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ABSTRACT
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LONGER ABSTRACT

Title: "AND WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?" (LUKE 10:29). A HISTORICAL-DOGMATIC ANALYSIS OF BIBLE SOURCES FOR OUTLINING A PUBLIC THEOLOGY OF THE NEIGHBOR

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This paper seeks to outline a public theology of the neighbor through a historical-dogmatic analysis of biblical sources based on the research of the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. The main directions of scientific research for this purpose are the following:

1. Understanding and developing the concept of neighbor in the history of the Church;
2. Analyzing the biblical perception on this concept;
3. How it was applied the concept of neighbor in the life and teachings of Jesus;
4. The development of the neighbor as an individual for contemporary society.

This study will link the Holy Scriptures, church tradition, morality and social spirituality. We will analyze the Parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate a spirituality relevant to our times, which emerges from the attention of the other, which in turn could help to expand our relationship with the divinity. We believe that understanding the concept of neighbor is at the

heart of the development of public theology and that it is crucial to a close relationship with God.

The object of our research arises from the desire for biblical explanation and social and religious application of the biblical concept of neighbor. In this paper we will also dwell on how the Parable of the Good Samaritan was understood in church history and how the term neighbor was interpreted, explained, identified, and applied.

Our research contains, in the first part, a historical-dogmatic analysis, even a diachronic one, of the concept of the neighbor in the great historical periods of the Universal Church and analyzes important representatives of these periods. We will also look at how the hermeneutics of the biblical text in Luke 10:25-37 developed and the social reflections that flow from it.

The object of our research, in the end, will be theological research, and not only, in order to develop a public theology of the neighbor for the contemporary period. The research will be based on prominent theologians who have discussed and analyzed the

Parable of the Good Samaritan, but also modern theological analyzes focused strictly on the issue of neighbor, to finally see how this biblical concept can be applied socially in our times.

Regarding the methodology of this scientific research, we will use, first of all, the methodology of historical research, through which we will present the way in which the Parable of the Good Samaritan was interpreted (Luke 10:25-37) in Church History, where we will stop and research on the concept of neighbor.

At the same time, we will look at how the concept of neighbor was explained in its occurrences in Holy Scripture, how the biblical hermeneutics of this concept developed, and what role the neighbor can play in the social and spiritual development of social communities today.

In addition to this method, we will also use the comparison methodology, by studying the issue of the concept of neighbor in the writings of the leading representatives of theology who analyzed the Parable of the Good Samaritan. For the development of this method we will use, in the first part, as primary sources

the writings of the Church Fathers, and in the second part, we will focus on the theological research that explained the parables of the Lord Jesus in a broader sense. Another essential aspect of this research is that in the primary sources we will analyze only the aspects related to the identification and explanation of the concept of neighbor, how to apply it to social life and the development of public theology.

This paper contains four main chapters, in the development of the public theology of the neighbor for the public space, an Introduction, a Conclusion, five Appendices and a Bibliography. For a clearer understanding, we have proposed that each chapter contains five subchapters in defining and developing the argument in this paper.

The first chapter examines the presentation of the parable, with clear and concise accents on the concept of the neighbor in the thought of Jesus, and its hermeneutics in the History of the Church. This chapter is divided into five essential subchapters, each subchapter representing a specific period in the history of the Church. For the description and analysis of each

subchapter we will deal with the method of interpreting it representative and its important thinkers, and after this analysis we will conclude with the relevant aspects of these periods. For a level corresponding to our study, we will focus on those authors who have influenced Christian thinking and who have brought an aspect of novelty in the biblical research on the biblical passage we are studying. We did not dwell on those Christian writers and thinkers whose perspective is found entirely in the thinking of their forerunners. Aspects of relevance to the culture of their time, influence on Christian thinking, and contribution to Bible research will form the basis of our selection for the most effective synthesis in the doctoral dissertation.

In the first part of this chapter we analyzed our subject in the first century of Christianity, but also in the writings of the Church Fathers. Here we start from the first indirect reference to the interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan, namely the work of the heretic Marcion. By historical analysis, it seems that he was the first thinker to give an explanation for this Lucanian parable. The first subchapter contains a

summary of the essential ideas found in the writings of the principal patristicists, respectively in the writings Irenaeus of Lyons (130-202): Jesus is the Samaritan; Clement of Alexandria (150-215): Jesus is the neighbor par excellence; Origen Adamantius (185-254): "go and do the same"; Gregory Thaumaturgus (213-275): "the guardian who watches over all"; Ephrem the Syrian (306-373): the neighbor is not limited to Jews; Gospel of Philip (3rd century): The Samaritan is a model; Ambrose of Milan (340-397): giving compassion to others; John Chrysostom (347-407): "Let us imitate Him"; Augustine of Hippo (354-430): The Samaritan is a guardian.

