

**DAILY, MONTHLY, AND
ANNUAL ACTIVITIES**

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June, 1994

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Bring Thyself to Account

1. Set before thine eyes God's unerring Balance and, as one standing in His Presence, weigh in that Balance thine actions every day, every moment of thy life. Bring thyself to account ere thou art summoned to a reckoning, on the Day when no man shall have strength to stand for fear of God, the Day when the hearts of the heedless ones shall be made to tremble.

Bahá'u'lláh
Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 51; *Gleanings*, p. 236;
quoted in *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 39, pp. 60-61

Develop and Increase

2. The bounties of the Blessed Perfection are infinite. We must endeavor to increase our capacity daily, to strengthen and enlarge our capabilities for receiving them, to become as perfect mirrors. The more polished and clean the mirror, the more effulgent is its reflection of the lights of the Sun of Truth. Be like a well-cultivated garden wherein the roses and variegated flowers of heaven are growing in fragrance and beauty. It is my hope that your hearts may become as ready ground, carefully tilled and prepared, upon which the divine showers of the bounties of the Blessed Perfection may descend and the zephyrs of this divine springtime may blow with quickening breath. Then will the garden of your hearts bring forth its flowers of delightful fragrance to refresh the nostril of the heavenly Gardener. Let your hearts reflect the glories of the Sun of Truth in their many colors to gladden the eye of the divine Cultivator Who has nourished them. Day by day become more closely attracted in order that the love of God may illumine all those with whom you come in contact. Be as one spirit, one soul, leaves of one tree, flowers of one garden, waves of one ocean.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 24

3. Thus, spirituality is the greatest of God's gifts, and ‘Life Everlasting’ means ‘Turning to God’. May you, one and all, increase daily in spirituality, may you be strengthened in all goodness, may you be helped more and more by the Divine consolation, be made free by the Holy Spirit of God, and may the power of the Heavenly Kingdom live and work among you.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Paris Talks, p. 112

4. I am greatly pleased with you all and rejoice that you have shown me the utmost kindness and affection. It is my desire that Bahá'u'lláh shall be pleased with you, that you may follow His precepts and become worthy of His confirmations. The requirements are that your minds must be illumined, your souls must be rejoiced with the glad tidings of God, you must become imbued with spiritual moralities, your daily life must evidence faith and assurance, your hearts must be sanctified and pure, reflecting a high degree of love and attraction toward the Kingdom of Abhá. You must become the lamps of Bahá'u'lláh so that you may shine with eternal light and be the

proofs and evidences of His truth. Then will such signs of purity and chastity be witnessed in your deeds and actions that men will behold the heavenly radiance of your lives and say, “Verily, ye are the proofs of Bahá’u’lláh. Verily, Bahá’u’lláh is the True One, for He has trained such souls as these, each one of which is a proof in himself.” They will say to others, “Come and witness the conduct of these souls; come and listen to their words, behold the illumination of their hearts, see the evidences of the love of God in them, consider their praiseworthy morals, and discover the foundations of the oneness of humanity firmly implanted within them. What greater proof can there be than these people that the message of Bahá’u’lláh is truth and reality?” It is my hope that each one of you shall be a herald of God, proclaiming the evidences of His appearance, in words, deeds and thoughts. Let your actions and utterances be a witness that you are of the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh. These are the duties enjoined upon you by Bahá’u’lláh.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 460-461

5. It is imperative to acquire the knowledge of divine proofs and evidences, and to acquaint oneself with convincing testimonies which demonstrate the revelation of God's resplendent Light. The study group thou didst organize hath imparted much joy and happiness to the heart of Abdu'l-Baha. Thou must exert much effort and show forth perseverance and constancy that, God willing, through the reviving breaths of His mercy, souls may be so educated as to become like radiant candles shining in the assemblage of divine knowledge and understanding. This matter is highly important. It is binding on every one and must be regarded as an obligation....

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
The Importance of Deepening, p. 194

6. In brief, my hope is that from the bounties of Bahá’u’lláh, thou mayest daily advance in the Kingdom, that thou mayest become a heavenly angel, confirmed by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, and mayest erect a structure that shall eternally remain firm and unshakeable....

These days are very precious; grasp the present opportunity and ignite a candle that shall never be extinguished, and which shall pour out its light eternally illuminating the world of mankind!

