

The Formation of the Anthroposen - The Impact of the Preaching of the Risen Christ

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Abstract

The importance of the seeds of the Gospel being sown in cultural and religious treasures requires accurate observation. The preacher of the Gospel, in this case the Prophet Paul, who was rooted in Judeo-Christianity, was very aware of the religious cultural aspect as a bridge for planting the seeds of the Gospel to produce new humans. In the conditions that occurred in Acts 17 on his second missionary journey, the Areopagus was a platform for preaching about the resurrection of Christ to the people of Athens who were rational in philosophy but still limited in understanding. Namely understanding the relationship between humans and God. This article highlights these aspects by using a reflective grammatical approach to issues of human experience, expressions and actions, the diction of the unknown God and the importance of the risen Christ. The findings show that the presence of new social relationships is inevitable. This is traced based on Habermas' theory which emphasizes the function of communication in social relations.

Keywords: Human Experience, Expression and Action, Unknown God, Christ Who Rose.

Introduction

Emile Durkheim postulated that when religious feelings become strong, the errors in that religion will never be acknowledged and there will always be an urge to look for explanations that will strengthen the religion. When Durkheim's statement is brought into the context of Athens, at least Athens and its religiosity were well known in the past. As a philosophical religious center in the first century AD with various worships of an unknown God. The large number of gods in the early days of Christianity is an interesting phenomenon, especially seen from the encounters. Christianity met with idolatry in the diction of ignorance of who the real God was that they recognized as the Greeks.

Thomas L. Brodie said, when discussing the idea of eternal unity, evangelists placed the spirituality of the Gospel at the center. Dynamics through tracing the development of the Gospel of Christ outside Palestine are possible. This development is in accordance with Christ's mandate to "reach the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8), the author of the Acts of the Apostles marks the movement of the Apostle Paul from Asia to Europe as very important. "Because it was forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel in Asia" (Acts 16:6), Paul was compelled by a vision (Acts 16:9-10) to immediately cross Troas into Macedonia.

After describing the tribulations of Paul and Silas in Philippi (Acts 16:12-40) and the mixed reception of the message of good news from Christ in Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 17:1-13), Luke as the author of this book tells how Paul was led alone to Athens. At this crucial point, in a carefully constructed sense of preaching and encounter, Luke inserts one of a series of representative Pauline sermons, "a symbolic encounter between the world of the Gospel and many aspects of the world destined to be transformed through the preaching of the risen Christ as the just Judge."

Speech before a council of experts and philosophers who were the guardians of Hellenistic civilization, Paul preached and informed the audience present. That the content of his sermon on the Areopagus pulpit was

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one of two speeches in the Acts of the Apostles delivered before an agnostic audience (cf. one of them in Acts 14:15-17). The phenomenon of meeting through the reporting of the Christian worldview meeting the Athenian Greek worldview has attracted the attention of the writer. This is nothing less than "a meeting of two worldviews between Jerusalem and Athens," between the thought of Judaeo-Christian promise and the thought of Greek philosophy. The context of this encounter is important because the Greek search for 'wisdom' and the Jewish emphasis on the importance of 'signs' meet each other in a sermon. It seemed ambiguous, but later it was seen that it was resolved by the Apostle Paul in the content of his sermon about Christ.

JA Fitzmyer called it "the most important episode in Paul's second missionary journey," and "one of the important things is in the Acts of the Apostles. Because the contents of this book itself are the Holy Spirit's strategy so that the church does not only dwell in Jerusalem but extends to the nations. And this movement itself reflects the penetration of God's power and His Kingdom for the restoration of the universe. Which is described as the beginning of the new creation and finally leading to the new Jerusalem.

The Areopagus Sermon is the most complete and dramatic speech in the journey and preaching of Christ's mission by the apostle Paul. Preceded by a shorter speech at Lystra (14:15-17) and consistent with the kerygma Paul addressed to the Gentiles in his letters (cf. Romans 1-3; 1 Thessalonians 1), this speech provides an overview of how Paul dealt with Gentiles elsewhere. His speech can be underlined as follows:

The structure of the sermon is according to the chiasmic pattern as follows:

Introduction — Evidence of ignorance in idolatry (17:22-23)

The target of true worship is the one and only Creator God (17:24-25)

The right relationship between humans and God (17:26-28)

The target of false worship is an idol made of gold, silver, or stone (17:29)

Conclusion — The age of ignorance is now over (17:30-31)

By paying attention to the background of the sermon which is colored by the polytheistic worldview of Greece and paganism as well as the pattern of Paul's sermon in the Areopagus, at least the actual problems in the Gospel's encounter with agnostic culture become relevant to be studied.

