

**AL – TAWHID IN ISLAM:  
BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN – MUSLIM DIALOGUE**

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**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

Al-Tawhid in Islam is the basic doctrine of God cherished by all Muslims. It is a belief in one God and the denial of 'any other' worthy of human's worship. This thesis used deductive implication approach through cultural reference method to analyse two Quranic texts: Surat al Ikhlas and Surat al Fatihah. The analysis results in the identification of some common themes to Christian beliefs in the doctrine of God, and Islam. Al-Tawhid thus is a good basis for Christian Muslim dialogue.

Cultural reference method is used as a guide in the Historical and Grammatical exegetical analysis of the texts of al-Quran, while its equivalent texts for comparison in the Bible also passed through a similar analysis. It is discovered in this thesis that the Christians' and Muslims' understanding of the one God in worship is very similar. The major differences in God's attributes in the two religions as understood by the adherent are the concept of 'the Son of God' and the channel of God's redemptive Grace.

The concept of the 'sons', 'children', or a 'son' of God is an old theme in the doctrine of God of the ancient times, relates the righteous or rulers to the creator God. This concept is also rooted in the Jewish religious tradition upon which Christian faith took off. The 'Son of God' title is thus used for Jesus as a Messianic title equivalent to Al-Masih in al-Quran.

The denial of the Fatherhood of God in Islam has its root in Meccan idolatry, where divinities worshipped as idols were referred to as sons and

daughters of God. The worship of the divinities was opposed by Muhammad and reflects in Surat al Ikhlas. The sonship of Jesus Christ in the Bible and the denial of God having a son in al Ikhlas arose out of different background and should not disrupt Christian-Muslim dialogue.

The redemption focus of God's grace is Christocentric in Christianity, but exclusively theocentric with predestination as its focus in Islam. The justice of God is however required in making available a clear redemptive grace for mankind, which could be accepted or rejected based on individual<sup>'s</sup> choice. This redemptive grace is found in Jesus Christ alone, because He is the Way that leads to this one God.

## CONCLUSION.

This thesis has used cultural reference method, comparative analysis, and deductive implication method to verify the concept of al-Tawhid in Islam. Al-Tawhid thus is a good basis for Christian-Muslim dialogue out of which deduced attributes are presented as bases for such a dialogue. The verified principles or attributes are presented as bases for Christian- Muslim dialogue. The point of divergent in the attributes of God in relation to His redemptive plan has been used as a background for discerning the one God's objective truth for humanity.

### A. Summary

Al-Tawhid in Islam means the oneness of God, who is the Creator, Sustainer and the Judge of mankind. The oneness of God in Christianity, which is tawhid's equivalent present Jesus Christ the Son of God as the means of redemption for humanity. Redemption in Islam is however ultimately determined by God (in predestination), without minding the individual way of life, even though a good moral life and the worship of God is required of the committed Muslim.

The similarities of the concept of the one God (mostly in God's attributes) are good bases for Christian – Muslim dialogue. These similarities will guide the dialogue to a peaceful co-existence between the adherents of the two religions. The redemption provided by the one God in His son, Jesus, is a concept to be imbibed by the contemporary Muslims.

## B. Recommendations.

The method of exegesis used for al-Fatihah and al-Ikhlās should be imbibed by contemporary Islamic and Muslim scholars with a complete openness of mind in Quranic studies. La M Yalid (Ikhlās, Ayat 3a) should not be related to Jesus Christ of Nazareth, for He is 'the Son of God' for eschatological role in human history. Jesus is the mystery of God (see Q 3: 45, Matthew 1:21), putting on human form but originating from the very Being of God beyond the level of Adam (cf. Imran, 59).

The one God must be worshipped sincerely and the redemption provided in Christ Jesus must not be under estimated as done in the contemporary Islamic traditions and theology. The common themes in Christianity and Islam should be used in Christian – Muslim dialogue for understanding and appreciation of one another's religion, while the objective truth should be sincerely considered by the Muslims.

## C Area For Further Research

Further research could be carried out on the concept of divine atonement in the two religions and objective truth on the efficacious atonement be analyzed from the findings.