



# Al-Ghazali's Perspective Moderating Values in the Book Bidayah al-Hidayah

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## Abstract

This research is motivated by the motivation to explore the values of moderation in Sufism because Sufism is seen to function as a basic framework for promoting religious moderation. This is because the teachings of Sufism emphasize the integration of Sufi values into social life, which can help fight extremism, radicalism and intolerance. This research aims to examine the values of moderation from Imam al-Ghazali's perspective contained in the book Bidayah al-Hidayah. Al-Ghazali, as one of the great figures in the history of Islamic thought, emphasized the importance of balance in various aspects of religious life, including worship, morality and social interaction. Using a qualitative approach, this research analyzes the texts in Bidayah al-Hidayah to identify the principles of moderation proposed by al-Ghazali. The results of the analysis show that al-Ghazali prioritizes values such as Tawazun (balance), Tasamuh (tolerance), I'tidal (justice/putting things in their place), and looking for a middle way (Tawasuth) avoiding extremism in worship and interacting with other people. to achieve a harmonious life. By strengthening the principles of moderation, Muslims are expected to be able to overcome the challenges of division and conflict in diverse societies. It is hoped that these findings can contribute to the development of moderate thinking in Islam and increase awareness of the importance of these values in everyday life.

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## INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation is urgent to prevent radicalism. Bartolomeus Samho in his research entitled "The Urgency of Religious Moderation to Prevent Radicalism in Indonesia" concluded that "religious moderation" is very important to maintain the dignity of religion, ensuring it remains relevant and significant in various eras. This moderation fosters a religious vision that promotes beauty, peace, kinship and unity in a religious society (Samho, 2022). Religion should be practiced as a means to free individuals from extreme attitudes and actions that can lead to dehumanization. Instead of being used to justify destructive behavior, religion must function as a source of creative inspiration aimed at improving the quality of human life universally (Samho, 2022).

The teachings of Sufism are considered an important element for promoting religious moderation. Muhammad Chairul Hidayat in his research entitled "Internalization of Social Sufism Teachings in Building Religious Moderation in Indonesia" stated that Sufism teachings can function as a basic framework for promoting religious moderation in Indonesia. This is because social Sufism emphasizes the integration of Sufi values into social life, which can help fight extremism, radicalism and intolerance (Muhammad, 2022).

In Sufism, religious radicalism has absolutely no place at all, because it is completely contrary to the principles of Sufism's teachings which are full of kindness, gentleness and wisdom. Kindness must be universal, it cannot be particular, local, and limited to certain communities. Wherever, whenever, to anyone, kindness must be applied. It is not considered a universal good when that good is accepted by one group and rejected by another group. This is the true Islam of rahmatan. (Rusmana & Kodir, 2022).

Based on the research above, exploring the thoughts of experts in Sufism regarding moderation is an interesting research object to discuss. In this research, the author chose Imam al-Ghazali as a Sufism expert to explore his thoughts because he was a Sufi figure who had a big influence on the history of Islamic thought. His thoughts will be explored in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*. This book was chosen among his other works because this book is a basic book in the science of Sufism, even Imam al-Ghazali himself stated in his muqaddimah that this book was the beginning of receiving guidance, containing guidance on servant manners so that they could rise to a higher level (purification of the soul to be closer to God).

Relevant previous research includes: Al-Ghazali's thoughts on Ethics of Living in the Society Based on *Bidayah Al-Hidayah* (Hamat & Shuhari, 2017), Values of Moral Education in the Book of *Bidayah Al-Hidayah* by Imam Al-Ghazali (Yahya & Syahriyah, 2024), and the concept of manners from Al-Ghazali's perspective and its relevance to character formation (Utomo et al., 2023), these studies focus on the concept of ethics/adab/morals put forward by al-Ghazali in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, but have not yet revealed the moderation side contained in the concept of adab. The author sees that there is an empty space regarding al-Ghazali's perspective in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, namely about moderation. Therefore, the author is interested in comprehensively discussing al-Ghazali's perspective on the moderation values contained in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, with the title "Moderation Values from al-Ghazali's Perspective in the Book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*"