The full text excerpt is as follows

ESV – Acts 17:22-31

22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 28 for

"'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, "'For we are indeed his offspring.'

29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now

he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

The next section compares it with the Contemporary Indonesian version and outlines Paul's sermon.

Sermon Framework According to Contemporary Indonesian Version – Acts 17:22-31

Sermon Introduction

When Paul stood before the people gathered at the Areopagus, Paul said, “O people of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For when I walked around your city and looked at your places of prayer, I saw also a place where sacrifices were offered; in that place it was written, 'To the Unknown God.'”

Sermon Transitions

Now, the God whom you worship but do not know, He is the one I preach to you.

Who is God really?

God who created this world and all its contents, is the Lord of heaven and earth. He does not live in divine houses made by humans. He also does not need human help, because He is the one who gives life and breath and everything to humans. From one human being He made all the nations and ordered them to inhabit the whole earth. He is also the one who determines from the beginning when and where they can live. God did that so that they would seek Him. Hopefully they will meet Him when they seek Him. But actually God is not far from each of us.

Commonly Known Understandings and Challenges

As people say, 'We live and move and exist in this world because of His power.' The same is what some of your poets say. They say, 'We are all His children.' Now, since we are God's children, we must not think of God as an image of gold or silver or stone made according to human wisdom. God has forgotten that period of our ignorance, but now He is telling people all over the world to repent of their sins.

About Time and People

Because He has appointed a time to judge the whole world fairly. This task will be carried out by someone who has been chosen by God for that purpose. And so that everyone can be sure of it, God has brought that person back from the dead!”

Moving on from this description and framework, it is necessary to determine the issue of the encounter between Jerusalem and Athens in order to ascertain what the true impact of the sermon was in leading to new humans by the power of the Gospel.

Sublimation of Problems

Referring to the chiasmic structure of the sermon in point C, the right relationship between humans and God is the core of the cultural encounter with the Gospel. A clear view of the true God according to Acts 17:22-31 must contain elements of religiosity, namely words and actions. Verbal statements indicate a person's basic beliefs and actions constitute his or her religious behavior. Thus, the problem formulation is as follows:

Ignorance in the religiosity of a civilization can be examined based on its religious experience, actions and expressions as well as the diction of its written statements about God. These three are not sufficient for their followers regarding who God really is.

And from Acts 17 in the sermon in the Areopagus pulpit it can be seen: a. his actions lead to a higher authority, b. use of words indicates ignorance, c. naming his actions within the framework of worship. d. how to react because the use of words (in point b) at least leads to agreement on what is right and what is wrong.

Methodological Approach

This study uses Wittgenstein's perspective, namely using a grammatical approach in a reflective manner on the basis that there is an internal connection between language and a person's religious practices.

