

Pastoral Counseling Services For LGBT Congregations

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Abstract

LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) people are currently becoming a topic of conversation in Indonesian society. The debate about LGBT is also viewed from various aspects of the life of the Indonesian people, especially from the moral and spiritual aspects. Some accept, and some also reject the existence of LGBT people. However, the church generally rejects their existence and excommunicates and punishes them. This attitude does not describe the church as a place to show love. LGBT people need a touch of love from the church with pastoral assistance. Through pastoral care provided by the church, LGBT people can be helped to experience recovery through a touch of Christ's love.

Keywords

LGBT; pastoral care; ministry; recovery



I. Introduction

The phenomenon of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) today has become a center of discussion globally. The development of LGBT is increasingly widespread and very fast over time. The term LGBT began to appear or be used in the 1990s to replace their gender identity. The term LGBT is an elaboration of Lesbian, a term for women who have a sexual attraction to the same sex, namely women. Gay is a term for men who have a sexual attraction to other men. Bisexual is a sexual attraction between a woman and a male and female man. Transgender is a sexual attraction between a man and a woman by changing herself to resemble a man or woman, for example, a transgender person (So'langi et al., 2021).

LGBT has also become a hot topic because of a community movement that shows its existence in society. LGBT began to enter and have an impact in foreign countries. However, LGBT also has an influence and impact in Indonesia. For example, in certain areas, such as Yogyakarta and Bali, which some time ago had same-sex marriages among the LGBT community (Bayu Prakoso et al., 2020).

LGBT is a sexual deviation spread in various circles today, including among Christians. The church, which has been integrated with a social life, is also affected by this LGBT. This can happen because there is an LGBT community activity that dares to show its existence in public. The development of LGBT can accelerate rapidly also because of technological developments, primarily through platforms social media. They feel safe through social media platforms because LGBT people can hide their identities. They use line, Whatsapp, Instagram, Twitter, and various specific platforms for LGBT people.

One of the obligations of the church in helping to restore LGBT people can be done through pastoral counseling. In carrying out this recovery, it is necessary to have a correct and objective understanding of them and have sensitivity and vigilance in assisting. The assistance provided does not hurt the feelings of LGBT people, who are also very sensitive. If

the approach taken hurts their feelings, it will have a fatal impact on the recovery of the LGBT community. Therefore, pastoral assistance for LGBT people must also be done carefully but does not violate the principles of God's Word by daring to compromise to sin social deviation, which LGBT people also commit. Pastoral care focuses on individuals who also need guidance and direction to realize their existence which is very vulnerable to falling into the sin of sexual perversion. Therefore, the author raised the title Pastoral Counseling Service Against the LGBT Congregation.

II. Research Methods

The method written by the author as this research is a study method (library research). A literature study can be interpreted as a study used to collect library data assisted by various materials such as books, journals, magazines, documents, and so on (Mirzaqon. 2018: 3). This article will examine how to treat LGBT people with pastoral care because serving LGBT people is different from serving non-LGBT people. First of all, the author would raise an argument-arguments posed by various LGBT (So'langi et al., 2021). Then the author will also provide a refutation of the argument-argument that through the viewpoint of psychology, biology, and theological writers will also take on a variety of literature existing to express a view of the Christian ethic against an LGBT identity.

III. Discussion

The question about LGBT is why and how someone can have such sexual orientation. Many views have sprung up from a biological and psychological perspective and Christian circles (from a theological perspective). What is happening out there, especially in the Christian world in the west, is that many people try to use the Bible to support legalizing LGBT. Therefore, the author will divide the discussion into several parts to discuss and explain this.

3.1 The Bible's View of LGBT People

The Bible says in Genesis 1:26-27: Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,[a] and over all the creatures that move along the ground." Moreover, overall the earth and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. "So God created man." The man was created in his image. He created him in God's image; he created man and woman. "God created man as male and female (not male and male; or female and female; Or male becomes female and female, and vice versa), and is ordered to give birth and breed in the next section. Genesis 1:28 "God blessed them, and God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

The movement of pro-Lesbian, Homosexual, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) in Indonesia today is very worrying. Someone who experienced this sexual orientation deviation previously concealed their identity. Now they dare to show their existence or their existence in public space. The freedom of liberalism is at the forefront of defending LGBT people, even fighting for them through three paths, academic, social movements, and politics. Liberalists are also at the forefront of supporting ongoing and structured activities, protecting human rights (HAM). (Tinggi & Real, 2020).

