

FORGIVENESS AS SOLIDARITY IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BASED ON JOHANN BAPTIST METZ

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Abstract : *This paper discuss the role of forgiveness in the Christian context as sign of solidarity and a duty in building loving and peaceful relationships. In the teachings of the Bible, forgiveness is a central principle and a strong calling for Christians. The words and examples in the Bible underscore the importance of forgiveness as an integral part of a life of faith. Forgiveness is not just an individual act, but also carries a deeper meaning in the context of social relationships, both between individuals and community groups. Forgiveness shows solidarity, empathy, and deep love in establishing healthy and constructive relationships. In addition, Christianity also emphasizes the importance of forgiveness as the responsibility of believers in following Christ's example. In forgiving, Christians demonstrate the character of Christ who forgives and gives new opportunities. Forgiveness also creates an environment that encourages reconciliation, peace and social transformation. In this context, Christians have an active duty in promoting forgiveness, repairing broken relationships, and creating a society filled with love and peace. The practical implication of this view is the importance of engaging in the process of forgiveness, avoiding vengeance and retaliation, and committing to building relationships based on mutual understanding, forgiveness, and repair. In conclusion, forgiveness in.*

Keywords : *Christian Education, Forgiveness, Johann Baptist Metz, Restore Relationships, Solidarity*

Abstrak : Makalah ini membahas posisi pengampunan dalam konteks Kristiani sebagai tanda solidaritas dan kewajiban dalam membangun hubungan yang penuh kasih dan damai. Dalam ajaran Alkitab, pengampunan adalah prinsip utama dan panggilan yang kuat bagi orang Kristen. Kata-kata dan contoh-contoh dalam Alkitab menggarisbawahi pentingnya pengampunan sebagai bagian yang tidak terpisahkan dari kehidupan iman. Pengampunan bukan hanya sebuah tindakan individu, tetapi juga memiliki makna yang lebih dalam dalam konteks hubungan sosial, baik antar individu maupun kelompok masyarakat. Pengampunan menunjukkan solidaritas, empati, dan kasih yang mendalam dalam membangun hubungan yang sehat dan konstruktif. Selain itu, Kekristenan juga menekankan pentingnya pengampunan sebagai tanggung jawab orang percaya dalam mengikuti teladan Kristus. Dalam mengampuni, orang Kristen menunjukkan karakter Kristus yang mengampuni dan memberikan kesempatan baru. Pengampunan juga menciptakan lingkungan yang mendorong rekonsiliasi, perdamaian, dan transformasi sosial. Dalam konteks ini, orang Kristen memiliki tugas aktif dalam mempromosikan pengampunan, memperbaiki hubungan yang rusak, dan menciptakan masyarakat yang penuh dengan kasih dan perdamaian. Implikasi praktis dari pandangan ini adalah pentingnya terlibat dalam proses pengampunan, menghindari dendam dan pembalasan, dan berkomitmen untuk membangun hubungan yang didasarkan pada saling pengertian, pengampunan, dan restorasi.

Kata Kunci : Pendidikan Kristen, Pengampunan, Johann Baptist Metz, Memulihkan Hubungan, Solidaritas

INTRODUCTION

Forgiveness is one of the most essential values in the Christian context. Forgiveness is the act of stopping attitudes of hatred, anger or resentment towards others that have wronged or hurt that person emotionally or physically. Throughout the Bible, forgiveness is believed to be an integral part of a Christian's life. Throughout the Scriptures, God frequently teaches His followers to practice forgiveness (Cowley, 2021; Erika et al., 2023; Ligan, 2022; Loheni et al., 2023; Mariani, 2020). For instance, in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught His people to forgive others as God forgives us (Angellyna, 2021; Angellyna & Tumbol, 2022; Tumbol, 2020; Wainarisi & Tumbol, 2022b, 2022a). Additionally, Jesus also set the perfect example of forgiveness through His death on the cross, where He forgave those who tormented Him, even in the most difficult of times.

Forgiveness is also closely related to solidarity and love (Pattiasina et al., 2022; Pradita, 2021; Pradita & Veronica, 2023; Susila & Pradita, 2022). In building loving and peaceful relationships with others, forgiveness is key. Without forgiveness, resentment, distrust, or tension in relationships can tear people apart and destroy solidarity between them. In the case of disputes or disagreements, forgiveness has all the power to restore relationships, strengthen bonds between individuals, and build trust (Munte, 2022a, 2022b; Munte & Korsina, 2022; Saputra et al., 2023; Seruyanti et al., 2023; Sihombing, 2022; Wainarisi et al., 2022a). Regarding Christian teaching and practice, forgiveness is not an easy task. Often, human beings tend to hold on to hatred or resentment as a natural response to the mistreatment they receive. However, a Christian is invited to overcome this natural urge and choose to be forgiving, following the example of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness has become a responsibility and duty for every individual who follows His teachings.

