

Christian Religious Education in the Family: Benefits and Uses for the Millennial Generation

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Abstract

Christian Religious Education, from now on referred to as family PAK, is a very important education for all family members. Through family PAK, that can be done with worship, with the aim that all family members can know and understand God who is worshiped and enable the whole family to live according to God's word and can be an example for others. Family PAK is an important task for parents as individuals who are given the responsibility by God to teach it. Not only parents but all family members who are there must support each other and carry out PAK in the family; therefore, it takes commitment from the whole family so that family PAK can be realized. Given how many children choose the wrong path (not in the presence of God) to take actions that are not commendable, the child's future will be disrupted. In this case, how do parents give time to teach their children through worship, stories, and conversations. This writing aims to see the extent to which the benefits and objectives of PAK are carried out in the family to anticipate the progress of the era, which greatly influences the human mindset.

Keywords: Family PAK, Benefits, The Purpose of Worship, Parents, Children.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Today, the millennial generation is a topic that is quite hotly discussed among the public, starting from the point of view of education, technology, morals, and culture. The millennial generation, often referred to as Generation Y, was born after generation X, namely people born in the 1980-2000s range (Harmadi & Jatmiko, 2020). In general, educational psychology experts claim that the millennial generation is special compared to previous generations because today's children are born in the age of technology, which is characterized by Smartphones, the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Line, etc. (2017).

Technological developments have made it easy for every child to obtain all information, communicate and simultaneously support smooth activities in completing existing tasks using the internet and gadgets (Sengkoen, 2022). According to Saniyyah et al. (2021) that the positive benefits obtained from using gadgets are facilitating communication. A gadget is a tool that has sophisticated technology. So, everyone can easily communicate. Building children's creativity, they will find it easier to find all the information and news they need, especially in terms of learning while playing or playing (Vivi et al., 2021).

On the other hand, technological developments and gadgets have had a particularly negative impact on the social life of today's children. Unknowingly that current technological developments have influenced the behavior of every child. One

of the behaviors of children that appear in this era are fighting, promiscuity, using illegal drugs, liking to take selfies at will, sexual perversion, running away from home, playing games without time limits, difficulty to direct, wasteful lifestyles, starting dating, high ego, smoking, drinking and many other things that have not been revealed (Anggraeni & Hendrizal, 2018; Marpaung, 2018).

To deal with the progress of the times and today's technology, a strong and positive mentality is needed from every generation of Christians so that this generation does not fall into the ugliness of this era (Widagti & Ndun, 2022). Thus, PAK has an important role in trying to prevent these problems. If this problem continues, Christian youths will experience bad morals, unclear lives, and a bleak future. Therefore, the mentality of today's young people must be repaired and reshaped through the values of truth with a solid foundation, namely the Word of God or the Bible (Lahagu, 2020).

Happy family life does not just come. To achieve a harmonious family (children who have good morals) and get joy, it must start with teaching children in the household. Harianto (2016) The Book of Proverbs 22:6 says, "educate a young person according to the path that is right for him so that even when he is old, he will not deviate from that path." The word educate in Hebrew is called "hanok," which means "to educate, to train" thus, the word hanok means the process of making something from the bottom up. Jimmy Swaggart (2010) "train up a child in the way he should go, and he is old, he will not depart from it" the "train up" mean to hedge up or hedge in. it is like building a fence around a child. Sinulingga (2012), with proper upbringing, children will be surrounded by good and right things, keeping them away from crime, laziness, and free sex, so that they can deal with life's problems that sometimes come to bother them.

PAK family is very important to equip children to live the way God wills. The benefits and uses carried out by parents for children will bring growth in faith and maturity in acting and determining attitudes in their life journey (Non-Serrano, 2016). Therefore, PAK should have a proper place in the family to be taught to children. This task is entrusted to the family as the first educator in the family (Tafona'o, 2016).

However, nowadays, Family PAK has begun to be forgotten, and it is rare for families to carry it out at home. Many parents feel that this is unimportant and ignore teaching PAK to their children (Sunarko, 2021). This can be seen from several factors: 1. Many parents do not have the time and opportunity to teach their children because they are busy working, so they forget their duties and responsibilities in teaching their children about God's Word. 2. The possibility of parents' relationship with God is not so close. 3. It could be that parents do not have good skills in knowledge to teach the word of God. 4. Lack of interest and willingness of children to participate in worship and PAK learning with parents. The benefits will be great if family PAK is carried out in the congregation's house. One of them is that children will grow in faith in God, where they can distinguish what is good and bad in this life and avoid immoral acts, such as drugs, promiscuity, dropping out of school, and so on.

