

SOUL CARE CONCEPT FOR PERSON BASED ON THE PRESPECTIVE OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

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Abstract

The paradigm of self or person experiences significant differences. The influence of Platonic philosophy and also Gnosticism understands a person dichotomously. Apart from that, the Christian faith understands the self or person as a complete entity and identity where the spirit, soul and body unite and complement each other. By using a critical review of literature studies on Soul care, this research reveals firstly, the incarnation and ministry of Jesus and legitimizes the state of the three entities in the self or person as a complete and integrated identity. Second, the space of soul care covers all aspects of self or person in a small scope, as well as family and environment in a large scope. Third, the transformation of life on the pilgrimage of faith in and the practice of soul care depends on each person's choice.

Keywords: Soul care, Person, Incarnation, the orthodox paradigm

A. Person in the History of Early Christian Theology

Early Christian theological conceptions of persons interpreted people as being composed of body, soul, and spirit. The three are not distinct elements; rather, they are components that impact one another, are silently interwoven, and comprise the entirety of the human being. The soul, or psyche, is the source of consciousness and life, while the body is the material realm. At the same time, the spiritual component that enables people to comprehend divine truth is the spirit (pneuma or nous). The spirit is not the same as the soul, according to Kallistos Ware, an Eastern Orthodox theologian. Through spiritual awareness as well as reasoning, the spirit enables people to have direct experiences with God. This is the foundation for realizing that humans possess two intelligences: spiritual (spirit) and rational (soul), which cooperate to produce divine truth and scientific knowledge. Nonetheless, some

contend that people are made up of merely the body and the soul, with the spirit being the highest element of the soul. Platonic dualism, which makes a clear distinction between matter (body) and spirit, has affected this worldview. As a result, the material world or body is viewed as a lower and even malevolent part. The allegation that the material world or body is the source of evil and causes catastrophes or accidents was reinforced by the existence of Gnosticism.

The Orthodox tradition, which views the body as an essential component of God's good creation rather than as an enemy of spirituality, vehemently opposes the notion of platonic dualism and gnosticism toward the person. According to Orthodox theology, the human spirit's misuse of free will, not the body, is what caused man to fall. Evil originates not from the earthly world but from spiritual rebellion, such as the war in heaven symbolized in Revelation 12:7. As a result, matter is not always bad. According to church elder Tertullian, "The flesh is the condition of salvation" explains how the Christian religion views the body as a means of redemption. This opinion is supported by Christ's incarnation.

God redeemed humanity by becoming completely human, body and soul. In Paul's writings, the distinction between "body" (soma) and "flesh" (sarx) highlights that what is rejected is not the physical body but rather life in a state of estrangement from God. According to 1 Corinthians 6:19, the human body is even referred to as the temple of the Holy Spirit and is deserving of sanctification and glory. This perspective is furthered by Maximus the Confessor and John Climacus, who assert that the body and soul have a perichoretic (mutual indwelling) relationship. The body is a component of a spiritual process rather than merely a container. According to St. Gregory Palamas, spiritual joy even changes the body into a spiritual one. These ideas confirm that the human or person is a full unity of body, soul, and spirit—an entity incorporated into God's creative and redeeming will—according to genuine Christian theology, (Clarke, 2010).

Gratton represents people as fish who spend their time searching for the sea. Living in God's kingdom is the goal. The wise fish represents a Christian friend or spiritual mentor to Gratton. The search for God's kingdom is analogous to the search for the sea. People are in God's grace, much like fish, although they frequently aren't aware of it. If people embrace vulnerability as a challenge and are present in it, they

can discover God's grace. Seekers who discover God's grace and comprehend their presence do more than simply speak; they transcend it by going into the quiet and capturing every syllable.

B. Following Jesus is imitating Jesus

Imitating Jesus is the primary goal of the Christian life, (Kim, 2017a). For Christian soul-keepers, imitating Jesus means learning not only from His person but also from His ministry. Imitating Jesus is the same as following Jesus completely. The presence of alignment with God's will through the teachings and way of life of Jesus brings satisfaction to the souls of Christians. In Christ, humans are created to be faithful followers regardless of position, wealth, riches and context, followers are taught to influence each other's positions with each other obedient and loyal to Christ. In this context, the call to be a complete follower of Christ refers to a transcendental call. Here is Heidegger on the meaning of transcendence.

Man in his life journey moves beyond limits and becomes something new on the path of Christ. Connected with man seen from the face as Levinas proposes. Christ in His ministry in the world has devoted that complete devotion in His actions starting from His birth, teachings, His death and His resurrection. Christ exists in our own reality not outside, having beyond, seeking social transform and finding the love. He gives both good news to the human being and sets the captives free for them (Read: Luke 4:18). Another hand, he also give his life for human beings (Matt 1:21), his work is essentially a soul-care ministry (Johnson 2007). To actualize this hope and to carry out His soul-keeping ministry, the sovereign God gives His people His Word. A new life and world requires obedience to God's Word.

