

**An Explorative Study on the Practice of Family Worship
on Nias, Indonesia**

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By

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DECLARATION,

SIGNED DECLARATION I, EIRENE KARDIANI GULO, HEREBY DECLARE THAT I HAVE WRITTEN THIS THESIS AND THAT THE WORK IT CONTAINS IS ENTIRELY MY OWN. I FURTHERMORE DECLARE THAT THIS THESIS HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED FOR ANY OTHER DEGREE OR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION.

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eirene", with a horizontal line underneath it.

DATE: August 15, 2020

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

All religions know a form of worship, including Christianity. Christians are called worshipers in the scripture (Phil.3:3; I Tim.2:10; Heb 12:28; Rev 13:12-13; 14:11). This idea is articulated by scholars who stress worship as the “defining characteristic” of being a Christian.¹ Christian worship is the visible primary aspect where one is recognized as a Christian. As such, worshipping God is the most indispensable and the most natural thing to do for Christians. It lies at the very center of the Christian life. Having this human nature in mind, Alexander Schmemmann describes human beings as “homo adorans,”² which is God’s intention for human beings from the beginning. Human beings are made in order to worship God.³ In the language of the Westminster Catechism, “man’s chief and highest end are to glorify God.”⁴ Thus, the importance of worship can never be overstressed.

As the context of human beings varied, so does worship. Through times we have witnessed the multiplicity of Christian worship in practices, forms, styles, models, and shapes.⁵ This contributes to the richness of liturgical expressions while underlining the fact none has a monopoly claim of being the most authentic, true, and the best way of worshipping. What one finds meaningful worship may be felt as a complete hindrance by others.

One form of worship is family worship, which is performed by family members in the house. Its value is implied in the poetic writing style of J.R Miller in 1880 as he wrote:

¹ Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2006). 43

² Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Yonkers, New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1973). 15

³ Paul Brunner, *Worship in the Name of Jesus* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968). 85

⁴ “The Westminster Confession of Faith & Larger and Shorter Catechisms In Modern English” (n.d.). 87

⁵ Paul Basden, *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views* (Zondervan, 2004).

True family worship is a fountain that brings a stream of holy influences into every part of daily life. It is a vase of perfume that sheds fragrance overall. It softens asperities. It quells anger. It quiets impatience. It settles differences. It subdues evil passions. Hearts that are drawn together at God's feet every day cannot get very far apart. The frictions of the day are forgotten when all voices mingle in the same upward breathing petitions. As the tender words of inspiration fall within their benign counsels all feeling of unkindness melts away. The altar in the midst wonderfully hallows and sweetens the home fellowship. Besides, it puts new strength into every heart. It comforts sorrow. It is a shield against temptation. It smooths out the wrinkle of care. It imparts strength for burden-bearing. It quickens every religious sentiment and keeps the fire burning on every heart's altar. There are no drawbacks whatever to the influences for good that come in the train of devout, regular, family worship. The best image of heaven which this earth can afford is found when a household is gathered to learn God's will from his holy Word, to raise the voice in song or praise in honor of his name, and to hold communion with him in united prayer. Every family can thus breathe the air of heaven every day, and to heaven becomes heaven-like.⁶

This practice of family worship is very much part of the life of families living on Nias Island.⁷ It is a very visible and strong practice as it is practiced regularly and consistently. Every morning and every evening, they gather together to worship God. As their singing breaks the quietness of the morning or evening air, one can tell the families are having a family worship.

Living on Nias Island, it is a common thing to hear people singing in the morning starting as early as 5 AM and in the evening around 8 PM. Various religious songs are sung from different houses at this time. It is just as common as hearing the voice of "adzan" (the Muslim prayer) from the mosque in the morning and the afternoon. Some new visitors on the island may at first find this practice irritating as it disturbs their rest but after some time, they get used to it.

Despite its strong visibility, there seems almost no written record available about the

⁶ J.R Miller, "Weekday Religion," 1880, accessed March 16, 2020, https://gracegems.org/Miller/weekday_religion.htm.

⁷ Nias Island is located off the western coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. This location places Nias Island administratively as part of North Sumatra Province. The local inhabitants of Nias are called Niassans or Ono Niha.

the practice of family worship in Nias. Perhaps, it is so familiar that it is not necessary to study and to record it. If someone wants to know something about this practice, that person just has to make a trip to Nias. However, as human memory and years of living are limited, there seems to be a need to write about this practice. Learning from the past, where many practices of the Nias community have disappeared without any written record, it seems part of the community history has also disappeared. The younger generation has no way to know and to learn from it, and this is a great loss. In light of preserving information, it is necessary to study and to write about the practice of family worship.

But more than for preserving information, the study of family worship is needed to have a better understanding of this practice. In Nias, there is a saying "tak kenal maka tak sayang" which means "do not know, then do not love." This saying conveys that only when something is understood can a feeling of appreciation be cultivated. It is very important, then, to articulate what this practice of family worship is all about and what it brings to people's life. What happens in family worship? What do people see in this practice? In what way does it influence them? In my view, the understanding and the knowledge of family worship may instill a genuine feeling of appreciation toward the practice. It is not practiced just for the sake of practicing it or because all families do it. It is practiced because the family is aware of its meaning in their life. This sense of awareness is developed when one takes time to study and to reflect on it.

Reflecting on the practice of family worship in the present context, which is often described as a postcolonial or postmodernist or secularist context, it is interesting to observe the dynamics between the practice and the context. Is this kind of practice still playing a role in the present context? Or is this practice on its way out? What factors influence this situation? In light of the new situation, the Covid-19 pandemic, can family worship offer something for people's spirituality? Now that public worship is done virtually, and is thus very much lacking

in physical fellowship, can family worship with its accessibility of physical fellowship fill this need? Indeed, the topic of family worship seems to have a great potentiality to be explored from various perspectives. But these questions can be answered only when there is solid or basic information about it. To carry out such studies, the first inescapable step is to have a thorough description of this practice.

These are the thoughts that stimulate my thinking and serve as a background in researching family worship practice in Nias with research questions as formulated below.

Aim and Research Questions

The main research questions are: *What does family worship look like in Nias? And how do family members perceive the meaning of family worship?*

On the question of what family worship looks like, I aim to describe the practice of family worship in my church. I hope to be able to give basic information about family worship, such as: what happens in family worship, who participates in it, what do they do in family worship, and how do they do it. Thus, this research question focuses on describing the outward and visible forms of family worship.

