

# The Role of Sunday School in Educating Children to be Obedient and Faithful

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## Abstract

This study aims to describe the role of Sunday school teachers and parents in educating children to be obedient and respectful. The research was a kind of literature study, of which the data was purely secondary data that obtained from the library. Since the study belongs to qualitative study, thereof, the researcher was the key informant. Regarding the research problem, the purpose of the study was to find out the answer whether or not there is a certain specific hints for teachers and parents in educating children being obedient and faithful based on Gods willingness. The result of the study shows that Sunday school teachers and parents should actively engage children in every activities which were opening and closing by prayers, and nurturing them how to please God in their life. The vice versa, the teachers and parents should firstly shaping themselves as main role-models to figure out God's goodness as they can imitate them to live the life.

**Keywords:** *children are worth and gifts from God, obey and respect parents, educating and teaching children*

## Introduction

Christian Religious Education is a service on the part of Christian parents who specifically involve children in a natural way living in family experience without requiring them to do things in a force condition. The purpose of Christian religious education (PAK) is to provide a learning experience that helps parents consider a number of ways to take care of the household and its effects specifically for the growth of children, which involve parents in studying the sources of Christian faith. Children as a gift that comes from God entrusted to parents to be born, nurtured, and raised, and because of that children do not belong to their parents but belong to God.

Parents are the closest characters to children in their daily lives and parents can help children to know who they are in relationships with people. Parents become the main object that educates children to know God and can do everything that is commanded by God and also directs children to enter into fellowship that lives with, by, and in Him so that they are sucked into a fellowship that recognizes and glorifies His name in all times and places .

In Ephesians 6: 1-4, Paul advises children to respect and obey people. Parents must also be able to fulfill their obligations and must also be able to provide education, teachings, and advice that comes from God and maintain attitudes, actions, and words towards children with the aim that children do not become a rebel against both parents and God through his anger but let the children live in the teachings and counsel of God and children should not be sacrificed to the ideals desired by their parents such as to a picture of fellowship or environment, to a family tradition or demands for progress both in the field of work and in the social field . Because there isn't any power in this world that has the right to their children. For this reason, the writer takes the theme of Ephesian-Based PAK 6:

Bearing about obedient and respectful in Christian Religious Education, education is a command from the Lord Jesus Christ in accordance with the Great Commission in Matthew 28: 19-20. Christian Religious Education introduces Christian faith to children so that they live according to the teachings of God's advice. According to Kristianto (2006: 4), "Christian Religious Education is a process of teaching and learning based on the Bible, centered on Christ, and dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit, which guides every person at all levels of growth, through teaching today towards the introduction and experience of plans and the will of God

through Christ in every aspect of life, and equipping them for effective service, centered on Christ the Great Teacher and the commandments that mature the disciples. "

Furthermore, Bushnell, quoted by Boehlke (1997: 470), said that: "Christian Religious Education is a service on the part of Christian parents who specifically involve young people in a natural way in family experience without requiring young people to experience repentance first great at a certain age. Bushnell also believes that the purpose of PAK is to provide learning experiences that help parents consider a number of ways to take care of the household and its specific effects on child growth, which involves parents in studying the sources of Christian faith, which encourages them to choose actions that are more in line with the faith they expressly express. verbally, so that parents are better able to convey Christian faith to their children. "In line with that, Christian Religious Education also aims to educate children to know God and be able to do everything commanded by God to enter into fellowship that lives with, by, and in He is thus absorbed in the fellowship which recognizes and glorifies His name in all times and places.

In Ephesians 6: 1-4, we learn that children must respect and obey parents as God's representatives who can see in this world. Parents must also be able to fulfill their obligations as representatives of God in this world and must also be able to provide education, teachings, and advice that is sourced from God and maintains attitudes, actions, and words towards children with the aim that children do not become rebels against parents or God through their anger but let the children live in the teachings and counsel of God. In this case parents as objects of Christian Religious Education must spend more time in the family, because parents are the main mediators who can meet the needs of children and as a convenient place for children to receive Christian Religious Education from parents.

For this reason, this paper discusses Ephesians 6: 1-4-based Christian Religious Education with the theme of Education.

