

THE MAIN THOUGHTS OF THE REFORMATION OF MARTIN LUTHER AND THE CHURCH MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (CRE)

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Abstract

This study examines the main ideas of Martin Luther's Reformation, the development of the church movement, and its implications for Christian Religious Education (CRE). The Reformation, initiated by Luther in the 16th century, was not merely a reaction to the deviations of the Catholic Church, but a spiritual calling rooted in the experience of justification by faith (Romans 1:17). Luther opposed the church's abuse of indulgences and established key theological principles: Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, Solus Christus, and Soli Deo Gloria. These principles gave rise to major changes in theology, church life, and faith education. The Lutheran movement expanded through the Augsburg Confession of 1530, which became the foundation of the teachings and identity of Protestant churches. The core of Luther's teaching, the doctrine of justification by faith, frees people from the fear of God's wrath and directs the focus of faith solely on Christ. This study uses qualitative methods with a library study, examining Luther's works and secondary literature. The results show that Luther's thoughts have had a significant impact on CHE, namely, faith education centered on Scripture, emphasizing a personal relationship with Christ, and a pedagogical vision that upholds access to education for all. The practical implication is that Christian Religious Education is called to develop a faith that is critical, reflective, and faithful to the Word, enabling students to become witnesses of Christ in society. The main ideas of Luther's Reformation remain relevant for renewing church life and Christian education today.

Keywords: *Martin Luther; Biblical Authority; Justification by Faith; Church Reformation*

I. Introduction

The Church Reformation pioneered by Martin Luther in the 16th century was one of the major events in Christian history that changed the direction of the development of theology, church life, and faith education.¹The Reformation movement cannot be understood simply as a reaction to deviations in religious practice, but rather as a spiritual calling born of profound theological struggle. Luther, a monk and theology professor at the University of Wittenberg, struggled with his fear of God's wrath. Despite his devotions and asceticism, he still felt inadequate before God. However, a turning point came when he interpreted Romans 1:17 as saying that "the just shall live by faith." From this spiritual experience, Luther realized that justification is not a result of human effort but is a gift from God. This realization later became the foundation of the Reformation call.

Luther's call for reform grew stronger when he saw the church's abuse of indulgences for economic and political gain. Through the sale of indulgences, believers were promised forgiveness of sins in exchange for a specific payment. Luther viewed this as an abuse of church authority and a deviation from the Gospel of Christ.²To emphasize his position, on October 31, 1517, he posted the 95 Theses on the door of Wittenberg Church. The Theses opposed the practice of indulgences and called for a return to the heart of the Gospel. This event symbolized the birth of the Protestant Reformation, which later spread throughout Europe. Luther's call for reform was not merely a social

¹Alister E. McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough* (New Jersey: Wiley, 2011), 5-7.

²McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough*, 24.

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critique of the church, but a call to return to the truth of God's Word as the foundation of Christian faith. Luther's theological ideas did not stop at criticizing indulgences. He developed principles that later became known as the foundations of the Reformation: *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone is the supreme authority), *Sola Fide* (faith alone saves), *Sola Gratia* (grace alone is the source of salvation), *Solus Christus* (Christ alone is the mediator), and *Soli Deo Gloria* (God alone is the glory).³ These principles not only transformed the church's theological model but also gave rise to a new pedagogical dimension. Luther emphasized the importance of Christian education rooted in Scripture so that people could live out their faith correctly.⁴ He even encouraged the establishment of schools for children, both boys and girls, believing that every believer should have access to the Word of God. From this idea, the Lutheran movement was born, spreading rapidly, especially in Germany and Northern Europe. This movement was not simply a splinter group from the Roman Catholic Church, but rather a community of faith built on the teachings of the Gospel. In this movement, the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments was placed at the center of the congregation's life, in accordance with Luther's theological understanding that God is truly present in His Word and in sacramental signs. The Augsburg Confession of 1530 became a crucial document that formulated the core of Lutheran teaching and has served as the basis for the identity of Lutheran churches to this day. The Lutheran movement subsequently developed into the foundation for various other branches of Protestantism, each with its own distinct emphases, but still rooted in the spirit of the Reformation, which sought to restore the Gospel to its pure position.⁵

