

This is a message which I wish to convey to my christian neighbor and workmate this christmas.

My christian neighbor: perhaps you're expecting me to congratulate you with a "Merry christmas, Happy new year", especially since you've previously greeted and congratulated me on Ramadan and Eid and said to me "Ramadan Mubarak, and Eid Mubarak". And especially because of what you always see from me: that when you're sick, I visit you, and when something good happens to you, I'm happy for you and congratulate you.

But before we talk about greeting/congratulating regarding christmas specifically, let me remind you of some facts regarding my own religion, and regarding christmas, and then you tell me whether you expect me to congratulate you regarding christmas or not.

My Prophet (peace be upon him) has said: "Indeed, actions are by their intentions". And so, anything I say or do as a Muslim, I must know why I'm saying or doing it, and I must have a right intention when doing it.

So if I congratulate you on Christmas, I would either be doing it as a good deed, a way of obeying God (as a form of worship), or as a neutral permissible deed, that I would do just to flatter you.

First, let's remember what christmas is, to see if congratulating you on it or celebrating it can be either of these (a good deed, or at least permissible deed).

Christmas started off as a pagan celebration, as is stated in several christian references. As stated for example in "The Circle on Biblical Knowledge, Vol. 4"(see link below), written by 4 christian arabic priests. Translation of meaning: "We cannot designate precisely the day nor month that Jesus was born, as there had been strong resistance from the early church to the pagan tradition of celebrating days of birth... And perhaps the reason the western church selected the day of the 25th of December, is that the Romans would already celebrate on that day, the festival of the sun god (Sol Invictus)".

<https://tinyurl.com/2zd99vsv>

Furthermore, early Christians, including Origen of Alexandria (an early christian scholar, and theologian), objected to birthday celebrations because the Bible mentions only two of them: one for Pharaoh (Genesis 40:20) and one for Herod (Mark 6:21; Matthew 14:6), both tyrants, and which both resulted in executions!

And Orogen mentions that: "Not one from all the saints is found to have celebrated a festive day or a great feast on the day of his birth. No one is found to have had joy on the day of the birth of his son or daughter."

And so in doing so, you're imitating tyrants and pagans.

Also, see Pat Robertson (a conservative Christian)'s word on this same point. (see link below) in which he mentions;

"Mistletoe? Pagan. Christmas tree? Pagan. Giving gifts? Pagan. Every bit of it is pagan; every single bit of it. We've christianised it all. And so that's good, so we have time to celebrate Jesus, everyone gets all misty-eyed, but the truth is: they're all Pagan".

<https://youtu.be/SDyNIIUOjxg>

And the American Priest, David C. Pac, also has a word titled: Should Christians Celebrate New years? In which he mentions several verses from Your Bible, oh my christian neighbor; these verses forbid copying the other nations in their traditions, as in Jeremiah chapter 10:2-3 "...Learn not the way of the heathen... For the customs of the people are vain...".

<https://youtu.be/ij5Nw--HNfI>

So, this christian priest is telling people from his own religion to not blindly follow the way of the people. So do you expect from me, oh my christian neighbor, to celebrate a pagan festival with you, or that I should congratulate you on it, while it is foreign to even your own religion?

You might say: "Well that was just the origin; we have nothing to do with that. We don't celebrate it now as a pagan festival; we celebrate it as the birthday of christ".

Alright then, who is Christ to you, oh my christian neighbor? "He's the Son of God, and simultaneously God in the form of a man". There we go. That creed of yours: I, as a Muslim, do not see that creed as a thing which should be celebrated. Rather, I see it as the most dangerous thing for you. And I'm worried for you because of it. Because I am merciful to you and I love goodness for you, and I sincerely care for you. I'm afraid of you dying upon this polytheism. I am merciful towards you because my role model is the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who said: "My parable and that of yours is like a man who kindled a fire. When it has illuminated all around him, the moths and grasshoppers began to fall therein. He tried to push them away, but they overcame him and jumped into it. I am catching hold of your waists ties (to save you) from fire, but you slip away from my hands".

My Prophet (peace be upon him) is the one who has said "The merciful are shown mercy by God the most merciful. Be merciful to those on the earth, and you will be shown mercy from Who is above the heavens". Merciful to those on the earth - all of them, not just the muslims.

I'm worried for you, and I am merciful to you, and I cannot deceive you. If your house was on fire, I'm not going to say "Merry Christmas" to you. Rather, I will do my best to save you from the fire.

I as a muslim, love the prophet of God, Jesus (peace be upon him), and I see myself as more entitled to him than you. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has said: "I am the nearest

of all the people to Jesus, the son of Mary.” Do you know why? Because according to the quran that I believe in: [Chapter Ma'idah 72]

((Those who say, “God is the Messiah, son of Mary,” have certainly fallen into disbelief. The Messiah ‘himself’ said, “O Children of Israel! Worship God—my Lord and your Lord.” Whoever associates others with God ‘in worship’ will surely be forbidden Paradise by God. Their home will be the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers.))

So I call to you in the same way Jesus (peace be upon him) did. And I’m afraid for you from the wrath of God, the one who has said in the quran: [Chapter Mary 88-91]

((And they say, “[God] The Most Merciful has begotten a son.” You have said an atrocious thing. The heavens almost rupture therefrom and the earth splits open and the mountains collapse in devastation, That they attribute to [God] the Most Merciful a begotten son.))

I as a Muslim (who is proud of their religion and has a strong personality): don’t expect from me to congratulate you on this festival, or celebrate it with you, and thus expose myself to the wrath of God and betray you instead of saving you; just so that I can look nice and socially agreeable, and so that I don’t appear weird, secluded and extreme, and so that I don’t end up being accused of being backwards, sectarian, etc etc.

