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## JOSEPH RATZINGER'S IDEA OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE IN TRUTH: INSPIRATIONS, QUESTIONS, AND PROBLEMS

**Abstract.** Without doubt Joseph Ratzinger is one of the most important participants of ecumenical dialogue. His theology has a practical impact on that dialogue not only because of his position in the Catholic Church. He has devoted many of his works to ecumenism. This paper is a result of the studies of all his works available in Polish since 2018. During the research it became clear that Ratzinger has offered an original idea of ecumenical dialogue. In this article it is called 'ecumenical dialogue in truth' and is described in the first part. Ratzinger insists to recognize in truth the causes of divisions, to accept that divisions among Christians are somehow allowed by the Lord, to see the true and authentic fidelity to the Lord at the bottom of divisions, and to 'be humble in adopting realistic intermediate goals'. He encourages us to recognize true Christianity in the authentic riches developed by various Traditions over the centuries. The second part of the article is dedicated to new inspirations, questions and some problems which followed these ideas in the field of fundamental theology. Ratzinger touches on the most important problems in fundamental theology, like authentic Christianity, Christian identity, the Church, and credibility. His theology demands reshaping fundamental theology: its main presuppositions, tasks, attitude, terminology and methods.

**Key words:** ecumenism; ecumenical dialogue; Joseph Ratzinger; truth; fundamental theology; Christianity.

For a long time, Christianity has dramatically split up to such an extent that its various 'fragments' (Churches, Communities, traditions, denominations) treated each other with great hostility. So-called 'religious wars' in Europe with all the suffering and harm they caused could not be erased from the history. This situation has changed. In recent decades many ecumenical activities were initiated and ecumenical dialogue began with a participation of almost all Christian Churches and Communities. The divisions of Christianity themselves became

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increasingly the subject of dialogue between Christians. One of the most important participants of this dialogue is Joseph Ratzinger (1927–).<sup>1</sup> He dedicated many works, lectures and articles to the topics of ecclesiology and ecumenism.<sup>2</sup> Both fields are closely connected in his theological thinking. Ratzinger has tried to comprehend the divisions as not only historical fact but also as theological ‘hard data’ and challenge. This paper is a result of the studies of all his works available in Polish as Ratzinger *Opera Omnia* series.<sup>3</sup> Reading all Ratzinger’s writings leads to a clear conclusion that he has offered an original idea of ecumenical dialogue: ecumenical dialogue in truth which will be presented in the first part of this article. This idea is also known as ‘unity in/through diversity’.<sup>4</sup> The second part of this article contains new inspirations, questions and some problems that arise when this idea enters the field of fundamental theology.

#### 1. RATZINGER’S IDEA OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE IN TRUTH<sup>5</sup>

For Ratzinger what counts the most in Christian identity, in true and authentic Christianity, is Jesus Christ and the truth. Jesus is ‘the Way and the Truth, and the Life’ (Jn 14,6). ‘The truth is in Jesus’ (Eph 4,21). The priority of the truth brings a faithful Christian to the practice of searching for only the truth, telling the truth, doing the truth, and walking the path of truth. The full

<sup>1</sup> Piotr JASKÓŁA, „Jedność Kościoła i Kościołów według J. Ratzingera – Benedykta XVI”, in *W kręgu teologii Josepha Ratzingera – Benedykta XVI. Wykłady otwarte w zamiejscowym ośrodku Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Opolskiego (2006/2007)*, ed. Kazimierz Wolsza (Opole: Redakcja Wydawnictw Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2008), 39–51; Bogdan FERDEK, „Modele ekumenizmu według Josepha Ratzingera”, *Studia Salvatoriana Polonica* 1 (2007): 61–76.

<sup>2</sup> Particularly: Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/1: *Kościół – znak wśród narodów. Pisma eklezjologiczne i ekumeniczne*, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka, trans. Wiesław Szymona (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2013) and IDEM, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2: *Kościół – znak wśród narodów. Pisma eklezjologiczne i ekumeniczne*.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. I–XIII, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2012–2018). This edition follows the original German edition and it consists of 11 volumes (17 books).

<sup>4</sup> JASKÓŁA, „Jedność Kościoła i Kościołów według J. Ratzingera – Benedykta XVI”, 46–51.