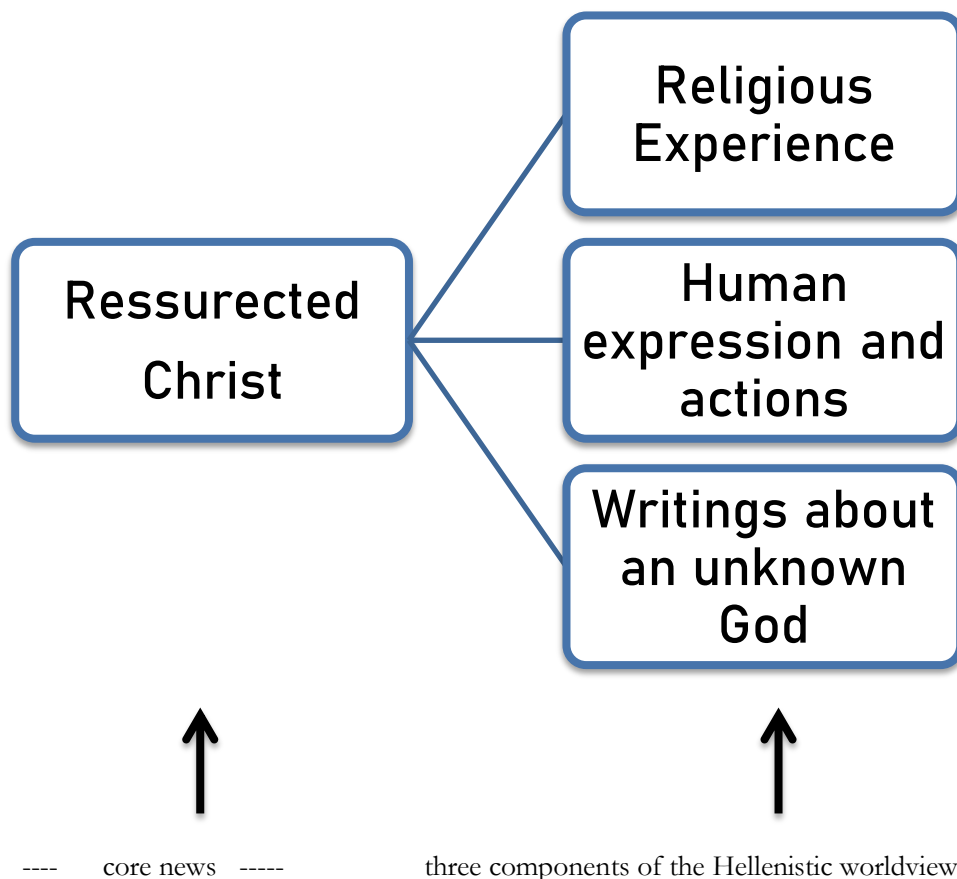
The use of this method is aimed at recognizing the form of life itself. By targeting the form of life that the Apostle Paul offered to the people of Athens both in the synagogue, in the marketplace (: agora) and to thinkers at that time, the penetration of the Gospel into culture can become a scientific and theological reference to enlighten the understanding of those who do not yet know God in Christ.

Method

- Pay attention to their actual expressions as the apostle Paul indicated in his observations of the mission world at that time.
- Pay attention to their imagination based on their experience of God.
- Pay attention to the Apostle Paul's proposal regarding the true form of life which is different from the Greek understanding at that time.

Described into a coherent relationship as follows:

Figure 1. Gospel Seed Preaching Center



Explanation

For Paul, placing Christ at the center of the message is crucial, especially because of human ignorance caused by a lack of information about and recognizing God. Christ as well as the person who revealed God was the preacher of Christian doctrine to guide the Hellenists out of their ignorance. Apart from being the core of preaching, Christ is also related to human experience both in terms of his religion and his religious actions and expressions. For him, human actions and expressions are the determining factor in humans' distorted understanding of God who is reduced to a statue, placed in a man-made temple. Also in this preaching, Christ is the real bridge so that humans who are trapped in their ignorance can know God as the Creator and the One who raises the dead and that begins with the resurrection of Christ as the first.

The resurrection of Christ for Paul in preaching the Gospel was a form of life that was different from what the Athenians had understood so far. The resurrection of Christ in Paul's preaching at the Areopagus is a form of epistemology explained by Greek philosophers about how human beings find justification for their lives. In the next segment, the resurrection of Christ makes humans responsible for their expressions and actions while they live in this world which is summarized in the phrase *agnoia* or ignorance. And not true faith. And in the third segment, the resurrection of Christ is related to human experiences in their religious culture. This is a comprehensive sermon that Paul introduces because it includes: human justification, human repentance and relationship with God in a concrete experience, not a pseudo-experience.

Discussion*Human Experience*

Human experience in everyday reality is linked to transcendent things. This is undoubtedly because the human experience of the meaning of life actually leads to mortality, meaning futility. And because of that, at least the deepest human conscience longs for eternal things. Connected to transcendental reality is a different and meaningful life. The metaphysical dilemma will be resolved when the mortal is redeemed by eternity and it is entirely the eternal person himself who moves and acts to overcome human experience in his ignorance. That his life needs to be freed from the control of sin and death.