God will protect His people from the coming time of trial upon the whole world when they have obeyed His Word (Revelation 3:10). God's Word is "perfect, refreshing the soul" (Psalm 19:7) and "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible in this sense is "aretegetic" and has a "virtue-forming function as a textual means of realizing the ethical-spiritual excellence known as the Form of Christ" (Johnson 2007, p. 33).

In the light of God's Word, people can discern their thoughts, desires, and behaviors, and in doing so, they can gradually become holy like Christ. God's word is the basis for the human soul, (Kim, 2017b). Three ways in which Jesus indirectly influences people to make choices in life are through His shepherding, His example, and the bringing of hope in stories.

First, Jesus is a good shepherd.

Jesus has provided undershepherds for the Church (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 5:2) and has left them an example (John 13:15), (Johnston, n.d.). He called and sent out disciples even during His historical ministry, to share in His work in three aspects: namely, to preach, to heal and protect, and to forgive sins (Mark 3:14-19; 6:7-13; John 20:21-23).

Second, Jesus is a role model.

Jesus' life in the world, He gave salvation to the oppressed and marginalized, gave the command to love and always enlightened humans to do what is right. His death showed the highest proof of love in suffering and His resurrection brought a bright future for the universe.

Third, Jesus is a storyteller.

As a teacher, Jesus was also a great writer whose parables emerged from common life and showed with daily life in the land, and he parables “reveal a definite personal character, a unique clarity, and simplicity, an unsurpassed mastery of construction”(Johnston, n.d.). His stories forced people to examine themselves and seek answers to their questions (Luke 10:36). "Jesus would not make a choice to fulfill their thoughts. He could show them what to see. He could paint them pictures in words and show them signs in action.

C. Soul Care Concept for Person

Soul care comes from the English phrase "care of souls" derived from the Latin Cura Animarum, Although Cura is often translated as care and can also mean to care for and cure. Care refers to actions designed to support the well-being of something or someone. Healing refers to actions to restore lost peace and well-being. The core of soul care is Jesus Christ whose ministry guides caring for the human soul. Because Jesus is seeking us (Luke 19:10), giving blessings of food and basic necessities for us (Matthew 6:25), defending us (Romans 8:34), healings us (Acts 3:16), rebuking and forgiving our sins (John 16:8 and James 5:16), cleaning us (2 Peter 1:9), and surrenders our souls to

His presence (Psalm 23), (Barber & Baker, 2014). Caring for souls is carried out by pastors, teachers, ministers, evangelists, and other leaders who are placed in all places to serve and lead. Soul is understood as the spiritual or hidden term of a person that is united with the body. The soul includes a person's mind and feelings, along with the heart or will, with its intentions and choices, and also a person's physical life and social relationships, which, in their inner meaning and nature, are as "hidden" as the mind and feelings. The secret to being strong, healthy, and fruitful lies in a person who works with God in all these dimensions. Together they make up the person who he truly is. These three are the inevitable sources of a person's outward life, and they almost completely determine the impact, good or bad, of our service activities. A good tree, Jesus said, "brings forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:17). If a person takes care of the tree, the fruit will grow of its own accord, (Personal Soul Care.Pdf, n.d.) Thus, soul care is about the meaning and sustaining of whole human life in his/her reality.

D. Constructing soul care spaces for ministers

Historically, the church has accepted both meanings of Cura and understood soul care as nurturing and supporting as well as healing and restoration. The construction of soul care in church history according to Clebsch and Jaekle has always involved four main elements of healing, maintenance, reconciliation, and guidance,(Williamson, 2000a).

First, the element of healing includes physical and spiritual that help the person overcome some disturbances and move towards wholeness.

Second, Maintenance refers to care actions designed to help the injured person survive and be in a state of well-being.

Third, Reconciliation refers to efforts to rebuild damaged relationships and be in a harmonious presence. Fourth, Guiding means helping the person make wise choices and thus grow in spiritual maturity.

Soul care is no longer concerned with a small part of the person, but goes beyond that sub-part and sees the person as a whole. Soul care is self-care, (Poppa, 2019). It presents to care for the entire human wholeness including human life.

In addition, Throughout the history of the soul, we hear about the greater soul being part of our soul. The greater soul begins with the family, the community, the nation, and the earth, it is called the anima mundi or world soul, (Kenneth, 2014). Soul care offers presence and attention. The person tries to be aware and emotionally accessible. The person thinks about what they hear and makes responses designed to help. There are many techniques to get much view from experience, expolaration of feelings, thinkings, relations, silence and dreams throughout contemplation, reflection and meditation of soul. Tradition often pays attention to one aspect of the human being such as thinking, feeling, choosing, behaving, and socializing. So, accompaniment in the soul care process needs to transform the attachment of thoughts, feelings, choices, behaviors, and interactions to live more deeply the life and character of Christ.