On the question of the meaning of family worship, I aim to describe what members of families convey about the importance or the significance of this practice in their life. I would like to describe what this practice brings into their life as perceived by the family members. What do the family members gain from doing this practice? These questions contribute to articulating the meaning of this practice for family members.

Relevancy of the Topic

From an academic perspective, this research intends to be a contribution in the field of practical theology, especially in the field of liturgical studies. This research is to enrich liturgical studies "beyond the liturgical movement" as proposed by Marcel Barnard, Johan Cilliers, and Cas Wepener. What they mean by this expression is articulated in their book *Worship in the Network Culture* (2014) in which they call for an academic study of the liturgy that takes performance or practice as its starting point. This is a shift from the usual approach of liturgical studies that is articulated from the perspective of a pre-given format and content of calibrated theology. It highlights the idea that liturgy should be understood from the perspective of its participants or performers.⁸

As it strives to contribute to the understanding of family worship as articulated by its practitioners from the Nias context, this research on family worship aims at filling the gap due to the scarcity of information on Nias family worship, and on the topic of family worship in general. It wants to help people to understand and to appreciate this practice of family worship.

From a societal perspective, this research can especially aid the church in Nias to evaluate, analyze, and improve family worship so that it has more impact on a family. The findings from this research will help the church to understand the situation of family worship in Nias. This understanding will help the church to clarify and to formulate its role in developing and equipping families to practice family worship.

This study can also stimulate each family member to discern more how this practice leads them closer to God and builds up their faith. As every family member takes the Christian faith seriously, it will certainly make an impact on society.

⁸ Marcel Barnard, Johan Cilliers, and Cas Wepener, *Worship in the Network Culture: Liturgical Ritual Studies, Fields and Methods, Concepts and Metaphors* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014). 39

Methodology

The aim of the research question mentioned above is achieved best by a qualitative method. The research question deals with “how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced, or constituted,” which is precisely the main feature of the qualitative method.⁹ Jennifer Mason explains the qualitative method as "exploring a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences, and imaginings of research participants, the way that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationship work, and the significance of meanings that they generate."¹⁰ It is a research method that looks into how things work in particular contexts, and connects context with explanation, thus producing well-founded "cross-contextual generalities."¹¹ It describes the lived realities of individuals and groups in particular settings.¹²

The data collection for this research is carried out through interviews. The interview is selected as a way of collecting data because an interview process can bring up people's ideas, opinions, perceptions as intended by the research question. Mason asserts that the interview can "explore people's individual and collective understandings, reasoning processes, social norms, and so on."¹³ It allows a more interactional, situational, and contextual atmosphere.¹⁴ It produces in-depth and rounded data which are very important for this research.¹⁵ It is crucial for situations in which there is a scarcity of data or information.¹⁶

For this research, the kind of interview selected is "qualitative interviewing or also called in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing."¹⁷ A semi-

⁹ Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2002). 3

¹⁰ J Swinton and H. Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed. (SCM Press, 2016). 1

¹¹ *Ibid.* 2

¹² *Ibid.* 43

¹³ Mason, *Qualitative Researching*. 56

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 64

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 65

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 66

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 62

structured interview is viewed as the best tool for this research because it allows an interactional exchange of dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee, ensuring relatively informal conversation which can help be parties at ease and relax, and provides flexibility in the structure despite having scripts or guided questions.¹⁸

The semi-structured interview was conducted through skype and WhatsApp due to the geographical distance and Covid-19 protocol. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated. Conducting a virtual interview is difficult, especially when the internet connection is unstable, which happens sometimes. The guide questions were prepared beforehand (Attachment 1) but were not rigidly stuck to as the interviews were open to new questions that came up during the interview. Other tools for collecting data, such as personal observation, or focus group discussions, could not be implemented because of the distance and the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, this paper cannot benefit from the triangulation approach.

There are eight interviewees for this research question. The interviewees come from different families and are selected based on the criteria that his/her family has been practicing family worship consistently for at least ten years and he/she actively participates in it. This period is observed to ensure that the interviewees are familiar with the practice. Furthermore, the interviewees have the skill to articulate or to explain about family worship, and they are willing to be interviewed.

The interviewees differ in terms of age, gender, and position in the family. This variety is intended to get a comprehensive perspective from all family members. The interviewees hold the position of a grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, 3 adult children, and a teenager. All of them live in an urban area (in the capital city of Nias) except for the grandfather who, lives in a village.

¹⁸ Ibid. 62

To answer the research question on the description of family worship (RQ-1), I interviewed six informants, and for the research question on the meaning of family worship (RQ-2), I interviewed eight informants. The six informants for RQ-1 are the same informants for RQ-2, but RQ-2 has two more informants. Thus, there are eight informants for RQ-2. The reason to have more informants for RQ-2 is to bring the perspective of all different age groups on the meaning of family worship.

After the data are collected from the informants, the next step is analyzing the data. The collected interview transcriptions are analyzed by applying manual coding. A code is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data.”¹⁹ Coding refers to a method that enables a researcher to organize and group similarly coded data into categories because they share the same characteristics.²⁰ Coding requires that the transcripts are read one by one, line by line to manually produce a pre-coding or significant word, quote, or passage that is found to be striking.

While there are many types of coding, in this research I apply only two types of coding; The first is *descriptive* coding, which means “a summary in a word or short phrase, the basic topic of a passage. It is an identification of the topic and not abbreviations of the content.”²¹ The second is *in vivo* coding, which means a word or short phrase used by informants themselves.²² I apply *in vivo* coding as most of my interviews answer the question straightforwardly and also because I am interested in the informants' voices.

¹⁹ Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (No. 14), London, Sage (2019). 3

²⁰ *Ibid.* 8

²¹ *Ibid.* 88

²² *Ibid.* 91

After coding, the next step is categorizing. This process refers to the consolidation of similar information. Later on, several categories are connected to formulate themes. The formulating theme is the last step in this qualitative data analysis.

The themes that emerge from the analysis are discussed from a practical theology point of view, especially from the ritual-liturgical perspective. The main finding from the discussion is developed as the focus of theological reflection in the last chapter of this thesis.