In the second subchapter, I developed the argument of the thesis through the prism of the hermeneutics of the parable found during the Christian church in the Middle Ages. The most representative thinkers found at this point are: Venerable Bede (627-735): a patristic allegory; Boniface (675-754): the relationship between people; Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109): good Samaritan, good friend; Theophilact

of Bulgaria (1050-1108): a guide to greater love; Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153): love of people and neighbor; Gottfried of Admont (b. 1165): an ethical interpretation; Radulfus Ardens (b.1200): a prophetic fulfillment; Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1218-1274): teachings at the intellectual level; Thomas D'Aquino (1225-1274): respect is manifested through love; Nicolas of Lyra (1270-1349): the ethical aspect of the parable.

In the third subchapter we turned our attention to the Reformation and to the two prominent representatives of this period, Luther and Calvin, and to the way in which they understood the parable and explained the term neighbor: a moral imperative, explained by Martin Luther (1483-1546), respectively the idea of a deeper reverence for Scripture, to Jean Calvin (1509-1564).

In the fourth subchapter we analyzed the interpretation of the parable with clear emphasis on the concept of neighbor reflected in theology of the modern period, where we turned our attention to the following

writers: Adolf Julicher (1857-1938): “self-sacrifice and unconditional love”; Joachim Jeremias (1900-1979): a call to love; Birger Gerhardson (1926-2013): a parallel between the parable and the gospels; Dan Otto Via (b. 1928): recovery of aesthetic nature; Kenneth Bailey (1930-2016): a drama in seven scenes; John D. Crossan (b. 1937): a good example to follow; Marcus Borg (1942-2015): compassion, ethos of the Christian community; Craig Blomberg (b. 1955): a triadic structure; Llewellyn Welille Mazamisa: Beatification of Fellowship; John R. Donahue, Greg Forbes, Ulrich Busse - discipleship, love and education.

In the fifth subchapter we presented the theme of our subject, as it is found in contemporary theology in the following writers: William Barclay (1907-1978): a real compassion is seen in deeds; N. T. Wright (b. 1948): a dispute between two visions; Darell L. Bock (b. 1953): the neighbor is the one who sees, feels, and serves; Paul Borgman (b. 1940): a lesson in Social Coexistence; David E. Garland (b. 1947): his neighbor and his close deeds; James Edwards (b. 1945): christian

love manifested in public; Robert A. J. Gagnon (b. 1958): an additional perspective on the commandment of love; Joel B. Green (b. 1956): love of neighbor knows no bounds; Luke Timothy Johnson (b. 1943): the despised Samaritan becomes the moral example; Mikeal C. Parsons (b. 1957): the neighbor as an agent of God.

The second chapter of our thesis focuses on the biblical perception of the concept of neighbor, namely how we develop the applicability of the concept of neighbor from the Law to fulfillment. In the first part of this chapter, I looked at the idea of neighbor in Old Testament law and presented the perception of the most important Jewish rabbis on the subject. I first explained the meaning of *re'a*, the Hebrew term used for the word neighbor, and analyzed this biblical concept in the light of the biblical passages in which it is presented. Then, we looked at how it was originally understood, and then we presented how its meaning evolved from a restrictive term to an integrative concept. In explaining this idea, we turned our attention to the hebrew concept

of neighbor in the Decalogue, but also in Leviticus chapter 19, a biblical passage essential in defining this concept.

In the second subchapter we present the biblical perception of the neighbor found in the Synoptic Gospels. The way Matthew, Mark and Luke use this concept of neighbor, the Greek *plésion (s)*, helps us to better understand the concept of neighbor and gives us essential ideas in developing a public theology of it. Here we will see that although there has been a more restrictive interpretation of the neighbor, an interpretation held by the Qumran community and the Pharisees, it is Jesus Christ who condemns such an approach. The people living in Qumran defined the neighbor as a restrictive concept because only those who were part of their community were integrated into the act of compassion and charity. For them, everyone outside that community lived in the dark, and contact with them should be avoided to avoid spiritual contamination.

In this analysis of the concept of neighbor in the New Testament, we will be able to draw four important

conclusions. First of all, the Greek word *plesíon* (*s*), used by the New Testament to translate *re'a*, derives from *pélas*, “near” or “close to” and really means neighbor, and applies to any human being because any man represents the image of God.

Second, the New Testament borrowed this rendering of the term *re'a* from the Septuagint. Third, Jesus choice of a Samaritan for His example was not accidental, for Samaritans and Jews were enemies in the Israel of the first-century. Thus, Jesus Christ defines the neighbor in terms of the inclusion of all, against the rabbinic interpretation that distinguished between the enemy and the neighbor.

