The Tablighi Quagmire & The Vanity Ulama

(Constructive reading for sociable and concerned Muslims)

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A Tablighi from a very prominent tablighi family in Isipingo Beach (south of Durban city) being escorted by a representative of the South African Police following a successful raid on their premises.

(Source: 60k pre-Rica'd sim cards found, Yogas Nair, Independent Newspapers, dated 8 November 2011. Photo credit: Sibusiso Ndlovu)

Introduction:

The Tablighi Jamaat in South Africa is characterised by:

- Grass roots effort.
- Substantively unstructured.
- Lack of Scientific advancement.
- Very limited knowledge based programs.
- Always seeking new recruits.
- Colossal effort to remain at grass roots level that risks drawing away from scientific advancement.

Their approach to dawah (invitation) involves:

1. Repetitive and institutionalised mosque camping throughout the year, travelling through towns and cities, and across countries and continents.
2. Repetitive visitations to Muslims homes to (in their words) invite.

Institutionalised mosque camping and repetitive visitations to Muslims homes are justified in their minds by an artificial dichotomy between deen and dunya, that is to say, between religion and world.

In over 30 years the Tablighis have:

- Institutionalised mosque camping,
- Made a fist long beard obligatory,
- Formalised the wearing of the kurtah,
- Repeatedly suppressed the advancement of women as income earners and as leaders and active role players in society beyond the home, and
- Marginalised society by emphasising the nikab.

A Breeding Ground for Shrewdness, Cunning and Deceit:

The common misconception about the Tablighi jamaat is that they are backward. What appears to be backward is an unstructured melting pot of old stalwarts and new recruits, all subsumed in the same simplistic mimicry. There is no openness to any kind of structure. Meeting are always conducted in hushed tones, usually in isolated corners of the musjid.

On a Thursday night they will come to your home, give a brief talk/lecture and then they will invite you to a programme in the musjid after esha salaah (women are not invited, by the way). When you go to the mosque, the speaker stands up after esha salaah and begins his talk. And what is the talk? The talk is the same talk and invitation that was already given to you in your own home when they visited your house at suppertime, before esha salaah.

This whole exercise is repeated week after week and year after year, and it's been going on for decades (no exaggeration). It's like a messenger that came to your home and told you that an important letter had arrived for you from a distant land and that this letter took many months to reach you and it changed many hands and that its importance is of the utmost. When you ask for the letter you are told the letter will be presented to you in the musjid. So you go the musjid and there you meet your neighbour and other people from your locality and they too have come to receive this letter. After esha salaah, a speaker stands up and begins to talk about the letter. He does not open the letter and read it out to you; he only talks about the arrival of the letter and talks about its importance. Then he talks about the people whose hands the letter exchanged and he gives a brief account of their personalities and their trials and tribulations. All these side stories create and build up the excitement of the letter.

After a while you realise that the letter is not getting opened. Naturally as the recipient of the letter you are getting frustrated and becoming bored with this speech, because you already heard of the letters importance and where it came from and how many hands it exchanged, etc when the jamaat came to your home at supper time before esha salaah and told you about it. Eventually the speaker ends his talk and everyone goes home. The letter was never opened.

Again next week, there is a knock on the door and again there is a man standing there with a very serious and dire expression on his face. What? What is it? What has happened? What is the trouble and the urgency? Again you told that a letter is awaiting you in the musjid and that it came from a distant land and that it exchanged many hands to reach you, and the strange thing about some Muslims is that they keep going back to receive the letter - the same letter that was not opened last week after esha salaah. And week after week he goes back and week after week the letter is still unopened after esha salaah. And again the strange thing about this group of Muslims is that the recipient of the letter, in the language of the CIA, is brain washed to the point that he forgets about opening the letter and he too joins the speaker after esha salaah. So come next Thursday he puts on his turban and kurtah and he is now joining the jamaat going from Muslim home to Muslim home in different localities, to tell more people about an important letter that is awaiting them in the mosque after esha salaah - the same letter that he forgot to ask to be opened.

So my readers I want to tell you that the letter is the message and the message is the favour of Allah and the favour of Allah is the honour of prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) to be its messenger and the honour of prophet Muhammad is the Quran and its teachings of nature, science, morality, social development, charity, etc.