The most prominent core of Luther's theology is the doctrine of justification by faith. For Luther, salvation cannot be achieved through works, rituals, or church services, but solely through faith in Christ. This faith is not merely a rational assent to doctrine, but rather a total surrender and complete trust in the work of Christ's death and resurrection for humanity. From this perspective, good works remain important, but they are not a condition for salvation but rather the fruit of true faith. By emphasizing this, Luther freed believers from fear of God's wrath and from dependence on the sacramental system instituted by the church. This theology of justification by faith became the center of all Reformation theology, simultaneously directing the focus of Christian faith to Christ as the sole basis of salvation. The main ideas and theology of Luther's Reformation had profound implications for Christian Religious Education (CHE). First, the principle of *Sola Scriptura* demands that faith education be centered on Scripture as the primary source of teaching.⁶ This means that Christian Education must be designed to help students understand, internalize, and live out God's Word, not simply study church traditions. Second, the doctrine of justification by faith directs Christian Education to emphasize a personal relationship with Christ, so that faith education does not stop at the transfer of knowledge but shapes a real spiritual life. Third, Luther's pedagogical vision, which emphasizes access to education for all levels of society, inspires Christian Education to uphold justice and equality in education. Christian education must not be elitist, but must be open to all, so that every believer can grow.

Furthermore, the implications of reform for Christian Religious Education (PAK) can also be seen in its practical dimensions. PAK not only aims to develop theological understanding but also guides students to live as witnesses of Christ in society. With a sound foundation in the Gospel, PAK is called to equip the congregation to face the challenges of the times with a solid faith. In the spirit of reform, PAK becomes a space for developing a critical, reflective faith, while remaining faithful to God's Word. This aligns with Luther's ideal that the true church is one that lives in the Word, teaches it correctly, and practices it in daily life.⁷ The main ideas of Luther's Reformation are not only relevant in the historical context of the 16th century, but also continue to have a profound influence on church life and Christian education today. Luther's call to return to the Gospel reminds the church in every age not to be trapped in legalism or empty formalism. The basic principles of the Reformation provide direction for sound theological and pedagogical understanding. The Lutheran movement serves as an example of how a faith community can be built on the foundation of the Gospel. The theology of justification by faith affirms Christ as the center of Christian faith. The implications for Christian Reformation education are that faith education must focus on the Word, foster a personal relationship with Christ, and educate people to live according to God's will.

³Robbie Castleman, *Story-Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 117.

⁴McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough*, 24.

⁵Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity, Volume 2: The Reformation to the Present Day* (New York: HarperOne, 2010), 25.

⁶Robert Richard Boehlke, *History of the Development of Thought and Practice of Christian Religious Education: From John Amos Comenius to the Development of PAK in Indonesia* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1997), 172.

⁷Hermanto, Jema Sinurat, *Introduction to Christian Religious Education* (Bandung: Widina Publisher, 2023), 59.

II. Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach.⁸ This approach was chosen because the topic of Martin Luther's reformation ideas, church movements, and their implications for Christian Religious Education (PAK) is more appropriately analyzed through a review of historical, theological, and pedagogical texts. The primary sources for this research are Luther's works such as the 95 Theses, the Small Catechism, and key Reformation documents.⁹ In addition, secondary literature was used in the form of books, journals, and academic articles discussing the historical context of the Reformation, the development of Lutheran theology, and its relevance to Christian education. Data collection techniques were carried out through the selection of relevant literature, source criticism, and classification of themes according to the research focus. Data analysis used the content analysis method, namely interpreting the meaning of the texts studied, identifying the main ideas, and then formulating their relevance in the context of Christian Religious Education. This step allows researchers to trace the relationship between Luther's theological thought, the Lutheran church movement, and pedagogical developments in faith education.

