

Logos In John 1:1-18 An Analysis of The Implications of Logos For Christian Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

Logos is a term that many Christians are familiar with. The word logos in human expression, translated from Greek means: word, speech, message or Word. The Word also refers to what settles in the human mind such as thought, reason or logic. The problem is that many people discuss and write about logos theologically. But no one has written about the logos that has become human and is present in the Jewish community to educate and teach. This research aims to explore the meaning of the logos that has become human in Jesus Christ based on the Gospel of John 1: 1-18 and raise its implications for Christian Religious Education. The research method used to answer this issue is a qualitative research method with literature study work on supporting literature with a historical criticism approach to the text. From this discussion, the author offers the results as a new perspective that the church needs to implement the meaning of logos, through Christian Religious Education for the congregation.

Keywords: Christian; Education; John; Logos

ABSTRAK

Logos adalah istilah yang akrab dengan banyak orang Kristen. Kata logos dalam ekspresi manusia, diterjemahkan dari bahasa Yunani berarti: kata, ucapan, pesan atau Firman. Firman juga mengacu pada apa yang menetap dalam pikiran manusia seperti pikiran, akal atau logika. Masalahnya adalah banyak orang mendiskusikan dan menulis tentang logos secara teologis. Tetapi tidak ada yang menulis tentang logos yang telah menjadi manusia dan hadir dalam komunitas Yahudi untuk mendidik dan mengajar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi makna logos yang telah menjadi manusia dalam diri Yesus Kristus berdasarkan Injil Yohanes 1:1-18 dan mengangkat implikasinya bagi Pendidikan Agama Kristen. Metode penelitian yang digunakan untuk menjawab masalah ini adalah metode penelitian kualitatif dengan karya studi literatur tentang penunjang sastra dengan pendekatan kritik sejarah terhadap teks. Dari pembahasan ini, penulis menawarkan hasilnya sebagai perspektif baru bahwa gereja perlu mengimplementasikan makna logos, melalui Pendidikan Keagamaan Kristen bagi jemaat

Kata Kunci: Kristen; Pendidikan; Logos; Yohanes

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Logos is a central concept in the opening of the Gospel of John. The opening section of the Gospel of John chapter 1 verses 1-18 is known as the Prologue of John which specifically discusses the concept of Logos. Logos is defined as the Word or Word that has existed from the beginning with God and has the same nature as God. Of the many research and studies conducted on the concept of logos in the Gospel of John, most of them focus on the textual aspects of the logos terminology itself, as well as the philosophical aspects contained in the concept of logos. Even though logos seems to be something conceptual, logos is not something abstract but something that can touch practical aspects as well so that it can be seen how the implications of one of them are for Christian Religious Education.

Efforts to understand the concept of logos have been ongoing for a long time and have been carried out in various styles and from various perspectives. Understanding logos certainly requires recognizing and understanding the meaning of the term itself. This is in line with what was stated by **Kuwornu-Adjaottor**, in his research he has conducted a study of the use and meaning of the term logos itself through a critical study done for the translation of John 1:1 and 14.¹ From the results of this research he revealed that logos is not simply understood as words or words alone, but more than that for the context of the reader, the logos has been real in Jesus Christ. So, for him, the meaning of the translation of the term logos is not only bound to the word or words, but also logos can be translated as Jesus himself, this is in line with both the context of the Gospel of John, but also acceptable to the context of the speaking community where this research was conducted.

Not only studies in terms of language and terminology, but because the concept of logos is part of real history, there are also those who study the concept of logos in the Gospel of John 1, emphasizing the historical aspects and even the apologetic value contained therein. This is in line with what **Irving Rouse** has done, in his study of the logos in the Gospel of John, he describes how the historical background of this concept, its apologetic value specifically in the transition from the Judaic world to the Hellenistic world and how it implies for the modern world..² From Rouse's research he has shown the existence of the concept of logos in the course of history, where logos is seen as something that can bridge what is ideal and what is concrete. This is obtained through a literature review that is directed at historical tracing. For Rouse, John took the existing concept of Logos and identified it with Christ as the full embodiment of the Divine Word/Logos. The Logos concept aided Christianity's expansion into the Greek world as it conquered Greek philosophy by showing that Christ was the answer to the human mind's search for the Divine.

