

PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

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Abstrak

Penulis meyakini bahwa arti dalam hidup ditemukan dalam hubungan dengan Allah. Dia menghendaki agar manusia selalu ada dalam hubungan dengan-Nya. Allah sendiri yang berinisitaif menyatakan diri-Nya kepada manusia, agar manusia dapat mengenal dan bersekutu di dalam Allah. Sebab itu, pelayanan untuk memperkenalkan manusia kepada Allah merupakan pelayanan yang sangat penting. Pendidikan teologi merupakan bentuk dari pelayanan tersebut. Penulis sudah menekuni pelayanan dalam bidang pendidikan teologi di Indonesia selama puluhan tahun, dan penulis meyakini bahwa pelayanan tersebut sangat penting untuk mendidik banyak hamba Tuhan untuk mengasihi Allah dan tekun dalam pelayanan yang diberikan kepadanya. Penulis menjabarkan tiga faktor yang sangat penting pendidikan teologi yang harus berjalan secara bersama-sama agar pendidikan teologi menghasilkan sesuatu yang efektif. Pertama, pendidikan – faktor ini sangat penting dalam memuridkan orang-orang percaya. Hal ini merupakan pusat dari Amanat Agung Tuhan Yesus (Mat.28:18-20). Hal-hal yang sangat penting dan harus diperhatikan dalam pendidikan adalah: guru, murid, kurikulum, metode dan lingkungan. Kedua, penyembahan – manusia harus menyembah Allah yang telah menciptakannya. Faktor yang sangat penting dalam penyembahan: pemimpin, penyembah, pujiyah, ekspresi, lingkungan dan Roh Kudus. Ketiga, penginjilan – Allah ingin setiap orang mempunyai kesempatan untuk menanggapi kabar baik tentang kasih dan rencana Allah. Faktor-faktor yang sangat penting dalam hal ini adalah: penginjil, orang yang belum diselamatkan, Injil, metode, lingkungan dan Roh Kudus. Pelayanan kepada Tuhan khususnya dalam bidang pendidikan teologi harus menyelaraskan semua hal diatas secara baik, agar pelayanan yang Tuhan percayakan dapat berhasil dengan baik dimana akan lebih banyak orang yang taat kepada Tuhan dengan senantiasa menyembah kepada-Nya dan memberitakan Injil kepada orang-orang yang belum mengenal Allah, dan juga mengajar mereka tentang kebenaran Allah dimana pada akhirnya mereka akan hidup dalam kebenaran tersebut senantiasa. Sebab hanya hal itulah yang menjadikan hidup ini berarti.

Kata Kunci: Filsafat Pelayanan, Pendidikan Teologi

INTRODUCTION

George Knight, in his book on Philosophy and education wrote, “Perhaps the greatest need of Christian schools is a philosophical foundation that is truly Christian.”¹

One’s philosophy of ministry is based on their theology and worldview. The theme of my philosophy is God all, in all, to all which is based on 1 Corinthians 15:28 and Mark 16:15. Meaning in life is to be found in relationship with God.

The beginning of that relationship comes from God’s revelation of Himself. We know Him only because He made Himself known through creation, Scripture, and through incarnation in the person of Jesus Christ. The ultimate test in knowledge of the divine Trinity is the Bible. There He chose to reveal Himself to the authors, inspiring them so that all Scripture is inerrant (2 Tim. 3:16).

Scripture not only tells us of God, but His plan for humanity. Our philosophy must be based on the eternal perspective of God’s decree or plan and purpose for mankind. Ministry must bring people into alignment with the eternal reason for their existence. One dimension of that is the acknowledgment of man’s condition. Though created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27), that image was marred by sin. All are in a sinful state and need solution for their salvation that can only come from God (Rom. 3:23).

God did provide a way for mankind to be free from the condemnation of sin and even to become a part of His eternal family. The story of His provision is what we call the gospel. God sent His Son to live on earth as the incarnate Word, Jesus (Jn. 1:1-2). He lived a sinless life, died as a sacrifice for our sin, and there by once for all He provided for salvation and sanctification (Heb. 10:10). God raised Jesus from the dead and after many had

¹George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: an Introduction in Christian Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI, USA: Andrews University Press, 1998), 157.

witnessed that resurrection, He was taken to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, where He is acting as our high priest and is waiting to return to earth as the Messiah King (Heb. 10:12-13).

