

Joni Manumpak Parulian
Gultom

*Department of Theology,
Real Theological Seminary*

 0000-0001-6195-5781

Otieli Harefa

*Department of Theology,
Real Theological Seminary*

 0000-0002-3034-4264

Vicky BGD Paat

*Department of Theology,
Real Theological Seminary*

 0000-0001-7782-4655

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Christian Parents' Strategies for Passing on Spiritual Life to Generation Alpha: Theological Study of Psalm 78: 3-11

This study aims to explain the strategy of parents in passing on a spiritual life to the Alpha generation according to Psalm 78: 5-11. The Alpha generation has experienced spiritual decline due to technological developments, cultural changes, the impact of globalization, and shifts in social values since childhood. The argument is that although the full responsibility for a person's spiritual life lies with each individual, the Church is also responsible for passing on spiritual life in synergy with parents and families to the Alpha Generation. The study used a qualitative approach with a literature study method. The conclusion is that parents base their spiritual heritage on the Bible, family-based discipleship in homes, sharing parents' spiritual life experiences with their children, and wise use of media technology as a teaching tool.

Key words: parents, generation alpha, spiritual heritage, faith, discipleship.

Introduction

The Old Testament mentions the God of worship as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exo 3: 6; 15-16; 4: 5; 1 Kings 18: 38; 1 Chro 29: 18; Deu 9: 5), referring to one lineage with three generations. This

mention is very special because it indicates that God's promise that Abraham believes in is passed on to his son Isaac, his grandson Jacob, and finally to the whole nation of Israel. Paul also explicitly mentions faith in his spiritual son Timothy, whose faith comes from the teaching of his mother Eunike and grandmother Lois (2 Tim 1: 5). Acts 2: 46-47 states that the early Church's life was a whole of unity, joy, and rapid spiritual growth, sharing the Word and praying regularly in spiritual meetings in the community. In this community, parents and children live in peace, sharing fellowship and worshipping God together. Personal and family spiritual growth occurred rapidly, and they became living witnesses that drew many people to be saved (Acts 2: 46). The hypothesis states that parents are responsible for accompanying their children to continue to grow in faith and have a leading role in passing on their spiritual life on an ongoing basis to the next generation.

Generation Alpha is facing spiritual issues. They are due to technological developments, cultural changes, the impact of globalization, and shifts in social values since childhood. The main problem is the influence of social media, digital games, and instant Internet access that is not controlled. Cassandra, a group specializing in young consumer studies, reports that 58% of Gen Alpha, ages 7 to 12, identify themselves as "gamers." The Institute for Family Studies and the Wheatley Institute survey also revealed that children aged 11-18 spend an average of 10 hours a day using digital media to play games, social media, video chat, and send text messages, and that does not include watching television¹. This condition makes them focus on things that are instant and superficial. The convenience of cyberspace has sucked up their time and attention, resulting in a decrease in interest in engaging in spiritual activities that require a considerable amount of time for reflection and tranquillity.

The following fact is that Gen Alpha has an attitude of doubt and excessive criticism of religion. This generation is very comfortable with digital communication and expects seamless integration of technology in all aspects of their lives, including religious practices². This generation can be challenging if the spiritual teaching is not supported by the correct logic of theological study and the relevant pastoral approach. In addition, the lack of personal self-reflection and a fast-paced

¹ K. Valatton, *Unlocking the Destiny of Gen Z and Gen Alpha*, Www.Krisvallotton.Com, last modified 2023, (date of access: 21.05.2024), <https://www.krisvallotton.com/unlocking-the-destiny-of-gen-z-and-gen-alpha>.

² R. Hoskins, *What You Should Know About Gen Alpha*, Goodnewsfl.Org, last modified 2023, (date of access: 29.09.2023), <https://www.goodnewsfl.org/what-you-should-know-about-gen-alpha/>.

lifestyle make Generation Alpha rarely take the opportunity to reflect or explore spiritual values. Spiritual activities that require contemplation and silence will be difficult to do. Lastly, the Alpha generation is susceptible to the influence of moral relativism caused by the influence of parents who do not direct their spirituality. The survey results show that only 49% of the Millennial Generation (The Gen Alpha's parent) are affiliated with Christianity, while 40% are not at all³. They allow children to develop themselves and create without strict supervision with spiritual values⁴. Even Frady coined a term called "Baby Genius Edutainment Complex", which refers to the actions of modern parents to force their children always to learn every minute to have specific intelligence and skills⁵.

The research by Casson, Woolley, Pittaway et al. shows that children's spiritual qualities are relational, based on current circumstances, and influenced by the environment. Indicators to measure come from the exploration of church toddler groups, the lens of ownership, behaviour, and trust levels⁶. Frady offers the concept of "Godly Play" with a fundamental theory that provides the idea of theological rendering to children who are 2 years old. The goal is to build an environment that offers language choices and play interactions to capture theological understanding from a child's point of view⁷. Zarzycki sees the Church as expressing the quality of the Scripture as the truth of the Gospel and the history of salvation, culminating in faith in Jesus Christ as it builds the spirituality of humanity. This research offers a different approach by referring to the strategies of parents who are fully responsible in passing on spiritual life to their children who are the Alpha generation in the era of technological advancement and social media.

³ C.W. Brant, *Navigating the Faith Generation Gap*, www.Cindywangbrandt.Com, last modified 2019, (date of access: 3.05.2024), <https://cindywangbrandt.com/navigating-the-faith-generation-gap/>.

⁴ S. Cottrell, *A Year-by-Year Guide to the Different Generations*, www.Parents.Com, last modified 2024, (date of access: 3.05.2024), <https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/style/generation-names-and-years-a-cheat-sheet-for-parents/>.