Parents are the father and mother of a child, both through biological and social relationships. Parents hold the main responsibility in the family. The family referred to here is a family consisting of parents (fathers), children, and servants (Matthew 10: 25,35; Romans 14: 4).

Likewise, Parents are a component of the family that is the result of a legal marriage relationship both in adat and in religion that can form a family. Parents have a responsibility to educate and care for their children to reach certain stages that deliver children to be ready in social life. In this case, the father and mother play an active role in the spiritual development of children and must be more serious in focusing and concentrating on teaching because the education given will affect the future character formation of the children and family of the Christian. As for the forms of the role of parents in the family, namely establishing family fellowship, serving life and educating children in Christian upbringing with biblical advice and reprimand. Families here are responsible for teaching Christian religious education to their families, and parents must also be able to lead their families into good Christian families and set an example in their lives and lives. In addition, the family is also responsible for setting an example for children, educating them in God's love and teachings (Ephesians 6: 4), and accepting all the conditions of children.

## **Discussion**

Parents must educate children, that is educating with the Word of God. Because the word of God is useful for teaching, stating mistakes, correcting behavior and educating in truth. Parents must educate children with the correct teaching in accordance with The Word and purpose of God, besides that parents must be an example for children in getting used to reading, pondering, and doing God's Word in real life. Parents are responsible for setting an example to children, educating children in the love and teachings of God, and accepting all circumstances of children.

As for how parents to create conditions that can support the implementation of success in educating their children, namely:

1. Create an atmosphere of love and awareness of God's presence. That is, parents must be able to increase awareness about Christ's leadership in their family

2. Build strong family ties. That is, parents must be able to build healthy relationships and always show respect for one another even when there are disagreements within the family
3. Making the home a center of knowledge. That is, parents must work together to help each person (children) in fulfilling their potential
4. Build family alliance by involving everyone in planning and achieving family goals. That is, parents must be able to build mutual support and show trust and loyalty in the family
5. Become a center of witness for the world. That is, parents must be able to maintain an open witness to their friends and new people through their words and examples of life

### **Definition of Children**

Children are a gift that is entrusted by God to parents, therefore, children have an obligation to parents to obey and respect because this is a command from God that must be done. The term children in Greek is Teknon which refers to children who are adults, as a means of a hope where children must respect parents, especially fathers and maintain family authority even to death.

Further more, in Genesis 5: 3, "children are the image and likeness of a parent." This means that children are descendants who will replace parents and are parents' expectations in the future. Children have a noble life, so children must be treated humanely as given a living both physically and mentally. Children are still very dependent and still imitate what others do and say. So people around the child such as parents must pay attention to the child's needs and development.

For this reason, in Ephesians 6: 1-3, Paul gives advice and teaches to children that children are given orders to obey and respect parents, namely their father and mother. Respecting both parents is a must for children because parents act as God's representatives for their children in terms of loving, caring, and also caring. That is why the word of God commands that children have respect and obedience to their parents like the people of hotmat and obey God.

Obeying parents is a natural reasonableness. The command that children are obliged to obey their parents is a special statement from God, it becomes a natural law that is written by God for all humans. Respect given to parents is an order and is one of the points of the law.

Respecting parents means respecting them when they are alive. The attitude of respect for children to parents, is not determined by a requirement whether the parents are good or not, but it is a necessity because it has been ordered by God. The result of obedience and respect for parents is God's promise of happiness and long life. Happiness and longevity are the result of obedience not as a goal. Be happy and long life is a blessing from God if children sincerely love their parents.

Respecting fathers and mothers can be by showing respect in words and deeds. Children must continue to respect the position of parents. Honoring that parent is the only command in the Bible that promises longevity as a gift. The word respect is a verb, and that means it requires right action. Children must try to respect their parents, just as they glorify God in thoughts, words and deeds. The responsibility of children in the family is first and foremost to obey and respect their parents.

Educate Children to be obedient and respectful (Ephesians 6: 1-4)

In Greek the word educate is *ektrepo*, meaning nourish, where this word explains that educating is the same as maintaining or feeding. Parents must educate children with the correct teachings in accordance with the word and purpose of God. In addition, parents should be an example for children in getting used to reading, meditating, and doing God's word clearly in everyday life. The way parents educate children is with teachings and advice, which is explained as follows:

- **Doctrine**

The teaching in Greek comes from the word *paideia*, which means to explain about a transformative education that changes and shapes morals for good. Teaching not only provides information and theories about morality, but also requires a child to do so. Wise parents can be identified through their lifestyle. Where they not only speak but also manifest their words in real life.