## METHODS

The research method used is library research with a qualitative approach, where this research places more emphasis on analysis that does not use statistics (Khatibah, 2011). In writing this research, content analysis techniques were used. This technique aims to analyze the meaning contained in data that has been collected through library research (Jaakkola, 2023). This research is based on data and information with various kinds of material in books, journal articles, the internet and so on which are related to the problem to be researched (Khatibah, 2011). The primary source in this research is the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali. Secondary sources include books and journal articles that are relevant to this research. Apart from that, the religious moderation theory of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia will be the analytical tool in this research.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### a. Religious Moderation

The word moderation comes from the Latin *moderateio*, which means moderation (neither excess nor deficiency). The word also means self-mastery (from an attitude of extreme advantages and disadvantages). The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) provides two meanings of the word moderation, namely: reducing violence and avoiding extremes (Nafisa et al., 2024). Meanwhile, moderation in Arabic is taken from the word "wasatha", which means being in the middle of nowhere. According to Sheikh Yusuf al-Qardhawi, *wasathiyah* is also called *at-tawazzun*, namely an effort to balance between two

opposite or contradictory sides/edges/edges so that one does not dominate and defeat the other. (Deniansyah Damanik, 2022).

Among Allah's words relating to moderation is Surah al-Baqarah: 143:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ  
الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ ۗ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ  
هَدَى اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

*Likewise, We have made you (Muslims) a medieval community) so that you may be witnesses of human (deeds) and so that the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) may be witnesses of your (deeds). We do not determine the Qibla (Baitulmaqdis) to which you (formerly) turned, except so that We know (in reality) who follows the Messenger and who turns back. Indeed, (transferring the Qibla) is very difficult, except for those who have been guided by Allah. Allah will not waste your faith. Indeed, Allah is truly Most Gracious and Most Merciful to humans. (Q.S. al-Baqarah; 143)*

According to Ibnu Katsir, the word wasath here is the best choice. As revealed, the Quraysh were the chosen Arab people, both in lineage and place of residence, meaning the best as said by the Prophet Muhammad. Wasathan fi Qaumih which means he is the best and noblest person. According to al-Thabari, the word wasathan means fair, Sayyid Quthub also interpreted the word to mean good, main, fair and middle. Muhammad Quraish Shihab in this case gives the meaning of these words, namely moderate, fair and not excessive. (Abdul Hamzah & Arfain, 2021).

The principles of religious moderation are as follows: 1) Tawassuth which means taking the middle path, namely an impartial attitude and emphasizing life principles that defend the values of justice in shared life, 2) Tawazun which means balance, namely an attitude that chooses a balanced and fair solution in dealing with a problem, 3) I'tidal which means straight and firm, namely an attitude that is fair and based on correct considerations, 4) Tasamuh which means tolerance, namely an attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for each other, 5) Musawah which means equality, namely an attitude that does not discriminate against other people based on differences in beliefs, traditions or origins, 6) Shura which means deliberation, namely an agreement reached through joint discussion, 7) Ishlah which means reform, namely an effort to create good conditions to answer the challenges of transformation and development of the times on the basis of the common good, 8) Aulawiyah which means prioritizing priorities, namely prioritizing things that are truly important, 9) Tathawur wa Ibtikar which means dynamic and innovative, namely openness to change for the better, 10) Tahadhdhur which means politeness, namely advancing character, character, identity and unity of the people as the best in the life of humanity and civilization. (Fajriati, 2023), (R&D & Training, 2022).

#### b. Get to know Imam al-Ghazali and the Book of Bidayah al-Hidayah

Imam al-Ghazali, or Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazali, was born in 1058 in Tus, Persia (now Iran). He was a scholar, philosopher and Sufi who had a great influence on the history of Islamic thought (Adu, 2010).