The revelation of God's truth about all of creation occurs in and through the human story and specific human stories. Truth creates meaning and changes a person's perspective on his life. Focused on his inner world and that extends to his worldview related to the reality of his environment and especially the Divine. This is reinforced by what William Rowan said,

Williams explains, "If the core of 'meaning' is the human story, the story of growth, conflict, and death, every human story, with all its strangeness and ambivalence, becomes open to interpretation in terms of God's saving work."

As finite creatures, humans do not objectively control their reality. Williams notes, "Human reality is acted upon at least as much as action" The New Testament mentions this situation in terms of the reality of sin and ignorance. And the way to overcome it is by repentance or turning away and realizing the reality of the presence of the redeemer for sinful humans.

In the case of this sermon at the Areopagus pulpit, although the Apostle Paul did not preach the crucifixion of Jesus, he touched on the importance of Jesus' resurrection and return as a just Judge. This description of the contents of Paul's sermon at least explains that human religious experience itself is not sufficient for understanding higher realities. And therefore the solution is through God's ways and actions, not human ways and actions.

We know God when we stop knowing in a human way. We know God when we know that it is more important for us to be known by God. this knowledge as enlightenment. Williams said, "Enlightenment is the exhaustion of language and thought, the compulsion exerted by a reality drastically and totally beyond

the reach of our conceptual apparatus. Seen on the Areopagus with their diction written: to the unknown God

Paul laid the foundation for the Greeks that: For the fundamental truth of Christianity is the reality of one infinite God who transcends all categories of human understanding entering into time, space, and human existence in the person of Jesus Christ. God became fully human while remaining fully God, and therefore bestowed eternal and divine meaning on human experience. In this basic connection, Paul also gave them new insight that the law of causality comes from God alone. And it is expressed in an open system. This is similar to what their poet said. In fact, this human being comes from one God (the oneness of God is mentioned). It is certain that man's relationship with God will be realized based on God's design in a covenant bond. And that bond is based on faith in the words of God in Christ (cf. Hebrews 1:1-4).

Human Expressions and Actions

Human expressions and actions should be based on love because love creates meaning. God's love in him is the greatest essence of life that humans can understand. Because His love far exceeds human understanding. Human expressions and actions covered in sin and ignorance do not meet the requirements from the perspective of the Living God. Because God exists and God lives forever, those who seek Him believe that God exists (Heb 11:1) and thus the human search for meaningful life is only found in God and that is revealed in Christ.

The message of repentance conveyed by the Apostle Paul means, We must also be willing to obey God once we listen to Him. James tells us that if we want wisdom, we (like Solomon) must ask for it (1:5). But we need to ask with faith, he emphasized (1:6), and then he explained this in a concrete way that faith is faith that is ready to live according to God's demands (2:14-26). If we truly pray that God will teach us to use the Bible (and we must; see Ps. 119!), we must pray with a faith that is ready to accept what we find in the Bible. We must accept what we find there even if it is unpopular, even if it causes us problems, and even if it challenges our way of life. It's a high price, but there are benefits: the joy of often making new and fresh discoveries, rather than just hearing what we want to hear. Often people's actions are influenced by what they hear.

Studying God's Word with an open and longing heart is one way we express our love for God. As mentioned Psalm 119 is connected to God's law. Now modern humans can connect with Christ who is God based on the canonical Gospels.

The main command or decree belonging to God to Israel is His statement that He is one (echad) (Deut. 6:4), therefore there is no room for idolatry. The case in Athens is that there are many places of paganism or idols. All the actions and expressions of the Athenian people were based on their belief in these gods.

Therefore, He exhorts His people to love Him alone, with an undivided heart and whole being (Deut. 6:5). Those who love God in this way will speak His Word all the time, everywhere, with everyone (Deut. 6:6-9). If God is truly first in our lives, then His Word will be central to us, and dominate us. Paul's sermon regarding the expressions and actions of the Greeks at that time boiled down to stupidity due to ignorance. And this indicates that rational religious people often don't understand who God really is.