Based on the explanation above, technological developments in society also impact the growth of Spirituality among adolescents. Christian today. Nevertheless, that will have a good impact if Christian youths get the right education. For this reason, one of the most appropriate places to build the Spirituality of Christian youth (Millennial generation) is through PAK in a well-executed family.

B. METHOD

The research method used in this paper is qualitative. The author collects data from various sources of literature, which are then analyzed objectively and concluded in a descriptive form (Sugiyono, 2011). The data sources in this study are the Bible, books, journals, and other literature from the internet. Then these sources are sources that can be accounted for academically. In addition, the materials used from the library sources consist of concepts, opinions, and ideas that the author has selected based on suitability for the discussion.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the Old Testament, we can find how God commands that children are always taught about God's laws. The family, commonly called the household, is the initial place for receiving teaching about God, in the family, all children will be guided and taught about God's deeds in the life of the Israelites. Parents function as teachers (teachers). Parents play a role in teaching and teaching the statutes of the Lord God. The Bible that bears testimony about this parental duty is Deuteronomy 6: 20-25: *"If in the future your son asks you, 'What are the testimonies, statutes, and ordinances that the Lord our God has commanded you?' then you must answer your son; 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, but God brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand. God made great signs and wonders to wreak havoc on Pharaoh and his household before our eyes. However, he brought us out of there so he could bring us in to give us the land he had sworn to our forefathers. The Lord, our God, commanded us to keep all these statutes and to fear the Lord our God so that we may always be well and that He might keep us alive, as is happening now. Moreover, this will be our righteousness if we carry out all the commandments carefully before the Lord our God, as we have been commanded.'"*

By this news, God's people are nurtured to be good people who obey Him and do all His commandments. This teaching took place orally in Israelite families. Barclay said that no nation has ever educated children in a family more deliberately than the Israelites, meaning that the Israelites placed far more emphasis on the necessity of teaching their children. We can see this in the Old Testament, especially Deuteronomy 6, and also in the New Testament, where Jesus treats children so important (Matthew 18:1-5) (Limbong, 2020)

Every form of the daily life of the Israelites was directed to develop the teaching of knowing God. The formation of generations is far more important than the temple, meaning that without the generation of God's people, God's covenant and the presence of the temple lost their essence because God's covenant and the temple are useless when the next generation cannot maintain and preserve it (Lie, 2017).

Regarding this teaching, Calvin argued and strongly emphasized that parents must indeed carry it out to their children; parents bear responsibility for their teaching. The starting point of this view is God's covenant. According to Calvin, children "when they are baptized in church services, their parents officially have the task of educating (teaching) them in fear of God. The purpose of education is so that they are enabled for their later assignments, namely to serve God in all areas of life (Abineno, 2015)

In the Dordrecht synod meeting, Calvin's view became one of the decisions (Family catechesis), which stated that the task of parents is "to teach the contents of the Bible and the Heidelberg Catechism by reading, interpreting and asking questions to children to find out whether they understand what they are taught or not. Another decision was for family worship to be held in the homes of church members.

The role of parents in children's education is very important; parents must be able to create something bright and pleasing to God and humans; therefore, parents must pay attention to teaching. Solomon wrote in Psalm 127: 4-5 it says, "*Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are children in their youth. Blessed is the man who has filled his quiver with these things. He will not be ashamed if he talks with the enemies at the gate.* With these words, it can be said that the parents' character largely determines a child's character. If parents set a good example, especially in teaching them the Word of God, they will create bright children like arrows (Julius Ishak Abraham- 2007). In line with that, Douglas Wilson, in Rose Marsaulina's writing, said that Christian education is given to children to restore the face of God, which has been damaged by the consequences of human sins (Douglas Wilson in the Rose Marsaulina, 2022).