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Selections ... ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 199

7. My prayer for you is that your spiritual faculties and aspirations may daily increase, and that you will never allow the material senses to veil from your eyes the glories of the Heavenly Illumination.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Paris Talks, p. 94

8. I pray in your behalf that your hearts may be enlightened with the light of the love of God; that your minds may develop daily; that your spirits may become aglow with the fire and illumination of His glad tidings, until these divine foundations may become established throughout the human world.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 66-67

9. First and foremost, one should use every possible means to purge one's heart and motives, otherwise, engaging in any form of enterprise would be futile. It is also essential to abstain from hypocrisy and blind imitation, inasmuch as their foul odour is soon detected by every man of understanding and wisdom. Moreover, the friends must observe the specific times for the remembrance of God, meditation, devotion and prayer, as it is highly unlikely, nay impossible, for any enterprise to prosper and develop when deprived of divine bestowals and confirmation. One can hardly imagine what a great influence genuine love, truthfulness and purity of motives exert on the souls of men. But these traits cannot be acquired by any believer unless he makes a daily effort to gain them...

Shoghi Effendi
Living the Life, pp. 1-2

10. It is often difficult for us to do things because they are so very different from what we are used to, not because the thing itself is particularly difficult. With you, and indeed most Bahá'ís, who are now, as adults, accepting this glorious Faith, no doubt some of the ordinances, like fasting and daily prayer, are hard to understand and obey at first. But we must always think that these things are given to all men for a thousand years to come. For Bahá'í children who see these things practised in the home, they will be as natural and necessary a thing as going to church on Sunday was to the more pious generation of Christians. Bahá'u'lláh would not have given us these things if they would not greatly benefit us, and, like children who are sensible enough to realize their father is wise and does what is good for them, we must accept to obey these ordinances even though at first we may not see any need for them. As we obey them we will gradually come to see in ourselves the benefits they confer.

Shoghi Effendi
Living the Life, pp. 19-20

11. Such a chaste and holy life, with its implications of modesty, purity, temperance, decency, and clean-mindedness, involves no less than the exercise of moderation in all that pertains to dress, language, amusements, and all artistic and literary avocations. It demands daily vigilance in the control of one's carnal desires and corrupt inclinations. It calls for the abandonment of a frivolous conduct, with its excessive attachment to trivial and often misdirected pleasures. It requires total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, from opium, and from similar habit-forming drugs. It condemns the prostitution of art and of literature, the practices of nudism and of companionate marriage, infidelity in marital relationships, and all manner of promiscuity, of easy familiarity, and of sexual vices. It can tolerate no compromise with the theories, the standards, the habits, and the excesses of a decadent age. Nay rather it seeks to demonstrate, through the dynamic force of its example, the pernicious character of such theories, the falsity of such standards, the hollowness of such claims, the perversity of such habits, and the sacrilegious character of such excesses.

Shoghi Effendi
The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 30

12. The all-conquering Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh cannot prove effective in this world of strife and turmoil, and cannot achieve its purpose for mankind, unless we, who are named after His Name,

and who are the recipients of His Grace, endeavour, by our example, our daily life and our dealings with our fellow-men, to reveal that noble spirit of love and self-sacrifice of which the world stands in need at present.

Shoghi Effendi
Unfolding Destiny, p. 14

13. It is Shoghi Effendi's hope therefore that your youth group will make a renewed and determined effort this year to put into daily practice the principles and teachings of the Cause, and thus demonstrate to the non-Bahá'í youth of your country the tremendous power which the Bahá'í Teachings have to shape, mould and reconstruct the lives of men.

He is praying to Bahá'u'lláh to bless and guide your endeavours to that end...

Shoghi Effendi
Light of Divine Guidance, Vol.1, p. 88

14. It is upon the individual believer, constituting the fundamental unit in the structure of the home front, that the revitalization, the expansion, and the enrichment of the home front must ultimately depend. The more strenuous the effort exerted, daily and methodically, by the individual laboring on the home front to rise to loftier heights of consecration, of self-abnegation, to contribute, through pioneering at home, to the multiplication of Bahá'í isolated centers, groups and assemblies, and to raise, through diligent, painstaking and continual endeavor to convert receptive souls to the Faith he has espoused, the number of its active and wholehearted supporters, the sooner will the vast and multiple enterprises, launched beyond the confines of the homeland, and now so desperately calling for a greater supply of men and means, be provided with the necessary support that will ensure their uninterrupted development and hasten their ultimate fruition, and the lighter will be the burden of the impending contest that must be waged, sooner or later, within the borders of the Union itself, between the rising institutions of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic divinely appointed Order, and the exponents of obsolescent doctrines and the defenders, both secular and religious, of a corrupt and fast-declining society.

