



Education For Young Generations in The Church

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ABSTRACT

The younger generation is the future successor of leadership in God's church. For this reason, it is necessary to prepare by conducting education from an early age. The research method used is qualitative research with theological studies by utilizing the Bible and literature according to the subject matter, then analyzed and presented descriptively. Thus, a true and strong foundation will be laid for the spiritual growth of the younger generation, so that they become like Christ to do God's will in their time. The education of the younger generation includes the example of leaders, teaching God's Word, fellowship with brothers and sisters and also involvement in ministry in the church and community. So that the church can be a witness for Christ throughout the ages.

Keywords: Church, Education, Young Generation

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INTRODUCTION

During the current Covid 19 pandemic, according to a survey from the Bilangan Research Center, the level of spirituality of the younger generation has decreased significantly. This is caused by meetings that are usually held face-to-face, diverted through online media; so boredom arises (Handi Irawan D, dkk., 2018). It is a concern for God's church, because it is this young generation who will continue the ministry in the future. This needs to be addressed immediately by taking significant steps for the spiritual growth of the younger generation. For this reason, the author argues that children's education which starts at an early age will produce a strong generation to maintain the continuity of God's work through His church in this world.

In Proverbs 22:6 it is written "Educate a young person according to the path that is proper for him, so that when he is old, he will not deviate from that path." God calls parents to lead their children. He tells them that if they educate a child in the way he should follow, then in old age he will not deviate from it. And how does a parent become

a good leader for a child? In part by focusing on three keywords: First, Modeling: Abraham Lincoln said, "There is but one way to train a child in the way he should go, and that is to travel it yourself." A good example is worth a thousand lectures.

What you do has more impact on your child than all the lectures you can give; Second, Management: Good management is the ability to recognize a child's uniqueness and teach them accordingly. We have to train a child the way he should go. This may mean that we will have to adjust our style, depending on the temperament and wiring of the child; Third, Memories: Parents should create memories. Why? Because memories are more important than anything. Note that the verse says, "When he is old, he will not depart..." This implies that the child retains some of the memories of his early experiences and embraces them later in life (Maxwell, 2002). With education from an early age for the younger generation, it is hoped that the church will grow stronger to become a witness for Christ. 1 Samuel 2:18 "Samuel served as a servant before the LORD; he was still a child, his body wrapped in a linen ephod."

RESEARCH METHOD

The writing method used in this article is descriptive with a qualitative approach to the (library) document. The author uses the theoretical views of experts, and conducts theological studies to describe these various theories. And apply it in the life of the younger generation in the church today.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The notion of education can be seen from two perspectives, namely education in general and the notion of Christian education. In general, the term education comes from two Latin words, namely "educare" and "educere". The first word means, "to nourish, to be healthy and strong. The second means, "to guide out of..." based on this understanding, in general education is a planned, regular, and continuous action to raise the quality of the human being educated. From not knowing to knowing, and then being able to apply it in everyday life. Christian education is not only carried out in a Christian atmosphere, but is an effort to educate people, especially Christians, to be oriented towards a spiritual life that produces Christian character (Christlikeness). An act of educating by instilling Christian values as taught by the Bible (Stevanus & Sitepu, 2020).

The process of socializing Christian Religious Education among Jewish families in the Old Testament is reflected in the notion of 'didache'. Didache in the Old Testament, is the essence of Jewish education, which basically starts in the family. Didache itself can be interpreted as a way of teaching or a way of life, in this case it is meant not only as an action but the content of that teaching. In Deuteronomy 6: 4-6, known as (shema yisrael), a kind of creed that a Jewish father had to teach his household, and repeated by every Jew to remind them of the Lord God of Israel and His deeds the big one. In (didache) it is centered on Jesus and the work of Jesus. From the very beginning of the Gospels, Jesus is described as a teacher, who astonished the priests and scribes by His teachings (didache) (Panggabean, 2018).

Moses in Deuteronomy 6: 7 says "you must teach it over and over to your children and talk about it when you sit in your house, when you are on your way, when you lie down and when you get up."