III. Theoretical Basis

3.1. History of the Christian Reformation

3.1.1. Condition of the Pre-Reformation Church

Before the Protestant Reformation began in the 16th century, the Catholic Church had become the largest religious institution in Europe, controlling various aspects of public life, from religious rituals to political decisions. However, the church's condition at that time faced significant challenges, particularly in terms of its moral credibility and perceived problematic religious practices. Some of the most prominent criticisms focused on the practice of indulgences, corruption, and the church's authority structure.¹⁰

1. The Dominance of the Catholic Church in Pre-Reformation Europe

In the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church played a central role in European society. The Church controlled various educational institutions, managed vast amounts of wealth, and played a role in establishing laws and political policies. Priests, bishops, and even popes wielded immense influence, often involved in state politics. This demonstrated that the Church was not only a spiritual center but also wielded significant secular power.¹¹ The strict hierarchical structure made the church a highly centralized institution. The pope was at the top of the church hierarchy, followed by cardinals, bishops, and priests at the lower levels. However, this system allowed for corrupt practices that ultimately eroded the church's credibility. Clergy often lived luxurious lives, contrary to Jesus' teachings of simplicity and humility. This led to dissatisfaction among the faithful, who increasingly felt the church was becoming a detached institution from Christian teachings.

2. Practice of Indulgences and Accepted Criticism

One of the main criticisms often leveled at the Catholic Church at that time was the practice of indulgences. An indulgence is a form of forgiveness granted by the church, whereby a person could obtain a reduction in the punishment for their sins through certain means, such as prayer, fasting, or good works. However, in the 16th century, indulgences evolved into a tool used by the church to raise money. Pope Leo X, for example, issued indulgences to finance the construction of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.¹² This situation was particularly worrying because indulgences were then freely sold with the promise that the buyer's sins would be forgiven, even those of the deceased. In practice, many people believed that by paying a certain amount of money to the church, they or their families could be freed from punishment in purgatory. Some priests even traveled from one city to another selling indulgences, leading critical thinkers to consider this practice a commercialization of salvation that contradicted the basic teachings of Christianity.¹³

⁸Robert Richard Boehlke, *History of the Development of Thought and Practice of Christian Religious Education: From John Amos Comenius to the Development of PAK in Indonesia* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1997), 172.

⁹Richard Boehlke, *History of the Development of Thought and Practice of Christian Religious Education: From John Amos Comenius to the Development of PAK in Indonesia*, 18-19.

¹⁰Toni Lane, Runtut Pijar: *History of Christian Thought* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 126.

¹¹Dale T Irvin, *The Protestant Reformation and World Christianity: Global Perspectives* (Michigan: WB Eerdsman, 2017), 111.

¹²Charles L. Mee, *White Robe, Black Robe: Pope Leo X, Martin Luther, and the Birth of the Reformation* (Boston: New Word City Publishers, 2018), 138.

¹³Mee, *White Robe, Black Robe: Pope Leo X, Martin Luther, and the Birth of the Reformation*, 138-139.

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Martin Luther, a German monk, strongly criticized the sale of indulgences and challenged the church's authority over the forgiveness of sins. According to Luther, salvation is not something that can be bought or sold; it is a gift from God that can only be obtained through faith. Luther's criticism of indulgences later became the starting point of the Reformation movement, which spread rapidly throughout Europe and gained support from various groups, including European kings and nobles.

3. Corruption within the Church

Corruption was another problem that plagued the church in the pre-Reformation period. Church officials often lived in luxury and exhibited behavior that was un-Christian. Many church leaders engaged in simony, the practice of selling offices or sacraments for profit. This led to the rise of incompetent and immoral church officials, which further tarnished the church's reputation. Furthermore, clergy often neglected their duties as shepherds of the people and became more interested in worldly riches. Many bishops and priests acquired personal wealth, owned land, and even became involved in military and political affairs, while the lives of ordinary people were often neglected. When the church, which should be a moral and spiritual institution, became caught up in corrupt practices and abuses of power, the congregation's trust began to erode. This phenomenon led society to question the church's legitimacy and authority as a spiritual guide.