Through forgiveness, loving and peaceful relationships may be established. Unity can flourish and human relationships can be strengthened (Amiani, 2022; Erika et al., 2023; Ligan, 2022; Loheni et al., 2023; Lumbanraja, 2021; Pengky et al., 2023; Siburian et al., 2023). Forgiveness also constitutes the essential instrument for each individual to overcome wounds, start over, and maintain peace. In the context of Christian life, forgiveness is a demanded responsibility to maintain relationships based on love and peace.

Concerning the theology of memory, Metz proposed the concept of "the sacrament of history" (*sacred memory*) as the means to see the signs of God's presence in human history. He also emphasized the significance of solidarity with those who suffer and called for concrete action in response to injustice and suffering (Andiny, 2020, 2023; Dandung et al., 2022; Nugrahhu, 2020; Sulistyowati et al., 2021, 2022). In conclusion, the concepts in Metz's theology of memory encourage Christians to reflect on and act responsibly towards the past, consider the ethical implications of our current actions, and build a more just and humane future. Johann Baptist Metz was theologian, philosopher and active in philosophy, politics and redemptive thought (Sanasintani, 2020, 2022; Simanjuntak, 2019; Susila, 2022a, 2022c, 2022b; Susila & Risvan, 2022). The authors finds that Jürgen Moltmann once praised Metz not only as an honest friend who both discussed the presence of God for all people, Moltmann also mentioned the book they wrote in honor of Ernst Bloch in 1965 (Moltmann & Lösel, 2020).

Mirko Vlk in his research brings together Metz's ideas with the idea that the freedom of conscience is a ticket to the concept of freedom connected to moral autonomy, including the freedom to embrace their respective religions (*Dignitatis Humanae* based on the Second Vatican Council) (Vlk, 2022). This condition Mirko Vlk brings together thoughts about conscience with politics that develop in theology which then leads to peace.

The realization of peace according to Metz in the political context shows at the same time the distinction between religion and the state as a unity without the need for separation (Fitriana et al., 2023; Kurniati et al., 2023; Manik et al., 2023; Munte, 2022a; Munte, Natalia, et al., 2023; Trisiana et al., 2023; Wirawan et al., 2023). This alignment shows that whatever human rights are, they are still under the law and its rules. Thus, the plurality of moral values is at the axiological level, for example when taking an attitude of empathy and concern for something that is structurally oppressed.

The first previous research, researchers saw the thought of Sixto J. Garcia who presented a theological configuration with the memory of the kerygma of justice, among others, through mercy

as a space to remember the radicalization of Jesus' subversive mercy (Garcia, 2023). The authenticity of suffering here according to Sixto J. Garcia is more about the life of Christian history itself which is pervasive, historical and timeless. Garcia's thoughts are close to the authors because they discuss Metz's thoughts and suffering. However, Garcia speaks more to and in the Latin context. Meanwhile, the authors are more concerned with the issue of bullying in Indonesia, although they only take parts of certain regions.

Secondly, the previous research, the authors noticed the closeness of the object of research which boils down to Metz's thought through Mirko Vlk. Mirko Vlk's thoughts on Metz's political philosophy in the context of the state and religion show that the level of political morality between religion and the state is equally driven by freedom of conscience as part of public morals (Vlk, 2022). Moral and conscience here are sovereignty between subjects, namely civil society. Vlk's research leads to the fusion of religion and the state while the researcher is more of a case study featuring bullying even though this case is not finished, but the researcher's decision to examine bullying is as a concern and also takes the space of suffering as part of the activity of remembering.

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study is qualitative research by considering conversations about forgiveness that exist in theology or Christianity. Thoughts on the topic of forgiveness are then developed by parsing through philosophy and theologian Johann Baptist Metz. This literature review research not only touches on Metz's thoughts but also brings them together with previously researched case studies on bullying. The thought of Johann Baptist Metz is important as an analytical knife to display previous studies through previous and recent published journals to meet between topics and subjects of thought about forgiveness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Johann Baptist Metz's theory of the theology of memory is concerned with ethical and social questions, including questions of justice, power, and protection against exploitation and violence (Huebner, 2008; Nindi et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2023; Vento, 2023). Metz's approach could be used to analyze cases of bullying, in which violence and ridicule are conflated. In the bullying context, such approaches might lead to the necessity of listening to and supporting victims of bullying, while spreading awareness and empowering individuals and communities to change the culture of violence.

Metz theory is an abstract philosophical view that focuses on ethical and social consequences. To comprehend practical studies and approaches related to bullying cases, it would be best to involve experts in the fields of psychology, sociology, or educational studies (Apandie et al., 2022; Apandie & Rahmelia, 2020; Pongoh, n.d., 2022b, 2022a; Rahmelia et al., 2022; Teriasi et al., 2022; Triadi, Pongoh, et al., 2022; Triadi, Prihadi, et al., 2022). Kids who experience Christian religious bullying may feel fear and anxiety about their religious beliefs and identity. He or she may feel isolated and anxious for fear of being subjected to negative messaging regarding their beliefs (Baruno et al., 2021; Hutapea & Yusuf, 2023; Supriatin et al., 2022; Unicef, 2020; Wirawan, 2021).

