

WINNING SOULS IN THE DIGITAL ERA: CHURCH MISSIOLOGY STRATEGIES IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

MEMENANGKAN JIWA DI ERA DIGITAL: STRATEGI MISIOLOGI GEREJA DALAM TRANSFORMASI DIGITAL

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the transformation of the concept of soul-winning in the context of the church's digital missiology in the era of digital transformation. Using a narrative review approach, this study examines the literature on mission theology, digital communication, and the sociology of religion to identify the changing paradigm of Christian mission. The results show that the mission paradigm is shifting from individual conversion to a relational and community approach, where the digital space becomes a strategic arena for participation in *Missio Dei*. The concepts of digital incarnation and *ecclesia digitalis* emphasize that the presence of faith in cyberspace is an authentic expression of Christian ministry. This study also identifies challenges such as depersonalization, shallow interactions, and issues of spiritual authority, as well as opportunities to reach digital-native generations and non-traditional contexts. The proposed Digital Missiology Framework provides a theological, strategic, and ethical conceptual framework for churches to develop digital ministries that are transformative and relevant to digital culture.

Keywords: Digital missiology, soul winning, *Missio Dei*, digital incarnation, *ecclesia digitalis*, digital church

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi transformasi konsep memenangkan jiwa dalam konteks misiologi digital gereja di era transformasi digital. Dengan pendekatan *narrative review*, studi ini menelaah literatur teologi misi, komunikasi digital, dan sosiologi agama untuk mengidentifikasi perubahan paradigma misi Kristen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa paradigma misi bergeser dari konversi individu menuju pendekatan relasional dan komunitas, di mana ruang digital menjadi arena strategis untuk partisipasi dalam *Missio Dei*. Konsep digital incarnation dan *ecclesia digitalis* menegaskan bahwa kehadiran iman dalam dunia maya merupakan ekspresi autentik dari pelayanan Kristiani. Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi tantangan seperti depersonalisasi, dangkalnya interaksi, dan isu otoritas rohani, serta peluang menjangkau generasi digital-native dan konteks non-tradisional. Digital Missiology Framework yang diusulkan menyediakan kerangka konseptual teologis, strategis, dan etis bagi gereja untuk mengembangkan pelayanan digital yang transformatif dan relevan dengan budaya digital.

Kata Kunci: Misiologi digital, memenangkan jiwa, *Missio Dei*, digital incarnation, *ecclesia digitalis*, gereja digital

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought about fundamental changes in the paradigm of church ministry. The presence of the internet and social media has opened up new spaces for religious activities, including missionary and evangelistic ministry. According to DataReportal (2024), there are more than 5.35 billion internet users worldwide, or around 66.2% of the global population which are now connected online. Of these, 93.8% are active users of social media, making digital platforms a primary space for human interaction (DataReportal, 2024). This transformation requires the church to adapt and re-imagine its primary mission in the context of the digital world.

Phenomenondigital church, online evangelism, and e-discipleship has strengthened post-COVID-19 pandemic. Barna Group (2022) reported that96% of Protestant churches in the United States began broadcasting worship services online in 2020. After the pandemic subsided,20% of the congregations choose to follow worship online, and26%adopting a hybrid model combining in-person and virtual worship. This data shows that digital presence has become a permanent part of modern ecclesiology, not just a temporary strategy.

A similar trend is also evident in individual religious behavior. A Pew Research Center survey (2023) found that30% of adults in the United States use the internet to search for religious information,21%reading the Bible or holy books through online applications or sites,15%listening to religious podcasts, and7%joining online prayer groups. This underscores the shift in spirituality from physical to digital spaces, where individuals build and nurture their faith through digital media.

In addition, spiritual application platforms such asYouVersion Bible Appalso reflect this major change. The application has been downloaded more than 725 million times worldwide by the end of 2023 (YouVersion, 2023). This phenomenon demonstrates that the digital space is not just a means of communication, but has become an arena for significant growth in faith and mission.The following table summarizes key data related to the development of digitalization of church services and online religious behavior:

Table 1.
Global statistics on the digitalization of church services and digital religious behavior

Aspect	Statistical Data	Description / Implications	Source
Global internet users	5.35 billion (66.2% of the world's population)	Potential basis for digital missions	(DataReportal, 2024)
Active social media users	93.8% of internet users	Social media as the main space for evangelization	(DataReportal, 2024)
Protestant church that broadcasts worship online	96%	Digital church becomes the new norm of ministry	(Children's Group, 2022)
Congregation that continues to worship online	20% (online), 26% (hybrid)	Shift in the culture of worship	(Children's Group, 2022)
Adults seek religious information online	30%	Changes in people's spiritual behavior	(Pew Research Center, 2023)
Bible reader via app/site	21%	Digitalization of spiritual practices	(Pew Research Center, 2023)
YouVersion Bible App Downloader	725 million installations	The growth of global e-discipleship	(YouVersion, 2023)