In addition to historical tracing efforts, studies related to the concept of logos are also often associated with philosophical aspects. One research that focuses on this is the research by **Gavin Hendricks**. He does not only conduct studies from a historical perspective, but he also looks at interpretations philosophically, which are then linked to the perspective of oral

¹ Jonathan Kuwornu-Adjaottor, "A critical study of the translations of logos in John 1:1 and 14," *Global Advanced Research Journal of Arts and Humanities* 2, no. 1 (Januari 2013): 001–006.

² Irving E. Rouse, "The Logos in the Gospel of John," *Review & Expositor* 32, no. 4 (Oktober 1935): 388–404, <https://doi.org/10.1177/003463733503200403>.

and literary traditions.³ Hendricks explores the concept of logos in John's Gospel from both oral and literary perspectives, and how philosophical and historical interpretations of logos influenced John's community. He also explains how logos in the Greek tradition is used by schools of philosophy such as Platonism and Stoicism. For Hendricks, logos in the Greek view, and *davar* in the Jewish tradition, influences how people construct communication and how it shapes people's understanding, particularly communication that is divine or that comes from God who is manifest in the logos itself.

Based on the research results from both Kuwornu-Adjaottor, Rouse, and Hendricks, it reinforces the researcher's view, to place the concept of logos as a topic that continues to be relevant in research and study, because there are so many things that need to be elaborated related to the concept of logos itself. Like Kuwornu-Adjaottor who tries to explain logos in terms of terms through critical studies, but also looks at its historical aspects like Rouse, and even looks at the implications of logos in other fields, for example for Hendricks, philosophically. Thus, there are still new spaces open to be the target of study for the concept of logos itself. One of the fields that is very relevant to the concept of logos is Christian Religious Education. As an integral part both scientifically and practically, the implications of the concept of logos for Christian Religious Education will open new spaces and horizons, that the study of logos is not only a biblical-theological study but can also touch other domains concretely. This novelty encourages researchers to conduct a study of the logos in the Gospel of John, and how the implications of the logos concept for Christian Religious Education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses the hermeneutic method with a historical criticism approach to trace the situation in which the text appeared, but also through this effort seeks to understand the text in accordance with its historical context without excluding other comprehensive aspects of the interpretation of a text. This method will also be used to connect the theological understanding of the Logos with its practical implications in Christian religious education. Information on the historical background of a book is available from several sources. The first is from good commentaries, many of which contain detailed and up-to-date summaries. Secondly, there are introductions to both the Old and New Testaments which interact more extensively than commentaries. Third are dictionaries and encyclopedias which have separate articles not only on the book but on authors, themes and background issues. These sources are used to study the initial data for interpreting a text. The value of this preliminary reading is to shift from the present perspective to be aware of the past situation behind the text.

Some things to consider according to Osborne are (1) Authorship which is an important aspect of historical criticism investigation. This aspect can help to place a text in history. (2) Dating which is an interpretive tool to determine the meaning of a text. The year a text was written will greatly affect its meaning. (3) The intended audience plays an important role in deriving the meaning of the text. Their circumstances determine the content of the text. (4)

³ Gavin Hendricks, "A philosophical and historical interpretation of the concept logos in John 1:1 from the perspective of orality and literacy," *Scriptura : Journal for Contextual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa* 113, no. 1 (Januari 2014): 1–12.

Purpose and themes are important aspects as aids to interpretation. It is important to have a basic knowledge of the situations in a book and the themes with which the author deals with these issues.⁴ Thus there are methodical and systematic steps taken to arrive at an understanding of the text, especially the text of the Gospel of John 1.

In addition to conducting a historical-critical analysis of the text of John 1:1-18, this research also aims to link the theological understanding of Logos with its practical implications in Christian religious education. By understanding the Logos as the divine principle underlying creation and redemption, this research will explore how this concept can be applied in the teaching of Christianity, character building, and curriculum development in Christian education. This approach not only emphasizes the historical understanding of the text, but also its relevance in an educational context that aims to shape learners' faith and spirituality.