4. Rigid Church Authority Structure

The church's rigid hierarchical system of authority made it difficult for the Catholic Church to accept criticism or change. Church leaders often refused to accept new views or ideas that contradicted their official doctrine. The overly strict hierarchy also closed the church to outside input, causing criticism from more progressive thinkers, such as the humanists, to be ignored. Renaissance thinkers, such as Erasmus of Rotterdam, began advocating for a purification of the faith and a reformation of the church from within, seeking a return to the fundamental teachings of the Bible. They emphasized the importance of sincere faith and pure morality and criticized church practices they considered corrupt and deviant. However, because of the church's rigid authority, these criticisms were often perceived as threatening and rejected. Furthermore, there was the issue of the pope's perceived absolute authority, which placed all church decisions entirely at the mercy of the papacy. Popes of the time often claimed to be God's representatives on earth with unquestionable authority.

5. Social and Economic Background Driving Reform

In the pre-Reformation period, the social and economic conditions of European society also played a significant role in fueling dissatisfaction with the church. The prevailing feudal system led to social inequality, with most wealth and land owned by the church and the nobility. Ordinary people, especially peasants, faced extreme hardship and often had to pay heavy taxes to the church. This situation led to tensions between the church and the common people, who felt oppressed by the church's power. The printing revolution pioneered by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-15th century accelerated the spread of critical ideas against the church. The printing press enabled the works of thinkers like Luther, Erasmus, and others to quickly spread throughout Europe, broadening the public's horizons and instilling a new understanding of the Christian faith. This enabled people to begin questioning the authority and practices of the church, which they considered unbiblical.

The pre-Reformation conditions of the Catholic Church indicate that it was experiencing a serious moral and spiritual crisis. Criticism of indulgences, corruption, and rigid authority illustrated fundamental problems within the church. Despite attempts at internal reform by some thinkers, the church at that time rejected many changes deemed essential for a renewal of faith. It was in this context that the Protestant Reformation emerged, fueled by the people's dissatisfaction with practices deemed inconsistent with the teachings of Christ. The Reformation was more than just a religious movement; it was a reaction to the state of the church, which had deviated from the fundamental principles of Christianity. The Reformation marked a new era in which the authority of the church began to be questioned, and people began to seek ways to practice their faith more purely, without relying on institutions they considered corrupt. This Reformation ultimately changed the face of Christianity in Europe and has had a profound impact on Christian history to this day.¹⁴

¹⁴Alastair Armstrong, *The European Reformation, 1500-1610* (Portsmouth: Heinemann Educational, 2002), 2-3.

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3.2. The Protestant Reformation Movement

In western and central Europe, reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin questioned the authority of the Pope and the practices of the Catholic Church, and sought reform within the church. This movement led to conflict, persecution, and the Counter-Reformation, the Catholic Church's official reaction to the rise of Protestantism. Historians generally mark the beginning of the Reformation in 1517 with the publication of Martin Luther's 95 Theses. The end of the Reformation is often associated with the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, which paved the way for the coexistence of Catholicism and Lutheranism in Germany, or the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War. Key tenets of the Reformation, such as the purification of the church and the understanding of the Bible as the primary source of spiritual authority, were not entirely new. However, Luther and the reformers successfully spread their ideas thanks to the use of the printing press, reaching a wide audience.¹⁵

The Counter-Reformation of the Catholic Church was responded to by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which clarified the Church's position on the reformation.¹⁶ During this era, new orders such as the Jesuits played a crucial role by combining spirituality and intellectualism, while the Inquisition was tightened to counter the threat of Protestant heresy. The legacy of the Reformation encompassed profound religious and political changes. The new political and religious freedoms in Northern Europe came at a high price, with decades of bloody conflict. However, the Reformation's positive impact was seen in intellectual and cultural advancements, the flourishing of universities, Lutheran church music, and merchant capitalism supported by Dutch Calvinists.

