3313 - Difficulties facing a Christian girl who wants to take the decision to enter Islam

the question

I am a young Christian woman and I have been reading about Islam for some months now. I have already read a translation of the Koran and several books about Islam along with articles and other material I have found on the internet and elsewhere. I do not pretend to know or understand everything, there are many things that still confuse me, and I have a hard time accepting some applications and interpretations of Islam that I have read about. However, I do believe in God and I do believe that Muhammad was his prophet and that the Koran is the revealed word of God.
The question is what should I do about it? As I said there are still so many things that I do not know or understand and this is a major decision I am trying to make and to tell the truth it feels like an enormous responsibility and it is quite frightening. What worries me the most is that I don't know how well I could live by Islam if I converted. I have already changed some things in my life, I have stopped drinking, I avoid pork and I try to wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants (or skirts) when I go out. But I also know that there are some things I would not be able to do immediately if I converted, for varios reasons, (at least that is the way it looks to me at this moment), such as wearing hijab.
Also, I am currently studying abroad (in the US, but I am from Europe) but I am going home to my family over Christmas. I don't think I would be able to tell my family right away if I converted and thus I do not know if I could do things such as pray all the five daily prayers, fast or avoid pork while at home over Christmas.
Would it be wrong of me converting knowing that I will not be able to fulfill all the obligations that follow (at least not immediately), and knowing that there are still many issues that I do not understand or have a hard time accepting wholeheartedly (due to lack of understanding and knowledge . Please guide me .

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What you have achieved in your quest for the truth is great indeed. All that remains to be done is the most important step you will ever take in your life, which is to pronounce the Shahaadatayn and enter Islam. We truly appreciate the great efforts you have made by reading the entire Quraan in translation, and other books and articles about Islam, and also by already giving up some haraam things such as drinking wine and eating pork. The most important thing that you have achieved is your conviction about Islam, the Prophet of Islam and the Book of Islam. From your question we can sum up the obstacles that you face in two points:

1. some social embarrassment

2. some matters that you do not yet fully understand

With regard to the second point, it is not a condition for becoming Muslim that a person should know the entire religion, because it is a vast ocean. You can become Muslim and then learn the religion and develop full conviction about all the rulings of Islam. At the beginning, it is sufficient to believe in the six pillars of faith in general terms (belief in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and predestination, both good and bad) and to understand and accept in general terms the five pillars of Islam (testifying that there is no god but Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, prayer, paying zakaah, fasting in Ramadaan, and performing Hajj to the sacred House of Allaah, for the one who is able and has the means). Realize that knowledge and conviction develop gradually, and that faith increases by doing acts of worship and obedience to Allaah, which in turn leads to a deeper understanding and acceptance of the rulings of Islam.

With regard to the first point, we are sure that if you enter Islam and are sincere towards Allaah and do righteous deeds, then Allaah will give you the strength, steadfastness, courage and certainty to face all difficulties and overcome them. The experience of other women who have become Muslim before you gives you a good example of what you could be able to do in the future

as regards following the rules of Islam, such as hijaab and other issues, despite being surrounded by an overwhelming atmosphere of kufr. We also say that if any woman were to ask us whether she should become Muslim despite not wearing full hijab or stay a kaafir, we would definitely tell her to become Muslim, because the seriousness and danger of remaining a kaafir is far worse than being a Muslim but committing a sin.

We understand totally the difficulties and social embarrassment that you speak of, and we know that going against ones family and the society in which one lives are very difficult matters, but Allaah makes every difficult thing easy.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meanings):

And Allaah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers. [Aal Imraan 3:68]

And whosoever fears Allaah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). [al-Talaaq 65:2]

Allaah will grant after hardship, ease. [al-Talaaq 65:7]

As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e., Allaahs Religion Islamic Monotheism) [al-Ankaboot 29:69]

We also want to tell you that it is possible for a person, if he becomes Muslim and fears unbearable persecution or hardship, to conceal his Islam and keep it a secret, hiding his acts of worship from the people around him although it is difficult to do so. But for the sake of following the truth and saving oneself from the punishment of Hellfire, everything becomes easy and the believer can overcome all difficulties.

Finally, we can only thank you for the efforts you have made and for sending this question. We hope that the next step, which you should take immediately, is abundantly clear to you from our answer. We will be very happy to help you with anything you may need in the future, and we ask Allaah to guide you to the path of truth, to help you and to make things easy for you. Allaah is the Guide to the Straight Path.