Reconstruction Pastoral Ministry Concept of the Assemblies of God Church in North Sulawesi Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the problems of pastoral care that occur in the Assemblies of God Church in North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Assemblies of God's efforts are reconstructing (providing a solution proposal) regarding pastoral care in an effort to develop the Assemblies of God congregation. To obtain research data, the authors used documents, both books and journals as a theoretical basis and conducted interviews with 14 church leaders as respondents/research subjects from regional organizational leaders, pastors and academics. The research was conducted using qualitative research methods by conducting interviews with 14 Assemblies of God leaders in North Sulawesi. Retrieval of research data using probability sampling with purposive sampling technique. The results showed that there were problems in Assemblies of God's pastoral care, especially with regard to pastoral care. The problem that occurs is the wrong paradigm regarding the concept of pastoral care in pastoral care caused by the old theoretical concept of pastoral care among church leaders, and the church's struggles in terms of independence. Therefore, in this study, two new theories were proposed in the form of proposed solutions, namely; 1) reconstruction of theological education (contextual pastoral care development), and 2) Striving for church independence.

Keywords: reconstruction, pastoral care, church

Introduction

Assemblies of God is a Pentecostal church denomination. Unlike the Assemblies of God in other countries, in Indonesia, especially in North Sulawesi, the Assemblies of God has very different characteristics. This is because in North Sulawesi, the church is very much in touch with the culture and traditions of the local community, which is often referred to as Minahasa. As a church with a distinctive Eastern culture, the church has been inculturated with the culture and traditions that exist in Indonesia, especially in Minahasa, thus creating a church that is more contextual and alive in culture.

In addition to churches that are inculturated with the local Minahasa culture, churches in North Sulawesi, especially the Assemblies of God Churches, have different problems in their congregations, especially those related to pastoral issues. Concrete problems in the congregation at the local church of Assemblies of God also become a theological struggle. The main thing is related to the understanding of the church leader or who in the Assemblies
of God organization is known as the church pastor. In the author's initial research, a pastor revealed that what is meant by pastoral care is the pastoral ministry of pastors and pastoral staff in the church, including preaching, visiting birthdays, leading funeral services. In the above sense it shows that shepherding is related to worship or spiritual activities in the church.

Another thing that becomes a problem in the concept of pastoral care at Assemblies of God is the pastor's understanding of the concept of the church. The church, which should be interpreted with God's own people as the body of Christ, is more widely understood as a physical building. A pastoral staff at one of the Assemblies of God churches in North Sulawesi revealed that the pastor where he serves focuses on the physical construction of the church. Competition for the splendor of the "church building" in North Sulawesi triggers competition for the construction of magnificent churches, but often the splendor of the church is not in accordance with the condition of the ability of the congregation and the number (quantity) of the congregation in a church. In this case, again according to the pastor is more focused on the physical building of the church than the formation of the quality of the congregation.

The right understanding of pastoral care will form the correct concept and be applied in practice. Pastoral care that is in accordance with the correct meaning and concept will have an impact on the improvement and growth of the church, both in quality and quantity. This is of course very different from the understanding of many leaders regarding the importance of the right concept of pastoral ministry in the church. The lack of proper practice of the concept of pastoral ministry has greatly impacted the growth of the church. The fact is that so far the growth of the church, specifically quantitative growth, is only based on biological growth.

The concept of exclusive pastoral care and fixation on ecclesiastical matters will be able to form pastoral ministers who do not have sensitivity and concern for the reality and aspects of people's lives. The church and its ministers become "capitalist" churches and ministers instead of "servant" ministries. Servants and churches tend to seek for and seek life rather than share and give life. In the context of the Assemblies of God church organization, there is a contrast due to the system in the Church Administration and Implementing Regulations. In the Assemblies of God organization, every pastor must try to support himself, both for his personal needs, for his family, as well as for the needs of the church and ministry. This will have an impact on the priorities of pastors in church ministry.
Most pastors, especially those with small congregations, must be entrepreneurial to meet their personal, family and ministry needs. It's just that often "professional dualism" makes pastors inevitably have to look for "other jobs" to fulfill their needs. One example is in Kasuratan village, which has repeatedly changed pastors because pastors have to share time between church services and daily work to make ends meet. According to the confession of a Assemblies of God gospel minister, that the pastor was only in the church on Saturday and Sunday, while the other day the pastor was busy with his business outside the village of Kasuratan. The problems of pastoral care in the local church of Assemblies of God which are indicated to be inconsistent with the actual concept of pastoral care, have led to the initiative to reconstruct the concept of Assemblies of God’s pastoral care.