For the Apostle Paul, the expression of Athena in the form of writing to an unknown God, the existence of a place to make offerings, and the existing temples ensured that they all needed enlightenment. Reconfirmation of the expression of his acts of worship even though they appear pious. Manifestation in this direction leads to dispelling this ignorance and walking in the light of God. Ignorance has a dark connotation and lack of true understanding. So his expressions and actions certainly appear in a concrete relationship in religious writings.

The scope of missions carried out in Hellenistic civilization is also related to what is known as being too superstitious but in Paul's language it is said to be very religious in all respects. This shows that there is a correlation between expression and religious behavior but without a true understanding. Correct verstehen

(; knowledge) impacts a person's actions and expressions about God and his worship. It is with this basis that the apostle Paul explores as widely as possible what underlies Athens' ambiguous attitude in its beliefs and statements.

Unknown God

The phrase unknown God was a common description in Athens but was never given critical attention. Just accepted without ever exploring what it means to them. The Unknown God is a characteristic of paganism. And it is rooted in self-understanding that God is intangible, impersonal and limited to what the human mind can imagine. This is the essence of religion.

The Apostle John teaches us that human knowledge and love must be transformed and reorganized. Williams explains, "To be defined by knowledge and love of creatures, to have them as the defining reality of one's inner life, is to be able to know and love God." Our inner lives are shaped by what we know and what we love. "Knowledge unifies; knowledge is participation, in which the knower is constituted to take the form of what is known."

This diction of the unknown God which was widely understood by the Athenians actually shows that their inner expression of God is an impersonal being. Allah is not a persona but merely a religious charm. That is why the Apostle Paul offers a personal and immanent introduction to God with humans through a person who has been raised from the dead. So it is certain that Allah is close to humans because they both have personalities.

Resurrection of Christ

CHRIST who is risen, although not mentioned concretely by Paul, is a presentation based on the Christian paradigm. This specialty took its place on the stage of the Areopagus based on the world view of Hellenistic paganism when it was inadequate from a philosophical point of view. This can be seen from several words that appear as Hellenistic insufficiency regarding human existence and the reality of God. These words include: the place of sacrifice of the Greeks, then writings about an unknown God, then the residence of God not made by humans, then regarding the existence of God who is the source of the existence of humans in this world, and God cannot be reduced to a person who is helped and needed human help to make the statue.

By seeing the inadequacies of this Hellenistic worldview, Paul created a new formula and it encompassed the entirety of human existence. That the one raised from the dead will come as the Just Judge. Reflecting on this formulation, the Hellenistic worldview does not once mention the resurrection of the dead and it was something new for them when Paul confirmed the existence of the resurrection of the dead. To once in a while give an account to Allah. In fact, the most important thing from the description of this sermon is that the resurrection of Christ is not only a transcendental marker but also the essence of God's immanence towards humans and vice versa.

The New Testament assures today's readers that salvation is in the uniqueness of being human. God entered the world in Christ not to save humanity in abstract terms, but to offer the individual a uniquely Christian relationship with God mediated by the Church and the Preaching of the Gospel. In the fourth Gospel treatise, it is stated that when an individual accepts Jesus and believes in Him, that person's status is declared new as a child of God (John 1:12). In the Gospel of Luke 23 verses 39-43, the writer Luke uses the term Paradise which is sought by humans, given by Jesus to criminals who believed Himself to come as King.

Thus, it can be explored that the Hellenistic worldview at the time of the Apostle Paul, carrying out his duties as a preacher of the Gospel, required a paradigm that was inherent, congruent, comprehensive and non-contradictory. Jesus who is risen and will come later as the Just Judge is the center and content of the new paradigm. Namely a "different" and "comprehensive" paradigm. It contains narratives about people, experiences, knowledge, and God.

