

The ruling on changing one's name after accepting Islam

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Question:

“Is it obligatory upon new Muslims to change their previous names such as George, Joseph, and others?”

Answer:

“It is not obligatory to change the name unless it means worshipping other than Allaah. However, changing ones name to something better is permissible. Accordingly, changing ones name from a foreign name to an Islamic name is proper and good, but as to whether it is obligatory, no it is not.

But if a persons name is Abd Al-Masih (slave of the Messiah) or similar names that indicate servitude to other than Allaah, it becomes obligatory to change it. It falls under the ruling of worshipping other than Allaah by the Ijma (consensus) of scholars as reported by Aboo Muhammad ibn Hazm (may Allaah be merciful to him). Allaah is the Grantor of success.

Reference: Volume 4, question 3.

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