Leviticus 18:22 says, “Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable”. Homosexuality is one thing that is forbidden and also an abomination to God. Everyone who commits all abominations will be punished as written in verse 29 ‘Everyone who does any of these detestable things—such persons must be cut off from their people.’ With the above verse, we can see that homosexuality is a very unbiblical behavior. Romans 1:26-27 says that the person who replaces natural intercourse with unnatural intercourse will also be punished for his error. In Greek, he uses *patheatimias*, which means excellent lust that is not praiseworthy (So’langi et al., 2021). Mark 2:17 also says that Jesus came into the world, not for the righteous but for sinners; Likewise, the church should also accept all people without any exception to get God's love, including LGBT people. The church should provide a service that needs help for those who have a strange relationship and provide an affirmation that the sin of LGBT is an abomination in the eyes of God (Suseno et al., 2021).

In his book 'Issues Facing Christian Today' (1984), John Stott in-depth and broadly responds to LGBT people. He begins with advice: not to make oneself a judge and condemn those in the circle. We are sinners, so it is also not worthy to justify ourselves and curse others.

First, all of us are human beings. There has never been a phenomenon where 'humans are gay.' Only human beings have been created in the image and likeness of God. However, they have fallen into sin with all the greatness and tragedy that the paradox has applied, including sexual potential and sexual problems.

Second, all of us are sexual beings. Regarding our sexuality, according to the Bible or experience, it is essential for our humanity. Maybe angels are not sexless creatures, but humans are not. When Allah created man, Allah created male and female. Many women were active in colonial struggles. These women were not feminist; they did not see tension between their own struggles and those of their community at large (Birgani, 2019). By alluding to talk of sex, we are referring to a conversation close to the center of our concern. The problem is ourselves, which may also be strengthened but also threatened. So, the point of this discussion is to demand an extraordinary level of sensitivity.

Third, all of us are sinners, including sexual sinners. Of all Christian teachings, there is not a single part of our existence that is not polluted or turned upside down by sin, including our sexuality. It is true what Dr. Merville Vincent of the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School wrote in 1972: 'I suspect that in the eyes of God we are all sexual perverts.

I doubt whether there is one person who has never put his mind into his heart, which also deviates from the ideal and perfect sexuality as Allah wills'. No one (except Jesus of Nazareth being the sole exception) is without sexual sin. Therefore, let no human being who wants to be part of this conversation come with an attitude of moral superiority. He is the holiest of all people because humans are in God's court. All of us are in dire need of forgiveness. -His. Furthermore, sexual sin is not the only sin, nor is it most certainly the heaviest sin. Arrogance and hypocrisy are sins that are more serious than that.

Fourth, we are human, sexual, and also sinners. Here I assume that the readers are Christians. (Sipayung & Sihombing, 2018)

3.2 The Purpose and Function of Pastoral Counseling Services

The word pastoral is a word that comes from the Latin pastor, which means pastor. Pastoral can also be interpreted in two senses: doing shepherding and studying shepherding. Pastoral care is a significant part of the science of pastoralism, which is to care for people who also need pastoral care. Jesus is the ultimate shepherd who has also revealed Himself as a servant figure: He came into the world to serve and not to be served (Goa, 2018). Pastoral ministry is something that Jesus Christ wants. All congregation members must be nurtured,

supported, and shaped until they grow into a whole. A pastoral ministry is an act that arises from grace, and mercy is healing in all human life. Pastoral care must be a matter of concern because we must listen and pay attention to everyone we serve. We must understand and judge whether what he said happened and experienced them from the gestures. Our role there is also to be friends so they cannot be awkward to tell stories (Messakh, 2020). Van Beek once said that the function of pastoral counseling assistance is to provide help. Pastoral counseling has the same function, but the approach is different. The following are the functions of mentoring and pastoral counseling, namely:

The function of guidance (guiding). The function of pastoral guidance is to help everyone in confusion make a definite choice or a clear choice and not a choice that impacts the future or present psychological state.