Methods

The method used is qualitative. Qualitative method is a type of method that is often used in theological research work. The author or researcher will try to provide solutions to problems based on theoretical studies. In this study, the data obtained are descriptive data, where the researcher will include the study in the research report. In the qualitative method, the author is not trying to get the results of numbers which then become the subject of discussion and answers to hypotheses, but is to make a theological study of the research problem.\(^1\)

In this study, the author/researcher will make a solution proposal in the form of reconstruction of pastoral ministry which has been the main problem, where the concept of pastoral care, especially Assemblies of God in North Sulawesi, is too exclusive and does not answer the context of the congregation's problems as church members. The solution proposal is in the form of a pastoral ministry reconstruction that can answer pastoral care problems at Assemblies of God in North Sulawesi and Gorontalo.

Three main techniques in collecting data with the aim of fulfilling research information. 1) Interview, 2) Observation, and 3) Documentation. In qualitative research, specifically theological research, the Bible remains a material for the study of biblical interpretation.\(^2\) Instrument validation must be carried out to researchers as an instrument to

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be able to carry out research work objectively. The level of objectivity of the researcher can be seen when conducting initial observations and finding research problems, especially in the context of problems with the concept of Assemblies of God pastoral care in North Sulawesi and Gorontalo. Then, researchers must also have "sensitivity" in determining respondents to obtain objective and empirical data. The final part, as an instrument, researchers and the Bible as a knife of analysis will build a new paradigm in critical discussion and study based on theory and the acquisition of research data.

**Discussion**

In this study, the author does not only focus on ministry in the context of the church. Service is not defined as a liturgical service and a service manager in a church to only serve local church congregations, but service is broadly interpreted as a form of horizontal practical relationship between humans and each other. The word "neighbor" here does not only refer to fellow believers in one church organization or local church, but the target of service is all human beings regardless of background.

Holistic and inclusive service is an effort to realize God's mission. Diakonia is the practice of preaching the Word that takes place after the service. In carrying out the ministry, the church is required to manifest the preaching of the Word into real praxis in the community. The church must be sensitive and aware of its vocation, which is an effort to respond and realize the essence of the Word in the existence of a church that is community and lives in the midst of pluralism.

Diakonia or transformative services which are also known as liberation diakonia can be described as services that seek to bring relief and empower every community so that they can live independently and are able to work. Small people and local communities still need to be made aware of their potential and their rights so that they can continue to develop by maximizing themselves. This self-potential development will release them from the backwardness that makes them live in subordination from other parties, especially the capitalists.

The word "transform" in the "Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary" as quoted by Josef P. Widyatmadja is defined as "Their appearance and function is totally

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change". So transformative diaconia aims to transform people's lives in all aspects and dimensions of their lives. For Perkins, the word "development" can also mean liberation with reference to the French "de-envelope" or open the envelope. Opening the envelope requires a release process. The aim of transformative diaconia is the liberation effort that is implemented in order to free the small people from the structuralism of the capitalists. Transformative diaconia, which is in the form of empowering the people, is a diaconia that intends to liberate humans from powerlessness in a social context.

The biblical definition of diaconia is not only an attempt to provide assistance to the poor, but is often accompanied by condemnation of social sin. Stephen, for example, one of the seven deacons appointed by the apostles, died not because he gave help to others, but because of his condemnation of social sin (Acts 7). However, the practice of diaconia without condemnation of social sin occurs when the state provides financial aid and other facilities to churches and monasteries in Europe. When the church is officially recognized as the state religion, the church has lost its role in condemning social sins. The condemnation of social sin has been replaced by prayers for the state and emperor. The attention of the church and Christianity is no longer focused on solidarity, but on the teachings of dogmas/creeds.

It is in this context that churches in Indonesia and the Third World receive deacon services from European churches. Diakonia is only limited to providing food assistance for the poor, establishing hospitals, schools and orphanages. Diakonia regardless of the condemnation of social sins committed by the zending agency on the colonial government in the other country. This kind of deacon is inherited and preserved after the mission agency left their colony. Diakonia began to be free from criticism of social and political sins because State finances had affected the life of the church. Church deacons are no longer focused on creating people and a new world, but only helping the government to distribute material aid to the poor and maintain security and stability.

