

Answer to those who ask "Do new Muslims have to abandon their former pleasures and activities?"

When we talk about a religious way of life, what generally comes to mind first is a lifestyle divorced from all mundane pursuits. Contrary to this flawed thinking, however, Allah wants His servants to lead the most beautiful life. In the Qur'an, Allah gives the news that believers will lead a beautiful life, for:

Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer, We will give them a good life and will recompense them according to the best of what they did. (Qur'an, 16:97)

Despite the good news declared in this verse, people do not receive many of Allah's blessings due to an understanding of religion that is based on hearsay. However, the Qur'an encourages believers to use lawful and clean things and warns those who bring prohibitive systems:

O you who believe. Do not make unlawful the good things that Allah has made lawful for you, and do not overstep the limits. Allah does not love people who overstep the limits. (Qur'an, 5:87)

As long as people observe the limits set by Allah, the Qur'an does not prohibit them from socializing and enjoying themselves. The things considered to be unlawful by the Qur'an are obvious, as are the Prophet's (pbuh) exemplary life and advice. Apart from these, the Qur'an severely condemns the laying down of new judgments and attempting to do this in the name of religion, as the following verses indicate:

Do not say about what your lying tongues describe: "This is lawful and this is unlawful," inventing lies against Allah. Those who invent lies against Allah are not successful. (Qur'an, 16:116)

Wear fine clothing in every mosque and eat and drink, but do not be profligate. He does not love the profligate. Say: "Who has forbidden the fine clothing that Allah has produced for His servants and the good kinds of provision?" Say: "On the Day of Resurrection, such things will be exclusively for those who had faith during their life in the world." In this way, We make the Signs clear for people who know. (Qur'an, 7:31-32)

As we mentioned earlier, the Qur'an relates that the Prophets asked for Allah's blessings. This aside, those who lack true faith in Allah also benefit from them. This is the point where the differences between believers and unbelievers emerge. Unbelievers feel a strong attachment to favors bestowed upon them (e.g., money or property), forget to remember Allah, and feel ungrateful for His blessings. On the other hand, believers, who are aware that they are from Allah, use these blessings for Allah's cause in the best way and draw nearer to Him. The Qur'an sets the following criterion for this issue:

Seek the abode of the Hereafter with what Allah has given you, without forgetting your portion of the world. And do good, as Allah has been good to you. And do not seek to cause corruption in the land, for Allah does not love corrupters. (Qur'an, 28:77)

However, apart from all of these, remember that as people adopt the Qur'an's values and make them an integral part of their lives and assume more of the believers' attributes, they will acknowledge the existence of very different tastes and pleasures. For members of a society that does not live by the religion, for instance, the greatest pleasure in life is to enjoy themselves. Believers however, have more noble and permanent pleasures, such as striving to earn

Allah's good pleasure, conveying Allah's message to people, communicating the beauties of the Qur'an's morality to people, and carrying out an intellectual struggle against unbelievers.

As people draw nearer to the model of a believer described in the Qur'an, they see that the real pleasures attained through sincere faith are incomparably superior to those enjoyed by unbelievers.