Initially, I and so many others like me, having attended many tablighi programmes, had drawn the deduction that the tablighis

were backward in their repetitive exercise of Muslim house visiting to notify of a letter and then week after week the letter is not opened. But I have prepared this essay to say to people stop calling the tablighis backward. They know they are not going to open the letter. The letter (the Quran) is structured and the place that exemplifies the letter (that is, the Quran) is the university with its diverse faculties and specialised department in the sciences and social sciences, but in our homes and musjids we must make the effort, beyond tilawat, to read the meanings of the Quran and to use reason and logic to extract and apply its scientific knowledge.

In many different cultures and throughout history you will find that when people coveted greed and power, the best hiding place for their agenda was humility. To call a people backward is to place humility on them. The backward label is tolerated by the tablighis because they understand that when people are laughing at them then the people's scepticism and suspicion is not on them. Herein is the vital boost and freedom that the tablighis enjoy to spread and grow their jamaat quickly into thousands of followers without opposition. They become a cultural tour de force in their own right.

I will tell you one thing that has happened in the last 30 years. More and more people are joining the farz salaah in the musjid. And the tablighis are not just aware of this they want this. They genuinely want to have the mosques filled for farz salaah and this is not a bad thing. It is good but if you stay at home and read salaah in your home that's also not a bad thing too. If this is their true objective then look at their modi operandi - their methods. The tablighis certainly know that the call to salaah is the task of muezin, in the azaan that he gives 5 times a day. Nonetheless, if more people want to make further personal calls to the salaah it is welcomed. However, the tablighis are not openly and simply saying 'come to the musjid for farz salaah'. Instead of simply saying 'come to the musjid for farz salaah' the tablighis are calling you to a letter that is never opened and to an artificial dichotomy between deen (religion) and dunya (world). Why? Is it that they seek an agenda beyond the Farz salaah? The tablighis modi operandi and their approach to dawah that I have stated above have a social cost attached to it. The social cost is that the tablighi jamaat becomes a breeding ground for shrewdness, cunning, and deceit and shrewdness, cunning, and deceit are a blackened psychological foundation to dominance, control and amassing power in followers.

Unstructured and Simple:

In the last 30 years of the tablighis jamaat there are no ongoing structured workshops and structured symposiums and conferences on the sciences of the Quran and on the implementation of social development programmes. Week after week, year after year and decade after decade they still preaching an artificial dichotomy

between deen and dunya and they still recruiting more people to camp in the mosque and to go from Muslim house to Muslim house to call men to the musjid for a letter that is never opened.

Simplicity is essential to reach a larger audience. People come from different backgrounds and culture and to satisfy everyone at the same time the best approach is to keep things simple. Hence their book readings in the musjid after the sunnat and nafil salaah is all but parrot reading. A properly structured book reading with discussions, analysis and references for self study and individual intellectual progression lets the seeker of knowledge go off on his own quest. But if people go off on their own quests then there are fewer people in the tablighi activities and gatherings and that means less control and less power.

A resilient virus is hard to kill because it multiplies and spreads so fast. And why does a virus spread and multiply so fast? Because it is substantively simplistic and unstructured. Similarly tablighis deliberately and shrewdly remain simplistic and unstructured to spread and increase followers at the lowest cost and in the shortest time.

Another social cost of the tablighis unstructured and simplistic traits are that it lends them a greater propensity toward militancy, because nearly everything becomes a black and white issue. Structure, which is the letter opened (the Quran read and studied) shows the many shades of grey between that acts as a barriers against thoughtless and reckless actions. Not everyone one in the tablighi jamaat has a tendency toward militancy. Many are reserved and very passive in their religious stance.

Artificial Dichotomy between Deen and Dunya:

The tablighi mindset carries an artificial dichotomy between deen (religion) and dunya (world) and the tablighis are ritualistic toward their mosque camping and Muslim house visits. When people are not taking part in these activities and when fewer people are gathering for these activities then deen is decreasing. This is the way they think. It matters not to them that the letter of Allah is not opened and that their book reading is all but parrot like with no structured discussions and analysis and no references, and no petitioning for self-study at home or in an academic institute with the objective of individual intellectual progression.

