

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islám.

Today we're going to speak about how Islam organizes our relationships with other people, our family members, our children, our spouses, our neighbors, our co-workers and even people of other faiths. Our modern world has brought together people of diverse cultures into a global village, and we Muslims in the West have to do some critical thinking and make some crucial choices about our relationships with our neighbors and those we associate with.

In the USA, there are approximately 3.5 million Muslims in a total population of about 320 million. We are a small community in terms of numbers. However, we are not the first Muslims to face the challenge of living as a minority in a western secular environment.

Remember that the Prophet Muhammad was the leader of the first Muslim minority in a very hostile tribal society. The Quraish of Makka were bitterly opposed to Islam, they persecuted Muslims quite severely, and there was a real danger that Islam could have been wiped out completely. As a precaution, therefore, the Prophet Muhammad sent a small delegation to Abyssinia...They became the 1st Muslim minority in a friendly Christian society. It was here that a wise, just and tolerant King, welcomed them and guaranteed their safety.

Over the past half-century, many Muslims have migrated to the USA. Added to this, there has been a steady flow of students and professional Muslims seeking to advance their careers as well as political asylum seekers who have fallen out of favour with their

own governments. While North America benefits from this inflow of skilled human resources from Muslim countries, the new communities have to face some difficult choices: Many of them are not familiar with western ways. Often their arrival is not welcomed. How should they respond?

Indeed brothers and sisters, there are both beneficial things and harmful things in all civilizations, and the Muslim should always be the one who focuses and tries to do the beneficial things while abandoning the negative, immoral and indecent things. So what should be our attitude towards the civilization we live in today?

Our attitude towards the civilization we live in may be one of four things:

1- **Ignoring this civilization completely, good points and bad alike**, which is kind of difficult for us seeing that we live here.

2- **Adopting it in whole, good points and bad**. For example these people seize opportunities since it is the land of opportunities, these people are always on time because everyone else is, people work hard because you get overtime and incentives from your employers. However, these people accept all of the bad as well and start practicing it... such as the discrimination and racism, they discriminate against their own brothers and sisters in Islam because of their race or nationality, they accept and approve and sometimes practice immoral acts such as fornication, transgenderism, homosexuality, because everyone else is doing it, they sell and consume intoxicants, alcohol, drugs, and riba, because every other business is doing it, and they've abandoned the Quran and their ethnic nasheeds in exchange for Rap, pop,

R&B, Rock and other types of music and all other acts of disobedience to Allah.

The third attitude, which is worse than the previous is **Adopting the bad things and not the good**. By adopting and participating in the beliefs and worship of other than Allah, by adopting an attitude that says that 'Islam needs reform, the Quran is outdated, having a beard or wearing a hijab is extreme' or remaining silent about those who slander Allah, his prophets, his books, his people, and adopting and accepting immoral and indecent acts that all religions despise and consider a sin such as homosexuality and transgenderism. They accept all of these things while abandoning the good traits we find with some of civilization we live in such as the hard work ethic, the sincerity in their work, punctuality, organization, professionalism and respect in dealing with others.

The fourth attitude is those who adopt only the good things and not the bad. This is the right attitude that a Muslim should have. Adopt everything good that does not conflict with the religion of Islam. Wherever the Muslim goes he should be of benefit to those around him and at the same time benefit from those around him.

The first three are undoubtedly wrong and only one of them is undoubtedly good, which is the last one.

So normally Muslims coming to the West have generally chosen one of 3 options:

Assimilation, isolation or selective interaction.

The first group are those who choose to assimilate, they are those who usually suffer from a massive inferiority complex. They abandon their Muslim identity, they imitate the culture of the host community in every possible way. They feel ashamed of who they are and where they have come from. They feel ashamed and embarrassed of the struggles and hard work that their ancestors put in to preserve and protect their religion back in their homelands. They deny their origins and they try to be someone who they're not. They change their names from Muhammad to mo, from Fatimah to frances, they lighten their skin, all to be accepted from those who surround him, Wherever they are they try to blend in or fit in, so that they are not recognized, they stay under the radar.

We should be reminded of the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad when he said: "Whoever imitates a people, then he is one of them."

The one who assimilates and imitates the non-Muslims feels that he is inferior and defeated, so he hastens to make up for his feelings of inadequacy by imitating those who surround him and those whom he admires seeking to fit in and be accepted.

But be reminded that no matter what you do to try to fit in, you will never be accepted,...so why try so hard to be accepted by those who only want you to abandon your religion, as Allah says:

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ ۗ
وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۗ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ -

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And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, "Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance." If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper.