RESULT

The Gospel of John

Like the synoptic gospels, John describes Jesus' life journey from the beginning to the Crucifixion and Resurrection, although there are some distinctive differences. Because of the differences with the other three gospels, when one begins to read John's gospel, it is as if the reader is transported to another world than that depicted in the other three gospels. In the three synoptic gospels Jesus is portrayed relatively simply but also with vivid imagery. He shows himself in a series of miracles and proclamations. In contrast, the tone and atmosphere of John's Gospel is rather mysterious and even mystical. In John's Gospel, Jesus speaks in long discourses that are often difficult to follow.⁵ Some of the characteristics of John's gospel include that according to the synoptic gospels, Jesus went to Jerusalem only once, at the end of his ministry, but according to John he went there on four occasions. Another distinctive feature is Jesus' relationship with John the Baptist. According to the synoptics Jesus does not appear in public until John is imprisoned, while in John they both work at the same time. Another point is that according to the Synoptists Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples at sunrise; according to John he died the previous evening, during the preparation for the Passover, when the Passover lamb was slaughtered in the temple.⁶

On the question of authorship, tradition says that this Gospel was written by John b. Zebedee, a disciple of Jesus. However, there are many doubts, such as how John, a fisherman from Galilee, used such good Greek, or if he was an eyewitness because he relied so much on tradition and absorbed ideas that did not simply come from Jesus. He is also equated with the beloved disciple who appears several times in John's Gospel. It is therefore difficult to determine the exact name of the author of this gospel, but the author is certainly a person who was deeply involved in this community. Speaking of community, it seems that the early readers

⁴ Grant R. Osborne, *Spiral Hermeneutika: Pengantar komperhensif bagi penafsiran Alkitab* (Surabaya: Momentum, 2012). 21

⁵ C. Groenen, *Pengantar ke dalam Perjanjian Baru: mengenal latar belakang dari tiap-tiap karangannya* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1980). 144

⁶ Willi Marxsen, *Pengantar Perjanjian Baru: Pendekatan Kritis terhadap Masalah-masalahnya* (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 2009). 310

were a solitary group. The language they spoke was Greek, they knew little Aramaic or Hebrew, so the author needed to translate Jewish terms into Greek.⁷

In the development of New Testament studies, the Gospel of John is thought to have been written between 90-100 CE in the region of Ephesus (Asia Minor), emerging within the highly complex context of the early Christian community.⁸ The Johannine Community played a vital role in the formation and editing of this fourth Gospel, especially in the development of sophisticated theological concepts such as the Logos. Raymond E. Brown identifies that this community developed through several phases, where the tension between Jewish and Hellenistic elements catalyzed the formulation of John's distinctive Christology.⁹ This community, which was initially firmly rooted in Jewish tradition, faced serious challenges when interacting with Hellenistic thought, especially in attempting to articulate Jesus' identity as the incarnate Logos. The historical context of the writing of John's Gospel cannot be separated from the socio-political situation of the late first century, where the Christian community faced expulsion from the synagogue (apostynagōgos) around 85-90 CE, as reflected in John 9:22; 12:42; and 16:2.¹⁰ In this period, the concept of Logos developed at the intersection of two major currents of thought: the Jewish tradition of Wisdom and the Hellenistic philosophy of Logos as a universal rational principle. Craig S. Keener demonstrates how the Ephesian setting, as a center of Hellenistic learning and the nexus of various religious traditions, provided a crucial backdrop for the articulation of John's theology.¹¹

The process of composition of John's Gospel itself is believed to have taken place in several stages, starting from oral traditions which were then compiled in writing around 90 CE, with the final revision completed around 100 CE.¹² Martin Hengel argues that the concept of Logos in John was the result of deep and sustained theological reflection within the community.¹³ This historical dimension is essential to understanding how the proclamation "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14) was not just a theological statement, but also a response to the community's struggle to define their identity amidst the religious-philosophical plurality of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Logos in The Gospel of John

Speaking of the idea of Logos, the first chapter of the Gospel of John is one of the most famous passages in the Bible. This short passage is written with great care to give it deep meaning and

⁷ Samuel B. Hakh, *Perjanjian Baru: Sejarah. Pengantar dan Pokok-pokok Teologisnya* (Bandung: Bina Media Informatika, 2010). 302-303

⁸ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, ed. Francis J. Moloney (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 199-206

⁹ Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 171-182

¹⁰ J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 46-66

¹¹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, vol. 1, (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 81-139.

