

Narrations of the Salaf about Sincerity, Showing Off and the Love of Fame

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Taken from the book: 'Min Akhbaar-is-Salaf'

Ayoob As-Sakhtayaani used to pray the night prayer, and he would conceal this. If morning arrived, he would raise his voice as if he only awoke at that hour. (Sifat-us-Safwah: 3/492)

Abdus Samad ibn Abdil Waarith said:

Hawshab would cry and say: My name has reached the Masjid Al-Jaami'.

It is reported upon Abul Aaliyah that if more than three people were to gather and sit around him, he would get up. (At-Tawaadu':47)

It is reported upon Bishr ibn Al-Haarith that he said:

O Allaah. If you have made me famous to expose me on the day of judgement, then strip it away from me. (Az-Zuhd by Al-Bayhaqi: 147)

Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyaad said: No one loves leadership except that they are envious, transgress, search for the faults of the people and hate that anyone be mentioned with good. (Jaami' Bayaan Al-'ilm: 1/652)

Abdullaah ibn Al-Mubaarak said:

Sufyaan Ath-Thawri said to me: Beware of fame. Everyone I met warned me about fame. (As-Siyar: 7/260)

Abul 'Aaliyyah said: The Companions of Muhammad said to me:

"Do not perform an action for other than Allaah, as He will leave you to the one whom you have acted for." (Al-Musannaf: 7/207)

Hamdoon Al-Qassar was asked:

"Why is the speech of the Salaf more beneficial than ours?"

He replied: This is because they spoke to give ascendancy to Islam and to please The Most Merciful; whereas we speak to give ascendancy to ourselves, to seek after the worldly life and please the creation.

(Safwatus Safwah: 2/122)

Muhammad ibn Al-Qaasim said:

I accompanied Muhammad ibn Aslam for more than 20 years, and I never saw him pray two supererogatory rak'ahs, except on the day of Jum'ah. On one occasion, I heard him take an oath: "By Allaah If I was able to pray a supererogatory prayer where my two angels could not see me; I would do so out of fear of showing off. He used to enter his house and close his door. I was never aware of what he would get up to until I heard his young son conversing how he used to cry. However,

when he used to go outside, he would wash his face and apply kuhl, and no sign of him crying would be visible. He used to provide for a people and clothe them, but when he would send his Messenger, he used to say: Make sure they don't know who sent you. (As-Siyar: 12/201)

Hurmulah said:

I heard Ash-Shaafi'ee say:

I hoped to be rewarded for all the knowledge that I possessed and that the people had learnt from me, but (I desired) that they would not praise me. (As-Siyar: 10/55)

Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyaad said:

"Whosoever is saddened by loneliness and feels tranquil around the people, is not safe from Riyaa.

(As-Siyar: 8/436)

Abu Haazim said:

"Hide your good deeds more than you hide your bad deeds." (Al-Musannaf: 7/195)

Al-Khuraybee said:

They used to prefer that a man hide his righteous deeds, (to the extent), that his wife or anyone else wouldn't be aware of it. (As-Siyar: 9/349)

Wakee' said:

Whoever inquires about something and he already understands it, then this is a part of showing off.

(Al-Jaami' Li Akhlaaq Ar-Raawi: 1/ 197)

'Aqeel ibn Ma'qil said:

I heard my paternal uncle, Wahb ibn Munabbih, say:

Three signs of a hypocrite: when his alone he is lazy, he is energetic when in the company others and he chases after praise in all of his affairs.

Three signs of an envious person: he backbites the one whom he is jealous of, if he were to meet him, he flatters him, and he is delighted at his misfortunes. (Al-Hilyah: 4/47)

When 'Abdur Rahman ibn Mahdi rose from a gathering, he was followed by the people. (Upon this) he said: O people! Do not follow me. (Siyar: 9/207)

Abu 'Awn said:

When the righteous people met one another they would advise each other and if they were absent they would write to one another, (with the following):

Whoever does an act seeking the hereafter then Allaah will suffice him in his worldly affairs, whoever corrects what is between him and Allaah, then Allaah will correct that which is between him and the people, and whoever corrects his behaviour in private, then Allaah will correct his situation publicly. (Al-Musannaf: 7/162)

Bishr ibn Al-Haarith said:

The (person) that loves fame has not feared Allaah.

He also said:

Don't act in order to be mentioned, and hide your good deeds like you hide your bad ones. (As-Siyar: 10/476)

Sa'eed ibn Al-Haddaad said:

Nothing hinders from the path of Allaah like seeking praise and status. (As-Siyar: 14/ 214)

Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyaadh said:

Whoever loves to be mentioned, will not be mentioned; and whoever dislikes to be mentioned, then he will be mentioned. (As-Siyar: 8/432)

Sufyaan Ath-Thawri:

Safety is that you don't desire to be known. (As-Siyar: 7/257)