

## **“KINGDOM OF GOD” IMPLEMENTATION AS A FOUNDATION FOR CHRISTIANSTO LIVE WITH WITNESS TO CHRIST ATTITUDE IN INDONESIAN PLURALISM**

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**Abstract:** *Christians have long heard about the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ himself has taught us about the kingdom of God. But the concept of “kingdom” may have faded as time went on into this modern age, and its values are still questionable, especially in very plural nations such as Indonesia. According to the 2018 Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics survey on social and cultural issues, Indonesia had 1.340 ethnic groups and about 2.500 kinds of languages. Rich in diversity, UNESCO also considered Indonesia a superpower country in terms of culture. On the other hand, they also stated that cultural differences are also the root of numerous conflicts. Plurality is one thing, but Christians in Indonesia are also considered “minorities” in terms of religion (about 11% of the population is Christian and Catholic). Will this pluralism and being a minority be a challenge for Christians to live with a witness-to-Christ attitude? This paper shows, based on a biblical point of view and some related research, that a witness-to-Christ attitude can be maintained, lived upon, and even radiate even within pluralism and minority groups if the understanding of the kingdom of God is implemented and planted correctly among believers.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Bible, not just an ordinary book but “living words” for Christians, showed them that the kingdom of God has come upon them (the believers). In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus Christ talks about the coming of the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ stated in Luke 17:20–21 that the coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed nor pointed out, but it is in the midst of the people He was speaking to (Inc., 2011). The word “in the midst” in its original text language (Greek) is *entos* (ἐντός), which could also mean

“within” (Strong, 1984). The concept of the kingdom of God therefore is not about something that can be seen physically but more about something that is unseen inside the people. As it is said that it cannot be observed

or pointed out, this kingdom has an abstract form or is like the one that the people used to understand. A kingdom is generally known as something visible, symbolic, and sizable. Sung Nam Kim reviews that a kingdom (if bigger can be called an empire) consists of five characteristics: subjects (people being ruled), notions of superiority, frontiers (ruled areas), ruled by king, and hierarchy or system (King, 2013). Samuel Wells Williams takes a closer portrait of the kingdom of China in the mid-nineteenth century that includes religion, works, arts, and culture inside the wall (S. W. Williams, 2005). Kesavan Veluthat (2019) also magnifies some interesting points on chieftdom in South India (a kingdom in a smaller stage) that there are statuses inside a kingdom that are defined by the proximity of the kinsmen towards the chief. Unlike what the people know about the kingdom itself, the concept of the kingdom of God in the Gospel is rather unique and might become questionable due to Jesus Christ's words about the coming of His kingdom without the physical being of the kingdom itself already present.

It is written in John 18:36 that the kingdom Jesus mentioned is not of this world but from another place (Inc., 2011). This means that the kingdom has already been established and is standing, but it is not yet inside the world. But where is it, actually? As mentioned before, the traits of a kingdom consist of the subject and the sovereign ruler above them. By this, a greater question can be explored as well: who is the subject of the kingdom of God and where they came from? Apparently, in Luke 16:16, Jesus said that up until John the Baptist, the good news of the kingdom of God was preached, but everyone was forcing their way into it (Inc., 2011). Forcing their way means that people are unconsciously using any means necessary to enter the kingdom of God. And by entering the kingdom of God, you are becoming the subject of the kingdom of God. In the same context of forcing into something, Matthew 7:13–14 wrote that Jesus said to enter through the narrow gate (that

is why people are forcing into it), and to which that narrow gate and road lead to life (Inc, 2011). From a very long time up until now, people have actually been yearning for life. Living life is very important but life's meaning itself varies from person to person and thus creates a kind of mental pluralism, the diversity of thought.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Indonesia Pluralism Overview**

Indonesia has long lived under the slogan *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, which means "even in diversity, we are one." With a great number of 273 million people, Indonesia has been living a long life of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity (Indonesia Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2022). According to the 2018 Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics survey on social and cultural issues, Indonesia had 1,340 ethnic groups and about 2,500 kinds of languages (Statistik, Badan Pusat, 2018). The risk of diversity can be greater than the diversity itself, but on the other side, it can be a great asset and beauty. Indonesian pluralism is so great that UNESCO considers Indonesia a superpower country in terms of culture (Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017). Pluralism classifies people based on their unique differences, such as languages, colours, ethnicities, religions, and many others. But more than this, there is much deeper thought about pluralism that we have to consider. Each person from a different background and race might produce a different set of thoughts, acceptances, and perspectives. Guilherme and Dietz also emphasise the difficulties of intercultural differences in cosmological visions, concepts, living, and moral standards (Ottuh, & Aitufe, 2014; Guilherme, 2015; Ottuh & Idjakpo, 2021). Therefore, pluralism is not just about differences in visible looks but also differences within each person.