Theoretical Framework

The methodology described above is aligned with the framework of practical theology. Practical theology is concerned with making a connection between theology and faith practice. In other words, it tries to connect theological tradition and human experience. In this framework, practice is viewed as the place of encounter with God. It is the bearer of theology. It is an articulation of theological conviction and insight.²³

Practice in practical theology study can be analyzed by applying the action-reflection cycle. This cycle consists of four aspects, namely experience, reflection, learning, and action. The experience of the practitioners is articulated and documented using social sciences methods of gathering data. In this thesis, this phase is indicated by conducting empirical research and applying qualitative analysis data. The experience of the practitioners is thus embodied in the text. This embodied experience is later reflected upon. In this thesis, this process is manifested in the discussion of several themes emerge from the data analysis. The discussion of themes is directed toward identifying significant learning, which is developed into a theological reflection that brings renewed action and theology.²⁴

²³ D. Bhatti et al., *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology* (Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd., 2010). 13

²⁴ *Ibid.* 50

While there is a stage in the process in which the “reflection” step is the focus, it should be borne in mind that the cycle is theological all the way through.²⁵ From this framework, "theology in four voices" is developed as a way of reflecting on the practice. The four voices of theology consist of normative theology, formal theology, espoused theology, and operant theology. The normative voice of theology is concerned with theological authority. It is related to the ecclesial identities and relationships of the group. The formal voice refers to the theology of the academy, of the "professional" theologian. Espoused theology is the theology embedded within a group's articulation of its beliefs. Operant theology is the theology embedded within the actual practices of a group.²⁶ These four voices are not separate from one another. They are intertwined and interconnected. It is in the conversation between these voices that an authentic practical-theological insight can be disclosed.²⁷

Outline

This thesis consists of five chapters.

Chapter 1 contains the introduction. It discusses the background, research statement, aims, relevancy, methodology, and theoretical framework of the research.

Chapter 2 contains a literary review. It discusses the concept of family worship, the history, the elements, and the meaning of family worship. It also discusses briefly the history of Christianity in Nias and the context of families in Nias.

Chapter 3 contains the findings and the discussion of empirical research.

Chapter 4 contains the theological reflection.

Chapter 5 contains the conclusion and suggestions.

²⁵ Ibid. 51

²⁶ Ibid. 53-54

²⁷ Ibid. 56

Chapter 2

Literary Review

Introduction

This literary review is concerned with the operative concept of family worship employed in this thesis, short sketches of its historical background, its pattern and meaning, and an overview of the Nias context.

A literature study on this topic turns to be a challenging one because of the scarcity of resources. Most available materials on family worship are either very old (written in the 18th or 19th century) or when they are recent, they are mostly "how-to" books from an American Evangelical perspective which explains how to do family worship in practice. Although old materials, I still make use of these resources, especially the more Pietist authors, because they provide an insight into how missionaries who came to Nias might have understood and introduced family worship.

Definition of Family Worship

Within the framework of practical theology, family worship is understood as one of the Christian practices. As a Christian practice, family worship "bears faithful witness to the God from whom the practice emerges, and whom it reflects and [...] enables individuals and communities to participate faithfully in Christ's redemptive mission."²⁸ It is filled with theological contents and bearers of Christian tradition which are performed by family members

²⁸ Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology, and Qualitative Research*. 21

repeatedly, regularly, and purposively.²⁹ Family worship is "the place of encounter between God and people, the place of grace."³⁰

Lartey is convinced that Christian practices have two poles that are always in interactive tension with each other, that is, God's dimension and the human dimension.³¹ Thus as a Christian practice, family worship also has a divine dimension which includes doctrines, views, teachings as well as experiences of God. God is seen as being related in important ways to the life of persons and family members although God's mystery remains. The human dimension in family worship refers to the corporate and personal aspects of family context and experiences. Capturing the dynamic between God's dimension and the human dimension, family worship can be said to be "faith-inspired practice and practice-inspired faith."³² In Barnard's term, family worship is a liturgical-ritual gathering. Liturgical conveys its theological dimension, and ritual represents its cultural-anthropological aspect.³³

One of the distinct features of family worship if compared to other forms of worship (personal and public worship) is that the practitioners of family worship are not an individual or a general community but a family. The concept of family, however, is very difficult to define. The concept of a nuclear family where the family is defined as consisting of a father, a mother, and children is no longer the norm for many communities. The dynamic and composition of the family in the present context are more varied. This can be discerned through the existence of blended families, children born out of wedlock, cohabitation, step-families, adopted children, foster parents, single parents, and homosexual marriages. Rosemary R. Ruether

²⁹ James Nieman, "The Idea of Practice and Why It Matters in the Teaching of Preaching," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 11, no. 3 (n.d.): 123–133.

³⁰ Bhatti et al., *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology*. 23

³¹ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *Pastoral Theology in An Intercultural World* (The Pilgrim Press, 2006). 17

³² Ibid. 28

³³ Marcel Barnard, Johan Cilliers, and Cas Wepener, *Worship in the Network Culture: Liturgical Ritual Studies, Fields and Methods, Concepts, and Metaphors* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014). 39-40

remarks that “it is no longer possible to speak out of one predominant normative model of family.”³⁴

In this paper, however, the definition of family is drawn from the perspective of Niassans as the practitioners of the practice. Niassans view the family as a household or *songambatö sebua* in the Nias language. It refers to a group of people bonded by kinship through having a common ancestor, or related by marriage, by a blood relationship, living in the same house, and sharing a common economic activity, which usually means having common farming.³⁵ Thus, a Niassan family has a large number of family members, consisting not only of father, mother, and children but also including all relatives (near and far). There is a well-known saying in the Nias language “*emali dome si so ba lala, ono Luo na so yomo,*” which, if translated, goes something like “you are a harmful person while in my yard, but you are my family when residing inside my house.” It practically considers anyone staying in the same house to be a family member regardless of whether a kinship relationship exists or not, but those who are not staying in the same house are also considered family members. For example, children who are studying or working in other places are also family members. So, the concept of family in Nias is very fluid. For this paper, when it talks about family it refers to those who are present in the same house at the moment when family worship is conducted.

