

Dear Mr. Davis,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked if it was “okay for Christians to wear rosaries.”

Before we answer your question we will quote some general information, taken from the Internet, regarding rosary beads.

“The Rosary is a string of beads or a knotted cord used to count prayers. The term is also applied to the prayers themselves. Rosaries are used in many religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity. Most often associated with Roman Catholics, the rosary is also used by the Orthodox, for whom it is almost exclusively a monastic devotion, and by some Anglicans.

“In Roman Catholic practice, the rosary is a string of beads made in the form of a circle, with a pendant crucifix. The standard rosary consists of five sets of beads called decades, each composed of one large and ten smaller beads. On the large beads, the Lord's Prayer, or Our Father, is said; on the smaller beads, the Hail Mary, or Ave Maria. In between the decades the "Glory Be," a doxology, is recited. As the prayers are said, the person reciting the rosary may meditate on a series of New Testament events, called the "mysteries" of the rosary, from the lives of Christ and his mother, Mary. The use of these meditations is optional. Traditionally, the rosary was ascribed to the Spanish theologian St. Dominic early in the 13th century, but no proof exists that he originated it.”

Since the rosary has ten times the amount of prayers addressed to Mary as to God, it is basically designed as a devotion to Mary. God expressly told us to worship no other gods but him or to make idols of anything in heaven or on earth and worship them (Exodus 20:3-4, Deuteronomy 5:7-8). Therefore, we strongly believe that prayers to Mary or any of the saints, for that matter, are in violation of God's direct command to us. Furthermore, the rosary represents a form of repetitious prayer that was expressly condemned by Jesus, for He said, “And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. “ (Matthew 6:7)

Is it “okay” for a Christian to wear rosaries? In light of what the rosary represents, it is our opinion that the Christian should not wear rosaries, even as decorative jewelry, and certainly not use them when praying to God. We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio