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**Saved by Faith Not Your Body:
Towards The Theology of Disability**

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Abstract

This article describes that the perfection of God's creation was guaranteed by faith, must be hold and lived in the life of the believers. Physical weakness (difiable) is not a condition cause decreasing the perfection of God's creation. Difiable is not decreasing or weakening the existence and essence of human being as the body of Christ which was loved and saved by the blood of Christ. This article used the library research in theology, explored the love of God in the life of human being. The result showed that the church must develop the ministries of educating and empowering disable people (people with the special need). They are perfect as the body of Christ because the God itself is perfect. God is perfect so the creation is perfect too. Human being was perfected by the love of God.

Keywords: body of Christ; disable people; imago Dei; perfect creation; the church

INTRODUCTION

The Christian Church does not only consist of humans who have perfect bodies according to human eyes, but also people who have bodies with special needs. Having special needs or being referred to as disabled, seems to indicate a loss of form or physiological function, for example a disorder that causes damage to the optic nerve, motor nerves and even intellectual delays. The definition of disability literally means to hinder or put you in a disadvantageous position, indicating the loss resulting from decline.¹ Disability describes the consequence of the disorder which may be in the form of an inability to perform some tasks or activities. One type of disability that is highlighted in this discussion is intellectual disability, or what is commonly called persons with disabilities down syndrome.

Disabilities can occur as a result of accidents, diseases, genetics or causes that may not be known. Whereas down syndrome occurs due to the presence of an extra chromosome 21 in a person's cells. In reality, this can affect all aspects of an individual's life to the point of being uncomfortable. In addition, people with disabilities are often not treated the same as those around them,

both in terms of acceptance and empowerment; it appears that there are humans who are imperfect before humans. But in fact, people with disabilities contribute much that is of value to their communities, namely when the people around them do not only focus on their physical condition.² For this reason, it is very important to review how the Bible views people with special needs. What is the theological basis that states that people with disabilities also receive salvation? Because Christians are called to restore the same concept of perfection, it is important to ask, what are the efforts of the Church as a place of acceptance and empowerment of people with disabilities?

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is qualitative research with an analytical approach. In developing this research, the author used qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are methods used to collect text, data and literature sources. Systematically, this article contains: first, the biblical theological basis for the existence of believers as the body of Christ will be explained that disabilities are central, necessary and essential for the perfect and functioning body of Christ; secondly, then explaining the essence

¹ Deborah Beth Creamer, *Disability and Christian Theology: Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 13-14.

² Thomas E. Reynolds, *Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2008), 6.

that faith is what saves, not a physical matter because the work of human salvation is centered on redemption achieved through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and third, outlining the real actions of the Church's service to disabled people, namely by educating, enabling and empowering them.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biblical Foundation: The Existence of Believers as the Body of Christ

Paul describes about "Body of Christ" (Yun. σῶμα Χριστου, *Soma Christou*) (1 Cor. 12:27; Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:12) to express the essential character of the Christian Church. This also wants to emphasize that the Church is held and supported by Christ as the Head, who has a place in the world to bring the preaching of the Gospel. Several passages in Paul's writings reflect an understanding of *soma* in the physical sense of the body in general (eg. 1 Cor. 5:3; 7:34), where the physical body is understood not only to influence the sinful acts of individuals but also to the whole person down to his or her soul. This is underlined by Paul's question: "Don't you know that your body is a member of

Christ?... so, glorify God with your body" (1 Cor. 6:15).³

Paul called on and hoped positively for the Corinthian congregation to glorify God with their bodies so that their whole life would glorify Christ (Phil. 1:20). The appeal to them as the temple of God is similar to Paul's statement in the introduction to Romans 12 which calls on the Romans to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God (Rom. 12:1).⁴ The body becomes a living offering because it lives in virtue and dies to evil; the body becomes an offering because it is dead to this world and it is corrupt works so that everything the body does as an offering is good things. Therefore, Paul also uses the word "holy" in the sense of salvation, so that the body is not destroyed by the servants of impurity and disobedience.⁵

The entire personal body of a believer belongs to Christ; members who have different physiological sides and different forms belong to Christ.⁶ This is based on Paul's understanding of seeing humans as creatures, but as creatures created in the image and likeness of God as seen in the

³ S. Wibbing, "Body," in *The New International Dictionary of The New Testament*, ed. Collin Brown (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1975), 238.