Al-Ghazali studied in various big cities such as Nishapur and Baghdad. In Baghdad, he studied from various figures, including al-Juwayni, an expert in fiqh and theology. After completing his studies, he began teaching and writing at various institutions, including the Nizamiyah in Baghdad. After reaching the peak of his academic career, al-Ghazali felt a spiritual emptiness and chose to leave his position. He undertook a spiritual journey and pursued a Sufi life. This experience greatly influenced his thinking and his works (Sahri, 2018).

Al-Ghazali is considered one of the greatest figures in Islamic history. His thoughts help bridge the sciences of fiqh and Sufism, and develop a deeper understanding of spirituality in Islam. He also contributed to theological thought, and his work is still studied today.

Imam al-Ghazali has many works covering various fields, including theology, fiqh, philosophy, and Sufism that have had a deep impact on Islamic thought and are still widely studied today. The following are some of his main works: (Adu, 2010).

1. Ihya Ulum al-Din (Bringing Religious Knowledge to Life): This work is considered al-Ghazali's magnum opus. This book discusses various aspects of spiritual life and religious practices, and combines the teachings of fiqh and Sufism.
2. Tahafut al-Falasifah (Criticism of Philosophers): In this work, al-Ghazali criticizes the thinking of philosophers, especially Aristotle and his followers, and defends the theological position of Islam.

3. *Maqasid al-Falasifah* (The Goals of Philosophers): This work explains philosophical thought and provides al-Ghazali's views on philosophy.
4. *Bidayat al-Hidayah* (Beginning Instructions): A practical guide to living a good Islamic life, covering moral and ethical aspects.
5. *Kimiya al-Sa'adah* (The Alchemy of Happiness): This book discusses how to achieve true happiness through self-development and closeness to Allah.
6. *Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* (Savior from Ignorance): In this work, al-Ghazali tells of his spiritual journey and his search for truth.
7. *Nasihah al-Muluk* (Advice to Kings): This work provides guidance on just government and the responsibilities of a leader.
8. *Faysal al-Tafriqa* (The Separator between Right and Wrong): This book discusses the debate between various schools of thought in Islam.

Imam al-Ghazali died in 1111 in the city of Baghdad. His legacy lives on in Islamic teachings and philosophical thought, making him one of the most respected figures in Islamic tradition (Sahri, 2018). The Book of *Bidayah al-Hidayah* is the work of Imam Al-Ghazali, where this book has important value to be studied and used as a reference in carrying out spiritual sharia activities in everyday life (Yahya & Syahriyah, 2024). This book not only functions as a guide to worship, but also as a guide to ethics and morals in life. This work is often used by Islamic students and practitioners as a reference to deepen their understanding of religion and how to live a life in accordance with Islamic teachings (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

In the introduction to his book, al-Ghazali opens the book with an explanation of the importance of knowledge and sincere intentions in seeking Allah's guidance. He emphasized that useful knowledge is that which leads to good action. Next, Imam al-Ghazali explained several aspects in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, namely aspects of worship rituals, ethical and moral aspects, aspects of spiritual education, and aspects of avoiding sin and immorality (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015). Overall, this book reflects al-Ghazali's views on the importance of integration between knowledge, worship and morals in achieving a life in harmony with religious teachings.

This *Bidayah al-Hidayah* book can be a basis for someone to improve themselves and receive guidance from Allah. By applying the good manners taught by al-Ghazali in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*. (Utomo et al., 2023).

