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## **The Six Foundational Principles of Tablighi Jamaat: An Analytical Study**

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### **Abstract**

The Tablighi Jamaat is one of the most influential Islamic revivalist movements of the modern era, founded by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in response to the challenges of religious decline in Mewat, India. Its missionary framework is built upon six foundational principles, commonly known as *chhe number* or *six asool*: Kalima Tayyaba, Salah (prayer), Ilm and Dhikr (knowledge and remembrance of Allah), Ikram al-Muslim (honouring fellow Muslims), Ikhlas al-Niyyah (sincerity of intention), and Dawah wa Tabligh (propagation and preaching). This paper provides an analytical study of these principles by tracing their historical development, theological grounding, and practical application within Muslim communities. The analysis demonstrates how these principles aim to strengthen faith, promote moral discipline, and revive collective religious identity. While not directly instituted during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), they serve as a structured method for contemporary Muslims to reconnect with the essential teachings of Islam. The study concludes that the six foundational principles remain a central framework for Tablighi Jamaat's global influence, offering both spiritual guidance and communal reform.

**Keywords:** Tablighi Jamaat, Six Principles, Dawah, Islamic Revival, Faith and Practice, Religious Reform

## Introduction

Islam emphasises both individual faith and collective responsibility for spreading its message. The Holy Qur'an instructs believers: ***“And let there be a group among you who call towards goodness, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; they are the successful”*** (Al-Imran 3:104). This verse highlights that da‘wah, or inviting others to Islam, is not restricted to prophets and scholars alone, but is a continuing duty of the Muslim Ummah. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also reinforced this obligation in his Farewell Sermon when he said: ***“Let those who are present convey the message to those who are absent”*** (Bukhari, Kitab al-Ilm). In this context, different movements have emerged throughout Islamic history to preserve religious identity and promote reform. Among them, the Tablighi Jamaat, founded by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in Mewat, India, during the early twentieth century, became one of the most significant revivalist efforts. Its central aim was to protect Muslims from religious decline and to reconnect them with the fundamentals of Islam through grassroots preaching and practical reform.

The distinctive contribution of Tablighi Jamaat is the formulation of six foundational principles, commonly known as the *six asool*. These principles are Kalima Tayyaba, Salah (prayer), Ilm and Dhikr (knowledge and remembrance), Ikram al-Muslim (honouring fellow Muslims), Ikhlas al-Niyyah (sincerity of intention), and Dawah wa Tabligh (preaching and propagation). Together, they provide a simple yet comprehensive framework for nurturing personal piety, strengthening community ties, and ensuring continuity of Islamic practice in diverse contexts. This paper undertakes an analytical study of these six principles by examining their historical development, theological basis, and practical significance. It seeks to demonstrate how they function as a method for spiritual

Published:  
September 14, 2025

reform and collective revival, while also assessing their relevance in contemporary Muslim societies.

Muhammad (PBUH) was sent by Allah as the last prophet. He spent his whole life in preaching of Islam. On the other hand the main purpose of this Ummah is also Dawah, As Allah says in the Quran:

﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ (1)

"And let there be a group of you who call people to what is good, what is right and forbid what is wrong, and these are the people who will be successful."

On the occasion of the Khutba Hajjatul Wida, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) gave clear instructions to the ummah that came into being on the basis of the religion of Islam, saying: "فليبلغ الشاهد الغائب" convey my message to the present and the absent. 2

This means that the person who knows about religion should not neglect to convey it to others. The ummah of the Holy Prophet took over this work. This is the reason why the chain of preaching continues till today. In different regions of the entire Muslim world, various da'wah organizations are busy in fulfilling this great duty. Thousands of people and some millions of people have been introduced and influenced by the work of some of them. One of them is the "Tablighi Jamaat" movement, which was started by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas. Now this movement is a hot practice in many countries of the world. Its scope is not only limited to Muslim countries but also engaged in non-Muslim countries.

