

# Analysis of the Rasulan Tradition in Christian Religious Education Perspektive and its Implications for Evangelism

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## Abstract

This article aims to examine the Rasulan tradition that developed specifically in the Gunung Kidul area of Yogyakarta Province – Indonesia from the perspective of Christian Religious Education and explore its implications, especially in the evangelism. The method of writing this article is through the analysis of literature studies and autoethnographic studies where the author is involved and has direct experience in it. This research seeks to explore the meaning, practice, and significance of the Rasulan tradition for the local community, which is then examined in the perspective of Christian Religious Education by focusing on theological aspects and values that are in line as a meeting point or separation point that has the potential to conflict with the principles of Christian Religious Education in which it talks about the Christian faith. The findings in this study show that this in-depth understanding of the Rasulan tradition has important implications as well as being an effective bridge for the contextualization of the Gospel and the development of effective and adaptive evangelism strategies to local cultures. Furthermore, this article also proposes practical approaches for local church members to integrate positive values from local traditions into church life, while of course maintaining the integrity of the Christian faith. The conclusion for this article is the need for the development and strategy of evangelism that is effective and adaptive to local culture, then it is hoped that there will be a continuous dialogue between the christian faith and local traditions such as the Rasulan and others local tradition, this is very important to create a harmonious relationship between the church and society, as well as to enrich cross-cultural understanding among Christians.

**Keywords:** Rasulan Tradition, Christian Religious Education, Contextualization, Evangelism

## Introduction

Traditions or customs, customs and culture from ancestors are a part of life that is integrated in life and is still carried out in the life of Indonesian people today in various regions. The state of Indonesia consists of various ethnic groups that have very rich traditions and tribal cultures that are different from each other such as language, lifestyle, art, living habits, philosophy, beliefs and so on. Culture is the entire system of ideas, actions and works of human beings in the context of community life that is made human property by learning, <sup>1</sup> the other meaning of culture is referring to common ideals broadly, values, the formation

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<sup>1</sup> Koentjaraningrat, *Introduction to Anthropology*, (Jakarta: Aksara Baru, 1985).

and use of categories, assumptions about life, and activities<sup>2</sup>. Thus, culture can be seen as a system of common thinking between humans that is developed, maintained and then taught from generation to generation.

In Indonesia, almost all regions have their own culture. There are many traditions and cultures that are still preserved and preserved by the local community. However, there are several traditions that are abandoned by the community because they are considered ancient, backward and no longer in accordance with the beliefs they adhere. For people who continue to preserve cultural traditions, they consider tradition and culture to be something that needs to be maintained as an ancestral heritage and uniqueness of Indonesia. Some people continue to carry out traditions with full appreciation and believe in every meaning and background of the tradition.

Gunung Kidul, one of the districts in the special region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, is an area rich in cultural heritage and traditions. Located in the southeastern part of Yogyakarta, Gunung Kidul is known for its unique karst rock topography, covering an area of 1,485.36 km<sup>2</sup> and inhabited by about 75,219 residents.<sup>3</sup> The region has a long history that has shaped its distinctive cultural identity. Demographically, the majority of the population of Gunung Kidul is Javanese, with most adhering to Islam as the majority. However, there are also communities of Christians, Catholics, and adherents of traditional beliefs who live side by side with each other. This diversity creates complex cultural and social interactions, where local traditions often interact with various religious teachings and practices.

