

## Shirk in Love

Major shirk can be divided into four categories:

- The first category of major shirk is “associating in supplication”, which involves directing one’s supplications to other than Allah as a means of gaining provisions or being cured from a sickness or obtaining help during a crisis or for any other purpose.
  
- The second category of major shirk is “association in the intention”, that is, performing deeds that may be good in themselves but which are done for the sake of this worldly life and not for the sake of Allah.
  
- The third category of major shirk is “association in loving Allah”. That is to love someone or something else more than or as much as one loves Allah.
  
- The fourth category of major shirk is “association in obedience” which is to obey people when they make unlawful things lawful, and to believe that it is permissible to follow those who make such legislations.

Here we discuss the third category.

The third category of major shirk is “association in loving Allah”. That is to love someone or something else more than or as much as one loves Allah. Allah says: “There are men who take others besides Allah as equal with Him. They love them as much as they should love Allah. But the believers have more love for Allah.”

[Al-Baqara:165]

There are people who recognize Allah as the Creator, the Owner and the Sustainer of the universe, and yet love others more than Him. Some people love money more than they love Allah and for this reason, they do not pay zakat or they gain their money from unlawful sources. They are the slaves of Dirhams and Dinars, or in today's terminology, the slaves of Dollars. The Prophet, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, said: «He who became the slave of the Dinar or the Dirham will perish and be destroyed...» [Reported by Bukhari]

Some people love their desires more than they love Allah. Consequently, they would follow their desires even when they lead to disobeying Allah: “Do you see the one who is taking as his lord his own desires?” [Al-Furqaan: 43]

Therefore, loving Allah and His Messenger more than anything is a precondition for tasting the sweetness of faith. It has been narrated in an authentic hadith that the Prophet sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam, said: «There are three qualities whosoever has them will taste the sweetness of Iman: loving Allah and His Messenger above all else, loving someone solely for the sake of Allah, and hating to return to disbelief after Allah has rescued him from it, as much as he would hate being thrown into Hellfire.» [Reported by Bukhari]

Allah has put two criteria to test whether one's love for Him is more than the love of anything else. The first is the following of the Sunnah of the Prophet, sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam. Allah says: “Say (Muhammad), if you do love Allah, follow me, Allah will love you (in return) and forgive your sins” [Al-i-Imraan:31]

Thus, following the Sunnah in all aspects of our lives is absolutely essential. The second criterion to know if one's love of Allah is more than anything else is through jihad for the sake of Allah: “Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives or your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline or the houses in which you delight, are dearer to you than Allah or His Messenger, or the jihad for Allah's sake; then wait until Allah brings about his decision; and Allah does not guide the rebellious,” [Al-Tawba: 24]

