

What happens when non-Muslims fall in love with Muslims?

We have Muslim refugees and neighbors around us. Many of these are young men. Some of them will get married to non-Muslim women – Christians or non-religious¹. What should Christian women expect when they accept being courted by a Muslim man? There are already a large number of bi-religious marriages. I have been counseling a few of these couples for the last 20 years. This is some advice from my experience. Some of this advice is for later in the marriage, especially in the case of a visit or move to a predominate Muslim country. These will be marked with **S** for „Sharia“. If this is your case, you can then evaluate the consequences that such a step can have for you.

Positive aspects

1. **Love**, a gallant, attentive partner
2. A **family** and community
3. **Enrichment** through another culture and language
4. **Re-discovering your Christian faith** through discussing the differences to Islam
5. Perhaps as a Christian you hope to be able to **win your Muslim bridegroom for your faith** - all too often, this is an illusion

Possible Challenges

1. Your Muslim bridegroom may initially respect your faith, but one cannot be sure how things will develop when, for example, a **conservative uncle** puts him under pressure. At the present time, he is not very religious, he only follows the Koran, not the tradition (hadith). He is tolerant and respects your Christian faith, but this attitude can change through external influences.
2. Your motivation is love. But perhaps your marriage is the only way for your counterpart to receive a **residence permit**.
3. Statistics show that marriages between partners from different countries of origin have a 64% **higher divorce rate** than marriages between partners from the same country of origin. The **risk of divorce** increases by a further 60% when they belong to different religions.²

Cultural Factors

1. **Religious festivals**, a child's birth, circumcision, wedding or death often cause differences of opinion. Here the **extended family often pressures** the couple and earlier marital arrangements are then forgotten. According to Islam, your children may not be baptized.³
2. A Muslim man may marry a Christian woman but a **Christian man may not marry a Muslim woman**.⁴ In this case the woman would no longer be under the protection of Islam.⁵ A non-Muslim man would first have to officially become a Muslim and possibly be circumcised before he can marry a Muslim woman. He would have to give up his former religion.
3. **A Muslim man should marry a Muslim woman**.⁶
4. Even though your Muslim partner may be open for your faith, this may end when this person is not so deeply in love as before or when the relatives, friends or mosque **put pressure on him**. One always

¹It is mostly the case that Muslim man marry non-Muslim woman. This is why we chose to speak of the case of a man even though this applies equally to both sexes.

²<http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article137596968/Warum-binationale-Ehen-viel-haeufiger-zerbrechen.html> from 18.2.2015. *Rostocker Zentrum zur Erforschung des demografischen Wandels* and from the *University of Liverpool*.

³<http://islam.de/1641.php>: „Die Kinder einer Mischehe zwischen einem Muslim und einer Jüdin, Christin und Muslima müssen islamisch erzogen werden. Deswegen ist eine ...Taufe ... nicht erlaubt.“

⁴Sure 5,5: „Und (zum Heiraten sind euch erlaubt) die ehrbaren (muhsanaat) gläubigen Frauen und die ehrbaren Frauen (aus der Gemeinschaft) derer, die vor euch die Schrift erhalten haben...“; <http://islam.de/1641.php>: „Der Islam unterstützt nicht die Ehe einer muslimischen Frau mit einem Nicht-Muslim.“

⁵<http://islam.de/1641.php>

⁶http://www.answering-christianity.com/umar/mixed_marriage_rebuttal.htm

marries into a family, and in the Muslim culture they participate in all decisions. At this point, you may be strongly encouraged to become a Muslim.⁷

5. According to Islam, the husband is responsible to care for the family financially. If it would happen that the **wife would have a higher salary**, this would undermine the traditional role of the husband.⁸

Piece of advice for Christian women:

If you are convinced Christian, why would you give up your faith and assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ for a vague hope in Islam?⁹ Why should a Christian marry a man who totally rejects faith in the eternal **Son of God**¹⁰, His death on the **cross** and the **Bible** as the faithfully transmitted Word of God? Can you accept **Mohammed** as a real prophet and the **Koran**; can you deny the central Christian beliefs?¹¹ In the Bible, Christians are advised to marry Christians.¹² A deep spiritual fellowship can only be given to both partners through the **Holy Spirit**, who lives in us, if both of these are Christians.