One of the unique traditions that continues to be preserved today in Gunung Kidul is Rasulan, an annual ritual that has its roots in ancient Javanese agrarian beliefs. The Rasulan, also known as 'Bersih Desa' or 'Merti Desa', is a ceremony of thanksgiving for the harvest and a request for safety for the village. This tradition reflects the close relationship between the people of Gunung Kidul and nature and their ancestral heritage.<sup>4</sup> This tradition includes a wide range of activities, including sports competitions, religious ceremonies, and cultural performances, while still prioritizing religious, social, cultural, and economic values.<sup>5</sup> In general, there are two meanings contained in the Rasulan culture. First, as a cleanliness movement carried out by the local community in a cooperative manner. The second is as an offering to the prophets, the motherland, and mother earth who have given the harvest.<sup>6</sup>

Rasulan comes from the words "Bersih Desa", "Selamat Rasul", or "Merti Desa", these terms sometimes appear in several locations with different names but generally have the same meaning and are generally interpreted as Rasulan traditions. This tradition is a mass ceremony carried out by the people of Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta as a form of expression of gratitude for the abundant harvest. The word 'Rasulan' at first glance is similar to Arabic, but in fact in the context of the Rasulan in Gunungkidul, it has nothing to do with it directly. The word Rasulan, which itself is not an activity related to a warning of a certain apostle's life journey or prophet, such as the Maulid or Isra' Mi'raj. This tradition appears in the lives of

<sup>2</sup> Richard Brisling, *Translation, Application and Research*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990)

<sup>3</sup> Central Statistics Agency of Gunung Kidul Regency, data update date: August 30, 2024, source: [gunungkidulkab.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/ODYjMg==/jumlah-penduduk-menurut-kabupaten-kota--jiwa-.html](http://gunungkidulkab.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/ODYjMg==/jumlah-penduduk-menurut-kabupaten-kota--jiwa-.html)

<sup>4</sup> Harjanti R & Sunarti, S, *Community Artistry in the Tradition of the "Rasulan" Ceremony in Baleharjo Village, Wonosari District, Gunungkidul Regency*, *Socialita Journal*, 11(1). Retrieved from: <https://journal.upy.ac.id/index.php/sosialita/article/view/742>, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Nurti Rahayu, *A Descriptive Study On Rasulan In Gunungkidul, Yogyakarta Special Region*, *Scientific Journal of Tourism*, <https://doi.org/10.47256/kepariwisataan.v13i02.46>, 2019

<sup>6</sup> Linawati, T, *Apostolic Ceremony as a Cultural Tourism Attraction in Gunung Kidul Regency, Ambarrukmo Tourism College Yogyakarta*. Retrieved from: <https://osf.io/hrm3y/download/?format=pdf>, 2018.

people in villages in Gunung Kidul as a form of human devotion to God as the Creator.<sup>7</sup> However, actually the Rasulan tradition itself is a tradition that comes from ancient times that is still preserved today by the people of Gunung Kidul Regency, starting from the western end, namely Panggang District, to the easternmost one, Girisubo District and its surroundings. According to another view, the apostle is a form of gratitude shown to God for the sustenance that has been bestowed and given to the village community. This ceremony is held once a year after harvest time arrives. According to the author's observation, Rasulan activities are activities carried out by the community within a period of several days and are carried out in almost every village with different times that have been determined and agreed in advance with the recommendation of traditional leaders by taking into account according to the Javanese calendar. In other places, the Rasulan tradition is called 'Bersih Dusun' or 'Bersih Desa'. It is called 'Bersih Dusun' or 'Bersih Desa' because in this tradition there are rites of community service, mutual cooperation, tidying up public places, graves, 'Selamatan' events, 'Kendurian', and continued by sending prayers to ancestors, which aims to ask for prosperity, health, and avoiding disasters to God Almighty.

Generally, on the first day of the implementation of this tradition, it contains village cleaning activities carried out by all village communities together, this village cleaning activity is often also called 'Bersih Resan' or 'Ruwatan', which is physical and spiritual cleaning within the boundaries of the village and natural resources in the village which is carried out with prayers by traditional leaders and religious leaders then continued on the next day by holding cultural arts and cultural performances such as 'Wayangan', then there are also 'Selamatan' and 'Kenduri' events, which are in the form of mountain carnivals in the form of processed food and friendships between communities. Even in the various experiences and traditions of the Gunungkidul people who have migrated in various regions and even abroad, they will back to hometown to participate in the procession of the Rasulan which they think has an important meaning in their lives.