### c. Al-Ghazali's Perspective Moderating Values in the Book of *Bidayah al-Hidayah*

There are five (5) values of al-Ghazali's perspective moderation in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, namely *tawazun*, *i'tidal*, *tasamuh*, *musawah*, and *tawasuth*. Here's the explanation:

#### 1. **Tawazun (Balance)**

*Tawazun* is balance. In the context of religious moderation, *Tawazun* refers to the attitude of choosing a balanced and fair solution or path in dealing with a problem. This principle emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between various aspects of life, be it between rights and obligations, individuals and society, or between worldly and spiritual interests. *Tawazun* teaches that a person should not be trapped in extremes or imbalances, but should always look for a fair and wise middle path. (Thohir et al., 2023)

There are four (4) balances according to Imam al-Ghazali in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*:

##### a) **Balance between spirituality and social interaction.**

In the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, Imam al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of balance between spirituality and social interaction. He taught that balance is the key to achieving happiness and peace. This can be seen in the content of the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah* itself, there is an aspect of spirituality paying attention to the relationship with Allah such as purification, prayer, fasting, and other practices that must be maximized by a Muslim according to religious guidance and there is an aspect of social interaction with others. Humans who provide guidance on how to interact with other humans well. Imam al-Ghazali provides an explanation about how to behave towards teachers, students, parents and other people (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

Thus, it can be said that it is not enough just to build a good relationship with God, but you also have to build a good relationship with others.

### b) **Balanced views on obligatory and sunnah deeds**

In his muqaddimah Imam al-Ghazali said:

اعلم أن أوامر الله تعالى فرائض ونوافل؛ فالفرض رأس المال، وهو أصل التجارة وبه تحصل النجاة، والنفل هو الريح وبه الفوز بالدرجات، قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: يقول الله تبارك وتعالى: (ما تقرب إلي المتقربون بمثل أداء ما افترضت عليهم، ولا يزال العبد يتقرب إلى بالنوافل حتى أحبه، فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به، وبصره الذي يبصر به، ولسانه الذي ينطق به، ويده التي يبطش بها، ورجله التي يمشي بها)

*Know that Allah SWT's commands are divided into two, namely obligatory and sunnah. Obligations are like capital in a trade while sunnah charities are like profits from that trade, as the Prophet SAW said; Allah says (hadith qudsi) My servant draws himself closer to Me with obligatory deeds, and he continues to approach Me with sunnah deeds until I love him. When I love a servant then I become the ear with which he hears, the sight with which he sees things, becomes the tongue with which he speaks, becomes the hand with which he touches something, and becomes the foot with which he steps. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)*

For example, when explaining the matter of performing ablution, Imam al-Ghazali did not focus on the obligatory matters alone, he explained the sunnah matters. The order of his explanation regarding ablution is as follows: (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

1. When you have finished istinja' (cebok), then do not leave the siwak
2. After you have done the siwak (brushing your teeth), then sit facing the Qibla in a slightly elevated place so that you don't get splashed by water that falls to the ground (unholy floor), then read "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, O Allah I seek refuge in you from the evil spirits and I seek refuge in you from their presence by my side."
3. Then wash your hands before putting them into the container for ablution
4. After that, intend to remove the hadats or intention so that you are allowed to pray
5. Then take more water and inhale through your nose three times
6. Then take water to wash your face
7. Don't forget to get used to wetting your thick beard
8. After that, wash your right hand and your left hand, both elbows up to the middle of the shoulder
9. After that, rub your head (your hair)
10. After that, rub both your ears, outside and inside
11. After that, wash your right foot then your left foot along with both ankles and intersect your toes with the little finger of your left hand.
12. When you have finished performing ablution, then raise your gaze towards the sky and then recite the prayer after completing ablution'

From this explanation, it can be seen that Imam al-Ghazali is of the view that a servant does not place importance on obligatory matters alone, but takes sunnah matters for granted.

