



## Spiritual Growth

O man! Verily you are ever toiling on toward your Lord-painfully toiling-but you shall meet Him. You shall surely travel from stage to stage.

*Islám - Qur'an 84.6, 19*

By degrees, little by little, from time to time, a wise person should remove his own impurities as a smith removes the dross from silver.

*Buddhism - Dhammapada 239*

If, brethren, a woman or man or a young lad fond of self-adornment, on examining the reflection of his own face in a bright clean mirror or bowl of clear water, should see therein a stain or speck, he will strive to remove that stain or speck; and when he no longer sees it there he is pleased and satisfied, thinking, "A gain it is to me that I am clean." Likewise a monk's introspection is most fruitful in good conditions, thus: "Do I or do I not generally live

covetous? Do I or do I not generally live malevolent in heart? Do I or do I not generally live possessed by sloth and torpor? Do I or do I not generally live excited in mind? Do I generally live in doubt and wavering, or have I crossed beyond it? Do I generally live wrathful or not? Do I generally live with soiled thoughts or clean thoughts? Do I generally live with body passionate or not? Do I generally live sluggish or full of energy? Do I generally live uncontrolled or well controlled?"

If on self-examination a monk finds thus: "I generally live covetous, malevolent in heart, possessed by sloth and torpor, excited in mind, doubtful and wavering, wrathful, with body passionate, sluggish, uncontrolled" -- then that monk must put forth extra desire, effort, endeavor, exertion, impulse, mindfulness, and attention for the abandoning of those wicked, unprofitable states.

*Buddhism - Anguttara Nikaya v.66*

...when some one expressed discouragement to Him [‘Abdu’l-Bahá], saying they could not possibly acquire all the qualities and virtues that Bahá’ís are directed to possess, the Master replied, "Kam Kam, Rúz-bih rúz." – Little by little; day by day.

**Bahá’í Faith** - Vignettes from the life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p 27

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts.

**Christianity** - *Romans 5.3-5*

The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.

**Christianity** - *Mark 4.26-29*

Train yourself in godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

**Christianity** - *1 Timothy 4.7-8*

This Atman [the Self], resplendent and pure, whom the sinless disciples behold residing within the body, is attained by unceasing practice of truthfulness, austerity, right knowledge, and continence.

**Hinduism** - *Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.5*

The superior man, seeing what is good, imitates it; seeing what is bad, he corrects it in himself.

**Confucianism** - *I Ching 42*

Make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being

ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these things is blind and short-sighted and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall; so there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*Christianity - 2 Peter 1.5-11*

Make haste in doing good; check your mind from evil; for the mind of him who is slow in doing meritorious actions delights in evil. Should a person commit evil, he should not do it again and again; he should not find pleasure therein: painful is the accumulation of evil. Should a person perform a meritorious action, he should do it again and again; he should find pleasure therein: blissful is the accumulation of merit.

*Buddhism - Dhammapada 116-18*

Do not disregard evil, saying, "It will not come nigh unto me": by the falling of drops even a

water jar is filled; likewise the fool, gathering little by little, fills himself with evil.

Do not disregard merit, saying, "It will not come nigh unto me": by the falling of drops of water even a water jar is filled; likewise the wise man, gathering little by little, fills himself with good.

*Buddhism - Dhammapada 121-22*

The Master said, "The inferior man is not ashamed of unkindness and does not shrink from injustice. If no advantage beckons he makes no effort. If he is not intimidated he does not improve himself, but if he is made to behave correctly in small matters he is careful in large ones. This is fortunate for the inferior man...."

"the inferior man thinks to himself, Goodness in small things has no value, and so neglects it. He thinks, Small sins do no harm, and so does not give them up. Thus his sins accumulate until they can no longer be covered up, and his guilt becomes so great that it can no longer be wiped out."

*Confucianism - I Ching, Great Commentary 2+5.7-8*

Mencius said to Kau Tzu, "A trail through the mountains, if used, becomes a path in a short time, but, if unused, becomes blocked by grass in an equally short time. Now your heart is blocked by grass.

*Confucianism - Mencius VII.fl.21*

volition. Your own acts testify to this truth.

*Bahá'í Faith - Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh 149*

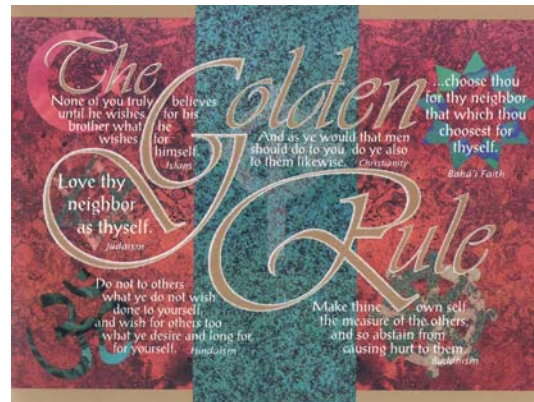


By sustained effort, earnestness, discipline, and self-control, let the wise man make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

*Buddhism - Dhammapada 25*

Birth does not lead to greatness; but cultivation of numerous virtues by a man leads him to greatness. It is a pearl that possesses real greatness and not the pair of shells in which it is produced.

*Jainism - Vajjalagam 687*



Know thou that all men have been created in the nature made by God, the Guardian, the Self-Subsisting. Unto each one hath been prescribed a pre-ordained measure, as decreed in God's mighty and guarded Tablets. All that which ye potentially possess can however, be manifested only as a result of your own





## PRAYER FOR AMERICA

O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of Thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to Thee through Thy bounty and bestowal.

*Abdu'l-Bahá*