### **Six basic principles of Tablighi Jamaat**

Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, the founder of Tablighi Jamaat, worked very hard in the work of Tabligh. First of all, Maulana set only two rules or numbers. One is Kalma and the other is Prayer. After that these rules became six. These six principles of preaching are the result of your own efforts. Maulana convened a

Published:  
September 14, 2025

Panchayat after extensive visits to Mewat. In it Panchayat Nama was compiled, the principles of preaching were determined, and the procedure was laid down. Prayers, narrations of the Companions and Chahal Hadith were added and it was agreed that Tabligh is not the work of Ulama alone but it is the duty of all Muslims. Muhammad Saad Kandhalvi writes about six Numbers of Tabligh:

“These six numbers are the name of a hard work and the purpose of this hard work is to bring the Ummah to this hard work and in simple words to change their beliefs through the invitation of six numbers and to create reasons to change the beliefs of others” 3

The summary of Tablighi Jamaat's invitation and its activities is called "Six Numbers". These six numbers are as follows:

### 1. Kalima e Tayyaba

The first number in Tablighi six number is Kalima Tayyaba or faith. This is the first condition of being a Muslim. It has two components. One is faith in Allah and the other is faith in Muhammad. Maulana Yusuf Kandhalvi explains the meaning of faith as follows:

"Faith in the dictionary is the name of accepting someone's word with certainty on someone's trust, and in the pure term of religion, faith is the name of simply accepting someone's word with certainty on the trust of the Messenger without observing it." 4

Therefore, the person who obeys the commands of Allah and His Messenger believes in them and then acts on them, that person is a believer. In the Qur'an, Allah says about the believers:

“إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ” 5

“The believers are those whose hearts are afraid when the name of Allah is mentioned, and when the verses of Allah are recited to them, those verses

Published:  
September 14, 2025

strengthen their faith and they believe in their Lord.”

Hazrat Abu Hurairah narrates the hadith:

”سُئِلَ اللَّهُ ﷻ أَيُّ الْأَعْمَالِ أَفْضَلُ قَالَ إِيْمَانُ بِاللَّهِ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَاذَا قَالَ الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَاذَا قَالَ  
حَجٌّ مَبْرُورٌ. “٤٥

"The Holy Prophet (PBUH) was asked, Which is the best deed among deeds?" He said: "Believing in Allah". The question was asked then what? He said: Hajj with virtues.

It should be known from this hadith that the first right of Allah is upon every servant that he should believe in Allah well and fulfill the orders of Allah, do not neglect anything. Do not associate anyone with Allah. Only the glory of Allah. It is the greatest. By following this first number, a relationship with Allah's Most High is created. And his power is directly used. For this, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) has brought methods from Allah Ta'ala, when his methods come into people's lives, Allah Ta'ala will bless them with success in every way and in every field of life.

Likewise, Muhammad (PBUH) is the last Prophet and Messenger of Allah. Believing in him (PBUH) is a part of faith. Whoever does not believe in him (PBUH) is not a Muslim, no matter how much he worships Allah. There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Rasool of Allah. There is a demand to change your belief and passion and your ways. Only upon the change of belief, Allah Almighty will grant a paradise many times bigger than this earth and heaven, and Allah Almighty will subjugate all those things from which faith will emerge and come to Allah.

According to the Tablighi Jamaat, three efforts have to be done to get the certainty of Kalima Tayyaba. The first task in the first place is to invoke لا اله الا الله. مجد رسول الله. Explain the majesty of Allah, His Lordship and His power in the

Published:  
September 14, 2025

invitation. One should not be ashamed of giving dawah, as it is appropriate, give its everywhere, whether it be in the congregation, even if you give dawaat individually, because dawah is very dear to Allah Ta'ala. The second task in Kalima Tayyaba is to sit down and think that what you have been invited to do, this is the right, this is the truth.

In summary, the Kalima Tayyaba is not only the gateway to Islam but also the essence of the Tablighi Jamaat's first principle. By constantly reaffirming this testimony, believers strengthen their certainty in Allah's supremacy and in the finality of His Messenger (peace be upon him). Tablighi teachings highlight that faith should not remain a mere statement of the tongue but must penetrate the heart and shape one's actions. This principle, therefore, ensures that Muslims live with conviction, courage, and submission to divine guidance, forming the foundation for all other principles of the movement.