### c) **Balance between physical and spiritual deeds**

In this case, Imam al-Ghazali provides an explanation:

ولن تصل أيها الطالب إلى القيام بأوامر الله تعالى إلا بمراقبة قلبك وجوارحك في لحظاتك وأنفاسك، حين تصبح إلى حين تسمى. فاعلم أن الله تعالى مطلع على ضميرك، ومشرف على ظاهرك وباطنك، ومحيط بجميع لحظاتك، وخطراتك، وخطواتك، وسائر سكناتك وحركاتك؛ وأنت في مخالطتك وخلواتك متردد بين يديه؛ فلا يسكن في الملك والمملوك ساكن، ولا يتحرك متحرك، إلا وجبار السموات والأرض مطلع عليه، يعلم خائنة الأعين وما تخفي الصدور، ويعلم السر وأخفى؛

فتأدب أيها المسكين ظاهرا وباطنا بين يدي الله تعالى تأدب العبد الذليل المذنب في حضرة الملك الجبار القهار، واجتهد ألا يراك مولاك حيث نهاك، ولا يفقدك حيث أمرك

O person who seeks knowledge, you will not be able to carry out Allah's commandments, unless you make your heart and all your body parts aware at all times, from morning to evening, so that you are always with Allah.

Know that Allah SWT. He knows your heart, watches over your soul and mind, knows your movements both when you are with people and when you are alone. In short, under whatever circumstances, you are always watched over by Allah. Everything in the heavens and on earth, both moving and immovable, cannot escape God's attention. He said: "He knows the treacherous looks of the eyes and what the heart hides." (QS. Al-Mu'minun: 19). And His words again: "Indeed, Allah knows the secrets and what is more hidden." (QS. Thaha: 7). Thus, you must be able to maintain your physical and spiritual behavior before Allah SWT. Humble yourself before Him, like a humble servant who makes many mistakes before a mighty king. Try as hard as you can to protect yourself, so that Allah does not see you carrying out actions that He has prohibited and also try to do what He wants. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)

From Imam al-Ghazali's statement, it can be understood that according to him a salik/servant should not only be busy with external deeds and ignore inner deeds (including *muraqabatullah*/feeling of always being watched over by Allah) to strengthen them so that they can maximally carry out Allah SWT's commands.

#### d) Balance between physical and mental purity

Imam al-Ghazali in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, emphasizes the importance of balance between *zahir* (physical) and inner (soul) purity in the life of a Muslim. He argued that the two cannot be separated, because physical purity, such as carrying out the Shari'a and worship, must be supported by inner purity from disease.

Apart from explaining how to purify properly and correctly through *istinjak*, ablution, bathing, *tayammun*, and other deeds, the Imam provides a portion that can be said a lot in the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah* about maintaining the purity of the heart from various things that can pollute it, including the eyes. and impaired hearing, lying, breaking promises, backbiting, arguing with the coachman, envy, envy, *riya'*, *takabbur*, and sins of the heart others. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

Imam al-Ghazali said:

اعلم أن الصفات المذمومة في القلب كثيرة، وطريق تطهير القلب من رذائلها طويلة، وسبيل العلاج فيها غامض، وقد اندرس بالكلية علمه وعمله؛ لغفلة الخلق عن أنفسهم واشتغالهم بزخارف الدنيا وقد استقصينا ذلك كله في كتاب (إحياء علوم الدين) في ربيع المهلكات وربع المنجيات، ولكننا نحذرك؛ فإنها مهلكات في أنفسها، وهي أمهات لجملة من الخبائب سواها: وهي الحسد، والرياء، والعجب؛ فاجتهد في تطهير قلبك منها؛ فإن قدرت عليها فتعلم كيفية الحذر من بقيتها من ربيع المهلكات. فإن عجزت عن هذا، فأنت عن غيره أعجز.

It should be noted that there are many types of despicable heart traits. To clean it takes quite a long time. Therefore, treating it is not easy. Because, many people neglect to introspect themselves. Many people are lulled by worldly luxuries and forget the afterlife. Their hearts are full of disease. The medicine has run out, but they are still not cured. You can read about liver disease and how to treat it in the book *Ihya' Ulumuddin* in the chapters *Rubu'ul Muhlikat* and *Rubu'ul Munjiyat*. Simply put, there are three main causes of liver disease, namely: (1) *Hasud* (envy). Feeling jealous and hating when someone gets pleasure. And feel happy when someone is affected by a disaster. (2) *Riya'* (showing off), carrying out an activity not because of Allah, but expecting praise and praise from others. (3) *Ujub* (self-praise). Considers that he is the most noble in all things. Therefore, cleanse yourself of this trait. If we cannot cleanse the liver of these three qualities, of course treating other liver diseases will also experience difficulties (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