Those that don’t take part are watched and targeted because in their mind they are moving away from deen. It is the word deen that is used repeatedly to brainwash their followers. It does not matter to them that you are frustrated by the stagnation and the unstructured character of their activities. Their mindset prevents them from seeing the frustration. They only see, what to them is, a decrease in deen. The truth is that that if you not

ritualistically participating in their activities then you out of their control and influence and that means less power for them.

Once again I want to say to people to stop calling tablighis backward in their repetitive Muslim house visits and lecture programs after esha salah. It's all designed this way to amass power in followers. The target, the dream and the prize for the tablighis is power and control over society in ideology, in religiosity, in business and trade, in politics and in law.

On the positive side another thing that has come out is that the tablighis have contributed to a revival of Islamic culture - the attachment to the Musjid (and to cleanliness, morality and sobriety), the pulsating and throbbing overseas jamaats criss-crossing continents and airport terminals in a blanket of white and their dawah (invitation) has contributed to fostering an Islamic ethos, especially for those Muslims living in the West. This contribution is acknowledged. They are aware of their contribution and success and this has swelled some of their ranks with pride and conceit to the point that they have come to believe that their narrowness and substantively unstructured approach to religion is paramount and superior to the sciences – the same sciences that the west and the Jews and Christians have mastered (not to say the Muslim are not capable of scientific advancement). This kind of attitude is dangerous. Some tablighis regard the sciences as mundane knowledge of dunya that is inferior to the knowledge of what in their dichotomised mindset is religion(deen). They don't realise that they doing a disfavour to the Umma (the global Muslim community). The sciences are rooted in the Quran and the Quran is the structured message of Allah and the honour of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) to be its messenger.

The spill over effect of the deen and dunya dichotomy is that it reaches into Muslims schools and it affects the way teachers and learners interact. In some South African Muslim schools the excitement is lost in respect of academic endeavour. Learners become less interested and less competitive in the sciences. As concerned members of the community what we don't want is for our children to matriculate having no competitive advantage. We want leaders and achievers. Thus we find that many progressive young Muslim parents sense this and so they opt to send their children to non-Islamic schools. But Muslims schools do have the versatility to overcome any stagnation that may periodically set in and then to adopt integrated approaches to learning.

The Highest Form of Islam:

If Tablighis keep separating Deen from Dunya and expressly tell the people that Deen is always superior to Dunya and that the best possible way of life is the mimicry of the 7th century Muslim community of the Prophet's Medina then why do Tablighis, such as shown in the police photo on the first page of this essay, sell cell phone sim cards in their family businesses? The prophet did

not use a cell phone. Why do Tablighis use cell phones to organise and network their tablighi gatherings? Why do their wives go to a westernised hospital to deliver their babies and why do their wives take a bath from hot water pouring out of an electrified geyser? The prophet did not have an electric geyser in his humble home. Why are Tablighis so clever to employ the best westernised innovations in their own homes, for the benefit of their own wives and children and also use the same westernised innovations, such as applied and conductive electricity in their mosques that they build and patronize and yet at the same time they bark out from the Pulpit, hypocritically using a electric microphone, that Deen and Dunya are separate and that the former is superior? Why be progressive and electrified in the pursuit of money and success in business and then be stagnated in the musjid and for the success in the life after death? Why don't they tell their children that since they mimic the Nabi in the musjid, in the deen and in the sunnah, then in their family business they must also mimic their grandfathers and the prophet that did not sell cell phone sim cards in the 1950s and 1960s and hundreds of years ago? Isn't that a consistent principle to be traditional and true to ones ancestors and teachers? Or are they instead money minded and shrewd, employing double standards?

If Tablighis can drive a car then can't they see its innovation in helping their way of life? If innovation in science of dunya helped their deen then can't it be so that Deen and Dunya are not really separate after all but rather reflections of each other and the greatest authority in Islam is not to mimic the 7th century Islam of the Prophet's Medina but that which is enunciated in the 30th ayah (verse) of the 30th surah (chapter) of the Quran which states:

30:30 So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know.

