

Seeking the Face of God in a Broken World: A Theological Reflection on Hope

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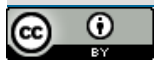
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ABSTRACT

The search for God's face amidst this uncertainty becomes a central theme in theological reflection, which seeks to find hope in a fractured world. This study uses a theological approach and biblical text analysis to explore the concept of hope in the context of doubt and suffering. The methods used include literature review and reflection on biblical texts such as Psalms, Job, and Isaiah. The results show that true hope is found in the practice of prayer, silence, and faith community. The discussion emphasizes that hope is not only psychological or futuristic, but also relational, connecting people with God and others in social solidarity. In conclusion, the spirituality of hope becomes a means to strengthen spiritual resilience and encourage more just and loving social change.

INTRODUCTION

The modern world is experiencing various forms of deep fractures—socially, ecologically, and spiritually. Armed conflicts, economic inequality, environmental crises, and the disintegration of human relationships create a global landscape marked by wounds and anxiety. The 2024 report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) shows that more than 117 million individuals are displaced due to war and disasters (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2024). Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports a significant rise in depression and anxiety disorders in the post-pandemic era, reflecting a void of meaning and hope in daily life. This reality raises profound questions about the existence and relevance of God in the face of the world's suffering (World Health Organization, 2025). According to a United Nations report, more than 700 million people live in extreme poverty and approximately 1.5 billion are trapped in armed conflicts (United Nations, 2021). Therefore, a fundamental question arises: where is God's presence when the world experiences such profound brokenness? The search for God's face amid these difficulties is not only a theological reflection but also a necessity to find hope in the midst of darkness.

In the context of this fragile reality, the search for God's face is not merely a spiritual activity but an existential need. Many individuals begin to question whether God is truly present, caring, and involved in the world's seemingly chaotic struggles. Faith traditions throughout Christian theological history have offered various responses to this issue, yet the struggle remains relevant today. This situation opens a deeper space for reflection on hope, not as naïve optimism, but as a theological power that arises from knowing the character of God who is faithful, just, and loving. In the scriptures, God is often identified with presence in the midst of suffering (Sitanggang, 2022). For instance, in Matthew 5:14–16, believers are reminded to be the light of the world, reflecting the nature of God's love and justice. However, the existing reality shows that many individuals feel

alienated from God when facing life's difficulties, creating a gap between faith and real experience.

A major challenge in discussing theological hope is the reality that human experiences often suggest the opposite. The 2023 report by the Pew Research Center shows a significant decline in trust toward religious institutions, especially among the global youth. This indicates a crisis of trust, including toward traditional theological narratives. In the fracture between faith and lived experience, the question of how God is present and working becomes an unavoidable reflection. While 80% of people worldwide believe religion plays an important role in their lives, only 29% feel that their faith is strong enough to face life's challenges (Katherine Schaeffer, 2023). This reveals a gap between theological belief and practical experience. In this context, theological reflection on hope becomes increasingly relevant, aiming to bridge that gap. Therefore, a theological approach is needed—one that not only affirms doctrine but also honestly explores the dynamics of hope amid destruction.

In the Bible, especially in the Psalms and the book of Lamentations, we find deeply human cries in the search for God when everything seems dark. These biblical traditions show that theological reflection on hope does not begin with answers but with honesty about suffering. Hope, in this framework, emerges not because situations improve but because a relationship is maintained with God who, although hidden, is still encountered in wounded spaces. This type of theology gives room for doubt, sorrow, and the tension between faith and reality. As a response to the world's crisis, the church and theological communities are invited to renew their understanding of hope—not as an escape from reality but as the courage to live within a broken world with a vision that sees beyond the visible. Research from Barna Group states that spiritual narratives that connect suffering with transcendent meaning can increase individuals' resilience in facing life's crises (Barna Group, 2022). Thus, theological reflection on hope is not merely an academic discourse but a way of life that brings healing power.

This paper seeks to re-explore the dimension of hope in Christian faith by reexamining how the face of God can be recognized, experienced, and believed in amid a fractured world. This reflection does not intend to simplify suffering but to reframe that experience in the light of God's love and faithfulness. By emphasizing a narrative, biblical, and contemplative approach, this reflection aims to open new space for a deeper and more contextual understanding of faith, particularly in answering fundamental questions about hope in the contemporary era.