- Advice

In Greek the advice is translated as *nouthesia* which means admonition. This word describes the sect as a warning, a good rebuke coming from God. God's advice means advice sourced from the Bible. Which advises with the right time, place and way. Like the word of God which states that: "Who gives a lot of blessings is given abundance, he who gives a drink will be given a drink (Proverbs 11:25)".

In Ephesians 6: 1-4, Paul gives advice to the family life of the churches in Ephesus in the sense that what is preached to worshipers in worship (on Sundays), must be practiced in his family but also Paul advises to apply both in worship and in family and society. In addition, in this article there is also advice given to wives and children where he demands obedience (*Hupakoe*). The fathers here must try to give the children an education that is sourced in God that is inspired and driven by Him which is oriented to and in accordance with His will. If Christ becomes the center of education surely children will not be angry and rebellious, but instead will obey and respect their parents. Children should not be sacrificed to the ideals of parents, but parents must be able to make children live under the teachings and advice of God.

In Ephesians 6: 1-4, there are some important things that children need to pay attention to, namely as follows:

Paragraph 1: Obedience (Obedience)

In Greek obedience comes from the word *ὕπακούετε* (*upakouete*, bhs.English: to obey) which means obedient. Obedience is an attitude of submission to authority, carry out what is ordered, obey what is demanded, or distance yourself from what is prohibited. The definition of obedience can be interpreted into three things, namely:

1. Obedience is true (Ephesians 5:21)
2. Obedience is a command (Ephesians 6: 2)
3. Obedience is a blessing (Ephesians 6: 2-3)

Obedience is also a Jewish tradition, where if the Jews respect their parents, the Jews also respect God, but if they do not respect their parents, the Jews also do not respect God.

In the Bible the word obey means always listening and doing what God commands. Paul advised the children that as children the members of the church are also saints and not polluted children, meaning that Paul requires children to live as saints and obey their parents in the Lord (*En Kurioi*). Such obedience according to Paul is a must, better, something that is true, that is just (*Dikaion*) means something that is true and just for God, where in Christ, this God expresses his love for his parents and in him, he give him a place of honor for parents.

In line with that, obedience is a quality of character that determines one's future. True obedience must be born from an understanding of the truth of God's word especially about the principle of the relationship between obedience and authority. Paragraph 2: Honor (Respect), in Greek respect comes from the word *τιμή* (*tima*, bhs, English: to honor) which means respect. Respect is an act that indicates a sense of submission that must be done. Respect is more than obedience and contains aspects of fear, not fear of slaves or slaves but fear born of fear of God and this fear is rightfully earned by parents.

Father and mother are the first to have the right to love children because the relationship between parents and children is very high. Because according to the testimony of the scriptures parents are not only people who have given birth to children, but they are God's representatives and instruments. His. This means that without parents, children cannot exist because parental marriage is the origin of children's lives, so in the status of parents who have similarities with God as creator in worldly terms. Therefore children must see their father and mother as parents in the light. That is why Allah says; "Honor your father and your mother!" It means respecting more than loving those who deserve respect from their children because God is pleased to create children through the mediation of parents. The way to respect parents is to obey the commands of parents, respect parents and occasionally do not make them distress or hurt. Paragraph 2: Command., in Greek the command comes from the word *ἐντολή* (*entole*, in English: a commandment) which means command. The word command is a word that means asking someone to do something. This command is the same as the command from wives to husbands and also from children to parents. Paul here demands that besides obedience (*Time*) is also very important in the commandment, because respect is more than obedience. It contains aspects of fear born of fear of God and therefore children must see father and mother as parents in the light and as representatives of God's creative power in this world.

### Verse 3: Promise (Happy and long life)

In Greek *eu* comes from the word εὖ (eu, bhs.English: Well) which means, good, happy, rich. Being happy in the Big Indonesian Dictionary means a state or feeling of being happy and at ease (free from all that is troublesome). Happiness is defined as a life that always succeeds and becomes prosperous. Being happy refers to the patience of the teachings and blessings that come from God and they will acknowledge that life from grace (grace) is received from the results of honoring parents who are from God.