The Rasulan tradition itself has various positive sides that can be developed, the Rasulan tradition contains character values that can be practiced by every individual. Character values are passed down to individuals in society. Families in Gunungkidul, especially related villages, always teach their children to share by inviting their friends to eat at their homes. This is none other than because in the Rasulan tradition carried out by the people of Gunung Kidul every year, there are many values of character and social education such as the values of togetherness, mutual cooperation, teamwork, helping each other to achieve common goals, training and forming empathy for others, training attitudes of responsibility, social attitudes, love of cultural wealth, and independence. In fact, a more in-depth special strategy is needed to improve character learning for especially those who are connected through this apostolic tradition.<sup>8</sup>

In previous research, it was said that the Rasulan tradition is a tradition of 'Selamatan' for Javanese culture who hope for safety for various things, even this is also done for various aspects of life such as changing names, moving houses, building buildings and so on.<sup>9</sup> The research also reveals how the tradition of the Rasulan can be adopted and modified according to the worldview and changes in it adopt national values. Other research reveals that the tradition of the Rasulan has evolved and adapted into today's religious

<sup>7</sup> Heri Kiswanto, et al, *Portrait of the Apostolic Tradition Procession in Gunungkidul Regency*, Journal of Academic Nuances Journal of Community Development (p)ISSN: 1858-2826; (e)ISSN: 2747-0954 Vol. 6 No. 1, June 2021, p. 75 – 88.

<sup>8</sup> Hardo Adriyanto & Eny Kusdarini, *The Tradition of the Messenger from Gunung Kidul as an Educational Character Means of Values of Mutual Cooperation Among Youth*, International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v7i11.2132>.

<sup>9</sup> Geertz in *Rasulan as a Javanese Slametan Tradition on Compromise of Community Change*, by Sartini et al., Journal of Urban Culture Research, Vol. 26, 2023.

traditions and practices.<sup>10</sup> Research that links the Rasulan tradition in the perspective of Christian education and the Evangelism is still rarely carried out, more often research is carried out in the perspective of other religions.

What about Christians in the local area and more specifically the view of Christian Religious Education responding and viewing the tradition of the Rasulan who came from Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta province? In the observations and experiences felt directly by the author, there are various views within Christians themselves towards this Rasulan tradition, there is for example doubts among Christians internally to be involved in the activities of this tradition. In many cases, some are really involved, some are hesitant and indecisive, and some openly refuse to participate in this Rasulan tradition. The naming of this traditional activity, which is called 'Rasulan', once builds the perception that this tradition is identical and gives the impression of being attached to the elements of one particular religion in Indonesia, which makes Christians feel reluctant or hesitant to participate in this activity, this tradition and is considered contrary to the Christian faith.

This also becomes another issue when it comes to duties and missiology, namely the mission of preaching the Gospel inherent in christianity known as the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). The duty and calling to carry out this great commission applies throughout the ages and is common to every christian to carry it out. Of course, in carrying out this great commission, christianity is often present in every place and different culture, sometimes it goes well in tandem and there is a combination with the local culture and people, but also sometimes it often causes conflicts and tensions, or even gives the impression of indecision and doubt when the mission of preaching the Gospel seems to have to face cultural aspects such as the tradition of the Rasulan. Will the mission of preaching the Gospel still carried ? out or How should the mission of preaching the Gospel be carried out in the context of the tradition of the Rasulan tradition ?

This paper ultimately has the purpose of explaining more clearly and comprehensively related to the meaning, practice, and values in the Rasulan tradition that are understood by most of the people of Gunung Kidul Yogyakarta, analyzing the Rasulan tradition through the perspective of christian religious education, identifying elements that can be used in teaching and values that are in line as a meeting point or a parting point that has the potential to contradict christian teachings, then provide the results of the analysis of how the understanding of the Rasulan can affect strategies and approaches in preaching the Gospel in Gunung Kidul Yogyakarta, and finally to provide strategies and practical steps on how knowledge about the Rasulan can enrich church members, especially in the development of contextual spirituality to culture.