One approach to understanding hope in this context is through the analysis of theological texts and the experiences of believers. This research will involve an in-depth literature review of theological perspectives on hope, including the writings of figures such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Jürgen Moltmann, who emphasize the importance of hope in facing suffering. In addition, interviews will be conducted with individuals who have experienced life difficulties in order to gain deeper perspectives on how they find hope in challenging situations. The data analysis obtained from the literature review and interviews will provide a clearer picture of how the face of God can be found in broken situations. This research aims to demonstrate that although the challenges faced are immense, hope remains and can be found through faith and community. The practical implications of this research can provide guidance for individuals and communities in building spiritual resilience amid hardship. Therefore, this research will contribute to the broader theological discussion on hope and the presence of God in an imperfect world. By understanding the ways in which individuals discover hope, this study is expected to offer inspiration and guidance to those who are seeking meaning and purpose in their lives. This research will serve as an initial step in further exploring how the face of God can be found in the midst of a fractured world.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative reflective-theological approach, which aims to deeply explore the theological meaning of hope in the context of a fractured world. This approach allows for the formulation of theological reflections grounded in contemporary human experiences as well as the Christian faith tradition. Through this approach, the researcher not only gathers empirical data but also processes theological discourse that is alive in texts, contexts, and praxis. The research type used is library research. The main data sources come from biblical texts, systematic theology works, Christian spirituality, and literature related to the human crisis, hope, and the search for meaning in the current global context. The researcher also uses secondary documents such as reports from international organizations like the WHO, UNHCR, Pew Research Center, and Barna Group to provide a factual and empirical framework for the reflections being built.

Data collection is carried out by critically and analytically reading relevant theological literature and supporting data. Works by contemporary theologians such as Jürgen Moltmann, Miroslav Volf, Dorothee Sölle, and Henri Nouwen serve as primary references in building theological arguments. In addition, biblical texts are analyzed using a contextual hermeneutical approach to find the relevance of their meaning in the present situation. Data analysis is conducted with a theological hermeneutical approach, interpreting texts and reality in light of the Christian faith. This process includes three stages: (1) describing the fractured state of the world and human existential experiences; (2) interpreting biblical texts and theological reflections from various sources; and (3) formulating a theological synthesis of hope as a faith response to the complex condition of the world. The analysis focuses on the narrative and existential dimensions in understanding how God's face can be encountered in the fractured world. The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation, comparing views from various theological literature sources and factual reports to achieve a comprehensive and balanced understanding. Furthermore, critical reflection and theoretical evaluation are conducted continuously to ensure that the research does not fall into subjective speculation but remains academically and spiritually responsible.

With this method, the research is expected to enrich the public theology treasure and contribute constructively to formulating a Christian hope that is relevant, realistic, and rooted in faith in God who is present in the midst of a suffering world.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Fractured Reality of the World Amid a Map of Humanitarian and Spiritual Crisis

The world today is in the midst of a multidimensional crisis that is interwoven and deepens global human suffering. Armed conflicts continue to rage in various regions, creating political instability and widespread suffering. Data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) shows that in 2024, the number of global refugees reached over 117 million people, consisting of individuals forced to leave their homes due to war, violence, and persecution. Prolonged conflicts such as those in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, and Myanmar stand as stark symbols of a world that has lost its humanity (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2024). This situation not only results in physical suffering and homelessness but also exacerbates prolonged psychological trauma.

In addition to conflict, the environmental crisis adds to the complexity of the world's fracture. The 2023 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that global temperatures have risen more than 1.1°C compared to pre-industrial levels, and this trend continues toward an unavoidable ecological disaster. Climate change has triggered an increase in the intensity of natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and wildfires, as well as worsened food security in many countries (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2023). These ecological impacts are not merely physical but also threaten the social and economic resilience of the most vulnerable communities. A damaged ecology reflects a world not only wounded materially but also losing the order of creation that is meant to reflect divine goodness.

