

# From Letters Written on Behalf of Shoghi Effendi:

Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi

Original English



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The responsibility of young believers is very great, as they must not only fit themselves to inherit the work of the older Bahá'ís and carry on the affairs of the Cause in general, but the world which lies ahead of them — as promised by Bahá'u'lláh — will be a world chastened by its sufferings, ready to listen to His Divine Message at last; and consequently a very high character will be expected of the exponents of such a religion. To deepen their knowledge, to perfect themselves in the Bahá'í standards of virtue and upright conduct, should be the paramount duty of every young Bahá'í.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 6 June 1941 to the Bahá'í youth of Bombay, India, '*Dawn of a New Day*', p. 179

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The Guardian was delighted to hear of your youth group. The children who are trained in the world-embracing teachings of Bahá'u'lláh cannot but grow up to be a truly new race of men. He hopes these young people will prepare themselves for the great task which will face them in the future, that of helping to rebuild the world with the aid and inspiration of the Bahá'í teachings.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 25 December 1941 to the Bahá'ís of Hobart, Tasmania

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If we could perceive the true reality of things we would see that the greatest of all battles raging in the world today is the spiritual battle. If the believers like yourself,



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young and eager and full of life, desire to win laurels for true and undying heroism, then let them join in the spiritual battle — whatever their physical occupation may be — which involves the very soul of man. The hardest and the noblest task in the world today is to be a true Bahá'í; this requires that we defeat not only the current evils prevailing all over the world, but the weaknesses, attachments to the past, prejudices, and selfishnesses that may be inherited and acquired within our own characters; that we give forth a shining and incorruptible example to our fellow-men.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 5 April 1942 to an individual believer

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He hopes that you will develop into Bahá'ís in character as well as in belief. The whole purpose of Bahá'u'lláh is that we should become a new kind of people, people who are upright, kind, intelligent, truthful, and honest and who live according to His great laws laid down for this new epoch in man's development. To call ourselves Bahá'ís is not enough, our inmost being must become ennobled and enlightened through living a Bahá'í life.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 25 August 1944 to the Youth Session, Louhelen School

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Indeed if the friends could seek, and exert themselves, to become 100 per cent Bahá'ís they would see how greatly their influence over others would be increased, and how rapidly the Cause would spread. The world is seeking not a compromise but the embodiment of a high and shining ideal. The more the friends live up to our teachings in every aspect of their lives, in their homes, in business, in their social relationships, the greater will be the attraction they exercise over the hearts of others.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 23 January 1945 to an individual believer

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The believers, as we all know, should endeavour to set such an example in their personal lives and conduct that others will feel impelled to embrace a Faith which reforms human character. However, unfortunately, not everyone achieves easily and rapidly the victory over self. What every believer, new or old, should realize is that the Cause has the spiritual power to re-create us if we make the effort to let that power influence us, and the greatest help in this respect is prayer. We must supplicate Bahá'u'lláh to assist us to overcome the failings in our own characters, and also exert our own will-power in mastering ourselves.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 27 January 1945 to an individual believer

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His constant hope is that the believers will conduct themselves, individually and in their Bahá'í Community life, in such a manner as to attract the attention of others to the Cause. The world is not only starving for lofty principles and ideals, it is, above all, starving for a shining example which the Bahá'ís can and must provide.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 22 February 1945 to an individual believer

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...the young Bahá'ís in every city should make a point of keeping in touch with local youth activities and clubs, and endeavouring to make their views known to as many young people in as many ways as possible. Above all they should set a high example to them; chastity, politeness, friendliness, hospitality, joyous optimism about the ultimate future happiness and well-being of mankind, should distinguish them and win over to them the love and admiration of their fellow youth. The thing which is most conspicuously lacking in modern life is a high standard of conduct and good character; the young Bahá'ís must demonstrate both, if they hope to seriously win over to the Faith members of their own generation, so sorely disillusioned and so contaminated by the laxity war gives rise to.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 20 October 1945 to the National Youth Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada

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We must be patient with each other's shortcomings, and always strive to create love and unity among the believers, who, after all, are still immature in many ways and far from perfect. The Faith itself is the great thing, and the Bahá'ís must strive to become ever more perfect instruments for Bahá'u'lláh to use and to accomplish His purpose through.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 26 May 1946 to an individual believer

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The Guardian has urged, over and over again, the paramount necessity for Bahá'í Youth to exemplify the Teachings, most particularly the moral aspect of them. If they are not

distinguished for their high conduct they cannot expect other young people to take the Cause very seriously.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 6 September 1946 to an individual believer

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He feels that the youth, in particular, must constantly and determinedly strive to exemplify a Bahá'í life. In the world around us we see moral decay, promiscuity, indecency, vulgarity, bad manners — the Bahá'í young people must be the opposite of these things, and, by their chastity, their uprightness, their decency, their consideration and good manners, attract others, old and young, to the Faith. The world is tired of words; it wants example, and it is up to the Bahá'í youth to furnish it.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 19 September 1946 to the Green Acre Summer School

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The eyes of the people of the world are beginning to be focused on us; and, as humanity's plight goes from bad to worse, we will be watched ever more intently by non-Bahá'ís, to see whether we do uphold our own institutions whole-heartedly; whether we are the people of the new creation or not; whether we live up to our beliefs, principles and laws in deed as well as word. We cannot be too careful. We cannot be too exemplary.

On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 5 August 1955, '*Unfolding Destiny*', p. 350