Kinship in Nias is organized along lines of descent from a father, which means every Niassan inherits the father's family name. The significance of the household is not only as a major unit of economic production but also as a source of identity and the center of religious life. Niassans put such a high value on family life that law called *fondrakö* has been established

³⁴ Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Christianity and The Making of the Modern Family* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000). 181

³⁵ Tuhoni Telaumbanua and Uwe Hummel, *Cross and Adu: A Socio-Historical Study on the Encounter Between Christianity and the Indigenous Culture on Nias and the Batu Islands, Indonesia (1865-1965)* (Netherlands: Boekencentrum, 2007). 53

to protect families. The Niass family consists of a patriarchal household with the husband or father exercising authority over the other members of the household.

Historical Background of Family Worship

Tracing the history of family worship reveals that it has not been consistently practiced through the ages. While it is very central during the biblical time and early Christianity, it experiences a decline during the Middle Ages, is revived during the Reformation period, and declines again in our present time. Another personal observation from this section is that there have been very few comprehensive studies on family worship compared to public or private worship. Thus, there are many gaps to fill in the topic of family worship, such as: did it completely disappear in the Middle Ages, or did it perhaps take another form? Do people miss something significant when it is not practiced? Family worship seems to contain many potential topics to be explored.

In the book edited by Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones entitled *Trained in the Fear of God*, the biblical and theological foundation of family worship is elaborated. In Deuteronomy 6:6-7, God underpins the importance of the Word being taught in the family. The family, especially the Christian parents, have a responsibility to raise their children to know, love, and enjoy God.³⁶ The Psalmist (Ps.78:4) also encourages parents to retell the stories about God and God's glorious deeds, and pass them on to the next generation.³⁷ There are also some examples prominent figures in the Bible who practice family worship such as Noah (Gen.8), Abraham (Gen.12), and Job (Job 1).

³⁶ James M. Hamilton, "That The Coming Generation Might Praise The Lord: Family Discipleship In The Old Testament," in *Trained In The Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (US: Kregel, 2011). 33-43

³⁷ Ibid. 44

Some passages of the New Testament also remind parents of their responsibility to train the children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). The persons in the household heard, received, and believed the proclaimed message of God (Acts 10:1-2; 16:31-33).³⁸

The Reformers take seriously the idea of a household or family members collectively praising God. Martin Luther writes a Small and Large Catechism to help families to conduct family worship.³⁹ Luther believes that family worship is the first and primary way in which Christian devotion manifests itself.⁴⁰ John Calvin shares the same conviction with Luther that family worship should be observed faithfully by the family on a daily basis.⁴¹ For this purpose, Calvin develops his catechism called "a form of instruction for children."⁴²

The Puritans in England and America cultivated this Reformation vision and gave shape to a more mature and consistent form of family worship in the dawn of the seventeenth century. They developed family worship into a normative practice and it achieved confessional status in the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647). Then, later on, the Scottish Presbyterian adopted this confession and developed a "Directory for Family Worship."⁴³ Their basic conviction that the family is "a household of faith; every father is a priest in his own family" is central in the writings of Richard Baxter, Jonathan Edward, and Matthew Henry, to mention some of the Puritans' most prominent figures. Puritans' high regard of family worship is also

³⁸ Robert L. Plummer, "Bring Them Up In The Discipline and Instruction of The Lord: Family Discipleship Among the First Christians," in *Trained In The Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (USA: Kregel, 2011). 50-52

³⁹ Martin Luther, *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism* (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943). 39

⁴⁰ Betty DeBerg, "Lutheran Family Devotions," in *Religions of the United States in Practice, Volume 2*, ed. Colleen McDannell (US: Princeton University Press, 2001). 25

⁴¹ Lukas Vischer, ed., *Christian Worship In Reformed Churches Past And Present* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B.Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003). 25

⁴² John J. Murray, "Instruction in the Faith: Lessons from John Calvin," *Witness* (2009), <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/article/instruction-faith>.

⁴³ Terry L. Johnson, "Reforming the Family: Lessons From Our Reformed and Puritan Heritage" (n.d.), <https://www.reformationtoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ReformingtheFamily.pdf>.

shown in their intention to have particular documents dedicated to family worship called Directory for Family Worship in 1647, which governs the responsibility of elders and pastors to investigate its implementation among members. Sanctions awaited the members who failed to perform family worship.

Around the same time, the 17th century, in Germany, another movement was begun by Philip Jakob Spener and August Hermann Francke called Pietism. Like Puritans, Pietists also put much emphasis on the practical concerns of living the Christian life, including maintaining family worship and catechizing children.⁴⁴ Pietism emerged as a counter-reaction to its context, which placed too much emphasis on rationality and debates on doctrines, by shifting attention to the religious renewal of individual belief in the Bible as the unfailing guide to faith and life. Pietism is skeptical of reason. What Pietism stressed is the personal experience of encounter with Jesus Christ. It involves good works, daily self-examination, daily Bible study, a clear break with worldly practices, and meetings in private houses. The world is viewed as separate from the church and in need of being saved. This understanding has inspired the Christianization movement in the 18th century and 19th century.⁴⁵ It is this movement, Pietism, that shaped and influenced missionaries who came to Nias.⁴⁶

The Elements of Family Worship

The available sources for the element of family worship are either very old or when recent they are from a more Evangelical perspective. Nevertheless, I make use of these resources because they provide information on how family worship was practiced at this time and illuminate why

⁴⁴ Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church: Moderatism, Pietism, and Awakening* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004).71

⁴⁵ William Cardwell Prout, "Spener and The Theology of Pietism," *Journal of Bible and Religion* 15 (1947), https://www.jstor.org/stable/1457267?seq=4#metadata_info_tab_contents.

⁴⁶ Telaumbanua and Hummel, *Cross and Adu: A Socio-Historical Study on the Encounter Between Christianity and the Indigenous Culture on Nias and the Batu Islands, Indonesia (1865-1965)*. 70-71

Nias family worship is practiced the way it is. Nias family worship is very much shaped by the missionaries who were nurtured and shaped in this old tradition.

The *Directory for Family Worship* (1647) states:

The ordinary duties comprehended under the exercise of piety which should be in families, when they are convened to that effect, are these: **First**, Prayer and praises performed with a special reference, as well to the public condition of the kirk of God and this kingdom, as to the present case of the family, and every member thereof. **Next**, Reading of the scriptures, with catechizing, that the understandings of the simpler may be the better enabled to profit under the public ordinances, and they made more capable of understanding the scriptures when they are read; together with godly conferences tending to the edification of all the members in the holiest faith.⁴⁷

In this directory, the elements of family worship are made normative and consist of prayer, praise, and reading the scripture. These are the three basic elements of family worship.

