

*"Blessed is the spot..... where mention of God hath been made"*

# TEACHING NEWS BULLETIN

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## "Confirmation".

### The Meaning.

To become a Baha'i is to believe in God through all of the Prophets of by-gone ages and particularly through the twin Manifestations of God in this Age, the Bab and Baha'u'llah. It is to understand and accept the fact that whatsoever has been revealed by Their Pens is of God and is, therefore, divinely inspired. It is, in consequence of this fact, to accept the Station of 'Abdu'l-Baha, the centre of Baha'u'llah's Covenant, the perfect Exemplar of His Teachings, and to adhere to every phrase of His sacred Will and Testament, which establishes the Baha'i Administrative Order with the Twon Institutions of Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice at its peak. To become a Baha'i is to believe, not to join. To become a Baha'i is the forging of an eternal link between the individual and God through the Divine Messengers of this Age. To become a Baha'i is to be confirmed in one's own heart that Baha'u'llah and the Bab are "the True Ones from God". Mere intellectual acceptance of the Teachings of the Faith is not sufficient, spiritual exaltation resulting from the reading of the Writings or the Prayers is not enough. To be a Baha'i means that one has opened his heart and mind completely and has by study, prayer and meditation come to recognize and accept all of the fundamental verities of



the Faith to such a degree that one feels impelled to turn to the people and give to them as well the Message of Baha'u'llah.

### The Process of Spiritual Birth.

"Rebirth", as Christ termed it, takes place in somewhat the same pattern as physical birth. It is the recognition of this fact and the way in which we apply its implications that will in large part determine the success with which our teaching work goes forward. The stages of spiritual growth must be recognised and the specific needs of each stage met so that at the appointed time the individual is indeed born spiritually.

In one sense, the Baha'i who tells the enquirer of the Cause and who helps him to study and understand the Faith is in like relationship to that seeker as a mother is to her child. In our teaching work we must recognize this spiritual link between the seeker and the Baha'i, or Baha'is, who teach him. After the enquirer has been attracted to the Faith, care should be taken to deepen his initial interest, to broaden his knowledge of the history of the Cause, the Station of its Founders, and the fundamental verities it enshrines. (For full details of the methods of deepening the knowledge of the seeker, see p. 28 of the Teaching Manual - and for notes on the process of Confirmation, see p. 32 - 34).

The stages of spiritual birth are basically these:

1. First contact with the Faith.
2. Deepening of initial interest.
3. Widening of knowledge of the Cause and its Teachings.
4. Love of the Founders of the Faith and intellectual acceptance of Their Message.
5. Growing desire to give the Message to other people and to serve the Faith.
6. The dawn of real belief and activity.



It is up to us as Baha'is to fill the requirements of the contact at every stage by loving and consistent support of his growing joy in the knowledge that the Faith is true. Though the Writings will give him a knowledge of the Teachings, it is from the Baha'is he meets that he will come to realise of the Baha'i way of life. We must transmit to them the happiness we know in being a Baha'i; we should share with them the news of the triumphs of the Faith all over the world; we should give them an idea of the tremendous significance which underlies the spreading of the Message in this day; our enthusiasm for the Administrative Order and our love of the Guardian should be infused into them by constant and joyful emphasis.

When, by every means in our power, we have taught our contacts the full details of the Faith and given them sufficient spiritual food that they desire to become Baha'is, it is then our responsibility to make sure that their Faith is firm and secure in God and Baha'u'llah, and not in us or our fellow believers. Personality inevitably enters into our teaching work, but in no instance should the Faith of a new believer be dependent on his "spiritual mother". As a mother weans a child, so must we help our "spiritual children" to become self-reliant and spiritually independent of personalities. Every new Baha'i should be encouraged to become the supporter of new contacts, rather than a leaner on the older Baha'is who helped him to investigate the Faith.

#### In Conclusion.

The aim of every Baha'i in his teaching work should, in the words of The Guardian, be as follows:

"Let him not be content until he has infused into his spiritual child so deep a longing as to impel him to arise independently in his turn and devote his energies to the quickening of other souls and the upholding of the laws and principles laid down by his newly adopted Faith."