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Towards an Inclusive and Contextual Church in Indonesia: An Investigation

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Abstract

As the body of Christ the Church has to be planted and landed in the life of the people around the world. As the part of the Kingdom of God, the world believe and confess the present of God through the ministry of the church. In order to declare the Kingdom of God in this world, the church has to be an inclusive church and in the same time become contextual church. To be inclusive means that the church be opened to all people. Church is not about nation, ethnic, skin color, economy (rich or poor), gender or whatever separated people, one to another. The church is about faith and believes to God the Father, The Son Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit. The people is one as the body of Christ, and has to be served by the church in her ministry and hospitality. Used the qualitative research, this article describes that the church has to be inclusive; the church also has to be contextualized in people life and context. Becomes contextual church means the church is serving, planting and growing in the people context itself, teaching and preaching the Gospel in the people context. The church has to be accepted in all people context around the world.

Keywords: Church, Inclusive, Contextual, Ministry, Hospitality.

INTRODUCTION

The affliction of Jesus the Messiah has removed all human obstacles. This affliction makes God available to mankind and enables them to be part of the mystery of divine salvation. Despite their varied backgrounds and traditions, individuals must be able to see one another as fellow pilgrims in need of God's salvific force amid the depths of God's sorrow. When Christianity interacts with local cultures, Christianity stands in a position, not as a substitute for culture or to replace the lives of people who have lived and developed in their respective cultures, but cultures can stand in their existence as enriching and expanding local culture, and also at the same time providing the relationship of these cultures to a wider relationship to the outside world and preparing as well as providing a view of something that is happening during that culture. Thus, the position of Christianity enriches, gives direction, and at the same time develops culture and Christianity remains standing as a filter for that culture.

Theologically, the church learns facts rather than God's call when it hears the cries and tears of the poor. God's word is addressed to every human being and God's concern is for all where all are created through God's love and lives in their respective environment. No one can be set aside or set aside from the Kingdom of God. The presence of the poor became a starting point for God's openness and concern for His creatures and this was a call for the church to bear fruit and help those who needed help. In terms of evangelism, we see that the poor have an important position in the attention of the church where the church expresses and reflects the love of God in its actions.

Christ is the Righteousness, and because of the righteousness Christ wants the world believe and receive the righteousness, and the only way is that the world have to know the love and the grace of God through the cross. The salvation that has given by God in His only Son, Jesus Christ is an universal salvation, so it means the salvation from God is the salvation for all God's creation. The love of God has to be seen by all human being and all creation.

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In essence, the church assumes them as they are and the church seeks the development of their lives. Understanding this diversity, the church understands its existence as a church of poor people who are committed to their call to love and cling to justice. It is in this reality that the commitment of the church vocation must be developed into an inclusive and contextual church. Where the church must open itself up to every human being without discriminating, and at the same time as a church that lives, develops and serves in the context of society itself. Therefore, the Kingdom of God is real on this earth.

Biblical Conventions: An Inclusive and Contextual Church

In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, it is explained that Paul's evangelism is taking a method of contextualizing evangelism that focuses on cultural adaptation. Paul applied His method of evangelism by utilizing approaching and living directly in the society encountered by the gospel itself. In verse 19, he takes and positions himself as a servant of all mankind, even though in fact at the same time he is a free man and only becomes a servant of the Lord. He adapted himself as a Jew to approach and win over the Jews by accepting the gospel. The most interesting thing is that he positioned himself as a person who lived under the law even though he no longer lived under the law because the gospel he preached proclaimed freedom in the redemption of Christ Jesus. He emphasized the fact that he took to win over the Jews and those under the law. On the other hand, Paul stated that he also lives as someone who does not live under the law for those who do not. He declared himself to be a person who lived under Christ's law. As a result, he can also win over those who do not live under the law (verses 20-21).

In the socioeconomic and political approach, there is special attention to the weak. Paul adapted himself to a weak person in the middle of a person's life, so, he could try to win over and save them from the pressures that squeezed their lives. It is remarkable a declaration of the model of contextualization model of evangelism in which he emphasizes that he has become everything for all men to win over some of them and bring them to the light of the gospel and Christ in their lives (verse 22). In verse 23 as a reason for the placement of himself in the context of an overarching society, Paul asserts that he did so solely because of the gospel and he also had a share in it.