⁴ Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians. Concordia Commentary* (Saint Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 2000), 221.

⁵ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works 25. Lectures on the Romans: Glosses and Scholia*, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (Saint Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1972), 436.

⁶ Robert H. Gundry, *Sōma in Biblical Theology. With Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 61.

Old Testament. As the image and likeness of God, Paul understood that everyone's basic position is equal before God, so that there are no differences between men, women, nationalities, and social positions. Such differences were strong in Paul's society, but he declared that all elements of such differences were unacceptable. As Fitzmeyer said, Paul teaches about the equality of Christians individually and in their bodies, as well as the Spirit that dwells in each person without any more speculation between one another.⁷

Everyone who is a member of the body of Christ is urged by Paul to become a part of a community of sufferers that gives the greatest honor to the weakest members (1 Cor. 12:23-26). According to Miller and Dewey, as quoted by Sarah J. Melcher, this affirmation is very useful from a disabled perspective because it encourages the reader of the letter to respect their experiences and feelings.⁸ This reflects a Biblical understanding of the body as a physical aspect of a person and is the most important part of the human being created by God and which must therefore be respected by the individual himself and by other individuals. The

Christian's body belongs to God, an integral part of the person who has been redeemed for resurrection.⁹

In Paul's concept, the body as the temple of God is a metaphor for the evangelical community as a building, a building that was built by Jesus Christ alone in his death and resurrection. In the part of evangelism, he uses the metaphor of planting and watering. He says that the Corinthian Christian community was "the field of God" (1 Cor. 3:9); but he concludes the comparison of evangelism with a building, as the temple of God (*naos theou*). The phrase "temple of God" is an Old Testament term found in Daniel 5:3 and Judges 4:2 for the actual temple in Jerusalem, but Paul uses it now to imply a kind of antagonism to the Jerusalem Temple. From this it can be understood that the Christian congregation is no longer just a building belonging to God (1 Cor. 3:9) but is the place where God lives. Paul's intention in this case is to show the second part, namely "the Spirit of God dwells in you," namely in their existence together.

Besides that, the use of the phrase Temple of God also suggests the unity of the Christian community as the description

⁷ Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, ed., *First Corinthians: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary. The Anchor Yale Bible*, v. 32 (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 270.

⁸ Sarah J. Melcher, Mikeal C. Parsons, and Amos Yong, eds., *The Bible and Disability: A Commentary*

(*Studies in Religion, Theology, and Disability*) (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2017), 24.

⁹ Lockwood, *1 Corinthians. Concordia Commentary*, 216.

of cult in the Old Testament implies the unity of Israel as God's people (2 Kings 23:4-25).¹⁰ The use of the phrase "Temple of God" also alludes to the opening description of the letter to the Corinthians, that they belong to God by referring to them as "sanctified and called to be His holy people." (1 Cor. 1:2).¹¹ It is clear that the Christian believe in Jesus Christ, saved and justified by the death of Jesus Christ as the body of Christ. As the temple of God, because God existed in their life, and they are holy because God Himself is Holy. The salvation is not human made or given by this world, but it is by the grace of God. So, it does not depend on the condition of the human body (disable or not) but it is a free gift from God in His only Son Jesus Christ.

Strictly speaking, Paul through passage 1 Corinthians 12 is aiming to undermine the elitist, triumphant and exclusive attitude that has been developed by certain Corinthians towards others in the church. Because the Holy Spirit gives gifts freely and generously, people with disabilities are also able to contribute to building a community of faith, because the unity of the body is formed by its diversity, the metaphor of

the Church as a body with diverse members (some thought to be strong, others thought to be weak), highlights the presence disabled people within the Body of Christ. The weaker members of the body (people with disabilities) are equally necessary for the health of the whole group, but members who are marginalized should be given greater honor and greater respect (1 Cor. 12:23).