<sup>5</sup> Part I of this article is based on a part of my book „*Cóż to jest prawda?*” *Argumentacja z prawdy za najwyższą wiarygodnością chrześcijaństwa na kanwie twórczości Josepha Ratzingera* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2020). In that book Ratzinger’s idea of ecumenical dialogue in truth appears as one of premises in his argumentation: argumentation from the dialogue in the truth for the highest credibility of Christianity. Also, I was honored to give a lecture “Ecumenical dialogue in truth: the path marked out by one of the best Catholic theologians of our times” (13 XI 2019) at Theology Faculty of University in Helsinki. I’m very grateful to Prof. dr Pekka Kärkkäinen and his students for questions and suggestions followed that lecture.

respect to the truth must also lead Christians to the dialogue: sincere dialogue in truth. According to Ratzinger the most important dialogue is the constant dialogue with Jesus. That dialogue, when taking up the problem of divisions seriously, might open new solutions on the path to unity.<sup>6</sup> Only by listening to the Word of God, to the Truth, only by saying and accepting the truth and reality, Christians could come back to the unity of the one Church, restore it and – crucially in this case – recognize in truth the causes of divisions, which often – as Ratzinger says – resulted from human egoism, pride, fears and even errors. Ratzinger has no doubt that one of such errors is ‘a constant temptation’ of deification the products of human actions and traditions.<sup>7</sup>

Ratzinger says that despite numerous divisions, the Church established by Jesus Christ is still one, and the essence of the Christian faith, the essence of Christianity has not been broken.<sup>8</sup> He proposes that the divisions be interpreted guided primarily by the truth: historical truth and above all the Truth communicated by God in Jesus Christ. It would be naivety, ignorance and disrespect for the truth to say that the most important divisions were irrelevant and now obsolete. Since its beginning, Christianity has carried important dilemmas which might have caused the biggest divisions. Ratzinger, truthfully and bravely, lists the essence of differences and disputes. In 1983, he said: ‘Of course, you can right away list a lot of things which separated Christians and Christian Churches: Scripture and Tradition or Scripture and the Church’s teaching power; the related problem of spiritual office, apostolic succession as the sacramental figure of Tradition and their connection at the office of Peter; the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist and the problem of the transformation of gifts, as well as the permanent presence of the Lord in those gifts, and with this the Eucharistic adoration outside the Mass (fundamental unity has already been achieved in the matter of the real presence of Christ in the sacred activities themselves); the sacrament of penance; different views in the field of Christian morality, in which, of course, the problem of the Church’s teaching office is of great importance’.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XII: *Głosiciele Słowa i służby Waszej radości. Teologia i duchowość sakramentu święceń*, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka, trans. Marzena Górecka, Monika Rodkiewicz, cooperation Joachim Kobienia, Dominik Petruk (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2012), 143. This idea concludes Ratzinger’s paper dedicated to Apostolic letter *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (1994) by John Paul II.

<sup>7</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 684. See also pp. 743, 771.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VI/2: *Jezus z Nazaretu. Studia o chrystologii*, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka, trans. Wiesław Szymona (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2015), 921; IDEM, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VI/1: *Jezus z Nazaretu. Studia o chrystologii*, 554. See also p. 381.

<sup>9</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 875–876. He was interviewed by Internationale katholische Zeitschrift *Communio* Editorial Board.

Ratzinger believes that the dispute between Eastern and Western Christianity concerned important doctrinal issues, as well as the overarching principle of ordering the functioning of the Church. What is that overarching principle: the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, autocephality or personal and individual freedom in the Holy Spirit?<sup>10</sup> The split within Western Christianity arose primarily from the biggest problem and question: is the Church, with the authority of the Bishop of Rome, still retained its Christian identity? Even stronger: is it still Christianity or not?<sup>11</sup> According to Ratzinger sharp critics of the Roman Church by the reformers in the sixteenth century led to radicalization of their theological views.<sup>12</sup>

Ratzinger argues that the essence of divisions among Christians arises – both when they arose and now – from the fundamental concern for fidelity: to the origins of Christianity and to the beginnings of the Church (which is one and catholic; catholic originally means universal).<sup>13</sup> In short: from concern for fidelity to the Lord. It was all about fidelity and faithfulness to the Lord himself, faithfulness to the Truth and the whole Truth, which He is and which He brought to the world. Christians always should be more faithful to the Lord than to any people, sometimes even to ‘the [institutions of the] Church’. Ratzinger seems to ask frequently in his writings: who might be able to guarantee that the pastors of the Church, Church structures and procedures are always totally free from any human egoism, pride, fears and errors? Since there have been significant differences between Christians over the centuries in understanding faithfulness to the Lord and to the Truth, it would be unfaithful to the truth to ignore these differences or reduce them.