The function of sustaining (sustaining). There are various kinds of difficulties faced by the people, and sometimes they are difficult to handle on their own. For example, when they lose their parents who have died or their loved ones, when they are in a condition or condition that is sick and not recovering or loses something precious to them, it will potentially trigger a hostile atmosphere. Refers to anxiety as well as hopelessness that is difficult to overcome. However, a healing Word of God says, The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down (Ps. 145:14). The function of sustaining the goal is for sick or injured people to survive in conditions that require doing and overcoming experienced difficult things. This sustaining function can help everyone so that they can accept reality, be independent of circumstances that make them grow wholly and entirely. Through this pastoral service, which supports each of them, they have needed or can be said to be a necessity. The presence of a pastor is an opportunity to support, accompany, and strengthen people who are experiencing a crisis.

Function healing (healing). Humans are individual creatures but also social creatures. Humans are creatures who are aware of their existence. Man has a body, a spirit, and a soul (1 Thess. 5:23). Humans also have feelings, a will, thoughts, and even other things. The healing function can also demand people express their feelings in their hearts. Through an open relationship of interaction, and can also be brought to a relationship with God through prayer, study, reading of the Bible, and a pastoral conversation. The healing function is to overcome all damage, replace it with a whole, and lead the person to live and walk in a better direction.

So the function of healing itself in terms of pastoral care is comprehensive, relating to the existence of a people as individuals and social beings.

The function of repairing the relationship (reconciling). This function is more to help people forgive mistakes that people have made to them; it aims to give forgiveness. Clinebell says that the function of repairing is tantamount to helping people to have good relationships that have previously been damaged, relationships between themselves and with others. The shepherd's presence is to try to find a way out of the problem by reestablishing a relationship that has been severed.

The function of nurturing or maintaining (nurturing). The process of caring for the church is a form of maturity. David also wrote that he could find comfort through the rod and the staff because he realized that God was his shepherd. The latter never allowed himself to become immature (Psalm 23:1-6) by the shepherd to discipline and also guide each of his shepherded sheep. David always trained himself to be a mature person. The responsibility of shepherding also cannot be separated from a process of maturation for everyone who is shepherded. Pastors must also be able to provide opportunities for each congregation to solve the problems they are facing without being dependent on the pastor himself. This function aims to enable everyone to develop the potential within them. The maturation process can also be done by allowing him to deal with and deal with the problems at hand. The level of

success in terms of maturation efforts should not be disputed. However, it must be a reference for shepherds to review for further handling.

God calls a shepherd to care for His children or His sheep. The reason is that God loves and also loves every human being, and also God sees that they also need attention and guidance for their lives. Humans are given the opportunity to live only once in the world and will return to the afterlife (Kholil, 2020).

In John 10, Jesus shows Himself as an example of a good shepherd so that people whom God has called to be a shepherd have an exemplary image of Jesus (Nugroho, 2019). Luke 15:4 also says that Jesus not only looked after and protected the children but also left the ninety-nine that were in the field and went to look for one until he found it. The church must be a place where everyone can find God's love. Everyone has different problems and different levels of difficulty. And presumably there is an optimistic attitude that there is still a chance to continue to rise from the fall, as long as there is a strong will from all parties to improve attitudes, pursue public interests, and the interests of the Church for the preaching of the good news (Sihombing, 2019). Therefore the church must provide pastoral services to help every congregation, including LGBT people, to introduce the truth of God's Word. Christ must be proclaimed to all people as the basis of true repentance and the source of power in the process of sanctifying life. LGBT people must be guided to live in the truth of God's word and genuinely repent and live in Jesus Christ, guiding them to recover and be renewed Agung Gunawan, (2016). LGBT people must be cared for by the church and lead them to experience restoration in Christ.

He was guiding function. The role of pastoral care. A guide not to play the role of shepherd choice decision-making. The Israelites' exodus from Egypt clearly illustrates God's guide and accompany them. When Moses saw Israel's behavior corrupted by idolatry, God still gave every Israelite a chance. They had to choose or decide whether to obey (Ex 32:25-26). But God always leads his people on the right path, as God's word reveals

"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures. he leads me beside quiet waters. he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake." (Ps. 23:1-3).). Because God has given an example, the existence of a shepherd must guide and guide the congregation to make choices based on the excellent example of the shepherd. For example, When the congregation wants to choose a job, the pastor's presence will only help guide the congregation. The advice that the pastor will have also expressed is a part that has been carefully considered and also does not conflict with a principle of faithful Christian. (Goa, 2018)