Thus, both disabled and intellectual disabilities are central, necessary and essential for a perfect and functioning body of Christ. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the whole body to stop the stigmatization and marginalization of people with disabilities. As the Body of Christ and as the Temple of God, the people with disabilities worshiping God in their own existence, they meet with God and praising God in their own context. Smile and happiness become the sign of believe (faith), when they see the picture of Jesus Christ, when they hear the Church music and hymns. When they move and dance, they follow the rhythm of Church music as a sign of belief (faith). As the fact of faith, disabilities not become limit for the people with disabilities for praising and worshiping God.

¹⁰ Fitzmeyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary. The Anchor Yale Bible*, v. 32, 202.

¹¹ Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians. The Pillar New Testament*

Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Apollos, 2010), 264.

Faith Saves, Not Physicality

The church is often referred to as a phrase which emphasizes that between Christ and His church there is unity; in whom Christ is His head while His church is His body, besides that among the members of the church there is also a unity united by His blood. In this case believers exist within the Body of Christ because God put them there and their unity because of God who binds them. Therefore, their existence in His body was not due to their efforts.¹²

Every believer receives salvation from God in Jesus Christ, both the weak and the strong, people without special needs or people with special needs, because the salvation that the Lord Jesus gave is universal. For Luther, disabilities are entrusted to humanity as well as abilities. Luther saw that humans have a blurred perception of the reality of God and have a spoiled ability to judge and evaluate the reality of other humans. They judge suffering, shame, and disability as things that are intrinsically bad; whereas every human being is born as part of the glory of God.¹³ We believed that every human being is born as part of the glory

of God, in the same way we believed all human beings disabled or not are valuable in the eyes of God. One who is disabled in the eyes of the world but can be a valuable and perfectly functioning member of the Body of Christ in the eyes of God. We were created by the hand of God and created as *Imago Dei*. We are perfect and holy, because God Himself is perfect and holy. Because every human being is born as part of the glory of God, every human being received all the blessings that were given by God. The cross of Jesus Christ as the symbol of the Christian. Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation and the way of reconciliation between God and the sinners. The sins of the believers nailed on the cross of Jesus.¹⁴

The human body and physique are formed by God from dust and soil. God breathed the breath of life (spirit) so that humans become living beings.¹⁵ With the extraordinary function of the human body, the body of the living continuously takes in and discards its own elements, until finally the human body that is destined to die will return to the dust where it came from.¹⁶ Thus, the human body is temporary, and

¹² Pintor Marihot Sitanggang, *Sola Gratia: Rekonsiliasi Sang Rekonsiliator* (Bandung: Penerbit Widina, 2021), 80.

¹³ Stefam Heuser, "The Human Condition as Seen from the Cross: Luther and Disability," in *Disability in the Christian Tradition*, ed. Brian Brock and John Swinton (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 208.

¹⁴ Pintor Marihot Sitanggang, *Allahku Pengharapanku. Teodise – Iman – Pemuridan* (Bandung: Penerbit Widina, 2023), 75.

¹⁵ Norman L. Geisler, *Systematic Theology: In One Volume* (Minneapolis, Minn: Bethany House Publishers, 2011), 795.

¹⁶ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 1976), 125.

will experience death. But God does not allow humans to experience death forever, but will achieve perfection, namely having life after physical death because of His grace and the faith He bestows in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.¹⁷

Salvation is obtained through participation in Christ's suffering, our behavior being our response. This is to clarify the relationship between salvation, faith, and good works. Faith is like a tree which must first become good before it can produce good fruit.¹⁸ Thus a sinful body must be emptied (cleansed) through the development of a better life. Because the wage of sin is death, but God gives eternal life through Jesus Christ. Therefore, giving yourself to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ must mean giving yourself to be baptized into His death, so that with the resurrection of Christ, people who believe will also be resurrected and humans will live a new life that is eternal and he is saved by faith in Jesus.¹⁹ Every believer is saved by their faith in Jesus Christ, not depending on their physical condition or their deed but it is by the grace of God that

they believed. Salvation is not a product of this world; it is not human made. Salvation is a work of God in Jesus Christ. We received the salvation in and by our faith (*Sola Fide*), by the grace of God (*Sola Gratia*) and by the Gospel of God (*Sola Scriptura*).