Source:
DataReportal, 2024; Barna Group, 2022; Pew Research Center, 2023; YouVersion, 2023

This change gives rise to conceptual crisis in missiology:Is the traditional concept of “winning souls” still relevant in the digital space?Historically, this concept is rooted in the paradigm of face-to-face interaction and physical community, while the digital world creates new forms of presence, relationships, and faith community. The church is not only faced with the technical issues of using technology, but also with theological challenges how

understanding the presence of God, salvation, and spiritual transformation in a digital context. Thus, digital transformation is not just changing the way the church delivers the Gospel message, but also challenging fundamental understandings of the nature of mission itself. The modern church needs a reformulation of the concept winning souls to be relevant to the digital context without losing its theological depth. This research seeks to address this need by exploring how the concept of winning souls transformed into digital missiology in the era of digital transformation of the church.

While the study of mission practices in the digital realm has been rapid over the past decade, most empirical and conceptual literature still focuses on two main aspects: the effectiveness of digital platforms in reaching audiences (e.g., reach metrics, engagement rates, or participant conversions), and technical best practices (e.g., content strategy, worship streaming design, or social media optimization). These approaches tend to be instrumental, assessing digital media as a communication tool or message distribution channel, often overlooking substantial changes in the theological meaning and ecclesiological implications of these practices.

First, there is lack of studies focusing on conceptual transformation. Little research has explicitly mapped how the concept of "soul winning" (conversion, discipleship, or spiritual formation) shifts in meaning when the arena of practice shifts to a networked, asynchronous, and interspatial digital space. Traditional theology of mission studies often view "soul winning" through the lens of face-to-face encounters, sacramentality, and local community; however, the digital space demands a reexamination of categories such as presence, authenticity, and community in a distanced and mediated context (Bevans, 2002; Campbell, 2021).

Second, there is a lack of integrated missiology models which combine theological foundations Mission of God with the dynamics of digital culture. Although the concept Mission of God While directing mission research to see God's action as the source of mission initiatives, literature constructing explicit conceptual models that show how the principles of *Missio Dei* are realized or interpreted differently in digital platforms, algorithms, and data ecologies is still limited. This gap means that churches and academics do not yet have an adequate theoretical framework to assess whether digital mission practices are truly participation in *Missio Dei* or simply tactical adaptations without fundamental theological renewal.

Third, there is a lack of critical understanding of the theological, ethical, and axiological implications of digital evangelism. Issues such as privacy, algorithmic manipulation, the commodification of spiritual experiences, sacramental authority in virtual spaces, and the impact on the formation of faith communities (discipleship depth vs. engagement breadth) have not received critical analysis from non-instrumental studies. This deficiency has the potential to cause digital mission practices to develop without strong ethical-theological guidelines, thus weakening the quality of faith transformation that is the goal of mission.

Fourth, most available studies are sector-specific (e.g., case studies of specific denominational churches or country-specific surveys) and lack cross-cultural comparative studies. Because digital cultures, data regulations, and religious ecologies vary across regions, a universal understanding requires studies that consider both local and transnational contexts.

Based on these things, this research places the focus on yes conceptual transformation mission is not merely media effectiveness with the aim of building a theoretical framework that is sensitive to theology GIS and practical relevance to the digital church phenomenon and online mission practices. Based on research that has been identified, this study was designed with several main objectives. First, this study aims to explore the conceptual transformation winning souls in the context of digital missiology. This objective emphasizes the analysis of changes in meaning, nature, theological goals, and indicators of success when mission practices take place in the digital space. An exploratory approach is considered essential to capture theological nuances that have not been standardized in the literature. Second, this study seeks to reinterpret the concept of Christian mission through a digital and

contextual lens. Emphasis is placed on formulating a contextual theological interpretation that integrates the principles of *Mission of God*, ecclesiology, and understanding of the incarnation in a technology-mediated context. The expected results are not merely descriptive, but are able to offer normative reinterpretations that can guide practice. Third, this research aims to identify the theological and ethical principles underlying digital mission, by examining ethical issues such as privacy, authority, and justice of access, as well as theological issues related to incarnation, sacramentality, and community formation. Fourth, this research aims to develop an initial conceptual framework that integrates theology of mission with the dynamics of digital culture. This practical goal is directed at producing a theoretical model that can be tested through further research, such as case studies or comparative research, while also serving as a guide for churches and mission practitioners in developing theological and contextual digital mission strategies.