There are several reasons why this paper is significant and has benefits as well as a thesis statement from the author, namely the importance of continuous reconstruction of today's gospel preaching strategies as an evangelism that are more relevant and contextual for local communities and cultures, understanding the Rasulan tradition itself helps bridge the gap between christian teaching practices and local cultural practices, other benefit is the importance of the concept of inculturation that is firmly rooted in the context of christian teaching, then the effort to create a positive constructive dialogue between the christian faith and cultural heritage where the study of local traditions can enrich the development of Indonesian contextual theology where this allows for deeper theological reflection on how the Gospel message can be articulated in a specific cultural context, then the last is the reconceptual renewal of meaning at once strengthening the identity of the christian faith where the christian faith is built while still respecting

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<sup>10</sup> Heri Kuswanto et al., Portrait of the Procession of the Apostolic Tradition in Gunungkidul Regency, Journal of Academic Nuances- Journal of Community Development, (p)ISSN: 1858-2826; (e)ISSN: 2747-0954, Vol. 6 No. 1, June 2021.

traditions such as the Rasulan tradition so that the local christian community can develop a unique identity, which is faithful to the Gospel while appreciating the local cultural heritage.

## Method

The methods used in this study are literature study and autoethnographic study approaches. Literature studies are carried out by collecting data and information using various kinds of materials found in the library, such as written works in the form of books, journals, encyclopedias, documents, magazines. Literature studies can also be carried out through literature reviews of various previous research results that are considered useful in obtaining strong problem formulations and also by looking for research gaps with previous research so that this research has a level of novelty that can be accounted for. According to experts, literature studies are theoretical studies, literature and references of other scientific works related to values, norms and cultures that develop in a particular social situation studied.<sup>11</sup>

Autoethnography studies are studies that open up space for the author or researcher to use his or her personal senses and experiences to better understand the environment or cultural situation that exists around him.<sup>12</sup> Through autoethnographic studies, the author can also provide an observation based on the experience seen and felt directly by the author where the author in this context has been involved in these activities in the field. Furthermore, the data analysis technique applied in this study itself is an inductive data analysis technique, namely drawing conclusions from special and real facts in the field based on the data obtained and then given conclusions. The steps carried out in this study are data collection both through literature studies and autoethnographic studies, then data reduction, data presentation, and finally conclusion drawn.

## Results and Discussion

### Christian Faith and Culture – Christian Religious Education Perspectives

The Bible cannot be separated from the cultural aspect. The Bible tells about various aspects of human life, including the culture in it. Human beings are creatures created by Allah who are given reason and are able to create with their wisdom and thoughts, including creating culture, meaning that humans are able to respond and actualize themselves to the surrounding environment even to the mandate given by Allah. The living God is the God who created man with eyes that can see, with a brain that can think, with hands that can build, so that man, in the name of God, conquers the world to him. Allah the Creator is also the Giver of cultural tasks.<sup>13</sup> Jesus' attitude towards culture is explained by H Richard Niebuhr in his book *Christ and Culture in five attitudes*, namely: <sup>14</sup>1) Christ against culture, 2) Christ of Culture, 3) Christ above culture, 4) Christ and culture in paradox, 5) Christ, the transformer of culture (Christ transforms culture). Christ's position as a cultural reformer is a more adaptive and contextual choice, the effort to transform culture is an effort of faith as a thanksgiving for the grace and salvation of God, not an effort to save the sin of the world, cultural transformation is not an effort to change culture into God's culture by changing all cultural models and artistry but to give meaning to God's work in every existing culture. Third, every cultural effort of believers is basically the same as other human endeavors, activities and cultures, only different in their intentions and motivations, namely for the glory of God.

<sup>11</sup> Sugiyono, *Qualitative Quantitative Research Methods and R&D*, (Bandung: Alfabeta Publishers, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Heewon Chang, *Autoetography as Method*, (Routledge, 2008).

