I Have Only Been Sent to Perfect Good Manners

The topic of good akhlaaq is very important. Consider that the Prophet SAW said: “The only reason I have been sent is to perfect good manners.”
Allah SWT starts off Surah Al-Qalam, an early Makkan surah revealed to defend the status and honor of Prophet Muhammad SAW, by saying that he possesses an exalted standard of character. Allah SWT says in another aayah: “Command my servants to say that which is best.”

Blessing #1

Having good akhlaaq is a continual theme throughout the Qur’an and Sunnah. It is part of the comprehensive advice the Prophet SAW would give. In one hadith he said to Muadh: “Fear Allah wherever you are, follow up an evil deed with a good deed, and meet/interact with the people with good akhlaaq.” Three beautiful, comprehensive phrases.
He also said: “Be firm, be perseverant, be straight in your following of Siraat al Mustaqeem. Let your akhlaaq be good to the people.”
The Prophet SAW further stated: “Have fear of Allah, and do not trivialize anything of goodness, even if it is that you take from your bucket of water and pour it into your brother’s bucket.” In those days, lifting water out of a well was a daily, minor chore. So the Prophet SAW said not to trivialize any good deed.
And he said: “Even if you were to meet your brother with a smiling face, do not trivialize it.” He SAW also said, “If someone curses you or tries to find fault with you, in a matter that does not exist in you... do not find fault with him in a matter that he does have. Leave him, because the evil of that deed will be against him, and the good will be for you.” In another place he said: “Do not ever curse any person.”

Blessing #2

“The best blessing that a person can be given in this life is akhlaaq.” It is far greater than money, wealth, status, family, or anything of this world. In other hadiths, he SAW said: “Mankind has not been given anything better than good akhlaaq,” and “I command you to be of good akhlaaq.”

Blessing #3

The rewards of good akhlaaq are equivalent to, or greater than, extra and continual worship. Through akhlaaq, a person can obtain blessings they wouldn't otherwise reach. The Prophet SAW said: “A person can reach the level of a person who prays all night and fasts all day just because of his good akhlaaq.”
He SAW also said: “The Muslim who is musaddat reaches the darajat as-sawwam al-qawwam.” *Sawwam* is one who continually fasts, and *qawwam* is one who continually stands in prayer. A social Muslim fulfilling the rights of others earns this extra thawwab through character alone.

Blessing #4

Good akhlaaq is a sign of strong, perfected eman. A coarse, arrogant, or vain person does not have strong eman, regardless of their self-assigned labels or boasts. Even if they fast and pray, they have not perfected their faith. Meanwhile, someone performing the minimum wajibaat (obligations) with good akhlaaq is far better.
The Prophet SAW said:

- “The people (or the Mu’mins) who have perfected their eman most perfectly, are those who are best in akhlaaq.”
- “The best of the Mu’mineen are the ones who are best in their akhlaaq... and the best of you are those of you who are best to their wives.”

It is easy to show good manners to a neighbor or coworker whom you see briefly, but showing it to your spouse—whom you live with constantly—is the true height of good character.
He SAW also said: “The best Mu’mins are those who are best in their akhlaaq, those whose shoulders are trodden over.” This Arabic expression means they are humble. He SAW explained they are friendly, respond to friendliness, and achieve *ulfa* (brotherhood). There is no good in one who neither shows nor receives *ulfa*. The mu’min is genuinely friendly from the heart.

Blessing #5

Akhlaaq is beloved to Allah SWT; He loves noble characteristics (*ma’ali akhlaaq*) and despises lowly ones. The Prophet SAW said: “Allah is beautiful and loves beauty, and He loves noble akhlaaq... and He hates, he despises lowly characteristics.”
He SAW also stated: “Allah SWT has containers on the face of this earth, and the containers of your Lord are the hearts of His servants.” These hearts fill with Allah's mercy, love, and knowledge. “The most beloved of these containers are the ones that are the most soft, and the ones that are most gentle.” Conversely, Allah SWT dislikes those with coarse hearts who are constantly vulgar, critical, arrogant, and sarcastic.

Blessing #6

Good akhlaaq is the heaviest thing on the scale (*meezaan*) on the Day of Judgment. The Prophet SAW told us: “The heaviest aspect, the heaviest matter [that will help a believer] that will be in the meezaan, on the scales on the Day of Judgment, is good akhlaaq.” If a person lacks voluntary fasts or nafl/Sunnah prayers, excellent akhlaaq is the ultimate way to make it up.

Blessing #7

Good akhlaaq ensures closeness to the Prophet SAW in the Hereafter. He SAW said: “Those of you who will be closest to me on the Day of Judgment will be those who have the best akhlaaq.” These individuals will have the "closest seats" to him.
Conversely, he SAW said: “And the people who are the most hated by me and the ones who are the furthest from me in the Hereafter are those who have the worst akhlaaq.” He described them as *“Atharta’oon, al mutabayhaqun, al mutashaddaqoon”*—terms denoting people who are vulgar, crude, coarse, and arrogant in their speech.

Blessing #8

Alongside taqwa, good akhlaaq is the primary factor that causes people to enter Jannah. When asked what characteristic brings most people into Jannah, the Prophet SAW responded: “To have the taqwa of Allah and to have good akhlaaq.” These two go hand-in-hand: worship Allah SWT properly (tawhid) and treat mankind properly.

PART II

Having good akhlaaq is both easy and difficult. It costs no money, but it requires rigorous self-control. We must avoid two extremes. Some groups emphasize manners while ignoring worship, believing that as long as they are peaceful, major sins or shirk do not matter. However, the Prophet SAW said: “The best of you in Islam... are the best of you in akhlaaq as long as they have knowledge.” Without knowledge, akhlaaq loses its foundation. When combined, it represents perfect eman—just as the Prophet SAW combined total knowledge, fear of Allah SWT, and the best akhlaaq.

PART III

The Prophet SAW taught: “Tell him that your body has a right over you, your soul has a right over you, and your family and wife have a right over you. So give everyone the right that it has over you.”
He SAW emphasized: “I have only been sent... so that I may perfect good akhlaaq.” This encompasses akhlaaq with Allah SWT, akhlaaq with His creation, and akhlaaq with one’s self.