

Remember (9)

Sixth Verse: *“Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.”* (Hebrews 13:7).

This wonderful verse, which many memorize, carries many:

1- **Good role models are very important for our spiritual life.** We all need to follow good role models, those who lived the commandment of the Bible and preached it, not only by preaching the word, but by living it as well. That’s to say we should be able to see, through their lives, how they lived the Bible and how they followed the Biblical commandment. These role models demonstrate to us how God works within the hearts that faithfully love Him.

2- **It is important to read stories of saints.** We should study their sayings, experience, and epistles recorded in the books at our disposal like “Paradise of the Fathers” and other books of patristics and church history. There are many spiritual comforting stories and lessons in their conduct. The strife of the saints is a treasure that revitalizes our own strife and inspires us with more power and perseverance to continue our spiritual journey to the end like them.

3- **This verse points out to the outcome of their conduct, not just to the beginning or some sporadic snapshots of their lives. Likewise, we ought to persevere in our strife to the end.** In reality, one of the most critical matters in the spiritual life is being steadfast in our path and to complete our strife to the last breath. It is not enough to just have a good start! What benefits do we have if we start and then stop, or deviate from the straight path? The people of Israel started leaving Egypt and followed the Lord, but the majority didn’t make it to the promise land because of discontent, lack of faith and evil lusts (1 Corinthians 10). Some of the Galatians have begun in the spirit then continued in the flesh, so St Paul rebuked them (Galatians 3). Thus means that we must complete our strife with patience and vigilance till we reach the end.

4- **We are not expected to imitate the saints in every detail of their lives or their outwardly appearance.** We only need to follow their inner heart and faith. We need to follow their inner faith in their lives, their submission and thanksgiving, their courage in witnessing to the truth, patience, faithfulness, sacrifice, fleeing from sin, taking responsibility, etc.

The conduct of the saints is a genuine reference. We must measure our spiritual lives against theirs so that we don’t deviate from the safe path that they walked. Their paths was full of humility, patience, worship, praise, continuous nourishment from the divine word, submission, and discipleship. Therefore, we must always refer back to their approach and the teachings which we inherited from our Fathers and spiritual leaders. Do we follow their path in our lives or not?

5- **The word of God makes saints.** When they go into its depth, live it and follow it in their lives, it becomes their strength, edification, light to their path, comfort to their hearts and weapons in their strife. Therefore, when we remember our Sainly Fathers who spoke to us with the word of God, we remember the importance of His words, to be nourished by it, armed by it, conduct ourselves according to it, and preach it to generations to come.

6- **Our beloved Church applied this verse practically in her worship.** Our church is the only one in the world that reads the stories of the saints in the daily liturgies from the “Synexaium”, a book that has short stories for the life of saints, prophets, apostles, and martyrs. Many other Traditional churches [Apostolic] has similar books to the Synexaium, but they are kept on the shelves of their libraries and are not read to the people during worship. However, our Coptic Orthodox Church, in its wisdom, has preserved the readings of the Synexaium in her daily liturgies as an original biblical tradition, to remember our spiritual leaders and contemplate upon their strife and follow their conduct. (To be continued)



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