

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are based on the statement of the problem and the objective of this study. This thesis is a descriptive and critical study of the theology of salvation of David Yonggi Cho. In the descriptive part, this study strove to answer two questions : What context of theology of salvation is Cho trying to address ? How does Cho develop his theology of salvation to be relevant to his context ?

In the critical part, based on Cho's theology of salvation, this study discerned some pastoral challenges for Indonesian Christian ministers. It was aimed at answering the question : What pastoral values, attitudes, and direction can be followed to become better ministers of the kingdom of God in the present context of Indonesia ?

It is the objective of this study to provide an example of how Indonesian Christian ministers can develop a theology of salvation which is (1) rooted in the context and contemporary experiences of the people, (2) faithful to the Christian Tradition, and (3) geared towards a holistic understanding of salvation. It is hoped that the study can offer some pastoral challenges to Indonesian Christian ministers to be better ministers of the kingdom of God in Indonesia at present.

*Cho's Soteriology was Addressed to a Context of People Who were Poor, Sick,
and Desperate*

Did this study answer those questions in the statement of the problem ? Did this study also fulfill its objective ? First, this study saw that Cho's theology of salvation is rooted in the context and its contemporary experiences. Cho was trying to address a context wherein people were poor, sick, and desperate. In times of economic progress, there were other problems to be addressed : the changes in the traditional social structures and family system, a sense of isolation and lost of identity, and individualism and materialism. The Korean religious context did provide a fertile soil for Cho's theology of salvation. Koreans were already open to the spiritual world and the personal God. They valued prayer and fasting. Korean Christian churches were already lay-centered since in the beginning of Christianity. Moreover, Cho's own life experiences facilitated the development of

this theology of salvation is intellectual (to know God better), fiducial (to trust God more lovingly), and transformative (to work closer with God to transform the world).²

I believe that this theology of salvation must be an Indonesian theology of salvation not only because it uses Indonesian resources, but also because, in a way, it is to better serve the Indonesian people. The salvation and liberation which they will experience in all aspects of life through the service rendered by the Indonesian Christian ministers will be at the same time the glorification of God.³ In the context of Indonesia, God's glory lies in the salvation of all Indonesians.

Some Missing Elements of Cho's Soteriology

Cho's theology of salvation is, of course, incomplete. Some of the missing elements are a critical dialogue with culture and popular religiosity, a desire to

(Maryknoll, New York : Orbis Books, 1996), 138-146.

²See Avery Dulles, "The Meaning of Faith Considered in Relationship to Justice," in *The Faith That Does Justice : Examining Christian Sources for Social Change*, Woodstock Studies 2, ed. John C.Haughey (New York : Paulist Press, 1977), 10-46.

³Luna Dingayan writes, "I do believe that the kind of theology we need in Asia today is not just a theology that can make use of Asian resources, but more importantly a theology that could redirect these Asian resources in a way that could best serve the people of Asia." As quoted by Eleazar S. Fernandez in *Toward a Theology of Struggle* (Maryknoll, New York : Orbis Books, 1994), 174.

develop a theology which is for a multicultural and multireligious society, and a respectful dialogue and cooperation with other religions and beliefs. There should be also a strong awareness for the social, political, economical, ecological and cultural aspects of salvation and its interrelationships. Moreover, people can also question many aspects of his four structural elements of his soteriology.

Recommendations

Recommendations of this study are related to the critical part of this study. In that critical part, this study offered some pastoral values, attitudes, and direction as pastoral challenges for Indonesian Christian ministers to be better ministers of the kingdom of God in the Indonesian context at present. These challenges are, of course, to be followed with pastoral programs and activities. They must be also supported by pastoral structures and institutions which is in line with its underlying theology of salvation. These concerns are not within the scope of this study. Nevertheless, this study would like to elaborate briefly some recommendations in that direction.

To Live in Solidarity with the Suffering People

First, there is a need to concretize the pastoral values of solidarity and identification with the suffering people to be better ministers of the kingdom of

together with sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics, politics, law, and technology so as to bridge theory and practice. Since not one discipline of study and nor one single practitioner is able to respond to all the needs of people in the context, it is affirmative for a minister to join communities, movements, groups, institutions which promote this communal discernment and actions.

To Go into Concrete Actions with Faith in God

Finally, the search for wholeness, holistic salvation, teaches us about the actuality and eschatology of salvation. We are still expecting the fulfillment of salvation in the future. But here and now we already want to experience salvation be it only in terms of moments and fragments. Hence, Indonesian Christian ministers must move beyond listening to and understanding the suffering people and join communities which promote communal discernment and actions. In other words, they should go into concrete actions. The unemployed need jobs and not only theology. The oppressed need freedom and not only preaching. The marginalized need equal rights and not only prayer.

At the same time, as Christian ministers, they are aware that the concrete programs for helping people to experience salvation here and now are not the only things which matter. There should be a basis and direction to be continuously remembered. The basis and the direction is God, the God of all, who wants all

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¹In 1992, Paul Yonggi Cho changed his name into David Yonggi Cho. Therefore some books published before 1992 used the name Paul Yonggi Cho.

²*Church Growth Manual* is published by the Church Growth International, Seoul. I have with me *Church Growth Manual* no.3 to no.8. This manual comprises different talks / papers presented at the different Annual Church Growth International Conferences in Seoul.

³*Church Growth* is the official quarterly magazine published by the Church Growth International (CGI). Frequent contributors are CGI board members such as C.Peter Wagner, Marylin Hickey, and Billy Joe Daugherty. *Church Growth* is sent to people in 147 nations in the world. Cho always writes at least one article in this magazine.

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