In Luther's view, we are as human beings are determined by our relationship with God, which is justified by faith. Luther notes that humanity is the pinnacle of creation, and everything created is to serve man. Man was created by God in His image and likeness to live forever in God to praise Him. Human minds will not know their beginning and end existence without going through the Word.²⁰ It is God's Word that has the power to guide and give humans teachings about their nature as humans and the salvation they will receive. Everyone can receive God's Spirit because it is a way of personal relationship between humans and God.²¹ To do justice and develop prosperity, serving people equally as the Body of Christ, can be understood as a calling of the Church ministry. This calling encourages the Church to plan, create and develop

¹⁷ Huria Kristen Batak Protestan, *HKBP's Creed: Confessions of 1951 and 1996 Batak, Indonesian and English* (Tarutung Pearaja: HKBP Head Office, 2013), 129.

¹⁸ David V. N. Bagchi and David Curtis Steinmetz, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology. Cambridge Companions to Religion* (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 48.

¹⁹ Alexander Roberts, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Vol. 3* (Michigan: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), 580.

²⁰ Mark Ellingsen, *Martin Luther's Legacy: Reforming Reformation Theology For the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 137.

²¹ Choan-Seng Song, *Allah Yang Turut Menderita* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2007), 46.

the models or methods of ministry to fulfill the needs of the people in their own background and condition.

The work of human salvation is centered on redemption which is achieved through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. So, if you want to be saved, humans are required to have faith and believe first without demanding proof with their physical abilities, because there is no salvation apart from Christ. So that in faith man is actually born again like a new creation. And it is also through faith that people can relate to their belief in God's promises and unite believers with Christ. God has made a covenant with us so that whoever believes and is baptized will receive a work of salvation. In this covenant God is true and faithful, and bound by what He has promised.²² Through faith, believers are clothed in Christ's righteousness. Justifying faith allows believers united with the righteousness of Christ to be justified on the basis of that faith not basis of their physical condition. As we believed that once we were baptized, means we were united with the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Your faith saves you, not your physicality.

Teaching (Educating) - Enabling – Empowering People with Special Needs

Churches are often confused about how to serve people with disabilities and are less responsive to social relationships. In some cases, the church has provided encouragement and support through the presence of carers for persons with disabilities. However, in general, people with disabilities are absent from most churches. They are often seen as burdens rather than worthy members of the ecclesiastical community. However, given the fact that humans were created in God's image, and they are God's perfect temple.

The metaphor of the Body of Christ makes it clear that weaker members are indispensable to the mission and unity of the church. They are a means of realizing God's presence and omnipotence in the world. For this reason, the Church must pay attention to justice for people with disabilities, recognizing that they are also an integral part of the church. Regardless of the capacity or ability of each individual, the church needs to provide services for people with disabilities. People with disabilities may not always be agents of ministry in the normal sense, but those who are slow to see, hear and experience the faith and presence of

²² Alister E. McGrath, *Sejarah Pemikiran Reformasi* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2006), 118.

God in their lives are channels of the revelatory and transformative gifts of the Spirit of God.²³ We can see the expression of faith from the people with disabilities, when they smile happily and energetically hear the church music in the time of hearing the church music or church songs. We should realize and declare that they are singing along in their own ways, or faith calls us to trust that the Spirit of God is working in their life. Sometimes we can hear they say God, clapping their hands and dancing in their own ways in worshipping and praising God.

The church is called to address the spiritual of everyone, but this cannot be separated from the reality of life in all aspects. The church as a spiritual observer needs to pay attention to the spiritual needs of people with disabilities. People with disabilities, like humans in general, have spiritual needs that must be met. Jesus himself in his ministry has set an example where he is close to all people, including people with disabilities and always succeeds in meeting their spiritual needs.

A person who has their spiritual needs met will have a good perspective on life, especially for those with special needs

so they do not feel alienated from their surrounding community. Besides that, the church also needs to provide teaching for non-disabled members of congregations so that they understand the theology of disabilities which is important for knowing the person of God and the meaning of life for all people who are in God's power.²⁴ The goal is to give space for the people of disabilities in the Church and they feel at home in the Church. Praising and worshipping God in their own ways same as the "normal" people praising and worshipping God in their own ways.