The pressure-filled condition of the world has also led to a global-scale mental health crisis. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2023 that more than 970 million people worldwide experience mental disorders, with depression and anxiety being the most dominant forms. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened this condition, especially among young people and marginalized groups. Social isolation, economic uncertainty, and prolonged grief have driven increases in suicide rates and gaps in mental health services (World Health Organization, 2025). In many countries, these issues remain inadequately addressed due to limited access to professional services and persistent stigma.

Amidst these realities, the world is also facing social disintegration that erodes collective solidarity. The rise of political polarization, the spread of misinformation, and the growing trend of individualism pose serious threats to social cohesion. In digital spaces, social media algorithms often reinforce divided opinions and incite intergroup conflict. The 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer report indicates a declining level of trust in public institutions, including government, media, and religion. As a result, global society is becoming increasingly fragmented, losing a sense of unity, and experiencing a crisis of trust in the social structures that have long served as the foundation of communal life (Edelman, 2024).

These four crises—conflict, environmental degradation, mental disorders, and social disintegration—portray the face of a world fractured in multiple dimensions. These fractures not only threaten social and political structures but also shake the spiritual and existential dimension of humanity. In such a world, fundamental questions resurface: Where is God in the midst of this suffering? And is there any hope that can truly be trusted in a world seemingly lost? The world's multidimensional fracture not only impacts the social and ecological spheres but also deeply disturbs the innermost part of human existence—the search for meaning and the relationship with the Divine. When suffering becomes an unavoidable part of daily life—through loss, violence, environmental destruction, and

emotional emptiness—a profound spiritual unrest emerges. Many individuals experience a void within the fundamental questions: “Why is this happening?”, “Does life have a purpose?”, and above all, “Where is God in all of this?” These questions are not merely cognitive expressions but heartfelt cries arising from the deepest human longing for the hope of divine presence.

The world today is in a phase of multidimensional crises that are interconnected and deepen human wounds globally. Armed conflicts continue to rage in various regions, creating political instability and massive suffering. Data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) shows that by 2024, the global refugee population has reached more than 117 million, including individuals forced to leave their homes due to war, violence, and persecution. Protracted conflicts such as those in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, and Myanmar have become stark symbols of a world losing its humanity. This situation not only causes physical suffering and displacement but also exacerbates prolonged psychological trauma.

In addition to conflicts, environmental crises add complexity to the fractures of the world. A 2023 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that global temperatures have risen by more than 1.1°C compared to the pre-industrial era, and this trend continues to lead toward inevitable ecological disasters. Climate change has triggered an increase in the intensity of natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and wildfires, and has worsened food security in many countries. The ecological impact is not only physical but also threatens the social and economic resilience of the most vulnerable communities. A damaged ecology depicts a world not only physically wounded but also losing the order of creation that ought to reflect divine goodness.

The pressured state of the world has also given rise to a global mental health crisis. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2023 that over 970 million people worldwide suffer from mental disorders, with depression and anxiety being the two most prevalent forms. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened this condition, especially among young people and marginalized groups. Social isolation, economic uncertainty, and prolonged grief have led to an increase in suicide rates and gaps in mental health services. In many countries, this issue has not been adequately addressed due to limited access to professional services and persistent stigma. Amidst this reality, the world is also facing social disintegration that erodes collective solidarity. Increased political polarization, the spread of fake news, and rising individualism present serious challenges to social cohesion. In the digital space, social media algorithms often reinforce opinion divisions and provoke conflicts between groups. The Edelman Trust Barometer 2024 report indicates a decline in trust toward public institutions, including governments, media, and religion. As a result, global society is increasingly divided, losing a sense of community, and experiencing a crisis of trust in the social structures that have long been the foundation of communal life.

These four crises conflict, environmental destruction, mental health disturbances, and social disintegration depict the face of a world that is fracturing across multiple dimensions. These fractures not only threaten social and political structures but also shake the spiritual and existential dimensions of human life. In such a world, fundamental questions arise once again: where is God in the midst of this suffering? And is there a hope that can truly be relied upon in a world that seems to have lost its way? The multidimensional fractures experienced by the world not only impact social and ecological aspects but also disrupt the deepest dimension of human existence the search for meaning and relationship with the Divine. As suffering becomes an inevitable part of daily life through loss, violence, environmental destruction,

and emotional emptiness, intense spiritual anxiety emerges. Many individuals feel a void in fundamental questions: "Why is this happening?", "Does life have a purpose?", and especially, "Where is God in all of this?" These questions are not merely cognitive expressions but outbursts from the deepest human connection with the hope of divine presence.