Fourthly, when Jesus was asked by a scholar to state the essence of the Torah, he instructed this scholar, with rabbinic knowledge, to immediately recognize, quoting two Bible verses to be evaluated above all others, the importance of praxis toward one's neighbor with the Law. This praxis is highlighted by the diversification of the use of the term neighbor, in its New Testament occurrences, and explained in relation

to sacrifices, the Law, Christian fellowship, judgment, and eternal life.

The third subchapter presents the opinion of the Apostle Paul on this biblical concept, found in his epistles to the christians in Galatia and Rome, an opinion in which we followed the public implications of fulfilling this duty to be a neighbor in the social space. In the last part of this subchapter we have focused on the analysis of the concept of the biblical neighbor in the Epistle of James, the brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, and on how he contributes to the development of the neighbor's theology for public space.

In the third chapter, we present our neighbor's mission reflected in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Luke. This chapter, like the others, is divided into five important subchapters. The first subchapter, within the neighbor's mission, deals with identifying the neighbor as a better perspective on social life. In the biblical passages discussed at this point, we do not highlight the neighbor's approach as an exact identification or nomination, but how certain

people who came in contact with the teachings of the Lord, or with the person of Jesus Christ, responded to his counsel regarding to get involved in helping others, even in solving certain social problems that certain individuals go through.

The second subchapter develops the call of the neighbor to charity because we have a God as the author of generosity who wants us to be a blessing to others through the blessings left to us.

The third subchapter introduces Jesus as the beneficiary of the hospitality of some of His countrymen. Here we will see a cultural context relevant to the love of God and neighbor in the teaching of Jesus in Bible hospitality, and these will be presented in the light of the Bible passages that can be found in the Gospel scenes where Jesus sits at the table with publicans and sinners (Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 2:13-17, Luke 5:27-32), or at the feast in the houses of the Pharisees (Luke 7:36-50; 11:37-54; 14:1-24). In the biblical analysis of the passages that speak of hospitality, we can easily see that the most common recipients of hospitality, which Jesus includes in this

act, are the poor and oppressed, including the social outcasts, such as the publicans and sinners.

The fourth subchapter presents Jesus' perspective on poverty and the attitude that one's neighbor must take toward it. Love for the poor has been a major part of the testimony of the Universal Church, at all times and in all places. Love for the poor is one of the practices by which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church proclaimed the apostolic faith, first articulated in the kerygmatic preaching of the Lord's Resurrection. It is an integral part of the Gospel tradition that goes back to those who knew Jesus Himself.

In the last subchapter of the neighbor's mission we will present the social message of Jesus' teaching for the development of a better society, and to understand more accurately the social message presented by Jesus mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, we need to explore the elements of God's Kingdom which are expressed in the Gospel: healing and exorcism, judgment, preaching, present reality and prophetic fulfillment, Jesus as King, the disciples, and

so on. In Jesus words we find that the messianic mission of Jesus embraces His proclamation and deeds, His deeds and suffering, His life and death and His proclamation of the imminent Kingdom of God are parts of His all-encompassing mission.

The fourth chapter of this paper deals directly with the presentation of the biblical neighbor as a social person. In the first part of this chapter we presented the development of an anthropology of neighbor and how man, in becoming to be a neighbor, must allow himself to be transformed by the biblical message and his spiritual calling. Jesus is the one who does not want to identify, classify or analyze those in need of help, but as Jesus command at the end of the parable says "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37). Jesus wants a construction of the teacher of the Law so that he becomes the neighbor. In other words, it is Jesus who shows him the real problem in this discussion of "who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). The teacher of the law, asking for a paradigm shift in this debate. Jesus is the One who appeals to his becoming as a neighbor to

others, or answers by this example what it means to be a person with personality and spiritual responsibility.

In the second subchapter we focused on the deeds of the neighbor as a public person, as their responsibility and social direction. In front of the audience, the discussion between Jesus and the teacher does not remain at the analysis of a personal aspect, an inner question of the questioner, but develops as an analysis of some public behaviors from which some conclusions are drawn. Closing the discussion, by Jesus command, "Go and do thou likewise!" it shows us, even at this point, that the idea of neighbor cannot be understood in a restrictive, organizational sense, but only in a way of a universal principle. The parable, at this point in the discussion, takes on a strong aspect of example of how we can talk about our neighbor from a public life perspective.

In the third subchapter, our thesis analyzes the possibility of developing a public theology of the neighbor. The conversion of the neighbor into a theological nature, at the moment, is directed towards a deeper, fuller and freer love for God, but also his love

manifested towards others as attributed to his own self. This is a conversion to love God, who is identified with his neighbor as Jesus teaches His disciples.