Shoghi Effendi
Citadel of Faith, p. 155

Recite Verses of God

15. Recite ye the verses of God every morn and eventide. Whoso faileth to recite them hath not been faithful to the Covenant of God and His Testament, and whoso turneth away from these holy verses in this Day is of those who throughout eternity have turned away from God. Fear ye God, O My servants, one and all. Pride not yourselves on much reading of the verses or on a multitude of pious acts by night and day; for were a man to read a single verse with joy and radiance it would be better for him than to read with lassitude all the Holy Books of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Read ye the sacred verses in such measure that ye be not overcome by languor and despondency. Lay not upon your souls that which will weary them and weigh them down, but rather what will lighten and uplift them, so that they may soar on the

wings of the Divine verses towards the Dawning-place of His manifest signs; this will draw you nearer to God, did ye but comprehend.

Bahá' u'lláh
The Kitáb-i-Áqdas, pp. 73-74

Prayer

16. Consider thou and call to mind the time when Muhammad appeared. He said, and His word is the truth 'Pilgrimage to the House¹ is a service due to God.'² And likewise are the daily prayer, fasting, and the laws which shone forth above the horizon of the Book of God, the Lord of the World and the true Educator of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. It is incumbent upon everyone to obey Him in whatsoever God hath ordained; and whosoever denieth Him hath disbelieved in God, in His verses, in His Messengers and in His Books.

Bahá' u'lláh
Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 108-109

17. That seeker should, also, regard backbiting as grievous error, and keep himself aloof from its dominion, inasmuch as backbiting quencheth the light of the heart, and extinguisheth the life of the soul. He should be content with little, and be freed from all inordinate desire. He should treasure the companionship of them that have renounced the world, and regard avoidance of boastful and worldly people a precious benefit. At the dawn of every day he should commune with God, and, with all his soul, persevere in the quest of his Beloved. He should consume every wayward thought with the flame of His loving mention, and, with the swiftness of lightning, pass by all else save Him. He should succor the dispossessed, and never withhold his favor from the destitute. He should show kindness to animals, how much more unto his fellow-man, to him who is endowed with the power of utterance. He should not hesitate to offer up his life for his Beloved, nor allow the censure of the people to turn him away from the Truth. He should not wish for others that which he doth not wish for himself, nor promise that which he doth not fulfil. With all his heart he should avoid fellowship with evil-doers, and pray for the remission of their sins. He should forgive the sinful, and never despise his low estate, for none knoweth what his own end shall be. How often hath a sinner attained, at the hour of death, to the essence of faith, and, quaffing the immortal draught, hath taken his flight unto the Concourse on high! And how often hath a devout believer, at the hour of his soul's ascension, been so changed as to fall into the nethermost fire! Our purpose in revealing these convincing and weighty utterances is to impress upon the seeker that he should regard all else beside God as transient, and count all things save Him, Who is the Object of all adoration, as utter nothingness.

Bahá' u'lláh
The Kitáb-i-Íqán, pp. 193-195; *Gleanings*, pp. 265-266

18. O thou spiritual friend! Thou hast asked the wisdom of prayer. Know thou that prayer is indispensable and obligatory, and man under no pretext whatsoever is excused from performing the prayer unless he be mentally unsound, or an insurmountable obstacle prevent him. The

¹ Mecca

² Qur'án 3:91

wisdom of prayer is this That it causeth a connection between the servant and the True One, because in that state man with all heart and soul turneth his face towards His Highness the Almighty, seeking His association and desiring His love and compassion. The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing; that is why with every soul who is attracted to the Kingdom of God, his greatest hope is to find an opportunity to entreat and supplicate before his Beloved, appeal for His mercy and grace and be immersed in the ocean of His utterance, goodness and generosity.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Bahá’í World Faith, p. 368

19. Know thou that in every word and movement of the obligatory prayer there are allusions, mysteries and a wisdom that man is unable to comprehend, and letters and scrolls cannot contain.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Prayer, Meditation, ..., p. 233