The method of performing these elements is varied. Regarding the scripture reading, in 1704, Matthew Henry argues that in family worship, the scripture should be read ultimately by the father. If children are the ones reading it, this is treating the scripture like a school book. But when the father is the one reading it, there is solemnity and authority.⁴⁸ Several years later, Alexander emphasizes the idea that only the father, as the head of the family and thus worship leader, is fit to read the scripture. Furthermore, Alexander discourages the reading of the scripture in rotation in which each person is responsible for certain verses of the scripture. In his opinion, this creates a lot of interruption and belittles the scripture as "no one even thinks of reading any secular paragraph of lively interest, such as a letter, or news from Mexico, in this manner."⁴⁹

⁴⁷ "The Directory of Family Worship" (n.d.), <https://thewestminsterstandard.org/directory-for-family-worship/>.

⁴⁸ Matthew Henry, *A Church in the House* (Texas: Gideon House Books, 2015). 18

⁴⁹ James W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Family Worship* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847).

A lot has happened in society since the 18th century so that the idea to have only the father who can read the scripture in family worship is no longer the prevailing practice for today. More recent writers have expressed different opinions. Joel R. Beeke, for example, a professor of Systematic Theology and Homiletics at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in his book *Family Worship* (2009) insists that scripture reading should involve all the family members, even when the children cannot read yet. In his opinion, various portions of the scripture reading should be assigned to family members. Preschool children can sit on the lap of the parents and the parents can whisper a few words at a time into the child's ear and ask the child to repeat them aloud. One of two verses "read" in this manner is sufficient for a preschooler to feel included in the family. The older children can be assigned a full reading, one for one child each day. In this way, the children will learn to read the Bible articulately, with expression, and with reverence.⁵⁰

In terms of selecting the passage, some Puritan writers in the 18th century suggest focusing on daily reading of Psalms and Proverbs since these are considered edifying books.⁵¹ A classic author on family worship, James A. Alexander (1804-1859), a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary and a Presbyterian preacher, suggests that the Old Testament should be read in the evening, and the New Testament should be read in the morning.⁵² The more recent view presented by Joel R. Beeke, however, recommends the selection is done based on the age level of family members.⁵³ Donald S. Whitney, a professor of Biblical Spirituality and Associate Dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in his book *Family Worship: In the Bible, In History, and Your Home* (2015), suggests that various devotional books can be incorporated in family worship, materials such as *Upper Room*, *Our Daily Bread*, etc. because

⁵⁰ Joel R. Beeke, *Family Worship*, second ed. (Michigan: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009). 16

⁵¹ Henry, *A Church in the House*. 17

⁵² Alexander, *Thoughts on Family Worship*.

⁵³ Joel R. Beeke, *Family Worship*, second ed. (Michigan: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009). 12

these materials already contain a scripture text and a reflection. Furthermore, he says that an explanation should be provided for any words that the children may not understand.⁵⁴

On the element of singing, 18th century writers suggest that only psalmody be sung during family worship.⁵⁵ Most recent writers welcome the variety of music genres to be sung in family worship. Peter R. Schemm, a faculty member of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, expresses that hymns and praise worship songs are also great to be sung in family worship, along with psalmody. He argues that the teaching of faith when it is sung can affect deeply, conveying the sense of delight and emotion in us.⁵⁶ Furthermore, he says that the selected songs or hymns should be theologically rich, gospel-centered, and soul-satisfying.⁵⁷ Remembering the children, Donald Whitey recommends that for families with small children, children's songs should also be sung. It is up to the families whether to sing a different song each time, or sing the same song for a week in order to learn it.⁵⁸

In the 18th century, the debate on praying is centered on the issue of extemporaneous prayer or set form prayer. Alexander argues that "the best of all prayers in the family, as everywhere else, are those which proceed without a book." For him, a set form of praying has a risk of "ritual coldness and emptiness. Spontaneous prayer, on the other hand, facilitates a more intimate and close relationship with God and more dependence on the Holy Spirit."⁵⁹ Many Puritans share the same view with Alexander about set form prayer, so that many of them rejected use the Book of Common Prayer in worship. However, Alexander admitted that for certain situations, a set form of prayer is allowed, especially when a person has difficulty

⁵⁴ Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Illinois: Crossway, 2016). 41

⁵⁵ Kerry Ptacek, *Family Worship: Biblical Basis, Historical Reality, Current Need* (Birmingham: Covenant Family Fellowship, 1995). 74

⁵⁶ Peter R. Schemm, "Habits of A Gospel-Centered Household," in *Trained in the Fear of God: Family Ministry in Theological, Historical, and Practical Perspective*, ed. Randi Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (USA: Kregel, 2011). 187

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 187

⁵⁸ Whitney, *Family Worship*. 42

⁵⁹ Alexander, *Thoughts on Family Worship*.

organizing and articulating thoughts concisely. In this situation, it is better to have a set form of prayer than no prayer at all.⁶⁰

On the other hand, those who are inclined towards a set form of prayer believe that the Holy Spirit must have been working in written prayer too. There are best-scripted prayers recorded in the Bible, such as Psalm 121, Romans 8:26-39, Col.1:3-14.⁶¹ At present, both of these forms are applied in family worship, depending on the family. Joel Beeke claims that both are good and neither is superior to the other, and thus in family worship, both ways are permitted. Furthermore, he suggests that the content of family prayers should express the concern of family members and things that affect their life together as a family preferably not for more than 5 minutes, and children's names and their needs one by one should be mentioned on a daily basis.⁶²

For family worship to be meaningful, Joel Beeke articulates certain principles to be observed, such as family worship should be brief, otherwise the children will be restless and provoked to anger, it should be consistent so that no excuses are made to avoid family worship, and it should show hopeful solemnity in which hope and awe, fear and faith, repentance and confidence are balanced.⁶³

The sources indicate that elements of family worship formulated in the *Directory of Family Worship* in the 17th century – scripture reading, singing, and praying – are still retained in the present although the manner of implementing them is very much dependent on every family. What seems to be a great change in the practice of family worship is the shift of leadership in family worship from a father to all family members. The present practice of family members encourages sharing leadership and participation among family members.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Schemm, "Habits of A Gospel-Centered Household." 188

⁶² Beeke, *Family Worship*. 18

⁶³ Alexander, *Thoughts on Family Worship*.