⁵ H.H. Stewart, *Helicopter Parenting May Lead to "Hothouse Children"*, Www.Familyeducation.Com, last modified 2023, (date of access: 3.05.2024), <https://www.familyeducation.com/toddlers/behavior-discipline/helicopter-parenting-may-lead-to-hothouse-children>.

⁶ A. Casson et al., *Paying Attention to the Spiritual Flourishing of Young Children in Church Toddler Groups: A Scoping Study Evaluating the Feasibility of a Research Study in This Context*, "Religions" 14, no. 2 (2023), pp. 1-13.

⁷ K. Frady, *Rendering Theology with 2-Year-Old Children: A Godly Play and Grounded Theory Combination*, "International Journal of Children's Spirituality" 24 (2019), pp. 183-201, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:181567193>.

The purpose of this study is to explain the strategies parents use to pass on a spiritual life to their Alpha Generation children based on Psalm 78: 5-11. Parents become the main subjects essential in passing on a spiritual life to their children. The offered reconstruction is the first, parents base all forms of teaching on the Word of God as the best source of spiritual heritage. Secondly, special meetings are necessary for discipleship in homes. Thirdly, the best testimony of spiritual heritage for children is not material possessions and all forms of success but the historical value of the journey of the growth of the parents' Christian life that must be told and shared.

Method

The research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. Qualitative research explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems, using its ability to explain processes and patterns of human behaviour that are difficult to measure⁸. The first discussion is about the Alpha generation with all the characteristics it has, especially the understanding of spirituality and the possessed spiritual qualities. Then, it was continued by describing and explaining the strategies of parents to pass on spiritual heritage to the Alpha generation, which was carried out through steps to make God's Word the primary source of spiritual inheritance, conducting family-based discipleship in the home in daily life, setting an example through living testimony and spiritual journey with Christ. After that, the author offers other practical steps for parents to use media technology wisely, resulting in conclusions.

Findings and results

The Alpha generation was born in 2010. Their growth demographics are expected to reach 2.2 billion people by 2025. This generation has not had a close relationship with the Church since childhood. The world recognizes this generation as trendsetters in life because of their rapid progress⁹. The characteristics of this generation are very

⁸ S. Tenny, J. M. Brannan, G.D. Brannan, *Qualitative Study*, StatPearls Publishing, Treasure Island (FL), 2023, <http://europepmc.org/books/NBK470395>.

⁹ S. Uhrig, *Generation Alpha: Diapers, Training Wheels, and Artificial Intelligence*, in: *Real. Deal. Heal. Gen Z and Social Issues*, Lincoln, NE: Advent Source, 2021, pp. 87-90, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cye-pubs/12/?fr=operanews%0Ahttps://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=cye-pubs>.

different from those of their parents, who are millennials. The difference can be seen in social life patterns, thinking patterns, emotional and motor development, and social behaviour patterns¹⁰. This generation tends to be innovative and masters technology and media. Still, it is severely lacking in spiritual knowledge and life skills. In addition, this generation lacks practical skills and the ability to make the best decisions. Parents teach social, economic, and innovative skills that children love in addition to the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics¹¹. This generation grows up with a high level of technological literacy and innovation and has been a part of their lives since childhood.

Here are some things to note about this generation. At first, the Alpha generation is experiencing an identity crisis and weakening of spiritual qualities. This generation is exposed to unlimited global cultural ideas through the Internet, so they tend to experience confusion in finding spiritual identity and the actual value of life. This generation also questions the true meaning of life, purpose, and the value of eternity. They are called “screamagers”; a term that describes grumpy behaviour and develops into stereotypes¹². Secondly, this generation is prone to anxiety and depression. This generation has high social expectations with pressure and competition from social media. The phenomenon is called “Hothouse children”, meaning that the Alpha gen is forced to excel academically faster than the cognitive and intellectual standards corresponding to the usual child development standards. Stress also occurs due to the competitive nature of parenting¹³. Thirdly, this generation has difficulty connecting with the spiritual community. This generation is physically isolated. They tend to rarely gather in person in certain groups, thus having the effect of missing out on the opportunity to feel the support and closeness of the Church community

¹⁰ M. Vlasuk, *Generation Alpha: Online, Dependent, and Depressed*, in: *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, vol. 6, Elsevier Ltd, 2022, p. 363, DOI: 10.1016/S2352-4642(22)00130-4.

¹¹ G. Perry, *Generation Alpha: Understanding Our Children and Helping Them Thrive*, “TEACH Journal of Christian Education”, vol. 16, 2022.

¹² M. Drugaș, *Screenagers or “Screamagers”? Current Perspectives on Generation Alpha*, “Psychological Thought” 15, no. 1 (2021), pp. 1-11, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Marius-Drugas/publication/360313636_SCREENAGERS_OR_SCREENAGERS_CURRENT_PERSPECTIVES_ON_GENERATION_ALPHA/links/6310773eacd814437ff2c80d/SCREENAGERS-OR-SCREENAGERS-CURRENT-PERSPECTIVES-ON-GENERATION-ALPHA.pdf?_sg%5B0%5D=.

¹³ HH. Stewart, *Helicopter Parenting May Lead to “Hothouse Children”*.

or other spiritual groups. Most likely, it was the parents who restricted them from moving. Otto stated that Gen Alpha's relationship with the religious, spiritual community is more sporadic and virtual because the majority of Gen Alpha parents do not facilitate activities to build relationships with the Church from childhood¹⁴.