20. You must offer supplications unto the Kingdom of Abhá and seek eternal bounties from Him. You must pray that your hearts may become filled with glorious lights, even as a purified mirror; then will the lights of the Sun of Truth shine therein. You must supplicate and pray to God every night and every day, seeking His assistance and help, saying

O Lord! We are weak; strengthen us. O God! We are ignorant; make us knowing. O Lord! We are poor; make us wealthy. O God! We are dead; quicken us. O Lord! We are humiliation itself; glorify us in Thy Kingdom. If Thou dost assist us, O Lord, we shall become as scintillating stars. If Thou dost not assist us, we shall become lower than the earth. O Lord! Strengthen us. O God! Confer victory upon us. O God! Enable us to conquer self and overcome desire. O Lord! Deliver us from the bondage of the material world. O Lord! Quicken us through the breath of the Holy Spirit in order that we may arise to serve Thee, engage in worshiping Thee and exert ourselves in Thy Kingdom with the utmost sincerity. O Lord, Thou art powerful. O God, Thou art forgiving. O Lord, Thou art compassionate.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 458

21. Praise be to God, thy heart is engaged in the commemoration of God, thy soul is gladdened by the glad tidings of God and thou art absorbed in prayer. The state of prayer is the best of conditions, for man is then associating with God. Prayer verily bestoweth life, particularly when offered in private and at times, such as midnight, when freed from daily cares.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Selections ... ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 202

22. “If you find you need to visualize someone when you pray, think of the Master. Through Him you can address Bahá’u’lláh. Gradually try to think of the qualities of the Manifestation,

and in that way a mental form will fade out, for after all the body is not the thing, His Spirit is there and is the essential, everlasting element.”

Shoghi Effendi
Directives of the Guardian, p. 59

Daily Obligatory Prayers

23. The daily obligatory prayers are three in number. The shortest one consists of a single verse which has to be recited once in every twenty-four hours and at midday. The medium (prayer which begins with the words ‘The Lord is witness that there is none other God but He,’ has to be recited three times a day, in the morning, at noon and in the evening. The long prayer which is the most elaborate of the three has to be recited once in every twenty-four hours, and at any time one feels inclined to do so.

The believer is entirely free to choose any one of those three prayers but is under the obligation of reciting one of them, and in accordance with any specific directions with which they may be accompanied.

These daily obligatory prayers, together with a few other specific ones, such as the Healing Prayer, the Tablet of Ahmad, have been invested by Bahá’u’lláh with a special potency and significance, and should therefore be accepted as such and be recited by the believers with unquestioned faith and confidence, that through them they may enter into a much closer communion with God, and identify themselves more fully with His Laws and precepts.”

Shoghi Effendi
Directives of the Guardian, p. 60

24. The three daily Obligatory Prayers are to be recited individually, not in congregation.

Kitáb-i-Áqdas: Notes, p. 173

25. The daily prayers are to be said each one for himself, aloud or silent makes no difference. There is no congregational prayer except that for the dead. We read healing and other prayers in our meetings, but the daily prayer is a personal obligation, so someone else reading it is not quite the same thing as saying it for yourself. Ablutions are specifically associated with certain prayers. They must precede the offering of the three Obligatory Prayers, the daily recitation of “Alláh-u-Abhá” ninety-five times, and the recital of the verse prescribed as an alternative to obligatory prayer and fasting for women in their courses (see note 20).

Kitáb-i-Áqdas: Notes, p. 180

26. The obligatory prayers are binding inasmuch as they are conducive to humility and submissiveness, to setting one's face towards God and expressing devotion to Him. Through such prayer man holdeth communion with God, seeketh to draw near unto Him, converseth with the true Beloved of one's heart, and attaineth spiritual stations.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Prayer, Meditation, ..., p. 232

27. QUESTION: The believers have been enjoined to face in the direction of the Qiblih when reciting their Obligatory Prayers; in what direction should they turn when offering other prayers and devotions?

ANSWER: Facing in the direction of the Qiblih is a fixed requirement for the recitation of obligatory prayer, but for other prayers and devotions one may follow what the merciful Lord hath revealed in the Qur'án: "Whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God."

Bahá'u'lláh
Kitáb-i-Áqdas: Questions and Answers, p. 111

28. Praised be God, ye two have demonstrated the truth of your words by your deeds, and have won the confirmations of the Lord God. Every day at first light, ye gather the Bahá'í children together and teach them the communes and prayers. This is a most praiseworthy act, and bringeth joy to the children's hearts that they should, at every morn, turn their faces toward the Kingdom and make mention of the Lord and praise His Name, and in the sweetest of voices, chant and recite.