In this case, Paul also wrote about the influence and role of the world on human life at the end of time (Abraham, 2007). Timothy 3:1-5:

"Know that in the last days, difficult times will come. Man will love himself and become a slave to money. They will boast and boast, they will be slanderers, they will rebel against their parents and are ungrateful, careless about religion, do not know love, are not willing to make peace, like to speak ill of others, cannot restrain themselves, are fierce, do not like good, treasonous, thoughtless, pretending to know, following lust more than God. Outwardly they practice worship, but in essence, they deny its power.

Sigmund Freud, a psychoanalytic in psychology, said that human nature and character are very difficult to change because they have been ingrained since childhood. When they grow up, they will take root and become a force that is difficult to change or revoke, but there are only three possibilities to be able to change it, namely:

1. The human brain is dissected and replaced with a new brain
2. Using the method of psycho-analysis will change
3. Religious conversion

The task as a parent is to motivate them to meet the needs of body and soul and build their emotions, especially their faith in Jesus Christ. This means parents must diligently introduce God's word, pray, and encourage them to live a godly Christian life (Wijanarko, 2017). Realizing as a parent who wants to educate his children to live

in truth is a responsibility handed over by God as written in 3 John 1:4 " *for me, there is no greater joy than hearing my children live in truth.*"

Parents want their children to be great, smart, kind, and pious. However, it must be known that a pious and good child does not just come down from the sky, but must be educated and influenced by the environment in which he lives, and also not only influenced by genetic factors, but the most important thing is how children are influenced by their parents to fear God (Winarko, 2017)

There are various things that parents need to worry about in this digital era, and Don Tapscott said there are various concerns, including Jarot Wijanarko (2018):

1. They do not want to read (study) and are very bad at communicating with other people. A lack of attention may cause this, so they will likely experience poor performance in every education they follow.
2. They lose social skills and do not give time to good things like sports
3. Often exposes himself to the public without feeling embarrassed
4. Lack of self-confidence and lack of independence because they do not have definite goals or ideals
5. Always likes violence and bullying friends either verbally or online
6. Have no work ethic, and they will probably be a disappointing co-worker
7. Their attitude is indifferent and selfish

Parents and their Authority

The progress of time in this complex digital era greatly influences human existence and behavior. Zega (2021) argues, with the progress of today's era, the question arises "how to protect children from the bad influences of this era? With the progress of this era, more and more children are abandoning their identities as children of God. In this case, Fredrik Melkias Boiliu believes parents must be teachers, role models, educators, and motivators for their children. Parental Authority in advancing children is very influential. God says if that child/generation becomes good, use that Authority well (cf. Deuteronomy 6:1). Authority is given to parents so they can lead their children well. That Authority is to lead, educate, and disciple so they become children who fear God. A father is responsible for the religious education of his family by teaching that religious education is centered and based on God's law (cf. Deuteronomy 6:4-9). Harianto GP (2017). In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, the purpose of Religious Education is formulated that God's people are obliged to pass on divine truth to the younger generation because they are the ones who will become reliable successors of the Christian faith in the future. These duties and responsibilities must be carried out with tenacity and tirelessness.

Like Joshua, parents needed to instill standards and values in the family, who realized that all Israelites had to follow God's standards and decrees. Joshua said, " *But if you think it is not good for you to serve God, choose today whom you will serve, the God your ancestors served on the other side of the Euphrates River, or the God of the Amorites in whose land we live. However, as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord* " (Joshua 24:15). Parents can build a filter that can protect the family from various negative

influences of the world by educating children according to God's teachings and advice. Apart from the teaching that we have given, the important thing is that every parent must imitate God's word and practice it. The example set by the parents will greatly impact the child's life because the example is far more important and meaningful than the advice and teaching (Benjamin & Gratia, 2020). Building obedience and discipline in the family is the most important thing. Parents are the first to obey the discipline mutually agreed upon. Why? Because children will find it easier to carry out all the existing rules and regulations, especially when they see the Word of God in their parents' lives. If a child can obey his visible parents, it will be easier for him to obey God, who is invisible, because parents are the personification of God in this world (Winarko, 2017). God also commands parents to obey His Word first so that they have the right to teach God's Word repeatedly so that it is implemented. As is written in Proverbs 29: 15, which says, "a stick and reproof bring wisdom, but a child who is left alone disgraces his mother". What parents can do to achieve good children and families is to provide discipline based on love. Parents must give punishment and sanctions to children who lack discipline or are clearly rebellious. With the sanctions, we, as parents, hope it will change. Walter Brueggemann argues that the stick of education is "musar," which means it should not be understood as arbitrariness; on the contrary, it is a means of guidance and protection (Kolibu, 2019)