¹² Paul N. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus: Modern Foundations Reconsidered*, (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 37-41

¹³ Martin Hengel, "The Prologue of the Gospel of John as the Gateway to Christological Truth," in *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham and Carl Mosser (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 265-294

theological clarity. Ἐν ἀρχῇ (in the beginning) ἦν (was) ὁ (the) λόγος (Word) *In the beginning* is meant to remind readers of this Gospel of the opening sentence of the first book of the OT, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" The word used in the LXX (Septuagint) translation is the exact same word used by the evangelist John. Genesis uses the word to refer to the creation of all things, so John's use of the same word refers to the same theme of creation. The difference is that in Gen. 1:1 uses the verb "to create" after the phrase *in the beginning*, which refers to the work of God in creating the heavens and the earth, while in John's Gospel the work of creation referred to in Genesis is only explained in verse 3. So, John actually explains the meaning of *In the beginning* earlier than what the book of Genesis wants to explain. He wants to say that *something already existed* before God did the work of creation, namely the existence of the Logos. Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν (was) ὁ λόγος explains the Logos is the *Being* that existed in the beginning, before all creation existed.

After Ἐν ἀρχῇ John uses a noun with an article (ὁ λόγος, not just λόγος). The use of the article is significant because John wants to show that the *Logos* is a *Person*. Therefore, the word *in the beginning* in this passage refers to the "time" before creation existed, before everything existed the *Logos* had been the beginning of everything. What is called existing does not come into existence by itself but "comes into existence" because it is created, while the *Logos* is not created or made, and He *exists* by Himself. Instead, He is the One who makes what exists to exist. The Logos can be understood from the relationship of the use of ἀρχῇ in Jn 1:1 and Gen 1:1. In Gen 1:1, the actor of creation is God (אֱלֹהִים) while in Jn 1:3 the *Logos* is stated to be the actor of the creation of the universe. Therefore, it can be understood that the *Logos* in Jn 1:1 also refers to God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

In Greek grammar, when the Logos is designated with a *definite article*, it is described as having been together or having *fellowship* with the *Theos* who is also designated with a definite article. Earlier it was explained that the Logos in Jn 1:1 is אֱלֹהִים (read: Elohim) which in the LXX translation uses ὁ θεὸς in the nominative or subject case. *The Logos (Word)* is *Theos* but now John says that The Logos or The *Word* was, from the beginning, in union with *The God*. This is where the use of the article becomes very significant. *Logos*, with the article, is the one who existed from eternity and *Theos*, with the article, is the one who existed when *Logos* existed. Both existed before *Logos* created all things. Both are Persons who existed before anything existed.

In John 1:1 the word πρὸς is used together with the accusative case (τὸν θεόν), but the use with the accusative still has other meanings, one of which is in describing relationships. The word πρὸς generally means *to, toward, with*. However, in its usage, this word can have several meanings depending on the context of the sentence. The evangelist John specifically and carefully places the word πρὸς together with the accusative case to explain that Logos and Theos existed together from the beginning and not only existed, but Logos and Theos were in a special fellowship. Thus, the evangelist John wants to say that the Logos has existed since before all things existed, He existed from eternity, and He is not a creation. In this eternal existence, Logos has been together with Theos in a special and eternal fellowship. The existence of fellowship between Logos and Theos would indicate that they are different (distinguishable). But Logos is the same as Theos in one thing, namely Godhood. Logos and Theos are God in reference to the same essence, which is the essence of God Himself.

Understanding Logos

Verse 2 is like a repetition of the second part of Verse 1. However, there is a difference that in verse 2 there is the addition of "in the beginning." This repetition was done by the evangelist John so that the readers could really understand what he meant in verse 1. Another reason mentioned by scholars regarding the repetition of the *fellowship* between Logos and Theos is that their existence is *in the beginning*, but they are not in opposition. So, Logos and Theos are not like the gods of Greek mythology who are at war with each other. Logos and Theos existed and were in harmonious fellowship from eternity. The Word is God just as the Father is God. He is in close communion with God and lives with God. Kanagaraj and Kemp assert: "The Logos is theos, because he exists in the closest union of being and life with ho theos. As Bruce puts it, "The Word shared the nature and being of God, or ... was an extension of the personality of God."¹⁴ Everything or anything outside of God was made; and everything that was made was made by the Logos. The phrase "all things" in vs.3a added to the phrase "nothing" in vs.3b is meant to emphasize that "nothing" is an exception to what the Logos created, as Ridderbos asserts: "The emphatic position that 'all things' has in vs.3 and the addition that 'nothing' is excepted from what has been made by the Word."¹⁵ In verse 3, the relationship between the Logos and the world is shown through the phrase "all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." All things (πάντα, *panta*) display a broad sense, referring to the world, i.e. *the universe of created things*.¹⁶ In the context of this verse, πάντα ("all things") is stronger than the phrase οὐδὲ ἓν ("nothing"), showing not only the totality of "all things" but also the diversity of the created "all things".

