

INTERFAITH INSIGHTS

Fi sabeel Allah: In the cause of God, for the cause of God

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The 2012 Year of Interfaith Understanding was an effort to foster a spirit of community. It also was a testament to our deeper understanding of the universe, created by the one God, known by different names to the different peoples of the world. What took place every single day in 2012 can and should be incorporated into every day and every year that follows, thus becoming a part of every waking moment of our lives.



Munir

Our inner struggle to accept, tolerate and embrace all of God's creation is the profound message given to all humanity through the sacred scriptures, specific to different religions. A famous verse in the Quran, which defines the relationship between human beings and God, states: "Am I not your Lord? They said: 'Yes, we bear witness.'" (7:172) "They" refers to all the chil-

dren of Adam, male or female, and the "yes" confirms the affirmation of God's oneness. All human beings still bear the echo of this "yes" deep within their souls. The call of Islam speaks precisely to this primordial nature, to "recognize and know each other." Humanity, according to the Quran, was created from a single soul that subsequently diversified into tribes and races. It is this single origin of humanity that implies the profound unity within the diversity of human nature.

"Tawhid," the concept of the oneness of God, is at the

heart of Islam. Striving after the realization of this oneness is the goal of the religious life, and the degree to which one is able to realize Tawhid is the measure of success in this journey.

GOD'S ONENESS

Tawhid also refers to the integration of God's attributes and manifestations. While God has many names or attributes, God is indivisible and is in essence one.

The emphasis of Islam is to strive for that indivisible oneness, which when attained is the completeness of a

human soul. Once we reach that level, there is an awareness and understanding that all humanity is one from the same Creator, who is God.

The Creator reveals himself in his creation and in his message to humanity through his prophets. The basic message is to believe in the one God and to worship the one God. We are asked to treat one another in the spirit of love, compassion, justice and kindness.

On another level, if we understand creation is atomic energy that is vibrating constantly to sustain us, then we

are in a vibrating vessel in this universe — connected and interconnected. Our recent GVSU interfaith speaker from Cambridge, David Ford, so passionately called us to action. He challenged us to make it a part of our ecosystem and culture to give our time and our energy to understand and to know each other, no matter how different we are.

In the name of God, let's embark on this journey together: fi sabeel Allah. In the cause of God, for the cause of God.

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