3.3. Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Background, Main Teachings, and Views on the Church and Faith

Martin Luther was a German reformer theologian best known for his role in sparking the Protestant Reformation, which challenged many of the practices and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century. Luther introduced theological principles that transformed Christianity in Europe and strengthened the Bible's position as the ultimate authority for spiritual life. Many of Luther's key concepts are closely related to his views on salvation and ecclesiastical authority.¹⁷

Background of Martin Luther's Life and Education

Martin Luther was born in Eisleben, Germany, in 1483. He came from a working-class family who wanted Luther to become a lawyer.¹⁸ However, in 1505, after a profound spiritual experience, Luther decided to become a monk in the Augustinian Order. He then continued his studies at the University of Wittenberg, where he became a professor of theology. His religious experiences and intensive study of the Bible gave rise to an inner conflict with the church's teachings at the time, particularly regarding penance and the sale of indulgences, which he considered to deviate significantly from the teachings of Jesus Christ. This controversy over Luther's resistance sparked widespread debate and became a catalyst for the Protestant Reformation.

IV. Discussion: Luther's Main Teachings and the Main Ideas of Luther's Reformation

1. Sola Scriptura (Scripture Only)

The principle of "Sola Scriptura" is the foundation of Luther's theology, asserting that Scripture is the sole and ultimate authority in matters of faith and life. Luther viewed the Bible as the irreplaceable word of God and rejected church traditions that developed without a strong biblical foundation. For Luther, the authority of the church and the pope had no greater legitimacy than the Bible itself. He opposed the view that biblical interpretation should be determined by the Catholic Church, which at the time was seen as having a monopoly on the meaning of Scripture.¹⁹ Luther emphasized that every Christian has the right to read and interpret the Bible privately without having to go through church intermediaries. "Sola Scriptura" led Luther to translate the Bible into German, making it accessible to the general public. This was a crucial step, allowing ordinary people to understand and practice biblical teachings without the constraints of the Latin used in the church.²⁰

¹⁵Armstrong, *The European Reformation, 1500-1610*, 2-3.

¹⁶Brian C. Brewer, *Calvin and the Early Reformation* (Brill: Leiden, 2019), 1-2.

¹⁷Ocker, *Luther, Conflict, and Christendom: Reformation Europe and Christianity in the West*, 348.

¹⁸Mark A. Lamport, *Encyclopedia of Martin Luther and the Reformation Volume 2* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017), xxvii.

¹⁹Alberto Melloni, *Martin Luther: A Christian Between Reforms and Modernity (1517-2017)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 24-25.

²⁰Martin Luther, *Luther & Scripture: Writings on Hermeneutics, Exegesis and Patristics* (Baden-Württemberg: Livraria Press, 2024), 4.

2. Sola Fide (Faith Only)

The principle of “Sola Fide” asserts that salvation is obtained only through faith in Jesus Christ, not through good works.²¹ In Luther's view, sinners cannot attain salvation through personal effort or merit, but only through faith in Christ, who can save them from the penalty of sin. Luther rejected the church's teaching that the sacraments and good works play a role in atone for human sin. Instead, he asserted that faith is a gift of God's grace received by believers as a sign of His grace. Luther used Paul's letter to Romans 1:17, which states, “The just shall live by faith,” as the basis for this theology. In Luther's understanding, faith is the foundation of humanity's relationship with God, and salvation is a gift from God alone, independent of human effort. This concept frees individuals from the fear of punishment for sin, with the assurance that their faith is sufficient to receive God's grace.

3. Sola Gratia (Only Grace)

Sola Gratia, or “by grace alone,” is one of the five central principles of the Protestant Reformation, emphasized by Martin Luther. This doctrine asserts that human salvation is granted solely by God's grace, not as a result of human works or good deeds. Luther rejected the idea that humans could achieve salvation through personal action or effort, a common view in the Catholic Church at the time, particularly in the practice of buying and selling indulgences, where people could reduce the punishment for sins by making financial donations.²²

Luther emphasized that salvation is a gift given by God through Jesus Christ to believers, which can only be received through faith (sola fide) and not by one's own efforts. This had a profound impact on Luther's views on the structure of the church and the sacraments, which had previously been believed to be the primary channels of grace. According to Luther, God directly reveals His grace to each individual, without the need for special intermediary from the church.²³ The principle of sola gratia illustrates that God is the sole source of salvation and grace, affirming humanity's absolute dependence on God. Luther believed that this understanding of grace would bring freedom to believers, who would no longer be bound by legal requirements or specific practices. Sola gratia became the basis for significant theological reform, shifting the focus from the institutional power of the church to the personal relationship between humans and God.