Methodological note: the above objectives will be achieved through a hermeneutic qualitative approach and narrative review enriched with thematic analysis, thus producing a strong theological synthesis that can be used as a basis for subsequent empirical research. The main research questions are formulated to direct the focus of the conceptual and hermeneutic study: **“How is the concept of “Winning Souls” transformed in the context of digital missiology in the era of digital transformation of the church?”**

This research has dual significance, both from a theoretical and practical perspective. Theoretically, this research seeks to expand mission theory by systematically incorporating digital dimensions into the discourse. Mission of God and contemporary ecclesiology, so that its theoretical contribution not only updates the conceptual language but also provides a normative framework for assessing digital mission practices. In addition, this research is expected to produce a digital missiology framework. This interdisciplinary study combines theology, media studies, sociology of religion, and ethics of technology, providing a foundation for further empirical or comparative research. It also enriches theological discourse by analyzing themes such as digital incarnation, virtual presence, and mediated sacramentals, thus broadening our understanding of how faith is embodied in non-physical forms. Practically, the resulting framework and principles can be used by churches, mission agencies, and ministers to design theologically, ethically, and contextually sound digital mission strategies, including pastoral privacy policies, online communication guidelines, and digital discipleship training curricula. It also provides a conceptual framework for assessing the quality of spiritual impact, such as the depth of discipleship, which is not only measured through surface metrics such as views, likes, or shares, and serves as the basis for developing digital church leadership training modules and ethically oriented internal policy recommendations. However, this research is of a purely empirical nature. narrative/conceptual, so that the results are more generative than verifiable; empirical validation requires further studies such as case studies, surveys, or digital ethnography. For further development, it is important to define the terms winning souls operationally from the outset of the research so that conceptual discussions have a clear point of reference. A comparative approach between churches that have intensively adopted digital and traditional churches can help assess conceptual and practical differences, while user perspectives through interviews with digital congregations and analysis of their spiritual experiences can complement the conceptual findings. An interdisciplinary approach that combines theological hermeneutics with media theory, data ethics, and social change theory, such as diffusion of innovations also recommended to enrich the analysis.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Approach

This research uses approach narrative review with orientation theological and interdisciplinary. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on conceptual exploration and interpretation of the transformation of mission theology in a digital context,

rather than on empirical testing of specific variables. According to Ferrari (2015), this approach/narrative review effectively used to integrate various cross-disciplinary scientific sources and construct in-depth and reflective conceptual syntheses.

In a theological context, narrative review This allows researchers to trace the changing paradigm of the church's mission through historical and hermeneutical analysis of relevant literature. A theological orientation is necessary because this research aims to reconstruct the meaning of winning souls as part of Mission of God, which now operates in the digital space. Meanwhile, an interdisciplinary approach is needed because the phenomenon of the digitalization of church services cannot be adequately understood solely through a systematic theological perspective, but requires theoretical support from the fields of digital communication, the sociology of religion, and media anthropology.

By combining these approaches, this research seeks to understand how churches not only use technology but also as a tool, but also undergoing a conceptual transformation in how we understand mission, faith communities, and God's presence in the digital space. The end result of this approach is expected to be a new conceptual construction of digital missiology that can bridge classical theological values and the realities of modern communication.

2.2. Data Sources

The data sources in this study are entirely secondary and consist of various academic literature and institutional publications relevant to the issue of missiological digitalization. The primary literature is drawn from reputable journals such as Scopus, ATLA Religion Database, and JSTOR, which cover studies of mission theology, the digital church, and contemporary religious communication. Furthermore, key books on digital theology, missiology, and contextual theology, such as Campbell (2021), Bevans (2002), Helland (2018), and Sweet (2019), also serve as important references to deepen the conceptual foundation of the research.

This research also utilizes church documents such as annual reports, white papers, and official publications of institutions such as World Council of Churches, Lausanne Movement, And The Barna Group These documents serve to provide practical context for how churches and mission agencies are responding to the development of digital technology in their ministries. The integration of academic and institutional sources is expected to provide a balanced understanding of theory and practice, enriching conceptual analysis with actual contextual data.

2.3. Literature Selection Criteria

The literature selection was conducted systematically based on the principles of thematic relevance, source credibility, and conceptual contribution to the development of digital missiology. Only works published between 2010 and 2025 were considered, as this period marks a crucial phase in the development of global church digitalization, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the adoption of online worship and ministry.