The plan of salvation provided for mankind is one that allows free choice for acceptance of that gift, or rejection of it. It is a choice that everyone makes, but some people don't have opportunity of hearing the full story so that they can make an informed choice. Jesus commanded His followers to take the news of the gospel to all and teach them all that He commanded (Mt. 28:19-20). He wants a relationship with all (2 Pet. 3:9), but those who reject His plan are subject to His wrath (Jn. 3:36).

God's plan for mankind includes worship of Him and fellowship now and eternally. That worship is to be done individually and with the group of believers that are the church - the body of Christ that He initiated to carry out His kingdom program. God wants all believers involved in the work of the church. For that reason He equipped all with spiritual gifts. He also provided them all with the Holy Spirit for the power of ministry and to help them in worship and daily life.

Life in this world is a temporary state and gives us a chance to respond to God's love and follow His eternal program and wishes. We exist to worship, do His work, and involve others in His kingdom.

In building this philosophy of ministry, the author has attempted to build on Biblical principles, not on the work of others. George Knight recommended, as the best way of building a good philosophy, not to begin with the work of others. "The better way is for educators and educational systems to individually examine their own basic beliefs in terms of reality, truth and value, and then consciously to build a personal educational philosophy upon that platform."²

²Ibid, 156.

MINISTRY SETTING

Simpson Theological College in Central Java, Indonesia, is an institution for the training of church planters, pastors, and church workers. The school was begun to train those who would be involved in reaching Java with the gospel. It emphasizes church planting, especially in cities and villages where the majority of the population is Muslim. The ministry context of this paper will be limited to work with the students in this college.

DEFINITIONS

Ministry

Ministry is service as an expression of faith and a response to God's love. It is founded on God's word in principle and example. Directed to God, the church (body), and the world, it meets spiritual, physical, emotional, social, and mental needs in mankind and glorifies God. In relationship with God, ministry is expressed in worship and stewardship. Ministry to the body is carried out in the relational activities of teaching, nurture, fellowship, discipline, and service. Areas of ministry to the world include proclamation of the gospel, redemptive activities, and management of creation.

While the primary focus of my ministry will be to young adults in a classroom setting, they will be learning to relate to all other age groups. They must learn many types or avenues of ministry to the body and world including personal, interpersonal, small group, congregational (large group), and administrative.

Factors

Those essential elements that occur in education, worship, and evangelism that work together to carry out each activity.

Terms of Philosophical Method

1. I will be using the term "presupposition" as a "theological assumption or premise that is a part of the foundation of our

belief systems and convictions.”³ It is not just an ordinary premise, but one based on an understanding of God, His work and will in this world. It is foundational for what is taught, why, and how it is presented.

2. The “principle of action” will be defined in this paper as, “those biblical commands or truths that form or guide general policies of ministry activities and that extend the presupposition”. Because ministry is based on God’s word, guidance for general policies of ministry should be founded on clear biblical commands or truths. The relationship must be clear between these directives to action and the overlaying presupposition.
3. The ministry is done using “practice of ministry” which can be defined as “those short term and long term plans (goals) and activities (objectives) that illustrate for a particular agency and age group the principle of action to which it is attached.” These goals and objectives that focus ministry in practice for specific change to occur, must be based on a biblical principle of action and a correct presupposition. For application of my philosophy of ministry to the context of teaching in Simpson Theological College, I will begin each factor of the teaching-learning process with a “presupposition”, followed by a “principle of action”, and conclude the application with a “practice of ministry”.

EDUCATION

Education is important in discipleship of believers. It is at the heart of the great Commission that Jesus gave His disciples just before He ascended to heaven, (Matt. 28:18-20). Because my ministry is basically in education, this will be the first topic of my ministry paper. Logically worship would be the priority in a church setting according to my philosophy.

³Robert J. Radcliffe, *Shaping Your Philosophy of Ministry* (Portland, Or: Western Seminary, 1999), 10.

Factors

1. *Teacher.* In any Christian education there are a number of factors that occur and affect the outcome of the teaching and learning that occur. There must be someone who influences the student to learn or change. That person will be called the “teacher” in this paper, though it could be “professor” for the college situation that is the focal point of this paper. The more general term of teacher works well in the Indonesian context.
2. *Student.* The teacher is in relationship to the “student” or the one who is changed by learning. Although this could be termed learner, I have chosen the word “student” because of my context of ministry.
3. *Curriculum.* The body of information or content taught is generally referred to as curriculum in educational institutions. For that reason, I will use the term “curriculum” in speaking of the content of the lessons. The word implies that the material taught is a course of study and focused for a particular aim.
4. *Method.* The way that learning is brought about is the method. It explains how the teacher conveys the information or how the student receives the curriculum needed to affect change.
5. *Environment.* All teaching occurs in some environment or setting that has physical, emotional, and social implications. It may not be a physical place, but a climate or situation that affects teaching. While most of the teaching that I do for a particular course occurs in a classroom, some does not. I will speak of “environment” for the setting, climate, or situation.
6. *Holy Spirit.* Because Christian teaching occurs through a teacher lead by the Holy Spirit, who conveys information that is applied by the Holy Spirit to the hearts of Christian students; the teaching or influence of the Holy Spirit is a key factor in educational ministry. Spiritual change cannot occur without the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the factor that separates Christian teaching from all other.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Teacher

