4816 - She wants to become Muslim but thinks she will have problems with her friends, family and job

the question

I am a woman studying Islam and have a few questions that need answering:
1. I have a few Muslim male friends, we are very close and they treat me as an equal, if I had to convert to Islam would their attitutes towards me have to change, e.g. when I visit their houses, their wifes are very much in the background while I am allowed to sit with the men and partake in the conversation the wifes are usually busy in the kitchens or else busy with the kids or generally sit and watch TV while we talk; I would not like to loose these special moments with my friends;
2. What will I be able to do about Friday prayers? I work in a place where my situation is very difficult. My collegeus are very prejudice against Muslims and I am afraid that should I convert they will freak. I have read somewhere that you can appoint someone to do the prayers for you, is that true?
3. My family are all very staunch Christians and I was brought up as a christian, I am also married to a christian but he has no objections to my studying and practicing Islam, if I had to convert how can I get my family to leave me alone?
4. Obviously this is a big step for me and I do still have doubts as to whether I am doing the right thing, how can one be 100% sure that you are doing the right thing. In my heart I feel OK about this although my mind has a lot of worries as you can notice from my questions. I am sure of the Oneness of God and have always been. I have read the Choice by Ahmed Deedat and I am sure about the Prophet (PBUH) and I do and have always believed in life after death but why do I still feel so confused? Am I ready to take the big step?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is what you want to do the right step? Are you ready to take this great step? From what you say, these are the two important questions to which you have been trying to find the answer. We thank you for consulting us, and we believe that what you are going to do is the right step for sure, because this is the religion of Allah, and He does not accept any other religion from His slaves, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:85]

Maybe you have compared (religions, etc.) and read widely and have reached the conviction that this is the true religion which you must follow, but this is not enough and it will not save a person just to believe in the Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the resurrection after death. He must also utter the Shahadataayn and practise Islam. It seems to us that your hesitation is not due to lack of conviction of the truth but because of certain fears that have to do with social factors such as friends, family, husband and job.

One aspect of the answer may be found under Question # 4775, so please refer to that. As far as your Muslim acquaintances are concerned, you will be sitting with their wives, not with the men, as is dictated by Islamic teaching. If you find this difficult at first, you will find it easy later on. If these women are too busy, then look for other sincere Muslim women who you can make friends with and encourage one another to adhere to the truth.

If you are sincere towards Allah, He will help you to overcome your difficulties with your husband and family. With regard to Friday Prayers, this is not obligatory for women because the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “It is a duty for every Muslim to pray Jumu’ah in congregation apart from four: slaves, women, young boys and the sick.” (Reported by Abu Dawood, 901). Women have to pray four rak’ahs of Zuhr prayer on Friday wherever they are. What you have heard about a person delegating someone else to pray on his behalf is not correct

at all. Prayer is fard ‘ayn, i.e., an individual duty for each Muslim, and it is not acceptable for one person to appoint someone else as a proxy or for one person to pray on behalf of another. In any case, you have no need for this in the case of Jumu’ah prayers, as you now know.

Briefly, all you need in your case is to put your trust in Allah and strive to please Him. Go ahead and embrace His religion even if it makes other people angry. So long as you accept Him as your Lord and God, and follow His religion, He will never let you down or forsake you. We believe that you are ready to take this great step, in sha Allah, so remember our advice in brief is “Go for it” and put your trust in Allah. We ask Allah to give you strength.