The Meaning of Family Worship

The second part of the research question deals with the description of the meaning of family worship. The word "meaning" here refers to the significance and the impact of family worship in people's lives. It tries to explain what family worship does in the life of family members. Martin Stringer stresses that the meaning of worship is primarily found in the performance or the acting out of worship, and not in the text of worship. The ordinary members of the congregation, Martin Stringer argues, did not "understand" the liturgy in theological terms at all because their understanding was shaped more by their life problems. Martin Stringer concludes that the meaning of worship is situated in the minds of those who participate in it.⁶⁴ In this part, I explore what people have said or understood to be the meaning of family worship throughout time.

J.H. Merle d'Aubigne, a classic church historian, also wrote a book on *Family Worship* (1827) which has been continuously republished till now. In that book, he proposes that the significance of family worship lies in the fact that it brings glory to God. He also argues that "domestic piety will prevent all these evils" because parents' teaching about God will restrain children from doing bad things. Family worship brings real joy in the home, a source of consolation during trying times. As family members "live not only to the opinion of men but also to the judgment of God," they influence the world.⁶⁵ J.W. Alexander points out that family worship is a means of intellectual improvement as it is a precious blessing when family members amazingly come together despite all differences.⁶⁶ Sharing from a personal

⁶⁴ Martin Stringer, "Text, Context, and Performance: Hermeneutics and the Study of Worship," *Scottish Journal of Theology* (2000). 366

⁶⁵ J.H. Merle D'Aubigne, *Family Worship* (USA: Chapel Library, 2001). 7-11

⁶⁶ Alexander, *Thoughts on Family Worship*.

experience, John G. Paton testifies in “Memories of Family Worship” that family worship laid the solid rock foundations of his religious life.⁶⁷ John Randolph shares a similar testimony as quoted by Hallock in his book *Christ in the Home*. He said, "I should have been an atheist had it not been for the recollection and memory of the time when my mother used to take my little hand."⁶⁸

These insights remain, despite tremendous changes in society. Writing in this century, Joel R. Beeke remarks that "strong bonds established in the family worship in early years may be a great help to teens in years to come. These teens may be spared from many sins when recalling family prayers and worship."⁶⁹ Another writer, Pastor Jason Helopoulos, the assistant pastor of University Reformed Church, in his book *A Neglected Grace* (2013), states that the meaning of family worship focuses on shaping the home around God's grace. It is a way of showing honor and glorifying God. Furthermore, it binds the family together, encouraging peace in the home and equipping the children for corporate worship.⁷⁰

Reflecting on what has been said on the meaning of family worship, we can see that it is aligned with the understanding of family worship as a practice that contains faithful witness of God's redemptive mission. As people articulate what this practice means in their life, they express their faith in God and affirm that they have been shaped by this practice.

⁶⁷ John G. Paton, “Memories of Family Worship,” *Free Grace Broadcaster*, no. 188 (2004), <https://chapellibrary.org:8443/api/books/download?code=fworfg&format=pdf>.

⁶⁸ G.B.F. Hallock, *Christ in the Home* (Chicago: The Glad Tidings Publishing Company, 1911).

⁶⁹ Beeke, *Family Worship*. 27

⁷⁰ Jason Helopoulos, *A Neglected Grace: Family Worship in the Christian Home* (Michigan: Christian Focus, 2013). 41-49

The Context of Nias Families

To understand the context of Nias families concerning their practice of family worship, I look briefly into the history of Christianity in Nias, covering the formative process undertaken by the missionaries before their mission works, then the highlights of the conversion process, and the present situation of the Nias church and Nias families.

At present, the majority of the Nias population are Christians, amounting to 90% of the total population. The rest of the people are Moslems, Hindus, and Buddhists. Two mission organizations serve Nias Island. One is the Rhenish Mission (RM), and the other is the Dutch Lutheran Mission (DLM). The Rhenish Mission is centered in Wuppertal, Germany, while the Dutch Lutheran Mission is centered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.⁷¹ At first, Nias was not part of the mission field of the Rhenish Mission. However, Ernst Denninger, who was RM's missionary in Borneo, courageously decided to go to Nias when he escaped the revolt against all Europeans in Kalimantan.⁷² Later on, RM completely supported and approved his action. Ernst Denninger, with his family, arrived on September 27, 1865, in Gunungsitoli, Nias.⁷³ Thirty years later, DLM also sends its missionaries, but they focus on serving in the Batu Islands region.⁷⁴ The relationship between these two organizations is complicated, but somehow, they can maintain cooperation.⁷⁵

Telaumbanua and Hummel, in their book *Cross and Adu*, state that RM is strongly influenced by the Pietist and revivalist movements.⁷⁶ It is a union of smaller mission societies that agreed to consolidate in 1828,⁷⁷ They are supported by congregations which are partly

⁷¹ Telaumbanua and Hummel, *Cross and Adu: A Socio-Historical Study on the Encounter Between Christianity and the Indigenous Culture on Nias and the Batu Islands, Indonesia (1865-1965)*. 1

⁷² Ibid. 95

⁷³ Ibid. 97

⁷⁴ Ibid. 69

⁷⁵ Ibid. 82-83

⁷⁶ Ibid. 70-71

⁷⁷ Ibid. 75-76

Lutheran and partly Calvinist denominations. The training for missionaries is mostly done in the Barmen institute.⁷⁸ What is stressed in the formation period is biblical preaching (rejecting rational-historical-biblical criticism), personal relationship to God, the coming of God's Kingdom, salvation through the blood of Christ, the influential role of the laity, rejection of formal liturgies and pre-formulated prayers.⁷⁹ Their reference books, along with the Bible, are *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan and *The Little Book of the Heart* by Johannes E. Gossner, which later on are also translated in the Niassan language.⁸⁰ There is also a tendency to associate Christianity with Western civilization. Friedrich Fabri, one of the directors of the Barmen institute, said that "part of the task of missionaries is to bring more advanced culture to heathens. He had to root out whatever was incompatible with Christianity and adjust indigenous culture to the level of the colonial order."⁸¹ This formation shapes the way missionaries do mission on Nias Island.

