

# The Etiquettes of the Way

By Al-Quṭb Abū Madyan al-Tilimsāni

1. The pleasure of life is but in the company of the impoverished – they are the sultans, the masters, the princes.
2. So be in their company and behave well in their presence. And wherever they put you – even in the front, leave your interest behind.
3. And seize time and be always in their presence. And know that satisfaction (riḍā) is specifically given to people who attend.
4. Cling to silence unless you are questioned. Then say, “I have no knowledge,” and be concealed in ignorance.
5. Do not look at faults unless you see a clear fault appear in you, but [though] it is concealed.
6. Lower your head and ask forgiveness without cause. Stand apologizing in just treatment.
7. If a fault appears from you, then apologize and lift the face of your apology for what has flowed in you from you.
8. And say, “Your insignificant slave is more entitled to your pardon.” Act kindly in forgiveness and adhere to gentleness, O fuqarā!
9. Take for granted their goodness for that is their nature. Fear neither overtaking nor harm from them.
10. Always be generous in singing the praises of the brothers in the senses and the meaning. Lower the eye if someone slips.

11. Watch the Shaykh carefully in his states,  
perhaps a trace of his approval will be seen on you.
12. Advance seriousness and leap to serve him.  
Perhaps he will be pleased, and beware lest you become irritated.
13. The pleasure of the Creator is in his pleasure and his obedience.  
He will be pleased with you, so then beware of leaving it.
14. And know that the Path of the People is obscure needing study,  
and the state of the one who claims it today is as you see.
15. When will I see them and where will I see them?  
When will my ear hear some news of them?
16. Whom do I have to help me, and how is it possible for someone  
like me to compete with them in wells about which I do not  
recognize impurity?
17. I love them and treat them gently and I offer them  
my heart's blood – especially a party of them.
18. A people of noble qualities – wherever they sit,  
a fragrance remains in the place after them.
19. Taşawwuf is guided by their character in the Paths.  
Excellent harmony is theirs that delights my eye.
20. They are the people of my love and my lovers who are among  
those who trail the coat-tails of might in magnificence.
21. May I be reunited with them in Allāh,  
and my wrong actions forgiven and pardoned in Him.
22. Then blessings be upon the Chosen, Sayyiduna Muḥammad,  
the best of those who fulfilled and who vowed.