

Being dutiful to non-Muslim parents

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Reference: Fataawa Nur 'ala ad-Darb

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Question:

Allaah blessed me to embrace the true religion of Islaam at the hands of some Shaykhs, and I therefore changed my name from 'Abdus Saleeb' (servant of the cross) to 'Abdullaah. This did not please my father who then ordered me not to transgress upon my name and my family's name. Due to this some differing broke out between me and him which caused me to leave my father's country and migrate to this noble country (Saudi).

However I am still in a state of confusion. Does Islam require me to please my father and obey him even if he is Christian? Or does it require me to ignore what my father said to me, knowing that he is a Christian who is obstinate concerning his faith, as well as knowing that my previous name was 'Abdus Saleeb?

Answer:

Firstly: You should be grateful to Allaah the Elevated, for granting you success to discovering the truth and embracing Islaam, the religion of truth. Allaah ordered all the people of Earth, regardless of their diverse religions and sects, to embrace this religion of truth and abandon what they are upon, the religion of Allaah the Glorified, which He accepted for Himself. So you should be grateful to Allaah for allowing you to attain this tremendous virtue. We pray that Allaah makes you firm upon the religion of Islaam.

As for the second issue which is your relationship with your parents, Allaah, the Glorified and Elevated, decreed the obligation of being kind and beneficent to parents even if they were non-Muslims, Allaah the Elevated said:

[And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years – be grateful to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final destination. But if they (both) strive to make you associate others in worship with Me, that of which you have no knowledge of, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of those who turn to Me in

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repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.]¹

So it is compulsory for you to be kind and beneficent to you parents in relation to worldly affairs.

As for religious affairs, you are to follow the religion of truth, even if it contradicts the religion of your parents, but while being kind to them in recompense. So you must be beneficent to them and recompense them for the good they have done for you even if they were non-Muslims. So there is nothing wrong with keeping in touch with your father and recompensing him, but do not obey him in something that is a disobedience to Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

¹ سورة لقمان – Soorah Luqmaan [31:15-16]