Ignoring the purity of the heart threatens to make charity meaningless. Imam al-Ghazali stated:

ولا تظن أنك تسلم بنية صالحة في تعلم العلم، وفي قلبك شيء من الجسد والرياء والعجب،  
وقد قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: (ثلاث مهلكات: شح مطاع، وهوى متبع، وإعجاب المرء  
بنفسه)

*Even though you are sincere in seeking knowledge, don't assume that it is free from blemishes and sins. Especially if the characteristics of basud, riya and ujub are still attached to us. Rasulullah SAW once said: "Three things can destroy good deeds, namely the infidelity that is followed, the desires that are followed and self-indulgence." (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)*

## 2. I'tidal (justice, putting things in their place)

Imam al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of having a just heart, so that there is wisdom in acting. He gave guidance regarding this matter very deeply by saying: "Don't be surprised if someone speaks ill of you when you are not around and don't be angry with them, because if you want to be aware or be fair, you yourself have also done something like that, both to close friends, family, even teachers and your parents. You have also dared to tell people who are close and have made great contributions to you behind their backs." (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

Imam al-Ghazali taught the clever attitude of putting things in their place:

"If they make a mistake in a matter, but they don't want to learn from you, then don't teach them, because they will take knowledge from you and then be hostile to you. Unless the mistake they committed was an immoral act that they were not aware of. If that's the case, then tell them the truth in a subtle way. If they seem to appreciate your advice, then thank Allah, and if you see their displeasure with you, then hand over their decision to Allah, then ask Him for protection from their evil, without ridiculing them or speaking to them in words: you don't know who I am! I am the! I am an expert in this field and that. Because statements like that show stupidity and have the impression of considering yourself clean. Meanwhile, the most stupid people are people who think they are clean and like to praise themselves. Know that Allah SWT. do not encourage them to do evil to you except because of your sins or mistakes that you have committed before, and this is the punishment of Allah SWT. for the sins and mistakes you have committed. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)

## 3. Tasamuh (Tolerant)

In the context of religious moderation, Tasamuh refers to an attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for each other, regardless of differences in beliefs, culture or views of life. This principle emphasizes the importance of peaceful coexistence with other people, accepting diversity, and not discriminating against people who are different. Tasamuh teaches to respect other people's rights to have different views or beliefs, as well as creating harmonious relationships in social life. (Thohir et al., 2023), (Fajriati, 2023)

In Bidayah al-Hidayah, Imam al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of tolerance as one of the basic principles in interactions between individuals and communities. The following are several points that can be extracted from the book Bidayah al-Hidayah, the principle of tolerance according to al-Ghazali:

### a) Maintain harmonious relationships by avoiding criticism, cynicism and insults

فاحفظ لسانك منه، في الجدل والهزل؛ فإنه يريق ماء الوجه ويسقط المهابة، ويستجر الوحشية،  
ويؤذي القلوب، وهو مبدأ اللجاج والغضب والتصارم، ويغرس الحقد في القلوب

*We should be good at taking care of ourselves, don't let our words be used to ridicule, humiliate and play other people. Either for real or just playing around. Because, all of this can embarrass, eliminate authority and honor, and cause anxiety and even hurt people's hearts. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).*

Imam al-Ghazali gave a touching sentence, that perhaps the one who is insulted is better than the one who insults:

فيجب ألا تستصغر منهم أحدا؛ فإنك لا تدري لعله خير منك

*Do not belittle or insult any of them. Because you don't really know about him yet. Maybe he is better than you. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).*

