

The Influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher's Thinking in Christian Theology and its Relationship with Christian Education

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher's thoughts on Christian theology and its relation to Christian education. The method used in this research is qualitative with a literature study approach. The results of the study found that Friedrich Schleiermacher emphasized feelings and experiences in understanding the Bible and rejected the authority of the Scriptures. As a result, Christian theology that is absolute is possible to be relative and this is certainly a setback in the study of Christian theology. The danger that lurks about Christian education is the content of learning whose substance is the finality of Christian doctrine to be absolute.

Keywords: Friedrich Schleiermacher; Christian Theology; Christian Education

1 Introduction

The Age of Enlightenment in Europe had a great influence on people's lives. Empiricism in England, Rationalism in France, Holland, and Germany participate in coloring the philosophical thinking of humans at that time. Empiricism and Rationalism cast doubt on the traditional beliefs of the time. It goes from religious beliefs that rely heavily on God's revelations then switch to relying on reason, which for them is sufficient to answer all problems and find all truth [1]. The influence of thinking as conveyed by Empiricism and Rationalism in Christian theology has given birth to theological liberalism.

One of the leaders of liberal theology in Christianity is Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834). He is the father of modern theology because he was the first person who systematically consider theological questions previously avoided by the church. Questions regarding the validity of historical records in the Bible such as explanations of the reality and natural phenomena, the nature of authority in religious life, and the validity of religious claims on the purity of God's revelation that they have amid the plurality of religions in the world [2]. Schleiermacher has made a new contribution to the study of Christian theological hermeneutics, and his intended contribution is an approach to the study of theology. Although considered deviant because of his liberal thinking, Schleiermacher is considered quite intelligent with the delivery of his theological studies.

The influence of Schleiermacher's theological thinking on the world of Christian education cannot be ignored, because what he does is necessary. However, caution against thoughts that

can harm Christians is in one of his thoughts about sin. Schleiermacher limits the understanding of sin as something that interferes with the feeling of absolute dependence in humans. In other words, sin is defined as the human desire to be free when it should be United with God [3].

2 Literature Review

Friedrich Schleiermacher was present amid Romanticism which was very dominant, influencing the thinking and culture of people throughout mainland Europe. Therefore, he concludes that God cannot be an object of the same ratio as objects and natural reality. God can only be the object of human consciousness. A true experience with God can only be experienced and felt [4]. Schleiermacher made a clear distinction between religion and reason. Religion is not a form of knowing but a form of action [5]. Schleiermacher's thought is considered to have had a major influence on the study of Christian theology, especially in thematic and hermeneutical contexts.

Concerning Christian theology, in general, the term theology begins with two Greek words, namely Theos (God) and Logos (science), which etymologically, the term theology refers to the teaching of God. Theology is understood as a scientific arrangement, comparing, demonstrating, and defending all facts from any source relating to God and his teachings [6]. According to John Frame, theology is the application of God's Word by individuals to all areas of life [7]. The study of Christian theology is talking about God with His works for mankind accompanied by the teachings of the faith.

Christian education is a divine and human effort that is carried out systematically and continuously to transmit knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, and behaviors that are consistent with the Christian faith. Education seeks change, renewal, and reform of individuals, groups, and structures, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that students live according to God's will, as revealed by the Bible and by Jesus Christ himself [8]. Christian education is based on the Bible as the word of God and Jesus Christ as a person who has an example in it. Through Christian education, it is hoped that students will be enlightened and even come to know Christ [9]. Christian education seeks to establish a relationship between God and man, where a man can know and live according to His laws.

3 Method

The methodology used in this research is a qualitative method where the qualitative research procedure intends to produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior [10]. Qualitative methods are used to obtain in-depth data, a data that contains meaning [11]. The type of qualitative research in writing this article is library research. What is called library research or often also called library study, is a series of activities related to library data collection methods, reading, and recording and managing research materials [12]. This type of literature study research is carried out by collecting data from various kinds of literature, both libraries and other places [13]. A qualitative approach with literature research is carried out to answer the influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher's thoughts on Christian theology and its relation to Christian education.

