

Ruling Concerning X-Mas

His Reverence **Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Salih Al-Uthaymin**

*What is the legal opinion of congratulating unbelievers on the occasion of Christmas celebrations because they work with us? How do we respond if they greet us? Is it permissible to go to their places where they hold such celebrations? Is it sinful if a person commits any of the above unintentionally but by way of courtesy or other reasons? Is it alright to imitate them? Please advise us.

Answer:

Congratulating unbelievers on the occasion of Christmas and such other religious celebrations is prohibited by consensus. Ibn Al-Qayyim has said in his book “**Rules of Non-Muslims living in Muslim countries**”.

“Congratulations on the occasions of the cultic practices of the unbelievers are prohibited by consensus, such as congratulating them on the occasion of their Eids and fasting. If the doer or sayer scapes infidelity, it is one of the forbidden things and is tantamount to congratulating them for kneeling for the cross. Not only is that it also more sinful and objectionable than congratulating someone for drinking alcohol, murder or adultery. Many who take religion lightly commit this offense without being aware of its seriousness.”

Congratulating unbelievers on the occasion of their religious rites is hence sinful as adjudged by Ibn Al-Qayyim because of the inherent acknowledgement and acceptance of unbeliever’s ceremonies. A Muslim is not allowed to accept such ceremonies or congratulate others on their occasions. Say Allah: **“If you reject (Allah) surely Allah has no need of you, and He does not approve of unbelief for His servant”**. And Allah said: **“Today I have completed your religion, completed my favors unto you and am satisfied with Islam as (your) religion”**. If they congratulate us on the occasion of their ceremonies we do not respond because they are not our festivals and because such ceremonies are not acceptable to Allah and they were superseded by Islam on which Allah has said, **“Those who seek a religion other than Islam will not be accepted from them and on the doomsday they will be losers”**. Responding to their invitation on such occasions is similarly forbidden because you participate with them which is even more sinful. It is likewise prohibited for Muslims to imitate them by organizing such festivities, exchanging gifts, distributing candy or food dishes and stopping work. Shaykh Ibn Taymiah said “Following the right path means disagreeing with those destined to go to hell”.

Those who do any of the above are sinful whether they do it by way of courtesy, friendliness or otherwise because it is flattery and a reason to strengthen the pride of the unbelievers in themselves and their religion.

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