John Calvin asserts: "All things were made by him, having declared that the Word is God and proclaimed His divine essence, he goes on to prove His divinity from His works."¹⁷ John declares that "all things were made by him." The preposition "by" (from the Greek word διά, *he*) implies a mediator which describes Christ as the mediator of creation. Similarly, the Logos is God's personal agent in creating all things. Whether the action is still in design or has already been carried out is all through the Logos Himself. The Logos existed before creation, and He created everything from nothing. Nothing existed before God created it, or nothing existed in the beginning apart from God Himself. Therefore, the expression "all things were made by Him" is meant to show that the Logos is God and has revealed His divine essence, and the Logos proves His divinity through His works. The Word (*logos*) is repeated by John in the sense: "the same one who was the Word, the Life and the Light, has now become flesh." Kanagaraj and Kemp assert: "Became flesh is incarnation, which means quite literally *enfleshment*".¹⁸ This is to speak of the incarnation of the logos itself. Flesh (*sarks*) refers to the

¹⁴ Jey J. Kanagaraj dan Ian S. Kemp, *The Gospel According to John* (Singapore: Asia Theological Association, 2002). 64

¹⁵ Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel According to John A Theological Commentary* (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2018). 36

¹⁶ Johann Albrecht Bengel, Charlton T. Lewis, dan Marvin Richardson Vincent, *New Testament Word Studies*, Kregel Reprint Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971). 544

¹⁷ David W. Torrance dan Thomas F. Torrance, ed., *Calvin's Commentaries: The Gospel According to St. John 1-10* (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1972). 9

¹⁸ Kanagaraj dan Kemp, *The Gospel According to John*. 121

human body or in the meaning of this discussion is Jesus as a human being as Bengel asserts: "*Flesh ... denotes the human body, or as here, the man himself, named from his visible part. ... (and viewed especially on the side of his weakness and mortality.*"¹⁹ So the meaning of "flesh" refers to all human existence with all the weaknesses that exist in humans and a body that is bound to perish. Christ's body was a real body, born of the virgin Mary, not just an appearance of flesh as Docetism taught. Nonetheless, His body was sinless, as the term "flesh" only describes human nature, excluding sin. Lenski asserts: "*...while the Word became flesh, he did not become sinful flesh; for the word flesh itself, as describing our nature, does not include sin.*"²⁰

In connection with the word meat, there is the word "becoming" (ἐγένετο, *egeneto*) from a literal perspective can be interpreted as: "*a person or thing changes its property and enters into a new condition, becoming something that it was not before.*"²¹ The use of the aorist tense verb in this Greek word would indicate that this is the only decisive event or a particular event in history, but it also has the meaning: "*a temporary sojourn*". Lenski asserts that: "*the Logos remained σὰρξ only until his redemptive work was finished, then not to discard the tent of his flesh but to transfer his human nature into the Holy of Holies above by the miracle of his glorification and ascension*".²² To affirm the historical reality of the incarnation, the evangelist John testified that he and other believers had actually seen the existence of the incarnation with their own eyes, as John stated in 1 John 1:1, "The things which were from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have witnessed, which we have handled with our hands, the Word of life-these we write to you."²³ Thus, believers use the word incarnation to express their belief that the birth of Jesus Christ marks the entry of the eternal and divine Son of God into the life of humanity. The historic Christian position is that Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man.