A teacher must live the things that are to be taught spiritually or the student will be hindered in accepting the truth that may be presented. The presupposition is that, “the life of the teacher is an example to the students”. That concept is found several places in the Bible. In Luke 6:40 Christ said, “everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.”

A verse that has command on this subject is 1 Timothy 4:12. The last part of that verse is what will be used as the principle of action. It says, “in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.” Timothy was a teacher, admonished to be an example by his life, even though he was still a young man. That example was to be in relationship to God and man.

In applying this to a teacher in my context, one practice of ministry will be, “the teacher will maintain a healthy personal relationship with God through daily Bible study, prayer, and worship”. That will nourish faith and purity so that the teacher is an example to the students.

Student

For the factor of student, there is a presupposition that “a Christian learns how to correctly interpret Scripture by diligent study of it”. Paul reminds Timothy that he needs to “accurately” handle “the word of truth” in 2 Timothy 2:15. Timothy is urged to be diligent as a workman so that he need not be ashamed of the way he uses the word of truth.

The principle of action for the student is, “search the Scriptures, because...it is these that bear witness of Me;” John 5:39. The student is commanded to search the Scriptures, which is a part of being a diligent workman who learns how to interpret the Bible. The Scripture is in leading to Jesus, brings eternal life -

which is something that those who heard Christ didn't understand, according to the key verse here.

A practice of ministry for the student will be “to read the Minor Prophets twice for the course on those books, looking for teaching about the Messiah.” In that way the learner will be searching Scripture and learning of how it speaks of Christ. Any study of the Bible could be used as a practice of ministry like this.

Curriculum

Another factor of education is curriculum. The presupposition that has been chosen for curriculum is “sound doctrine is important for salvation and Christian living”. In 1 Timothy 4:16 there is an admonition to “watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” Sound doctrine nourishes the spiritual life, according to 1 Timothy 4:16. It is in accordance with Biblical principles, even if the topic is secular.

A principle of action that works well with the presupposition on curriculum is “you must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine”, (Titus 2:1). Any educational content should be in agreement with Scripture. There are areas where the Bible is silent, but certainly there is to be no curriculum that counters sound biblical doctrine.

As a practice of ministry I have chosen, “teach the book of Romans”. It is the epistle noted for the most logical presentation doctrine in the New Testament and is required of every student.

Method

The fourth factor that will be addressed for application of philosophy is method. One method that is to be used in Scripture is “reasoning” or logical presentation of facts with opportunities for interaction. Paul often reasoned with people in teaching. Acts 18:4 says that he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath. The term is also translated “discuss” in Matthew 16:7 where the disciples were discussing an issue among themselves. The

presupposition is, “discussion or reasoning is beneficial in teaching for clarity of understanding.”

A principle of action is found in 1 Peter 3:15, “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (NIV) Giving an answer is a part of discussion and it is a logical exchange that should clarify understanding.

A practice of ministry could be, “students will be expected to participate in discussions on how to apply biblical concepts to daily life within their culture.”

Environment

Another factor of education is environment. A presupposition is that educational situations need to be flexible enough to meet the needs of students. There may be times that individual work cannot be done at the expense of the group, but too often program controls an environment for no good reason. Jesus taught anywhere there where needy people and adjusted his plans to bring kingdom understanding to them on their level of readiness. In the death of Lazarus, Jesus taught that He was the author of life (John 11:25). In the need for food, Jesus fed five thousand and taught that he had the power to be their provider (John 6:1-14).

A principle of action that grows out of that is the matter of being ready. In 1 Peter 3:15 it says “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (NIV). The questions can occur anywhere and we need to be flexible in meeting the needs when people are ready to receive teaching.

The application of this in a practice of ministry could be to prepare the syllabus for each course with extra time allowed in the course schedule for ministering to student needs and questions. Planning for some interaction time can help the teacher be flexible when there are needs.