The main criteria used in selecting the literature in this study encompass several important aspects. First, the literature must be directly related to the issues of mission theology, digital church, online evangelism, or contextual theology, thus being relevant to the research focus on conceptual transformation. winning souls in digital missiology. Second, the selected literature must contribute to a theological or conceptual understanding of digital mission practices, both in terms of principles, strategies, and theological and ethical implications, thus enabling the research to build a strong, theory-based conceptual framework. Third, the literature must come from credible sources, including reputable academic journals, publications from theological research institutions, or official documents from international ecclesiastical institutions, to ensure the reliability of the data and the quality of the analysis.

This criterion ensures that the material analyzed is not only relevant but also academically sound.

Literature that is solely descriptive or sourced from non-academic blogs was excluded to maintain the quality of the analysis. The results of this selection process are expected to produce a theoretically robust and representative body of literature on the development of missiological discourse in the digital age.

2.4. Analysis Techniques

Literature analysis was carried out using an approach thematic synthesis, which allows the integration of research results from various sources into a coherent and in-depth conceptual understanding. According to Thomas and Harden (2008), thematic synthesis includes three main stages, namely identifying core concepts, grouping themes, and compiling a synthetic narrative.

The first stage is identifying core concepts, where researchers explore key terms and ideas that frequently appear in the literature, such as winning souls, digital mission, discipleship, Mission of God, and incarnational presence. Each concept is then analyzed to see how its meaning changes in a digital context, both theologically and practically.

The second stage is theme classification, where the results of the concept identification are grouped into three broad categories: theological themes, methodological themes, and contextual themes. Theological themes cover issues such as changing understandings of the incarnation and sacramentality in the digital space. The methodological themes highlight digital communication strategies, the use of social media for evangelism, and the dynamics of virtual interactions between churches and congregations. Meanwhile, the contextual themes relate to cultural responses, the ethics of technology use, and the social implications of digital mission practices.

The last stage is narrative synthesis, where the three groups of themes are integrated into a conceptual narrative that describes how the concept winning souls undergo transformation in the digital era. This narrative approach not only interprets data descriptively but also establishes logical relationships between themes to build a new conceptual framework that illustrates a digital mission paradigm rooted in classical theology but relevant to the context of digital culture.

2.5. Validity and Reliability of Analysis

To ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis results, this study implemented several systematic steps. First, cross-origin verification (cross-source verification), namely comparing information from academic journals with institutional reports and documents to avoid interpretive bias. Second, it is applied to testing theological coherence (theological coherence testing), to ensure that the results of the synthesis remain in line with the basic principles of Christian theology, especially the framework Mission of God. Third, the approach used iterative reflection, namely repeated reading and recoding to ensure consistency of meaning, as well as to strengthen the theoretical arguments that emerge from the synthesis process.

These steps not only strengthen the research's academic credibility but also ensure that the resulting synthesis makes a valid, systematic, and theological contribution to the development of digital missiology. Thus, this research is expected to serve as a foundation for further studies focused on reconstructing the theology of mission amidst the evolving digital transformation.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Evolution of the Concept of "Soul Winning"

The concept of "soul winning" has undergone a profound evolution in the context of Christian missions, shifting from a narrow focus on individual conversion to a broader understanding that encompasses community formation and relationship-building. Historically, the paradigm of "soul winning" in the early Christian mission tradition has been influenced heavily by classical evangelical theology, which emphasizes the necessity of individual conversion as a pathway to salvation. This traditional view often hinges on the premise that missionary efforts aim to lead individuals from spiritual darkness into the light through direct Gospel proclamation, a sentiment echoed in contemporary discussions surrounding the nature of evangelism (Andrews, 2016).

As the social and theological context has developed over recent decades, the understanding of "soul winning" has morphed significantly. Contemporary missiologists propose a transition toward relationship-centered mission approaches, which prioritize fostering relationships and communities that reflect God's love over mere numerical conversion metrics (Simon, 2018; , Willey, 2019). For instance, the notion that the mission is not limited to converting individuals but rather transforming communities resonates deeply with critiques of traditional evangelical practices, emphasizing the relational and holistic dimensions of faith in the modern world (Adeney, 2005). According to these scholars, the emphasis has shifted towards fostering a communal understanding of faith, which aligns well with the increasing recognition of the importance of relationships in the theological discourse of modern evangelism.