## 2. Prayer

Prayer is the second pillar of Islam and the second number of six tabligh numbers. After believing, the first thing that Allah wants to see in his servant is prayer. The prayer will be acceptable and beneficial only when it is done in the way of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It will happen. Prayer is ordered to benefit directly from the power of Allah Almighty. Prayer is a way of communication between Allah and his servant. In prayer, the servant will give whatever he asks from his Lord. Therefore, waiting from one prayer to another to fulfill one's needs through the order of prayer. To perform the prayer in the manner in which it is right to perform it. Use your body from head to toe in a specific way that pleases Allah, with restrictions, use your eyes, ears, tongue and feet properly. Three things have to be done for such a prayer. The first task is invitation, the second task is practice and the third is calling. The first task is to

Published:  
September 14, 2025

invite people to pray and to tell the truth about it. If one prays correctly, there are successes in this world and the hereafter. The Holy Qur'an states:

”إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ.”-٧٥

"Those who believe and do good deeds and maintain prayer and give zakat, for them is their reward with their Lord, and they will have no fear, nor they will grieve."

”إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ”-٨٥

In the same way, a prayer that is performed correctly and performed humbly gives a person a blessing, and a prayer that is not performed correctly causes a person to be cursed. Therefore, those who do not pray should invite the benefits of prayer in this world and in the hereafter.

The second task is the practice of prayer. By exercise it is meant to get help from prayer. It is said in the Qur'an.

”وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ.”-٩٥

"And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed it is heavy, except for the humble."

This means that when there is a need or an illness etc., pray and ask Allah for help. If the need is not fulfilled by praying for the first time, then pray again. Allah will surely help His servant by trying will do.

The third task, "Supplication", is that when we perform the call to prayer and practice the prayer as it has been suggested, then after completing the act of prayer, we think that we could not fulfill the right of prayer according to the glory of Allah. But cry and say, O Allah, grant us the truth of prayer.

Thus, prayer stands as the second and most visible pillar of Islam, serving as both

Published:  
September 14, 2025

a spiritual duty and a constant reminder of the believer's link with Allah. Within the framework of Tablighi Jamaat, Salah is emphasised not only as a ritual but as a means of building discipline, humility, and reliance on divine help. When performed with sincerity, prayer protects from sin and provides strength to face life's challenges. By urging Muslims to practise and promote Salah, this principle ensures that worship remains central to daily life, reinforcing faith at both the personal and collective level.

### 3. Ilam o ziker

The meaning of knowledge is to acquire the knowledge of Allah in order to benefit from the orders sent by Allah Ta'ala in order to fulfill them according to the method of Prophet Muhammad. Because of knowledge, man has been called Ashraf al-Makhlukat. Based on knowledge, man is superior to all other creatures. Through this, we can gain knowledge of Allah and His commandments and prohibitions and His Messenger. Allah says in the Qur'an:

”قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ“ ١٠٥

"Say, can the knowledgeable and the ignorant be equal?"

In another place Allah says:

”إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ“ ١١٥

"Indeed, only His servants fear Allah Ta'ala who have knowledge of His greatness."

These verses showed that there is a big difference between the scholar and the ignorant. He who has knowledge of the oneness, greatness and majesty of Allah always fears Allah. That is why Tablighi Jamaat has kept knowledge as a number. The purpose of knowledge is to develop the spirit of research in us. We will learn the knowledge of religion so much that we can do everything according to the command of Allah and according to the Sunnah method of the Holy



Published:  
September 14, 2025

Prophet.

To be able to recognize the rights and duties, to be able to distinguish between lawful and unlawful and halal o Haram, to be able to distinguish between right and wrong, to follow the orders and prohibitions, to live your life according to the life of the Prophets, to follow the blessed Sunnah of Muhammad ﷺ. To be able to bring in their lives, to get a good position in the society, to be able to treat people with good manners. The purpose is that by getting knowledge and practicing it, the success of both worlds are achieved.

Along with knowledge Ziker is mentioned. It means that we should put the knowledge we get into our actions.

It is dhikr to meditate on the oneness of Allah, the creation and the universe, and engage in the meditation of Allah at all times. It is also dhikr to carry out the acts of worship that Allah has ordered and to do them well. That is why Hazrat Umar said that every obedient person who obeys Allah and His Messenger is a dhikr. As long as a person's lips are moving in the remembrance of Allah, the power and help of Allah is with him. The remembrance of Allah is a fortress to avoid Shatan. If a person remembers Allah, Shatan cannot attack him.

