20106 - Marrying an ex-Christian woman who has become Muslim recently and has a child

the question

I have a very good friend who embraced Islam only a couple of months ago.
She was married and had a child with her Christian husband. The marriage is now annulled after her conversion and she has the custody of the child.
I want to marry her and support her child but my parents are not allowing me to do so. I am proud to say that I was God's tool for the conversion of this girl.
But now I face this tough situation. On one hand my parents seriously resisting my wish and are not ready to allow me to marry this girl because she comes from a different culture and society and also has a son from her previous marriage.
And on the other hand I know that this girl needs a lot of help with her life and religion and I want to help her by marrying her and taking her child as my son.
Please advise me in the light of Qura'an and Sunnah, whether I should go ahead with my choice and judgement or should I leave her alone according to my parents' will even after knowing that the only reason they are rejecting her is because she comes from a different country and culture?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Parents have important rights over their children, hence Allaah mentioned the command to honour parents in conjunction with the command to worship Him Alone, as He says:

“And (remember) when We took a covenant from the Children of Israel, (saying): Worship none but Allaah (Alone) and be dutiful and good to parents”
[al-Baqarah 2:83]

“Worship Allaah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents…”

[al-Nisa’ 4:36]

“Say (O Muhammad): Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from: Join not anything in worship with Him; be good and dutiful to your parents…”

[al-An’aam 6:151]

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour”

[al-Isra’ 17:23]

Honouring parents, treating them kindly and striving to please them are among the greatest of good deeds and best of characteristics.

It is known that a man does not have to marry a particular woman, so if there is a conflict between pleasing his parents and marrying a woman he wants, then he should undoubtedly give precedence to pleasing his parents.

Al-Tirmidhi (1900) and Ibn Maajah (2089) narrated from Abu’l-Darda’ that a man came to him and said, “I have a wife and my mother is telling me to divorce her.” Abu’l-Darda’ said: “I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say, ‘The father is the best door to Paradise.’ So if you want, you may ignore this door or pay attention to it.” This hadeeth was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

What Abu’l-Darda’ said has to do with divorce, which is more serious than the issue at hand, because divorce is a very serious matter. Hence the correct view is that you do not have to obey your parents in this matter. (See al-Adab al-Shar’iyyah by Ibn Muflih, 1/447)

Based on the above, you should try to convince your parents to let you marry this woman. If they insist on refusing then our advice is to obey them. The woman will find a righteous husband to marry in sha Allah, and you will have the reward of having brought her to Islam, praise be to

Allaah.

And Allaah knows best.