One key principle of Jesus's attitude of solidarity was that He died for all mankind and sacrificed Himself once to bear the sins of many (Hebrews 9:28). Christ's solidarity, which begins in death, is continued in the resurrection. The Christ's resurrection, all of mankind has been resurrected in principle (1 Corinthians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 4:14). Jesus Christ truly is a manifestation of great solidarity. He was also involved in the joys and sorrows felt by His mankind. Paul emphatically points out that he carried out evangelism not to anyone excepts to the one who sent him, Jesus Christ. Jesus's love became a reference for Paul's evangelism in carrying out His mission.

The existence of a strong belief in Jesus Christ becomes a confederal form of ours that Jesus is the true vine because He has proved His love for us. We have been cleaned through His words (John 15:3), and what He has consecrated is called by Him to live in Him who has saved. The existence of this decree is evident in John 15:1-8 where every believer who dwells in Him, is lifted into His branches and then equipped and motivated to bear fruit as a manifestation of the salvation he has obtained. John 15:1-8 can be understood as a theology of Yohannes' taught, where the believer is part of the body of Christ (in this case it is revealed as a branch) and who has received a blessing from Jesus, must bear fruit and reveal the work of salvation that he has obtained through an action.

METHODOLOGY

This article uses a qualitative description approach with a literature study. The data obtained came from several sources such as articles and books related to culture in Indonesia, especially the Toba Batak tribe. This can be seen from the exposition of 1 Corinthians 9: 19-23, and also the results of interviews conducted with priests from the community around Pematang Siantar/Medan city. Primary data comes from the latest books and journals regarding the church, pastoral stewardship and cultural conditions. Secondary data comes from observations, interviews, and social media information. The first step is to conduct a study on church egalitarianism, inclusiveness, contextuality, service and hospitality. Then look at the actual form of practice in

the church, then discuss the form of local cultural exclusivity that occurs, with observations and practices in the church environment, especially the HKBP church. The next step is to examine the inclusiveness of Batak culture, so that it becomes a solution to differences in implementing inclusive, contextual, service and hospitality styles.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

An Inclusive and Contextual Church in Indonesia – A Proposal

Facing the reality, living and growing in Indonesia as minority religion make the Christian keep thinking the ways how to be accepted and grown in community. Radicalism and fundamentalism has to be avoided. In this article I proposed, in order to be accepted and grown in Indonesia the church has to be an inclusive and contextual church. Make sure that the church avoids the conflict and not becomes an exclusive church. The church has to live in the spirit and calling as blessing to the people, community and also the congregations itself. In order to reach the aim as inclusive and contextual church, I proposed these steps below that have to do by the churches in her ministries in Indonesia.

A loving Church that Grows and Serves

In line with Jesus Christ's command to His disciples in Matthew 28:18-20" Jesus approached them and said; "All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything whatsoever I have commanded you. "And know, I am with you always to the end of the age." The love of Christ accompanies and gives strength to the church and truly lives in the protection of Christ and the love of Christ in His mission. This love does not come from oneself but rather the encouragement of the Power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Mission who encourages ministers of God like Paul to preach the gospel boldly and steadfastly, it is the Holy Spirit who moves one's heart to preach the gospel to an unreached tribe. Unreachable tribes are like sheep who are lost and who walk toward destruction, needing guidance on the Way of Truth and Eternal Life together with Christ.

A Mankind was created by God with a different personality. God never aims to separate people for the sake of people or create a chasm between one nation and another. God does not want His mankind to destroy one another at all because they feel strong toward others (Galatians 5:15). In this case, God taught that strong mankind is obliged to bear the weaknesses of those who are not strong and we must not seek our pleasure (Romans 15:1). Thus, there appears to be an act of mutual love. Living in love is a command from the Lord that we may remain in His words of love (2 John 1:5) and be a blessing to the world.

Each person certainly lives with one another. Everyone has life interactions with each other. It means that mankind is not only related to God but mankind is also related to the others one. Every mankind being can also feel God's love through those around him. Therefore, in addition to living in love with God, it must also be love for one's another. This does not rule out the possibility that everyone can love other living beings. In Proverbs 14:21 it is also said that a happy person has mercy on the one who suffers but the one who insults His neighbor sins because he has unwittingly also insulted God. Thus, a sense of solidarity can be exercised by a person because of a sense of love because love is the basis of brotherhood between people.