In Greek long life comes from the word μακροχρόνιος (macrochronios, bhs.English: long-lived) which means long life. Long life in KBBI means old age, long life. The promise Paul gives to the children of the church members in Ephesus is the promise contained in the fifth law: "that you may continue to live in the land that the Lord your God will give you (Exodus 20:12). Member- the members of the church at Ephesus were people of pagan nations. Accordingly, what Paul means by this *Epi Test Ges* (on Earth) is not the land of Canaan, but the earth or the world where it rests.

Likewise, Paul reminds children that parents are a gift of God which contains a promise that parents have outlived their children. Not only have parents experienced the patience and virtue that comes from God, but also the warnings and knowledge about the limits of their abilities which up to now are owned or experienced by their children. But now children also have long lives under God's patience, teachings and blessings. They cannot create for themselves a long, useful and joyful life. Life must be given or given to children. Out of respect for parents, children acknowledge that children live from the gift (grace) received, even though children cannot choose their own parents. Children receive a life of patience, leadership, food, before children ask for something from parents. This means that parents have provided everything for their children from God. That's why parents are a great gift from God and are a blessing for children who come from God.

So the result of obedience and respect for parents is God's promise of happiness and a long life that will always follow throughout the lives of obedient and respectful children.

### Verse 4: Fathers, anger, educate

Paul here considers fathers as heads of households in the family who bear and represent the authority of parents. And here Paul also advises parents especially fathers not to arouse the anger of their children. Because anger can lead us to sin and to the power of Satan (4:26) and with anger people can fall into slander which can separate them from fellowship with God, especially for children, that is very dangerous. The Father who warms the hearts of his children so that the child becomes angry and consciously or unconsciously leads the child to rebellion against everything that has to do with the father and thus also to the rebellion against God as Father. For this reason, Paul advises parents, especially fathers, that they avoid all of these things. Paul also advised them positively so that parents educate their children in the teachings and counsel of God. The command not to arouse the anger of children is an order that is absolutely directed to fathers because fathers are more easily carried away by anger than mothers who have the gift of patience.

Educating comes from the Greek word *ektrephein* which means to educate, to enlarge, which is the same meaning as *en kurioi* meaning to educate. Fathers must try to give their children an education that is rooted in God, which is inspired and moved by him, which is oriented to and in accordance with his will. If Christ becomes the center of education (parents) surely children will not be angry and rebellious, but instead will obey and respect parents. The way parents educate children to be obedient and respectful in the Bible is to be an example for each of their children both in deeds, thoughts and words and parents also have to fight hard to educate children from the age of children to adolescents / adults and parents must teach and educate their children with no fatigue and educate children in the truth in a variety of creative ways in every opportunity both formally and informally, both inside the house or outside the home.

For this reason, educating children to be obedient is indeed God's commandment, and parents here need to open dialogue with children without imposing their parents' wishes blindly, meaning that parents must give their children freedom to express opinions without pressure from any party. so that children can convey the wishes of children to their parents and parents can know the desires of children without restraining them but supervise or control them in achieving the wishes of children.

## Conclusions

Parents are responsible for their children in terms of educating and teaching children in God. Parents Being a role model in the midst of the family both in words, thoughts and deeds. Children are a gift of God that is entrusted to parents to obey and respect parents. The impact on children from obedience and respect for parents is God's promise of happiness and long life.

The result of the study shows that Sunday school teachers and parents should actively engage children in every activities which were opening and closing by prayers, and nurturing them how to please God in their life. The vice versa, the teachers and parents should firstly shaping themselves as main role-models to figure out God's goodness as they can imitate them to live the life.

It is better for parents not to arouse anger in the hearts of their children, but parents educate their children in the teachings and counsel of God so that children become a blessing to everyone and become more familiar and fearful of God and who want to listen to parents. For another side, it is better for children to obey and respect parents as they obey and respect God by not manipulating or faking such obedient and respectful behavior, but with a pure motive for God's glory because children who obey and respect God and parents will get blessings that come from God such as long life, a bright future, and so on.

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