

Christy Angelle Bauman's Theology of the Womb Perspective on Contributing to the Fatherless Phenomenon

Prionaray Bram M¹, Ester Tadu Karusisi², Yosep Rendi³
¹⁻³Institut Agama Kristen Negeri Toraja
pnbram345@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Indonesia ranks third in the world as a country experiencing the pressure of the fatherless phenomenon. Indonesia is experiencing a crisis of the presence of a father in the development of children, resulting in the term for Indonesia as a fatherless country. As citizens, believers must also need to reflect on this phenomenon and contribute ideas to the phenomenon of fatherlessness, because of its enormous impact on child development, both biologically and psychologically. The research method used in this study uses a qualitative research method with a literature study approach. The purpose of this study is to correlate the theology of mercy of Christy Angelle Bauman with the phenomenon of fatherlessness, as a very sad condition in Indonesia until now according to data for 2023. In this study, it was found that the theology of Christy Angelle Bauman, emphasizes the task of mercy that is not directed at the biological understanding that must be carried out by mothers only, but also a father and with the aim of breaking out of the patriarchal culture that continues to shackle.

Keywords: *Christy Angelle Bauman, The Fatherless Phenomenon, Theology of the Womb*



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INTRODUCTION

In the results of research conducted in 2023, it was found that Indonesia is included in the category of countries experiencing the phenomenon of fatherlessness (Arsyia Fajarrini & Umam, 2023). Indonesia is ranked third as a country experiencing a fatherless crisis. The absence of a father's presence is a major crisis that Indonesia faces crucially. In the category presented, the event of fatherlessness occurs in a child who cannot feel the love of a father. Not only does it reach the attachment of affection, but also to the absence of a good bond between a father and child, which of course this can occur because of a father, for example, divorce or also to circumstances beyond human control, such as the death of the father. The loss of a father's role figure for a child, whether in conditions that are still within human control or even beyond human control, clearly has a significant contribution to the growth and development of a child in his life. The lack of a father's affection certainly has a major impact, not only on the fulfillment of emotional needs. A lack of paternal love will also impact a child's physical and psychological development, as well as their developmental milestones toward adulthood (Nindhita, V., & Pringgadani, 2023). Several previous studies have shown various differences between children who are accompanied by a father and those who are not (Walyono, Adillah, F., Sari, F., Wahyuni, W. S., & Syah, 2024).

In situations categorized as human control, it must be clearly recognized that conditions where a father's involvement in providing guidance (Engel & Hallatu, 2021) sometimes extends beyond the condition of a father who dies or later divorces. The situation of children who do not experience a father's love is also undeniably due to factors such as the existence of a mindset that is still contaminated by patriarchal cultures. Patriarchal culture emphasizes that women carry out the task of raising children (Haryanto, 2020). Fathers are categorized as means of earning and providing for the family, so a father does not have a direct obligation to educate and contribute to the growth and development of children. This is a form of tendency that Christy Angelle Bauman experienced directly to overcome this problem. For Bauman, the absence of a father or certain individuals in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as parents to children shows a form of negligence of responsibility from God. It is clear that conditions like this have a significant impact on the growth of children, especially those who expect the role of a father (Hadi, F. H., Hastuti, E., & Marthalena, 2023).

Research has shown that the absence of a father's role in a child has a significant impact. Maryam Sobari, in her research, found that the impact of a father's absence on a child's development can lead to uncontrolled self-control behavior. Children experiencing fatherlessness are more likely to be disobedient, have poor academic abilities, and can even be aggressive (Maryam, 2022). Furthermore, in a study conducted within the desisteration project in Tanjung Harapan Village, Riani found that the stress levels experienced by children affected by fatherlessness were higher than those experienced by children whose fathers directly influenced their development (Kumowal, 2024). Research conducted by Wendi and Kusmiati found that the impact of fatherlessness on children (divorce) is that they cannot find their adult identity without first restoring their self-esteem during adulthood (Wendi, R. V., & Kusmiati, 2022). Not only that, in a study by Gita and Parapat, it was found that children aged 5-6 years who experienced fatherlessness actually had difficulty in establishing good communication

(Gita & Parapat, 2024). It was found that the role of a father in the growth and survival of children is very necessary (Prionaray Bram M et al., 2024).

