Surah 16. An-Nahl

Asad: CALL THOU [all mankind] unto thy Sustainer's path with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the most kindly manner:149 for, behold, thy Sustainer knows best as to who strays from His path, and best knows He as to who are the right-guided.

Malik: Call people to the Way of your Rabb with wisdom and best advice, and reason with them, if you have to, in the most courteous manner: for your Rabb knows best who strays from His Way and He knows best who is rightly guided.

Pickthall: Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way. Lo! thy Lord is best aware of him who strayeth from His way, and He is Best Aware of those who go aright.

Yusuf Ali: Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best who have strayed from His Path and who receive guidance. 2161 2162

Transliteration: OdAAu ila sabeeli rabbika bialhikmati waalmawAAi thati alhasanati wajadilhum biallaatee hiya ahsanu inna rabbaka huwa aAAalamu biman dalla AAan sabeelihi wahuwa aAAalamu bialmuhtadeena

Khattab:

Invite ?all? to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord ?alone? knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is ?rightly? guided.

Author Comments

149 - Cf. 29:46 - “And do not argue with the followers of earlier revelation otherwise than in the most kindly manner”. This stress on kindness and tact and, hence, on the use of reason alone in all religious discussions with adherents of other creeds is fully in tune with the basic, categorical injunction, “There shall be no coercion in matters of faith” (2: 256).

2161 - In this wonderful passage are laid down principles of religious preaching, which are good for all time. But where are the Teachers with such qualifications? We must invite all to the Way of Allah, and expound His Universal Will; we must do it with wisdom and discretion, meeting people on their own ground and convincing them with illustrations from their own knowledge and experience, which may be very narrow, or very wide. Our preaching must be, not dogmatic, not self-regarding, not offensive, but gentle, considerate, and such as would attract their attention. Our manner and our arguments should not be acrimonious, but modelled on the most courteous and the most gracious example, so that the hearer may say to himself, “This man is not dealing merely with dialectics; he is not trying to get a rise out of me; he is sincerely expounding the faith that is in him, and his motive is the love of man and the love of Allah.”
It may be that the Preacher sometimes says to himself, "What is the use of teaching these people? they have made up their minds, or they are obstinate; or they are only trying to catch me out," Let him not yield to such a thought. Who knows how the seed of the Word of Allah may germinate in people's minds? It is not for man to look for results. Man's inner thoughts are known best to Allah.

Source: Alim.org-Compare Translation-Surah 16-Ayah 125