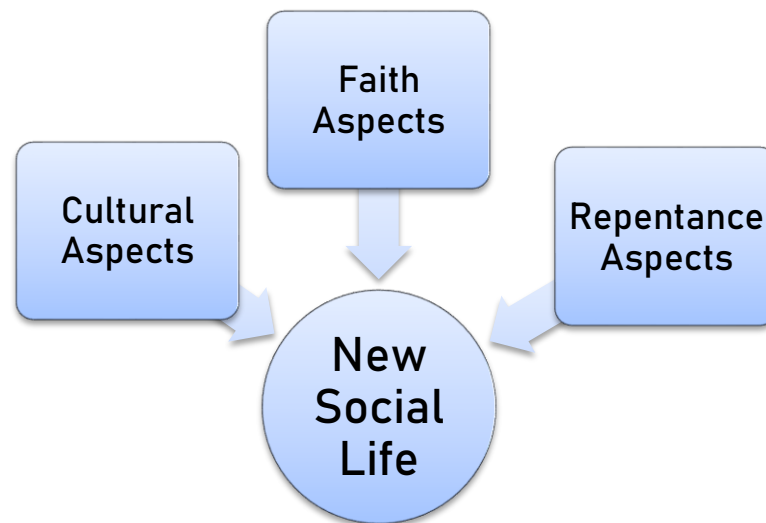
Findings

Based on the previous discourse, the context of the Gospel Preaching at the Areopagus has sublime and significant aspects. Both in the sense of the Gospel meeting with ignorant culture as well as paganism. Namely:

- The Apostle Paul began his preaching of the Gospel of Christ with a question and answer approach in the market place to obtain accurate information regarding the ambiguous religiosity of Athens.
- In accordance with the chiasmic pattern mentioned at the beginning of the article, the emphasis that Paul preaches is focused on how to realize an adequate connection between humans and God, whom Athena did not recognize and even had minimal information about God. And the basis for its epistemology is Christ who was raised from the dead. Christ will come as a just judge. And this is emphasized because Paul himself had an encounter with the risen Jesus on his journey to Damascus.
- Athenian religious descriptions wrapped in cultural philosophy are seen to provide a bridge for the preaching of the Gospel. Namely the common ground which originates from the diction of the Athenian poets at that time who were recognized by the Stoics and Epicureans. And its content is limited to God, the source of everything so that it exists and comes into being. Including the existence of humans originating from God which the Greeks did not know.
- The content of Paul's sermon, apart from being positive, is also corrective because it is indicated that the Athenians' understanding of human relationships, represented by their experiences, expressions, actions and knowledge of God the Creator, has not met the philosophical criteria that they have adhered to so far. Be it aspects of coherence, consistency, non-contradiction to comprehensiveness.
- Evangelism by placing Christ who is risen and will come again as a just Judge is an indication that a complete Christology is not only historical but also eschatological.
- From the perspective of the dynamics resulting from this news, it is also indicated that the initial position which was anthropological in nature after receiving the risen Christ changed to the anthropocene. The old in Hellenistic humanity is now by the resurrection of Christ a new man (band. 2 Cor. 5:17).

If formulated based on a new social process due to the intervention of the Gospel which is centered on the risen Christ, this process can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. New Social Process – Acts 17:22-31



The new social process in Greek civilization based on the preaching of the Apostle Paul occurred in stages, first in its initial position with an insufficient religious cultural pattern, then entering the second stage based on their faith that God is also the Creator of all things and the One who resurrected mortal man in his ignorance through Christ so that The third stage will be experiencing repentance and a new understanding as a new human (:anthropo + cein).

Discussion

Philip J. Luca added that based on Acts chapter 9 to Acts chapter 26, the missionary service that Paul carried out to the Jews and Greeks in his time was postulated into a statement that Christ, whom God raised from the dead as the Messiah for the nations, was a new faith rooted in the Jewish faith. And this is clearly seen in the phrase in his sermon regarding the terms creating all things (: creation)... and resurrected. And this is also what Paul emphasized in his letter to the Romans based on Abraham's faith (Romans 4:17). A form of continuity of the essence of Abraham's faith in creation and resurrection and God in Christ alone who is the epicenter in preaching the mission of the Gospel of Christ which brings new and meaningful life.

While Patrick Gray articulates that Hollywood is capable of distorting historical aspects and evidence about the resurrection of Christ, the interesting thing in Paul's sermon at the Areopagus pulpit is that Paul presents a statement of repentance or turning away from ignorance in humans at the end of his sermon. This word *metanoia* is able to provoke the audience to finally be shocked and some even become followers of the Gospel of Christ.