In the context of suffering, the relationship with God does not always manifest as unwavering faith. On the contrary, what often arises is a tension between belief and reality. Prayer becomes silent, worship loses its vitality, and sacred texts seem distant from lived experience. This is a symptom of a crisis of meaning that frequently leads individuals into spiritual alienation—a sense of being disconnected from the source of hope and spiritual identity. This phenomenon has been observed across many spiritual traditions, including Christianity, which recognizes that the experience of inner emptiness is not unfamiliar. The stories found in the books of Job, Psalms, and Lamentations illustrate that the search for God often emerges from the lowest points of human existence (Kawangmani, 2019).

Existentially, the crisis drives many people toward two extreme possibilities: despair or a deeper spiritual quest. In despair, suffering is understood as evidence of God's absence, giving rise to cynical, fatalistic attitudes, or even rejection of faith. On the other hand, some individuals are prompted to re-explore the dimensions of faith, discovering new forms of relationship with God that are more honest, contemplative, and personal. In this condition, faith is no longer sustained by logical certainty or systematic theological answers, but by the experience of God's presence in silence, suffering, and unknowing.

When the conventional structures of social and spiritual life are shaken, the need arises to reinterpret personal identity in light of one's relationship with God. Many begin to realize that hope does not merely lie in the transformation of external circumstances, but in the ability to encounter the divine presence amid brokenness. Relationship with God is no longer about answers, but about the courage to dwell within

the questions. In this framework, the search for meaning is not only a response to suffering, but also becomes a path of forming a more authentic and existential faith. This condition also encourages a transformation in how one sees God—not as someone who always rescues instantly from suffering, but as the God who is present within the suffering itself. The understanding of God as "Immanuel," God with us, becomes deeply relevant and empowering (Maolani, 2018). In the depths of one's inner experience, there arises the awareness that God does not always change circumstances, but gives the strength to walk through them. The relationship with God, in this context, is built not on absolute answers, but on a trust that continues to grow even amidst uncertainty (Simanjuntak et al., 2022). Thus, the existential impact of a fractured world not only shakes the relationship with God, but also opens reflective space for nurturing a more mature spirituality—a spirituality that is able to live within tension, embrace wounds, and continue seeking the face of God even in darkness.

The Call of Faith in the Biblical Tradition: Seeking God Amidst Destruction

The Scriptures contain narratives and poetry rich with human struggles with suffering, despair, and the search for meaning amidst a broken reality. Texts like the Psalms, Lamentations, Job, and Isaiah do not offer final answers to suffering but serve as mirrors to the dynamics of an honest and existential faith. Through these texts, readers are invited to delve into a spiritual experience that does not avoid pain but processes it in the light of hope in God. The Psalms present a wide spectrum of emotions, from praise to the deepest lament. For example, Psalm 13 portrays a cry of utter despair: "How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever?" (Psalm 13:2). This cry is not an expression of unbelief but a form of faith that courageously brings its wounds before God. The lament Psalms open a spiritual space for people to be honest with God, showing that living faith is not marked by denial of reality but by openness in facing the fragility of life.

The Book of Lamentations serves as a poetic response to the destruction of Jerusalem, depicting collective suffering, despair, and feelings of abandonment by God. Lamentations 3:17-18 states, “You have taken peace from my soul; I have forgotten what prosperity is. So I say, ‘My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the Lord.’” Yet, within the darkness of this poem, a surprising confession arises: “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end” (Lamentations 3:22). Amid the ruins, faith strives to grasp hope. This text demonstrates that true hope does not emerge from tranquil circumstances but from the courage to await God in the absence.