In the duties and responsibilities of believers, it is clearly seen in Deuteronomy 6:7, providing an indication that in providing education, it is not only emphasized on the figure of women (Waruwu & Panjaitan, 2023). The responsibility of teaching and even supervising the growth and development of children must certainly be carried out carefully (father and mother) by paying attention that each has a topoxy in the task and responsibility of teaching for the growth of children (Pangaribuan & Rumetor, 2024). Parents are required to be able to continue to carry out the task of teaching responsibilities side by side (Rantesalu, 2018). The lack of involvement of a father in providing his role for the growth of children is certainly a problem that must be grappled with by the church today. In this section, it is clear that there are two clear categories that need to be divided so as not to be trapped in a dilemma that raises the question of what about those (children) who are left by a deceased father or even in the frame of orphans. Of course, this needs to be distinguished from the context where there is a lack of a father's role due to things beyond human control, or things that are within human control that can still be attempted, for example.

In this section, the author is interested in exploring the extent of a father's responsibility and how Christy Angelle Bauman's theology of mercy addresses it. The author attempts to combine the meaning of Christy Angelle Bauman's views with the maternal responsibilities that a father must also fulfill. It becomes interesting to attempt to correlate the meaning of the theology of mercy with the duties and responsibilities of a father. It is clear that Christy Angelle Bauman's views do not focus on biological conditions, thus providing an opportunity and even space for the author to correlate these two, which indirectly seem quite different but can be combined to form a new understanding for the lives of believers in particular.

Several previous studies have been conducted that discuss Christy Angelle Bauman's theology of mercy. This is the research conducted by Eramartina Saragih, who provides a research locus for the conceptual theology of the womb according to Choan Seng-Song, the author of the book "God Who Suffers." In this section, it is clearly visible how the contribution of thought is directed at the basis of systematic theology that prioritizes reflective efforts (Saragih, 2022). However, what is new in this paper, where the author tries to build the conceptual theology of mercy of Christy Angelle Bauman by providing a space for dialogue on the phenomenon of fatherlessness as a factual phenomenon and context faced by Indonesia and even believers specifically in the framework of the third rank of the phenomenon of fatherless country. Previous research has also been conducted with the title "Theology of the Womb: Bridging the Mercy in Christy Angelle Bauman's Theology through the Struggle of Assimilating the Meaning of the Womb in the Mother Wound Phenomenon" (M et al., 2025). In this study, it tries to see how the theology of mercy of Christy Angelle Bauman talks about the phenomenon of mother wound. Being a form of novelty is the author trying to reverse how the theology of Christy Angelle Bauman talks about the phenomenon of fatherlessness which for the author certainly presents a certain challenge in correlating this. Research has also been conducted by Risye Yulika Rieuwpassa, who attempted to reconstruct God's womb from the perspective of a barren woman using Catherine Keller's comparison (Rieuwpassa, 2021). In this study, she attempted to clearly understand Christy Angelle Bauman's thinking as a point of comparison in interpreting the meaning of the womb itself.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research method with a literature study approach. Qualitative research relies on descriptive data presentation (Malahati et al., 2023). A descriptive approach leads to descriptive data presentation with the aim of facilitating data analysis consistent with field data. The literature study approach involves obtaining data from clear sources directly from the literature, which can confirm the truth and validity of the data presented. The use of these literature sources facilitates descriptive data presentation (Adlini et al., 2022). Data collection techniques begin with gathering literature related to the topic at hand. The primary literature is the theology of mercy written by Christy Angelle Bauman, juxtaposed with the phenomenon of fatherlessness. In data processing, the first step is shown, starting with selecting books relevant to the topic being discussed. Secondly, the source selection process is carried out, which can be categorized as primary and secondary sources. This resource will assist in effectively organizing increasingly complex data. The final stage is writing, which will of course be accompanied by primary data and supported by sound secondary data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theology of Mercy

Christy Angelle Bauman's thinking attempts to provide an approach based on reflection on her own body awareness as a woman. Bauman explains the connection between women and God in the creation process. She relates that women and God, in particular, have a close relationship in the creation process. Bauman's writing leans toward feminism, focusing on how God participates in women's experiences. Bauman's "woman" refers to a comparison between God and women, in which God is seen within the concept of creation, and women are viewed from the perspective of producing life through the womb. This becomes Christy Angelle Bauman's struggle to move beyond patriarchal understanding and offer contextual ideas relevant to the present.