Imitation of the non-Muslims means imitating their clothing and appearance, and the customs, beliefs, worship and traditions that are unique and special to them. Dressing the way they dress, talking the way they talk, walking the way they walk, worshipping the way they worship, believing the way they believe, accepting indecent and immoral acts of injustice, oppression and wrongdoing. The Muslim is one who was distinguished by Allah for being the best of creation, the best ummah...so are you all proud of being Muslim??? If so then dress like a Muslim, wear modest loose fitting clothing, not only in the masjid but also outside, start off with something that takes no effort at all and will adorn your face such as growing a beard like the prophet Muhammad and his companions had, look like a Muslim, behave like a Muslim, don't lie, don't cheat, don't deceive, take advantage of others...Muslims or non-Muslims...don't backbite, and slander your brothers and sisters in Islam... conduct business like a Muslim, give your brother the same price you would love to receive for yourself, avoid riba, selling of intoxicants, cigarettes, drugs, and the likes...be proud of who you are as Allah has

entrusted us all with a responsibility, to be Muslims and be examples for the rest of humanity.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۗ

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah

The second group of Muslims living here are those who may choose complete Isolation. They are those who are horrified with what they see has become of the first group who've assimilated completely and lost their Islamic Identity.

Those who isolate themselves do not want to disappear and melt away into the cultural melting pot of this society. They want to preserve their Islamic identity, which they often confuse with their cultural and ethnic identity. Further, they think the best way to protect Islám, and their Muslim identity, is to have no contact, or minimal contact, with their non-Muslim neighbours.

This fear of these isolationists is understandable, but it cannot be a solution. Islám cannot be hidden away like some precious relic in a museum. Or a masjid in the middle of the woods. Because of this we find the current situation of Islam and the Muslims in America. Because many of the communities have isolated themselves from the larger community. They have little or no interaction with the local non-Muslims in the inner cities, they consider themselves too good or too rich to socialize with those people. Brothers and sisters in Islam, we must be reminded that Islam was never intended to be a religion of secret, or a certain

ethnic group, or jurisprudence madhthab, rather it is a religion for all mankind, for all times and places. And it is upon those who have isolated themselves for so long to reach out to their neighbors and bring this merciful religion to the people, all people.

The third group of Muslims are those who choose Selective Interaction here in the west, which is the middle way, and is the best and correct choice. They believe that, Muslims can and should freely associate with people of other faiths and beliefs. They interact with their neighbors and their local community, at home, at work and leisure, so that they can cultivate a friendship that benefits both sides. This group seeks to take and benefit from the good wholesome things in the civilization that agree with Islam and do not contradict it in any way, while avoiding the bad influences at all means necessary. This group feels that their interaction with others allows Muslims to generate an Islamic influence on their neighbors and fellow citizens to invite them to guidance and lead the way for them.

Second Khutbah

Brothers and sisters in faith, clearly, Islam was never intended for any one race or group. Islam is for all mankind, for all time, and in all places. It is our duty as Muslims to share it with others. But how do we do this? How do we show others the beauty of faith? How do we convince them that Islam has the best solutions to the problems of our time?

Let us take our clues from our own history. If the Prophet Muhammad had confined his attention to Muslims only, Islam

would not have grown as it did. Islam would not have spread to as far East as China and as far west as the USA. Our Holy Prophet Muhammad, started his mission and continued it to the end of his life, by preaching, teaching and setting an excellent personal example, to his friends and enemies, to Muslims and others alike. He would go to the downtown area, the city center in Makkah and invite the people to Islam. He would pray there, do business there and meet with people there. So the question is, what are we doing in our downtown areas? Are we meeting with the people down there? Do we have a presence there?

Brothers and sisters in faith, We should not be shy or embarrassed when people of other faiths ask us about our religion. Let us invite them to our homes. Let us tell them about Islam and our way of life. This is so much more important now that Islám and Muslims are in the spotlight of world attention.

How do we cultivate the confidence to speak to them about our faith and beliefs? This comes from knowledge and understanding. Fear and insecurity are caused by ignorance. We need knowledge and understanding to build confidence and, if it pleases Allah, we may even acquire wisdom. The best way to improve our knowledge of Islam is to go directly to the source, and to study it with qualified scholars.

As we grow in knowledge about our faith, so our fear and insecurity will disappear. As we grow more confident, so we become better equipped to deal with the many challenges of living in a multi-faith environment.

Let us pray to Allah, subhanallahu ta'ala, to awaken within us, the desire to improve ourselves, and to serve Islam better, the desire to move forward and become more effective Muslims. O Allah, help us in our efforts to seek knowledge, understanding and Wisdom, so that we can serve You, and seek Your pleasure. Help us, O Alláh, to live as true and worthy examples for those who are not yet Muslim. Let the light of Islam shine through us, through our behaviour, as a beacon for those who are still lost in darkness. O Allah, let us, our children and all future generations of Muslims increase in number and quality. And, despite the terrible events of these past few weeks, that have damaged the good name of Islám, let Islám grow and prosper. Help us to do our duty, so that Islám can make its greatest conquest, not by physical force, but by winning the hearts and minds of all who love truth, beauty and justice.