103044 - Who bears the consequences of mixing – men or women?

the question

If you discuss with some brothers about the ruling on free mixing between men and women at work, they say that it is normal situation that a man works, and that he is not sinful for continuing to do so. Please advise these brothers bearing in mind that chances of employment in our country are limited.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Mixing between men and women at work has bad consequences and obvious evil effects on both men and women, including the following:

1 – Haraam looking. Allah has commanded both believing men and believing women to lower their gaze. He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do.

31. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent…”

[al-Noor 24:30-31]

In Saheeh Muslim (2159) it is narrated that Jareer ibn ‘Abd-Allah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: I asked the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about an accidental glance and he ordered me to avert my gaze.

2 – It may result in haraam touching., which includes shaking hands. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “If one of you were to be stabbed in the head with an iron needle, that would be better for him than his touching a woman who is not permissible for him.” Narrated by al-Tabaraani from Ma’qil ibn Yasaar; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami’ no. 5045.

3 – Mixing may lead to a man being alone with a non-mahram woman, which is haraam because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “No man is alone with a woman but the third one present is the shaytaan.” Narated by al-Tirmidhi (2165); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

According to another report: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him not be alone with a woman who has no mahram present, for the third one present will be the shaytaan.” Narrated by Ahmad and classed as saheeh by al-Hakaim, and al-Dhahabi agreed with him; it was also classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Ghaayat al-Maraam (180).

4 – Another of its evil consequences is when a man becomes infatuated with a woman, or vice versa, which is due to mixing and prolonged interaction.

5 – That may lead to the break-up of families. How many men have neglected their wives and lost their families, because they were infatuated with a female classmate or colleague? How many women have lost their husbands and neglected their homes for the same reason. Indeed, how many cases of divorce have been caused by haraam relationships formed by the husband or wife, and mixing at work was the thing that lead to that.

For these and other reasons, Islam forbids mixing that leads to these evils. The evidence for the prohibition on mixing has been discussed in detail in the answer to question no. 1200.

The natural situation for women is to stay at home, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance” [al-Ahzaab 33:33].

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said: This means: stay in your houses and do not come out unnecessarily. End quote.

Those who should work to earn money and do different jobs and professions are the men, but even though this is the natural way and the woman is the one who is transgressing the limits and crowding with men in the workplace, and going out fully adorned, and doing things that Allah has forbidden, all of that is no justification for a Muslim man doing that which Allah has forbidden him to do, rather he will be questioned about his actions. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “No person earns any (sin) except against himself (only), and no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another” [al-An’aam 6:164].

The Muslim is enjoined to adhere to the limits set by Allah, and not to transgress them just because other people do so; rather he is required to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil as much as he can, not to take the fact that people do evil deeds as a justification for falling into them himself. Hence our advice to every Muslim is to strive to keep his heart free of the effects of fitan (tribulations and temptations), especially the fitnah of women of which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “I have not left after me any fitnah that is more harmful to men than women.” Agreed upon.

He should also keep away from those places which the shaytaan takes as a starting point to gradually tempt people from one sin to another that is worse than it. We should have certain faith that the one who puts his trust in Allah will find that He is sufficient for him, and if one fears Him, He will grant a way out. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).

3. And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine”

[al-Talaaq 65:2-3]

So the Muslim should strive to find work where there is no mixing with women; if he cannot find it,

let him fear Allah as much as he can, by lowering his gaze and avoiding talking to women unnecessarily, or going beyond that to laughing and joking, or being alone with a woman, for a huge fire may start with a single spark.

May Allah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allah knows best.