4. Theology of the Cross

The theology of the cross is the concept underlying Luther's views on suffering, human weakness, and the redemptive power of Christ on the cross. Luther rejected what he called the theology of glory, a view that emphasized God's greatness and glory outside the cross.²⁴

5. Martin Luther's Theology: Justification by Faith

One of Martin Luther's greatest contributions to the history of Christian theology is the doctrine of justification by faith. This teaching arose from Luther's personal struggle with how sinful humans could face a holy God. In his experience as a monk, Luther felt he was never righteous enough, despite his efforts in prayer, fasting, and works of charity. However, when interpreting Romans 1:17, “the just shall live by faith,” Luther discovered that salvation is not a result of human effort, but rather a gift from God received through faith.²⁵ For Luther, faith was not merely intellectual assent to doctrine, but complete trust and surrender to Christ. Through faith, humans receive God's unconditional saving grace. Thus, humans are justified not by good works, the law, or the sacraments, but by God's grace in Christ. Faith becomes the means by which humans connect with Christ's saving work. This doctrine asserts that good works are not eliminated but placed in their proper place. Good works are the fruit of faith, not a condition of salvation. This means that justified Christians will naturally produce works of love as a form of obedience to God. With this view, Luther freed the people from the moral burden that emphasized human effort as the path to salvation,

²¹James B. Nickoloff, *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2007), 1303.

²²Nickoloff, *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies*, 1304-1305.

²³McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough*, 5-7.

²⁴McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough*, 6.

²⁵McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough*, 48.

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while simultaneously criticizing the practice of indulgences that was prevalent in his day.²⁶ The theology of justification by faith also became the foundation of the Reformation movement. This teaching shifted the center of authority for salvation from the institutional church to Christ himself. Thus, every believer had direct access to God through faith, without the mediation of a rigid church structure.

The Impact of Luther's Teachings on Christianity

Luther's teachings paved the way for religious freedom and freedom of expression within Christianity. By declaring the Reformation, Luther freed the church from dependence on ecclesiastical authority and empowered individuals to interact directly with God through faith. The Protestant Reformation, spearheaded by Luther, strengthened Christians' independent spirit in biblical study and contributed to the development of better theology.

V. Implications for Christian Religious Education

The Reformation theology pioneered by Martin Luther had a profound influence not only on theology and church life, but also on education, particularly Christian Religious Education (PAK). Luther's teachings on justification by faith, the basic principles of the Reformation, and his ideas on education provided significant direction for the development of PAK to the present day. These implications can be examined from three main aspects: the source of the teachings, the purpose of education, and pedagogical practice.²⁷

First, the principle of *Sola Scriptura* affirms that Scripture is the supreme authority in faith and life. The implication for Christian Religious Education is that the curriculum and teaching materials must be rooted in God's Word, not merely in tradition or the authority of church institutions. Scripture serves as the foundation for developing a sound understanding of faith and guiding students in building a personal relationship with God. By adhering to *Sola Scriptura*, Christian Religious Education is called to teach the Bible holistically, contextually, and relevantly to the needs of modern-day students.

Second, the doctrine of justification by faith provides a new direction for the goals of Christian Religious Education. Faith education should not stop at the transfer of religious knowledge or dogmatic memorization, but rather lead students to a genuine experience of faith. Christian Religious Education aims to instill an awareness that salvation is a gift from God received through faith in Christ. Therefore, Christian Religious Education needs to prioritize the personal and relational aspects, guiding students to live out their faith in love and obedience, not merely through rituals or obligations.

Third, Luther's pedagogical thinking, which emphasized universal access to education, also had a significant influence. Luther encouraged children, both boys and girls, to receive an education because through knowledge they can understand God's Word. This inspired the Christian Religious Education (PAK) to uphold the principles of justice and equality in education. PAK must be open to all, without discrimination of gender, social status, or background. In this context, PAK is understood as a means of church service that shapes God's people to become mature in faith and responsible in social life.