Woman's status according to the Koran

1. According to the Koran **men are above women**;¹³ according to the New Testament, both are equal: a wife should freely submit to her husband as he is submitted to her and to the Lord¹⁴.
2. A Christian woman is not made **unclean before God** through her menstruation, as in Islam, so that she would have to pray purification prayers.¹⁵
3. According to the Koran, a woman's testimony is only worth half as much as a man's testimony in a court of law.¹⁶ **S**
4. A woman is **her husband's property**.¹⁷
5. Women should be **veiled** as soon as they leave their own home.¹⁸ **S**
6. A man can **beat his wife** when she does not do his will.¹⁹ A man should remember this rule when there is conflict in the marriage. **S**

⁷<http://www.domini.org/lam/marriages.html>

⁸<http://newmuslimguide.com/de/your-family/559> „The husband has the duty to provide his wife with food, clothing, and everything else she may need“

⁹Sure 19:71: „There is not one of you but shall approach it. That is a fixed ordinance of thy Lord.“ (Pickthall); 1. John 5:12: „Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.“ (NIV)

¹⁰Sure 5:17: „They indeed have disbelieved who say: Lo! Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary.“

¹¹1. John 2:22: „Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son.“

¹²1. Cor 7:39: „A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.“ 2. Cor 6:14: „Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.“

<http://www.domini.org/lam/unequallyyoked.html>

¹³Sure 2:228: „men are a degree above them.“

¹⁴Ephesians 5:22-25: „Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord... Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.“

¹⁵<http://newmuslimguide.com/de/your-purification/557> and Galatians 3:28: „There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.“ And Titus 1:15: „To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure.“

¹⁶Sure 2:282: „And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not (at hand) then a man and two women, of such as ye approve as witnesses, so that if the one erreth (through forgetfulness) the other will remember.“

Sure 4:11: „to the male the equivalent of the portion of two females“.

¹⁷Sure 3:14 „Beautified for mankind is love of the joys (that come) from women and offspring; and stored-up heaps of gold and silver, and horses branded (with their mark), and cattle and land.“

¹⁸Sure 24:31: „And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands “

¹⁹Sure 4:34: „As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them.“

7. A woman **can only leave her home with the permission** of her husband.²⁰ **S**
8. A Muslim **can divorce his wife verbally** but a woman does not have this same right.²¹ A wife can only divorce her husband when he is terminally ill or impotent, when he cannot take care of her or has been neglecting his marital duty but only in a court of law. A verbal divorce is not allowed in western countries as the civil ceremony is accepted above the Islamic marriage ceremony.
9. When a Muslim has spoken the **divorce formula three times**, he is divorced from his wife. He can then only marry her again when in the meantime she gets married to another man and is then divorced by him.²² **S**
10. When a marriage **partner leaves the Islamic faith**, the marriage is automatically dissolved.²³ **S**

Women according to the Hadithen

In everyday life, the traditions of the prophet (Hadithen) have more authority as the Koran. Here we find a few more positive statements about women even though these are hard to understand. Two examples:

1. Mohamed taught that women **lacked in understanding and religion**.²⁴
2. The majority of women **will go to hell because of their impurity**.²⁵

Problems with sexuality

1. According to the Koran, the wife is **her husband's field to plant his seed**, he may demand sexual intercourse at any time.²⁶

²⁰http://www.islaminstitut.de/Nachrichtenanzeige.4.0.html?&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=32&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=2139 and <http://newmuslimguide.com/de/your-family/559>: „One of the rights of the husband is that his wife may not leave her house without his permission.“ Sure 33:33: „And stay in your houses. Bedizen not yourselves with the bedizement of the Time of Ignorance...“

²¹Sure 2:229: „Divorce must be pronounced twice and then (a woman) must be retained in honour or released in kindness.“ see further 65:1-7 and <http://www.islaminstitut.de/Artikelanzeige.41+M57c6e10cace.0.html>

²²Sure 2:230: „And if he hath divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she hath wedded another husband. Then if he (the other husband) divorce her it is no sin for both of them that they come together again.“ This is intolerable according to the Bible, (5.Mose 24:4)