It starts to be clear that Ratzinger’s offer addressed to divided Christians is very original. It is also not easy to be heard by Catholics. As Christians we should, Ratzinger believes, constantly strive for unity to be able to testify to the world of the credibility of Christianity, but at the same time ... we must ‘be humble in adopting realistic intermediate goals’.<sup>14</sup> He proposes to all Christians that they respect and accept the diversity of Christianity of other Christians that

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<sup>10</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XIII/1: *W rozmowie z czasem*, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2017), 157.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. IX/1: *Wiara w Piśmie i Tradycji. Teologiczna nauka o zasadach*, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka, trans. Jarosław Merecki (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2018), 350. See also p. 349.

<sup>12</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 880; IDEM, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XI: *Teologia liturgii. Sakramentalne podstawy życia chrześcijańskiego*, ed. Krzysztof Gózdź, Marzena Górecka, trans. Wiesław Szymona (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2012), 615–616.

<sup>13</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XIII/1, 155; IDEM, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 774.

<sup>14</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 898.

has arisen as a result of divisions.<sup>15</sup> According to Ratzinger, the idea of 'converting' others to one ('my' or 'our' own) Christian tradition, as it happened to the Roman Catholic Church (and – to say the truth – it happened not only to the Roman Catholic Church) is unrealistic and inappropriate. On the path of such 'conversion', the authentic fruits of the lives of 'different' Christians as Christians, which had been developed for centuries, would be lost. As Christians we must not lose the truth. We should protect and respect it. An authentic truth – Ratzinger insists – is present in many authentic achievements reached by 'different' Christians over the centuries.

His idea goes even further. He proposes that the divisions in Christianity be recognized as ... allowed by the Lord. He wrote: '... in a situation of division, showing each other not only respect, but also love, in the belief that it is also in this situation that we need each other, that we receive something from each other, that we live for each other and are Christians together. Division – as long as the Lord allows it – can also be fruitful, it can lead to enrichment of faith and in this way prepare the arrival of the Church one in diversity, which today we cannot yet imagine, in which, however, none of the positive values growing in history should disappear – anywhere that they would be. Perhaps we need divisions so that we can reach the fullness that the Lord expects'.<sup>16</sup> Thanks to divisions and ecumenical dialogue, each of the great Traditions of Christianity has a chance for constant correction and purification.<sup>17</sup> Ratzinger asks: Why can't Christians discuss and even argue about matters that matter most to them?<sup>18</sup> Why can't we recognize the presence of true, authentic Christianity in each other, in our Traditions, especially in what has developed the most valuable? We should have more respect to former Christian generations living in the past. Even being divided, sometimes horribly, many of them have been doing their best to protect the faith. They developed the faith and lived an authentic Christian life. Many 'different' Christians became true disciples of the Lord, witnesses and even martyrs. Ratzinger proposes that the Christian East and West mutually recognize themselves as orthodox, not heretical.<sup>19</sup> Walking along this path, he explains to Protestant Christians that the anathema that the Council of Trent cast on the reformers 'is not a complete Catholic assessment of Protestantism'. In his opinion, this assessment increasingly sees 'positive

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<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, 684.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, 898–899.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, 678. See also *Opera Omnia*, vol. IX/1, 39.

<sup>18</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/1, 356–357.

<sup>19</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 668.

Christian dignity' in Protestantism.<sup>20</sup> His opinion must be firmly reminded today, because even now it happens that some Catholic theologians see Protestantism as only heresy and schism.

