that should make the heart tremble with longing. A love declared first in the highest heaven, and then echoed all the way down to the earth beneath your feet.

إِذَا أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ الْعَبْدَ نَادَى جِبْرِيلَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ فُلَانًا
فَأَحِبِّهِ، فَيَحِبُّهُ جِبْرِيلُ، ثُمَّ يَنَادِي فِي أَهْلِ السَّمَاءِ:
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ فُلَانًا فَأَحِبُّوهُ، فَيَحِبُّهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ، ثُمَّ
يُوضَعُ لَهُ الْقَبُولُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

*When Allah loves a servant, He calls out to Jibril: Indeed, Allah loves so-and-so, so love him. So Jibril loves him. Then he calls out among the inhabitants of the heaven: Indeed, Allah loves so-and-so, so love him. So the inhabitants of the heaven love him. **Then acceptance is placed for him on the earth.***

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 3209 and Sahih Muslim: 2637 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

Reflect on the sheer magnitude of this. When Allah loves a servant, that love does not stay hidden in a quiet corner. It is announced to Jibril, the greatest of the angels. Then it is proclaimed to all the inhabitants of the heavens, every angel there is. And then it descends to the earth itself, where acceptance and love for that servant are placed into the hearts of the believers. The heavens love him. The earth accepts him. And it all began because Allah first loved him.

My dear brother, my dear sister, *this* is what is truly worth striving for. Far, far above the fleeting, fickle love of people that we chase so anxiously, so exhaustingly. Here is the secret that would set us free if we truly grasped it: seek the love of Allah, and the love of His creation will be handed to you as a gift you never had to beg for. But chase the love of creation while neglecting Allah, and in the end you will lose them both. Seek the sun, and the shadow follows you home.

Hold Your Life Against the List

Before we turn this map into a journey, sit with me for a moment of honest accounting. Not to crush you, but to wake you, because every one of these questions is also an open door. Ask yourself gently: is there excellence in my worship, or do I give Allah only the hurried, distracted minimum before I rush back to my phone? Do I carry the consciousness of Allah into my private hours, or am I one person before people and someone else entirely when the door is locked? When I fall into sin, do I keep returning to Him like the tawwabin, or do I let despair pin me to the ground?

Keep asking. Am I patient in my trials and trusting in my Lord, or am I anxious, complaining, gnawing myself with worry the bird never feels? Am I just and gentle with the people around me, starting with my own family who see the real me? Do I benefit the people, or only myself? And above all of it, the question that gathers the rest: am I truly following the Messenger ﷺ, walking his road, or am I following my own desires while my tongue claims to love Allah?

My brother, my sister, these questions are not a verdict of guilt. They are the map that Allah Himself drew to His love. Every one of them is a door standing open. And the believer who walks toward even one of these qualities, deliberately, this week, is walking toward the single greatest treasure a soul can ever hope to hold. So let us not admire this for an hour and then go home unchanged. Let us walk.

THE TRAP OF OUR AGE

Chasing the Wrong Approval

And there is a particular trap in our time that I have to name plainly, because it is stealing the peace of a whole generation. We live in an age that trains the heart, from the moment it wakes, to crave the love and approval of *people* above all else. We measure our worth by the reactions of strangers on a glowing screen. We shape our words, our photos, our whole presentation of ourselves, to win the applause of an audience we will never meet. And then we grow anxious and hollow and sleepless when that applause does not come, or when it comes and still leaves us empty.

The believer who truly understands this lesson inverts the entire pursuit. He stops chasing the love of people, which is fickle and fleeting and was never once in his control. And he turns instead to pursue the love of the One who, when He loves a servant, places acceptance for that servant in the hearts of people *without the servant ever begging for it*. Do you see the freedom in that? Seek the love of Allah in the deeds

that no audience ever sees, the prayer in the dark, the charity given in secret, the kindness no one records, and you will find that the love of His creation follows quietly behind you, the way a shadow follows the one who simply walks toward the sun. And do not underestimate the power of simply asking Him, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that supplication is the very core of it all.