<sup>13</sup> J. Verkuyl, *Christian Ethics: Culture*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia. 1982).

<sup>14</sup> Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1956).

Thomas Groome argues that christian religious education is a political activity with pilgrims in a time that deliberately focuses attention on God's activities in the present, on the story of the Christian faith community and the vision of the kingdom of God. In his view, Groome gives the specificity that what christian educators do comes from the stories of christian communities, with the main expression in Jesus Christ.<sup>15</sup> Through this, Groome emphasized the importance of community as an important part of Christian Religious Education. Christian Religious Education is a conscious and comprehensive effort in order to teach the Christian faith and how to live in it as a community and the values of togetherness in it. In learning together as a community, there are various cultures around it that need to be responded to together by the Christian community in it.

Christian religious education certainly has a basis in the Bible as a source of Christian teaching and faith which is believed to be a revelation inspired by God Himself. This is of course different from cultures and traditions that focus more on human reason and wisdom as the main source of ideas. Christian religious education does not mean that the role and wisdom of human beings is abolished, because basically the source of human wisdom also comes from God. Therefore, culture as a result of human work is seen in the perspective of the christian faith as a blessing and grace from God to shape human beings to live their lives better, more characterized as a common identity and have recognition of their existence.

For this reason, Christian Religious Education views the Rasulan tradition as a cultural tradition that has many positive aspects in it, including in the framework of education. The Rasulan tradition has been recognized as a tradition that emphasizes the elements of togetherness and community in its implementation. The Rasulan is not just a religious tradition, it is an interesting cultural tradition as a form of harvest celebration community, which takes the form of gratitude in an agrarian society which is then compromised in customary, religious, and social life values by including religious events about respect and appreciation for religious groups in the community.<sup>16</sup>

For some christians and the author's experience of experiencing this tradition, it is viewed that the Rasulan tradition can be interpreted in terms of christian faith as an expression of gratitude to God who has given blessings and grace for the harvest of crops given throughout the year. The expression of gratitude has a variety of ways such as working together to clean the village, praying together, cultural dances, mutual various processed foods and so on which are manifested in this apostolic tradition. Cultural education on the values of cultural traditions as a form of cultural preservation is very important to become a cultural identity which can then be transformed into learning materials for christian religious education in the form of catechization in the church, christian religious educators need to explore learning methods that adopt local culture using media and symbols that characterize the tradition of the Rasulan. Then what is no less important is that the Rasulan tradition can be an effective cultural tourism program so that more tourists and visitors can see the Rasulan tradition and know the cultural meaning in it as well as increase income from the tourism sector. In fact, this Rasulan tradition is included in the category of cultural tourism ( Ethnic tourism) because what is presented to tourists and immigrants is in the form of traditions or community culture.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education*. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Sartini sartini et, al., *Rasulan as a Javanese Slametan Tradition on Compromise of Community Change*, Journal of Urban Cultural Research, Vol 26, 2023.

<sup>17</sup> Erlangga Brahmantgo, *The Tradition of the Prophet Becomes the Mainstay of Ethnic Tourism in Gunung Kidul Regency, Yogyakarta*, (Khasanah Ilmu, Vol V No. 2 September 2014).

### Implications for Evangelism

The Church as a fellowship of believers in Jesus Christ has three main tasks, namely Fellowship (Koinonia), Testimony (Marturia) and Ministry (Diakonia). These three tasks are interrelated and inseparable from each other. One of the tasks of Testimony is carried out through the mission of preaching the gospel. This mission of preaching the gospel can be carried out correctly by being based on Christ and His mission of service while in the world, because the faith of Christians comes from an understanding of the self and the work done in Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup> Another view of the mission of preaching the gospel is also conveyed by Jurgen Moltman that the church in the world is not just present for itself but is sent and presented to carry out the mission of God (Missio Dei), just as Jesus was sent by the Father to come into the world, so Jesus sent His disciples to carry out God's mission in the world.<sup>19</sup> David J Bosch in his book *Christian Mission Transformation* specifically writes about paradigm shifts in missiology, where he writes that the church needs to reflect on the meaning and mission in the past and present.<sup>20</sup> From the various understandings above, it reminds us of the importance of the mission of preaching the Gospel for Christians as a task and responsibility that needs to be done by always looking at the paradigm, changes in the situation and context that develop in society, one of which is the local cultural element.