In the fourth subchapter we study certain directions towards a better path, namely, how public life can develop for the better, through the social acts of the neighbor. But what we want to present is that the contemporary disciple, in becoming the neighbor, must not remain theoretically following the example of the Savior, but he must consume this Christological act in him in order to truly offer support to the one who really needs it. The Christian, in his becoming, as always close, must develop an attitudinal system, a complex of sequences, of deeds, through which he will truly present an infinitely better social path.

In the last subchapter we presented the neighbor as a social phenomenon through a reflection on the development of three areas of social research, but also how the concept of the neighbor was the basis for the development of social justice, social psychology and sociology, ending with the presentation of love as social experience. We can see how the good Samaritan,

who is developed in the contemporary period as the individual necessary for contemporary societies as a development of the public good and the resolution of certain social discrepancies encountered within them, becomes a foundation, not only of welfare and help in Christianity, but also we will see, but also of the various social sciences, which find their foundation on this biblical concept, but which has become one of social scope.

Being neighbor is not limited to relationship or closeness. It is just a demonstration of God's love and mercy to all who need it, whoever and wherever they may be, regardless of race, faith, or ethnicity. Jesus teaches us that love is an action, not just a feeling or a theory, and that it sometimes requires carrying the burdens of others, an often awkward process. The priest and the Levite were religious people, and yet they acted inhumanly, and the Samaritan man proved just the opposite. Religious vocation or affiliation is empty without the actions that support it. Being a neighbor, according to Jesus, means being involved in producing the good of another person.

The neighbor, as we will see, is also the one who, through a personal decision, chooses to be transformed by the Word of God, following the principles and social values that he will express in the public space. The neighbor is not locked in a personal space, but he is public, he is the social traveler who in the face of certain circumstances chooses to offer his support, knowledge and sacrifice for the good of those around him. He is always present, and through his actions he presents his personal theology and his relationship with God. A neighbor's theology is not one that discusses psychic aspects and long plans, it is concrete and visible. She is attentive to the ways in which God accompanies and suffers with the poor because of the dehumanization and shortcomings they face. A theology of the neighbor will deal with and develop certain principles of application, starting from the example of the Samaritan, which must be applied to whole masses of people who belong to certain disadvantaged social categories.

In the conclusions section you will find some clear, concise ideas or essential directions for

developing a public theology of the neighbor. We will see that the allegorical vision of the parable draws the reader's attention to the question of the teacher of the Law, what he must do to inherit eternal life. In this hermeneutic note, Jesus answer is seen as a plan of salvation, a way to obtain eternal life. Such a view consistently restricts the definition of the concept of neighbor, because the neighbor is seen as just Jesus. Second, the Parable of the Good Samaritan becomes a paradigm of human actions. For the disciples of Jesus Christ, this parable becomes a model of discipleship in which the other, the one in need, is the subject, and his own person is the predicate. The parable shows us two different directions, consequently two different hermeneutics. For the priest and the Levite, the action is done through the prism of the laws of purity and, as a result, surpasses the love of the neighbor in front of these laws. For the Samaritan as well as for Jesus, the hermeneutic key is the double commandment of love, which in accordance with the Kingdom of God aligns with human dignity, their restoration and rehabilitation.

Third, Jesus is the one who gives us a broader understanding of the notion of neighbor. The neighbor is presented as a divine character, so that everyone has the opportunity to be close to someone by performing acts of mercy. At the same time, the neighbor shows us a divine way, becoming mercy in action. Our neighbor challenges us to be agents for the restoration of human dignity, because for the evangelist Luke, the one who gives mercy and compassion is the agent of God. Just as in the gospel, Jesus is the agent of God for the good of those around him, so the neighbor is the agent of God for the public space.

Fourth, the Good Samaritan Parable brings ethical implications for personal and community life, which, according to God's law, should move us to act in behalf of mankind. How the definition of one's neighbor is perceived can be essential to a person's actions. A misunderstanding of it can damage his relationship with God. If the Law teacher asks for a classification of those who belong to the category of neighbor, Jesus is the One who answers to him by example. The teacher asks for exclusive clarifications,

and all he receives is an inclusive reference. He is waiting for an opinion against someone, and all he receives is the fact that he must love even those he considers enemies.

The neighbor, in a public sense, does not belong only to theology. He belongs to the public space, he is the social phenomenon that Moscovici, Kasirer, Ricoeur and others are talking about. It is the neighbor who is the basis for the change of human relations and the development of social communities for the good of all. He is the person who sets the example, he is the person who learns, who corrects the mistakes of others, who helps to restore and rehabilitate people, he is the one who gives a direction for a better path, he is really the need of contemporary societies.

At the end of the thesis we will find our own definition, as a result of the present analysis, by which we understand the neighbor as a person who, regardless of race, ethnicity, relationship or gender, manifests his public duty to help for social rehabilitation and / or restoration even if it involves sacrificing personal resources.