
Moderation in the religion

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question:¹ What is the intent by al-Wasat (Moderation) in the religion?

Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)²: Moderation in the religion is that one doesn't go to the extreme therein where as he foreruns that which Allaah (عزوجل)³ stipulated. Nor does he omit anything there from and consequently diminishes what Allaah (تبارك وتعالى)⁴ has laid down.

Moderation in the religion is to adhere strictly to the way of the Prophet, (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)⁵. Ghuloo (Extremism) in the religion is to precede that and Taqseer (Negligence) is to not reach it.

An example of that is a man says: "I'm going to pray the entire night and not sleep from now on because Salaat is from the most virtuous acts of worship therefore I love that I remain praying the entire night." We say: This person is an extremist in the religion of Allaah and is not upon the truth.

This (incident) occurred during the time of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Some individuals gathered together and one from amongst them said: "I'm going to pray and not sleep." The other said: "I'm going to fast and not break it." The third said: "I'm not ever going to get married."

So that which they said reached the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), so he, (عليه الصلاة والسلام)⁶ said: **"What is wrong with some people who say such and such (a thing). I fast and I break my fast, I pray and sleep and I marry women. So whoever goes against my Sunnah (i.e. way) is not from me."**⁷

¹ This is a question taken from Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen's (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Rasaail (vol.1/pg42-43).

² (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

³ (عزوجل) (Azza wa Jaal) Mighty and Majestic is He

⁴ (تبارك وتعالى) (Tabaraka wa Ta'ala) The Blessed and the Most High

⁵ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

⁶ (عليه الصلاة والسلام) (Alayhi 'I-salat wa 'I-Salam) Upon him prayer and peace

⁷ Saheeh Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

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These people exceeded the bounds and thus the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), freed himself from them because they turned away from his Sunnah which entailed fasting and breaking the fast, praying (at night) and sleeping and marrying women.

As for the lethargic person: Then he is one who says: "I have no need or desire in performing supererogatory acts of worship. I do not perform them but rather I only perform the obligatory acts of worship." It is probable that he will fall short in the obligatory acts. So this is the lethargic person.

The moderate one is he who treads upon what the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his rightly guided predecessors were on.

Another example: In front of three men is a Muslim Faasiq (Evil Muslim). So one of them says: "I'm not going to give this Faasiq the salaam, I'm boycotting him, staying far away from him and I'm not going to say one word to him."

The second says: "I'm going to walk and accompany him, give him the salaam, smile in his face, invite him (to my house or outings), respond to his invitations and so on and he is just like a righteous person to me."

The third says: "I hate this person due to the evil he is upon; however I love him for his 'Eemaan (belief). I will not boycott except if that will be a means in his rectification. If that isn't going to help in rectifying him, instead it will cause him to increase in his evil, and then I will not do it."

So we say: The first was immoderate and extreme, the second was remiss and negligent and the third was moderate.

And like this is how we judge all the other acts of worship and interactions with the creation. The people are between negligence, extremism and moderation regarding them.

A third example: A man is like a prisoner to his woman. She directs him any which way she pleases. He doesn't stop her from committing evil nor does he encourage her with good. She has dominated his intellect and she has become the one who has guardianship and supervision over him.

Another man is tyrannical and haughty with his wife. He doesn't care about her and it is as though she is more inferior to him than a servant.

The third man is mediate. He deals with her just as Allaah and His messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) have commanded him to. Allaah says: **[And they (women) have rights (over their husbands**

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as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable.]⁸

And the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: "No believing man should hate a believing woman (e.g. such as his wife). If he dislikes a characteristic from her he will be pleased with another."⁹

So the last individual is moderate, the first is (seriously) negligent in dealing with his wife and the second is extreme.

And the remaining actions and acts of worship are based upon this scale, i.e. either being mediate, negligent or extreme.

⁸ سورة البقرة – Soorah al-Baqarah [2:228]

⁹ Saheeh Muslim