فَأَقِمْ
وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ **حَنِيفًا** ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ
عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

[This and all other Quran translations are from Saheeh International]

As per authentic hadith (prophetic report) in Sahih al Bukhari (hadith number 298) Fitrah, from the above Quran verse, is the

natural inclination of every human being to worship Allah from birth. This lesson from the prophet implies that nature itself, without Quran and without Sunnah of the prophet Muhammad, teaches to believe in one Allah and also that every human being is born in the pure state of Islam, which means that everyone is born a Muslim. It is your parents and the culture that you grow up in that that either keeps you in Islam or takes you out of Islam as is what happens to Evangelical Christians and Hindus. At the end of this Quran Ayah (verse) Allah expressly states *'No Change there should be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion.'* This is the highest form of Islam. The word hanif is this one highlighted in red above: '**حَنِيفًا**'. To wit, Hanif is mentioned 10 times in the Quran in 10 different verses. Here are 5 more examples of hanif:

3:67 Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim [submitting to Allah]. And he was not of the polytheists.

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَٰكِن كَانَ **حَنِيفًا** مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

3:95 Say, "Allah has told the truth. So follow the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth; and he was not of the polytheists."

قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ ۗ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ **حَنِيفًا** وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

4:125 And who is better in religion than one who submits himself to Allah while being a doer of good and follows the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth? And Allah took Abraham as an intimate friend.

وَمَنْ
أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ **حَنِيفًا** ۗ وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا

6:161 Say, "Indeed, my Lord has guided me to a straight path - a correct religion - the way of Abraham, inclining toward truth. And he was not among those who associated others with Allah."

قُلْ
إِنَّنِي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيَمًا
مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ **حَنِيفًا** ۚ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

> *16:123 Then We revealed to you, [O Muhammad], to follow the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth; and he was not of those who associate with Allah.*

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنِ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ **حَنِيفًا** ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

As can be seen, the Saheeh International translation always uses the phrase 'Inclining toward truth' but the true Arabic word from Allah is hanif (**حَنِيفًا**).

Expressly and repeatedly, Allah says to the prophet Muhammad, to follow 'Ibrahima Hanifa' (**حَنِيفًا** إِبْرَاهِيمَ). To know more about what Hanif is I reference another hadith from Sahih al Bukhari (hadith number 169) which states that a contemporary of Prophet Muhammad, Zaid bin 'Amr bin Nufail, enquired about different religions on one of his travels. A Jewish and Christian scholar separately told him that Hanif is the religion of Prophet Abraham who was neither a Jew nor a Christian. As can be seen, this description from Zaid matches what Allah says in verse 3:67 (quoted above). What I want to establish here is the true religious hierarchy in Islam. The highest authority is Fitrah and Hanif. Then comes the sunnah of prophet Muhammad. The sunnah must always be interpreted within the overarching framework of Fitrah and Hanif Islam and not the other ways around. And since Fitrah and Hanif are drawn directly from nature, and nature includes the world around us and above us in the skies, which is to say it is Dunya, then it means that not only does Dunya play a part in Deen (religion) but it in fact dictates how to regulate and interpret religion over and above the sunnah of prophet Muhammad and not the other ways around, which is the shrewd and hypocritical way of the Tablighis. Many Muslims lovingly aggrandize prophet Muhammad as the highest of God's prophets but clearly Allah states that Muhammad too must follow another and that other is none other than Abraham, the friend (khalil) of Allah, as ayah 125 of the 4th surah of the Quran (quoted above) states:

وَ اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ اخَلِيلً (And Allah took Abraham as an intimate friend).

The Mirror of Allah and the Vanity Ulama:

The enlightened and broad scientific framework of Fitrah and Hanif Islam is enunciated in verse 164 of surah al-Baqarah (2nd surah of the Quran):

> *2:164 Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the [great] ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every [kind of] moving creature, and [His] directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are **signs** for a people who use reason.*

إِنَّ

فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ

وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنفَعُ

النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ

الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ

وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ

وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

At the end of the above quoted verse the word ayat (آيَاتٍ) is highlighted in red. Elsewhere in the Quran, such as in the second verse of the 8th surah, Allah calls the verses 'ayah' and accordingly that is what devout Muslims also call the verses of the Quran. Ayah is singular and ayat is plural in the Arabic language. As can be seen from this ayah (verse) 2:164, the phenomena of nature such as alternation of day and night, the Oceans, the clouds, the wind and the rain are also called ayat. Ayah 2:164 clearly shows that nature like the verses in the Quran are also ayat.