Teaching (Educating)

The church has space to provide healthy motivation and teaching to people with special needs so that they can understand and find their true purpose and identity. The church needs to provide specific teaching to them as a form of understanding that God who created them is the Most Perfect and has a perfect plan for their lives, as well as a form of support, strengthening and direction for them to be able to live their lives well. This teaching can be done by way of seminars, or open meetings for people with disabilities. The teachings that are

²³ Amos Yong, *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 113.

²⁴ John Swinton, "Who Is the God We Worship? Theologies of Disability; Challenges and New

Possibilities," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 14, no. 2 (February 1, 2011): 273–307, https://doi.org/10.1515/IJPT.2011.020/MACHINE_READABLECITATION/RIS.

taught include how to relate to God, identity, personal talents, and relationships with others, all of which must be taught according to the truth of the Word.²⁵ To realize this effort, the Church first needs to prepare teachers who are good, patient, understanding and capable in teaching people with disabilities.

In making teaching materials for people with disabilities and normal people, of course, it is different, where teaching materials and services for people with disabilities are more specific or specific regarding their relationship with God. The missiological content that is given must depart from their existence so that various negative stigmas about them can be removed and they can tell stories about God.²⁶ The teaching materials for people with disabilities have to fulfill the needs of the disabilities. For example: to fulfill the needs of the blind people, the church has to prepare teaching materials using the braille alphabet. To fulfill the needs of the deaf and dumb (D&D) people, the church has to prepare teaching materials using multimedia and develop the sign language to help the deaf and dumb people to understand the teaching materials. To fulfill the needs of the people with disabilities especially down syndrome, the church

has to prepare interest teaching materials that makes the smile, laugh and happy. Those kinds of actions can be understood as the actions of faith.

The main goal of teaching the Bible is for a change of life towards full maturity in Christ. In general, educational goals include providing learning content and inspiration moving participants to specific actions. Full maturity in Christ comes through learning to discern right from wrong in life. In achieving spiritual maturity, educators must teach the Bible from the target content, the goal of inspiration until they are able to respond. Therefore, educators must also understand well the part of the Bible that is to be taught, understand the implications or the relationship between the contents of the story and the lives of students and put forward short, clear and flexible response goals.

Well prepared curricula can be a great help for Bible teachers who do not understand theology. But that does not mean that this curriculum has the highest authority but the Bible. The characteristics of a good curriculum are: looking at the Bible not only as conveying information but also guiding students to relate to God and demanding a response from students, investigating the Word to discover implications

²⁵ Paul E. Loth, *Teknik Mengajar* (Malang: Gandum Mas, 1997), 5.

²⁶ Rosalina S. Lawalata, *Difabel Sebagai Ruang Berteologi* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2021), 58.

of Bible truth for personal life.²⁷ Table 1 propose models of teaching or curricula that can be used to teach people with special needs

and what responds that can be expected from them.

No.	Themes	Methods of teaching	Expected Responses
1	Praying	Showing flash card; showing the way to pray with sign language	Smile, Happy, Saying something in their own ways, Folding fingers.
2	Praising, Singing	Showing flash card; communicate with sign language, using music	Smile, Happy, Jumping, Shouting and Singing in their own ways to show their happiness.
3	Jesus Christ and the Cross	Showing flash card; communicate with sign language, showing bible with pictures.	Smile, Happy, Jumping, Shouting and Singing in their own ways to show their happiness to meet with their friend.
4	Church	Showing flash card; communicate with sign language, showing bible with pictures, also using the methods how to pray and praise the Lord.	Smile, Happy, Jumping, Shouting and Singing in their own ways to show their happiness to meet their friend and make them to feel at home.

