

# [NEW THEOLOGICAL POSITION OF SADDLEBACK CHURCH CONCERNING ISLAM](#)

By [Ken Silva pastor-teacher](#) on Mar 6, 2012

## Rick Warren builds bridge to Muslims



By now you're likely aware of [Rick Warren builds bridge to Muslims](#) by veteran journalist Jim Hinch, which ran in the Orange County Register. Hinch told us that back in December that Rick Warren began "an effort to heal divisions between evangelical Christians and Muslims."

One of the ways Hinch said Warren would do this is:

by partnering with Southern California mosques and proposing a set of theological principles that includes acknowledging that Christians and Muslims worship the same God.

The effort, informally dubbed King's Way, caps years of outreach between Warren and Muslims. ([Online source](#))

[Apprising Ministries](#) began our coverage of this in [Rick Warren, Islam, And Jim Hinch](#) when Warren accused Hinch of putting out an article with "multiple errors." I also shared Hinch's defense that came from my discussion with him.

Then I would write [Apprising Ministries Exclusive On Rick Warren, Jim Hinch, And Islam](#) after I contacted Hinch again concerning how I might obtain a copy of the King's Way because it hasn't been published anywhere.

He was kind enough to share the relevant portion concerning what it says about God. Then Ed Stetzer of the SBC's Lifeway Research publishing arm decided to take a swipe at ministries like this and come to Warren's defense.

So, yesterday I wrote [Rick Warren, Ed Stetzer, And Watchbloggers](#) where I helped to focus attention on the issues and walk you through what's at stake. Briefly, one can see why Hinch said what he did.

The below was co-written by Abraham Meulenberg, a Saddleback pastor in charge of interfaith outreach, and Jihad Turk, director of religious affairs at The Islamic Center of Southern California:

I. WHO: we believe in ONE GOD:

1. God is one ([Mark 12:29](#); Muhammed 47:19)
2. God is the Creator ([Genesis 1:1](#); Al Shura 42:11)

Having the Bible and the Qur'an cited side by side surely gives the impression that we're talking here about the same God Who "is one" and "the Creator." This King's Way document pretty clearly implies that the Muslim and the Christian believe in the same God.

The truth is, we absolutely do not; but now Rick Warren has come out and said he agrees with me on this point:

Christians have a fundamentally different view of God than Muslims. We worship Jesus as God. Muslims don't. Our God is Jesus, not Allah. ([Online source](#))

However I wonder, does Rick Warren and Saddleback make sure that the Muslims they meet with know they believe in a different God? And if so, then why use the ambiguous, and misleading, language? As another illustration of the confusion, I leave you with the below, which was up for around a month.

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- January 2012
- February 2012
- March 2011
- April 2011
- May 2011
- June 2011
- July 2011
- August 2011
- September 2010
- October 2010
- November 2010
- December 2010
- January 2009
- February 2009
- March 2009
- April 2009

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## ICSC Co-authors Historic Interfaith Document

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**By: Editor**

Last Sunday, a historic event took place at Saddleback Church in Orange County, California. Saddleback is known for its famous pastor, Rick Warren, who delivered the prayer at President Obama's inauguration ceremony. The Church hosted a number of Muslim communities in based in Southern California for its second annual celebration of Jesus (pbuh). This event is significant because Saddleback is a large evangelical church with over 22 thousand members. Although only a select number of individuals were invited to this dinner, it demonstrates the new theological position of Saddleback. At the celebration, a document one year in the making was presented which encourages Christians and Muslims to appreciate the similarities of our faiths.



A presentation outlining the document

The document encouraged that our communities work together towards the common good and to combat bigotry in a 1-2-3 plan. The first step in the plan identifies the belief in one God. The second step acknowledges God's commandment to love God and your neighbor. Finally, step three is for our communities to commit to three things: making friends, building peace, and serving the world at large together.

This relationship with Saddleback Church was initiated over a year ago with a friendship between one of the pastors, Abraham Meulenberg, and the ICSC's Jihad Turk. Pastor Meulenberg reached out having heard about the Center and our interfaith work. From this friendship developed an institutional link between their respective organizations.