The influence of postmodernism further complicates traditional notions of "souls" and "salvation." In contemporary contexts, humanity is perceived as multifaceted; individuals are seen not only as spiritual beings but also as social and digital entities. This holistic view challenges previous paradigms that narrowly defined missions as verbal proclamations of the Gospel. Instead, it incorporates elements of character formation and faith accompaniment, suggesting that authentic engagement in both physical and virtual communities is paramount for effective missions today (Ensor, 2003; , Thomaskutty, 2023). As such, the modern understanding of "soul winning" has expanded to include the essence of creating Christ-centered digital communities, responding to the realities of a technologically-mediated social landscape and the diverse manifestations of identity in the digital age (Rimun, 2023; , Corrie, 2014).

Thus, the evolution of "soul winning" reflects a significant paradigm shift within Christian missions: it now recognizes that the essence of mission transcends mere conversion rates, calling for a commitment to nurturing relationships, creating supportive communities, and approaching evangelization with sensitivity to the complexities of human identity in a postmodern context. This development signifies a move away from traditional metrics of success towards a more qualitative assessment of missional effectiveness that includes the transformation of individual lives within the larger fabric of community response (Pedrosa & Madrigal, 2021; , Penning & Smidt, 2000).

3.2. The Emergence of Digital Missiology

The emergence of digital missiology reflects a profound transformation in how the church approaches mission in the context of an increasingly digital world. No longer perceived merely as a tool for spreading the Gospel, the digital landscape is now recognized as a "missional space" where God interacts with humanity, presenting new opportunities for faith engagement through platforms like social media, podcasts, and immersive environments such as the metaverse (Nam, 2023). This shift necessitates innovative methodologies in evangelism and ministry, which must be tailored to the dynamics of these novel environments (Sastrohartoyo et al., 2021).

Central to this evolution is the concept of digital presence theology, which emphasizes that online activities embody a theological expression akin to the incarnation, showcasing God's presence through His followers in digital contexts (Nam, 2023). Digital missionaries are called to serve not merely by distributing content but by fostering genuine interactions imbued with empathy, authenticity, and robust dialogue (Shirley, 2017). This relational component is crucial as communication in these spaces transitions from a unidirectional proclamation of messages to a more interactive, conversational format that encourages participation and community engagement (Shirley, 2017; Foltz & Foltz, 2003).

Furthermore, the adaptation of mission strategies to embrace participatory and contextual communication methods highlights a significant paradigm shift. The church, in its digital mission efforts, must facilitate faith dialogues that are responsive to the needs and questions of individuals navigating their spiritual journeys within digital platforms (Nam, 2023). Such a participatory model respects individuals' freedom of expression while affirming essential Gospel truths, making spaces for personal encounters with faith that are relational and communal (Dunlow, 2021; Shirley, 2017). The historical context of these shifts echoes the missiological insights found within traditional evangelism models, which call for community involvement and contextual sensitivity (Adiatma et al., 2022).

In summary, the advent of digital missiology signifies not just an adaptation to new technologies, but a deepening of the church's engagement with the spiritual and social dimensions of faith communication in the digital age. This movement encourages a rethinking of mission strategies to align with both the mediums of communication and the evolving landscape of spiritual needs across a global community.

3.3. Theological Dimensions of Transformation

Mission transformation within the digital realm is intrinsically linked to a robust theological foundation, particularly encapsulated by the concept of *Missio Dei*. This term emphasizes that mission is fundamentally the work of God, with the church acting as a participant in God's mission rather than the originator of it. Acknowledging that God operates within the digital landscape allows us to see that this space is integrated into the *Missio Dei*, reframing the church's online presence as a significant engagement in the divine work of salvation that transcends geographical and temporal constraints (Niemandt, 2019; Worsley, 2018; Langmead, 2013).

The concept of "digital incarnation" further enriches this theological framework by extending the understanding of faith's presence. Just as Christ incarnated as a human in the world, Christians are invited to manifest God's love within digital environments. This does not negate the importance of physical presence; instead, it expands the modalities through which God's love can be communicated, emphasizing that virtual interactions can embody the divine presence in meaningful ways (Michael, 2014; Bevans, 2022; Kim, 2024). This invites the church to re-evaluate its notions of presence, community, and worship, particularly as it pertains to ecclesial digitalisation, an idea that recognizes a faith community spanning across time and space through the tools of digital technology (Konz, 2018; Simon, 2013).