²³<http://www.islaminstitut.de/Artikelanzeige.41+M57c6e10cace.0.html>: „A muslim marriage ends with the death of spouse, with divorce or when the husband leaves the Islamic faith.“

²⁴Sahih Bukhari Vol 2 Buch 24 Nr. 541, Sahih Bukhari 3:48:826, Sahih Bukhari 1:6:301

Volume 3, Book 48, Number 826: Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri: The Prophet said, "Isn't the witness of a woman equal to half of that of a man?" The women said, "Yes." He said, "This is because of the deficiency of a woman's mind." <http://www.usc.edu/org/cmje/religious-texts/hadith/bukhari/048-sbt.php>

Volume 1, Book 6, Number 301: Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri: Once Allah's Apostle went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) o 'Id-al-Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you (women)." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Apostle?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?" They replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?" The women replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion."

²⁵Sahih Bukhari 1:6:301, Sahih Muslim 36:6596- 6597, 36:6600, Kanz al-'Ummal 22:10

²⁶Sure 2:223: „Your women are a tilth for you (to cultivate) so go to your tilth as ye will,“ Sahih Muslim 8:3367-3368; Sahih Bukhari 7:62:122-123. Muslim 8:3367: Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: By Him in Whose Hand is my life, when a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond, the One Who is in the heaven is displeased with her until he (her husband) is pleased with her. Muslim 8:3368: Abu Huraira (Allah he pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (may, peace be upon him) as saying: When a man invites his wife to his bed and she does not come, and he (the husband) spends the night being angry with her, the angels curse her until morning.

http://www.searchtruth.com/book_display.php?book=008&translator=2&start=136&number=3366

2. A Muslim may be married with **four wives at the same time**,²⁷ he must treat them all equally which is actually impossible. Nevertheless, there are many Islamic countries with polygamy or concubines. One reason may be when the first wife is barren. **S**
3. The Koran allows sexual intercourse with an unlimited number of **slaves (in modern times with household servants)**; the Shiite even allow a marriage limited in time for payment (Prostitution)²⁸ **S**
4. **A woman may be locked up in her home until her death** if she has committed adultery.²⁹ **S**

Consequences for children

1. Children **must grow up in the Islamic faith**. This is the duty of a Muslim, no matter which arrangements were made beforehand. In bi-religious marriages „*the children should follow the better religion*“, which is Islam. It is the only true religion.³⁰
2. In Islamic countries, the husband receives sole custody of the children; his former wife does not have the right to see her children. Non-Muslims are not appropriate **protectors or caregivers** for Muslims.³¹ **S**
3. A Muslim may give his daughter into **marriage before she reaches puberty**.³² **S**
4. **It is not allowed to adopt a child** because Allah ordered Mohamed to marry the wife of his adoptive son, after this adoption was forbidden.³³ **S**

Inheritance

1. When a Muslim dies, **the Islamic law applies to all assets** in an Islamic country. If his wife did not convert to Islam, she will have no or **very little inheritance**. If she has converted to Islam and she has no children, she will inherit one-fourth of the inheritance. The majority of the inheritance goes to the parents, brother, uncle... of the deceased. If he had children, his wife then gets one-eighth of the inheritance and the children the rest; where as a son inherits twice as much as a daughter.³⁴ It may vary in the practice according to the application of the Sharia. **S**
2. When a Muslim couple converts to Christianity, they may **not receive any inheritance from the relatives**. Likewise, the inheritance of a Christian wife will be automatically allocated to the Muslim relatives. The Christian relatives of the wife receive no inheritance.³⁵ The assets are shifted to the Islamic party. **S**

²⁷Sure 4:3: „*marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands possess.*“

²⁸Sure 4:24, Sunan Abu Dawud 5:711:2150ff. Sure 4:24: „*And all married women (are forbidden unto you) save those (captives) whom your right hands possess. ... And those of whom ye seek content (by marrying them), give unto them their portions as a duty. And there is no sin for you in what ye do by mutual agreement after the duty (hath been done).*“ And www.katholisches.info/2013/08/16/islamische-fauenrechtlerin-fordert-christliche-sex-sklavinnen-fuer-moslems/ and <http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/gesellschaft/deutscher-rettungswagenfahrer-in-saudi-arabien-blaulich-durch-riad-a-956053-2.html> and <http://www.ag-friedensforschung.de/regionen/Marokko/sklaven.html>