Holy Spirit

The final factor of teaching is the Holy Spirit. He is also called the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, 15:26). My presupposition for this factor is found in John 16:13, “the Spirit...will guide you into all truth”. That thought is reinforced in 1 Corinthians 2:12, “we have received... the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God”.

A principle of action that gives command is “take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Ephesians 6:17). Scripture is truth and it is used by the Spirit to guide us into other truth by giving us principle for judging. The Holy Spirit works with Scripture in hearts to call attention to the truth and guide in obedience to that truth

In application to this injunction to take the sword of the Spirit, is the practice of ministry. It will be, “before each class period there will be prayer for guidance of the Holy Spirit in understanding specific truth for that lesson”.

WORSHIP

The main reason for being of a person is to worship God. That worship is a blessing both to God and the person involved. It is to be done individually and corporately, but here I will write particularly of worship in the body of believers.

Factors

1. *Leader.* Worship can occur individually or in a group setting. Usually when more than one person is involved there is someone who helps the others focus on worship by leading in the activities. The “leader” corresponds to a “teacher” from the educational environment.
2. *Worshiper.* Those who follow the leading of the worship director will be called “worshipers”. They are participants, involved in the activity of worship, being led by the leader.
3. *Praise.* The content of worship can be termed praise. It may occur in a Psalm, a spoken testimony, music, art, or in a

number of other forms. It is lifted to God in magnifying, thanking, and lauding Him.

4. *Expression.* The term used in education is method, but the form or way of worship is its expression. That expression of worship can take a variety of forms and is not just oral. Dance, art, music, reading, prayer, and many other avenues are used for the expression of worship.
5. *Environment.* The environment of worship is much like the usage of the term in the educational context. It may be a physical place, but can also be a climate or situation that affects the worship mood.
6. *Holy Spirit.* The Holy Spirit is involved in the life of every believer. He encourages worship and helps the believer to pray when it is difficult to know what to pray or how to express something (Rom. 8:26).

PHILOSOPHY OF WORSHIP

Leader

Worship has a history beginning with Adam. We get some of our ideas about public worship from Old Testament times and temple policies. They had worship leaders in the time of David, including Asaph (1Chr. 16:5-7). He was a godly example whose Psalms helped others communicate their praise to God. My presupposition is that, “the worship leader is an example of someone who loves the Lord and expresses it.” Psalm 22:23 is specific to this, “You who fear the Lord, praise Him.”

A principle of action can be found in Philippians 3:17, “Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.” Worship is many faceted, but the heart attitude of the leader is a pattern that can be followed even by those who don’t have a particular talent for music, art, or another form of worship.

In applying this to the context of Simpson Theological College, one practice of ministry could be, “students will be encouraged to prepare for leading worship in the chapel services by meeting with their advisor for prayer and counsel at least two

days in advance of their ministry.” The meeting would be to help the student prepare spiritually for ministry. It would also be a chance for the student to think through ways to help others worship.

Worship

Worship is a matter of heart and action. Correct action begins with the attitude of love for God. My presupposition for this factor is, God desires worshipers to come before Him with pure, holy hearts. In 1 Chronicles 16:29 we are told to worship the Lord in the splendor of Holiness. That is also found in Psalm 29:2 and 96:9.

An injunction for this comes from Jesus. The principle of action is “True worshipers shall worship God in spirit and truth” (John 4:23-24). There is no way to exalt the Lord simply by following rituals or ceremonies - even those that God commanded to be done. God wants the spirit involved or one becomes like the Pharisees of biblical times.

The practice of ministry for this will be, upon entering services, the students will be encouraged to bow their heads in silent prayer to prepare their hearts for further worship. They will be taught that they need to pray that God will cleanse them from sin and prepare them to listen to Him and respond.

Praise

The content of worship is primarily focused on who God is and what He has done. The Psalms are full of specific topics of praise. Psalm 145 in particular, lists many subjects that should cause us to exalt God. A general one is found in verse 9, “The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all He has made.” My presupposition is that the goodness of God should lead us to praise Him. The theme of God’s goodness in act and character is found from Genesis 1 and then throughout the Bible.

The expression of God’s goodness as a principle of action for praise is found in Psalm 136:1, “Give thanks to the Lord, for

He is good; for His loving-kindness is everlasting.” We are commanded to express thanks because of God’s good character and action that is shown in loving-kindness.