In this context, the church is liberated from the confines of physical structures and territorial boundaries, becoming globally accessible through digital connectivity. Ecclesia digitalis thus emerges as a multifaceted faith community, facilitating interactions that are cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, and cross-generational. It transforms digital mission from a mere technological adaptation to a profound ecclesiological paradigm shift. This reorientation challenges traditional understandings of the church, community, and sacramentality, underscoring the necessity for the church to embrace innovative strategies that align with contemporary society's dynamics (Cho, 2024; Seah, 2024; Youn, 2018). Consequently, digital mission transformation is not simply a phenomenon driven by technology, but rather an evolution in ecclesiological thought that redefines how the church perceives its purpose and

function in the world today, providing a lens through which older missiological approaches can be recontextualized in light of current realities (Handley, 2021; Kim, 2004).

3.4. Challenges and Implications

While digital missiology offers great opportunities, there are various theological and practical challenges that need to be addressed. One of these is the risk depersonalization and digital superficiality, where spiritual connections can lose depth due to rapid, instantaneous, and emotional interactions. This phenomenon demands that the church develop a profound digital spirituality—a form of spiritual discipline that emphasizes authenticity, reflection, and sincerity amidst the massive flow of information.

Furthermore, the issue of spiritual authority and sacramentality in the digital space has also become a significant theological debate. For example, does participation in online communion have the same meaning as physical communion? Does digital pastoral care have the same authority as in-person ministry? These questions require in-depth theological reflection on the nature of presence, mediation, and representation of faith in the digital context.

However, the opportunities that arise cannot be ignored. The digital space offers enormous potential to reach the next generation, digital-native and non-traditional community contexts that are difficult to reach through conventional methods. In this context, digital missions become a strategic means to realize the Great Commission in a new era, where the Gospel can be conveyed through language, culture, and media that are relevant to the times.

Thus, the results of this study show that the transformation of the concept of “winning souls” in digital missiology is not just an adaptation to technology, but rather a new expression of the participation of God’s people in the work of salvation that is universal, contextual, and interconnected.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Theological Synthesis

Based on the results of the analysis of the evolution of the concept of soul winning, the emergence of digital missiology, the theological dimensions of transformation, and its challenges and implications, it can be concluded that the transformation of soul winning is a paradigm shift that is theological, ecclesiological, and practical.

First, this shift affirms that Christian mission is no longer understood solely as an effort to convert individuals through one-way preaching. The traditional concept of conversion-centered mission has evolved into a broader paradigm, namely relationship-centered mission, which emphasizes the formation of faith communities, spiritual accompaniment, and holistic transformation. This view aligns with modern thinking that humans are multidimensional spiritual, social, and digital entities that demand a more complex and contextual approach to mission (Andrews, 2016; Adeney, 2005; Simon, 2018).

Second, digitalization opens up new spaces for participation in the *Missio Dei*. The church's presence in the digital world is not merely a technological adaptation, but an authentic expression of the incarnation of Christian faith, known as digital incarnation. This concept expands the meaning of Christ's incarnation, where Christians are called to express God's love and service through digital interactions, forming a community across time and space (*ecclesia digitalis*). Thus, the digital space becomes a new theological arena where God's work of salvation continues, affirming that the *Missio Dei* is not limited by time and space (Niemandt, 2019; Worsley, 2018; Michael, 2014).

Third, digital missiology demands the integration of theological principles, ethics, and practical strategies. Presence in digital spaces must reflect authentic, reflective, and holistic relationships, so that online interactions do not become shallow or depersonalized. The church is called to cultivate digital spirituality, a spiritual discipline that emphasizes authenticity,

reflection, and sincerity in the digital context. This underscores the importance of maintaining digital ethics, spiritual authority, and sacramentality even when interactions occur online (Cho, 2024; Seah, 2024; Youn, 2018).

Fourth, this transformation emphasizes the balance between continuity and innovation in mission theology. Digital mission is not a replacement for traditional mission, but rather a theological extension and expansion of God's work. Digital mission enables the church to reach digital-native generations and communities difficult to access through conventional methods, thus becoming a strategic means for actualizing the Great Commission in the contemporary era (Rimun, 2023; Corrie, 2014).

Thus, the theological synthesis of this research shows that the transformation of the concept of soul-winning in the context of digital mission reflects the inclusive, contextual, and interconnected *Missio Dei* paradigm. This paradigm requires the church to think theologically, strategically, and ethically in presenting the Christian faith in the digital space, making digital mission a living, relational, and transformative manifestation of faith.