John As a Witness of The Light

The discussion of the logos in creation history then turns to another topic that is quite different from the previous section, connecting the beginning of verse 6 with verse 5 is the theme of light; a man has been sent by God to testify to the light that has shone in the darkness. Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος is used to begin this verse. The same expression used by the evangelist Mark when introducing John, the Baptist with the word ἐγενετο which can be translated has come, has appeared. The beginning of John's gospel (1:1-2) begins with the word ἦν in the imperfect tense, describing what happened before creation, then in verse 3 changes to the use of the aorist form, ἐγενετο, when he begins to talk about the history of creation. Similarly, in verse 6, the aorist use of ἐγενετο indicates that the story moves in historical time.²⁴

¹⁹ Bengel, Lewis, dan Vincent, *New Testament Word Studies*. 121

²⁰ R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress, 2008).

²¹ Kanagaraj dan Kemp, *The Gospel According to John*. 121

²² Lenski, *Interpretation of St. John's Gospel*. 75

²³ Kanagaraj dan Kemp, *The Gospel According to John*. 122

²⁴ John McHugh dan Graham Stanton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on John 1-4* (London, New York: Continuum International Pub. Group : Bloomsbury ; T & T Clark, 2009).

John was commissioned to be a witness who proclaimed the light. It is clearly stated that John was not the light, but he preached about the light. Of course, the light is Christ. The use of the aorist verb indicates that John did not continue to witness, but that he had completed his task. He had witnessed to the world. The task of witnessing was not an end, but the goal was that through him all would believe. The verb believe is not in the continuum which could be significant because John came to make people decide, to determine the certainty of faith.²⁵ The evangelist John brings up the concept of light to point to Christ as the light, which enlightens all men. Christ is the true light. He is the one who enlightens all people, there is no debate about the true light referring to Christ. The Logos gives light to all men, not just to certain believers. This is a common teaching in the New Testament about revelation given to all people, or in John's concept known as *general illumination* which is the work of the Logos itself.²⁶

The use of the term κόσμος is to show that the Logos and the light came into the world where people live and dwell. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν where ἦν is almost always used to indicate something permanent, even eternal. The repeated use of this word would indicate first that light is present in the Logos. Secondly, the Logos has been in the world since creation, and thirdly, even though its presence was initially rejected, it came to them in the world they lived in.²⁷ The evangelist John did not want to leave the impression that no one responded to the Logos. Many did not respond, but there were some who did. John now turns his attention to them. To these people is given the right to become children of God. Although the New Testament sees God as the Father of all people, paradoxically it does not assume that all people are children of God. God's attitude towards all people is that of a Father. All are His children in the sense that He makes them so, and that He provides for them. But people are His children in the fullest sense only when they respond to what He did for them in Christ. When they receive the Logos, they are born again into the royal family of God. Only then do they truly become children of God.²⁸

Then the Logos is again discussed by the evangelist John, this time the Logos is described as having become human. The Greek word used here is σὰρξ which is also understood as flesh. The Logos, which was originally described as something transcendental, as a *divine being* has now manifested in the flesh, becoming human. Where the human being dwells among humans and humans have seen the majesty of the Logos. That majesty was received by Him as the only begotten Son of the Father. Through Him man saw God and His love for all mankind. John's role is again shown as a witness. He reminds his preacher that the One who came after John is greater than him, because before John existed, He already existed. John describes Him as loving; His love never ceases, and He never ceases to bless His people. The evangelist John alluded to the practice of the Law that the law of God was received by the people through Moses. But according to John, God's love and faithfulness revealed through Jesus Christ, through the Logos, is greater for His people. For no one has seen God except the only begotten Son of the Father, who is like the Father and closely related to Him, the One who reveals the Father to men, to His children, the Logos who was manifested in the flesh as a man.

²⁵ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971). 91

²⁶ Morris. 95

²⁷ McHugh dan Stanton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on John 1-4*. 40

²⁸ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*. 98

Christian Religious Education

In simple terms, education can be understood as an effort to inform those who do not know. And more broadly changing a person or group of people from a bad way of life towards a better one, so that their thoughts, attitudes, and skills are empowered to be useful for others and their environment. The etymology of the word education provides important clues about the nature of the activity itself. The English word (*education*) comes from the Latin *ducare* (and a word of the same origin *ducere*) meaning "to lead, direct, or lead" and the prefix *e*, meaning "outward". Thus, based on the origin of the word, education means the activity of "leading out".²⁹ The act of "leading outward" can be understood as the process of leading out of ignorance, stupidity, and other things that seem to restrain human life, towards a better change.