Bullying can disrupt a child's belief in themselves and in their religion. It may make him/her feel worthless or unworthy because of his/her religious beliefs. It can result in low self-esteem and self-confidence, and may lead to emotional problems such as depression and anxiety. Christian religious bullying may make kids doubt their own beliefs. Indeed, due to being ridiculed or mocked by others, they may question the truth and validity of their religious beliefs (Smeru et al., 2021; Unicef, 2020; UNICEF, 2020). Depending on their spiritual search and understanding, this may interfere with the process of (Apandie et al., 2022; Nugrahu et al., 2023; Rahmelia & Agustina, 2022; Rahmelia & Apandie, 2023; Utami, 2022). Depending on the child's religion, some kids may choose to reject their own religion as a response to bullying. Those may feel that there is no benefit or pride in maintaining their religious beliefs, and prefer to hide or reject their true religion.

Bullying represents a form of action or violence committed by someone intentionally or consciously to oppress vulnerable persons which can damage the victim's mentality and make the

victim feel helpless and affect their academic performance because of the threat faced by the victim of bullying (Munte, 2023; Munte, Saputra, et al., 2023; Suriani & Betaubun, 2022; Wainarisi, 2021a, 2021b; Wainarisi et al., 2022a, 2022b, 2023). As taken from the case of religious bullying against Christians that occurred in the neighborhood of Karanganyar elementary school, the victim claimed that he was bullied by his friends because of different religions, starting from the perpetrator asking the victim's religion and the victim answered that he was a Christian (AMARIA, 2021). The perpetrator invited the victim to enter their religion when they found out about the victim's religion, they also stayed away and did not want to interact with the victim anymore (DI SMAS et al., n.d.).

Bullying cases of elementary school children in Karanganyar, central Java were bullied by their friends because they were Christians and the second case was experienced by an elementary school student named Josep Sebastian Zebua he was also a victim of bullying at his school SDN Pekayon, 16 East Jakarta in November 2017 Josep was bullied for being Christians and of Chinese descent Josep was also often treated harshly, verbally and physically (DI SMAS et al., n.d.). During the ceremony, Josep was beaten up and the teachers who saw it were just silent. Josep was treated badly since Ahok committed blasphemy in the news and Josep at that time was equated with Ahok (DI SMAS et al., n.d.).

Metz argued that recognizing and honoring collective memory is essential in building a just and peace-oriented society ("Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*," 2021; Awak et al., 2023; Cole, 2021; Nindi et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2023). Metz has criticized traditional theological views that focus too much on hope for the future, often ignoring the suffering and injustices that occur in the world today (Gorringe, 2023). He contends that integrating the experience of suffering into theology can result in a theology more responsive to social and political conditions.

Riyako's thought Cecilia Hikota presents Metz's thought in the context of the presence of self through the Mass (Hikota, 2022). The commemoration based on the Eucharist and the liturgy of memory means that Christ's crucifixion on the cross is a commemoration of His suffering as well as seeing Him as a victim. The set of sacrifices throughout history, according to Metz, should enable human beings as Christians to take transformative action on something outside themselves (Baruno et al., 2021; Faot & Hutapea, 2022; Hutapea & Yusuf, 2023; Wulan & Sanjaya, 2022). This attitude is a political attitude. This attitude, according to Metz through Hikota, is the axiological key to grassroots theology that leads to practical action (Hikota, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Based on Metz's thoughts on political philosophy, bullying cases in Indonesia, although the authors only take from certain regions, about remembrance, and the theory of forgiveness, the authors conclude that the commemoration of the pain of suffering involving physical, psychological and mental violence in victims cannot be normalized as part of the suffering of Christ which departs from the understanding that suffering is a passive activity. The commemoration of forgiveness in this case is more about concern and solidarity for the victim for the injustice of the victim who is unable to defend her rights as a citizen or as a member of the church.

In addition, the authors conclude that the political position in Metz's thinking boils down to active politics that brings and transforms peace by remembering the goodness of Christ who was sacrificed on the cross. This event for Christianity is a space to give, immerse and dissolve themselves for the world and fellow humans, especially for victims of injustice on earth. In summary, forgiveness, love, and peace is that by practicing forgiveness, love, and peace, we can create healthy relationships, harmonize with ourselves and others, and create a better world. Forgiveness is the process of letting go of grudges, wrongs, or injustices we feel towards others. By forgiving, we remove emotional baggage and create space for growth and repair. Love is an attitude of compassion, kindness, and concern that we extend to others. Through love, in turn, creates positive, supportive, and respectful relationships. Power of peace is an inner state of tranquility, balance, and harmony within ourselves and among those around us. Through peace, one creates an environment that is free from conflict and violence.

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