The purpose of knowledge is to develop the spirit of research in us. What does Allah want from me in this situation? And then putting yourself in this process with the attention of Allah is zikr. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi says about zikr: "Zikr is called remembrance, whether it is from the heart alone, whether the tongue also participates in it." 12

In essence, the principle of Ilm and Dhikr shows that knowledge without practice is incomplete, and remembrance without understanding lacks depth. Tablighi Jamaat stresses that a true believer must learn the essentials of religion and then live by them through constant remembrance of Allah. This union of knowledge

Published:  
September 14, 2025

and dhikr strengthens faith, nurtures humility, and keeps the heart connected to divine guidance. By promoting both learning and remembrance, this principle provides Muslims with a balanced path that develops intellect, purifies the soul, and safeguards the community from neglecting their religious duties.

#### **4. Ikram e Muslim**

Ikram is the fourth number of Tablighi Jamaat, which means to treat other Muslims with morals, to pay their every right, to respect them, to share in their grief and to encourage them in the state of grief. Encouraging, considering the happiness of your Muslim brother as your happiness, fulfilling the need of a Muslim brother in difficult times, etc.

Every Muslim has to respect the whole Muslims as a ummah of the Messenger of Allah. To pay the rights of every person and not to demand his rights. The person who covers a Muslim's veil. Allah will cover his veil. As long as a man is engaged in the work of his Muslim brother, Allah Almighty is engaged in his work. Whoever forgives his right, Allah Almighty will grant him a palace in the middle of Paradise, which is for Allah. He wants the well-wishing of others, Allah will grant him elevation, for this he has to create a passion for Ikram Muslim by encouraging others. We have to narrate the stories of the morals, compassion and self-sacrifice of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions.

Ultimately, the principle of Ikram al-Muslim ensures that respect, compassion, and service remain at the heart of Muslim social life. For the Tablighi Jamaat, honouring fellow Muslims is not only an act of kindness but a form of worship that strengthens unity within the Ummah. By reminding believers to care for others, fulfil their rights, and support them in times of need, this principle fosters humility and selflessness. It teaches that true piety is incomplete without social responsibility, making Ikram al-Muslim a vital bridge between individual

devotion and communal harmony.

## 5. Ikhlas Niyat

The fifth number of Tablighi Jamaat is Ikhlas Niyat or Tasih Niyat. It means that the servant should fulfill all the commands of Allah Ta'ala only for the pleasure of Allah.

In other words, sincerity is the source of goodness and its root, that is, that a servant should dedicate his worship and support to his Lord with sincerity in such a way that he cuts off his heart connection with all creatures, and does not expect profit from them. Keep and do not act for their sake and make your goal only the Lord Almighty.

”بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ- 13”

"Yes, whoever bows his face before Allah Ta'ala and is sincere, then such a person will get his reward from his Lord. There will be no fear on such people, nor they will be sad."

From this verse, it is known that the intention is very important in every action. Whoever gives a sip of water to someone for the sake of Allah, Allah will give him such water from His reservoir on the Day of Judgment that he will enter Paradise. There will be no thirst, and whoever feeds a hungry person, Allah will feed him the food of Paradise, and whoever clothes a naked body, Allah will clothe him in Paradise.

If a servant only intends to do a good deed, then Allah will reward him for that intention. And if someone does something to show the creation, he will not be rewarded. Therefore, whatever you do, the purpose of it should be to please Allah Ta'ala and not to show it to anyone. Pure action is very powerful; it saves a person from great calamities.

In every action, there should be the desire of Allah's pleasure, no action is

Published:  
September 14, 2025

intended to seek the world or to make one's own position, even a small action with the desire of Allah's pleasure will bring many rewards. will cause In order to correct one's intention, one should instill in others the desire to correct the intention by inviting them.

Therefore, Ikhlas al-Niyyah reminds Muslims that the value of every deed lies in its intention. For Tablighi Jamaat, sincerity protects actions from pride and ensures that worship is directed solely towards Allah. By purifying motives, even small acts become great in reward, while outwardly impressive deeds lose meaning if done for show. This principle guides believers to seek only divine pleasure in all aspects of life, nurturing humility and safeguarding them from hypocrisy. In this way, sincerity of intention becomes the spirit that gives life to every other principle of faith and practice.