E. The Key Instrument of Soul Care

The task of soul care is to help, guide, assist, care for, transform and make transcendent choices to achieve meaning and calling in life. Some key steps to highlight:

Breath. The Genesis 2 creation account tells us that “the Lord God...breathed into [man’s] nostrils the breath of life” (Gen. 2:7). This session is a testament to the human spirit’s ability to overcome adversity, fostering a sense of community and deep understanding. In this space of shared vulnerability, both counselor and client emerge transformed, united by their collective experience. The bond formed through this interaction highlights the importance of empathy and the lasting impact of kindness in a world often overshadowed by challenges. As they navigate the complexities of life together, they discover that healing and recovery often begin with the simple act of listening and acknowledging each other’s struggles. This newfound connection not only enriches their individual journeys but also serves as a reminder that hope can flourish even in the darkest of times. Many reverends have participated in the spiritual care of hurting travelers who seem unable to breathe on their own. We recognize that our support for these people is temporary. If they eventually do not breathe on their own, they will die despite our best efforts in soul care but for now, they have the opportunity to live, to enjoy life with God,(Williamson, 2000b). Breath greatly affects our feelings. It is the cardiovascular system that occurs between the heart and lungs, namely the

middle realm of the heart is the center of the soul's life and the life of feelings. If our middle part is blocked or cramped due to trauma, we cannot breathe and we are in a phase of holding our breath. This certainly does not bring goodness to humans. Thus in the process of soul-care, breath becomes a key instrument that needs to be considered.

The Word of God. one of the soul-care model roots is the narrative of bible, yet leaves conceptual room for variation that can be faithfully adapted to the diverse soul-care vocations. Brueggemann (1997) argues that just as a therapist invites a client to move from one narrative (an unhealthy childhood relationship) to another (a healthy adult relationship), a pastor invites his congregation to leave behind its old narrative and live in the biblical text as the new and better narrative. However, the honest Christian practitioner of soul-care, whether in the secular space or the church office. All who work in soul care—whether pastor or therapist, mentor or spiritual director—must learn to offer the beauty and benefits of this “alternative world” of the biblical text with “great artistry, care, and courage”(DeGroat, 2009a).

A pilgrimage of faith. There were signposts along the New Exodus road, the word ‘wounds’ might be placed in Egypt and the word ‘evil’ in Sinai. The Israelites’ struggle in Egypt is not described primarily in terms of sin and responsibility. Of course, the fact that Israel found herself in Egypt in the first place, and the fact that she remained, clearly involved in evil, sin, and human responsibility. But what we find in Scripture time and again along the way is that God will refrain from making a direct point for the larger pattern to unfold. In this case, Israel will soon learn the hard lesson of her sin in the wilderness. For now, God shows mercy to the victim, not judgment to the sinner, (DeGroat, 2009b).

Application. Soul-care exists to identify, test, and promote evidence-based practices to support personal well-being. There are two basic benefits of Soul-care, namely positive mood and emotions that include joy, gratitude, inner satisfaction, interest, entertainment, awe, and love. On the other hand, Soul -care also activates psychological functions (life purpose, personal growth, and self-acceptance) and social functions (maintaining relationships and contributing to the context). People are expected to be able to manage their time and healthy lifestyle every day while bringing and sharing good news about and from God.

Practical steps to do soul-care with Daily Tests (12-15 minutes/day). First, realizing the presence of God through the breath of life. Second, review the events in the last 24 hours, and remember 2-3 things that make the person grateful. Third, paying attention to what emotions arise. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, praying through these emotions, pay attention to which emotions bring the person closer to God or distance the person from God. Fourth, talking to God about what stands out to the person. If necessary, ask for forgiveness. Fifth, look forward to the next 24 hours reflecting What is the one important thing the person should do? Where does the person need God's help? In addition to verbal methods, people can also try writing methods such as Surviving through writing or Expressive Writing. First, choose a situation that is in the person's heart. Second, write for 3-4 days in a row. Third, each writing session lasts 20 minutes. Fourth, write whatever comes to mind freely about the person's relationships with others and events that occur in life. Trying to overcome it by letting go of the role of emotions that are not very helpful: We get carried away by emotions but we have to get used to it. Starting organizing difficult events or vulnerable things then labeling them, and understanding them. Furthermore, by labeling feelings and understanding them, people can make plans to react and overcome them.

F. Conclusion.

Soul-care is a process of caring for whole the human self (body, spirit and soul). So far, the polemic about the self or person has experienced significant differences. The influence of Platonic philosophy and also Gnosticism which divides the person into dichotomy and paradoxical spaces. In addition, Christian faith understands the self or person as a whole entity and identity where the spirit, soul and body are united and complement each other. This study reveals first, the incarnation and ministry of Jesus helped legitimize the state of the three entities in the self or person as a whole and integrated identity. Second, the space of soul-care includes all aspects of the self or person in a small scope, as well as the family and environment in a large scope. Third, the transformation of life through the pilgrimage of faith and the practical actions of soul-care depends on the choice of each person.

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