Furthermore, Reformation theology also implies the importance of critical and transformative education. Luther emphasized the freedom of believers before God, meaning every student is called to develop a critical understanding of faith, not simply passively accept teachings. Reformation Christian Education, therefore, focuses not only on doctrine but also fosters a critical attitude toward cultural, political, and social issues, making Christian faith relevant to real life. This aligns with the Reformation vision that the church should be the light and salt of the world.²⁸

Ultimately, the implications of Reformation theology in Christian Religious Education emphasize that Christian faith education must be Christ-centered, rooted in God's Word, foster a personal relationship with God, and encourage life transformation. Christian Religious Education must not cease to be a means of transmitting tradition, but rather a space for vibrant, critical, and contextual faith formation. In the spirit of Luther's Reformation, Christian Religious Education is called to continually renew itself, remaining faithful to the Gospel and relevant to the challenges of our times.

The following are the main points of the Implications of Reformation Theology in PAK:

1. The Bible as the primary source

PAK must base all its teachings on the Holy Scriptures as the highest authority for faith and life.

²⁶Hans-Walter Ruckebauer and Yvanka Raynova, eds., *The Impact of the Reformation and the Future of Christianity* (Vienna: Axia Academic Publishers, 2019), 47.

²⁷Melloni, Martin Luther: A Christian Between Reforms and Modernity (1517-2017), 24-25.

²⁸James E. Bradley. "Luther's Contribution to Christian Education." *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 2 (1986), 7-18.

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2. Faith and grace as the basis of salvation
PAK emphasizes the teaching that humans are saved only by God's grace through faith, not by works or deeds.
3. Contextual faith education
PAK is directed at connecting the truth of the Gospel with the real lives of students.
4. Christian freedom and responsibility
PAK forms students to be aware of freedom in Christ, but at the same time be responsible in love for others.
5. Grace-based education
The emphasis on grace drives PAK to be a means of liberating, building character, and deepening one's relationship with God.
6. Critical and dialogical development
The spirit of reform encourages PAK to train critical thinking and dialogue skills in various contexts of the times.

VI. Conclusion

The Church Reformation, spearheaded by Martin Luther in the 16th century, was a major milestone in Christian history, transforming theology, church life, and faith education. Beginning with Luther's personal spiritual struggle regarding justification before God, he found the answer in Romans 1:17 that "the just shall live by faith." This realization gave birth to the doctrine of justification by faith, the core of the Reformation, which affirms that salvation is a gift from God alone, not a result of human effort. His concern over the abuse of indulgences led Luther to post his 95 Theses on October 31, 1517, which later became a symbol of the birth of the Protestant Reformation. This movement opposed corrupt church practices and called for a return to the heart of the Gospel. From this emerged the five fundamental principles of the Reformation: Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, Solus Christus, and Soli Deo Gloria. These principles were not merely critiques, but rather a new foundation for understanding the Christian faith, emphasizing the supremacy of Scripture, personal faith in Christ, and a life directed entirely to the glory of God.

The implications of the Reformation extended beyond the theological realm to include education. Luther emphasized the importance of Christian education rooted in Scripture, enabling people to live out their faith correctly. He advocated the establishment of schools for all children, both boys and girls, believing that every believer has the right to understand the Bible. This became the foundation of Christian pedagogy, which emphasizes equality, open access, and critical and reflective faith formation. In the context of Christian Religious Education (PAK), Luther's reformation provided three important principles. First, PAK must be centered on Scripture, not merely church tradition; second, PAK emphasizes a personal relationship with Christ, not just the transfer of knowledge; and third, PAK is inclusive, opening access to education for all, so that the Christian faith can be lived out in society. Therefore, PAK functions to shape students into witnesses of Christ who live in the world with a strong faith. To this day, the legacy of Luther's reformation remains relevant. The church is reminded not to get caught up in legalism and empty formalities, but to continually return to the pure Gospel.

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