### **Scope of Pluralism in Indonesia**

Hue and Molina defined pluralism as feelings that one subgroup is recognised, accepted, and also valued by the whole members of the common group (Huo, 2006). Diana L. Eck, the principal investigator, author, and editor of the "On Common Ground: World Religions in America" project,

which later turned into the Pluralism Project at Harvard University, defined pluralism as the combination of engagement, understanding, commitments, and dialogue with diversity (Eck, 2012). In its concrete form, Harvard University, with its pluralism project, separated pluralism into three parts: religion, encounter, and landscape (Eck, 2022).

When talking specifically about Indonesia, Mavridis research emphasises more ethnicities. Indonesia is so diverse in ethnicities that the research could take place at a small district level. Ethnicities could almost represent major differences in one bucket for language, colours, and cultural diversities. But more than that, ethnic diversity in Indonesia could affect invisible aspects of life such as trust, perceived safety, participation in community activities, and even voting in elections (Mavridis, 2015).

Therefore, we can conclude that the scope of pluralism that we are about to explore extends beyond the boundaries of not only physical differences but also the abstract differences that come within each individual. Taking into account what is relevant and what may matter to Indonesian people, this paper will focus on four types of diversities:

- Cultural diversity
- Religious diversity
- Generational diversity
- Thought diversity

Culture and religion are not only very much related to every diversity happened around the world but also very relevant to Indonesia. Although Indonesia acknowledged 6 major religions, Indonesia also recognized its people that have multiple streams of beliefs (animism and dynamism). Alongside with thousands of cultures and beliefs that existed in Indonesia, we can conclude that religion and culture are important aspect that contributes towards Indonesian pluralism. The next pluralism key that we need to explore deeper is generational differences. Each generation faced different types of problems, technology advancement, and cultural changes. Studies in Denmark by Claus Thustrup Kreiner found out that there are

intergenerational correlations facing financial problems (Kreiner, 2020) , another study also showed that 5 out of 10 families experienced loss in relationships within three generations due to changes of social and family circumstances (Kemp, 2007) . It is also important to note that there are many diversities revolving at family relationship. Multiple values and beliefs might exist in such a small group from generation to generation.

And for the abstract form of diversity, we will focus on the diversity of thoughts. Thought diversity can be a broad topic to discuss so this paper is going to set a clear definition on what is meant as thought diversity. This paper defines thought diversity as a collection of perspectives, ways of thinking, and values that affects how people can make decisions. For example, Loes, Pascarella, and Umbach have researched that diversity in college students positively affect critical thinking (Pascarella & Umbach, 2021). This research showed us that there are already two types of thoughts: the comfortable way and complex way of thought. This affects the result and how they respond with their current surroundings. Williams in her research concluded that diversity of thinking styles will foster the development of science and technology (F. M. Williams, 2002) . Her research shows that some people may have canonical ways of thoughts (axiomatic) and other relational ways of thoughts. We may also consider that how people think then will even affect the decision on how they choose to live. Without realizing there is a lot of diversity of thoughts or ways of thinking not only in our present time but also when Jesus was on this earth and spread His teachings.

### **Diversity as challenges and opportunity**

Diversity is like a two-edged sword that can bring so much improvement but also can backlash and raise deep conflict. Post's research said that diversity sometimes can seed conflict when the people have different values, priorities, communication styles, and incentives. We will highlight these factors later but supposedly what we hope from diversity that can bring positive outcomes could also bring negative evaluation, criticism, even disorder (Post, C, E D, 2015). Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics also claimed that Indonesia's pluralism is so high that sometimes frictions among its

people are somehow unavoidable and become the color of their interaction (Statistik, Badan Pusat, 2018).

As Indonesia gone through many years and assimilate with modern way of living, the people obedience towards their belief of culture remains high and unwavering. Taking example of the majority of religion in Indonesia, Muslims and their superb obedience. A simple study by Rizal and Rahmat on Tasikmalaya cities in Indonesia found that only 95.6% of Muslim junior high school students having medium until high obedience towards their religion (Rizal & M, 2019) . But this captivating numbers also contribute towards 11.1% of Muslim low religious tolerance. Jakarta also faced inter-religious conflict on 2018 when Basuki Tjahya Purnama a Christian Chinese leader nominated for Jakarta governor (Suseno, 2018). Although, for some people that see meritocratic values, this rejection is one-sided and not objective at all. The pluralism of religion has proven to be a challenge without high tolerance towards new values. UNESCO defined diversity as a capacity to maintain the dynamic of change (U.N.E.S.C.O, 2009). When diversity of culture and values restrain the freedom of people to change from its current condition of belief, it is not yet “diverse” because we lack the capacity for it.