Ratzinger conducts a dialogue on ecumenism with Roman Catholics. He reminds that 'the Reformation undoubtedly erupted because Catholics did not have enough authentic Catholicity', that the necessity of conversion concerns first of all oneself and cannot be a request directed only at non-Catholics.<sup>21</sup> He admits that he is 'a friend of truly spiritual Protestants', that their Christian life is deep and interested in Catholicism.<sup>22</sup> He states that full belonging with the Roman Catholic Church – despite believing that this Church has preserved and developed the most elements of the original Church, the Church of Christ – does not automatically guarantee a truly Christian attitude, because it cannot do so. It depends on the specific person. It could be said in modern language: Christianity is not a slot machine. 'A single evangelical Christian can be a fuller Christian in a given situation than a single Christian Catholic'.<sup>23</sup> Ratzinger said that it is a real tragedy when someone can hold a high position in the Church structures and not be a Christian at all.<sup>24</sup> He also honestly admits that Catholics must reckon with the consequences of the Catholic model of the Church. 'Diaspora Churches', he says, are usually free from numerous administrative procedures to which the Roman Church is condemned because of its institutional side, which often burdens and binds it.<sup>25</sup> Catholics, guided by the truth, should be aware of these difficulties and cannot absolutize or idealize the Church to which they belong.

## 2. INSPIRATIONS, QUESTIONS, AND PROBLEMS

How to evaluate Ratzinger's idea of ecumenical dialogue in truth?

Without doubt it makes Catholic theology abandon false stereotypes. It also brings new inspirations to Catholic fundamental theology. It is really a breeze of a fresh air. Even today Catholic fundamental ecclesiology seems to be still fo-

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, 750. See also 752.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, 764-765.

<sup>22</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. XIII/1, 154.

<sup>23</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. VIII/2, 760.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, 1133.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. X: *Zmartwychwstanie i życie wieczne. Studia o eschatologii i teologii nadziei*, ed. Krzysztof Góźdz, Marzena Górecka, trans. Joachim Kobienia (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2014), 421.

cused on defending the Divine origins of only the structures of the Church. That theology too often forgets the content transmitted by those structures. Maybe I am wrong but Catholic fundamental ecclesiology seems to be still, deeply inside, anti-Protestant and not ready yet to understand authentic Christian reasons which moved the first Reformers to start their protest. Ratzinger has no hesitations on that matter.

His ecclesiology is a suggestion to reshape Catholic fundamental theology in many ways. Its task should be to search for authentic Church as authentic Christianity in other Churches and Christian Communities. It should be reminded here that the Second Vatican Council has started going this way and even named elements of the one authentic Church in 'others'. Ratzinger's ecclesiology subject is no more only the structures of the Church, but – as naturally logical – the Church itself: the Church of the Lord and the Church/Churches of today, with their virtues and vices. Speaking about the structures of the Church, Ratzinger tries to be totally honest. He mentioned a horrible decay of the papacy in the tenth century and other failures in the past which were so numerous and many times 'even horrifying'.<sup>26</sup> He tries to identify sometimes dangerous tendencies in the way of thinking represented by bishops, priests and theologians. But first of all, his general way of defending the Church is this: he names what exactly in the Church is truly and authentic Christian. In his eyes this is what makes the Church still credible, despite many vices. The Church retains credibility because following the will of the Lord, recognizing it and bringing it into practice still predominate. According to Ratzinger, the term 'credibility' in Christian language means, first of all, to respond to the Lord's will and to be humble, simple, truthful, honest, loving, and serving. It looks like Catholic fundamental theology, especially in Poland, does not realize the nature of time we are living today. Ratzinger names it: 'the hour of disbelief'. Could defending the structures of the Church help the Church much in this situation? Are we sure that this is what the Lord wants us to do today?

Ratzinger has a profound understanding of the term 'Christianity' and this is also inspiring. For him, the term 'Christianity' primarily means the original form of this Religion, as well as its characters developed by various Traditions on its basis and in accordance with its core. If Christians are guided by the truth, by the vivid and totally honest dialogue with the Lord, they can see the richness and authenticity of Christianity far greater than what they are used to see in only their own Tradition. Then they will see fuller Christianity, the

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<sup>26</sup> OO XIII/1, 370; OO VIII/2, 1095.

whole Christianity, and consequently: still one Christianity. For Ratzinger Christianity is neither exclusively individual nor exclusively communal. It is and should be individual, but it is so only when a Christian is in communion with other members of one Lord's Body, the Church. Christianity is and should be communal and ecclesiastical, visibly and recognizably shaped, structured, historically and socially real, but it is so only when the members of the Church are animated by personal adherence to the Lord.<sup>27</sup>