In terms of methodology, the content and delivery of the Apostle Paul's sermon uses Habermas' perspective to reconfirm that the Gospel and its preaching in Athens have a liberating character. In Habermas's statement, he stated that society could no longer be conceived of as self-maintaining, as shown by the presence and provision of sacrificial places and temples. It should be based on communication that is free from domination so that the meaning of preaching the gospel as a criterion for its functionality is useful in social processes. A new life through faith and repentance. As depicted in figure 2.

In line with what Mircea Eliade said, there is continuity between the structure of human existence and the cosmic structure, which contains the world and the sacred. So Daniel Pals underlines the religious psychological aspects of a civilization. And psychologically, for striking humanitarian reasons, the type of god (god) plays an important role in the history of religion. This can also be seen in the Hellenistic civilization that Paul encountered in Athens. That humans need a proper relationship with those gods. Greek civilization, in its strong humanity, is indicated as having an open door for *Anatelloto* rise to the glory of God. And that's what Paul preached that Christ is the glory of God who shines light on the darkness and things unknown to the Hellenists.

Related to Figure 2, the anthropological perspective which is seen at its base in the cultural aspect leaves an understanding of the contours of human experience which require epistemic validity and relevance, and in the aspect of belief in creation and resurrection according to the content of the apostle Paul's sermon shows the centrality of justification by faith in existence. God. This part of faith is the real bridge that transcends the need for contingent social constructs so that social constructs are no longer contingent but permanent and this means new creation and being saved. That is the aim of the apostle Paul in preaching the risen Christ so that the audience experiences the reality of being a new creation and being accepted by God in terms of worship, in new expressions and actions always. Renewable. Truly tasting the essence of eternal life is expressed in the experience of being loved and it is always new.

Epilogomena

Paganism in the work of Christ's liberating mission could be brought into the realm of transformation because of the insufficient understanding held by Athenian society at that time. And from this insufficiency of understanding it can be seen that the evidence that Paul revealed to the members of the Areopagus assembly (there were 600 people) was expressed in a statement of stupidity or ignorance. And the cause is a lack of information about God and His power in sustaining human life. Limited information exists among the Greeks.

The Gospel centered on the risen Christ is the power of God to illuminate human ignorance in their ignorance so that humans repent and are renewed, as can be seen for example in the text of John 3 about Christ being exalted after His crucifixion, as well as 1 Cor 15:3 and 4 as a comprehensive Gospel treatise. Even the Apostle Paul to the Corinthian church in his second letter presents the importance of God's power in Creation from nothing (: darkness) as being closely related to the glory of the risen Christ (2 Cor 4:6). So that in the end justification due to faith is realized in people who do not have enough information about their episteme religiously and culturally.

Preaching the Gospel to a rational naturalistic world requires a social anthropological construction in which the basic elements leave a space for it. Fulfillment of the need to be justified by God in all aspects of his life, whether it be his experiences, expressions and actions to his insufficient knowledge about God. The answer to that fulfillment rests on faith in God who exists and that God is not silent, thus the agnostic is turned into a pistea by the power of the risen Christ and who has created all things through Him. And this fulfills God's criteria according to the faith of Abraham, the father of all believers.

In fact, in preaching the gospel, it is unavoidable that there will be cognitive contradictions. The recipient of the news has a space of understanding that he received from birth, an inheritance of thought and recognition of reality and it is taken for granted. Meanwhile, preachers of the Gospel of Christ such as the Apostle Paul faced two realities that confronted each other, Christ himself was a sign from God as the Messiah and then Paul was directly faced with the need for wisdom needed by Greek civilization. Impersonal wisdom is the principle of logic. From this reality, Paul denied the contradictions in the Greek understanding that the God they believed in was not impersonal but a person with power in creation and in raising the dead. This person was revealed by God to the Hellenistic world as Christ, the firstborn of all believers and the first to be resurrected by God. It is at this point that the settlement is made. The risen Christ was a sign for the Jews as well as the wisdom of God that the Greeks wanted. Problems in the mission field about sign with wisdom were completely resolved.

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