The knowledge of the Quran is diverse. It includes the instructions to pay zakat, to establish salah, to fast and the Quran also advises and commands us to morality, to be righteous and to be believers. Beyond this the knowledge of the Quran is a reflection of the complex structures found in nature. It describes

natural phenomena and it also calls these phenomena ayat. The Quran, in many places, is like a small mirror reflecting the light from a greater source, which is the greater ayat of Allah, which is nature and the dunya all around us. To study these complex structures of nature from the Quran itself and from direct scientific observation of nature the Muslims must organise themselves into diverse structured groups, including hundreds of specialists groups and numerous generalists to facilitate integration of acquired knowledge which will lay the foundation for applied sciences and new inventions. Such endeavours will help up to strengthen the Umma both from within, through better services rendered and better cooperation amongst ourselves, and from without by using scientific technology to defend our Muslim civilisation from our enemies that seek to enslave and kill Muslims and to destroy Islam.

Muslims must be broad minded and embrace the dunya as a source of religious knowledge. Unfortunately tablighis have taken the narrow view that religious knowledge excludes the dunya because deen and dunya are separate for them. In their narrow reading of the Quran the Tablighis are like a person that takes the mirror of Allah and stares at it with pride. When they stare at the mirror in pride they become vain. Their teachers are what I call vanity ulama. Those others that go out in the world, not with narrowness, but a broad mindset read from nature in the reductionist science that they do. The scientists are the true ulama (scholars) of Allah. That is why Allah constantly implored the prophet and his followers to follow prophet Abraham. Abraham did not have the Quran ayats to teach him Iman (belief in Allah). He was the one who turned his gaze to the skies in search of his lord. That is to say, he turned to nature, to the great ayat of Allah, to teach him who his true lord is. The story is set out in 6 verses from the 6th surah of the Quran. I have written a more detailed book called 'Intelligent Design Symmetries & The Future of Islam' which explains this scientific approach to Islam in greater detail. You may find this book at the following website: https://www.scribd.com/doc/269092380/Intelligent-Design-Symmetries-The-Future-of-Islam. Here I will quote from pages 131-132:

'Abraham's discovery of God from studying the natural world is beautifully told in verses 74 to 79 of the 6th surah of the Quran. One night he began a search for his Lord from the natural surroundings. He wasn't meditating or searching within himself with his inner eye, which meant that he did not look upon himself as his own lord. He searched with his physical eye and the glitter of a rising star caught his gaze. "This is my Lord", he said, but soon afterwards he rejected the star after it fell back to earth (it set over the horizon). Then he fixed his gaze on the moon, a heavenly sphere more radiant that a sparkling star. It lights up the night and dispels darkness like a torch. "This is my Lord", he said, but the moon failed him when it too fell back to the earth (the moon set over the horizon). Then in the last stage of the

night he looked up again and an amazing light appeared to him over the eastern horizon and soon it lit up the entire sky and was more brilliant than the moon. As it rose up higher its light intensified until its radiance outshined the moon and all the stars. "This is my Lord; this is greater", he said. There is no physical light that shines upon the Earth equal or comparable to the sun. Then after noon the sun receded and began falling over the western sky. It too was failing just as the stars and the moon failed him the night before. He knew that he wouldn't find any greater torch than the sun because the sun was the greatest of them all but his search was not in vain because it ended with a profound new realization. Reason and logic prevailed over his outer senses. Abraham reasoned and he understood that everything that has a beginning, like the rising star, the rising moon and the rising sun has an end. The light of the stars, the moon and sun all have a beginning in their rise and end in their setting. He realized that, that which has both a beginning and end cannot create itself and with this realization came the deeper realization that the beginning, preservation and the end of the world is subjected to the will of one who has no beginning and has no end – an unborn, undying and ever present and ever living independent lord and God.'

Not surprisingly prophet Muhammad is reported to have said, as reported in Tirmidhi, that: *'Everything has its pinnacle and the pinnacle of the Qur'an is Surah al-Baqarah. In it there is an ayah which is the greatest in the Qur'an: Ayat al-Kursi'*. Surah Baqarah is the second surah of the Quran and Ayat al-Kursi is the 255th verse of this surah. Look carefully at the opening words of this greatest ayah:

'Allah - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence.'

The greatest ayah in its opening sentence says two things:
1. No god but Allah.
2. Allah is ever-living.