This remark is important to Catholic fundamental theology. It officially claims that its primary purpose is to justify the credibility of Christianity. But in practice it looks like Catholic fundamental theology makes two mistakes already at 'the point of departure'. Firstly, its object is only the first, original form of Christianity, established by Jesus, Christianity *in nucleo*, Jesus of the Gospels, and the first generations of disciples. Fundamental theology very often calls its subject: the Divine Revelation or the Christian Revelation. However, this position seems to forget what happened later: about later Christianity. Ratzinger strongly reminds it. Christianity has had its own history and as such it demands to be justified, of course always in the truth. This is a true task and a real challenge. Defending Jesus of the Gospels and the first Christianity of martyrs is quite easy, especially when it is addressed to good and sensitive people. But defending Christianity with all deep divisions in its history is a real challenge. Ratzinger has bravely faced it and established the pattern for fundamental theology. Secondly, it is hard to find in Catholic fundamental theology an authentic interest in authentic Christian life present in 'others'. It looks like, deeply inside, that theology reduces Christianity only to Catholicism. This is probably why this theology has today so many 'obstacles', and less and less listeners. Ratzinger has prescribed a 'prescription'.

His idea of ecumenical dialogue in truth – as evaluated in truth – provokes some questions. At the first side it seems to contain a contradiction. On the one hand, Ratzinger says that the divisions were often caused by human egoism, pride, fears, and errors. On the other hand, he claims that the divisions arose from a fundamental concern for fidelity, fidelity to the Lord. So, which is true? It could be a real problem especially to those who do not know Christianity. Let me say that Ratzinger's theology explains that this contradiction is rather apparent. In his eyes both factors have effected Christianity in the past and both are still at work. His anthropology is realistic. Among Christians, in the past and today, some strive to be faithful to the

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<sup>27</sup> RATZINGER, *Opera Omnia*, vol. IX/2: *Wiara w Piśmie i Tradycji*, 761.



Lord and some do not overcome their egoism and pride. Even more: in the same person as a Christian there is always a real struggle between faithfulness to the Lord and natural egoism. However, a truly serious question which could be asked by Ratzinger is this: who and how is able to distinguish both factors in a particular moment of Christian history? In other words: who has the authority to say in the Church what the Lord wills from the Church and what in the Church is a product of human egoism, pride, fears and errors? It looks like, again, after we had followed a promising path marked out by Ratzinger, we turn back to the fundamental problem unresolved until today: What should be the overarching principle of ordering the functioning of the Church? Christianity with all its Traditions is in need of such a principle and Ratzinger's idea of ecumenical dialogue in truth names this need but does not offer a final solution.

There is another problem and questions which Ratzinger might be asked: What exactly are the riches of Christianity, developed over the centuries by its various Traditions? Who is able to list them precisely in the name of the Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches, Protestantism and 'others'? This task seems to be very difficult. But this is what the Lord wants Christian theologians to do. Churches and Communities, and even contemporary societies, rightly expect that theologians are true experts in Religious and Christian matters. It would be very helpful to Christianity today if Christian theologians representing various Traditions could fulfil this task. They should share the results of their work with others in a dialogue which would become a truly ecumenical dialogue this way. Practical suggestions are necessary here: theologians need to use as simple language as it is only possible. They have to forget they are scholars and remind themselves they are first of all Christians and represent Christianity. Communicating the riches of various Christian Traditions should not mean only listing the successes of the past, but first of all responding the question: what exactly means to be a Christian today?

The last 'critical' remark touches on practical problems. Ratzinger proposes that the Christian East and West view each other as orthodox, not any more heretical. Undoubtedly, the Roman Catholic Church has made a huge progress in that matter, this trend starting during the last council. This Church recognizes a positive Christian dignity in 'others'. But what is the attitude of Orthodox Churches to 'others'? The Roman Catholic Church still expects a clear statement on this matter. And how about Protestantism? Does it see true Christianity in Catholicism? Catholics and Lutherans know how fruitful was and still is the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*

signed in 1999. To tell the truth, some Lutherans expect that the Roman Church will accept the Augsburg Confession (*Confessio Augustana*) as an authentic part of Christianity, of Christian Tradition. Ratzinger, as the President of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, must have heard it. Some Lutherans would also appreciate calling Lutheran Communities Churches. It has not happened yet and nobody knows if it will in the future. For now, the Catholic Church says, just like Ratzinger: there is positive Christian dignity in Protestantism and we should 'be humble in adopting realistic intermediate goals.' Maybe that stage in the Catholic Church lasts too long, but Christianity still has a long way to go.