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7 Widyatmadja, 2012, pg. 68.
Harianto GP defines the word "pastoral" or what in English is called pastor (shepherd) is a word that comes from the Greek translation "poimen".\(^8\) In the early ecclesiastical tradition, the term gembla was often associated with the word "priest". The term pastoral is also always associated with the self and ministry of Jesus Christ as “the perfect pastor” and is a picture of the example of a good shepherd (John 10). This image of Christ as the good shepherd certainly appears and refers to existence. Jesus is a loving and compassionate shepherd to those in need. In fact, he helps, nurtures and gives his life as a ransom for his sheep. For Jesus, each of his pastoral examples was carried out with sincerity to give meaning that pastoral work is a noble work and calling.\(^9\)

According to J. L. Ch. Abineno, the term pastor has several meanings or meanings, namely: 1) As an adjective, it describes a work-function to shepherd. 2) Derived from a Greek word meaning “to raise livestock”, “poimenics” is a word that describes the ecclesiastical functions of a religious leader (priest) such as; characteristics, behavior, and so on.\(^10\) So the pastoral ministry is a service with a "moral love" that emphasizes action: wanting what is good for those who are loved and trying what is good as much as possible.\(^11\) Thus pastoral emphasizes ministry that speaks about theory and practice.\(^12\) Besides being a call to serve and shepherd, the term pastor is also a term that describes the figure of a "leader" or leadership in social life.\(^13\)

In the Asian context, being a church is not only placed in the interest of getting rooted in the local culture, but also based on the importance that the proclamation of the good news and the realization of the Kingdom of God can be more real, becoming a church of God's people, becoming a living church. It must be understood that it is the pastor of the local church who is able to recognize and apply ways of proclaiming the Gospel, building churches, and embodying the values of the Kingdom of God. Make the pastoral ministry of the church ready to carry out its mission. Today's church in its pastoral task is increasingly required to place itself in the reality of an increasingly plural and complex world reality.

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\(^9\) Ibid.


\(^12\) Abineno, 2015., pg. 1

Therefore, the emphasis on dialogue with the diversity of plural realities is increasingly emphasized.

Many churches in Asia have formulated their identity as churches in dialogue, which is termed the “triple dialogue”, namely dialogue with other religions/beliefs, dialogue with the reality of poverty and dialogue with cultural diversity in Asia.\textsuperscript{14} The dialogue is recognized as a way of life of the church, in order to realize pastoral care in the Asian context. The dimension of the dialogue is placed in the perspective of proclaiming the Kingdom of God, proclaiming God's work of salvation which is wider than the reality of the church, even though the church is in and for the Kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{15} Dialogue as a form of pastoral care in the Asian context is intended not only for the sake of a harmonious life together, or for a method/method of evangelism, but is a process to recognize the light of God's guidance which is not only limited by the walls of the church denomination, but also to find a way for the realization of the message. this, both in the actual context of social, political, economic, religious, and cultural realities in Asia.\textsuperscript{16}

A separate note regarding the topic of the problem in this research is the lack of pastoral care in the model and practice of Assemblies of God ministry in North Sulawesi. The pattern of Assemblies of God pastoral care is still very closed/exclusive and has not tried to be open to things that are physical. The church is still confined to the old pattern of ministry which in the end has an impact on the lack of maximum pastoral care in the congregation. Several things are the causes of not optimal pastoral care at Assemblies of God Churches in North Sulawesi.

Most of the Assemblies of God leaders' understanding of pastoral care is still patterned with the old understanding, where pastoral ministry is defined as a form of ministry within the church. The limitation of pastoral ministry is on liturgical worship, where the church leader in this case the pastor of the congregation feeds the congregation in spiritual matters or spirituality. The church does not touch on physical things because physical things are considered not the church's job. Pastoral care by most pastors/leaders of Assemblies of God is interpreted as the task of church leaders or in this case pastors of congregations. Pastoral ministry is considered as the work and responsibility of the pastor, not the


\textsuperscript{15} Piet Go O. CArn, \textit{Teologi Moral Dasar}, (Malang: Penerbit Dioma, 2007)., pg. 10.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., pg. 39.
congregation. Therefore, there is a limit to the function of the task, where pastoral care is structural and not functional.