3.3 Steps for Pastoral Counseling Services for LGBT Congregations

Pastoral Services for LGBT people can help them experience healing, feel God's love, solve their problems and find healing. Accepting the presence of LGBT people in the church is not because they identify with LGBT relationships, but help them get out of all LGBT activities that are not fair that violate the truth of God's word, to help them understand God's love and practice God's word in their lives. Life. Churches and servants of God must be careful in serving LGBT people because LGBT people are susceptible and have to wait patiently because it takes a long process to guide LGBT people. When serving LGBT people, please do not force them to show change, but let them experience change slowly. Without external coercion, changes from the heart will be permanent. The church must also provide support to each of them and teach them to continue to hope in God that God will heal them and give them recovery because nothing is impossible, and for God, nothing is impossible (So'langi et al., 2021). The step taken in pastoral care is to help LGBT people. There are several ways in pastoral care to support these LGBT people and overcome the problems they

are experiencing, restoring the lives of LGBT people starting from small things, namely forgiveness. To guide these LGBT people in making decisions that impact or influence their lives. Heal wounds or things that have been damaged that LGBT people have experienced, direct, lead them to better paths, and help these LGBT people to develop every talent they have to be helpful in their lives. Later on. By giving teachings about God's word to these LGBT people, they can also know the truth and love from God that is so beautiful and true. For example, teaching about the character of Christ, God's love, surrendering to God, loving God and also fellow human beings, learning to be grateful, teaching about the importance of having integrity in life, also teaching to be a blessing to others, and teaching them can forgive. (Goa, 2018)

We need to understand that LGBT people are not sick or abnormal but sinners. Therefore the primary way to solve this problem is repentance, not just psychological and social rehabilitation. LGBT people even need to know that they will receive the gift of salvation in Christ. This will renew them, and According to Gunawan, if a Christian has an abnormal sexual orientation due to a traumatic experience, that person will try to avoid it and leave it because he knows it is a sin. The church needs to have a positive attitude about LGBT. The church cannot be a tolerant institution, but it cannot be a homophobic institution. As quoted by Gunawan, John Stott wrote that. (Christopher Alexander & Simanjuntak, 2021)

When it comes to providing pastoral assistance for LGBT people, there are several principles that the church and God's servants must also pay attention to. (Gunawan et al., 2016)

First, the church must accept and recognize that every human being is created in the image and likeness of God who has dignity and worth, including LGBT people, even though they commit strange things in their lives. This attitude needs to be shown to LGBT people so that they are not afraid to accept pastoral care provided by the pastor, which the church also provides.

Second, the church must also give hope to LGBT people to restore their lives and understand that sanctifying their lives is a process that leads to whole life, a lifelong journey. This will also motivate them to not give up in terms of facing the struggles of life.

Third, the church must be able to help and guide these LGBT people to be responsible for the sanctity of life and must also have a new mindset that follows and follows God's will. This attitude will make LGBT people more vigilant about living their lives.

Fourth, the church must educate its congregations to distinguish between the suffering caused by sin that leads to repentance and the shame caused by a rejection of the congregation towards LGBT people. Through this understanding, the congregation can also be more careful in responding to the presence of LGBT people during the church.

Fifth, these LGBT people must be helped and convinced that in the power of the Resurrection of Christ, there is strength for them to be broken by the power of sin that binds them that causes these sexual deviations.

Sixth, LGBT people must be involved in God-centered worship, which is full of joy and hope, so that they can experience a recovery in it quickly because a happy heart is an effective medicine for the restoration of one's life.

IV. Conclusion

LGBT people are everywhere in God's church. They are not aliens or dangerous creatures, so we must avoid

Alternatively, keep them away.

They are still God's creations like other human beings, and only they have abnormalities and deviations due to sin. Therefore, LGBT people must be accepted and embraced sincerely.

LGBT can be cured. LGBT people need a loving helping hand from a church by providing pastoral care services for their recovery. However, pastoral assistance to LGBT people must also be carried out carefully and thoughtfully because they can also feel comfortable undergoing conducive, intensive, and effective pastoral care. The church also has an equally important role because the church is an agent of change for sinners, including LGBT people. Therefore, the church should be busy with debates and the pros and cons of the existence of LGBT people. However, the church must also have an active role in providing a service to LGBT people who also need attention and help in dealing with the struggles of life. In this way, the church will also fulfill and realize the purpose of the Lord Jesus' coming to the world, namely to seek and save the lost and lost.

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