For some theologians, the postmodern mindset is considered a danger as it reacts to equivalent standards of personhood. The rise of postmodernism is a necessary refreshment in the context of modernism, and is marked by the rise of metanarratives, life vs. individualism, and the rejection of metanarratives. More than a creed, this battle is to be seen as something that offers many choices and alternatives, while at the consciousness level is taken for granted. Religion is becoming an object of reflection. (Bd. I). If, in the modern period, every religion had its space and followers, in the postmodern, syncretism involves every church in this competition. Many churches that remain isolated or outside the competition, lose their members and are closing their doors.

Churches should offer a visible path to liberty for choice for persons who have a postmodern worldview. The church should not be the only path for the mind searching for something in an authoritarian way. The only way to resist is by offering something relevant and satisfactory. This prepares the way for the next factor, in which attractiveness plays an important role.

In the postmodern worldview, pleasure plays an important role. It can be considered liberation, fulfillment, the goal for which a person works, sacrifices energy, and develops a group of friends. For having fun, entertainment. The days in the week are lived in order to have pleasure in weekends and the days of the year for vacations. While many biblical characters commissioned their life search for pleasures, it can be seen that behind the hedonistic pursuit is a need of fulfillment. Bojan Godina, in a very interesting article from the Journal of Adventist Mission Studies, describes interesting cases of persons who were practicing extreme sports, not for celebrity, but to overcome the tension, others that are taking drugs in search of happiness or are trying to feel mass euphoria like a religious pursuit. (Godina, 2014, p. 114, 115, 123).

This shows that hedonism is an exaggeration of a deep need for glory, an element modernism, and is marked by the rise of metanarratives, life vs. individualism, and the rejection of metanarratives. More than a creed, this battle is to be seen as something that offers many choices and alternatives, while at the consciousness level is taken for granted. Religion is becoming an object of reflection. (Bd. I). If, in the modern period, every religion had its space and followers, in the postmodern, syncretism involves every church in this competition. Many churches that remain isolated or outside the competition, lose their members and are closing their doors.

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In the background of postmodernism operates deconstructionism, that is very complex. It can work both ways. For example, the untruth may find the question of truth in the search of what is the truth may deconstruct falsehood. Therefore, from a Christian point of view, it may be seen in a positive light, as Jesus deconstructs in the case of the woman caught in adultery from John chapter 8, it is as a word to John the Baptist’s disciples from Luke 7, or in Matt 5:44 when He says to love one’s enemies. As Caputo says, “in a deconstruction, our lives, our beliefs, and our practices are not destroyed but forced to reform and reconfigure – which is risky business” (Caputo, 2007, p. 27).

The solution is in the authenticity of the practical spirituality. Ellen White prophetically said in her time: “The world needs evidences of sincere Christianity” (White, 2012, p. 71). A great opportunity for the Christian postmodernist, as well as for the viewer, is the desire for an authentic spiritual experience that satisfies the mind accustomed to comparing different elements of religions.

From “Stories vs. Metanarratives” to God’s Story

Lystad considers that postmodernism is “incridibility towards metanarratives” (Lystad, 1984, p. XVI). Paradoxically, Erickson utters that “postmodernism itself constitutes a metanarrative” (Erickson, 2002, p. 103) giving as example Derrida’s deconstructionism.

Sessoms, in his book Leading with Story sees here an opportunity saying that “this audience often reacts negatively to logical, abstract presentations, tending to distrust ‘truth’ that is expressed propositionally as ‘assertions of fact’” (Sessoms, 2016, p. 43). It seems that although metanarratives are resistant to metanarratives, a bridge can be built upon stories that are part of the biblical metanarratives.

Conclusions

Although it was built as a resistance against religions and against the idea of truth replaced by relativism, pluralism and deconstructivism, postmodernism is not without vulnerabilities and imperfections.

If Dan 2:44 is to be applied to cultures, then it is true what Harry Lee Poe says: “only God can bring down a culture” (Poe, 2001, p. 15).

The rise of postmodernism is a necessary refreshment in the context of the modernism, which paradoxically lead to urbanization and to secularism. Life, seen as the linear industrial mindset, is reshaped as more organic. As the postmodern mindset.

This, together with the person of Jesus Christ is not merely rational, cold philosophical theory, but experiential, consisting in relationship and this is translated as relevant and authentic in postmodern thinking.

References


Contact

Bogdan Platon
Email: bogdanplaton@gmail.com
Phone: 269-944-6959