A Church that Serves and Develops a Sense of Solidarity

Based on I Corinthians 13:13, Paul asserts that love referred to as the basis for evangelism is not pretended love (Romans 12:9), but rather Diaconal love, which is loving that is truly real without expecting reward (Matthew 25:40). A sense of solidarity can be possessed by everyone if in His life there is a sense of loyalty and love to full of responsibility. A sense of solidarity with others can also be carried out by not looking at the people we love. This sense of solidarity can also strengthen us because from the beginning God has shown His solidarity with His mankind, namely through Jesus's self-sacrifice on the cross and this is a way for us to know God better. Jesus Christ was willing to be crucified for the sake of mankind living in sin. A sense of solidarity becomes a calling for believers. When a person does a life principle to love and build one another up, it means that the person truly desires positive renewal (Romans 14:19).

Faith believes that God exists, means there is hope in our life. The faith and hope guide the believers to be survived in their suffering. We believe that God taking care and holding our hand in our life. This has to be taught in the process of discipleship in the church. In the process of discipleship all the believers help and encourage each other.

The Church expands the concept of solidarity in love to carry out and develop evangelism. Solidarity is positive teaching. A person called soldier is a person who has a caring, loyal comrade and is full of responsibility towards His fellow man. The word solidarity means a sense of empathy, a sense of care, and how we feel what others feel. A sense of solidarity is the unity of each person's feelings. The word solidarity also comes from the word *Συμψυχος* (Greek), which means a unity of life in love. *Συμψυχος* can also mean the existence of a harmonious relationship, oneness in the holy spirit (Philippians 2:2). Solidarity is a trait (feeling) that is one feeling or the feeling of one comrade between each other.

Solidarity means an attitude of mutual responsibility, interdependence, and togetherness between individuals and the community and vice versa. Solidarity said that every member of the community becomes truly directed and can find his or her development in an attitude of community service, and vice versa the community is also directed towards community members. Solidarity desires a renewal of society or reform, social, and rejects the theory of social conflict or class struggle.

Solidarity is a physiological reality in a simple group that has a more perfect organizational arrangement. Not only do human beings of the same generation depend on each other, but each generation also depends on the generation of the other including inheriting the struggles, sufferings, and work of the generations that preceded them. The form of solidarity is a social reality, for example in the relationship between children and parents, between one tribe and another.

Jesus taught that we also show our solidarity towards strangers or our enemies, for we used to be strangers (Exodus 22:21; 23:9; Deuteronomy 10:19; Zechariah 7:10; Luke 6: 27). If someone wants to help us, we should be open to helping them. The only limit for Christian generosity is the limit set by love itself. The mankind we have always considered enemies for doing evil to us are not the unsympathetic people before us, but they are the ones who unconsciously despise God's love, therefore, they are the objects of our love. Loving them means we hope that they return to the right path and feel the fruits of our solidarity.

The principle of solidarity that Jesus once practiced was when he willingly gave himself to die on the cross because of our sins. Christ died for all (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:15). Jesus prayed for his people to remain united (John 17:21). With all the differences given by Jesus, he still wanted all His mankind to remain united, one-minded, in one love, one soul, one purpose (Philippians 2:2). In this case, we are required to remain brothers full of faithfulness and love. That brotherhood must be true brotherhood, that is not only present in the joys of our neighbors but also present in the sorrows of our neighbors (Romans 12:15). Solidarity must be presented in a mood of joy and sorrow with our neighbors. Solidarity theology is built to answer situations where there is social inequality in society. Some people are suffered and excluded. We are required to have a sense of empathy, solidarity, and care to have a more humane relationship between people. The person being set aside is not necessarily a bad person but likely due to the social system and injustice.

The attitude of solidarity teaches that we think broadly about our neighbors. Solidarity arises when people show their loving relationship with others. The sense of affection comes from the feeling of a person who feels one-sided in love with His loved ones. That means a person is temporarily involved in their life experiences. Humane solidarity is solidarity that is carried out reciprocally between the parties concerned and prioritizes the value of the form of cooperation, interconnectedness, and sharing. Thus, solidarity relations occur between people who are harmoniously united. The attitude of solidarity takes part in building strength through communion so that common interests can be maintained and in the end, common goals are also achieved. Biblical solidarity is an attitude of solidarity with others when fulfilling God's call, and opposing the oppression of God's people. The church is called upon by God to live in biblical solidarity, that is, to be faithful without face to face and to build each other up for good causes.