The results of research conducted by Maria Lidya Wenas and I Putu Ayub Darmawan provide several important conclusions from Children's Education, namely: First, Bible verses talk about the importance of a child's education. In the Old Testament the books of Exodus, Deuteronomy, and the Psalms place emphasis on the education of children. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ put an important concern for children. Likewise in the letters of Paul, Ephesians

and Colossians, there is a concern for children and their education. Second, from a Biblical perspective, there are three important principles that can be obtained, namely (1) children's education is a process of inculcating faith; (2) children's education is a process of transferring knowledge; and (3) education is a process of inculcating Christian values (Tari & Tafonao, 2019). The Word of God also shows explicitly that the education that parents must give their children must basically be religious in nature (Panggabean, 2018).

Spiritual Basics

The younger generation needs a true and strong spiritual foundation in God. The Apostle Paul advises how he built with Christ as the foundation of the building, in 1 Corinthians 3:10 "According to the grace of God which was given to me, I, being a skilled builder, have laid the foundation, and another is building on it. But each person must pay attention to how he must build on it. For no one can lay any other foundation than that which has already been laid, which is Jesus Christ." Paul provides a construction (faith, hope and love) for application truth into life that can be used with confidence as a Biblical foundation for Christian Education at all ages (Panggabean, 2018).

Spiritual Growth

Stefanus and Sitepu explained that a healthy church also needs good human resources to run the ministry and also the growth of the church, even the authors argue that spiritual growth is also related to the growth of faith (Stefanus & Sitepu, 2020). In Ephesians 4:15 it says, "...in love we grow in all things to Him, Christ, the Head. According to Gunawan, "This process towards spiritual maturity takes place continuously throughout life (Philippians 3:12-14). Spiritual maturity requires a radical rearrangement of one's priorities, from pleasing oneself to pleasing God and learning to always obey God. The key to experiencing spiritual maturity is consistency and perseverance in doing things that will bring us closer to God." (Gunawan, 2017)

Fruitful

John the Baptist taught in Matthew 3:8, 10 "Bring fruit befitting repentance. The ax is at the root of the tree and every tree that does not produce good fruit must be cut down and thrown into the fire." The presence of the Holy Spirit makes every believer live in Him, which is then the Holy Spirit who guides believers to become true disciples of Christ, and can live to produce the fruits of the Holy Spirit which are the characteristics of a believer's life (Mulyono dkk., 2021). Life bears the fruit of the Holy Spirit. In the fruit one knows the tree, for the fruit is the natural flow of divinity through the created man. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the greatest and highest statement of man's character and culture as a believer. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is also the fulfillment of salvation which will reach glorious perfection (Mulyono dkk., 2021).

God's Will

The Sermon on the Mount that Jesus taught in Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone calls me: God, God! will enter the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven. A child gets an understanding of God's will from the teaching of his parents. In a Christian family, it is wrong to assume that the duties of parent's conflict with those of God (cf. Luke 14:26) (Tari & Tafonao, 2019). God's will for each of His people is to be "not conformed" to this world (Rom. 12:2). And in order not to be conformed to this world, it is necessary to experience a renewal of mind (Sumiwi, 2018). The renewal of the mind shows that the way of thinking or reasoning of followers

of Christ must be changed according to God's own standards or qualities. Let God change your heart or personality by giving you a completely new or completely different mind (Sumiwi, 2018).

Application/Deployment

W. Stanley Heath said that if we want to see steady church growth, then we must give priority to young children in our ministry. Many children who were evangelized as children would be willing to place their future in God's hands to become a pastor, evangelist, or lay elder (Lenga, 2003: 63). Because of that it is very important to provide teaching in the truth of God's word to children and youth intensively because apart from so that they experience spiritual growth, also because they are future church leaders and as the next generation of building the body of Christ on this earth (Latif, 2018).