The Book of Job offers a profound theological exploration of personal suffering and divine justice. Job, a righteous man, undergoes suffering that seems unjust. In his struggle, Job does not hesitate to question God: “Does it please you to oppress me, to spurn the work of your hands?” (Job 10:3). However, through long and sometimes perplexing dialogues, Job grows in his understanding of God. When God finally answers, the response is not a logical explanation but a revelation of God's sovereignty and mystery. Job declares, “I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you” (Job 42:5). This text underscores that the search for meaning in suffering can lead to a deeper encounter with God.

The Book of Isaiah, particularly in the Deutero-Isaiah section (chapters 40–55), introduces the figure of the Suffering Servant. In Isaiah 53, it is written that the servant was “pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities...” (Isaiah 53:5). This text forms a crucial foundation in the New Testament Christology but also carries a universal message about suffering that is redeemed and transformed into a path to salvation. The Servant of the Lord is not one who avoids suffering but bears it, becoming God's solidarity with the wounded people. In the context of a broken world, Isaiah presents a God who is actively present in human suffering—not as a passive observer but as a participant who bears the wounds of His people.

From these four texts, a strong common thread emerges: God is not distant from suffering. When the world is fractured and justice seems delayed, the Scriptures invite believers to come to God with all their lamentations. The relationship with God is not built on logical certainty or promises of an easy life, but on an honest encounter in the struggle. In confession, lament, and halting prayers, faith is formed not as an avoidance of reality but as a strength to walk through it.

In the Christian tradition of faith, hope is not merely a psychological mechanism to alleviate fear or optimism about a better future. True hope has much deeper roots: a relationship with the living God. This relational dimension distinguishes hope in faith from secular hope. Christian hope is not grounded solely in projections into the future but in the presence of God that accompanies us in the present, even in the darkest of situations. Therefore, hope is not an escape from reality but the courage to trust that reality itself is upheld and lived through with God.

In a world shattered by suffering, hope is only relevant if it remains rooted in the concrete experiences of life. If hope is understood merely as hope for a change in circumstances in the future, it will quickly crumble when that change does not occur as expected. However, if hope is experienced as a continuous relationship with God—who does not always resolve suffering but is present within it—then such hope can endure even amidst uncertainty. This kind of hope does not arise from human strength to think positively, but from the knowledge that one does not walk alone in their suffering.

The Scriptures are filled with depictions of God's presence, which is not always immediately visible but is still real. God in both the Old and New Testaments often appears in ways that are unexpected and unremarkable: in the gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:12), in the broken body of the Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 53), and in the crucified Jesus, the God who suffers alongside humanity. It is in such experiences that the concept arises that God does not always answer questions directly but answers through His presence. When help does not come

immediately in the form of restoration, God's presence becomes the most fundamental support for hope.

Theologians like Jürgen Moltmann and Henri Nouwen emphasize that hope cannot be separated from suffering. For Moltmann, hope emerges from the cross, from the paradox that God is most deeply present when He seems most absent. The God hidden in suffering is not distant but chooses to be present mysteriously, identifying with the wounds of His people. Nouwen speaks of this experience as the "wounded healer," the divine presence that heals not with dominative power but with a compassionate solidarity.

In spiritual experience, this mysterious presence of God is often recognized only through retrospection, in silence, or through the presence of others who extend His love. Relational hope does not always provide answers, but it opens space for people to ask questions, wrestle with their faith, and continue trusting that God has not forsaken them. This is the hope that frees us from the need to understand everything, yet is strong enough to sustain the soul through the storm.

Therefore, hope cannot be reduced to mere optimism or positive thinking. Hope in faith is a relational acknowledgment that God is the God who is there, even though He may not always be fully explained, felt, or understood. This hope comes from a relationship that is continually renewed, fought for, and nurtured through prayer, silence, and acts of love. Hope is not just waiting for something; it is living life with the One who is the source of all hope: the God who is present in the midst of a broken world.

Theological Reflection on Hope: from Dogma to the Dynamics of Life

Hope in the Christian faith tradition is not merely a doctrine neatly stored within systematic theology. It is a life dynamic that demands embodiment, not just affirmation. In a world overwhelmed by suffering, uncertainty, and moral collapse, hope cannot be reduced to an abstract concept. It must become an existential force that

enables people to keep walking, even when the path appears dark. Here, theology is challenged to move out of the realm of dogma into the realm of lived experience, where faith is tested, relationships are strained, and the presence of God is both questioned and encountered.