These children are even as young plants, and teaching them the prayers is as letting the rain pour down upon them, that they may wax tender and fresh, and the soft breezes of the love of God may blow over them, making them to tremble with joy.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Selections ... ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 139

Repeat Alláh-u-Abhá

29. It hath been ordained that every believer in God, the Lord of Judgement, shall, each day, having washed his hands and then his face, seat himself and, turning unto God, repeat "Alláh-u-Abhá" ninety-five times. Such was the decree of the Maker of the Heavens when, with majesty and power, He established Himself upon the thrones of His Names. Perform ye, likewise, ablutions for the Obligatory Prayer; this is the command of God, the Incomparable, the Unrestrained.

Bahá'u'lláh
The Kitáb-i-Áqdas, p. 26

Meditate

30. May we not, therefore, recognizing as we do the necessity for such a revelation of God's redeeming power, meditate upon the supreme grandeur of the System unfolded by the hand of Bahá'u'lláh in this day? May we not pause, pressed though we be by the daily preoccupations which the ever-widening range of the administrative activities of His Faith must involve, to reflect upon the sanctity of the responsibilities it is our privilege to shoulder?

Shoghi Effendi
World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 61

Peruse the Writings

31. Peruse ye every day the verses revealed by God. Blessed is the man who reciteth them and reflecteth upon them. He truly is of them with whom it shall be well.

Bahá'u'lláh
The Importance of Deepening, p. 188

32. Praise be to God, ye are firm and steadfast; be ye thankful that like unto blessed trees ye are firmly planted in the soil of the Covenant. It is sure that every firm one will grow, will yield new fruits and will increase daily in freshness and grace. Reflect upon all the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, whether epistles or prayers, and ye shall surely come across a thousand passages wherein Bahá'u'lláh prays: 'O God! Bring to naught the violators of the Covenant and defeat the oppressors of the Testament.' 'He who denieth the Covenant and the Testament is rejected by God, and he who remaineth firm and steadfast therein is favoured at the Threshold of Oneness.' Such sayings and prayers abound, refer to them and ye shall know.

'Abdu'l-Bahá
Selections ... 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 211

Teach the Cause of God

33. In reality every day which man passes in the mention of God, the diffusion of the fragrances of God and calling the people to the Kingdom of God, that day is his feast. Praise be to God that you are occupied in the service of the Kingdom of God and are engaged in the promulgation of the religion of God by day and by night. Therefore all your days are feast days. There is no doubt that the assistance and the bestowal of God shall descend upon you.

'Abdu'l-Bahá
Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 11

34. Dearly beloved friends! Though the task be long and arduous, yet the prize which the All-Bountiful Bestower has chosen to confer upon you is of such preciousness that neither tongue nor pen can befittingly appraise it. Though the goal towards which you are now so strenuously striving be distant, and as yet undisclosed to men's eyes, yet its promise lies firmly embedded in the authoritative and unalterable utterances of Bahá'u'lláh. Though the course He has traced for you seems, at times, lost in the threatening shadows with which a stricken humanity is now enveloped, yet the unfailing light He has caused to shine continually upon you is of such brightness that no earthly dusk can ever eclipse its splendor. Though small in numbers, and circumscribed as yet in your experiences, powers, and resources, yet the Force which energizes your mission is limitless in its range and incalculable in its potency. Though the enemies which every acceleration in the progress of your mission must raise up be fierce, numerous, and unrelenting, yet the invisible Hosts which, if you persevere, must, as promised, rush forth to your aid, will, in the end, enable you to vanquish their hopes and annihilate their forces. Though the ultimate blessings that must crown the consummation of your mission be undoubted, and the Divine promises given you firm and irrevocable, yet the measure of the

goodly reward which every one of you is to reap must depend on the extent to which your daily exertions will have contributed to the expansion of that mission and the hastening of its triumph.

