

## American Muslims buried as Christians

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

All praises belong to Allah the Lord of all that exists, and may Allah exalt the mention of His slave and messenger Muhammad ibn Abdullah.

Throughout the years, in various states across North America, I have seen first-hand and received numerous phone calls about Muslim brothers and sisters who; enter into Islam, practice the religion of Islam, and die while professing Islam; only to receive a full Christian burial. They are embalmed, dressed in traditional church attire, placed in a church or funeral home for viewing<sup>1</sup>, and sometimes even cremated.

In most cases the deceased Muslim is single, and has no Muslim family to take care of his/her affairs after their death; sometimes the Muslim man is married to a non-Muslim woman.

Often the non-Muslim families have previously agreed to grant him/her a Muslim burial, but when emotions take over, this promise is quickly forgotten. No doubt, some of them view a Christian burial as a last ditch effort for their loved one to receive 'salvation'. And the right of their blood relatives takes precedence over the wishes of the Muslim community according to the law of the land here in America.

When speaking about the importance of being buried in a Muslim graveyard Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah may Allah have mercy on him said: "This is more important than being distinguished from them in this life, by wearing different clothes etc.; because there is mercy in the graveyards of the Muslims, while there is punishment in the graveyards of the disbelievers<sup>2</sup>."

Shaykh Al Albani said it is obligatory for the Muslim to bequeath someone to prepare his body and bury him upon the Sunnah.<sup>3</sup>

Thus I advise myself and all the Muslims to ensure – by Allah's permission – a proper burial for yourself and your family. Attached is a burial form to use as a guide in preparing your paperwork. Don't delay, death is near and unexpected.

Written by: Rasheed ibn Estes Barbee--Masjid Tawheed wa Sunnah Durham, NC

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<sup>1</sup> This viewing is known as a 'wake'. Its origin is said to have come from the Anglo-Saxon church as a vigil to look over dead, due to fear of evil spirits hurting or even removing the body.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ikhtiyaraat, p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> Ruling of the funeral prayer pg. 10

Instructions for Funeral and Burial arrangements

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful

The following is a list of the required provisions for burial arrangements involving me and all of my dependents.

1. My name is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I reside at (street address) \_\_\_\_\_, (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State) \_\_\_\_ (Zip) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I, \_\_\_\_\_, being of sound mind and memory, declare that the following are my instructions for funeral and burial arrangements at the event of my death and the death of my dependents, and I do hereby revoke any and all former documents regarding my burial requests that I have previously made. I ask all my relatives, friends, and others, whether they be Muslims or non-Muslims, to honor my right to be a Muslim. I ask them to honor the spirit and letter of this document and not to obstruct or change it in any way.
4. I am a MUSLIM and my body MUST be prepared for burial in accordance with Islamic Law which is based upon the Quran and the authentic Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him.
5. Under no circumstances should my body be given for autopsy except if required by law. My body should NOT be given for medical purposes or organ donation for the benefit of others, nor embalmed.
6. In the event of my death immediately contact the following community and/or parties in reference to completing my Islamic burial.
  - 7.1 \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7.2 \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7.3 \_\_\_\_\_
7. In the absence or unavailability of the designated communities, efforts must be made to locate Muslims who will perform this service.
8. Each party that is mentioned in subdivisions 7.1 through 7.3 is to receive a copy of this declaration and shall collectively have the authority to implement these conditions as Muslims upon being notified of my death. These provisions are binding upon whosoever accepts the responsibility of my burial and the burial of all of my dependents. No relative or government branch is to ignore any of these provisions.
9. There is to be no religious service for me other than the Islamic Janazah prayer.

I \_\_\_\_\_ of legal age, do hereby attest this affidavit of my own free will on behalf of my dependents and myself. This document is to take effect immediately.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (L.S.) \_\_\_\_\_

(Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Witness 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Witness 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Witness 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

My Commission Expires \_\_\_\_\_

SEAL