Another unique designation for the Alpha generation is the Glass generation. It is a generation similar to mobile phone and laptop screenshots from the beginning. It is significant that this generation is experiencing the development of early adolescence influenced by consumerism, physical sophistication, social psychology, and advanced education. However, the reality in the field is that the level of maturity quality is more backward than it should be¹⁵. If this Alpha generation is not optimally prepared to adapt to the current situation, this generation is vulnerable to isolation and has problems with mental health. More excellent physical encounters will be necessary for this generation to adapt¹⁶. Generation Alpha also has problems with developmental psychology. Firstly, attention span and concentration are disrupted due to a lifestyle that simultaneously looks at many Internet screens. Secondly, this generation is more active on social networks, so they interact less in the real world with face-to-face communication patterns. Thirdly, the development of the imagination and creativity of the Alpha generation is highly dependent on technology, never coming from their efforts. Eventually, this generation is prone to depression, anxiety, and loneliness¹⁷.

Definition, theological foundations and forms of spiritual life

Spiritual life refers to the inheritance of religious beliefs and practices from generation to generation within a family, community, or religious group. These spiritual values include teachings, traditions, and values rooted in the Scripture and the life experiences of believers.

¹⁴ A. Otto, *He Spirituality of Generation Alpha: A Look Ahead*, Wwww.Godinallthings.Com, last modified 2023, (date of access: 2.05.2024), <https://godinallthings.com/2023/10/31/the-spirituality-of-generation-alpha-a-look-ahead/>.

¹⁵ Mc Crindle, *Understanding Generation Alpha*, Generationalpha.com, 2022, p. 7.

¹⁶ P.T. Diane Warns, *Generation Alpha and Mental Health*, Therapist.Com, last modified 2023, <https://therapist.com/generations/generation-alpha/>.

¹⁷ Team Iberdrola, *Generation Alpha Will Lead a 100% Digital World*, www.Berdrola.Com, last modified 2023, (date of access: 20.07.2023), <https://www.iberdrola.com/talent/alpha-generation#:~:text=PROBLEMS OF GENERATION ALPHA&text=Some neuroscientists and psychologists point,Reduced attention span and concentration.>

This spiritual life is seen as an essential component of one's spiritual identity and journey, influencing personal faith and shared worship^{18,19}. The meaning of Psalm 78: 4 states that believers have a responsibility to pass on spiritual truth – not to keep the story of God's goodness private or forgotten. Another verse in Deuteronomy 4: 9 emphasizes the act of being aware of the Israelites' negligence in the lost memory of God's inclusion in the nation's journey to the Promised Land. Every event must always be remembered and taught to generations. Deuteronomy 11: 8-20 also emphasizes obedience that brings blessings and disobedience that brings curses. The Israelites were instructed to keep God's promises (v. 8a) by committing to worship with all their hearts (v. 13). In verse 19, it is clearly said that the command for parents is to teach their children and talk about it in four conditions of daily life: at home, on the way, when resting, and when waking up from sleep.

Barna released the results of a 2019 survey, which stated that children inherited faith from their mothers (68%), fathers (46%) and grandparents (37%)²⁰. Parents and the home are the best subjects and places in the quest to pass on this legacy of faith. Parents make the home the most suitable place for everyday activities and a place to gather and discuss the current spirituality-related issues. These discussions can be done either in the dining room, in the living room, or even in the bedroom. Ziatdinov and Cilliers identified Gen Alpha, who are influenced by social media, social connections, high levels of perception, and the ability to interpret information as strengths to consider in the learning approach²¹. Parents seek to direct Generation Alpha in their innocence to be good discussion partners and form a gradual and continuous mindset based on the Bible.

The second form is the inheritance of faith experience in the process of life journey. The quality of parents' faith has certainly experienced

¹⁸ J.M.P. Gultom et al., *Strategi Musik Dan Kerygma Influencer Kristen Berdasarkan Kepemimpinan Daud Dalam Membangun Motivasi Diri Native Digital [Christian Influencer Music and Kerygma Strategy Based on David's Leadership in Building Native Digital Self-Motivation]*, "Epigraphe" 5, no. 2 (2021), pp. 161-175.

¹⁹ Team Biblehub, *Spiritual Heritage*, Biblehub.Com, https://biblehub.com/topical/s/spiritual_heritage.htm.

²⁰ Team Barna, *How Faith Heritage Relates to Faith Practice*, Barna.Com, last modified 2019, (date of access: 12.01.2025), <https://www.barna.com/research/faith-heritage-faith-practice/>.

²¹ R. Ziatdinov, J. Cilliers, *Generation Alpha: Understanding the Next Cohort of University Students*, "European Journal of Contemporary Education" 10, no. 3 (2021), pp. 783-789, <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2202.01422>.

long ups and downs of formation and is full of challenges. This kind of experience needs to be retold and explained to their children as a valuable life reference and spiritual value. The goal is for this spiritual experience to be used in the practice of children's spiritual growth in the future. With all the achieved results, developing parents' faith can provide an overview so children can easily understand the spiritual life. There are three reasons for this action. Firstly, it is a form of parental humility in giving the best response. Parents are often portrayed as senior personalities and feared in certain tribes or ethnicities. The result is the emergence of a large gap between parents and children. The transfer of spiritual experience is also hampered. Secondly, the life experience between parents and children is very different. However, the basic concepts and spiritual built values, such as patience, commitment, loyalty, and so on, are lessons that can be emulated. Thirdly, it is a form of responsibility. Parents' call is to prepare their children to be resilient and ready to face the next life in the future both mentally, outwardly and spiritually. Therefore, any experience, including the experience of the spiritual journey, becomes the essential material for the principal capital of their children's lives. The mental quality of children also needs serious attention.

Family-based religious discipleship

The Alpha Generation must be helped to recognize the true meaning of life. A necessary action that parents always do is to set an example. By building a family altar, parents reflect on everyday deeds that show life's meaning and faith's value, which is far more effective than a million spiritual words. Parents hold family meetings at mutually agreed-upon gathering times. They try to encourage parents to make time for warm and straightforward discussions. The discussion aims to train children's openness and thinking by allowing them to express their opinions and judgments. Parents can practice attitudes by agreeing, disagreeing or finding the best middle way when a solution has not been reached. The goal is for churches and pastors to anticipate the current limitations and inhibiting factors. So that parents can be refreshed specifically through a special meeting or prayer.