Indeed, I put forward to you that the great discovery of prophet Abraham in his survey of the star, the moon and the sun was that Allah is the true God and that Allah is ever-living just as ayat al-Kursi in its opening states.

Ayat al-Kursi goes on to say of Allah: *'the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth....His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not.'* The kursi is the footstool, hence the name of this ayah. Ayat al-Kursi is a comprehensive verse describing the attributes of Allah and Allah uses the descriptions of nature to magnify his greatness. All put together, the wisdom to take from this revelation is that the greatest ayah in the Quran points to nature and nature is also the

ayat of Allah. So again the point is reinforced that the Quran is the mirror of Allah reflecting the great light from Allah's greater Ayat in nature.

Verse 3:67 describes Abraham as Hanifa Muslima (حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا). Hanif Islam accesses nature (the dunya) directly and with this direct access we can impress upon the disbelieving world to say to them: look at the greatness of Islam and its tenets. We can use nature (the dunya) to show people that it is a creation from a single, high and mighty God and we can also use nature (dunya) to innovate new technologies to make life better for Muslims. This is the highest form of Islam.

If we leave out Hanif we have reduced ourselves to what Evangelical Christianity is today. Apart from the fact that these Christians are Trinitarians, believing that Jesus is part divine in a Trinity with God and the Holy Spirit, which makes them disbelievers in the true One God, they rely wholly on Jesus for their religion. No Jesus Christ and there is no salvation for them. Without Jesus Christ their religion has nothing solid to stand on. If Evangelical Christians were to say that nature teaches their faith then it destroys the divinity of Jesus Christ because it means that salvation existed before Jesus was born and they won't want to do that. Can the evangelical Christians compete with the great expanse of Islamic belief, in their narrowness of taking salvation from sin in the crucifixion of Jesus that they believe in and which the Quran refutes in 4:157? No. Then why must tablighis reduce Islam to the narrowness of Evangelical Christianity, thereby allowing the Christians to setup a false barrier to protect their false religion? If we allow ourselves to be reduced to the narrowness of how Tablighis interpret Quran and sunnah then the Evangelical Christians will say: 'You have your book, we have ours, neither has advantage over the other.' And they can also say: 'You have Muhammad and we have Jesus, the son of God, so we have an advantage.' Are the Muslims only to say such and such verses of the Quran refute the divinity of Jesus? No, we can say that and we can say more. In Fitrah and Hanif Islam we can have a higher platform to turn to nature and say that the true religion is read directly from nature because millions of people lived long before and after the times of both Jesus and Muhammad, and thereby did not have direct contact with them or their followers for hundreds of years, such as the natives of the Americas and many tribes in Asia and Africa. Religion existed at all times not just when Jesus and Muhammad lived and not just at those places where Jesus and Muhammad lived, but everywhere from China to Patagonia in South America and beyond in the skies above. Before the birth Jesus where in China was it written that salvation is in Jesus? Nowhere. So then the religion of the Evangelical Christians is narrow and not universal like Islam.

Conclusion:

In conclusion I want to say that participating in social development programs is good. Participating in dawah to the disbelievers is good. It is also good to invite for the farz salah. The truth is that you can spread deen without artificially creating a dichotomy between deen and dunya, which manifests itself in unstructured mosque camping, and without shrewd visitations to Muslim homes at suppertime.

We should all examine the diverse structure of nature (Allah's created universe) - the same structure that is mirrored in the verses of the Quran.

There is an old saying (which is scientifically truthful) that if you put a frog in pot of boiling water it will jump out - corrective action is instantaneous. But if you put a frog in a pot of cool water that is at room temperature and then put the pot with frog inside on a heated stove the frog will stay in place. Eventually you will boil and cook the frog – no corrective action. Death ensues. In the narrow mindset and unstructured strivings of the tablighi jamaat this boiling frog syndrome applies to this Umma. Tablighis need to ponder and think deeply on the consequences of their actions. In their unstructured actions are hidden costs – costs, which can weaken the umma from within, like a silent and undetected virus.

May Allah protect us from those that are attached to narrow-mindedness over diversity and progressiveness.

May Allah help and guide us to strive for, strengthen and protect our Islamic way of life, to keep the best of our traditions and to rise up into the skies above this diminished earth that is the prison of Shaitan (Satan).

Insha-Allah Ameen.

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