Shoghi Effendi

The Advent of Divine Justice, pp. 15-16

35. Upon every participator in this concerted effort, unprecedented in the annals of the American Bahá'í community, rests the spiritual obligation to make of the mandate of teaching, so vitally binding upon all, the all-pervading concern of his life. In his daily activities and contacts, in all his journeys, whether for business or otherwise, on his holidays and outings, and on any mission he may be called upon to undertake, every bearer of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh should consider it not only an obligation but a privilege to scatter far and wide the seeds of His Faith, and to rest content in the abiding knowledge that whatever be the immediate response to that Message, and however inadequate the vehicle that conveyed it, the power of its Author will, as He sees fit, enable those seeds to germinate, and in circumstances which no one can foresee enrich the harvest which the labor of His followers will gather. If he be member of any Spiritual Assembly let him encourage his Assembly to consecrate a certain part of its time, at each of its sessions, to the earnest and prayerful consideration of such ways and means as may foster the campaign of teaching, or may furnish whatever resources are available for its progress, extension, and consolidation. If he attends his summer school - and everyone without exception is urged to take advantage of attending it - let him consider such an occasion as a welcome and precious opportunity so to enrich, through lectures, study, and discussion, his knowledge of the fundamentals of his Faith as to be able to transmit, with greater confidence and effectiveness, the Message that has been entrusted to his care. Let him, moreover, seek, whenever feasible, through intercommunity visits to stimulate the zeal for teaching, and to demonstrate to outsiders the zest and alertness of the promoters of his Cause and the organic unity of its institutions.

Shoghi Effendi

The Advent of Divine Justice, pp. 53-54

36. Whether in His revelation of the station and functions of His loved ones, or His eulogies of the greatness of His Cause, or His emphasis on the paramount importance of teaching, or the dangers which He foreshadows, the counsels He imparts, the warnings He utters, the vistas He discloses, and the assurances and promises He gives, these dynamic and typical examples of Bahá'u'lláh's sublime utterance, each having a direct bearing on the tasks which actually face or lie ahead of the American Bahá'í community, cannot fail to produce on the minds and hearts of any one of its members, who approaches them with befitting humility and detachment, such powerful reactions as to illuminate his entire being and intensify tremendously his daily exertions.

Shoghi Effendi

The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 75

37. It is true that your group is now still small, but he assures you that your group will before long grow larger and larger day by day. It has been always the case with the growth of every religion. Some pure soul or souls go to some land and sow the seeds of the heavenly teachings in the hearts of few who are most pure and so most receptive. The seeds will germinate and grow in them. The fruits of these seeds appear in the regeneration of the lives of these primary

adherents. These primary adherents share the bounties they have received with other souls, who through them obtain new life and light and in turn illumine other people.

The primary adherents are the stars of great magnitude in every land in the firmament of the Kingdom of God. They are the chosen people. They are like candles which, through their sacrificial efforts, are weeping their lives away in order to give light to the world and establish the purpose of their Lord and Saviour, which purpose is the salvation of mankind. His Holiness, Jesus Christ! see how small the group of His disciples was! No matter how few the number of the disciples was, yet they through His power illumined the world. Our Era is similar to that, but through the development of humanity it is greater, and through the evils of the material civilization and negligence of mankind our sacrifices must be greater. Divine light must make itself manifest in our daily life deeds.

Shoghi Effendi
Arohanui: Letters to New Zealand, pp. 3-4

38. Now surely, if ever, is the time for us, the chosen ones of Bahá'u'lláh and the bearers of His Message to the world, to endeavor by day and by night, to deepen, first and foremost, the Spirit of His Cause in our own individual lives, and then labor, and labor incessantly to exemplify in all our dealings with our fellow-men that noble Spirit of which His beloved Son Abdu'l-Baha has been all the days of His life a true and unique exponent. The sayings of our beloved Master have been noised abroad, His name has filled all regions, and the eyes of mankind are now turned expectant towards His disciples who bear His name and profess His teachings. Shall we not by our daily life vindicate the high claims of His teachings, and prove by our services the influence of His undying Spirit? This surely is our highest privilege, and our most sacred duty.

Shoghi Effendi
Bahá'í Administration, p. 35

Daily Study and Work

39. He must study every day from morning till noon, so that he may learn how to read and write. From noon till about sunset he should acquire a craft. The children must both learn to read and acquire an art or skill.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
The Arts, p. 3

