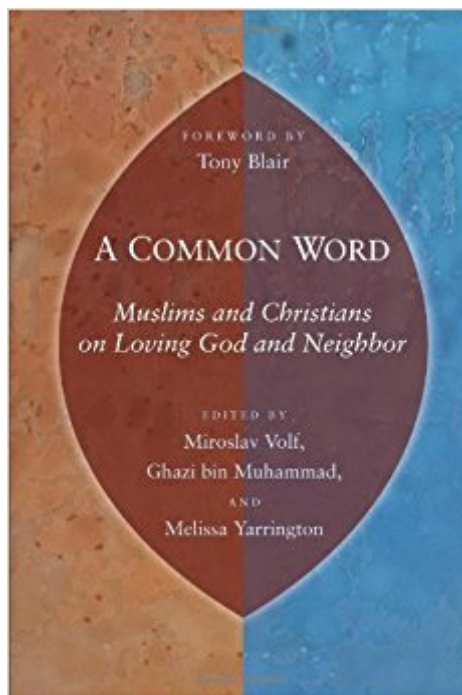




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# A Common Word: Muslims And Christians On Loving God And Neighbor



## Synopsis

In late 2007 Muslim leaders from around the world together issued in the pages of The New York Times an open letter to Christian leaders inviting cooperation as a step toward peace. That letter, "A Common Word between Us and You," acknowledged real differences between the two faiths but nonetheless contended that "righteousness and good works" should be the only areas in which they compete. The 138 signatories included over a dozen grand muftis, an ayatollah, and a Jordanian prince, and the document was widely considered a groundbreaking step toward reconciliation between Islam and Christianity—two major religions with a great deal in common. / That original letter and a collaborative Christian response—"Loving God and Neighbor Together"—both appear in this remarkable volume. Building on those original momentous documents, A Common Word further includes subsequent commentary and dialogue between Muslim and Christian scholars addressing critical and frequently asked questions. All in all, this eventful book encapsulates a brave and encouraging move toward harmony and accord between two world religions so often seen to be at odds.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Miroslav Volf is Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture and Henry B. Wright Professor of Systematic Theology at Yale Divinity School. His other books include Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation.

This is a great book pointing out the similarities between Christianity and Islam going back to their origins, dispelling myths on both sides and shedding light on their similarities.

Exceptional work of ecumenism of Christian/Muslim "apologia" written by a princely scholar from Al Ahzar. I've given it to several friends to open their eyes to the commonality between our religions. As a Master candidate in a program focused of faiths & cultures as well as inter-religious dialogue I consider this a must-read for my fellow classmates. We should all feel a debt of gratitude to the Jordanian royal family as well as their efforts to spearhead the Amman Accord.

A very significant book for Christians and Muslims dialogue

This book includes the 2007 letter written by Muslims entitled "A Common Word Between Us and You" and the response "Loving God and Neighbor: A Christian Response". In addition, it includes sections entitled "Muslim Perspectives," "Christian Perspectives," "Frequently Asked Questions," and "Political Significance." The book is about 200 pages of text and is a good compilation of Muslim and Christian concerns. The book is supported by a website with much additional information ([www.acommonword.com](http://www.acommonword.com)), including a list of the original 138 signatories and the additional 267 in 2016, and reading lists. As an indication of the interest in this topic, the website has had over 500,000 visitors in ten years. The book asks difficult questions in light of the original letter and the Christian response. A challenge is where to start and what to include when considering Muslim-Christian dialogue in the ongoing climate of violence and distrust. The Muslim writers chose to start with what Muslims and Christians believe about loving God and loving neighbor and areas of agreement and disagreement regarding these beliefs. An underlying concern of many readers is whether Muslims and Christians understand God and love in the same way. An additional question likely in the minds of many readers is whether the Muslims (and Christians) are telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The section "Muslim and Christian Perspectives" looks at these issues quite closely while "Frequently Asked Questions" further probes these issues. Because the issues are so complex, an underlying attitude to promote dialogue is this: "In the end, it is perhaps best to answer the question of whether Muslims and Christians worship the same God in terms more like 'Well, I'm not sure. We both desire to worship the one true God and we both claim to be doing so. But our worship and our beliefs about God differ in significant ways, and this leaves us a lot to discuss. Let's start talking.' " (pp. 184-185). This book is not easy reading and may require some theological background, but for those who persevere, it is sure to stimulate thought and

answer questions (perhaps not fully) and give some indication of the need for further reading and reflection. Topics as challenging as those considered in this book can't be fully understood in 200 pages, but this book is a good and satisfying start.

This is a good book. As a Christian living in America, my knowledge about Islam is quite limited and often influenced by a biased media. The Christian church and the Muslim mosque are filled with extremists who would like us to believe that the destruction of the "other" is the will of God. But there are other voices as well. There are Muslims and Christians who would say, "No!" to hatred, bigotry and ignorance. It is with this spirit that this book was written. The book itself examines a document released by several prominent Muslim scholars, later answered by prominent Christian scholars, attempting to find common ground in the command to love God and our neighbor. It is certainly NOT written to argue that Christianity and Islam are the same religion, rather it is saying, "We are so different, but when we over-emphasize our differences, we are prone to hatred. Let us rather emphasize our similarities to discover a place and plan for peace." I found it not only encouraging and edifying but also helpful to my own Christian walk with God. Highly recommended.

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