According to Clyde, "in the family, for the first time, a child knows God, and for him, the church is a symbol of Christianity and Christian standards" so that he can get to know the Christian faith well. (Kolibu, 2019). This means that the role of parents in the family is very large and influences the continuation of the child's life so that the child can know God and carry out His commandments. This is in stark contrast to research conducted by Sadiria Gulo in the Banua Niha Keriso Protentan (BNKP) family, where parents are less responsible for teaching PAK to their children. The reasons found are procrastination, lack of time, inadequate knowledge, and so on (Gulo, 2017)

Teaching children through discipline is very good because teaching without discipline is useless. According to Proverbs 19:18, "teach your child while there is hope, but do not desire his death" this understanding leads to teaching children should not "beat him" but "discipline him". A child needs to be taught to be disciplined in all aspects of his life. Things must be done as long as there is still hope, meaning as long as there is still a chance, or he can still receive discipline. The definition of death in the sentence above also wants to say so that children do not live in ignorance. Sinulingga (2012). In this case, discipline in the family is very important because if discipline is not enforced, children will behave wildly and have no boundaries. Therefore, discipline is very useful to be administered using a balanced and loving method.

Worship in the family

Worship is a way for humans to communicate with God; this is often done through prayer, singing, serving, worshipping, and so on. Worship is a human

endeavor aimed at God in whom he believes. Worship, commonly called *Latreia* and *Avoda* (Greek), expresses reverent fear, awe, and awe.

Talking about worship (family altar), parents and even narrow-minded believers often think that being responsible for meeting the necessities of life is a good and very good job, so many people are busy with their respective jobs to work day and night to fulfill their needs. The necessity of life is to forget the activities of gathering together to carry out spiritual activities at home. Spiritual needs are far more important to create a good and harmonious family. The Word of God says, "*But seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and then all these things will be added to you*" (Matthew 6:33) (Abraham, 2007)

The family is the smallest unit in society, the main place and basis for presenting the kingdom of heaven. As representatives of His kingdom, the family must consistently build a relationship with God by giving special time to fellowship. Parents are not only tasked with earning money and raising children but far more important is bringing their children into a good and close relationship with their creator. Leonardo S (2016). The wholeness and warmth of a Christ-centered family will enable every family member to fight against the world's increasingly misleading teachings.

God gives responsibility to parents to educate, nurture and form good character in children. According to James W. Fowler (in Zega, 2021), when children are young (adolescents), it is the right time to provide the right education to answer children's very high curiosity to produce children who are mature and responsible for the faith they have. Thus Kurniadi (2016) argues, in Matthew 28:19-20 the mandate to teach is not only the church and the apostles but also parents. Parents are God's representatives in educating and nurturing children to walk in God (Deuteronomy 6:6-9) (Kolibu, 2019). The family is a place to instill faith in every family member which leads to the formation of the right character and personality. This means that it is in the family that children are processed to achieve noble morals and fear of God. Anne Neo Feld Rupp argues about teaching in the family (Kolibu, 2019):

1. Build a family alliance
2. Serving the life of children in the family
3. Educating children in Christian life through biblical advice and rebuke
4. Communicating faith through the example of parental life, such as building love among parents, building joy and commitment

In a Christian family, God must be the center. Families must try to develop relationships, interactions, or fellowship. The main thing is to develop communion with God consistently and regularly. Relationships with God will guarantee a better and stronger family. This fellowship relationship can be done with worship at home led by parents. In worship, parents will provide important topics to be wrestled with together.