Groome further defines *Christian Religious Education* specifically that "*Christian Religious Education is political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the story of the Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's Kingdom the seeds of which are already among us.*" (Christian Religious Education is a political activity with pilgrims in time that intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the story of the Christian faith community, and to the vision of God's Kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us). Meanwhile, according to Boehlke, Christian Religious Education is a church service that intends to lead people of all ages to fulfill their calling as servants of God by learning, how to decide in meaningful matters according to their respective personal abilities".³⁰ In the formulation of Calvin's opinion, Boehlke argues that Christian Religious Education is the nourishment of the minds of believers and their children with the Word of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through a number of learning experiences carried out by the church, so that in themselves they produce continuous spiritual growth manifested more deeply through self-devotion to the God of the Lord Jesus Christ in the form of acts of love towards others.³¹

Therefore, based on the definitions of Christian Religious Education, it can be understood that Christian Religious Education is a service call for the church that needs to be carried out from time to time. Therefore, Christian Religious Education is pursued deliberately by the church because God wants it, meaning that CRE is God's mandate for His people and must be done, not to be ignored, Christian Religious Education is side by side with other sciences taught at school, its reach is the change of students' lives. And in the congregation, Christian Religious Education provides a basic understanding of the purpose and will of God in the guidance of the Holy Spirit for believers so that there is a deepening of the Word of God and church teachings for the present life and impact on the future. In the sense that believers will see the connection of their lives with God's past, present and future works to make the believer a true Christian. Because Christian Religious Education is a true education. Talking

²⁹ Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Berbagi Cerita dan Visi Kita* (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 2010). 5

³⁰ Robert R. Boehlke, *Peranan Keputusan dalam PAK* (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 1961). 102

³¹ Robert R. Boehlke, *Sejarah Perkembangan Pemikiran dan Praktek PAK* (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 1994). 413

about true education, Christian Religious Education is an effort to build a complete human being, in other words, how to humanize other humans.³²

Understanding Christian Religious Education conceptually means seeing it as more than a teaching methodology or a practical education system. In essence, Christian Religious Education is a theological-philosophical construct that includes a deep understanding of human nature (theological anthropology), the existential purpose of human life in relation to God (teleology), and the process of transformation involving the spiritual-transcendent dimension. Christian Religious Education, in a more fundamental sense, is a manifestation of God's own pedagogical revelation - God as the Great Teacher educating His people through salvation history. This concept is evident in the ancient Jewish tradition where Torah was not only understood as law, but also as divine teaching or instruction that shaped the identity of the people. In the context of the New Testament, Jesus himself displays a model of education that goes beyond the transfer of knowledge, creating deep transformation through an incarnational teacher-student relationship. Thus, Christian Religious Education at the conceptual level is an effort to understand and implement God's pattern in educating His people, which includes cognitive, affective, and transformative aspects within the framework of the covenant between God and humans.

Implications of Logos through Christian Religious Education

The analysis of the concept of Logos in John 1:1-18 does not only produce exegetical understanding, but further opens discussion space for the development of a new paradigm in Christian Religious Education (CRE). This section analyzes in depth how the results of the interpretation of the Logos provide a conceptual framework that transforms the understanding and practice of CRE. Using Groome's theoretical framework of CRE as “political activity with pilgrims” and Boehlke's view of CRE as “the nourishment of believers' minds”, it can be seen how specific elements of the Logos concept provide theological dimensions that deepen and enrich both understandings. The interpretation has identified three main theological aspects of the Logos that have fundamental significance for the CRE. First, the pre-existence and cosmological role of the Logos (Jn 1:1-3) provides a unique epistemological foundation. The interpretation shows that the Logos is not merely a philosophical concept, but a divine reality that has existed from eternity and is actively involved in creation. This understanding transforms the epistemology of CRE from a mere process of knowledge transfer to participation in God's ongoing work of creation and providence. This requires CRE to develop a methodology that integrates the revelative and rational dimensions, where knowledge is not separated from the experience of encountering the Logos.

