

Part II: Sudanese Courting Customs Reflect Restraint, Courtesy, Modesty

By **SISTER CHRISTINE**

(Continued From Last Week)

The bachelor sends his mother and sister or some female members of his family to visit his prospective wife's home and family, primarily because women regard other woman with a more critical eye than do most men. And naturally, the bachelor's mother, wishing the best for her son, goes, seeking the best most compatible companion for him.

IF THE GIRL IS reluctant to serve tea and cakes to the visiting prospective in-laws, this is a bad mark of her character. If the girl makes errors in the way of preparing the tea and cakes, this is a bad mark of her home-making abilities.

Her mannerisms of politeness, cleanliness and respect shown to adults are also surveyed. If she is a happy person and in good spirits, then of course they are happy to see this. Even if the girl is not interested in her prospective husband she will be polite to his family.

IF SHE is not, news of her mannerisms will be known to all and will hinder her from receiving proposals from

other interested parties. If the girl is too bold or outspoken, this is another bad mark; for this may surely indicate that she is a stubborn female and one who will not do as her husband may wish.

You may probably ask, what if the seeking bachelor does not see a girl that he thinks may be his most suitable companion? Well his family will help him. The families know the mannerisms of their sons and they know from observation the type of woman that will best fit their son's personality avoiding conflicts and discontent in the home.

They also know that after a man is a certain age he needs marriage and they assist him in finding his mate. These visits are done quite a number of times.

THE GIRL and her mother also visit the boys family, checking into the character and habitudes of his family and his life. The male members of the girls family also investigate into the financial position of the seeking man. They also see if he is financially able to support their girl.

If he drinks alcoholic beverages, they will generally not permit her to marry him. If he has a reputation of being rude and/or inconsiderate, this a bad mark of his character.

If his word is not always to be trusted, then they will not trust him; for mother and father both want the best companion for their daughter. The type of people that he takes for friends is observed; for as many people say, one may judge the character of a person by the com-

pany he keeps.

WHEN THE families are pleased and both the girl and man involved are in agreement, their engagement is announced. Each knows that their families want the best for them. The girl trusts her parents opinion, for she has been raised by them in a peaceful atmosphere of love and raised to respect their judgment and like wise is the man's attitude towards his family.

The Honorable Messenger, Elijah Muhammad's instructions to the single man and woman seeking a marriage partner are very similar to those existing in the Sudan. He instructs the female to check her prospective husband, not to just take him on the surface level.

Check his character, take note of the type of friends he keeps. If possible find out his family background. Is he a good Muslim? Is he an honorable man? Can his word be trusted? Is he able to support a wife? Will he be able to care for a family? What is his attitude towards children? These are all very important points which a female must consider in selecting a husband.

THE HONORABLE Messenger, teaches the men to look for a clean and respectable woman for a wife, a good home-maker. He just also check into the background of the woman he wishes to take as his wife. He may also learn of her character by the people she takes as friends. He must also know if she adheres to the laws of Islam.

(To be continued . . .)

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