## **6. Dawat wa Tableegh**

The sixth number is Da'wa and Tabligh, that is, trying to revive the Prophet's method of hard work in the whole world in order to correct one's belief and actions and bring all people to the right belief. Tabligh is the name of a hard work which All righteous deeds come alive. Without this hard work, righteous deeds cannot be established in the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ. When good prevails over evil, preaching is a sufficient duty, and when evil prevails over good, preaching is obligatory. Because the rise of individuals comes from good deeds and the rise of the ummah comes from preaching, this process benefits the entire ummah of Muhammadiyah ﷺ. Maulana Ashraf Ali Soleimani writes about Tabligh:

"In general terms, devoting oneself to knowledge and calling with free time is a sufficient obligation, which if a section of the Ummah continues to perform in such a way that the necessities of life continue to be fulfilled, then the rest of the

Published:  
September 14, 2025

Ummah will be freed from responsibility and sin. Otherwise, everyone is a sinner" 14

In other words, to invite another Muslim or non-Muslim to accept Islam is dawah and preaching. One is aware of it, but does not act on it, there is no sense in it, creating sense is also a da'wah. 15

Now the most important preaching is the preaching of the demand, there is a need to make the Muslims feel that they are Muslims and that religion does not come without learning and it needs to be learned more than worldly skills. The purpose of da'wah and preaching is that the whole religion should come alive in the whole world. All people should stop disobeying Allah and start obeying Allah and leave the ways of others and bring the ways of the Prophet ﷺ into their lives. And become those who establish prayer, become those who pay zakat and become those who live all their lives according to the Shariat. After our last prophet, the work of calling and preaching is our responsibility. Therefore, today, those who lack religion in the whole world. It is our responsibility to convey the message. Tablighi Jamaat has adopted the method of formation of parties to fulfill this responsibility. Many people go out to teach religion to others.

In conclusion, Dawah wa Tabligh is the principle that gives practical shape to all others, as it carries the message of faith beyond the individual to the wider community. The Tablighi Jamaat views this responsibility as both a personal duty and a collective mission, ensuring that the message of Islam reaches every corner of society. By inviting others with wisdom and sincerity, Muslims not only strengthen their own commitment but also contribute to the revival of faith within the Ummah. This principle safeguards religion from being confined to private worship, turning it instead into a living and active force that inspires transformation in personal and communal life.

Published:  
September 14, 2025

## Findings and Conclusion

The study has confirmed that Dawat-e-Deen is not only an act of virtue but also an essential duty of the Muslim Ummah, mandated by the Holy Qur'an and reinforced by the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Over the centuries, different revivalist movements have attempted to preserve Islamic identity in changing contexts. Among them, the Tablighi Jamaat, founded by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in the twentieth century, emerged as a grassroots movement in Mewat, India, where Muslims were under strong pressure of religious decline and possible apostasy. The findings show that the Jamaat responded by creating a systematic framework centred on six foundational principles, which later became the hallmark of its global da'wah activity.

These six principles—Kalima Tayyaba, Salah, Ilm and Dhikr, Ikram al-Muslim, Ikhlas al-Niyyah, and Dawah wa Tabligh—were analysed in detail. The first principle, Kalima Tayyaba, anchors faith in Allah and His Messenger as the basis of all religious practice. The second, Salah, reinforces the centrality of prayer as both an act of worship and a means of strengthening the bond between the servant and Allah. The third principle, Ilm and Dhikr, highlights the importance of religious knowledge and constant remembrance of Allah as safeguards against ignorance and negligence. The fourth, Ikram al-Muslim, promotes brotherhood, compassion, and respect within the Muslim community. The fifth, Ikhlas al-Niyyah, underlines sincerity of intention as the foundation of all righteous action. Finally, Dawah wa Tabligh, the sixth principle, ensures that faith is not confined to individuals but is shared collectively through preaching and outreach.

The findings further suggest that although these principles were not formally codified during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), they are rooted in Qur'anic injunctions and Prophetic guidance. They function as a

Published:  
September 14, 2025

simplified but comprehensive system of spiritual reform, making it easier for ordinary Muslims to practise Islam in their daily lives. By focusing on these six points, followers are encouraged to develop both personal piety and communal responsibility.

In conclusion, the six foundational principles of Tablighi Jamaat continue to be relevant in contemporary Muslim societies. They provide a clear framework for strengthening faith, nurturing moral character, reviving Islamic practices, and preserving collective identity amidst the challenges of modernity. Their enduring influence lies in their ability to connect belief with action, individual devotion with community service, and local contexts with the global mission of da'wah. This study demonstrates that the principles remain not only a method of personal reform but also a movement for the renewal of Islamic consciousness worldwide.

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