The Contextual Church – The Church Becomes like His Congregation

The main basis of cross-cultural evangelism is to have a sincere burden and love for the tribes served. Paul said, "For if I preach the gospel, I have no reason to boast. Because it must for me. Woe to me, if I do not preach the gospel," (1 Corinthians 9:16), this shows that for Paul to preach the gospel to everyone is a necessity, and Paul affirms his woe if he does not preach the gospel. Thus, the consequence faced is to face directly the culture of the local community. Paul's earnestness in the cross-cultural Missionary ministry was shown to the point that he would be wretched and even perish if he did not preach the gospel.

In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Paul provides 4 descriptions, of how he adapted the mission strategy to different groups: 1. The Jews (9:20a.), 2. Those under the Torah (9: 20b), 3. Those without the Torah (9: 21), 4. The weak of mankind. In this context, this word is repeated four times by the apostle Paul, namely in verses twenty, twenty-one, and twenty-second. In Greek the word 'to be like' uses terms in the Greek order of the words referred to as conjunction subordinating. This is a particle or article in the Bible translated by the word became as, which can be interpreted to be like; Just the way you are. In Greek order, a conjunction subordinating is needed to clarify the meaning and purpose of the word. Because if this conjunction does not exist, then the meaning of the sentence will be ambiguous and undetected. In the text of 1 Corinthians 9:18-23 the word $\kappa\alpha\iota$ which is conjunction needs to be understood because it explains the intent and method used by the Apostle Paul in preaching the gospel to people with different customs and cultures.

Thus, if he (Paul) was in the Jews he did like the Jews, conforming to their cultural customs and customs of living under the law. To preach the gospel to the Jews, Paul equated himself with their customs and customs so that he could win them over for Christ. Furthermore, regarding the phrase 'becoming like' which the Apostle Paul expressed in His epistle to the Corinthians, there is the following meaning; 'To the Jews, the apostle Paul had become like the Jews, so that he might win them over for Christ. For those who live under the apostle, Paul's Torah Law did so that he might win more souls for Christ.

Paul's utilization of the word "to be like" is utilized indicates that Christians are not just "Jews" (Galatians 3:3:28-29). This reality certainly prompted Paul to use this method of "becoming like" to bring them into the salvation of Christ and the Law of Christ through the gospel. Paul used this method when he faced two different groups of Jews and Greeks (bands. Acts 17:22-31). Paul used the source and language they understood. For the Greeks, Paul did not quote an understanding from the Bible but quoted it from the world of philosophy. This method is certainly a new form in the modern world of Christian preaching and teaching (band. Acts 16:3, 18:18). Religious traditions tend to alienate foreigners. Ecclesiastical structures became the walls that surrounded faithful believers. The detailed teachings of the church created heretics and pagans. Even expressions of religious loyalty in worship and liturgy make people strangers to each other.

Towards the one who was to be evangelized by the Apostle Paul, he became like them. When he was with the Jews, he became the same as the Jews and when he was among the Greeks, he became the same as the Greeks. The 'being like' referred to by the Apostle Paul is not just like that. However, you must understand and understand the culture. Tradition records that Paul when preaching the gospel to the Gentiles understood their culture and even learned the language. The word as emphasized by the Apostle Paul is a testament to Paul's method of cross-cultural evangelism. He was willing to be the same as those who were different from him to win them over for Christ.

The Church as a Servant of God: Serving and Friendly

Indeed, only the Lord Jesus is the Son to whom God is pleased. Only to Jesus did God make the statement: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). Indeed, there is no man to whom God is pleased. Only the Lord Jesus! Therefore, only in Jesus to whom God pleases, do we become human beings whom God has favored. Through living and whole faith, it happens to us as Paul says in Galatians 2:20 "But I live, but it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And my life which I live now in the flesh is to live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me." If God pleases us, he will not reject us. It must be in our convictions full of courage to approach the presence of God (Hebrews 4:16); we can live in confidence enter and dwell in the house of God for all time.

Paul asserts in I Corinthians 13:13, that the one who is favored by God will rejoice and live in peaceful and loving fellowship, for the sin that corrupts communion has perished in himself and the one who has love is the one who hopes in Jesus Christ. It must be evident in the life of the one whom God approves of heavenly fellowship, communion in the house of the Father in heaven. People who are favored by God will always truly serve others. In him will grow the power of Jesus's ministry who gave His blood, His life, and even His whole person to serve the world. Those to whom God is pleased will rejoice in living in the worship of God. He rejoices in offering His body into a living, holy and pleasing offering to God (Romans 12:1).