Deeply rooted in the spirit of ancestor worship, Niassans show great resistance to Christianity in the early encounters with the missionaries. Conflicts with missionaries are unavoidable. However, missionaries continue to preach and to teach the gospel. They share medication, new farming techniques, and teach the population, especially the young people, to read and to write as a first step toward winning the people for Christ. Telaumbanua and Hummel observe that some missionaries show a more tolerant attitude toward Nias traditional culture than others, but in general, missionaries think that Nias culture is backward.⁸² In 1872, 25 Niassans are baptized for the first time. These numbers increase as missionaries successfully penetrate the entire island in the bid to Christianize it.⁸³ The missionaries instruct that "in every Christian family, the oldest man (in the rare case, the oldest woman) would lead simple

⁷⁸ Ibid. 83

⁷⁹ Ibid. 72, 76

⁸⁰ Ibid. 72-73

⁸¹ Ibid. 86

⁸² Ibid. 186-187

⁸³ Ibid. 109

devotions in the morning and the evening. He (she) would remind the younger members of the family of their religious duties, such as attending Sunday service."⁸⁴ It seems that this is the origin of the practice of Christian family worship in Nias.

Very early on, the missionaries began to train some Niassans to assist them in teaching. After the first congregations had been founded, some of the responsibility was delegated to local leaders, at first mainly to the Christian chiefs, but later extended to the teacher-preacher and elders.⁸⁵ Then in March 1906, the first Niassan minister is ordained.⁸⁶ In 1915-1930, great repentance occurred. At this time, many Niassans experience strong feelings of guilt, and soberly confess before the missionaries or local leaders.⁸⁷ This confession is often accompanied by charismatic manifestations such as visionary dreams, prophecy, speaking in tongues, crying, screaming, fainting and trance.⁸⁸ Within a short time, many Niassans are converted to Christianity. By 1930, Christianity had become the strongest religion on the island, and the primal religion had almost disappeared from public life.⁸⁹ However, some Niassans still practice the traditional religion secretly. Beliefs in the ancestor spirits are still so strong that up to now occultism is still one of the main challenges encountered by the pastors in the ministry.

During the years 1930-1936, the missionaries and Niassan leaders prepared to establish a church organization in Nias that is self-supporting, which means no longer financially dependent on the Rhenish Mission, self-governing, which means to be in full charge of the organization and have a set of church orders, and self-propagating, which refers to the ability to witness God's love to the larger community. Finally, in 1936, a church organization is established in Nias with the name "Banua Niha Keriso Protestant (BNKP)" or "Protestant

⁸⁴ Ibid. 111

⁸⁵ Ibid. 112

⁸⁶ Ibid. 125

⁸⁷ Ed. Kriele, "The Nias Revival: The Story of A Spiritual Awakening," *International Review of Mission* 16, no. 1 (1927). 95

⁸⁸ Andrew Beatty, "The Tell-Tale Heart: Conversion and Emotion in Nias," *Ethnos* 77 (2012). 310-315

⁸⁹ Telaumbanua and Hummel, *Cross and Adu: A Socio-Historical Study on the Encounter Between Christianity and the Indigenous Culture on Nias and the Batu Islands, Indonesia (1865-1965)*. 160

Christian Church of Nias." This church organization is acknowledged by the Dutch colonial government in 1938. In the meantime, the organizing process is also taking place in Batu Island, resulting in the establishment of an organization called "Banua Keriso Protestant (BKP) or Independent Protestant Christian Church of Batu Island" in 1945. Later on, in 1960, BKP merged with BNKP.⁹⁰

Through time, BNKP experiences severe splits several times with various causes.⁹¹ Nevertheless, BNKP remains the most prominent church organization on the island. At present, BNKP has 546,550 church members, with 1,106 local churches, served by 592 pastors. Congregations are not only located in Nias but scattered all over Indonesia.⁹²

Most Nias families reside on Nias Island. It is located in the south-west of the Province of North Sumatra, around 85 nautical miles off the west coast of Sumatra, which lies in the Indian Ocean. Geographically, Nias Island lies between 0° 12' - r 32' North Latitude and 97°- 98'; East Longitude. Nias Island is the largest of the 132 islands, which make up the Nias region (some islands are not inhabited) with an area of 5,449.70 km, around 120 km long and 45 km wide.⁹³ Administratively, the island is part of North Sumatra province.

As an archipelago, Nias Island is blessed with a beautiful landscape, an attractive combination of lovely beaches, big waves, and green forest. Surfing competitions are organized now and then. The island is one of the tourist destinations of Indonesia. However, the geographical location also brings significant challenges. As the island sits on the geologically active Pacific Ring of Fire, the island is regularly hit by earthquakes, tsunami, and landslides. The major quakes and tsunamis in recent years happened in 2005 and killed almost 1000 inhabitants of the islands and destroyed 90% of the infrastructure.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 189-196

⁹¹ Ibid. 223-233

⁹² Data taken from BNKP Synod Office

⁹³ Lucas Partanda Oestoro and Ketut Wiradnyana, *Megalithic Traditions in Nias Island* (Medan: Medan Archeological Office, 2007). 12

The statistics of 2019 indicate that Nias Island is populated by 756,338 people, spread in five administrative regions: Nias District, South Nias District, North Nias District, West Nias District, and Gunungsitoli. The island is multi-cultural. Although the dominant ethnic group is formed by Niassans, many other ethnicities are living on the island, such as Bataknesse, Javanese, Chinese, Buginese, Minang, etc.

The majority of Nias families live in the villages and work as farmers. Agriculture is the most important source of income for most of the population. The main commodity of this island is rubber, cacao, coconut, bananas, from which they extract the patchouli oil used for the production of cosmetics like perfumes. They also grow rice, sweet potatoes, yam, cassava, corn, and various vegetables and fruits. Nias families also raise livestock, such as pigs, chickens, and goats. Preferred domestic animals are pigs as pigs must be served in all traditional ceremonies, not only for food but also as payment and value measurement in social interaction. Almost all Nias families raise pigs, and thus they are severely affected when pig disease occurs. The method of farming is traditional, very much dependent on nature. The production is too little so that Nias still imports most of its agricultural goods from other districts in North Sumatra. Other Nias families are fishermen. Surrounded by sea, the island has an abundance of fish, shrimps, crabs, and other sea products. However, this fishery sector has not also been fully cultivated for the welfare of the people. The rest of the population are government employees, merchants, and entrepreneurs.