4.2. New Conceptual Model: Digital Missiology Framework

Based on the synthesis of research results, this research proposes Digital Missiology Framework, a conceptual framework that affirms the theological, ecclesiological, and practical transformation of the conceptwinning souls in the digital age. This framework is designed to guide the church's thinking and practice in digital mission theologically, ethically, and contextually. The model consists of four main components:

1. Theological Core

This core component emphasizes that the digital mission is rooted in Mission of God, namely God's mission which is both transcendent and immanent. The church is not the creator of the mission, but a participant in God's work which takes place universally, including in the digital space (Niemandt, 2019; Worsley, 2018). The concept/digital incarnation affirms that the presence of faith in cyberspace is an extension of Christ's incarnation: Christians are present digitally to express God's love, bear witness to their faith, and build supportive communities. Thus, the success of digital mission is measured not simply by interactions or audience size, but by the extent to which digital presence reflects the church's participation in God's work of salvation.

2. Cultural Context

Digital mission takes place in interactive, algorithmic, and global digital culture. This context encompasses the characteristics of social media, the dynamics of online communication, information consumption patterns, and the expectations of digital-native users. The church needs to understand the logic of digital platforms and the culture of interaction so that its mission can be relevant and responsive. Participation in digital culture requires the church to adapt its communication methods, witnessing styles, and engagement strategies without sacrificing theological integrity.

3. Practical Strategy

Practical strategies in digital mission emphasize the concrete application of theological principles in pastoral action in the digital realm. This strategy encompasses several important aspects. First, engagement, namely building active, dialogic, and participatory interactions with digital audiences, so that faith communication is not one-way but involves real involvement and response from the congregation. Second, authenticity, namely presenting honest and sincere testimonies of faith, maintaining authenticity in every digital activity, so that the digital experience reflects the integrity and authenticity of the ministry. Third, community building, namely developing digital communities that support deep faith growth, not just superficial interactions or social media activities without spiritual meaning. These strategies emphasize

that digital mission is not simply about disseminating content or messages, but rather about creating transformative relational spaces for individuals and communities, so that participation in digital mission becomes a means of actualizing *Missio Dei* in a modern context.

4. Spiritual Outcome

This component emphasizes that the goal of the digital mission is transformation of faith, not just digital metrics like clicks, views, or followers. The digital mission must lead to character building, deepening faith, and active participation in faith communities, so that every interaction in the digital space has real and lasting spiritual value.

Framework Synthesis

Overall, Digital Missiology Framework combines theological, cultural, practical, and spiritual dimensions within a holistic framework. This framework enables the church to understand digital mission as an integral part of Mission of God, while navigating digital culture with theological and ethical sensitivity. Through this framework, churches can develop digital ministry strategies that are authentic, transformative, and responsive to the needs of their congregations and the changing social context. Furthermore, the success of digital mission is measured not only by the exposure or popularity of content, but by the transformation of faith and the formation of real community. Thus, digital mission is not simply an adaptation to new technologies, but rather a theological, relational, and contextual expression of Christian mission, relevant and effective in facing the challenges and opportunities of the era of digital transformation.

4.3. Comparison with Previous Literature

The evolution of missiological literature regarding digital mission illustrates a significant shift in perspectives over the years. Prior to 2015, much of the literature characterized digital mission primarily as an extension of traditional Gospel communication via new media. This conceptualization framed technology as an instrumental tool for evangelism, focusing predominantly on its efficacy in disseminating Christian messages to broader audiences. For instance, Gelfgren discusses the functional approach of digital media as a means to achieve the end of spreading the Gospel, particularly within institutionalized contexts (Gelfgren, 2016).

However, the discourse began shifting post-2020, with scholars like Heidi Campbell and Stephen Garner introducing more nuanced theological frameworks. They argue that digital media facilitates not just the communication of faith but encapsulates the embodiment of faith itself. Their works emphasize the necessity of recognizing digital contexts as existential spaces where Christian spirituality is engaged and expressed. Campbell's model posits that relations between faith communities and their digital representations must be analyzed within a structure of sociological and theological transformation (Arrington, 2015). This enriches the understanding of digital faith as something inherently interconnected with dissemination methods, where digital churches are seen not just as channels but also as platforms for incarnational ministry, reflecting a deeper theological engagement with digitality (Farah, 2022).

Scholars have also suggested that integrating concepts like *Missio Dei* with the emerging paradigm of digital incarnation creates a more comprehensive framework for digital mission. Rather than discarding digital methodologies as transient adaptations to cultural trends, researchers advocate for an acknowledgment of digital mission as integral to God's ongoing work of salvation in the world (Krabill & Norton, 2015). This perspective encourages a reflective missiological approach that encompasses cultural awareness alongside practical outreach strategies. By combining these elements, contemporary missiological discourse promotes both critical theological reflection and an understanding of the cultural dynamics at play in digital outreach efforts (Kollman, 2022).