40. With reference to Bahá'u'lláh's command concerning the engagement of the believers in some sort of profession; the teachings are most emphatic on this matter, particularly the statement in the Aqdas to this effect which makes it quite clear that idle people who lack the desire to work can have no place in the new World Order. As a corollary of this principle, Bahá'u'lláh further states that mendicity should not only be discouraged but entirely wiped out from the face of society. It is the duty of those who are in charge of the organization of society to give every individual the opportunity of acquiring the necessary talent in some kind of profession, and also the means of utilizing such a talent, both for its own sake and for the sake of earning the means of his livelihood. Every individual, no matter how handicapped and limited he may be, is under the obligation of engaging in some work or profession, for work, especially when performed in the spirit of service, is according to Bahá'u'lláh, a form of worship. It has not

only a utilitarian purpose, but has a value in itself, because it draws us nearer to God, and enables to better grasp His purpose for us in this world. It is obvious, therefore, that the inheritance of wealth cannot make anyone immune from daily work. As to the question of retirement from work for individuals who have reached a certain age, this is a matter on which the International House of Justice will have to legislate as there are no provisions in the Aqdas concerning it.

Shoghi Effendi

Directives of the Guardian, pp. 82-83; *Kitáb-i-Áqdas*: Notes, p. 192

Physical Cleanliness

41. Wash your feet once every day in summer, and once every three days during winter.

Bahá'u'lláh

The Kitáb-i-Áqdas, p. 75

Service to Humanity

42. Oh, friends of God! If ye will trust in the Word of God and be strong; if ye will follow the precepts of Bahá'u'lláh to tend the sick, raise the fallen, care for the poor and needy, give shelter to the destitute, protect the oppressed, comfort the sorrowful and love the world of humanity with all your hearts, then I say unto you that ere long this meeting-place will see a wonderful harvest. Day by day each member will advance and become more and more spiritual. But ye must have a firm foundation and your aims and ambitions must be clearly understood by each member. They shall be as follows:

1. To show compassion and goodwill to all mankind.
2. To render service to humanity.
3. To endeavour to guide and enlighten those in darkness.
4. To be kind to everyone, and show forth affection to every living soul.
5. To be humble in your attitude towards God, to be constant in prayer to Him, so as to grow daily nearer to God.
6. To be so faithful and sincere in all your actions that every member may be known as embodying the qualities of honesty, love, faith, kindness, generosity, and courage. To be detached from all that is not God, attracted by the Heavenly Breath - a divine soul; so that the world may know that a Bahá'í is a perfect being.

Strive to attain this at these meetings. Then, indeed and in truth will ye, the friends of God, come together with great joy! Render help one to the other, become as one man, having reached perfect unity.

I pray to God that daily ye may advance in spirituality, that God's love may be more and more manifested in you, that the thoughts of your hearts may be purified, and that your faces may be ever turned towards Him. May you one and all approach to the threshold of unity, and enter into the Kingdom. May each of you be like unto a flaming torch, lighted and burning bright with the fire of the Love of God.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Paris Talks, pp. 73-74

43. First and foremost, one should use every possible means to purge one's heart and motives, otherwise, engaging in any form of enterprise would be futile. It is also essential to abstain from hypocrisy and blind imitation, inasmuch as their foul odour is soon detected by every man of understanding and wisdom. Moreover, the friends must observe the specific times for the remembrance of God, meditation, devotion and prayer, as it is highly unlikely, nay impossible, for any enterprise to prosper and develop when deprived of divine bestowals and confirmation. One can hardly imagine what a great influence genuine love, truthfulness and purity of motives exert on the souls of men. But these traits cannot be acquired by any believer unless he makes a daily effort to gain them....

Shoghi Effendi
Guidelines for Teaching, p. 301

Destructive Influences

44. The Hegelian philosophy which, in other countries, has, in the form of an intolerant and militant nationalism, insisted on deifying the state, has inculcated the war-spirit, and incited to racial animosity, has, likewise, led to a marked weakening of the Church and to a grave diminution of its spiritual influence. Unlike the bold offensive which an avowedly atheistic movement had chosen to launch against it, both within the Soviet union and beyond its confines, this nationalistic philosophy, which Christian rulers and governments have upheld, is an attack directed against the Church by those who were previously its professed adherents, a betrayal of its cause by its own kith and kin. It was being stabbed by an alien and militant atheism from without, and by the preachers of a heretical doctrine from within. Both of these forces, each operating in its own sphere and using its own weapons and methods, have moreover been greatly assisted and encouraged by the prevailing spirit of modernism, with its emphasis on a purely materialistic philosophy, which, as it diffuses itself, tends increasingly to divorce religion from man's daily life.