Parents can create a loving atmosphere by giving their children space to freely express their feelings, share life experiences or ask questions about spiritual matters. Support and encouragement are given when children experience specific challenges or difficulties at school and in daily life through attitudes that build their confidence in God. This support is critical because the Alpha generation grew up

under social and technological pressures, so every word of encouragement and parental assistance can help them and give them a sense of comfort, security and courage. Transpersonal action from parents to children requires a revitalizing and growth initiative tailored to the family's needs. It involves the development of personalized spiritual practices. Essentially, parents are at the center of a comprehensive strategy for the children's spiritual growth²².

When implementing family-based discipleship to provide emotional support, there are several things to consider. At first, create a safe and inclusive environment. Parents ensure that home becomes an emotionally safe place for Gen Alpha to fellowship. Children will feel comfortable sharing feelings and experiences through open, non-judgmental communication. Parents open the Word as the primary teaching material and teach children to know the Person of the Holy Spirit and to experience His presence. It also aligns with Stout and Dein's research, which states that fellowship follows the pattern of Jesus teaching His 12 disciples. The goal is to teach the disciples to

²² J.M.P. Gultom, *Protestant Church Strategy in Building Spiritual Identity for Generation Alpha*, "Verbum Vitae" 41, no. 4, (date of access: 19.12.2023), pp. 1027-1046, <https://czasopisma.kul.pl/index.php/vv/article/view/16531>. The generation is navigating the complex terrain of a postmodern era characterized by the pervasive dissemination of concepts such as skepticism, subjectivism, and relativism. Gen Alpha has experienced a profound shift in cultural values, with a marked transition from religiosity to secularity. Consequently, the Church must direct her attention towards the ideological and spiritual well-being of the generation. The influence of distortionary forces on the perception of reality is a matter of concern, stemming from various sources such as peers in the community, the educational system, social media, and the vast expanse of the Internet. The result show that Gen Alpha has been raised in the context of post-Christian and post-Church cultural environments. In this research, a qualitative research approach is used, predominantly through an extensive review of pertinent literature. The examination commences with an in-depth exploration of Gen Alpha and the formation of spiritual identity. Subsequently, the strategic initiatives conducted by the Protestant Church are examined and the initiatives include worship services, fatherly mentorship, and cultivating a strong Christian identity. The conclusion shows the collaborative efforts of the Church with the pastoral team, in the construction of its ministry. This is characterized by the implementation of transpersonal actions, the guiding of healing initiatives for the needs of families, and the cultivation of personalized spiritual practices. An important component of the comprehensive strategy includes the training and education of fathers to assume a central role in building the spiritual development of children. Furthermore, the Church values the spiritual building of children aged between 4 and 14 years to fortify the Christian identity.

receive and experience the Holy Spirit and to be committed followers of Christ²³. Secondly, parents enlarge their capacity in the art of listening. Parents give their full attention and are not quickly interrupted. They respond in empathy when Gen Alpha shares something. A healthy emotional connection and a strong bond between children and parents will be built when parents listen actively. Thirdly, parents creatively take specific actions so that children can express their emotions optimally by drawing, telling stories or role-playing. The goal is for children to learn to express their feelings, which may sometimes be challenging to convey in words. Casson et al. show that a creative environment will open children's paradigms to learn and show their understanding of ideas. An understanding of children's spirituality as relational, based on the here and now, and shaped by the environment²⁴. Fourthly, parents direct skills in managing children's emotions. The step is to teach children to recognize and name every response that appears and provide strategies for calming down when their feelings are disturbed or they are sad. Parents emphasize the importance of praying and seeking God's guidance when faced with uncontrolled emotions. Mocanu and Clima refer to emotional intelligence that contributes to accurate assessment and expression of emotions in oneself and others, to effective regulation of emotions in oneself and others, and to the use of feelings to motivate, plan, and achieve goals in one's life²⁵. Emotional intelligence emphasizes the importance of teaching parents to children in managing emotions from an early age by developing self-control and empathy both for themselves and others to be able to live well in a social community.

Theological study of Psalm 78: 3-11

Psalm 78 is the teaching song of Asaph, a Levite who was gifted with music and prophecy in the court of King David. This Psalm addresses the theme of God's faithfulness and human disobedience, focusing on the responsibility to pass on faith and worship from one generation to the next. Its teaching serves as a generational warning, warning the Israelites not to repeat the unfaithfulness of their ancestors, and

²³ A. Stout, S. Dein, *Alpha and Evangelical Conversion*, "Journal of Beliefs & Values" 34, no. 2, (date of access: 1.08.2013), pp. 256-261, DOI: 10.1080/13617672.2013.808032.

²⁴ A. Casson et al., *Paying Attention to the Spiritual Flourishing of Young Children in Church Toddler Groups: A Scoping Study Evaluating the Feasibility of a Research Study in This Context*.

²⁵ L. Mocanu. C.E. Clima, *Emotional Intelligence*, "New Trends in Psychology" 3, no. 1 (2020), pp. 30-34.

a commitment to share God's work with future generations²⁶. In particular, Psalm 78: 3-11 contains an important message to the Israelites regarding the history and deeds of God as well as the dangers that will occur if they forget His works. These verses also teaches children the history of God's deeds to always remember God's miraculous deeds on the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. In general, Psalm 78 gives important points, firstly, that history and God's work are important things to teach children and the next generation. Hays states wisdom and history can create a safe environment for healing communities to recover and reorient themselves to the reality of a covenant relationship with God²⁷. Secondly, it warns of the apparent danger to God's people of forgetting God's deeds. People will lose focus and make various mistakes. Warnings will give memory space to the hearing ear. Boyd reveals an understanding of the "remembering" step used rhetorically in influencing the formation of identity in ancient Israel²⁸. Thirdly, it is a warning to avoid rebellion resulting from disobedience and violation of God's teachings.

