126446 - Should she go to the church with her mother to make her happy?

the question

My mother is having health problems and she requested me to go to church and pray for her there that she will gets better since I stopped going to church with her and my father for few months now. When I stopped, they were very upset at first and seemingly like every single Sunday comes up, they expected highly that I would get dressed and go with them, but I never did. So, is it permissible to go to church with the intention just to make them happy, especially my mother?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

With regard to a Muslim merely entering a Christian church, there is a difference of opinion among the scholars. The majority are of the view that it is forbidden, but some of the Hanbalis said that it is makrooh, whereas others said that it is permissible. This has been discussed in the answer to question number 111832, where we determined that the most correct view is that it is makrooh.

But we should differentiate between going to churches in cases where there is no kind of veneration or respect of them and of their religion, and going to churches in cases where that is the case.

In the answer to question number 82836, we mentioned some of the negative consequences involved in going to churches to hold academic meetings, and we have also pointed out that we should avoid calling people to Islam in the churches if the aim behind that is to humiliate the Muslim. See the answer to question number 11232.

The disapproval of going to churches, or the permission to enter them, includes those who go

there to listen to what they recite of the distorted Bible or their claim that God has a son, and fabricate laws and regulations that are not part of the revelation. Rather with regard to these matters there is no doubt that they are forbidden, and it is not permissible for anyone to attend these in order to be nice or to please anyone, even if they are our parents. This has already been quoted from the scholars of the Standing Committee in the first question referred to above. Entering churches in such cases is permissible in cases of necessity, such as when a Muslim is forced to do so in a real sense by another party, whether it is an individual or a group, that is able to punish him in a manner that he cannot bear. If he can get out of going to the church, then it is not permissible for him to continue doing so.

Secondly:

What we think in your case is that you are not being forced; rather it is for the purpose of pleasing your parents. Based on that, we do not think that you should go to the church with them.

What we advise you to do in this situation is:

1. Be kind and gentle in your dealings with your parents, show the greatest respect, take care of them and look after them, especially your sick mother. By means of this treatment, you can make them forget about forcing you to go to the church with them, let alone get angry with you for not going.

2. Give an appropriate excuse which will not make them be angry with you, such as staying home to study, or to receive a guest or friend, or other acceptable excuses.

3. Avoid attacking their religion directly, or making fun of what is said in the church.

4. Try to divert them from going there, whilst offering a convincing excuse, which is the fact that huge numbers of their fellow Christians do not go to church. It is better to offer statistics concerning that, that have to do with your country.

5. Do not fall short in calling them to Islam in a kind manner, by means of booklets, cassettes, visiting Islamic websites, and Islamic satellite channels such as the al-Huda channel in English.

6. Be patient and seek reward with Allah for whatever of harsh treatment you receive from them, or anger, because of your not going with them. We ask Allah to make that weigh heavily in your balance on the Day that you meet Him.

7. Always say du’aa’ for them to be guided, and seek the good times for supplication, such as the last third of the night, and strive to do so in the best of situations for the believer, which is whilst prostrating in prayer.

We ask Allah to help you in your difficulty, and to make you steadfast in adhering to truth and guidance, and to guide your parents and honour you with seeing them as Muslims and as believers in the Oneness of their Lord, may He be exalted, and to admit you all to His Paradise.

We welcome your correspondence with us and hope to hear good news from you with your parents. May Allah decree guidance for them and we hope to hear this good news.

And Allah is the source of strength.