Jürgen Moltmann, in his monumental work *Theology of Hope*, rejects the notion that Christian faith focuses solely on individual salvation in the future. For him, Christian hope is a transformative power rooted in the resurrection of Christ, which enables humanity to participate in the renewal of the world. Moltmann affirms that true hope is born from suffering. The cross of Christ does not eliminate suffering but transforms it into a space of divine solidarity. In the suffering of Jesus, God is present with suffering humanity, and from His resurrection arises the promise of a new future not as an escape from this world, but as a hope for the complete renewal of creation (Jürgen Moltmann, 1993).

Dorothee Sölle expands the practical dimension of hope by rejecting passive and escapist theology. She develops a radical "theologia crucis" in which God suffers not only for humanity but with humanity. For Sölle, hope is the courage to act prophetically for social justice rather than simply waiting for divine intervention. In her book *Suffering*, she writes that suffering which is silenced or passively accepted leads to spiritual death. Conversely, suffering that is lived through with a community of faith and fought through ethical action can become the seed of hope. Thus, hope is an active engagement with an unfinished reality, a form of love that works within history (Graham, 2007).

Miroslav Volf integrates the dimensions of suffering, forgiveness, and reconciliation in his reflection on hope. In *The End of Memory*, he emphasizes the importance of eschatological hope that penetrates the memory of past wounds. Hope, according to Volf, makes room to heal traumatic memory through acts of forgiveness that do not erase the reality of suffering but transform it. God's solidarity with victims of violence becomes the ethical foundation for building a just society. Volf proposes hope as a driving force to create a world

that reflects the kingdom of God on earth rather than merely waiting for its eventual arrival (Miroslav Volf, 2021).

Henri Nouwen, through his pastoral spirituality, articulates hope as the presence of God in the ambiguity of life. He acknowledges that life cannot always be explained logically and that suffering often leads to a crisis of faith. Yet in *The Wounded Healer* and *Turn My Mourning into Dancing*, Nouwen shows that hope does not rely on rational understanding but on trust in God who is present in silence and woundedness. Hope does not negate ignorance but grows within it. By embracing limitations, one opens space for the presence of love that is not dependent on answers but on a continually renewed relationship (Henri Nouwen, 2004).

From these four thinkers, one core conclusion emerges: hope in Christian faith is not a utopia that distances us from reality but an energy rooted in the mysterious yet real presence of God in the midst of suffering. Hope empowers people to continue walking, acting, and loving even without full certainty. It is a faith-driven decision to believe that the world, though broken, remains in the grasp of God's love that is at work in history toward restoration.

Moving from dogma to dynamics means understanding that hope is not merely “believing that something good will happen,” but “believing that God remains present even when the good has not yet appeared.” Hope does not negate the reality of suffering but penetrates it with trust in the faithfulness of God. In such an embodiment, hope becomes a way of living, not just a way of thinking. It shapes how humans respond to the world not with fatalistic resignation, but with loving engagement, courage, and perseverance.

This reflection calls for a paradigm shift from hope as a passive object (something awaited) to hope as a relational praxis (someone to be followed and embodied, namely Christ Himself). Hope in Christ is inseparable from the cross, suffering, and death. In fact, this is where its radical nature lies. Hope does not promise freedom from wounds but promises that the wounds are not in vain. Therefore, hope brings

life not because it removes us from harsh reality, but because it brings that reality into the embrace of the God who is with us.

In the context of the faith community, hope becomes a communal energy. It does not grow in isolation but in solidarity. A community of hope is one that dares to carry the cross together, that continues to sing in the midnight hour, and that sustains the narratives of love in a world thirsty for power. In this dimension, hope has social and ethical implications it compels action, inspires ministry, and upholds the struggle for justice.

Hope as a dynamic of life is a response to the God who moves not a God who remains silent in the metaphysics of eternity, but a God who walks with His people through history. In light of Christian eschatology, hope is not merely an orientation toward a heavenly future, but a participation in the redemption of the world that has already begun with the resurrection of Christ. This hope is a form of confession that the Kingdom of God is not yet fully present, yet its seeds are already growing in a broken world.