Culture also plants deep instilled values towards groups of people. Through-out Indonesia archipelago many believe in the culture of Pemali. Pemali tradition was based from East Kalimantan with many beliefs suchas the prohibition to roam before dusk or prohibition ofstanding in front of the door in the morning. Many people still believe that by following Pemali tradition will cultivate healthy living and avoid bad luck (Umar, 2018) . Some studies also find out that even amidst the modern era of living, Indonesian people keep upholding the local culture values handed down by their ancestors and even accepting it as part of their national identity (Arifin, 2021).

Indonesian both religion and culture is so thick with obedience and perhaps low tolerance into outside values. Given that circumstances, there is still opportunity that may arise for the adoption or co-living with Christian’s values. And how can that be? Because there might be some aspects that won’t cause friction even in the differences of values, priorities, and

incentives among people. Not all values are contradicting; some are better, more complete, and thus adopted by society. Kalliny and Hausman studies show certain conditions that may support religious and cultural impact on adoption of new values. These conditions are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, religious values, collectivism or individualism, and fatalism (Kalliny, 2007). In these conditions that existed pluralism might have different responses towards new values.

### **KINGDOM OF GOD IN DEPTH**

First, we have to define the values that existed in this “kingdom of God” from the Gospel. The message from the prophet Zechariah pointed out that there will be one day that The Lord will be king over the whole earth, and also punish those who will fight Jerusalem (Inc, 2011). This is in concordance with the revelation received by John in Revelation 20 and Revelation 21 that wrote about how Satan persuade countries to fight God’s people (before symbolized as Jerusalem) and then later God the king will reign victory over them (Inc, 2011) . Therefore, the Kingdom of God talks about the sovereignty of a king which will liberate his people, give life, and reign on all the earth. Matthew 28:18 said that all authority in heaven and on earth are given to Jesus Christ means that Jesus is “king” in all means of things existed (Inc, 2011). So, the first element of a kingdom already presents a ruler or a king. Eschatological point of view sees the coming of the King as something that is given, chronologically will come. Sooner or later the ruler of this world (Jesus Christ the Lord) will come down and serve the right justice, award the righteous, and punish the evil. In soteriology perspective: a king that will bring so many good things and a bright future can only be claimed by certain people who acknowledge it. Blumhardt stated that a king cannot rule as a king unless the people acknowledged him as one (Blumhardt, 2014).

Complimenting each other, Jesus is king in both circumstances whether in the coming of a kingdom physically at a certain specific time or upon the people starting to accept him as king at heart and live by His rule and will at any given time. Nicholas Perrin also classified the kingdom of God in two forms: the future pocalyptic kingdom and also the present non-

apocalyptic kingdom (Perrin, 2019).

The tale of such two kingdoms coming makes sense. The kingdom of God can come as soon as people accept Jesus as their King because the sovereignty, rules, and way of living have been accepted by the people. The Bible does not exactly give a boundary of area towards where their subject will live on earth. Melani McAlister, sharing the stories of the global history of American evangelicals also mentioned that Christianity is powerful and influential far beyond the border of nations (McAlister, 2018).

Why did Jesus Christ really want the people to be the subject of the kingdom of God? Because the people are His in the first place but lost the component needed to be the everlasting subject of the kingdom. John 1:10-11 explained it in a way that He was in the world, made the world, but the people did not recognize Him and even rejected Him (Inc, 2011). The component that was missing is that the human loses the glory of the God that should be with them in the very beginning. Romans 3:23 explained that this glory as divine quality or *doxa* (δόξα) and this divine quality (or some translated as dignity) are exactly the first intention of God of creating the humans (images and likeness) (Inc, 2011; Otto, D., & Udoh, 2024).

By living under the authority of Jesus, the kingdom of God's way of living is trying to restore what the people have lost. God's massive grace allowed the people of the world to receive the way they should live before, the glory that should be in them that they have lost. The Bible in Genesis and in Revelation described losing this divine quality or glory as being "naked" and people mostly don't know that they are "naked" (Inc, 2011). Those who are trying to gain the "life" they have lost are actually losing it because they are trying to find it outside God's sovereign rule (Inc, 2011). Those "life" cannot be restored without being subject to the kingdom of God in which its subjects are able to learn and live in such a way guided like they are having the divine quality before.

There is also the same symbolic key in the kingdom: there will be a river that endlessly flowing in Jerusalem that gives life to the thirsty (Inc, 2011). In the Gospel of John, Jesus also mentioned that whoever believes in



His rivers of water will flow from within them (Inc, 2011) . Unlike many forms of culture and religious values, the value of the kingdom of God emphasizes its people to “be the good” rather than “do what is good”. John 1:12 said that whoever believes in Christ will be given the right to be the children of God (Inc, 2011). Children are expected to follow their parents' character and teachings. Christians believed that Jesus Christ is the perfect role model for His children. Upon living to be like Christ (witness to Christ attitude), people will gain the divine quality that they have missed, and be an endless river of blessings to the world (Inc, 2011) . Only the children of God or the citizens of God that submit to His order are able to do what God does, and what God does is to bring goodness to the world (Inc, 2011).