In the context of Simpson Theological College there will be a practice of ministry based on the need to express praise for God’s goodness. The students will write Psalms about the goodness of God to them personally as a part of the small group ministry. These will be shared in their group.

Expression

There are many ways of worshiping God. But one of the unique gifts given to mankind was the ability to sing and play music. The Bible lists a lot of musical instruments and commanded that they be used in worship in many Psalms – one of them is Psalm 150. My presupposition for expression is, God desires worship through music and song.

A passage that lists some of the ways of expression of praise is Ephesians 5:18-19. I will use it as the principle of action, “be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.” The style of music is to be varied, but include some Scriptural content with other songs.

In application of this, the practice of ministry chosen is, “the students will be taught a variety of musical styles-including indigenous music, with part of the songs based on Psalms and other passages of Scripture.

Environment

A climate of praise is expressed by always giving thanks. Ephesians 5:20 says, “Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God.” The worship is to occur from the heart in good and bad circumstances. My presupposition is, Christians are to live in an environment of constant praise.

That thought is expressed in the command that is being used as the principle of action, “In everything give thanks; for this

is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thes. 5:18). The injunction helps us to affirm that God is in control and that makes it harder for us to fall into temptation.

The practice of ministry derived from this that can be applied in Simpson Theological College is, students will be helped to overcome hardships by providing a climate of thanksgiving and a sharing of burdens with God and friends in small group activities. Students will also be encouraged in other activities to be thankful and express it to God and others.

Holy Spirit

One aspect of the worship is prayer. A presupposition is that the Holy Spirit aids in prayer. Romans 8:26-27 tells us some of the ways that the help is given. "We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

We are told to pray in the Spirit in Ephesians 6:18. My principle of action is "pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." This is clearly not the type of praying listed in 1 Cor. 14:15-16 that is a praying without understanding, but a prayer that is offered up with the aid of the Holy Spirit to correctly interpret things according to God's will.

A practice of ministry for that could be, the students will be taught in small groups about prayer in the Spirit. That will give them confidence that even when they don't know a lot about the circumstances or specific ends desired, they can pray and allow the Holy Spirit to direct the right prayer to God. There will be times of praying together for needs around the world.

EVANGELISM

God wants everyone to have a chance to respond to the good news of His love and plan for them. He has given all

believers a personal story of their own encounter with God that should be shared with their immediate friends, family, and neighbors. He does not call everyone to go out and share the gospel in an effective daily ministry, but everyone should do some evangelism.

Factors

1. *Evangelist.* The person who brings the gospel to an unbeliever is an evangelist. This is the one who shares the message and does proclamation and teaching with the hope of persuading the person to repent and receive Jesus. While there is a special gift of evangelism and some people who make this a full time ministry, it should be a part of the Christian life of every believer as they share the gospel.
2. *Unsaved.* An unsaved person is not yet a believer on Jesus Christ, has not experienced salvation, and will be the one receiving the message of the evangelist. That one will be termed unsaved, though the roll will change into that of a disciple after conversion.
3. *Gospel.* The message of God's love and plan for forgiveness that is to be proclaimed to all people. It is the content in the ministry of an evangelist. It includes the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.
4. *Method.* The way in which the gospel is presented by the evangelist is the method of evangelism. There are many methods of evangelism that are used on a personal level, in small groups, or in larger outreach ministries.
5. *Environment.* This term remains the same in evangelism as it is for teaching and worship. It may be a physical place, but also can be a climate or psychological situation in which evangelism occurs.
6. *Holy Spirit.* There can be no salvation without the Holy Spirit to convict of sin, convince the person of the truth of the Gospel, and bring the new birth to the heart of the convert.

The Holy Spirit is with the evangelist in the proclamation of the message as well.

PHILOSOPHY OF EVANGELISM

Evangelist

Every believer has a testimony of his or her personal encounter with Jesus. For most believers they can also learn enough of the gospel to share it logically with their friends, family, and others in their sphere of influence. My presupposition is, “Christians are the fragrance of Christ and proclaim Him in life and word.” The basis of that is found in 2 Cor. 2:14-17. Verse 14 includes the statement, “through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him.” Verse 17 adds, “in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.”

In Acts 1:8 there is a command for those who receive the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses. The principle of action for this factor, is taken from the verse but modified slightly. “When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall be My witnesses locally, regionally, and even to the remotest part of the world.” Since all Christians have the Holy Spirit they all need to be witnesses.