The identification of the "servant" with Jehovah is shown not only in terms of My servant and My choice but also in the sentence describing their relationship which is the one I hold, holding by hand can be seen for example in Exodus 17:12 and Proverbs 31:19 and also the word I am pleased. Jehovah sustains His servant by upholding Him with strength like the LORD as the creator. The whole phrase "My servant whom I hold" is the same as the phrase that says "he is mine and no power can match Him." This is what makes the servant successful in doing His duty which is to show victory on earth.

Choan Seng Song also argues that Christian missionary should be seen and focused on God's creation of this world. Christians are expected to be able to actualize themselves with various forms of social, cultural, and religious life. Throughout the Bible, God is seen in fellowship and intimacy with His creation. The sacrifice and death of Jesus on the Cross is a form of a new relationship for all of His creation. The relationship is not based on blood or race relations, but on relationships that transcend regions, races, and religions. God no longer belongs to one nation, but Jesus is the reality of each diverse region. Jesus is not a luxury that oppresses you poor, but Jesus is a culture of low society. In such a culture, mankind can meet the real Christ. The community of trust will be established when we feel that we have space in other people's place, reciprocally, we prepare a place and space for people other than us. The reconciliation can be established when the people have the same feeling and understanding that they are both people of God and they are brothers and sisters. When we understand that the church is a church of solidarity, we must support people equally. When we build such a community, we become a community of trust.

God's salvation and protection for the nation of Israel and the blessing as God's chosen nation that God gave to the nation of Israel are also God's an election and God's universal salvation given by God to all nations on this earth. Thus, God's salvation and election are not only a prerogative right of the Israelites but is a universal blessing to all nations and all creatures on earth as recipients of God's election and salvation. Human existence in this world is equal before Allah, both the poor and the rich. Salvation can only be known and received only through faith in God. This existence requires the church to serve as a servant who serves and is friendly to all people. Because no one can be excommunicated in the ministry of the church. The Church belongs to all mankind (Church of the People).

An Inclusive and Contextual Church: Wins Over People

The sending of Jesus began with the baptism of Jesus by the Spirit of God. To understand this commission, we must not escape from His own name and the only name that was sent by something. Something that sent it is God or the Father. That commission means the coming of God upon Jesus and Jesus's beginning mission which is seen in such a glorious light over Jesus. In this case, Jesus became the subject of recognized law in Judaism. He penetrated His true self and found a true relationship with God as a beloved child. If we go back to what we talked about the Jesus's sending, it says that God sent His son. There is a special relationship between Jesus and His sender which is one unit, but that relationship is not always exclusive, now it is an inclusive relationship at the same time. The sending of Jesus Christ is for this world, which means to all nations and saves the whole world.

Due to the fact nowadays many people have poor lives, many are starving due to lack of food, some are without a place to live. Seeing this reality, do humans stay silent or further corner them. When this happens Allah never leaves the poor in their suffering. Instead, he shared in their suffering. This shows God's solidarity with the poor. His act of liberating the poor is an example and at the same time hearing the call of faith for each of His followers.

Christians are expected to be able to feel what is felt by others who suffer and live in brotherhood with the poor. The poverty that destroys human dignity was responded to by Jesus in His mission. He was willing to suffer for the poor, God also suffered. Through this theological understanding, it can be seen that God's work is always at work in history and His inclusion for the poor. Matthew 43:7 it says that when the oppressed cry out, God heard and in Job 5:16, there is hope for the little ones. To win over many people in its evangelism, the Church developed the doctrine of equality without distinction of social status and economic level of society. Salvation from God through Jesus Christ belongs to everyone without classifying one another.

CONCLUSION

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ the King of the Church became the motivation for the church in carrying out its mission to bring and win many people into the light and love of the gospel of Christ. Evangelism and church ministry bring mankind into God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ His son. Becoming an inclusive church is a church calling that is deeply rooted in and in Jesus Christ. Where the church opens itself to everyone (mankind) without discriminating against ethnicity, skin color, gender, economic condition or status of the human. No one person is not counted or is not served by the church. An inclusive or self-opening church makes it an actualization of the Kingdom of God that unites and embraces everyone.

After the church takes an inclusive ministry step, then the church will instill and ground the word of God and all of His teachings in and within the context of the community itself. Thus, the work of salvation, inclusion and blessing from God can be admitted in the believer's faith in His existence. So that no one feels (outsider) amid church services. Becoming a contextual church means imposing the cross of Christ directly on human life itself. The church responds to the needs of society in its context. The church serves society in its own context. So that it will build and grow commitment, spirit and a “sense of belonging” of the church or community to the church.

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