The value is the character of God Himself which will be inherited and adopted to every child of God. Romans 8:28 wrote that these characters are God's plan also to equip people to do good works for a much better world (Inc, 2011) . These Godly characters are joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Inc, 2011). There are too many to explain on God's character as we rather not oversimplify the complexity of God's excellence traits. Köstenberger helped us to classify God's character based on His excellence: moral excellence and relational excellence (Köstenberger, 2011). Moral excellence consisted of integrity, fidelity, and wisdom while relation excellence consisted of grace, humility, interdependence, and love. It is hard to believe that any law, rules, values, or cultures will try to forbid such good and divine character. Such true life, quality, and attitude is to be awarded for if anyone tries to pursue it.

### **Kingdom of God in the eyes of people**

Now, we can start to put our point of reference from the Bible. The political context of Jesus' era that day is when Israel was captive to Roman power. The biggest scope of defeat and living in fear in Israel's history also includes the slavery in Egypt and Babylonians. Since then, Israel by all means coveted freedom and prosperity, promised by God. There are also times of restoration where Israel is being rebuilt by God's anointed people such as Nehemiah and Zerubbabel (Inc, 2011) . Israelites are holding on to what God

has promised them: a time where a descendant of King David will be sovereign and bring peace for Jerusalem (Inc, 2011) . The Christians believed that this is Jesus Christ but perhaps it is not what the people of that time were expecting.

Apparently for some people He is just a carpenter from a marginal family (Inc, 2011) , blasphemous , or even a demonic-related person (Inc, 2011) . Putting our feet in their shoes, clarifying Jesus as God is really difficult. For someone that doesn't seem to show any outwardly royalty signs or status, even compared to God Himself, it is indeed very hard to be accepted with healthy logic and heart. The level of belief is questionable even for His closest disciples as they still didn't believe in His resurrection until seeing His empty tomb (Inc, 2011).

In the eyes of people, the Kingdom of God is something that they wanted to be, not something that God wanted to bring. Meanwhile, they were still clinging on past views of restoration and asked whether Jesus Christ will restore the kingdom of Israel once more (Inc, 2011) . How about the values? The values of being merciful clashed with the culture of obedience of law the people perceived shown in how Jesus Christ let go a woman that was caught having an affair. But the values of the Kingdom of God that Jesus delivered did not actually break the law, He just added another essence of who are the people, all of us were sinners. Jesus Christ is always in a heated debate with the religious groups because He opposes their priority of culture rather than the Torah itself (Inc, 2011) , priority of self-seeking glory rather than the glory of God (Inc, 2011) .

Kwai Hang Ng of University of Chicago research shows extraordinary proof that Chinese ethnic, tradition, and culture with Christian values are not mutually exclusive but intimately involved (K H, 2022). There is a way of how Chinese people understand about self, imagining the deities, or even about blessings and Christianity help shape them into local faith. Christianity, the values of the Kingdom of God assimilate and upscale those cultures and traditions of seeking God into something more complete. There is another

compelling story that the value of the Kingdom of God could affect positively towards young generation attitudes and trends. Michael Frost met a young Texas Christian who was interested in doing ultra-relevant, funky, and innovative church service and found out that he was actually misguided by his own thoughts that spectacular shows are higher than humility (Frost, 2006). The story turned out to be good; the young youthful man understands the value of Jesus' humility is much more valuable than the spectacular and wild flaming imagination. This sheds light, brings peace to the mind, and guides young people's way for the better. The value of the Kingdom of God on humility that Jesus Christ shared (Inc, 2011) did not stop young people to be creative, imaginative, and free but completes those sets of values and culture to be "wise and good" creativity, imagination, and freedom.

Nowadays, the value of the Kingdom of God can be rejected and cannot flourish in people's lives. Mirroring from the age where Jesus Christ does his work, He faced religious leaders who actually does not understand the scripture correctly and therefore becoming radical (Zega, 2020). In this age, rejection to these values mainly comes from radical movement. Zega in his paper wrote that many areas in Indonesia clashed with Christianity activity due to radicalism. Radicalism was rooted in misinterpreting the scripture. Misinterpreting the scripture may lead to destructive intolerance, exclusivism, and fanaticism. That said in the eyes of people in Indonesia, pluralism of existing value alongside with the value of the Kingdom of God is not the central challenge. The challenge is those who have wrongly misinterpreted the Christian values and bring untrue opposition in the name of their values.

