

# Studying the Cause

What does it truly mean to enter into the lifelong process of studying the Cause of God? The Bahá'í Writings themselves present the answer! These selections will represent the broad horizon of study and not of the call to study specific books, letters, or subjects. In fact this is just a taste test of the enormous amounts of passages that deal with the subject of study of the Cause that can be slowly accumulated and digested over time.

1. Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My words, that ye may unravel its secrets, and discover all the pearls of wisdom that lie hid in its depths. Take heed that ye do not vacillate in your determination to embrace the truth of this Cause -- a Cause through which the potentialities of the might of God have been revealed, and His sovereignty established. With faces beaming with joy, hasten ye unto Him. This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Let him that seeketh, attain it; and as to him that hath refused to seek it -- verily, God is Self-Sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 85.)

2. 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-Aqdas*, p. 73.)

3. Knowledge is love. Study, listen to exhortations, think, try to understand the wisdom and greatness of God. The soil must be fertilized before the seed can be sown.

(*Star of the West Vol. 20*, No. 10, p. 314; cited in *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, p. 204)

4. To deepen in the Cause means to read the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Master so thoroughly as to be able to give it to others in its pure form. There are many who have some superficial idea of what the Cause stands for. They, therefore, present it together with all sorts of ideas that are their own. As the Cause is still in its early days we must be most careful lest we fall under this error and injure the Movement we so much adore.

5. There is no limit to the study of the Cause. The more we read the writings the more truths we can find in them and the more we will see that our previous notions were erroneous.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 25 August, 1926; cited in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 565.)

6. You should prepare yourselves for this great task by trying to grasp the true meaning of the teachings and not just merely accepting them as something you are taught. They are like a wonderful new world of thought just beginning to be explored, and when we realize that Bahá'u'lláh has brought teachings and laws for a thousand years to come, we can readily see that each new generation may find some greater meaning in the writings than the ones gone before did.

(14 October 1942 to the Children of Stanley Bolton; cited in *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, pg. 225)

7. If the younger Bahá'í generation, in whom Shoghi Effendi has great hopes, take the pain of studying the Cause deeply and thoroughly, read its history, find its underlying principles and become both well informed and energetic, they surely can achieve a great deal. It is upon their shoulders that the Master has laid the tremendous work of teaching. They are the ones to raise the call of the Kingdom and arouse the people from slumber. If they fail the Cause is doomed to stagnation....

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India and Burma, 26 April, 1923; cited in *The Compilation of Compilations vol II*, p. 417.)

8. They have to be taught the habit of studying the Cause constantly, for the more we read the Words the more will the truth they contain be revealed to us.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, 24 November, 1932; cited in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 562.)

9. Success will crown the efforts of the friends on the home front when they meditate on the teaching, pray fervently for divine confirmations for their work, study the teachings so they may carry the spirit to the seeker, and then act, -- and above all persevere in action. When these steps are followed, and the teaching work carried on sacrificially and with devoted enthusiasm, the Faith will spread rapidly.

(Shoghi Effendi, 11 March, 1956, *Directives from the Guardian*, p. 71.)

10. Another essential thing is that those who do embrace the Faith should be constantly urged to study the literature of the Cause. It is not sufficient that our numbers should

increase, we want people whose faith stands on a rock and no trial can move. We want people who in turn arise and carry the message to other people and guide other souls.

(From letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, 13 March, 1932; cited in *Bahá'í News*, No. 64, July 1932, p. 4; *Lights of Guidance*, p. 567.)

11. It is also very important to hold study classes and go deep in the Teachings. A great harm is done by starting to teach without being firmly grounded in the literature. 'Little knowledge is dangerous' fully applies to the teaching work. The friends should read the Writings and be able to quote from the Tablets when discussing subjects pertaining to the Faith.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 9 May, 1932; cited in *Bahá'í News*, No.67, October 1932, p. 4; *Lights of Guidance*, p. 565.)

12. The Cause needs more Bahá'í scholars, people who not only are devoted to it and believe in it and are anxious to tell others about it, but also who have a deep grasp of the Teachings and their significance, and who can correlate its beliefs with the current thoughts and problems of the people of the world.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 21 October 1943; cited in *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, pg. 225)

13. Another essential thing is that those who do embrace the Faith should be constantly urged to study the literature of the Cause. It is not sufficient that our numbers should increase, we want people whose faith stands on a rock and no trial can move. We want people who will in turn arise and carry the Message to other people and guide other souls.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 13 April 1932 to a Local Spiritual Assembly and an individual believer; cited in *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, p. 215.)

14. Those who participate in such a campaign, whether in an organizing capacity, or as workers to whose care the execution of the task itself has been committed, must, as an essential preliminary to the discharge of their duties, thoroughly familiarize themselves with the various aspects of the history and teachings of their Faith. In their efforts to achieve this purpose they must study for themselves, conscientiously and painstakingly, the literature of their Faith, delve into its teachings, assimilate its laws and principles, ponder its admonitions, tenets and purposes, commit to memory certain of its exhortations and prayers, master the essentials of its administration, and keep abreast of its current affairs and latest developments. They must strive to obtain, from sources that are authoritative and unbiased, a sound knowledge of the history and tenets of Islam -- the source and background of their Faith -- and approach reverently and with a mind purged from preconceived ideas the study of the Qur'án which, apart from the sacred scriptures of the Bábí and Bahá'í Revelations, constitutes the only Book which can be

regarded as an absolutely authenticated Repository of the Word of God. They must devote special attention to the investigation of those institutions and circumstances that are directly connected with the origin and birth of their Faith, with the station claimed by its Forerunner, and with the laws revealed by its Author.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 49.)