Passing on living testimony through oral tradition and example (v. 3-4)

The beginning of verse 3 emphasizes: "What we have heard and known..." It indicates that faith can be passed on to children primarily through parents' lived experiences and testimony. It is also stated in Deuteronomy 6: 6-7, which commands parents to teach the Word to their children repeatedly. This repetition is clearly demonstrated at home or on the road, while resting or engaged in activities. In 2 Timothy 1: 5, it is clearly stated that Timothy's faith lived on because it was inherited from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. It demonstrates that the testimony of faith is not a matter of words, but of consistent living in everyday life. Burggraave emphasizes the attention given to the transition from the implicit to the explicit religious

²⁶ B. Weber, *Song, Prayer, Scripture: Aspects of the Reception of the Book of Psalms from the Hebrew Bible to the 21st Century*, in: *Song, Prayer, Scripture: Aspects of the Reception of the Book of Psalms from the Hebrew Bible to the 21st Century*, ed. D. Davage, L.-S. Tiemeyer 2025, pp. 167-186, <https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/monograph-detail?docid=b-9780567711854&tocid=b-9780567711854-chapter10>.

²⁷ R.W. Poe Hays, *Trauma, Remembrance, and Healing: The Meeting of Wisdom and History in Psalm 78*, "Journal for the Study of the Old Testament", vol. 41, no. 2 (2016), pp. 183-204, DOI: 10.1177/0309089216628420.

²⁸ S.L. Boyd, *The Rhetoric of Memory and the Formation of Identity in Psalm 78 and Deuteronomy 32*, "Biblical Research" 66 (2021), pp. 7-30.

meaning of blessing as a gift expressed in its two-dimensional modalities, namely speech and gesture. It indicates that verbal testimony is significant and must be considered in the inherited faith²⁹.

Narrative and storytelling of faith are used to pass on faith to children. Therefore, telling the story to future generations (children and grandchildren) must be based on novels or scripts that convey faith, not just rigid doctrine. King David's praise in Psalm 145: 4 demonstrates David's commitment to glorify God with all His power and might forever. It shows David's determination to teach and share with everyone, including children, about God's mercy and goodness. Even when we trace back to the Israelites' miraculous entry into the Promised Land by crossing the Jordan River, memorial stones are placed as historical narratives commemorating it (Jos 4: 6-7). Therefore, the teaching of the faith cannot stop with just one or two generations but must be passed on as a valuable communal legacy. The prophet Joel instructed that the act of telling the story of the journey of faith with God must continue from one generation to the next (Joel 1: 3). This emphasizes that the children of Israel should not become arrogant and should always be well-educated according to the path of righteousness that has been determined for them.

Today, children grow up within community networks in schools, churches, and even online media spaces. Therefore, parents must involve their children in the faith community and patiently monitor their growth. Parents' understanding of spirituality has also transformed. They believe that experiences with God extend beyond the physical space of the church to virtual reality. Sopacoly and Lattu refer to this as "clique activity," forming a new faith community defined by cliques and spiritual experiences whose power lies in the imagination of the community and the individual³⁰. Children need to be introduced to concrete spiritual experiences through prayer, shared spiritual services, social activities, creative worship, and so on, so their faith can grow and mature.

In conclusion, a testimony of faith can be passed on through daily life examples using simple methods of faith storytelling in narratives,

²⁹ R. Burggraeve, *Blessing: Exploring the Religious, Anthropological and Ethical Meaning*, "Religions" 14, no. 5 (2023), pp. 1-12, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:258526856>.

³⁰ M.M. Sopacoly, I.Y.M. Lattu, *Kekristenan Dan Spiritualitas Online: Cybertheology Sebagai Sumbangsih Berteologi Di Indonesia [Christianity And Spirituality Online. Cybertheologyas Contribution to Theologyin Indonesia]*, "Gema Teologika: Jurnal Teologi Kontekstual dan Filsafat Keilahian" 5, no. 2 (2020), pp. 137-154, <https://journal-theo.ukdw.ac.id/index.php/gemateologika/article/view/604>.

testimonies, or digital media. Therefore, Gen Alpha must be involved in communal contexts with families, churches, and other faith-building communities. Gen Alpha can focus on God's praise, power, and deeds, not just rules.

The Word of God as the basis of the primary teaching (v. 5)

In this context, the Word refers to the law of the Torah, which refers to Divine regulations and the testimony of the character of God Himself. The law of the Torah is the basis of the central relationship between God and His people and is the primary material to be passed on to their children. Beyond moral standards, ethical education remains essential amid artificial intelligence, data collection, and communication³¹. Children's identity is a crucial thing that must be forged and formed seriously³². The main approach is to reclaim learning with the concept of spiritual human identity through the Word of God.

The author provides several approaches, namely, coaching in attitudes and behavior. The Word of God is heard and becomes a reminder or alarm. Introduction, knowledge, and reflection on the Word of God do not happen quickly. However, patience is needed to repeat it in daily activities such as before bed, while playing, when with family, or even when in Sunday school (Deu 6: 6-7). In the Israelite tradition, the process of enculturation of children with religion every day will produce children who are active participants in the household cult³³. It means that children will continue practicing the religion taught daily when they become adults and have more children. The second is the action of speaking and reflecting on the Word of God. The success of a child in understanding the Bible is not only by remembering as knowledge but a method of remembering and reflecting on the true meaning as one (Jos 1: 8). Memorizing not only trains memory since childhood but also has positive implications for the quality of a person's spirituality³⁴.