In summary, the trajectory of missiological literature reveals a profound transition: from a functionalist view of digital tools for evangelism to a more reflective and theological understanding of digital spaces as vital environments for experiencing and practicing faith. This evolution invites an enriched discourse that integrates theology, culture, and mission practice, affirming the importance of digital engagement in the contemporary Christian narrative.

4.4. Implications for the Church

Concept transformationwinning soulsIn the context of digital missiology, there are various important implications for the church in carrying out its ministry in the digital era. These implications encompass theological, practical, and strategic aspects, requiring the church to adapt its ministry paradigm, human resource capacity, and digital ethical framework:

1. Strengthening Digital Theological Literacy

The church needs to equip missionaries and congregations with digital theological literacy, namely the ability to understand and apply theological principles in a digital context. This literacy enables digital ministry to become more than just a technological adaptation, but an authentic theological expression, ensuring that every online interaction reflects God's work of salvation.

2. Affirmation of Digital Mission Ethics

The church's presence in the digital space carries complex ethical implications. The church needs to affirm the ethical principles of digital mission, including integrity, authenticity, and the protection of congregational privacy. This ensures that online communication, content dissemination, and interactions do not lead to personalization or abuse. This ethical approach also maintains spiritual authority and sacramentality in digital ministry.

3. Contextual and Interactive Service Strategy

Digital mission demands participatory and contextual ministry strategies, in keeping with the characteristics of digital culture. Churches need to develop interactive engagement methods, build online communities that support faith growth, and deliver testimonies relevant to the needs and contexts of digital-native audiences. Digital mission must emphasize the formation of relationships, community, and transformative faith experiences, not simply the dissemination of information.

4. Utilizing Technology to Reach the New Generation

The digital space offers strategic opportunities to reach digital-natives and groups difficult to reach through conventional methods. Churches can leverage social media platforms, podcasts, video streaming, and virtual environments to deliver inclusive, innovative, and relevant services to modern lifestyles, while still emphasizing theological and spiritual values.

5. Measuring Success Based on Faith Transformation

The success of digital missions should be measured by faith transformation, not simply by audience size or digital impressions. Churches need to develop indicators that assess spiritual impact, community growth, and congregational engagement in authentic faith practices. This approach emphasizes the quality of interactions and community formation as relevant measures of success in the digital context.

Overall, the implications for the church show that digitalization is not a threat to theology of mission, but rather a strategic and theological opportunity to expand God's work. The church is called upon to think creatively, act ethically, and serve contextually, making digital mission a living, relational, and transformative expression of faith.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary of Findings

This study shows that the conceptwinning soulsThe context of Christian mission has undergone significant transformation due to digital developments. The mission paradigm has shifted from a focus on individual conversion to an approach that emphasizes relationships, community, and faith accompaniment. Digitalization opens up new spaces for mission implementation, where the presence of faith in cyberspace (digital incarnation) and communities across space and time (digital church) become an integral part ofMission of GodThis transformation is not merely a technological adaptation, but a conceptual shift that emphasizes the active participation of the people in God's work of salvation through digital media.

This research also highlights the challenges and opportunities of digital mission. Challenges include the risk of depersonalization, shallow interactions, and issues of spiritual authority and sacramentality in the digital space. On the other hand, emerging opportunities include the ability to reach digital-native generations and communities difficult to access through conventional methods, opening up strategic potential for the church to actualize its mission.Great Commission of the digital era.

5.2. Research Contributions

Theoretically, this research expands the understanding of missiology by positioning digital space as a theologically legitimate mission arena.Digital Missiology Frameworkproposed provides a new conceptual framework for understanding Christian mission as participation inMission of Godwhich is inclusive, contextual, and interconnected.Practically, this research provides guidance for churches and missionaries to develop digital mission strategies that are authentic, ethical, and relevant to digital culture. Churches can utilize this framework to build online faith communities that support spiritual transformation, maintain spiritual authority, and nurture sacramental values in digital interactions.

5.3. Limitations and Directions for Further Research

The limitations of this research lie in its conceptual nature and narrative review. This analysis emphasizes the integration of literature and conceptual frameworks without empirically testing the effectiveness of digital mission strategies in the field.Future research could employ empirical approaches, such as case studies of digital churches or participatory surveys, to assess the tangible impact of the Digital Missiology Framework on congregational faith transformation. Furthermore, future research could explore the ethics, sacramentality, and sustainability of online communities to enrich a more applicable understanding of digital missiology.

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