The role of parents in the family (father) greatly determines family happiness. Ephesians 6:4 says, "*and you, fathers, do not arouse anger in the hearts of your children, but educate them in the teachings and admonitions of God*". This refers to fathers raising their

children in love, not vice versa, so they grow in God. Jimmy Swaggart (1997:2070). Parents in the family have a very important and influential role in the spiritual development of children. In this case, Stephen Tong also argues that "children see God through their parents, because if the parents in the family are good or become good role models in the level of their deeds and Spirituality, then the children will also be awakened to become righteous children. Leonardo (2016) says the role of the father in the family is as follows:

1. As a priest

Every father/father naturally becomes the priest in the family. However, it is not found that a father was ordained in a special ceremony. Nevertheless, the fact is that a father must stand before God as a representative of his family. A father becoming a priest means representing all the believers in the family. He is the person who represents his family to come before God. He cares about the spiritual life of the whole family and always makes God a priority in family life. Especially in this era that has hit the world, namely covid-19, parents are required to be able to become priests to guide and lead worship in the family. Joseph Gule: 2020

2. As a Prophet

A father who acts as a priest must also act as a prophet, where he must be able to convey the message of God's Word to the whole family. A father must establish a close relationship with God and know what God's will is so that he can convey it properly, and this is done. Consistently and regularly

3. As a protector

Responsible for protecting the family from various threats, crimes, and injustice committed by others so that the whole family is comfortable and safe

4. As king

He is responsible for providing for the family because God created him to work. A king must struggle and work to meet the needs of everyday life.

Father as a priest means representing the family to come to God. This is the duty of a priest who cares about the spiritual life of his family. He must not take the spiritual life of the household lightly. Able to convey the content and message of God's word. Through PAK in the family, they need to be taught about God's word to be able to know and love God in Jesus Christ, and they need to be taught to pray, sing, and read God's word so that they are accustomed to living in true Spirituality so that it is according to God's will.

Parents must pay extra attention to their children's education, especially Christian education. Implementing religious education properly is the main task of parents, do not just get carried away with daily activities because parents are the main base in forging a child's spiritual life (Sidabutar & Banunaek: 2022). This is to prevent children who used to be adorable will turn into children who like to challenge themselves if the teaching needs to be done properly, disciplined, and continuously. Dave Earley (2016:14) writes about what the Bible says about the real priority of parents to teach children, namely, *"educate a young person according to the path that is*

proper for him, so that even when he is old, he will not deviate from that path". Parents must do this well and deliberately to produce God-fearing and wise children. This was also conveyed by Lasmaria Lumbantobing (2018) that parents must teach PAK to children continuously, using appropriate teaching methods, a comfortable atmosphere, and giving time and attention.

The goals and benefits of PAK through worship in the family:

Paul considered education and teaching in the family beneficial because what he saw and witnessed would be a life experience that he would do. Paulus gave an example of Timothy, where Timothy was the result of being taught by his grandmother and mother in the Harianto GP family (2017: 521): *"Because I remember your sincere and sincere faith, namely the faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and which I am sure lives also in you"* (2 Timothy 1:5) and other verses also tell *"also remember that from childhood you have known salvation through faith in Christ Jesus"* (2 Timothy 3:14)

Timothy is a living example of the fruit of religious education passed down from family; starting when he was small, he received active teaching from those close to him. The benefits of teaching given in the family are:

1. Teaching children to fear God, live according to the way He has determined, love Him, and worship God with all their heart and all their soul, especially so that children will hold on to the commandments (Deuteronomy 10:12-130)
2. Make a child a follower of Christ as long as he lives
3. Establish closeness between parents and children
4. Build close relationships both vertically and horizontally

D. CONCLUSION

Christian religious education in the family is fundamental/necessary because this religious education is the basis of other types of education. The role of the family greatly influences the growth and development of children so that it becomes the capital to shape their character and behavior in the future. Parents are the main ones responsible for spiritual education for their children. This responsibility cannot be transferred to anyone, be it a school teacher or a Sunday school teacher, because most of the time, children have it with their parents. In this case, parents must give their time to conduct learning through worship consistently and regularly. During this pandemic (Covid-19), we can see from the positive side that parents have far more time to work from home. Therefore, parents should give more free time to teach PAK to their children. Parents, as the person in charge of child-rearing, must be Christ-centered. Parents must be role models for their children so that all teaching can be more easily accepted and carried out. Psalm 127: 4, "like an arrow in the hand of a hero, so are children when they are young," meaning that parents are very influential in their children's progress. Guidance from an early age must be carried out properly and regularly, and this coaching can be done through teaching, conversations, stories, and worship at home.

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