### b) Respect differences and avoid arguments (coachy debates)

فذلك فيه إيذاء للمخاطب وتجهيل له، وطعن فيه، وفيه ثناء على النفس وتزكية لها بمزيد الفطنة والعلم، ثم هو مشوش للعيش؛ فإنك لا تمارى سفيها إلا ويؤذيك، ولا تمارى حليما إلا ويقليك ويحقد عليك؛ فقد قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: (من ترك المرء وهو مبطل بنى الله له بيتا في رضى الجنة، ومن ترك المرء وهو محق بنى الله له بيتا في أعلى الجنة)

*The act of arguing, arguing and talking too much is hurtful to the person you are talking to. Also, consider him stupid and insult him. Actions like that, whether based on or not, flatter yourself and think that you are smarter and smarter. Such behavior can result in dirty life and existence. If we fight verbally with stupid people, of course it will only cause hostility which will always irritate the heart. Meanwhile, if we fight verbally with wise people, people with higher knowledge, of course we will not get any results, but will be hated by them. We are considered impolite or even considered to have low knowledge (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).*

Imam al-Ghazali gave advice:

"Behave like a believer who always understands and accepts other people's reasons/opinions and don't be like a hypocrite who always looks for other people's mistakes." (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

#### c) Avoid blind fanaticism and feel like you have won

تقطع بشهادتك على أحد من أهل القبلة بشرك أو كفر أو نفاق؛ فإن المطلاع على السرائر هو الله تعالى، فلا تدخل بين العباد وبين الله تعالى

*Don't also say to Muslims that they are shirk, infidels or hypocrites. Because, the only person who knows a person's mind is Allah. Therefore, let us never get into problems that are between servants and Allah. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).*

#### 4. Masawah (Equation)

In the context of religious moderation, musawah refers to the attitude of not discriminating against other people based on differences in beliefs, traditions or origins. This principle emphasizes the importance of fair and equal treatment of every individual, regardless of background. Musawah teaches that everyone has the same right to be respected and treated with justice, without discrimination or unfair treatment. (Ahmad Muhammad, 2023), (Fajriati, 2023).

Looking equally at others is musawah, there are 2 points that can be taken from al-Ghazali's perspective in the book Bidayah al-Hidayah in this regard:

##### a) Develop social feelings towards others

Imam al-Ghazali explained that the situation of other people who have many defects and blemishes is the same as our situation. Likewise, of course we don't feel happy if other people reveal our bad things or secrets. Conversely, other people also feel happy if we reveal their faults and defects. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

He taught us to find our own weaknesses, before exploring the weaknesses of others:

وإن نظرت إلى ظاهرك وباطنك، فلم تطلع فيهما على عيب ونقص في دين ولا دنيا، فاعلم أن جهلك بعيوب نفسك أقبح أنواع الحماسة، ولا عيب أعظم من الحمق.

If we have corrected ourselves what is in our body and mind, but apparently cannot find the faults, defects and shortcomings that exist, whether regarding world affairs or religion, then know: "Indeed we are the worst of the most stupid people, and there is no disgrace worse than stupidity." (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

Imam al-Ghazali also gave in-depth advice about maintaining the honor of friends/other people:

وأن يذب عنه في غيبته إذا تعرض لعرضه كما يذب عن نفسه

*Defending a friend's honor as he defends his own honor. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)*

The feelings that are fostered must be honest from the heart. Imam al-Ghazali said:



## وَأَنْ يَضْمَرَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْلَ مَا يَظْهَرُ

Equating feelings towards friends between those inside the heart and those outside. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)

### b) Taking care of other people's feelings

Imam al-Ghazali said "It is not permissible to whisper to a friend sitting next to him when the teacher is at the assembly." (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015)

وَأَنْ يَظْهَرَ الْفَرْحَ بِجَمِيعِ مَا يَرْتَاحُ لَهُ مِنْ مَسَارِهِ، وَالْحُزْنَ عَلَى نِيَالِهِ مِنْ مَكَارِهِهِ

Shows joy when his friends are having fun and feels sad when his friends experience difficulties. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

