

Names Are Important

To the Editor: In response to the question, why the change in names for the so - called American Negroes? Brother Dawud Hakim wrote: "Name you children with good names". (Muhammad of the 5th century). Many will ask, "What's in a name?" In the Proverbs (22:1) one is advised that "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold". Note also the words found in Ecclesiastes (7:1) "A good name is better than precious ointment".

Considering that a name, especially a given name, is borne by an individual for a lifetime, one should be particularly selective in chosing a name for a child. The name should be meaningful as well as inspirational, so that the child may carry it with pride and dignity. In addition to these qualifications, a name ought to reflect the characteristic colors of one's ancestry. Pride of one's ancestry is found almost universally. For instance, it is significant that among the various ethnic and national groups throughout the world, the so - called Negroes are the only ones who name their progeny after their oppressor.

Not only has the average Afro - American been wearing the European's name for 400 years; he has answered to the name Negro. The word Negro is derived from the Greek word nekro or necro, meaning a corpse or dead body. (Dictionary of Word Origins, by Joseph Shipley, p. 240) In English, Grimm's law of consonants says the letters C, G, & K are interchangeable.

This name as applied to people does not signify a physical death, but a mental one, since they do not know their backgrounds, original names, or language.

Last names should be of paramount importance too. Most Afro - Americans derived their last names from the former slave masters. During slavery time if you were on Jones' plantation you were known as Jones' boy or Jones' girl. If you were trades and changed plantations fifty times a day your name changed fifty times.

Many brothers and sisters are giving their children first and second ancestral names, neglect to follow through with the last name. For instance, Lamumba Yero Brown or Khalil Ahmad Robinson. When the expectant mother is registered at the hospital she should use an Arabic or other African last name; thereby eliminatng this stigma from future generations.

Nicknames ought to be avoided at all costs. It has been recorded that the word nickname stems from St. Nick, who was represented as the devil. As in case of a nickname, it would mean a "devil" name.

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