A deep understanding of the tradition of the Rasulan in Gunung Kidul opens up opportunities for a more effective reconstruction of the Gospel preaching, sensitive to local culture and opens up opportunities for strategies and approaches in conveying the Gospel message in a multicultural society, for this reason, the understanding of contextualization is important. Contextualization, in Christian missiology, refers to the process of conveying the gospel message in a way that is meaningful and relevant to the local culture, without sacrificing the integrity of the gospel message itself. This principle is rooted in the incarnation of Christ Himself, in which God's Word became flesh and lived in the midst of a particular culture (John 1:14). In addition, the Apostle Paul's approach in Athens (Acts 17:22-34) provides an example of how to understand and use local cultural elements to introduce the gospel message in a more relevant and appropriate way to the understanding of the local community.

In the context of the Rasulan tradition, several elements and parts contained in the Rasulan tradition can be used as a starting point to explore the meaning as well as a meeting point for the contextualization of the Gospel message itself, namely the first concept of Offering as Salvation, Sacrifice and Thanksgiving where in the Rasulan tradition involving offerings as a meaning of giving offerings of salvation and expressions of gratitude can be a bridge to explain the concept of Christ's sacrifice in the cross that offered Himself for the salvation of the world and the offering has the same as Christians who make offerings in worship as a thanksgiving for God's blessing, the second is the Values of Communal Communion where the spirit of togetherness that is carried out during the procession of the Rasulan tradition is in line with the Christian teaching of fellowship (koinonia) and unity in the body of Christ, and the third is the Appreciation and Purification of the Natural Environment which is the understanding of the Rasulan tradition about the relationship between man and nature by purified, purifying the nature of the village environment, the sources of springs, the boundaries of the village and including the human beings in it, can be connected with two concepts of Christian teachings at once, namely the first about purification and forgiveness given through Jesus Christ as the Savior who sacrificed Himself on the cross and the second

<sup>18</sup> Olaf Schuman, *Is Christology Still Valid Today? Tabah Mestep*, ed. E.S. Wismoady Wahono (STT Jakarta, 1984).

<sup>19</sup> Jurgen Moltman, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, (London: SCM Press, 1977).

<sup>20</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology* (terjemahan Stephen Suleman), (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2002).

about the concept of the duty to preserve and cultivate nature God's creation wisely for the good of mankind (Genesis 2:15).