No. My sincerity to you, my trustworthiness, my sincere care for you, is more important to me than all of that. And I’m not going to deceive you just so that I don’t hurt your feelings.

We have a proverb in arabic; “May God have mercy on the one that made me cry and cried for me, and May He not have mercy on the one who made me laugh and laughed at me (i.e. deceived me)”.

I won’t deceive you, because - yes, your feelings are important to me, however, saving you from the wrath of God is more important to me.

The christian might say: okay muslims, doesn’t your book (quran) say: [Chapter Mumtahana 8]

((God does not forbid you from dealing kindly and fairly with those who have neither fought nor driven you out of your homes. Surely God loves those who are fair))?

Yes, our book does say that. And it’s for that exact reason that I am kind to you. If you get ill, I will visit you. If you’re in need of money, I will give you and help you. If a relative of yours passes away, I will give you my condolences. If a good event happens for you (graduation, marriage etc, something which is not tied to your religion): I will gift you and congratulate you. My religion calls me to be fair to you in all of my dealings with you; If you’re my colleague, I will help you and not be a sinister rival to you. If you’re my student, I will educate you in the best possible way, and be fair with you in your grades. If you’re my employee, I will give you your rights. Because God has said to me: [Chapter Nisa 58]

((Indeed, God commands you to return trusts to their rightful owners; and when you judge between people, judge with fairness.))

My religion commands me to be trustworthy and true to you; that you feel entirely safe from me regarding your life, your wealth, and your honor. So I will never betray you, and I will never cheat you, and I will never violate your belongings. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has said: "The believer is the one from whom the people's wealth and lives are safe". All people, without specifying.

My religion commands me to fulfil my promises and contracts with you, and to keep the good ties of kinship with you if you are my relative, and to strive to fulfil and fight for your rights and support you if you are oppressed - even if the oppressor is a muslim! *(Really? Yes!)* Because my religion is the religion of truth and righteousness, and goes with truth where it goes.

I, as a Muslim who is proud of my religion, shall be good to you, my christian neighbour, and I am better to you than someone from your own religion. And I do this all, as a means of getting closer to God, as a form of worship. Not out of hypocrisy, nor for worldly gains, nor for nationalism. Because nationalism doesn't have a heaven that I'm working for nor a fire to run away from. Rather, I do it all as worship to God, that has commanded me of all of this, and has placed for it a heaven and a fire.

And my biggest joy, oh my christian friend, is when I convince you to enter into Islam.

As for congratulating you for the birthday of God according to you: that would either be joining you in what I consider polytheism, or: that I don't mean what I'm saying, and I'm only lying to you and deceiving you.

No. Neither do I lie nor do I deceive.

The christian might say: okay muslims, what about some of the Imams which say that this greeting and congratulating for this festival is a form of kindness and is permissible?

No. What these imams have said is false, and in Islam, there are no infallible religious popes who can change what God has commanded. For the prophet (peace be upon him) upon whom was revealed this same verse (the command to deal kindly, Mumtahana 8), and his companions at his time, and the muslim scholars throughout the ages have all understood the verse in the same way, and acted upon it, and none have understood the verse commanding kindness to include congratulating you on the birthday of God.

The christian might say: okay muslim, can't you just celebrate with me with the intention of celebrating the birthday of Jesus the prophet, and I celebrate with the intention of the birthday of Jesus the God incarnate?

Not at all. My religion commands me to be of an independent personality, who influences, and is not influenced. As God has said: [Chapter Al-Imran 110]

((You are the best community produced [as an example] for mankind...)). All of mankind.

We as muslims must be a role model for the nations. That they follow us in the truth, and we not follow them. And this is from the honor and superiority of Islam.

My prophet (peace be upon him) has said: "There is a celebration for every nation", in the same sense as what God almighty has said that: [Chapter Ma'idah 48] ((To each of you we have prescribed a law and a method)), in the same way that God almighty has said: [Chapter Al-Baqarah 148] ((For each [religious following] is a direction toward which it faces)). We have our law, method, and direction, and we have our celebrations.

The christian might say: okay muslim, why don't we just celebrate with the intention that this is just a new year, without any religious creeds?

Nope. Even if you don't celebrate it with a religious intention, others do, and do so while raising polytheistic banners. So the muslim must separate himself entirely from these celebrations.

The muslim separates himself by his character and appearance, even in normal and casual matters.

The prophet (peace be upon him) has said: "Jews and Christians do not dye their hair [when it gets white], so act differently from them". This is the case for something which is entirely natural - the whitening of hair. Let alone a matter which has creedal origins.

This distinction and being separate isn't out of arrogance; rather, Islam wants from the muslims to be a measuring stick, and a radiant example for the nations. So that no matter how deviant the dispositions of people become, and no matter how their traditions change, and no matter how influenced they become by ignorance and misguidance, the muslims remain pure and distinct, a lighthouse for the nations, lighting the road for them.

To conclude, my christian neighbor: [Chapter An'am 161]

((Say, "Indeed, my Lord has guided me to a straight path; a correct religion, the way of Abraham, inclining toward truth. And he was not among those who associated others with God."

I call you to a common word between us: to worship the One God, because I hope just as we were neighbors in this world, that we become neighbors in heaven.

[Chapter Al-Imran 64]

((Say, "O People of the Book! Let us come to common terms: that we will worship none but God, associate none with Him, nor take one another as lords instead of God." But if they turn away, then say, "Bear witness that we have submitted to God alone".))

I ask God almighty to guide you, and to guide those muslims who flatter you at the cost of deceiving you, and at the cost of your hereafter.

Peace be upon those who follow the guidance.