45883 - He is studying in a mixed university; how should he deal with female teachers and students?

the question

I am a young man who is religiously committed. I am studying in a mixed university and I would like to develop my specialty further, but that requires me to interact in class, which will open channels of communication between me and other students. In addition to that there are female teachers who teach us very important subjects. How should I interact with the female students and teachers?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Studying in mixed schools, institutes and universities is not permitted. The evils that exist in these institutions because of that mixing are no secret, let alone the fact that people do not learn much, if anything, in these institutions. Wise people even in kaafir countries have called for segregation between the sexes in educational institutions because of the moral damage they have noticed and the weakening of educational standards. Trustworthy scholars have issued fatwas stating that this kind of education is not permissible.

The scholars of the Standing Committee said:

It is haraam for male and female students and teachers to mix in educational institutions, because of the fitnah and provocation of desires and immoral conduct that results from that. The gravity of the sin is compounded if the female teachers and students uncover any part of their ‘awrahs or wear see-through or tight clothing, or if the students or teachers flirt or joke together, which may lead to transgression of limits and violation of honour.

Fataawa Islamiyyah, 3/102, 103

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked:

Is it permissible for a man to study in a mixed university where men and women mix in one classroom, knowing that the student has a role to play in calling people to Allaah?

He replied:

What I think is that it is not permissible for anyone, man or woman, to study in a mixed school, because of the grave danger that it poses to his chastity, integrity and morals. No matter how great a person’s integrity, morals and innocence, if a woman is sitting beside him on the seat – especially if she is beautiful and unveiled – he can hardly avoid fitnah and evil. Everything that leads to fitnah and evil is also haraam and is not permitted. We ask Allaah to keep our Muslim brothers safe from such things which will only bring evil, fitnah and corruption to their youth. If there is no other university apart from this one, he should go and study in another city or country where this mixing does not happen. I do not think that this is permissible but others may have a different opinion.

Fataawa Islamiyyah, 3/103

We have already discussed the ruling on mixing in detail in the answer to question no. 1200.

See also the answers to questions no. 8827, 22397 and 6666.

This is easy for those who do not have the problem of mixed schools in their country or who have access to colleges and universities that are not mixed, so they have no need to study in mixed colleges. But there remains the question of those who are faced with the problem of mixed schools in their countries. What should they do, especially if that will affect their chances of earning a living or of getting married in the future, since if they do not study in these colleges they will not be able to find a job or get married.

In this case, there is no option, and the need is great, and when the need is great, the matter may come under the heading of necessity. This necessity may be taken into consideration, provided that the following conditions are met:

1-That there be no other place where he can study, even if it is in another country

2-That he cannot obtain this certificate by means of distance learning or studying via the internet, for example

3-That he goes to study in these mixed places seeking the help of Allaah to confront fitnah.

He should take care to lower his gaze as much as he can and not touch or shake hands with non-mahram women or be alone with them, and he should not sit right next to them.

He should advise the girls to sit away from the boys and adhere to other Islamic guidelines as well.

4-If he notices himself slipping towards haraam things and being tempted by those of the opposite sex who are with him, then the soundness of his religious commitment is more important than any worldly aims, so he has to leave the place immediately and Allaah will make him independent of means by His bounty. And Allaah is the One Whose help we seek.

And Allaah knows best.

There follows a list of colleges and universities that are not mixed:

1-The Medical College in Dubai

2-Al-Azhar University in Egypt

3-The Imam Muhammad ibn Sa’ood Islamic University in Saudi

4-Umm al-Qura University in Makkah al-Mukarramah

5-The Islamic University in Madeenah al-Munawwarah

6-The King Sa’ood University in Saudi.