The conclusion is, that a person must treat other people with pleasant treatment, as he wants to be treated well by other people. Whoever cannot love a friend as much as he loves himself, then the friendship of this kind of person is not sincere and will bring disaster in this world and in the hereafter. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

### 5. Tawasuth (taking the middle path)

In the context of moderation, tawasuth refers to an attitude that is not extreme or fanatical, but rather seeks balanced and moderate solutions. This principle emphasizes the importance of avoiding partiality or excessive attitudes, and focusing more on the principles of living justly and defending the values of justice in life together. Tawasuth teaches to act wisely, in balance, and not get caught up in radical views or actions (Fajriati, 2023; Nafisa et al., 2024).

In the final parts of the book *Bidayah al-Hidayah*, Imam al-Ghazali emphasizes this attitude of tawasuth, taking the middle path of avoiding extremism and going beyond limits, both in spiritual matters and social interactions.

وَكُنْ أَيْضًا كَمَا قَالَ بَعْضُ الْحُكَمَاءِ: الْقُصْدُ صَدِيقُكَ وَعَدُوُّكَ بَوَاجِهُ الرِّضَا، مِنْ غَيْرِ مَذَلَّةٍ لُهُمَا وَلَا هَيْبَةٍ مِنْهُمَا، وَتَوَقَّرْ مِنْ غَيْرِ كَبِيرٍ، وَتَوَاضَعْ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَذَلَّةٍ، وَكُنْ فِي جَمِيعِ أُمُورِكَ فِي أَوْسَطِهَا، فَكُلًّا طَرَفِي الْأُمُورِ ذَمِيمٌ، كَمَا قِيلَ:

عَلَيْكَ بِأَوْسَاطِ الْأُمُورِ فَإِنَّهَا ... طَرِيقٌ إِلَى تَحْجِجِ الصِّرَاطِ قَوِيمٌ  
وَلَا تَكُ فِيهَا مُفْرَطًا أَوْ مُفْرَطًا ... فَإِنَّ كُلَّ حَالِ الْأُمُورِ ذَمِيمٌ

And make yourself what an expert in wisdom said: Meet friends and enemies with a sweet, radiant face, but not because you are humble and afraid. Try to be firm and tough, but don't humiliate yourself. Try to be simple (middle) in everything. As the advice in the following poem: "You should always be simple (medium) in all your affairs, because simplicity (medium) is the best way to happiness. Don't go beyond the limits or be excessive, because both are disgraceful actions." (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

Even in the context of being hostile, according to Imam al-Ghazali, he still chooses the best option. He explained that if they are hostile to you, then do not respond to their hostility, because you will not be able to compete with them, even your religion will be damaged because of that hostility, so that you will suffer for a long time and in vain. (Imam Al-Ghazali, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

This research succeeded in revealing five (5) moderation values contained in the book *Bidayat al-Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali as follows:

1. Tawazun (balance): Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of balance in life. There are four forms of balance that he explained, namely; a) Balance between spirituality and social interaction, b) Balance of views on obligatory and sunnah deeds, c) Balance between outer and inner deeds, d) Balance between outer and inner purity.
2. I'tidal (justice, putting things in their place). This is necessary to be wise in your behavior to create harmony.
3. Tasamuh (Tolerance), includes three (3) things, namely a) Maintaining harmony in relationships by avoiding criticism, cynicism and insults, b) Respecting differences and avoiding arguments

- (coaching debates), c) Avoiding blind fanaticism and feeling win alone.
4. Musawah (Equality): Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of cultivating a deep social feeling towards others, viewing other people as worthy of being treated well, just as he wants to be treated well by others.
  5. Tawasuth (choosing the middle way): looking for a middle way (Tawasuth) avoiding extremism in worship and interacting with other people to achieve a harmonious life.
- Al-Ghazali's thoughts in *Bidayat al-Hidayah* not only provide practical guidance for individuals, but also offer solutions to face the challenges of moderation in modern society. Therefore, it is hoped that practicing these values can increase awareness of the importance of moderation in Islam and everyday life.

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