A practice of ministry applied to the students in Indonesia will be to train the students through classes, mentoring, and small group activities to think of themselves as witnesses in all that they do and say to the unsaved that live around the campus. They will develop a vision for being an evangelist that can help them do the work of an evangelist. That will carry over in their contacts off campus in weekend ministry and even in trips to the market.

Unsaved

Those who have not accepted God’s plan of salvation from sin and its consequences need to be given the message of the gospel in an acceptable form. My presupposition is from 2 Peter

3:9, “The Lord...is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

The word that they need to act on is found in Acts 3:19 which is my principle of action. It says, “Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away.” God desires repentance from the unsaved.

The students that come to Simpson Theological College in Indonesia are usually saved people. There are occasions when I have led them to repentance and salvation, but that isn’t normal. What we do desire is that they will be able to lead others to Christ. My practice of ministry is that students will be taught to lead unsaved people to repentance for their sins.

Gospel

The content of evangelism is not clearly stated in any one verse. Romans 1:3-4 speaks of God’s Son, a descendant of David in the flesh, who rose from the dead. In 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 the death, burial, and resurrection are included. Normally a definition includes all of these, the life of Jesus, and information on the kingdom of God. The presupposition that is to be used for this factor is, the Gospel is to be the content of evangelism.

Jesus gave a final message to His disciples before He ascended back to heaven. One place that message is recorded is in Mark 16. I have chosen verse 15 for the principle of action on the content of evangelism. “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

All students of the college in Java take homiletics. The practice of ministry will be, the students will learn to preach the gospel and will be given opportunity to practice it in weekend ministry.

Method

The factor that applies philosophy to the ways or means of evangelism is method. One method that is to be used by all Christians is to give a report or testimony of how Christ has

worked in their own lives. For evangelism it is one thing that cannot be refuted and therefore is affective in people that are considered resistant to the gospel. In the church it encourages and strengthens believers. My presupposition for method is, all believers have a testimony to share. In the early church it was said, “they began to report all things that God had done with them,” Acts 14:27. Paul shared his personal testimony concerning his salvation many times-three are recorded in Acts. He used it before a hostile crowd in Acts 22:2-21 and with rulers in Acts 26:4-23.

A principle of action that flows from that presupposition is found in Mark 5:19, “report to them what great things the Lord has done for you.” Every believer is to confess Christ and His work as it relates to their own lives.

The application to that command in a practice of ministry could be, the students will write out personal testimonies of salvation and refine them to be effective tools in witnessing to Muslims. A well thought out testimony can be of great value and be used throughout life.

Environment

Receptivity of the gospel can be hindered by the wrong cultural presentation of it. Therefore the presupposition for this factor in evangelism is, the evangelist needs to know the situation and relate to people according to their culture and needs. Paul was an example of this policy. He wrote in 1 Corinthians 9:22, “I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some.”

The principle of action that will be used here is taken from 2 Corinthians 4:15. It will be rephrased slightly as an injunctive. Do all things for their sake “that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.” Paul had used this principle in Corinth.

In applying this to the students in Java, the practice of ministry will be, students will learn culturally relevant ways to witness to Muslims. They will learn offensive terms and actions as well as acceptable bridges to the Gospel. They must learn to

avoid approaches that cause defensive behavior and hinder receptivity to the message.

Holy Spirit

The final factor in evangelism is the Holy Spirit. My presupposition is, the Holy Spirit can give boldness for sharing the gospel or witnessing. It is based on Acts 4:31 where the Holy Spirit filled the believers and gave them boldness to speak the word of God. Acts 1:8 reinforces the concept, “but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses.”

The principle of action is, “pray in the Spirit...to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel” (Ephesians 6:18-20). Prayer is needed to ask for power or effectiveness in witnessing.

A practice of ministry that is in keeping with that principle is, students will pray for boldness to share the gospel before they go out for weekend ministries. Since all students are involved in a program of guided ministry, they need to learn to rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them in their evangelism and other activities.

CONCLUSION

Life for a Christian is not found in gaining material goods, power, or knowledge. It should instead be based the teaching that Jesus gave in Matthew 16:24-27.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If any one wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds’

The life of sacrifice for Christ and His kingdom is not a life that ends up a burden. It is full of joy and adventure. Jesus said in

John 10:10, “I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.”

A life in obedience to God is a life of abiding in His love. That life will experience fullness of joy. In John 15:8-11 Jesus speaks of the type of life available for those who will abide in Him.

By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will be abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

God is the reason for being. He is the key to a joyful life of meaning and rich rewards. Right relationship to Him should shape the value system of Christians. To the believer, life needs to be God all, in all, and to all.

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