Should he respond to non-Muslims when they wish him a Happy New Year?

Is it permissible for me to say to non-Muslims " And the same to you " when they wish me a Happy New Year or say Best Wishes?.

Praise be to Allaah.

It is not permissible to greet or congratulate the kuffaar on the occasion of Christmas, New Year or any of their other holidays, and it is not permissible to respond to them when they greet us on those occasions,
because they are not festivals that are prescribed in our religion, and returning their greeting is an affirmation and approval of them. The Muslim should be proud of his religion and its rulings, and he should be keen to call others and convey to them the religion of Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted.

Shaykh Ibn ' Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) was asked about the ruling on greeting the kuffaar on the occasion of Christmas and how we should respond when they greet us on this occasion. Is it permissible to go to the parties that they hold on this occasion?

Is a person sinning if he does any of the things mentioned without intending to, and he only does it to be nice, or because of or shyness or embarrassment or other reasons? Is it permissible to imitate them
in that?

He replied:

Greeting the kuffaar on the occasion of Christmas or any of their other religious holidays is haraam according to scholarly consensus,

as was stated by Ibn al-Qayyim in his book Ahkaam Ahl al-Dhimmah, where he says:

"Congratulating the kuffaar on the rituals that belong only to them is haraam by consensus, as is congratulating them on their festivals and fasts by saying ‘ A happy festival to you ’ or ‘ May you enjoy your festival, ’ and so on. If the one who says this has been saved from kufr, it is still forbidden. It is like congratulating someone for prostrating to the cross, or even worse than that. It is as great a sin as congratulating someone for drinking wine, or murdering someone, or having illicit sexual relations, and so on. Many of those who have no respect for their religion fall into this error; they do not realize the offensiveness of their actions. Whoever congratulates a person for his disobedience or bid ’ ah or kufr exposes himself to the wrath and anger of Allaah." End quote.

Congratulating the kuffaar on their religious festivals is haraam to the extent described by Ibn al-Qayyim because it implies that one accepts or approves of their rituals of kufr, even if one would not accept those things for oneself. But the Muslim should

not accept the rituals of kufr or congratulate anyone else for them, because Allaah does not accept any of that at all, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

"If you disbelieve, then verily, Allaah is not in need of you, He likes not disbelief for His slaves. And if you are grateful (by being believers), He is pleased therewith for you.
.
[al-Zumar 39:7]

".
. .

This day, I have perfected your religion for you,

completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islaam as your religion . .

[al-Maa ’ idah 5:3]

So congratulating them is forbidden, whether they are one ’ s colleagues at work or otherwise.

If they greet us on the occasion of their festivals, we should not respond, because these are not our festivals, and because they are not festivals which are acceptable to Allaah. These festivals are innovations in their religions, and even those which may have been prescribed formerly have been abrogated by the religion of Islaam, with which Allaah sent Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to the whole of mankind. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Whoever seeks a religion other than Islaam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers."

[Aal ‘ Imraan 3:85]

It is haraam for a Muslim to accept invitations on such occasions, because this is worse than congratulating them as it implies taking part in their celebrations.

Similarly, Muslims are forbidden to imitate the kuffaar by having parties on such occasions, or exchanging gifts, or giving out sweets or food, or taking time off work, etc., because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

said: "Whoever imitates a people is one
of them." Shaykh al-Islaam Ibn Taymiyah said in his
book Iqtidaa ’ al-Siraat al-Mustaqeem Mukhaalifat Ashaab al-Jaheem:
"Imitating them in some of their festivals implies that one is
pleased with their false beliefs and practices, and
gives them the hope that they may have the
opportunity to humiliate and mislead the weak

End quote from Majmoo ’ Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn ‘ Uthaymeen,
3/44.

And Allaah knows best.