Shoghi Effendi
World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 182-183

45. Indeed the chief reason for the evils now rampant in society is the lack of spirituality. The materialistic civilization of our age has so much absorbed the energy and interest of mankind that people in general do no longer feel the necessity of raising themselves above the forces and conditions of their daily material existence. There is not sufficient demand for things that we call spiritual to differentiate them from the needs and requirements of our physical existence.

Shoghi Effendi
Directives of the Guardian, p. 86

MONTHLY

Hold Fireside

46. The Guardian hopes the Friends ... will display the loving spirit of the Master in their contacts, and then win those souls to the Faith. The fireside method of teaching seems to produce the greatest results, when each one invites friends into their homes once in nineteen days, and introduces them to the Faith. Close association and loving service affects the hearts; and when the heart is affected, then the spirit can enter. It is the Holy Spirit that quickens, and the Friends must become channels for its diffusion.

Shoghi Effendi
Guidelines for Teaching, p. 324

Attend Feast/Relate to other Bahá'ís

47. In their relations amongst themselves as fellow-believers, let them not be content with the mere exchange of cold and empty formalities often connected with the organizing of banquets, receptions, consultative assemblies, and lecture-halls. Let them rather, as equal co-sharers in the spiritual benefits conferred upon them by Bahá'u'lláh, arise and, with the aid and counsel of their local and national representatives, supplement these official functions with those opportunities which only a close and intimate social intercourse can adequately provide. In their homes, in their hours of relaxation and leisure, in the daily contact of business transactions, in the association of their children, whether in their study-classes, their playgrounds, and club-rooms, in short under all possible circumstances, however insignificant they appear, the community of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh should satisfy themselves that in the eyes of the world at large and in the sight of their vigilant Master they are the living witnesses of those truths which He fondly cherished and tirelessly championed to the very end of His days. If we relax in our purpose, if we falter in our faith, if we neglect the varied opportunities given us from time to time by an all-wise and gracious Master, we are not merely failing in what is our most vital and conspicuous obligation, but are thereby insensibly retarding the flow of those quickening energies which can alone insure the vigorous and speedy development of God's struggling Faith.

Shoghi Effendi
Bahá'í Administration, pp. 130-131

48. A third requisite [for them that take counsel together] is the promulgation of the divine commandments among the friends, such as the Obligatory Prayers, Fasting, Pilgrimage, Huququ'llah and all the other ordinances.

'Abdu'l-Bahá
Huququ'lláh, p. 513

ANNUALLY

Render Huqúq'u'lláh

49. O my heavenly friends! It is certain and evident that the Incomparable One is always praised for His absolute wealth, distinguished for His all-embracing mercy, characterized by His eternal grace, and known for His gifts to the world of existence. Nonetheless, in accordance with His inscrutable wisdom and in order to apply a unique test to distinguish the friend from the stranger, He hath enjoined the Huqúq upon His servants and made it obligatory.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Huqúqu'lláh, pp. 510-511

Lead One New Person to Faith

50. In this day every believer must concentrate his thoughts on teaching the Faith... O loved ones of God! Each one of the friends must teach at least one soul each year. This is everlasting glory. This is eternal grace.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Guidelines for Teaching, p.301

Attend Summer Schools

51. Since the purpose of the Summer School is not only to impart knowledge of the Teachings, but to infuse in the hearts of all those present such spirit as will enable them to translate the ideals of the Cause into daily deeds of constructive spiritual living, it is more than fitting therefore that this year's meetings should be principally devoted to the study of Bahá'í morals, not only in their theoretical aspect, but first and foremost in their relation to the present-day needs and requirements of Bahá'í community life.

Shoghi Effendi
Centres of Bahá'í Learning, pp. 34-35

52. He hopes your Committee will continue to endeavour in raising the standard, both intellectual and spiritual, of the school, and make it an attractive centre not only to the believers but especially to non-Bahá'ís. It is, indeed, the teaching value of the school which you should particularly emphasize. The courses, lectures and general activities conducted by the friends should be arranged in such a way as to attract the attention of the outside public to the Cause. The Summer School is a high occasion for teaching the Message. Through daily association with the believers, non-Bahá'ís will come to see the Cause functioning as an active and living community entirely dedicated to the service of what is best and highest in the world. The lectures will familiarize them with the principles underlying the New World Order, while their participation in the social life of the believers will enable them to see the way in which these very same principles are put into operation.

Shoghi Effendi
Centres of Bahá'í Learning, p. 38