Bauman demonstrates how she reflects on her faith from the perspective of the challenges she must navigate. In the loss of her first child, through her womb, she attempts to understand that reflecting on faith through the challenges faced is fundamentally necessary to find the meaning of life. This conceptualization exemplifies this experience, which is reflected in her book. This pilgrimage of faith begins with how to approach the three parts of women, or what the author considers the phases of women, through which their equality with God can be seen. The goal of equality is not to discuss how to emulate, but rather to become a source of faith for women, interpreting the concept of womb theology (Bauman, 2019). Divided into three chapters, they include:

In the first section, Christy Angelle Bauman begins her journey as she communicates with her friend Cherie. They discuss the shame women face during their periods. They seem to be immersed in the state of bleeding, which is considered shameful and should remain silent about it. When women experience menstruation, they feel compelled to remain silent and conceal it as unnecessary, even to face pressure if they reveal it publicly. Clearly, this is a particularly oppressive aspect of women's lives. However, considering the characteristics of Christy Angelle Bauman, Bauman reflects on the discussion with her friend. Reflecting on this

in the biblical world, for example in Leviticus 13, that those who then bleed, which refers to none other than women, are recorded in this case as those who are roughly considered unclean. Of course, talking about a further interpretation in this case will lead to the concept of the Old Testament. However, Christy Angelle Bauman wants to say that the condition of women who bleed (menstruate), is a condition that is seen as a bad condition and needs to be hidden because of the tendency that occurs. In the condition of women who also share in shame in this case, Christy Angelle Bauman then reflects, that the condition of bleeding that women must experience, has a correlation with the condition of Jesus who was crucified (M et al., 2025). To go deeper, let us then examine more specifically from the narrative. In the process of Jesus' crucifixion, Christy Angelle Bauman reflects that this event is the most real event of bloodshed that happened to Jesus. Christy Angelle Bauman further elaborates, explaining that Jesus' bloodshed was part of a series of human redemption processes, a process designed by God and prophesied in the Bible. Furthermore, it is reflected that the shedding of blood is the source of human life through the redemption that occurs. This is also interpreted for women. Women's birth, first menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and death demonstrate that these phases are part of the bloodshed that gives birth to new life. The birth of a man or woman from the womb requires bloodshed, clearly pointing to the creation of life through the womb. This is a key point that can be brought up in the context of understanding the first chapter.

In this second section, Christy Angelle Bauman attempts to examine the development of women through the framework of breast development. While this may be a sensitive topic, it serves as a reflection of Christy Angelle Bauman's faith. Her experience begins with recognizing this biological condition, choosing the right bra, and even caring for it during development, leading to a deeper reflection on its function, which is then explained, as the source of breast milk. The breastfeeding experience, she observes, leads to the conclusion that God, possessing love and compassion for humanity, nurtures and even distributes the source of life to His creation, which is none other than the *Imago Dei* itself. In this context, the concept of a woman breastfeeding from her breast clearly demonstrates the point at which the concept of womanhood, within the theology of mercy, shares God's purpose, for the sake of the expected source of life.

In the third section, Christy Angelle Bauman presents an awareness of the life cycle that women must go through. The bias toward women presented in this context stems from the reflection presented later. Women who must go through phases that can be observed through science, shows that life then basically leads to creation that also goes through cycles (M et al., 2025). God, at the time of the creation of women, inserted a part of Himself, to direct the condition of the womb that would be aware that those born through the womb given by God, is God's plan to give birth to the image of God for humans (Rieuwpassa, 2021). Christy Angelle Bauman realized that the condition in which the womb that must be accepted by a woman with the consequences of the womb, for example, must experience menstruation, bleeding as a form of response to the egg cell in the condition of not getting fertilized, then clearly this needs to be recognized as a form of God's truly noble plan for the womb as a source of life.

The Phenomenon of Fatherlessness

Fatherlessness is a term referring to the absence of a father in a child's life (Salsa Cantika Aster Budiani et al., 2024). The lack of paternal involvement referred to here is not

only confined to the concept of physical involvement but also refers to the child's psychological involvement (Hidayah, N., Ramli, A., & Tassia, 2023). It is important to understand that fatherlessness can occur due to, for example, a divorce, which leaves a father separated from his child and unable to fulfill his duties and responsibilities in educating and supporting the child. Fatherlessness can also occur due to the death of a father. The phenomenon of fatherlessness is often defined as a condition in which a child does not experience the role of a father. Therefore, if a father becomes busy and focused on his work and even neglects his responsibilities in childcare, this clearly falls into the category of fatherlessness (Aulia, F. O., Fauzi, A., Fauzanahya, Ach. A., & Ashari, 2024). Indonesia, which ranks third in the world for the highest rate of fatherlessness, suggests a significant contribution to raising awareness of this issue. Christy Angelle Bauman's thinking directly explains that the lack of a father's affection stems from a failure to understand the womb metaphorically, but rather from a natural, innate form that binds the subject.