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ

Supplication is the very heart of worship.

Source: Sunan Abi Dawud: 1479 and Sunan at-Tirmidhi: 2969 · **Authenticity:** Sahih

So ask Him directly for His love. The Prophet ﷺ himself taught us a supplication for exactly this, and I want every one of us to memorise it and to make it our own. He would say, O Allah, I ask You for Your love, and the love of those who love You, and the deeds that will bring me to Your love. O Allah, make Your love dearer to me than my own self and my family and cold water. Beg it of Him, because He loves to be asked, and the one who does not ask Him has displeased Him. And let it be steady, not a single burst of passion that fizzles out by Wednesday, for the Prophet ﷺ taught us the secret of what truly reaches Allah.

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَدْوَمُهَا وَإِنْ قَلَّ

The most beloved of deeds to Allah are the most constant of them, even if they are few.

Source: Sahih al-Bukhari: 6464 and Sahih Muslim: 783 · **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun Alayh (agreed upon)

The love of Allah is not won in a single dramatic Friday. It is won in the steady, daily, unglamorous walking toward Him, one small faithful step after another, on the days you feel it and the days you do not. So let no one leave despairing that he is too sinful to ever be loved, because the very first quality on the list is the one who keeps returning, and the door of repentance is the widest door of all. And let no one leave so casually confident that he grows careless, because love is earned by walking toward Him and

lost by drifting away. Walk between the two wings of hope and fear, hope in a Lord who proclaims His love in the heavens, and fear of a heart that assumes His love while quietly slipping. And now, let us walk.

☰ Your Action Plan: Walk Toward His Love

Don't just read — choose what you will act on this week. Each door below is one Allah Himself opened to His love.

1 Pray one prayer with ihsan

Choose a single obligatory prayer and pray it slowly, as though you can see Him, and know that He sees you. Silence the phone, feel who you stand before, and let this one prayer be a masterpiece rather than a rushed minimum.

TODAY

Make it last: once you begin today, keep it every day after — until it becomes a permanent habit for life.

2 Guard the private hour

Identify the one private moment where your consciousness of Allah usually slips, and deliberately carry taqwa into it. Be the same person alone as you are in the masjid, because that hidden hour is where the love of Allah is truly earned.

DAILY

Make it last: keep it daily until it becomes second nature — a habit for the rest of your life.

3 Return the instant you fall

When you slip into sin this week, refuse Shaytan's lie that you have gone too far. Rise at once, seek forgiveness, and return, because your very returning is the thing your Lord loves and rejoices over.

THIS WEEK

Make it last: once this first week is done, don't stop — carry it on as a lifelong habit.

4 Beg Allah for His love

Memorise the Prophet's du'a and say it after every prayer: O Allah, I ask You for Your love, the love of those who love You, and the deeds that bring me to Your love. Ask directly, because He loves to be asked.

DAILY

Make it last: keep it daily until it becomes second nature — a habit for the rest of your life.

🚩 The 7-Day Beloved of Allah Challenge

For seven days, walk through one door of Allah's love each day and one that repeats: begin every morning by asking Allah for His love in the Prophet's own words, and end every night by doing one hidden good deed that no human being will ever see or applaud, a secret charity, a quiet kindness, a prayer in the dark. Watch how your heart begins to loosen its grip on the approval of people and reach instead for the approval of the One in the heavens. Do not let it stop on the

seventh day. Let these two habits, asking for His love and doing good in secret, become the quiet engine of the rest of your life, until the day acceptance is placed for you upon the earth.

Make it stick — and make it last

- ✓ **Write it down.** Put your chosen action on a sticky note on your mirror, desk, or fridge — somewhere you cannot miss it.
- ✓ **Print this plan** and tick each action off as you do it.
- ✓ **Set a daily reminder** on your phone or calendar so it never slips your mind.
- ✓ **Keep a one-line journal** each night — did I do it today? how did it go? — and watch your streak grow.

Don't aim for one good day or week — aim to keep it for life. A habit only counts once it outlives the challenge.