### **Witness to Christ attitude and its impact**

The people chance to misinterpret the values of the Kingdom of God lies close within sight but there is also a point where a value cannot be challenged by anything due to its perfection of moral and ethics (Otto, 2023; Benson & Williams, 2023). Bible clearly said that there are no laws against the fruits of the Spirit (Inc, 2011). There can be two meanings of this writings of

Paul that no one can ever find fault of such virtues or no law can produce such fruit and therefore got nothing against it (Schreiner, 2010). These are not a set of law rather a result as a way of living. The value of the Kingdom of God focuses to be more than a belief but way of living. Such way that it will only produce such virtues as the fruits of Spirits that it can be called a true living. It made sense, as living under law or culture may not fully change people but only retain the people from doing the bad and the harmful. The people who have achieved such things are getting more to be like Jesus Christ in character and henceforth called as witness to Christ (Inc, 2011). Assembling a fine line of all, the value of the Kingdom of God such as the fruits of the Spirit is the foundation for Christians to live with witness to Christ attitude.

Witness to Christ attitude helped the Christians to live in the value of the Kingdom of God. These values like the fruits of Spirit are to ensure an impactful living. We have seen multiple resistances to Christianity values due to radicalism rooted from misinterpretation. Misinterpretation of the text may happen but misinterpretation of good and helpful results is most likely not to happen (as people will cherish good things that happen to them and to society logically). Taking example from Elizabeth A. Johnson that wrote about the understanding history of Christianity to female mostly come in negative perspective but by living inclusively as a Christians that upholds the right image of woman will shape a new understanding of feminism in Christ (Johnson, 2016). Feminism has continued its struggle mainly among communities with patriarchal values, traditional masculine values, or even religious values. The value of the kingdom of God through witness to Christ attitude can help to balance the scales and restore people's perspective towards gender. In James 2:18 written that Christian with faith should live and show his faith from his actions for without actions it is only an empty faith (Inc, 2011).

Not only popular concepts or movements that witness Christ attitude spread its positive vibes and changes, but through practical services such as medicinal and health care as well this attitude remained effective. Sulmasy

explained that Christian witnesses in medicine will manifest in the physicians' attitude, words, and deeds (Sulmasy, 2016). Is this attitude possible to implement then? There are great possibilities. We have seen in fact that some people have already lived with witness to Christ attitude in their area of life. So, the possibilities for witness to Christ attitude in Indonesia pluralism can happen, can occur, and even remain.

## **POSSIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Through cultural diversity**

According to the Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture in 2016 the pluralism in Indonesia is mostly a form of multiculturalism. This is shown by 71.78% of villages in Indonesia (about 58.892 villages) have more than one ethnicity or tribes within its people composition. Also, about 67.06% of villages in Indonesia (about 55118 villages) speak multiple languages. The languages can be local folk language, Indonesian language, and foreign language (Jakarta, 2016).

Figure 1. Indonesia Percentage of Villages in Indonesia According to Ethnic. Adapted from (Jakarta, 2016)

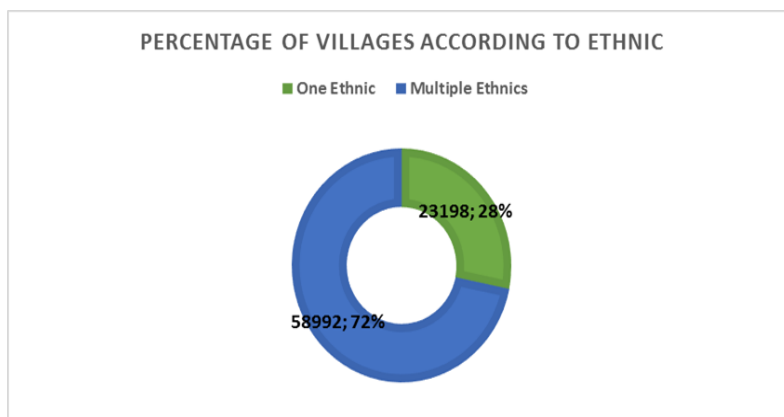
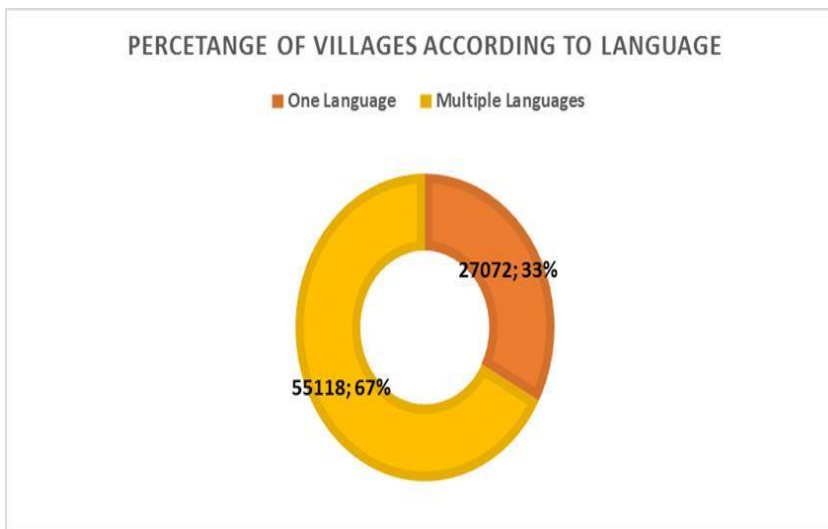