Thus, theological reflection on hope demands a shift from a static to a relational and practical understanding. Hope does not belong only to pulpit proclamation, but to wounded bodies, unanswered tears, and hands that continue to pray. It is the breath of faith in a suffocating world and a faint light that is enough to guide the steps even if it does not always explain the path.

Seeking the Face of God: Spirituality that Endures and Questions

The search for the face of God in a broken world is a journey of faith that involves spiritual resilience in the face of doubt and suffering. True hope is not found in easy answers or immediate explanations, but in an ongoing search that often leads us to question, endure, and continue hoping even in the darkness. Prayer, silence, the faith community, and the recognition that God is present in suffering become spaces where faith is practiced and hope is nurtured. Spirituality that develops through this process teaches us not only to seek personal peace

but to struggle together with others in solidarity and love. Theological reflection plays a crucial role in guiding the church and society to understand the challenges of the times through the lens of faith. A church that continually engages in theological reflection not only deepens its understanding of God but also acts as an agent of change in a world full of injustice and suffering. At the societal level, theological reflection encourages us to develop a deep moral and ethical understanding and to act to create a more just, inclusive, and loving world. In this way, theology becomes more than just doctrine or religious teaching; it becomes a means to renew our relationship with God and with others, as well as to respond to the challenges of the world in an active and constructive way.

The search for the face of God is a search that never ends. In the Christian faith tradition, God is often known as a mysterious being, beyond human understanding, but also deeply involved in the lives of His people. This search is not a journey toward a final answer or absolute certainty, but an ongoing process filled with doubt, hope, suffering, and comfort. True spirituality does not just endure in the midst of life's storms, but also dares to ask before God. Asking is not a sign of unbelief but a part of the honesty and depth of a relationship with the living God.

In a world filled with uncertainty, suffering, and existential anxiety, the search for the face of God becomes a way to find meaning in the emptiness and confusion. This search is not an escape from the reality of the broken world, but an acknowledgment that even though this world seems chaotic and unjust, there is a God who remains present within it. This search is a journey of faith that involves hope, even though that hope often feels blurry and almost unattainable. This aligns with the expression from Psalm 42:2, "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when can I go and meet with God?"—a cry that expresses a deep and ongoing search for God's presence. However, the search for the face of God is also a process that involves big questions about suffering, injustice, and the fracture of the world. Like in the story of Job, the questions raised are not

merely questions seeking rational answers, but more a search for the presence of God that is inseparable from the experience of suffering itself. Job asks with great anguish, "Why was I born to suffer?" (Job 3:11), yet in the process, he also accepts that God's presence in the midst of that suffering cannot be resolved in a simple answer. Asking in this context is an effort to remain in relationship with God, even when His purposes are not fully understood.

This spirituality of endurance and questioning is also reflected in the life journey of Jesus Christ, who suffered, asked questions, and even felt forsaken by God on the cross, "Eli, Eli, lema sabaktani?" (Mark 15:34). This is not just a question about loneliness, but an expression of the depth of a relationship with God that is both profoundly human and transcendental. Jesus teaches that the search for the face of God does not have to be separate from suffering, but rather within suffering itself. As the suffering servant, Jesus paves the way for humanity to seek God in uncertainty and in pain. It is here that spirituality that endures and questions becomes relevant. This is a spirituality rooted in unwavering faith that continuously seeks God's presence, even in ignorance and doubt. It does not free people from suffering or confusion, but it provides them peace on that journey, with the belief that the search itself is a profound act of faith. As Henri Nouwen writes in *The Wounded Healer*, "When we are in suffering, we also find within ourselves a depth that brings us closer to God." Spirituality that endures and questions is also a spirituality that involves the humility to acknowledge limitations, but also the courage to entrust life to a God who is not always understandable, yet always present.