²⁹Sure 4:15: „*confine them to the houses until death take them or (until) Allah appoint for them a way.*“

³⁰Sure 3:19: „*Lo! religion with Allah (is) the Surrender (to His Will and Guidance). [Islam]*“

³¹Sure 4:144: „*O ye who believe! Choose not disbelievers for (your) friends in place of believers.*“

³²Sure 65:4: „*And for such of your women as despair of menstruation, if ye doubt, their period (of waiting) shall be three months, along with those who have it not. And for those with child, their period shall be till they bring forth their burden.*“

³³Sure 33:37: „*So when Zeyd had performed that necessary formality (of divorce) from her, We gave her unto thee in marriage, so that (henceforth) there may be no sin for believers in respect of wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have performed the necessary formality (of release) from them.*“

³⁴Sure 4:12: „*And unto them belongeth the fourth of that which ye leave if ye have no child, but if ye have a child then the eighth of that which ye leave.*“

³⁵<http://www.islamreligion.com/de/articles/5217/islamisches-erbe-und-das-testament-teil-1-von-2/>: „*The followers of two different religions cannot inherante from one another.*“ Abu Dawud.

<http://www.islaminstitut.de/uploads/media/Abfall.pdf>: „*Normally anyone who has left the Islamic religion is disinherited, the conclusion is that a non-muslim may not have any muslim property or inheritance. He is considered dead in his country, and his heirs receive his property.*“

In Conclusion

Maybe you think most of these points only apply in Muslim countries. But there **are more and more Sharia courts** in other countries that practice a parallel system of justice and settle these matters out of court. What more, there is the pressure of the extended family, so that the outcome is the same as in an Islamic country. A marriage with different cultures is never easy. An Islamic partner who practices Islamic rules, which at some time he will believe to be the will of Allah, will put pressure on you. Therefore, a step into a bi-religious marriage should be considered very carefully. Don't do it!

Comments:

1. In western countries, many Muslims follow **only the Koran** and **reject the traditions** (Hadith). Western women consider such Muslims to be liberal and understanding. But married women are also discriminated in many areas in the Koran as we showed.

Helpful Links:

1. **Der Youtube-Kanal „BibleandQuranTeam“ and „BibelundKoranTeam“**: Please look for subtitles in English: „*Christians marry Muslims? – An inter-religious marriage*“ important facts and dangers of such a relationship: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnf8fW67ddc>
2. **Hundreds of Christian women warn of relationships with Muslim men**: <http://www.1001geschichte.de/>
3. **Advice of the Lutheran Church in Germany about Christian-Muslim Marriage**: <http://www.ekiba.de/html/media/dl.html?i=15347>
4. **Advice of the Catholic Church in Germany about Christian-Muslim Marriage**: http://www.cibedo.de/uploads/media/Handreichung_kath-islam_Ehen_Koeln_01.pdf
5. **Advice of the Catholic Church in Germany about multicultural Marriage** : http://cibedo.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Ehe_zw._Katholiken_und_Muslimen__DBK_2003__01.pdf
6. **Information about woman and family in Islam**: <http://islaminstitut.de/Frauen-und-Familie-im-Islam.26.0.html>
7. **Quranic Text about marriage, collected by a Christian author**: http://bitimage.dyndns.org/german/AbdAlMasih/Was_Eine_Frau_Ueber_Die_Islamische_Ehe_Wissen_Sollte_2003.pdf
8. **Mohammed's multireligious marriages**: <http://www.orientdienst.de/muslime/minikurs/bireligioes/>
9. **Islamic marriage agreements**: <http://www.orientdienst.de/muslime/minikurs/ehevertrage-auf-islamisch/>
10. **Woman in Islam**: http://www.orientdienst.de/muslime/minikurs/frauen_im_islam/
11. **Aisha –Mohammed's most loved wife?** <http://www.orientdienst.de/muslime/minikurs/aischa-die-lieblingsfrau-mohammeds/>
12. **Loving a Muslim**: <http://www.domini.org/lam/home.html>