Second, the incarnational dimension of the Logos (John 1:14) provides a transformative pedagogical paradigm. The interpretation reveals that the incarnation is God's act of fully entering human reality - *σὰρξ ἐγένετο* (becoming flesh) - not just a temporary manifestation. The implication for CRE is the need to develop a truly incarnational approach to learning. This means that CRE must enter deeply into the socio-cultural context of learners and use language

³² Denny A. Tarumingi, “PAK Terhadap Lansia,” *Exodus Fakultas Teologi* 21 (2007). 79

and concepts that can be understood in their frame of mind and develop learning methods that bridge the gap between theological truth and lived experience.

Third, the Logos' revelative function as the ἐξηγήσατο (revealer) of God (Jn 1:18) provides teleological direction for the CRE. The analysis of the word ἐξηγήσατο shows the meaning of “explaining completely” or “revealing completely”. The implication is that CRE should be understood as a comprehensive process of revelation, not merely the transmission of information. The ultimate goal is to enable learners to experience a transformative encounter with God through Christ.

In Groome's framework, these theological aspects enrich the understanding of the CRE as a “political activity with the pilgrims”. The pre-existence of the Logos confirms that this “political activity” is rooted in divine reality. The incarnational dimension provides a model of how this “togetherness” should be realized. The revelative function directs the “pilgrimage” towards a transformative encounter with God. While in Boehlke's understanding of the “nourishment of the believer's mind”, aspects of the Logos provide a new dimension. The pre-existence of the Logos extends the concept of “reason” beyond mere rationality. The incarnation provides a model of how “fertilization” should be done contextually. The revelative function directs “fertilization” towards holistic transformation.

In its implementation, curriculum development should reflect a deep integration between doctrinal understanding of the Logos and the experience of encountering Him. Learning materials need to be designed not only to focus on knowledge of Christ, but also to create space for transformative experiences with Him. This can be realized using learning methods that allow for a meaningful dialogue between the biblical text and the context of life, along with the integration of spiritual practices that facilitate a personal encounter with the Logos. Learning methodologies must also be developed to reflect the incarnational characteristics of Logos in depth. This means adopting a contextual approach that genuinely considers the socio-cultural background of learners, while developing learning models that integrate cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions thoroughly. In the process, it is necessary to create spaces for meaningful dialogue that allow learners to find the personal relevance of every truth learned in the context of their daily lives.

In terms of learning evaluation, there needs to be an expansion of perspective that goes beyond cognitive measurement. The evaluation process should include the development of instruments that are able to measure the spiritual transformation that takes place in learners, paying special attention to aspects of Christian character building. More than that, evaluation also needs to include an assessment of learners' ability to integrate the theological understanding they have gained into the context of their daily practical lives. More fundamentally, this understanding requires a reconsideration of the position of CRE as a sub-discipline of Practical Theology. CRE can no longer be viewed simply as a methodology for teaching religion but must be understood as a sacred space where encounters with the living Logos are possible. This demands the development of a more comprehensive theology of education, which integrates the Christology of Logos with learning theory and educational practice.

Thus, the implications of the Logos concept for CRE go beyond the methodological dimension, touching the ontological and epistemological aspects of Christian education itself.

The interpretation of the pre-existence, incarnation, and revelative function of the Logos provides a theological framework that transforms the understanding of the nature, process, and purpose of CRE. This transformation paves the way for renewal in the theory and practice of CRE that is more in line with the nature of the Logos as the personal and transformative revelation of God.

CONCLUSIONS ANF SUGGESTIONS

Research on the concept of Logos in John 1:1-18 has opened a rich understanding of theological meaning as well as deep implications for Christian Religious Education. Through the analysis that has been done, it can be concluded that the concept of Logos in this passage not only shows the pre-existence and divinity of Christ, but also reveals the incarnational and revelative dimensions that provide a theological foundation for the development of transformative CRE. Understanding the Logos as pre-existent, incarnational, and revelatory provides a conceptual framework that enriches the theory and practice of CRE. This requires CRE to develop a more holistic and transformative approach, which not only focuses on the transmission of knowledge, but also creates space for personal encounters with the living Logos. For further development, it is suggested that churches and Christian educational institutions can develop curriculum and learning methodologies that consciously integrate the theological dimensions of the Logos concept. More specific follow-up research is also needed on how to implement this understanding in different learning contexts, including in local church settings, Christian schools, and theological higher education. Thus, the theological richness of the Logos concept can truly enrich and transform the practice of CRE in various ministry contexts.

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