The search for the face of God also means being open to experiencing God's presence in various ways, including within the faith community. This search often takes place in fellowship with others, where life's big questions are found in encounters, shared prayers, and solidarity. God's presence becomes tangible through the love given to one another. Spirituality that endures and questions acknowledges that even though God is not always revealed clearly or directly, His presence is often

found in the existence of others, in acts of love, and in the commitment to work toward a better world. Thus, the search for the face of God is an ongoing process, one that does not end with answers that can be fully understood. It is a journey of faith that teaches the courage to ask questions, to remain faithful in the search, and to find God's mysterious yet real presence in the midst of life's uncertainties. It is a spirituality that is not afraid to acknowledge suffering and uncertainty, yet continues to move forward with the hope that the search brings us closer to the face of God, even if we can only glimpse it through the fog.

The Contribution of Theological Reflection to the Church and Society

Theological reflection serves not only as an effort to understand divine truth within the framework of dogma but also as a means to reflect upon and apply the teachings of faith in real life, both within the church and society. When the church and society face the challenges of a broken world, such as environmental crises, social injustice, conflict, and suffering, theological reflection becomes a source of renewal and enlightenment, enabling both to find a more hopeful direction. The contribution of theological reflection lies in its ability to offer perspectives that are not only esoteric and speculative but also practical and relevant to the conditions of the contemporary world.

For the church, theological reflection becomes a tool for understanding and reinterpreting faith in the context of a changing world. When the church is solely focused on tradition or dogma without critical reflection, it risks becoming irrelevant and detached from the social challenges faced by its people. Theological reflection opens space for the church to respond creatively to current issues such as social problems, poverty, injustice, and the environmental crisis. A church that continuously engages in theological reflection not only maintains faithfulness to the teachings of Christ but also embraces its calling to be an agent of change, proclaiming the Gospel in a grounded and contextual way. Moreover, the church, as a community of faith, can gain a

deeper understanding of its identity in a world filled with contradictions.

Theological reflection introduces new ideas about how the church can be more present in this world, not just as a place of worship, but as an agent of reconciliation, justice, and peace. The church can renew its commitment to building social solidarity and advocating for the rights of the oppressed in a more transformative way. By reflecting on teachings of love that knows no boundaries, forgiveness, and unity, the church can create inclusive spaces for the marginalized in society, strengthening its role as a blessing for humanity. On the other hand, the contribution of theological reflection to society can be felt in raising awareness of the importance of deep moral values and social ethics that prioritize the common good. In a world often dominated by personal and group interests, theological reflection emphasizes the importance of living together based on justice, love, and peace. This not only impacts individuals but also social and political structures. In an increasingly fragmented society, theological reflection offers ethical principles that can serve as a foundation for building healthier and more just relationships, both locally and globally.

Theological reflection also encourages believers to question and challenge structures of power and systems that oppress. For example, theological thinking about liberation, as proposed by Gustavo Gutiérrez in liberation theology, challenges the church and society to oppose all forms of oppression, discrimination, and injustice. Thus, theological reflection not only functions as a source of spiritual comfort but also as a tool for building critical social awareness, leading to more inclusive and just change. Furthermore, theological reflection invites society to consider the sustainability of the earth and ecological justice as part of the faith's calling. The church, through its reflective approach, can become a pioneer in conservation and environmental sustainability movements, which are increasingly urgent amidst the growing climate crisis. The understanding that God created the world as good and gave humanity the responsibility to care for His creation paves the way for the integration of

faith teachings with care for the earth. In this reflection, the church plays a central role in advocating for the importance of taking responsibility for nature as part of service to God.

Therefore, the contribution of theological reflection to the church and society is crucial in building a relevant, transformative, and responsive faith awareness that addresses the needs of the times. A church that continues to engage in theological reflection will be better prepared to face the complex challenges of the world, while society will also find a stronger ethical and moral foundation to build a better life together. This reflection does not merely provide answers or explanations for the problems of the world but directs faith towards concrete actions that advocate for justice, peace, and reconciliation in a world filled with suffering and conflict.

CONCLUSION

The search for the face of God and the application of theological reflection in the life of the church and society provide a tangible contribution to building spiritual resilience and social solidarity. Hope in the midst of doubt, suffering, and the darkness of the world is not an illusion or escapism, but a reality rooted in faith that continually seeks and believes in a God who is present and working in the midst of this world. Therefore, spirituality formed in doubt and suffering becomes a tool that not only transforms the personal lives of believers but also has a positive impact on the church and society as a whole, bringing about a better world that is closer to God's will.

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