

## *Be Devout*

*Be devout, trust in God. Love Him with all your heart. Be zealous towards His holy church. All His commandments sacredly revere and observe. Follow the path of virtue. Shun all vice. Be prudent. Having in mind the end, always maintain the right perception of your means. Do not idly let go by an occasion for worthy deeds. Do not embark on any venture without careful deliberation, and in your reasoning, do not hurry. Be not tardy, except only under special circumstances and occasions. Do not believe everything you know, but only that which should be proclaimed. That which you do not know, do not affirm, nor deny, best of all – enquire, then wilt thou be discreet. Be temperate. Do not partake food without hunger. Without thirst do not drink, and that only in small quantities when required. Avoid drunkenness as you would Hades. The abstentious live healthily and in continuous well-being.*

*Be meek, not arrogant – keeping more to silence than to talkativeness. When someone is speaking – keep quiet. When some is addressing you – pay attention. When someone is relaying orders to you – fulfill them, and do not boast. Do not be obstinate, quarrelsome or vain. To all be affable, to none be a flatterer. Be thou, also, righteous. Do not desire anything belonging to others; do not steal, but in whatsoever you may have need, seek it through your labour. In poverty ask for help, when it is given, accept it and be thankful. Whatsoever you may have borrowed – return; whatsoever you have promised – fulfill.*

*Be courageous, always willing to labour. Leave off all idleness and laziness. If you wish to start some project, measure well your strength in advance, then proceed without letting up. In adversity, do not lose hope, in prosperity, do not morally deteriorate. Hold thriftiness in esteem. Keep careful observation of the different occurrences in life of inconsistency, misfortune and sorrow. Over that which the patient forbear, the fainthearted sigh, lament and wail. Be benevolent and gracious. Give to him that asketh of thee, if thou hast; help the poor, if thou canst. If anyone has hurt thee – forgive him/her; if thou hast hurt anyone – reconcile thyself with him/her. It is very commendable to refrain from holding grudges. Forgive the sinner, accede in the reconciler. If you yourself will love your fellowman, you shall in turn be loved by all people. Be thou also obedient to elders, companionable to equals and courteous to subordinates. Greet those whom you meet; return the greeting of those who greet you. To the enquirer, give answer; to the ignorant, give advice, to the sorrowing, give comfort. Do not envy anyone. Wish well to all.*

*Serve each and all, as much as you are able to. With your good deeds, you shall please all people. Your friends shall love you; your enemies will not be able to hate you. Always speak the truth; never lie. Observe all this, and good fortune shall always be your lot.*

*Glory to God*

*A fundamental Doukhobor psalm depicting simple rules of life that has become an integral part of the traditional Doukhobor wedding ceremony. Composed by Doukhobor leader Larion Pobirokin in the 1600s. Translated from Russian by E.A. Popoff.*