Figure 2. Indonesia Percentage of Villages in Indonesia According to Language. Adapted from (Jakarta, 2016)



With this condition we can conclude that Indonesiapluralism is in the form of multiculturalism. Augustine

S. J. Park found problems of culture behind multiculturalism and suggested solving it with allowable accommodation to retain peace. Allowable accommodation means another culture or values can beaccommodated by the society as long as they are contained and conformed to the apparatus' rule of law (Park, 2010) .

Apparently, the values of the Kingdom of God arenot against any law at all. Living as with the witness to Christ attitude in Indonesia, pluralism can still be accommodated and will not bring conflict. The bringer of values needs to study and learn the current conditionof society culture beforehand.

The chances the value of the Kingdom of God might be adopted by the society will rise even more if Christians in multiculturalism understand that the waythe value of Kingdom of God might be adopted is to consistently living differently in godly ways. As the Biblein Corinthians says that the believers are the letter of Christ for everyone to see, so the impact derived much more from the actions (Inc, 2011). The next step after the value of the Kingdom of God after it existed together within a community is when people start to have interestto adopt it. This is called assimilation of culture. In assimilation it is important for a values or culture to be culture-neutral (Park, 2010). Christians need not to judge or radically point out flaws in current society cultural norms nor any culture that is still instilled in the new adopters. The

Bible in Corinthians through apostle Paul reminds the believers that even though they possess “the right knowledge”, they should not become a stumbling block to others that still cannot adopt the culture fully (Inc, 2011). The concern for Christian with their witness to Christ attitude is not to correct things but rather to be a loving guide and example for everyone to live based in love of Christ.

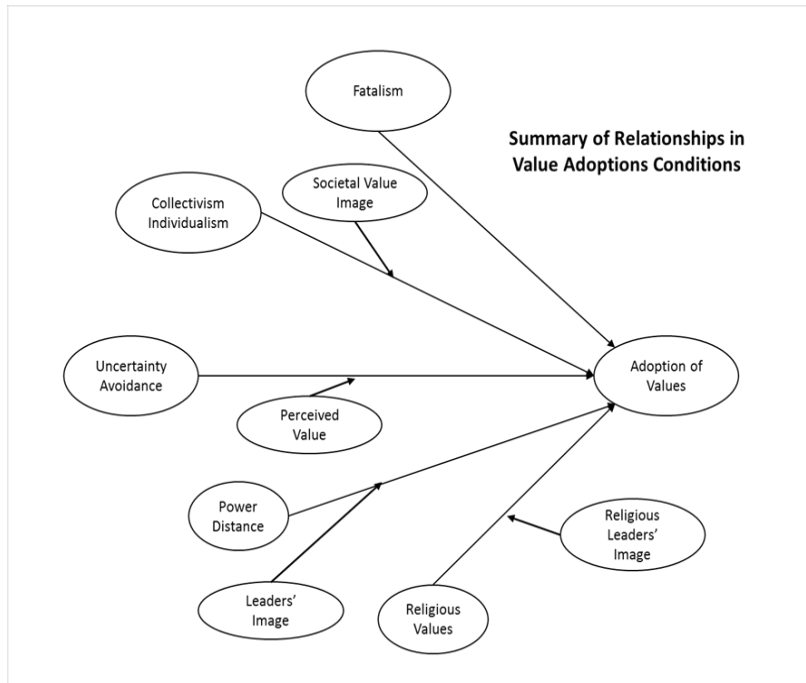
### **Through religion diversity**

Talking about religion diversity is much more complex as there are many factors that determine the condition of religion pluralism in an area. With the Appointment of the President of Republic of Indonesia Number 1 Year 1965, Indonesia accepted Islam, Christian, Catholic, Buddha, Hindu, Confucius, and other beliefs (President of Republic of Indonesia, 1965). “Other beliefs” are defined as any beliefs as long as they don't break any laws or regulations. From the very beginning Indonesia through President Soekarno have prepared themselves to accept multiculturalism through various religions. The spirit of acceptance though differs amongst the people from time to time. Diversity in religion can be very polar, taking sides especially with the majority, and might spread radicalism.