Assemblies of God circles The term means the word service as "leitourgos". The term leitourgos is a form of service performed by nations for political purposes. They are a general and religious ministry led at the altar. This means that it is a comprehensive service (community). Romans 13:4, 6 says that the Government is the servant of God. The ministry of priests serving worship is also referred to as “leitourgos” (Hebrews 8:2-6). So “leitourgos” are religious/worshipping leaders and evangelists. In its development the term leiturgos is used in the internal context of the church, where leiturgos is interpreted as a form of worship led by a priest or pastor.

Holistic service within the framework of pastoral care is only internal, where the church, especially Assemblies of God, only builds exclusive services and is confined to internal services such as sick people and birthday visits. The hope for Assemblies of God to be more inclusive is still confined and shackled by the old concept of pastoral ministry and the limitations of the church in developing church services. In the author's analysis, there are several problems that make pastoral care in the church not implemented properly.

In this research on the reconstruction of Assemblies of God pastoral care based on the perspective of the Minahasa locality, three new research findings were found that illustrate the difference between the theoretical view of pastoral care and the results of research in the field which are described as follows:

First, the misunderstanding of some church leaders regarding the concept of pastoral ministry. Pastoral ministry has so far been considered a form of worship service in the church that functions only to increase spiritual or spiritual growth. Pastoral care should not be interpreted as "leiturgos", but rather leads to the meaning of "diaconia", where church services are no longer exclusive, but more holistic and inclusive to answer the needs of the people both in the context of the congregation and the life of the wider community. Pastoral ministry can no longer be understood as worship that is concerned with spiritual matters only and puts aside the physical. Pastoral ministers must have a liberation spirituality that functions to free people from "backwardness" and bring about the Kingdom of God (Yun; bassileia ton theo).

Second, the lack of development of a pastoral pattern that leads to pastoral care is due to the influence of the old theological education received by church leaders, including
pastors regarding theology and pastoral ministry itself. Church leaders embrace the old pastoral concept, without any effort to develop themselves so that what happens is the application of the old theology into a world that is constantly evolving. This has unwittingly greatly affected the praxis of pastoral care at the local Assemblies of God churches. The result of the entry of old theology into the postmodern context has resulted in the pattern and model of Assemblies of God’s pastoral ministry being confined to matters relating to church worship, without having full concern for the realities of people’s lives.

Third, the development of holistic and inclusive pastoral care is constrained and collided by the “confusion” of church leaders, especially pastors of the priority scale of life. Where, on the one hand, pastors are “burdened” in developing holistic and inclusive pastoral care, but on the other hand, pastors must meet the needs of their lives and their families. In the church layout (TGPP-GSJA), the church organization does not regulate the life (needs) of the pastor because the pastor lives from the tithe of the congregation, and this depends on the size of the congregation. This dualism of priorities makes it difficult for the church to develop pastoral services that can have a direct impact on the congregation and also for society in general.

The findings of the research problems described above must be reconstructed by developing the concept of shepherding based on the Bible as a text analysis tool. The theological studies that are built are expected to build the concept of pastoral care which will have a holistic impact on the church and improve the quality of church services for the purpose of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. There are two texts that guide the development of pastoral care in the church.

Based on the research that has been described at length above, the researchers/authors develop new theories that are expected to answer research questions related to the Assemblies of God pastoral service in North Sulawesi. The development of this new theory is also an attempt to reconstruct the concept of Assemblies of God services in North Sulawesi.

1) Reconstruction of Assemblies of God Pastoral Theological Education Concept (Contextual Pastoral Care Development)

2) Church Independence Development
Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and studies described above, the authors conclude the research as follows:

First, there is a misunderstanding of the Assemblies of God pastoral concept in North Sulawesi, where pastoral care is only considered as a service concept in the context of worship or spiritual matters. While physical things are ignored. Second, the misunderstanding about the concept of pastoral ministry is the result of the old pastoral theology concept that has been embraced by Assemblies of God leaders in North Sulawesi. Third, another problem that arises is the occurrence of priority dualism, where on the one hand the pastor is focused on church services, but on the other hand he must think about fulfilling the necessities of life.

The reconstructions built under the Assemblies of God pastoral concept in North Sulawesi are as follows:

1) Reconstruction of Assemblies of God Pastoral Theological Education Concept (Contextual Pastoral Care Development).
2) Church Independence Development.

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