³¹ M. Vlasuk, *Generation Alpha: Online, Dependent, and Depressed*.

³² A. Aghnaita et al., *Rekonstruksi Pembelajaran Bagi Anak Usia Dini Melalui Konsep "Jati Diri"* [Reconstructing Learning for Early Childhood Through the Concept of "Core Self"], *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 6, no. 4 (2022), pp. 3253-3266, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359052567_Rekonstruksi_Pembelajaran_Bagi_Anak_Usia_Dini_Melalui_Konsep_Jati_Diri.

³³ K. Garroay, *Children and Religion in the Archaeological Record of Ancient Israel*, *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 17, no. 2 (2017), pp. 116-139, https://brill.com/view/journals/jane/17/2/article-p116_116.xml.

³⁴ M. Hamiz et al., *Repetitive Memorization Mobile Application Development for Elderly Memory Recall*, in: *2014 IEEE Conference on E-Learning, e-Management and e-Services (IC3e)*, 2014, pp. 150-155.

Furthermore, children are trained to have a wise and careful attitude from an early age. When children have trained themselves to consider every decision based on the truth of the Word they believe in, then life's moral and ethical quality and holiness have flowed within them. The third is retelling history and stories about God and his work. For example, the story of the Israelites leaving Egypt, along with the story of the 10 plagues, crossing the Red Sea and traveling around the desert for 40 years tell the best of God's deeds about care, help, the pillar of cloud and fire, the miracle of manna that fell from heaven, and other things (Exo 12: 26-27; 13: 8,14; Deu 11: 19; Jos 4: 6-7). A contextual understanding of spirituality that combines insights from a particular context's history, culture, and traditions can inform effective ways to provide spiritual support in clinical practice³⁵.

The role of parents in passing on faith to children and next generations (v. 6-7)

The purpose of teaching the Torah is so that future generations, including children and grandchildren, will continue to know God. The emphasized categories are a heart that trusts, a full and vital memory of God's works, and high discipline in adhering to His commands. It is a vision of spiritual teaching related to the inheritance of faith, which is the responsibility of the head of the family to their children. The first education that children receive is from family life. Parents are responsible for their children by teaching obedience to religious, moral, and intellectual teachings, and this is a habit that children learn in their family environment³⁶.

Parents' role is crucial in building children's spirituality from an early age. The history and deeds of God must be preserved and conveyed to children and the next generation. This action is a form of faith regeneration and teaching about God's power and goodness (v. 6). Regeneration of faith is carried out by guiding values in children's moral development, identity development, and self-image from an early age. Parenting has been influenced since the womb, meaning

³⁵ H. Inbadas, *History, Culture and Traditions: The Silent Spaces in the Study of Spirituality at the End of Life*, "Religions" 7, no. 5 (2016), <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/7/5/53>.

³⁶ A.F. Sari, *The Role of Parents in Building Spiritual, Moral, and Intellectual Mentality in Children*, "Journal of Childhood Development" 3, no. 1 (2023), pp. 84-91.

parenting begins before birth³⁷. One characteristic of parenting itself is communication. Open and empirical communication can make children comfortable and close to their parents³⁸. Therefore, parents must prepare themselves to teach their children Christianity systematically and regularly. They can improve their ability to educate and teach through informal institutions or Christian religious education seminars. Viktor and Febe emphasized that parental example, when combined with the application of the contextual Christian religious education, can form a conceptual foundation for a model of faith education based on collaboration at home, school, and in church³⁹.

The next thing is to communicate the purpose of conveying the history and deeds of God that build children's faith to learn to trust God and to obey His commandments (v. 7). The emotional bond between children and parents is a solid foundation for facing challenges of faith in the future. The role of parents can begin through acts of praise, worship, and prayer. Parents are the best models for their children since childhood, but they must also continuously be the praise, worship, and prayer teachers. It anticipates concerns about the decline of both practices, which has caused a loss of sensitivity to the supernatural dimension of children's faith since childhood⁴⁰. Prayer with Praise Worship is a commitment to gratitude and awakening faith. The main goal is to create a strong spiritual foundation for children. Building a spiritual bond from childhood with Gen Alpha will facilitate acts of obedience and commitment in their growth towards adulthood.

The next thing is that parents connect their children with the tradition of faith by introducing them to the liturgy and Christian tradition

³⁷ V. Glover, L. Capron, *Prenatal Parenting*, "Current Opinion in Psychology" 15 (2017), pp. 66-70, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352250X16301671>.

³⁸ R. Adawiyyah, *Menghadapi Tantangan Generasi Z: Mengapa Parenting Anak Sejak Dini Penting Untuk Menghindari Pergaulan Bebas [Facing Generation Z Challenges: Why Early Parenting Is Important to Avoid Free Association]*, Www.Psga.Uin-Malang.Ac.Id, last modified 2024, (date of access: 15.007.2024), <https://psga.uin-malang.ac.id/alda/tajuk-rencana/menghadapi-tantangan-generasi-z-mengapa-parenting-anak-sejak-dini-penting-untuk-menghindari-pergaulan-bebas/>.

³⁹ V.E. Dethan, F.F. Irawati Wanggai, *Peran Keteladanan Orang Tua Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen Bagi Anak Dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari*, "Real Didache" 5, no. 2 (2025), pp. 96-111, <https://ojs.sttreabatam.ac.id/index.php/didache/article/view/654>.

⁴⁰ D. Setran, *Priests and Prophets in the Home: Cotton Mather and Parental Prayer*, "Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care" 8, no. 1 (2015), pp. 28-52, DOI: 10.1177/193979091500800103.