The base and fundamental subject to worship of the kingdom of God is very different with many religions and therefore we cannot see religious values like cultural values in which we can accommodate a culture-neutral state. The Bible never shows that believers of Christ should fight existing religion or beliefs by doctrine debate, fundamental showcase, or such thing but the Bible do teach the believers to hold the right teaching among many false teachings. The key point is the perseverance of values that Christians hold.

To increase value adoption Kalliny and Hausman have created helpful suggestions on how to cope with typical religious conditions towards its adoption of new values. The background of their research was done in Arab countries with Muslim majority; this is in par with Indonesia with also Muslim majority. About 231 million of people in Indonesia are Muslim (about 85.5% of population), meanwhile only 20 million of people are Christians (7.4% of population) (Indonesia Ministry of Religion, 2022).

Figure 3. Summary of Relationship in Value Adoptions Conditions. Adopted with changes from (Kalliny, 2007)



There are five possible conditions that may arise in areas that have a certain majority religion such as Arab countries: fatalism, collectivism or individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and religious values. Fatalism has wide definitions and debates but for the sake of simplicity it is defined as a conceptual truth that no one is able to act otherwise than one does (Fischer, 2015) . This concept believes that one cannot avoid what is going to happen next, inevitable. The concept of fatalism may exist in religion values either as true doctrine or misconception but it will not hinder any adoption of values. Taking advantage of this witness to Christ attitude can be a way to show that we can live with a positive heart knowing that everything about tomorrow will be provided (Inc, 2011). The value of the kingdom of God could represent a likewise fatalism mindset whereas Christians could accept anything that might happen tomorrow but God is in control of our lives and will help His people to cope with any conditions (Inc, 2011).

Collectivism or individualism are basically a way of how society lives as independent or interdependent, group goals or individual goal oriented, and the ties between people are relationship or rational (Xue, 2009). Lene Pedersen



in her paper explains that one way to relieve religious tension is to provoke peace. One of its examples is not to do violent retaliation towards any religious aggressor as an individual (Pedersen, 2016). This is in line with the value of the Kingdom of God that rejects revenge to the oppressor (Inc, 2011). The perspective implanted to collectivism is to act for general good, while individualism could also be believed to avoid being involved in any conflicts for one's own personal wellbeing.

Uncertainty avoidance is a condition where an individual feels threatened by the unknown and the effect of it and thus needs trust and perceived value of it (Hwang, 2012). Perceived value can be mistaken by some people either by misinterpreting the values or hearing the wrong message about it. Erastus Sabdono also noticed that some people would openly reject Christianity or even cannot decide (due to uncertainty avoidance) with the reason of wrong understanding of Christianity and Jesus Christ (Sabdono, 2016). Kapferer, Telle, and Eriksen show that bible advocacy like this can even be shown as in what secularism normally enjoys such as using film or even campaign that touches the heart (Kapferer, 2010). Using this the society can see inside about the values outside religious ambience. After the understanding is getting better, there is a higher chance of value adoption within the society.

Power distance defined by Daniels and Greguras as a degree which inequalities are accepted either as unavoidable or as functional (Daniels, 2014). Indonesia majority of leaders will have so much influence to their followers in many decisions they made or even statement they created. It can lead to oppression, but it can also lead to peace. Power distance main anchor is on powerful leaders. For a value to have a chance to be adopted there has to be a symbol of an influential leader that holds that certain value. Value of the kingdom of God will be much accepted if there are any influential leaders bearing witness to Christ attitude.

Christian leaders should be able to hold high their religious values better than the other values. In the Bible, Jesus Christ exclaims that his people's righteousness even needs to surpass the teachers of the law or they

won't enter the kingdom of heaven (Inc, 2011). In the Indonesian version of the Bible "righteousness" is translated "religious life" meaning that Christian leaders need to lead a serious impactful religious life that will be a great example of being witness to Christ? Some good examples of this impactful religious life are when Christians can bring harmony instead of conflict and support their nations with their talents (Novalina, 2020).

### **Through generation diversity**

The Bible talks about how values can be adopted or transferred through generations. There are three compelling scenes. The first one is when the Israelites were in the wilderness and God was preparing them to enter the Promised Land. Through Moses, God instructed them to tell their kids about the value of loving God every time and at every moment (Inc, 2011). Value adoption comes from the power of parenting and family influence. The second scene is when the children of Israel come directly to Jesus Christ when He was teaching (Inc, 2011). People also believe that when their kids are going to the center of the influence, they might get imparted as well. The third scene was when God instructed the Israelites through Moses that "the love of God instruction" should be placed as a symbol on their forehead, wrist, doorposts, and gates (Inc, 2011). The instructions that God gave is not just a mere story or appeal but becoming norms accepted by every generation without question.

