

# **Religious upbringing and contemporary challenges in the Globalized era**

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Salam aleykum wa rahmatulahi wa barakatuh, ladies and gentlemen,

We all are responsible for upbringing the new generation. We do live in a very dynamic time. Today, it is not possible to stop the flow of information. We live in a world of technological innovations, the Internet, Satellite. Even young children are already familiar with communications technologies such as Skype, ICQ, can use mobile phone, iPhones, video call etc. Unfortunately, our modern society increasingly lacks sufficient moral principles. The current time is not only time of an economic crisis, but what is more serious is, that we are witnessing a crisis of moral values. Many people are running for money, new car, big house, career, do buy a lot of new toys for children, use to take them to expensive holiday, but don't spend time enough with them, don't teach them morality and real values of life. As a judge have to discuss many cases, where children play an important role. Such cases as divorce, professional careers and busy parents, other family problems, are increasing nowadays and very often are source of problematic behavior of children. We can see many children tend to alcohol, drugs, they also tend to have problems with the law.

The best way how to educate children is upbringing with transparency, open minded and religious values. Religion upbringing can help children find their places in today's world. Upbringing with humility, teaching children religious values through examples is definitely the best way how to influence children to live according to moral principles. When we start religious upbringing in early age of children, we would have benefit for the future. We can see many teenagers, who have not been raised according to religious principles, how they try to find their place in the world. There are so many seductions nowadays, as easily available alcohol, unfortunately drugs, pornography etc. Our globalized era has many positive sides, but also negative. We need to explain to the children the negative sides to this globalization, making them to have self control from drugs, pornography, alcohol and other seduction.

We must find a way to teach children religion in an attractive way, not to impose them anything. As I mentioned, the best way is transparency and examples. When young children can see their parents, teachers, people in the society to profess religious values, to live according moral principles, then will be much easier for them to follow such a way of life. It is extraordinarily tough for children and young people to see adults as they struggle with addiction to alcohol for example. Our goal should be to work for the society, where is natural to live according high moral principles, to help others, not to be selfish. Religion is the way how to live such a life. When young children are already familiar with the religious principles and adopt them as their, is much easier to appeal to these principles later.

One of the negative side of the globalized era is, that is going to be more difficult for teenagers to find their place in the world. It is easy to chat on the internet with the people from different age, countries, race, mentality, it is more difficult for parents to control children and to prevent them from such activities. Well known saying, “forbidden fruits taste better” is highly truthful. The banning way is not successful. There are many seduction in the modern globalized world. We can see many young people who tend to the magic, to the spirituality in different way. To be raised without religious principles is in fact very difficult for the children. We can see teenagers who are searching for their foothold in their life, who use to worship stones, icons etc, because they don't know the religion, they don't have experienced religious principles. Many young people starting follow sects unfortunately. The reason is to find “something” to believe in, to worship in the life. We can find many books nowadays teaching people that everybody can be happy if he or she wants, if he or she start worshipping different icons, cards etc. It is very confusing for young people who don't know religion, who are lost in the big globalized world.

It is our responsibility, our duty to raise children according religious principles, to teach them the right way of worshipping. Let me conclude with a short story that influenced many young people.

*A teenage girl about 17 named Aisha had gone to visit some friends one evening and time passed quickly as each shared their various experiences of the past year. She ended up staying longer than planned, and had to walk home alone. She wasn't afraid because it was a small town and she lived only a few blocks away. As she walked along under the tall elm trees, Aisha asked Allah to keep her safe from harm and danger. When she reached the alley, which was a short cut to her house, she decided to take it. However, halfway down the alley she noticed a man standing at the end as though he were waiting for her. She became uneasy and began to pray, asking for Allah's protection. Instantly a comforting feeling of quietness and security wrapped round her, she felt as though someone was walking with her. When she reached the end of the alley, she walked right past the man and arrived home safely. The following day, she read in the newspaper that a young girl had been attacked in the same alley just twenty minutes after she had been there. Feeling overwhelmed by this tragedy and*

*the fact that it could have been her, she began to weep. Thanking Allah for her safety and to help this young woman, she decided to go to the police station. She felt she could recognize the man, so she told them her story. The police asked her if she would be willing to look at a line up to see if she could identify him. She agreed and immediately pointed out the man she had seen in the alley the night before. When the man was told he had been identified, he immediately broke down and confessed. The officer thanked Aisha for her bravery and asked if there was anything they could do for her. She asked if they would ask the man one question. Aisha was curious as to why he had not attacked her. When the policeman asked him, he answered, 'Because she wasn't alone. She had two tall men (Angels) walking on either side of her. ' Amazingly, whether you believe or not, you're never alone. Did you know that 98% of teenagers will not stand up for God? Know, that Allah is always there in your heart and loves you no matter what.....and if you stand up for him he will.*