Educational methods that can be used in educating the younger generation include the following:

1. Exemplary (1 Tim. 4:12)

According to Sofia Retnowati and Wahyu Widhiarso, family life is where children first learn to learn emotions, in the form of how to recognize emotions, feel emotions, respond to situations that cause emotions and express emotions. Through the family formation container, individuals learn to express their emotions. Individuals take actions like what their parents demonstrated when raising them by expressing their emotions verbally and non-verbally (Tari & Tafonao, 2019).

2. Discipleship/Teaching of God's Word (Acts. 2:42)

Discipleship is a process that can make Christians experience spiritual maturity. There are many people who write and talk about discipleship and one of them is Edmund Chan. According to Edmund Chan, "Discipleship is a process of bringing people into a restored relationship with God and nurturing them towards full maturity in Christ through an intentional plan of growth, so that they are also able to multiply this whole process to others" (Chan, 2014). From the definition above it can be seen that one of the results of the discipleship process is the maturity of Christians in Christ (Gunawan, 2017). Rev. Obaja Tanto also said that discipleship in cell groups is the lifeblood of the twelve principles. Discipleship done in cell groups will be effective if it is done in the same way as the Lord Jesus Himself did when discipling His twelve disciples (2000, 103) (Latif, 2018).

3. Fellowship with fellow believers (Heb. 10:25)

Persevere in teaching and fellowship was the custom of the early church beginning that made them experience growth in quality and quantity (Acts 2:42) (Latif, 2018). Every believer must prepare himself spiritually so that he can fellowship with God. New Testament Christians come to God with a pure and clean conscience. Fellowship with God requires holiness (1 John 1:5-2:2) (Djadi, 2013).

4. Church and Community Service (1 Pet. 4:10, Mat. 20:26)

The church needs to focus on pastoral care that emphasizes deep personal relationships (Teng & Margaret, 2020). Yakob Tomatala says that spiritual or (Christian) entrepreneurs are people who have a unique relationship with God that underlies their strength and integrity in conducting business. Spiritual entrepreneurs (Christians) are distributors of God's blessings to other people around them (Tomatala, 2010) (Pasande & Tari, 2019).

Character is expected to be formed from an upbringing from an early age, in harmony with the fruit of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Galatians 5: 22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, mastery self." Christian character is a character that is formed on the basis of full surrender of life to the Lord Jesus Christ (Telaumbanua, 2018). Our personal strengths greatly determine our life in Christ. S.

H. Widyapranawa said, "If Christians want to become 'Christ-like,' it can only be done through radical changes and new life. That is, character can build a person perfectly, which is the same as the life of Christ. In addition, it also reflects the character of Christ in personal life. In Philippians 3:17, says "Brothers, follow my example and pay attention to those who live like us who are your example". In other words, the main character is proof of our maturity to live this life. And that is the importance of character in human life. So, the character states the real you and the real me (who you and I really are) (Telaumbanua, 2018).

Thomas Lickona said "our character determines how we act when we are not seen by others. Or as the old saying goes, "character is what you do when no one is watching". That is, the character is the value of human life that is hidden within him but can be expressed through good and right actions (Telaumbanua, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The church needs to focus on ministry development and outreach to the younger generation. In addition, the church also needs to open wider doors for the younger generation to be in the position of conceptor, decision maker, or part of the leadership team, and not just "actors" or "assistants" of adults. The involvement of the younger generation and family-based discipleship can actually be carried out together through an intergenerational service model. Intergenerational ministry occurs when a church intentionally brings and facilitates different generations to be involved in the process of mutual worship, community, and serving together as part of one unified body of Christ. Intergenerational services provide space for empowering the younger generation as well as equipping parents to become faith builders and spiritual role models.

The above can be achieved by conducting education from an early age for the young generation of the church. Family participation is the main factor and the church as a supporting factor. It is hoped that with spirituality/spirituality that is rooted and grows and bears fruit in the lives of the younger generation, the future of the church will shine even more. The church is able to be light and salt in the midst of the environment and society, even for the nation and state. So that God's name is glorified and the harvest of souls takes place in this last age.

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