

Enter into Islam Wholeheartedly



Islam means to submit to God's commandments according to His terms and conditions. The correct mindset of the Muslim is to fully submit to the commandments of God and His religion. A true Muslim is the one who rejects and denounces all beliefs and ideologies that are contrary to Islam, and abandons all religious practices that have not been legislated by God in the Quran or by the Messenger Muhammad.



Full Submission

God says in 2:208, “O you who have faith in Allah and follow His Messenger, enter Islam completely. Do not leave out any part of it like the People of the Scripture who accepted some parts of the book and rejected other parts. Do not follow the ways of Satan, for he is your sworn enemy.”

In the above passage, God commands all Muslims to enter into Islam completely, i.e. in terms of beliefs and practices. Muslims cannot selectively choose what they like from Islam or what is convenient, and ignore all other aspects. Part of submission is to believe that God, in His infinite knowledge and wisdom, knows what is best for His creation. Therefore, He only legislates that which is beneficial and contains good, even if we cannot fully understand or appreciate that wisdom.

Some commentators said that the above passage was revealed due to some new Muslims in the time of the Messenger Muhammad wanting to keep some of their former religious practices. Former Jews wanted to keep some aspects of Judaism, such as keeping the Sabbath and some dietary restrictions not legislated in the Quran. Former Christians wanted to keep some Christian devotions and acts of worship. God informed them that they had no need to do so, as by doing so they would have changed God’s commands and followed in Satan’s footsteps. Instead, they should enter into Islam wholeheartedly.

Cherry Picking

2:208 applies to all Muslims and not just new Muslims. It speaks to the tendency that some people may develop a habit of selecting particular parts of the religion based on personal preference, or any number of individual factors that apply to them (cherry picking). For example, some people ignore or even outright reject certain parts of Muslim marriage and divorce law or inheritance law, as they don't think it is correct or suitable in our time. Others may choose not to perform certain religious practices and regulations, such as keeping the beard for men, or modest clothing and covering the head and upper body for women. Yet others may dislike certain things that God has made permissible, such as the consumption of meat.



This can also work in the opposite way. Some people may refuse to abandon or leave off certain practices they were accustomed to before becoming Muslim. For example, the use of alcohol or drugs and the making of images and sculptures. Others may continue to keep close and intimate relationships with members of the opposite gender outside of marriage. Yet others may continue to partake in religious celebrations, such as Christmas.

In all of these examples, God commands that we enter into Islam wholeheartedly. To do otherwise is to take Satan's lead in disobeying God. God warns us of the ways of people who came before us and transgressed His commands in this fashion in **2:85**:

“So do you believe in some parts of the Scripture and not in others? The punishment for those of you who do this will be nothing but disgrace in this life, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be condemned to the harshest torment: God is not unaware of what you do.”

Differentiating Between Ideology and Personal Preference

An important distinction that needs to be made here is the difference between ideology or belief and personal preference which does not involve a differing ideology.

People have their own preferences. Islam came to guide society and human life. As long as these preferences do not contravene the laws of God, they would be allowed in Islam. If, however, they do oppose God's laws, then they are not allowed in Islam.

For example, it has become the norm in many countries for men and women to have casual and intimate relations outside of marriage. However, this clearly opposes God's commandments.

Such relationships should only take place in the confines of a legal Islamic marriage. In this case, we would follow God's commands.



On the other hand, someone may wish to make the choice that they don't want to consume certain foods or drinks that are otherwise permissible in Islam. For example, leaving off certain foods that one is not accustomed to. This person is not making these foods impermissible and acknowledges that God has not prohibited them. They simply choose not to consume them for their own personal reasons. This would be permissible.

One would have to question their own reasoning for such actions and preferences - is it ideological and philosophical - suggesting that what God legislated is not as ethical as one's own choices?

It is important for Muslims to enter into Islam wholeheartedly, to accept all of God's commands and instructions, and to be able to determine what opposes these commands. God's commands are the epitome of morality, ethics, and justice. A Muslim does not question the wisdom of God. Nor does a Muslim think that man-made philosophies and modern ideologies are superior to God's system and laws.





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