Mandrik, Fern, and Bao research on intergenerational influence shows two powerful factors that may affect someone on their preferences and orientation: conformity to peers and family communication (Fern & Bao, 2005). Family communication plays a very deep role considering how children will likely put their trust and depend much on their parents. In such a way, children will see and much likely to follow the values adopted by their family. To be successful to deliver the value of the Kingdom of God, witness to Christ attitude needs to start from parents to their children. Each generation ready to adapt to such values there has to be a good bond within each family.

But we cannot simply conclude that every family is ideal. In fact, there

are many family issues for such a huge population so there has got to be a point where intergenerational influence cannot be spread via family. This is where the church will play its role as an influential vessel for each generation. Church leaders can be classified towards an intergenerational basis such as young leaders and elders to ensure all generations can have their own role model to follow. Ballantyne, Connel, and Fien also suggest that value adoption from learning can be more effective when there is intergenerational interaction (Ballantyne & Fien., 1998) . Although diverse in age, each generation will learn many things especially when they can see each generation are changing and involved to be mature in the value of the kingdom of God.

The final step is when the value is embedded in a society or circle and accepted as norms. There are two type types of influences. Informational influences and normative influence both give impact to value adoption but normative influence will create better compliance to adopt such value (Li, J & C, Liu, 2016). The value of kingdom of God through witness to Christ attitude don't give consequences for breaking the normative influence rather people should together correct each other, with care and love (Inc, 2011). The purpose is to give extra care and attention to each generation so they can feel that the value of the kingdom of God is beneficial, warm, and true.

### **Through diversity of thought**

When Jesus was teaching to a lot of people, He wondered why a lot of people, especially the law teachers could not understand His teachings. They keep rejecting the fact that Jesus was the Messiah even though from time to time He tried to convince them with facts and even using Torah instructions (Udo & Archibong, 2019). But the way Jesus spoke to them was different, He spoke with wisdom and authority (Inc, 2011). And implicitly from His teachings He provides love as the basis of understanding the law. Jesus concluded that they cannot understand what He taught because they are unable to hear what He says (Inc, 2011). The word "hear" comes from the word akouein (ἀκούειν) which also mean to comprehend (Strong, 1984).

When Jesus had risen from the grave, He showed Himself to two of His disciples that were on the way to Emaus according to the Gospel of Luke (Inc,

2011). Jesus faced with diversities of thoughts. On one side diversity pushed Jesus Christ teachings, closing any opportunity for new perspectives, opinion, and truth. On the other hand, it does not reject Jesus' explanation but needs some time to finally fix the missing puzzle of thoughts.

Diversity of thoughts may occur but what makes rejection happen upon new value or perspective tries to enter the existing thought system? Clark and Inozu called this as unwanted intrusive thoughts (UIT) which can lead to persistence, intrusive behavior, and obsession (D. A. Clark & Inozu, 2014). The characteristics of UIT that lead to obsession are perfectionism, self-importance, intolerance of uncertainty, inflated responsibility, and overestimated threat.

In society these characteristics most likely exist and cause different responses to new values or perspectives. People with intolerance to uncertainty will be more skeptical and walk negatively towards new values even before understanding the whole context. Some ways of thinking may even overestimate threats from new values and perspectives, seeing the weaknesses and exploiting the threats side only. But what way to get communication of new values across this wall of thoughts? Nowadays communication is using empathetic communication. Empathetic communication is trying to find the receiver of message needs and try to provide solutions to it with our communication (Clark, 2012). Call centers these days are proficient at hearing customers' thoughts and try to understand them to bring the best solution possible. Jesus Christ always has this empathy as an attitude by hearing their concern and thoughts and delivering His message related to the kingdom of God.

When Jesus made miracles of multiplying breads for five thousand people a lot of them come to Him actually to ask for more. Jesus put empathetic answers with bread of life as a bridging to make them understand that it is not physical bread that He wanted to give but the spiritual bread (Inc, 2011). When Jesus met Samaritan woman in Sychar, Jesus asked her for water. This is troubling at that time because Jews do not associate with Samaritans but Jesus addresses this concern with empathy first as He shows

that there are no boundaries between them. After the meeting Jesus addresses another concern of water and then moves in wrapping his message within the context of water, the living water (Inc, 2011). Jesus' repeated encounters with people always started with empathy, answering concerns with love, and moving in with the message. This should be a perfect example for witness to Christ. As the bringer of godly values, one shall not only focus on how they deliver their thought, message, or communication across rather putting the recipient as priority. Hearing their concern to understand the way they think and then moving in with love and compassion.

### **CONCLUSION**

Witness to Christ attitude is essential as a bridge for the value of the kingdom of God deliverance into the society. Rejection mainly comes from misinterpretation of who is Jesus Christ and His teachings which comes from intrusion of thoughts. Therefore, Christians as witness to Christ should move on with their values demonstrated by the difference of how they live and respond to each situation with love and compassion. The key point of witness to Christ attitude in pluralism is how each Christians can persevere to live with the value of the kingdom of God.

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