(Eph 6: 4; 2 Tim 1: 5; 3: 14-15; Mark 10: 14; Acts 2: 39). Barna mentions four approaches, namely by helping them develop a commitment to become disciples of Jesus, guiding them in exploring biblical principles towards correct and holistic thinking, facilitating actions of obedience and obedience through the application of the Gospel values, and finally by introducing personal accountability and stability regarding essential values in life that strengthen growth⁴¹. Another part is the action of parents to bless and protect their children when parents ask for God's blessing and protection. Parents ask for a peaceful, calm, and positive atmosphere that influences children's emotional and spiritual development from an early age. Deuteronomy 6: 6-7 explains that parents regenerate faith and tell of God's miraculous deeds through mentoring and faith teaching sessions. They teach about the truth and show the way of life at home and when traveling. Discipline needs to be applied proportionally with love and with the correct pattern. Discipline can build a child's character from an early age (Pro 22: 6). In a survey on Families, in general, 14% of respondents stated the need for Effective discipline strategies for children⁴².

Parents also show a strong capacity for faith so that children can imitate and emulate it. For example, Timothy's faith came from his grandmother and mother (2 Tim 1: 5) and Jacob to his 12 children (Ps 78: 5-7). Parents must learn to listen attentively, understand the child's perspective, and provide wise views without judgment⁴³. Christian education is considered one approach that can provide a solid moral foundation for parents of Gen Z in dealing with various pressures and temptations in their environment⁴⁴. Parents can even build interactions with children through open communication, active supervision, spiritual teachings, and healthy relationships. Zega wrote that parents must be able to teach their children Christian religious

⁴¹ G. Barna, *Release #02: Four "Disciple-Making Practices" to Shape Children into "Spiritual Champions"*, *More about the Book*, 2023, https://www.arizonachristian.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/CRC_RSC_Release_2.pdf.

⁴² K. O'Toole, K. Walker, *Family Matters; Understanding the Reality of Parents in the West*, Family Matters Research, 2022.

⁴³ R. Adawiyyah, *Menghadapi Tantangan Generasi Z: Mengapa Parenting Anak Sejak Dini Penting Untuk Menghindari Pergaulan Bebas [Facing Generation Z Challenges: Why Early Parenting Is Important to Avoid Free Association]*.

⁴⁴ A. Armila, *Pendidikan Kristen Dalam Keluarga Dalam Upaya Membangun Karakter Anak Generasi Z [Christian Education in the Family in an Effort to Build the Character of Generation Z Children]*, "Adiba" 3, no. 4 (2023), pp. 510-519, <https://adisampublisher.org/index.php/adiba/article/view/495>.

education as a strong foundation of faith more than the faith education that exists in schools⁴⁵.

Faithfulness and loyalty to God as a requirement (v. 8)

Under certain conditions and circumstances, Christians often abandon their faith and turn to the world. The Psalm reminds the next generation to remain steadfast in maintaining the best quality of faith. Someone abandoning the faith after knowing the truth risks losing salvation (Heb 6: 4-6). Even believers who return to the old sins are described as a dog returning to its vomit. Something is disgusting and out of place (2 Pet 2: 20-22). Believers are called to be loyal to God, not to be friends with "the world" (1 John 2: 15-17; Jam 4: 4). Early warnings to children must be implemented so that they do not rebel or disobey, and remain loyal to God. Children are expected not to repeat the mistakes of previous generations when they were not connected to God and turned their motivations and goals in life away from the world.

Two parts of the warning are emphasized, namely the first about an unfaithful heart. It refers to an inconsistent and unreliable attitude towards following God. To be consistent and trustworthy, one needs some action. The first is persistence. The act of knowing God requires tireless sacrifice. One example is the parable of the unrighteous judge and a widow (Luk 18: 1-8). The widow continued to come to see the judge until her wish was granted. The second part is openness. Psalm 145: 18 mentions that actions holding on to the truth "will provide space for openness to oneself and God. The third is simplicity. God does not want chaos, but peace (1 Cor 14: 33). A person's simplicity in thinking and knowing God allows him to see God and experience his presence in everyday life. The fourth is faith. Hebrews 11: 6 states that faith moves a person to seek God and learn to commit. And finally, patience. It is difficult to be patient when facing a world that changes quickly and instantly. However, patience will enable a person to wait and always hope for God's best time (Gal 6: 9). The next part is an unfaithful soul. It refers to a person's actions of unbelief and disobedience to God. Faithfulness here emphasizes not being negligent in preparing the heart to seek God and to understand His Word. The real visible action regards separating oneself from the pollution of the world and all forms

⁴⁵ Y.K. Zega, *Pendidikan Agama Kristen Dalam Keluarga: Upaya Membangun Spiritualitas Remaja Generasi Z [Christian Religious Education in the Family: Efforts to Build Spirituality in Generation Z Adolescents]*, "Jurnal Luxnos" 7, no. 1 (2021), pp. 105-116, https://luxnos.sttpd.ac.id/index.php/20_luxnos_20/article/view/zega_2021.

of compromise with the sin. The unfaithful soul shows disobedience and it results in a lack of perseverance (Romans 12: 12). Obedience or perseverance cannot change because of the changing situations but only through commitment. McKaughan provides several attitudes to train oneself not to be negligent. Firstly, faith is valuable in maintaining relationships with God and others. Secondly, it states the role of faith biblically, without requiring inappropriate epistemic opinions, namely through unfavorable circumstances and periods of significant doubt⁴⁶.