4 Result and Discussion

The development of theological thought, especially in Europe, underwent a significant change in connection with the emergence of modern theological thought that many people like to identify with liberal theology. The number of questions that arise in the study of liberal theological hermeneutics is more of a theological analysis using a ratio and feeling approach; whereas theology originates from God's revelation, so the rational and emotional approach will threaten the existence of the final truth of the Bible. The main question is, can Christians still maintain their faith in God during an era where humans trust their own sensory experiences and perceptions more than assumptions about speculative metaphysical things? [14] Schleiermacher's hermeneutical theological proposals need to be considered in order to maintain the purity of the teaching of Christian theology itself.

4.1 The Influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher's Thought on Christian Theology

The history of Christian theology is inseparable from a person named Friedrich Schleiermacher. The development of rational thought in the Enlightenment period in Europe influenced Christian theological thinking, and through one of the important figures, namely Schleiermacher, new approaches to theology were born. Schleiermacher made a clear distinction between religion and reason. According to him, religion is not a form of knowledge but a form of action [15]. Schleiermacher emphasized experience, and not faith, as the essence of religion. Thus, separating beliefs and historical facts, for example about Jesus, is clear in his thinking. Much of this teaching was carried forward by the liberal movement in theology [16].

In his work *Der Christlichen Glaube*, Schleiermacher discusses a new approach within the boundaries of systematic theology. The essence of piety is neither knowing nor acting, but awareness that is dependent or, similarly, being in a relationship with God. Christian doctrines are reports of Christian religious feelings in spoken form [17]. Statements about God's attributes, for example, are not about God himself, but about how our feelings of absolute dependence are to be related to Him. Schleiermacher's influence can be felt today. Its impact is very broad, because of the hermeneutical approach to theology that it introduces.

4.2 Friedrich Schleiermacher Thoughts in Christian Theology and Its Influence on Christian Education

Thoughts and hermeneutical approaches to theology introduced by Friedrich Schleiermacher, by most experts are seen as part of liberal theology along with Albrecht Ritschl, Adolph Von Harnack, Horace Bushnell, and Walter Rauschenbusch. They are considered important figures in the liberal theological movement where the birth of this theology is considered a very far back faith [18]. A liberal theological group is a theological group that emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This historical period there was period which is very well known as the Enlightenment period. But this era does not give enlightenment to mankind, but on the contrary, it adds darkness by rejecting divine revelation which is the only true enlightenment [19]. Liberal theology is also generally synonymous with modernization, emphasizing scientific discoveries, and seeking to reconcile science and the Bible [20]. Liberal theology certainly has an influence on all areas of church life, including Christian education.

The presence of Christian education in mankind is seen as positive because it provides an understanding of true faith. It is said that Christian Education brings sinners to become God's saints so that they may live a real spiritual life, which is prepared by God, to obtain eternal life [21]. Christian education is a lesson for young and old to enter into a living fellowship of faith with God Himself and in Him, they are also sucked into the fellowship of His church which

acknowledges and glorifies God's name at all times and places [22]. Thus, Christian education becomes something important in building one's faith correctly and responsibly, leading to faith maturity. The problem now is what will happen if Christian education is contaminated by the teaching of liberal theology, especially those related to Friedrich Schleiermacher's thinking.

One of Schleiermacher's thoughts regarding sin is considered inaccurate. He limits the understanding of sin as something that interferes with the feeling of absolute dependence in humans. In other words, sin is defined as man's desire to be free at a time when he should be united with God [23]. Of course, this is very different and even contradicts the general belief in Christian theology about sin. It is very dangerous if Christian Education adopts Schleiermacher's teachings to be applied as main points in Christian teaching.

5 Conclusion

Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834) is known as the father of modern theology who systematically considered theological questions previously avoided by the church for the first time. The development of rational thought in the Enlightenment period in Europe influenced Christian theological thinking, and through one of the important figures, namely Schleiermacher, new approaches to theology were born. Schleiermacher emphasized experience, and not faith, as the essence of religion. Thus, separating the beliefs and historical facts of the presence of Christian education amid mankind is seen as positive because it provides an understanding of the true faith. Of course, this is very different and even contradicts the general belief in Christian theology about sin. It is very dangerous if Christian Education adopts Schleiermacher's teaching to be applied as the main points in Christian teaching.

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