#### CONCLUSION

Joseph Ratzinger's contribution to ecumenical dialogue is unquestionable. He has criticized mistaken concepts of that dialogue. His own understanding of ecumenical dialogue is scattered in all his writings and appears clearly on the basis of all his theological thinking. First of all, his thinking tries to follow the truth, no matter what it is. The main purpose of this article was to collect and summarize his concept of ecumenical dialogue. He is in favour of ecumenical dialogue in truth, better to say, in the fullness of Truth. He insists on recognizing the causes of divisions in truth, to accept that divisions among Christians are somehow allowed for by the Lord, who respects human freedom and fragility, to see the true and authentic fidelity to the Lord at the bottom of divisions, and to 'be humble in adopting realistic intermediate goals'. He encourages us to recognize true Christianity in the authentic riches developed by various Traditions. Ratzinger's idea of ecumenical dialogue in truth, even though do not resolve all problems and difficulties in ecumenical dialogue, touches on the most important problems of fundamental theology, like authentic Christianity, Christian identity, the Church, and credibility. Ratzinger tries to defend the credibility of Christianity in a realistic way facing the problem of deep divisions which is still one of the greatest scandals and 'obstacles' in faith. His idea brings new inspirations along with some questions and problems to Catholic fundamental theology. This idea demands the fundamental theology be reshaped: its main presuppositions, tasks, attitude, terms and methods. Ratzinger's idea leads to a general conclusion: Catholic fundamental theology can make a real contribution to ecumenical dialogue and in so doing it will be able to renew itself.

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JOSEPHA RATZINGERA KONCEPCJA DIALOGU EKUMENICZNEGO W PRAWDZIE:  
INSPIRACJE, PYTANIA I PROBLEMY

## Streszczenie

Niewątpliwie Joseph Ratzinger jest jednym z najbardziej kluczowych uczestników dialogu ekumenicznego nie tylko dlatego, że piastował najważniejsze funkcje w Kościele katolickim. Wiele jego dzieł jest poświęconych problematyce ekumenicznej. Niniejszy artykuł jest efektem badań podjętych nad całą jego twórczością, które od 2018 r. są w całości dostępne w języku polskim. Jednym z rezultatów tych badań jest stwierdzenie, że Ratzinger posiada oryginalną koncepcję dialogu ekumenicznego. Jest ona w tym artykule nazwana „dialogiem ekumenicznym w prawdzie”, choć jest bardziej znana jako „droga do jedności w różnorodności”. Jej charakterystyka wypełnia pierwszą część artykułu. Ratzinger uważa, że należy zgodnie z prawdą nazwać przyczyny podziałów w chrześcijaństwie. Trzeba dzięki prawdziwemu dialogowi z Panem uznać, że podziały mogą być przez Niego dopuszczone dla wyższego dobra. Należy wyraźnie zobaczyć pragnienie prawdziwej wierności Panu u korzeni wielu podziałów oraz „być pokornym i cieszyć się osiągnięciem realistycznych pośrednich celów” w dialogu ekumenicznym. Ratzinger proponuje, by uznać jako prawdziwe chrześcijaństwo liczne osiągnięcia wypracowane przez różne chrześcijańskie Tradycje w ciągu wie-

ków. Druga część artykułu jest poświęcona nowym inspiracjom oraz pytaniom i problemom, które rodzi koncepcja Ratzingera dla teologii fundamentalnej. Ta teologia nie może przejść obok niej obojętnie, bowiem Ratzinger porusza kluczowe dla teologii fundamentalnej zagadnienia, na przykład rozumienie chrześcijaństwa, jego autentyczności i prawdziwości, tożsamości i istoty, rozumienie Kościoła oraz pojęcia „wiarygodność”. Jego koncepcja rodzi konieczność dokonania korekt w katolickiej teologii fundamentalnej co do jej głównych założeń, zadań, nastawienia względem chrześcijan niekatolików, pojęć i metod.

**Słowa kluczowe:** ekumenizm; dialog ekumeniczny; Joseph Ratzinger; prawda; teologia fundamentalna; chrześcijaństwo.