The obstacle to the faithfulness of the heart lies in being trapped in the situation experienced when the focus of attention is more directed at the outside conditions, such as mistakes or problems. Therefore, the strength of the foundation of a faithful soul is faith or trust. The Old Testament never separates loyalty from personal credibility, which is shown through one's beliefs (Pro 13: 17). Every believer must train himself to be faithful, such as holding on to God's promises as a basis for hope (1 Thes 5). Nothing is impossible for God which has been promised. The next thing is to persevere and become a winner in every test that God has given. Consider it a spiritual muscle exercise that increases the capacity for faithfulness to God (1 Tim 4: 8-10). Therefore, fear and respect for God must be constant in maintaining the quality of true faith. Febri refers to the reflection that a genuine relationship with God is evident in actions that preserve the sanctity of life, make

⁴⁶ D.J. McKaughan, *On the Value of Faith and Faithfulness*, "International Journal for Philosophy of Religion" 81, no. 1 (2017), pp. 7-29, DOI: 10.1007/s11153-016-9606-x. However, the value of faith has been called into question, particularly in connection with religious commitment. What if anything that is valuable about faith – in the context of ordinary human relations or as a distinctive stance, people might take in relation to God? I approach this question by examining the role that faith talk played both in ancient Jewish and Christian communities and in the larger Greco-Roman culture in which Christian faith talk evolved. I locate the value of faith and faithfulness in the context of relationships involving trust and loyalty and argue that what is most distinctively valuable about faith is the function it plays in sustaining relationships through various kinds of challenges, including through evidentially unfavorable circumstances and significant periods of doubt. In light of this discussion, I set out a view of relational faith and, taking Mother Teresa as an exemplar, argue for two further conclusions. Firstly, faith can play the valuable role that it plays in sustaining relationships even without belief of the salient propositions. Secondly, in at least some circumstances, in order for faith to play this valuable role in a way that does not require epistemic opinions that fail to fit one's evidence, it is important that faith does not require such belief.

the Word the center of life, remain hopeful in Jesus, and carry out the Great Commission until the end of this world⁴⁷.

Israel's experience as a real warning for the next generation (v. 9-11)

In his writing, Asaph took an example from the story of the children of Ephraim, one of the main tribes of Israel (v. 9). The tribe of Ephraim was prophesied to have a high position, namely being the protector of God's head (Ps 108: 8). However, even though they were fully armed and had fighting strength, they were defeated. The cause of the defeat was that this nation did not maintain its relational quality to God. They refused to live in the truth of the Torah and continued to forget God and His miraculous deeds (v. 10-11). Even this nation continued to rebel against God by forcing themselves to ask for food according to their lusts (v. 18). This also has similarities with the story of the calf statue in the desert. A valuable lesson when the Israelites enjoyed the gold jewelry given for free by the Egyptians instead of worshiping idols by building a calf statue even though they had experienced miracles (Exo 32: 7-19).

Indeed, in the context of events in the desert and of the Promised Land, these Old Testament stories took place in the past. However, the concept of the negative impact of believers who forget and abandon God's deeds and His salvation is fundamental to this day. A person's action in ignoring God and His deeds is not only forgetting mentally, but more to an attitude of heart that is unfaithful, disobedient, and indifferent to God and His existence (Deu 8: 19-20; Isa 17: 10-11; Hos 4: 6; Ps 9: 18). As a result children and the next generation follow the mistakes of their parents. The consequences can occur in various circumstances, such as the physical punishment of war, disease, famine, or natural disasters. Another impact is the separation of spiritual life from God, the giver of life to His people. Even the last thing is the loss of His blessings and protection. Therefore, steps are needed to continue to remember every warning. Some steps can be taken: Firstly, the Word of God must be taught from generation to generation. Fear and trembling of God, who is just and has full authority over life, cannot be considered trivial. And children and the next generation must know

⁴⁷ F.Y. Zaliwu, I.K. Soliyanto, K.M. Waruwu, *Penghakiman Yang Akan Datang: Refleksi Teologis Bagi Kehidupan Kristiani [The Coming Judgment: A Theological Reflection for Christian Life]*, "Diagesis: Jurnal Teologi Kharismatika" 5, no. 2 (2022), pp. 97-111, <https://ojs.sttrealbatam.ac.id/index.php/diagesis/article/view/266/136>.

clearly and thoughtfully. King David asserted that the fear of the Lord will be taught to the children” (Ps 34: 11). The leading actors in the family are the parents themselves. They are responsible for warning their children about the consequences of the sin. Parents have a tremendous and weighty responsibility; they must maintain health, physical development, overall education, development of intellectual interests, and the creation of moral values, beliefs, and attitudes for children⁴⁸. The second step is the quality of faith, which must be maintained and developed thoughtfully. It is essential for parents to be satisfied with passing on faith and provide the proper steps for children to pursue understanding and feel it personally. Parental religiosity is dynamically interconnected with parenting styles and practices and, in turn, directly influences moral development in relation to the religiosity of children or adolescents⁴⁹. Thirdly, is a strong warning not to repeat the mistakes of actions that forget God, live in disobedience, and not wholeheartedly worship Him.

Conclusion

Generation Alpha has the largest population today with a constrained religious life. The digital world and media technology tend to harm their spirituality. Parents are the main spearheads responsible for passing on a spiritual life to this generation. Psalm 78: 5-11 provides several approaches on how parents base a spiritual heritage on Gen Alpha with total teaching based on the Bible, emphasizing complete loyalty to God as the primary requirement. Parents must develop family-based discipleship in homes, intensively sharing parents’ spiritual life experiences with children and wise use of media technology as a teaching tool through ebooks or virtual cartoon stories. The Church needs to support by mentoring, training, and preparing parents in their local churches to play a maximum significant role in passing on a spiritual heritage to their children.

⁴⁸ R. Ceka, Ardita; Murati, *The Role of Parents in the Education of Children*, “Journal of Education and Practice” 7, no. 5 (2016), pp. 61-64.

⁴⁹ S.A. Hardy, D.C. Dollahite, C.R. Baldwin, *Parenting, Religion, and Moral Development*, ed. D.J. Laible, G. Carlo, L.M. Padilla-Walker, *The Oxford Handbook of Parenting and Moral Development* (date of access: 3.11.2019), DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190638696.013.18.

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