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Failing to practice what one preaches

The second question of Fatwa no. 19172

Q 2: I sometimes used to lead the people of my village in Salah (Prayer). Many times, I deliver Khutbah (sermon) of Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer from books prepared for that purpose. I know, all praise be to Allah, my position in people's hearts. But the devil, sometimes, overcomes me and I follow my desires and whims. I feel great embarrassment when I commit any sin, because I know what is right and what is wrong. I ask people to avoid sins and evils though I commit these sins. Moreover, I know Allah's Saying: ﴿Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allâh) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture [the Taurât (Torah)]! Have you then no sense?﴾ I do not know when I can overcome these whims and desires. Moreover, I am a young man who is unmarried.

A: We advise you to continue advising people in your village and to increase your knowledge of Shari`ah (Islamic law) as much as you can. You also have to strive hard to avoid sins and your actions should be consistent with what you preach as much as possible. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allâh's religion - Islâmîc Monotheism). And verily, Allâh is with the Muhsinûn (good doers).﴾ You also have to repent sincerely of your past sins.

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May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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