[Click here to view more photos of the event.](#)

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This post would then suddenly disappear. It's the Islamic Center's take on the dinner where the King's Way document was presented, which Jim Hinch told us about in his initial report. The writer refers to it as an "historic event" at Saddleback Church "known for their famous pastor, Rick Warren."

Note carefully what we're told next:

Although only a select number of individuals were invited to this dinner, it demonstrates the new theological position of Saddleback. At the celebration, a document one year in the making was presented which encourages Christians and Muslims to appreciate the similarities of our faiths.

The document encouraged that our communities work together towards the common good and to combat bigotry in a 1-2-3 plan. The first step in the plan identifies the belief in one God.

This writer seems to under the impression that the King's Way document 1) represents "the new theological position of Saddleback," and 2) appears to imply this "one God" is the same God. So, we're left again to wonder where Saddleback and Rick Warren really stand.

Is Saddleback interfaith pastor Abraham Meulenberg telling these Muslims that Saddleback Church's new theological position is that they're all believing in same God? Or, is the ambiguous language used so that unsuspecting Muslims will infer that this is Saddleback's View?

[Christian Research Network](#) contributor Erin Benziger brings out a couple of important questions in her [Are We Witnessing a "King's Way" Cover-up?](#) She wonders:

A *new* theological position? For a *Christian* church? Perhaps the members of the ISCS misunderstood the intent of this entire endeavor. If so, one wonders why Saddleback did not seek to clarify such a misunderstanding sometime between December and today. One also must surely wonder why the King's Way excerpt that *has* emerged has been ignored by Warren and his team.

Finally, it cannot help but be questioned why it is that the ISCS has suddenly deleted this clear, boastful evidence of the December event and this "historic interfaith document." In the interest of Christian ethic, we certainly hope that there is no "King's Way Cover-up" underway. ([Online source](#))

Well, we do know one thing for sure. Saddleback's famous pastor Rick Warren has very publicly taken to the social media insisting "the truth" get out. I certainly do hope we will hear the truth; and may Warren be held to his words here in [Rick Warren on Muslims, Evangelism, and Missions](#) over at his own Pastors.com website:

**QUESTION:** Do people of other religions worship the same God as Christians?

**WARREN:** Of course not. Christians have a view of God that is unique. We believe Jesus is God! We believe God is a Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Not 3 separate gods but one God. No other faith believes Jesus is God. My God is Jesus. The belief in God as a Trinity is the foundational difference between Christians and everyone else. There are 2.1 billion people who call themselves Christians... whether Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Pentecostal, or Evangelical...and they all have the doctrine of the Trinity in common.

**QUESTION:** A recent newspaper article claimed you believe Christians and Muslims worship the same God, that you are "in partnership" with a mosque, and that you both agreed to "not evangelize each other." You immediately posted a brief refutation online. Can you expand on that?

**WARREN:** Sure. All three of those statements are flat out wrong. Those statements were made by a reporter, not by me. I did not say them ... I do not believe them... I completely disagree with them ... and no one even talked to me about that article! So let me address each one individually: First, as I've already said, Christians have a fundamentally different view of God than Muslims. We worship Jesus as God. Muslims don't. Our God is Jesus, not Allah. [Colossians 2:9](#) "For in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Second, while we urge our members to build friendships with everyone in our community, including Muslims and other faiths, ("Love your neighbor as yourself"), our church has never had any partnership with a mosque. Friendship and partnership are two very different levels of commitment. Some of our members have hosted a Bible study with Muslim friends, which I applaud, but I've never been to it, and a Bible study certainly isn't any kind of partnership or merger! It's just crazy that a simple Bible Study where people explore Scripture with non-Christians would be reported as a partnership and others would interpret that as a plan for a new compromised religion. Just crazy! Third, as both an Evangelical and as an evangelist, anyone who knows me and my 40 year track record of ministry knows that I would never agree to "not evangelizing" anyone! I am commanded by my Savior to share the Good News with all people everywhere, all the time, in every way possible! Anyone who's heard me teach knows that my heart beats for bringing others to Jesus.

[\(Online source\)](#)