Christy Angelle Bauman's Theology of Mercy's Contribution to the Phenomenon of Fatherlessness

In Christy Angelle Bauman's three points, she clearly concludes that the womb plays a vital role in human life. She even boldly asserts that a woman's bleeding from the womb is the beginning of human life, as significant as the bloodshed of Jesus on the cross. This section clearly demonstrates the importance of the womb, suggesting that those who cherish it must also participate in its care, not just for women. Men must also participate in protecting the womb as the source of life within the framework of human biology in general. Christy Angelle Bauman's theology of mercy attempts to provide a more nuanced understanding of the characteristics of mercy and the necessary duties and responsibilities of mercy. In the case of infertility, for example, Christy Angelle Bauman does not assume that the womb no longer serves a function. Instead, she points to the necessary duties and responsibilities of mercy. In addressing the phenomenon of fatherlessness, it appears that this phenomenon occurs in children who do not experience and feel the role of a father during their development. Correlating with the patriarchal culture previously discussed, it appears that most men who have assumed the status of fathers view the task of educating and nurturing as solely focused on the mother. In this case, the phenomenon of fatherlessness can arise (Awang, 2024). Examining this suggests that the role of mercy, biologically speaking, can only be performed by women. This, of course, refers to the concept of gender. However, speaking of the concept of mercy, more specifically emphasizing the duties and responsibilities of mercy (motherhood), requires that a father also carry it out. The role of mercy, according to Christy Angelle Bauman, is considered a shared task of parents (father and mother) as subjects in a position of expecting the womb as a source of life. This can then be manifested in the form of caregiving, being a peer partner in play and discussion, and even reaching the context of peer counseling. This raises a significant question: how should one fulfill the role of motherhood when faced with death, a condition beyond human control?

Prionaray Bram M, et al., explored Christy Angelle Bauman's theology of mercy. A new starting point in interpreting Deuteronomy 6:7 emerged in their analysis of the word "son" in Deuteronomy 6:7. In interpreting the word "son" in Deuteronomy 6:7, they discovered that the

child referred to does not only refer to biological children. A parent can consider a child as a natural child, adopted child, nephew, or even grandchild. This points to a mature ability to care for the needs of children who experience fatherlessness due to the death of a father (M et al., 2025). The author has a broader perspective on this point because he has a close relationship with this situation, and it has become a struggle for him. The responsibility of the closest parent certainly has a different impact than that of a father, but it can provide a glimpse into a child's maturity. An older sibling who can establish himself as a father figure certainly has a positive and noble impact compared to not fulfilling that role at all, and it can impact the growth and development of a younger sibling, for example. This awareness can be beneficial and even help reduce the phenomenon of fatherlessness. Although generally in the Indonesian context, it is still bound by the ideology of the womb as a mother's duty and only linked to functional gender, the church must act as a counselor and provide a deeper understanding of this issue.

CONCLUSION

With Indonesia experiencing the third-largest number of fatherless cases in the world, it is necessary to provide a clear understanding of men, especially in taking on the role of a father figure in child development. Previous studies have shown that children face significant obstacles in their position growing up without the presence of a father. Believers in particular need to grapple with this issue. The presence of Christy Angelle Bauman's theology of mercy provides an understanding that anyone who hopes in the womb needs to protect and nurture that womb. Christy Angelle Bauman wants to emphasize that the behavior of mercy is a focal point that needs to be recognized, not trapped in biological positions alone and especially not to fall into the trap of patriarchal cultural understandings. Men, as father figures, must carry out this duty of mercy, without considering that only women are given this task and responsibility in caring for and nurturing children given by God. Mercy needs to be seen as a conceptual starting point for the responsibility behind mercy, and not fixated on general functionality, because this has theological conceptual nuances. It is recommended that Christy Angelle Bauman's theology of mercy incorporate local wisdom to facilitate understanding and serve as a bridge to other theological perspectives. The church needs to understand this and incorporate it into the development of its members, fostering a sound understanding of the true meaning of the womb in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of parents.

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