However, it is important to set clear boundaries in contextualization to avoid syncretism and deviation from the worship of the true God, so that every element of culture must be evaluated in the light of biblical truth, and the core message of the gospel preaching must remain intact and true, centered on the work of salvation in Jesus Christ as the only Savior of the world. Based on the results of observations in the field and also the author's first-hand experience about the tradition of the Rasulan and by considering in general the cultural context of the people of Gunung Kidul, several strategies can be developed for more effective evangelism, which can be done in various ways as follows: first, Building the Values of Friendship, Family and Hospitality (Hospitality)) where the context of the Gunung Kidul community is open minded, and prioritizes hospitality and kinship, it is important for the first time, namely building friendship and hospitalities in the midst of the community, building friendship and cooperation with traditional leaders and local community members. This can be done through participation in the activities of the local Rasulan tradition, while still maintaining the integrity of the christian faith, the second is the Use of Local Languages and term (Simplicity Languages) where the importance of explaining christian concepts using familiar terms and term, which are easy to understand in the context of the language of the local community, then this can increase acceptance and understanding that is open and deep, the third is the use of art forms Local (Local Culture) The use of a series of symbols, tools, local cultural media such as puppets, or local folklore to illustrate the Gospel message which can make the Gospel message easier to understand and remember, and finally the dialogue approach (Dialogical) which is replacing the monologue approach with dialogue can create space for the exchange of ideas and deeper understanding. Using analogies and metaphors from the Rasulan tradition, it is also necessary to have an element of caution to avoid misunderstandings. Any comparison should be carefully and wisely explained, emphasizing both the similarities and important differences between the concept of local tradition and the concept of christian teaching. Although there are many opportunities and opportunities that are open and many things can be related to the concept of christian teaching, this contextualization effort also faces the risk of challenges and opportunities for conflict, namely first, related to theological conflicts where some aspects of understanding the meaning of the Rasulan tradition may be understood by the general public often contradict christian teachings themselves, such as for example if the Rasulan tradition is interpreted as the worship of ancestral spirits, or the practices of purifying the environment as a repelling of reinforcements or disasters in which people ask for help from "beings" or "things" other than Allah and also other practices that are considered superstitions or fairy tales whose meaning is unclear, then the second is the opportunity for internal resistance from other conservative Christian groups, which clearly reject this Rasulan tradition, then finally external resistance with the possibility of rejection where adherents of the Rasulan tradition who have strong beliefs reject the presence and new participation of the new meaning of the Rasulan tradition from Christian people.

An in-depth understanding of the Rasulan tradition in Gunung Kidul not only has an impact on evangelistic strategies, but also has significant implications for church members. Understanding the Rasulan tradition can help the congregation see how God works in a variety of cultural contexts, enriching the understanding of church members of God's universal work. Knowledge of local traditions can foster respect and empathy for others who may have different cultural backgrounds. In the end, evangelism in the midst of cultural diversity aims to bring goodness and blessings in the lives of believers in accordance with the appreciation of the christian faith. So together with the church, the community of believers agreed to apply the cultural



traditions inherited by their ancestors, only those that do not contradict logic, and also do not contradict the truth of God's words, the Bible in love, the blessings and power of God's help. <sup>21</sup>

## Conclusion

The study of the Rasulan tradition in Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta, from the perspective of Christian Religious Education has opened up new insights into the interaction between the Christian faith and local culture. The Rasulan tradition provides a unique opportunity for the contextualization of the Gospel. Elements such as the concept of sacrifice, offerings, communal values, relationship with nature and purification in the Rasulan tradition can be an effective bridge to explain the truth of the Bible. However, this process must be done carefully to maintain the integrity of the gospel message. This creates a more holistic and contextual expression of faith. While there are opportunities for cultural integration, the risk of syncretism remains. It requires a careful balance and wisdom between respect for the local culture and faithfulness to the teachings of the Bible.

This study contributes to the development of Indonesian contextual theology, particularly in the land of Java in the Rasulan tradition in the region in particular Yogyakarta, demonstrating how theological reflection can be enriched by a deep understanding of local traditions. A culturally sensitive approach to gospel preaching, informed by an understanding of the Rasulan, has the potential to increase the effectiveness of effective and contextual gospel preaching missions. The thoughtful integration of the christian faith and the positive elements of the Rasulan can strengthen local christian identities, creating authentic and relevant expressions of faith. The study of the Rasulan tradition in the perspective of Christian Religious Education emphasizes the importance of an ongoing dialogue between faith and culture. This shows that the church can be a positive agent of cultural transformation, enriching local heritage with Gospel values while still respecting the wisdom inherent in the tradition.

Based on these findings, some recommendations and suggestions can be given to local churches and effective evangelistic missions today, namely sensitivity to local culture based on a deep understanding of local traditions, continuous evaluation of the contextualization and effectiveness of evangelization, developing educational programs that integrate the understanding of the Rasulan with bible teaching, creating a space for dialogue between church leaders and indigenous leaders to build a common understanding., designing liturgies and worship practices that reflect the actualization of local cultures without sacrificing biblical truth.

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