Table 1. Curricula for teaching people with special needs

Enabling

For people with disabilities, community is a manifestation of the need to belong. They will feel at home in the world living with other people who accept them. On the other hand, being excluded, being a stranger, invisible or ostracized and homeless, breeds confusion and anxiety. Isolation also makes people with disabilities distrust their world, because they are often overwhelmed by feelings of being unwanted.²⁸

The form of the church diakonia that is given to persons with disabilities can be

linked to the provision of abilities, both those that are known and those that are not yet known. Studies of people with disabilities suggest that one of the basic practices for enabling people with disabilities is to apply the humanities of integration in a broad sense. In this case, the church seeks to provide space for acceptance of people with special needs, namely accepting them as part of God's perfect temple. Thus, this effort will also provide a spirit of acceptance of oneself as a glorious creation, which also receives salvation in Jesus Christ. In this way,

²⁷ Carolyn Nystrom, *Integrity Living the Truth: 10 Bible Study Materials for Individuals and Groups* (Wonorejo: East Java Perkantas Literature, 2020), 9.

²⁸ Reynolds, *Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality*, 54.

those who are unable to see will become able to transcend limits to continue their life in the world.

From a different angle, Robert Kolb explores another Luther concept of the “invisible Church” which aims to comfort those who are unsure of their membership in the Body of Christ, either because of punishment by the official church or because of their own sense of guilt and sinfulness.²⁹ The Bible assures believers that no matter what a person's external associations are, God still chooses them. Luther defined the church more as that which can be heard and seen, but above all he used “Church” to refer to God's faithful people even though they were hidden in the sense of invisibility under the cross of suffering and persecution.³⁰

Empowering

Empowerment is an effort to improve the ability of individuals and groups, especially those with disabilities or who have limited ability to meet their needs. Empowerment makes it possible for people to

engage in productive activities, as well as be able to participate in the areas that are directed. In Church ministry, empowerment is a form of restoring the human image as the image and likeness of God and developing a better life.³¹ Empowerment for people with special needs aims to minimize their dependence upon other people and are able to make choices in their lives.

Greater independence from others does not mean breaking off cooperation between individuals, especially in the status of a believer who has faith. For this reason, empowerment can also be carried out in the form of collaboration or individual collaboration with groups of people with disabilities to create new ways to fight exclusion and demeaning acts of people with disabilities.³² Efforts to empower people with disabilities can be started by involving them in church services according to the abilities possessed by these intellectual disabilities.³³ The involvement of people with disabilities in church ministry greatly influences the views of the congregation on understanding

²⁹ In the Dueteronomis and levirate traditions, bodies that do not comply with applicable laws are punished with disabilities and bodies that are able to carry them out can speak and walk. This fact is considered a metaphor for obedience to Yahweh. See David Tabb Stewart, “Leviticus-Deuteronomy,” in *The Bible and Disability: A Commentary*, ed. Sarah J. Melcher (Texas: Baylor University Press, 2017), 61.

³⁰ Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 153.

³¹ Norbertus Jegalus, “Tanggung Jawab Awam Dalam Perutusan Diakonia Gereja,” *Lumen Veritatis: Jurnal Filsafat Dan Teologi* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 2020): 139–64, <https://doi.org/10.30822/LUMENVERITATIS.V10I2.475>.

³² Creamer, *Disability and Christian Theology: Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities*, 45.

³³ Imanuel Teguh Harisantoso, “Congregational Perceptions and Disabilities Access,” *Visio Dei: Jurnal Teologi Kristen* 4, no. 1 (2022): 58–81, <https://doi.org/10.35909/visiodei.v4i1.242>.

ministry and understanding people with disabilities.

CONCLUSION

All baptised Christians are equally members and are equally called to participate in maintaining the unity and health of the body of Christ. Members who are neglected, despised, and marginalized such as those with intellectual disabilities are not only important for, but essential to the Body of Christ. The true Church has faith that Christ Jesus is Lord and Savior even of those with intellectual challenges, because salvation does not depend on a mortal's physique, but on his eternal faith. Therefore, the church as the Body of Christ and a part of the manifestation of the Kingdom of God in the world must be able to show love which is the basis of fellowship; and make Christ through the preaching of God's Word as the center. Man is made perfect by the love of God. People with disabilities are perfect as the Father's, making us perfect in Him. Perfect as God's creation that is not limited by physical weakness but focuses on God the Creator. God is perfect, so creation is also perfect.

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