UNICEF in 2006 reported that Nias is one of the poorest regions in Indonesia.⁹⁴ In the Nias District, poverty affects 18% of the total population, while in South Nias, it affects around 19% of the total population. In Gunungsitoli, this is 25%, while in the regions of West Nias and North Nias the numbers are much higher at 30% and 33% respectively.⁹⁵ In 2019 the level

⁹⁴ Eko Nugroho, *Socio-Economic Conditions of Moderately and Mildly Malnourished Children Admitted in Specific Intervention Programs in Nias Island, Indonesia* (Malang: UB Press, 2012). 10

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

of unemployment in the entire island reached 13,63%, the highest in North Sumatra province.⁹⁶ Many families experience financial difficulties. To have a better life, many Niassans find work outside the island. However, most of them end up in the palm oil plantations as laborers of the big companies, who give them a meager salary.

Poverty manifests itself in the education level of Nias families. The statistics show that in 2019, 57.33% of the Nias population had never gone to school.⁹⁷ Many people do not know how to read and write. The school facilities are poor. Textbooks are very limited.

Nias Island is also left behind in terms of health service availability. The island has long been known to be endemic for malaria, typhus, and dengue. Many children suffer from malnutrition and stunted growth. For the whole island, there are two hospitals, with a limited number of doctors and nurses. The situation is even worse in the countryside, as there are no doctors or nurses available there. Furthermore, many areas are not reachable by car, only by motorcycle and on foot. The roads are bad, especially during the rainy season. Electricity is also rare in the countryside.

The coming of the internet to the island has also influenced the life situation of families. Some influences are positive, such as being more connected to the outside world after being isolated for many years, acquiring more information, more promotion of the island for people outside. The negative influences are the shift of social values, the increase in violence, the increase in drug addicts, etc. Nevertheless, many Nias families still treasure religious and family values.

⁹⁶ Nias statistic office

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Chapter 3

Presentation of Empirical Research

Introduction

The previous chapter contained a literature review on the history, elements, and meaning of family worship as well as an overview of the context of the families of the Nias congregation. This chapter shows the result of empirical research on the practice of family worship in Nias. It tries to answer the research question on the description of family worship and the meaning of family worship as perceived by family members. The presentation begins with a profile of the informants, the process of arriving at the result, followed by a discussion on the result within the framework of four voices theology, and lastly the conclusion.

Profile of Informants⁹⁸

The result of this research is very much influenced by the background and the context of the informants. Thus, a profile of eight informants who have been interviewed for this study is provided. Their names are pseudonyms.

1. Candra

He is 74 years old, a father of five children, and grandfather of nine grandchildren. He and his wife are currently staying with one of their sons' family in the village. His son has 5 children, aging from 6 to 12 years old. He is an elementary school graduate, working as a farmer. He is still physically strong, and still able to farm. The son, he is living with works as a mechanic in a motorcycle repair shop. All his children are in school. The rest of the family members work on their family farm.

⁹⁸ The real names are listed on the informed consent form.

2. **Wati**

She is 72 years old, and has a son and five grandchildren. Currently she is staying with her son's family. She became a widow when her son was still a small boy. Working as a farmer, she has spent most of her life in the village. She had no opportunity to go to school. Around two years ago, she had a serious health problem. So, the son asked her to stay with them in the city. The son works as a merchant. His wife helps him with the bookkeeping of the store. His children are in college and high school.

3. **Ariel**

He is 42 years old, a father of four children aged between 2 and 11 years old. He is a Christian education lecturer in one of the colleges in Nias, while his wife is a nurse. His old mother also stays with them together with four students who are boarding with them.

4. **Neni**

She is 46 years old, a mother of two daughters, the eldest is 13 years old and the youngest is 7 years old. She and her husband also work as lecturers. She teaches Social Science. They live with two college students who are boarding with them.

5. **Kurnia**

She is a college graduate, 23 years old, currently having her internship in one of the community organizations. She lives with her parents and her youngest sister. There are five children in the family but the other two siblings have married and thus have their own families, while the other one is studying outside Nias Island.

6. Yamo

He is 35 years old, a father of two sons, between 2 and 5 years old. At the time of the interview, he had been away from his family for 3 years, finishing his Master's program in Java. His family is still in Nias. In the interview, he shares the practice of family worship in his family when he was not married yet. So, his feedback is more from the perspective of a child in the family.

7. Gita

She is a 20-year-old college student, in her last year. She is living with her parents and her oldest sister. Her father works as a government employee and her mother is a housewife. Her oldest sister is also government-employed.

8. Timo

He is 15 years old, a junior high school student. He lives with his parents together with his 3 siblings. Both of his parents are government employed.

Result of Empirical Research

To answer the research question, I followed three basic steps of data analysis in the qualitative research as explained in chapter 1, consisting of the coding phase, the categorizing phase, and lastly, the formulating themes phase. In the first step (coding phase), I have 70 descriptive codes and 92 in vivo codes (appendix 2).

In the second step (categorizing phase), I sort out the data by consolidating similar information. I come up with 8 categories in describing family worship (RQ 1), namely: the participants of worship, the act of worship, the circumstances of worship, the structure of

worship, the relationship/interaction in worship, the changes in worship, faith understanding in worship, and principles in worship (appendix 3A). For research question 2, which is the meaning of family worship as perceived by family members, I come up with 6 categories, consisting of meanings that are related to the relationship within the family; meanings that are related to knowledge and skills gained (education); meanings that are related to witness (effect outside the family); meanings that are related to the understanding of God; meanings that are related to the effect of failure to practice it; and meanings that are related to the housekeeping.

Some codes overlap because I find that they fit into several categories that I have made. For example, I put the code "learn to care" in the category of relationship within the family since caring should characterize the relationship in the family. I also place it in the category of education because caring is an attitude that can be learned from family worship. I also place it in the category of witness because when we care for other people, we show God's love to them. The detailed category is found in appendix 3B.

In the third step (formulating themes), I develop several themes from categories that I have made. I develop them by looking at what is often said by the respondent as this shows its importance. I also develop them by putting together categories that share a common theme. So, I come up with several themes. For RQ 1, I develop the following themes:

1. *The circumstances of worship*

The theme "circumstances of worship" covers descriptions of intensity, time, duration, quantity, place, atmosphere, and language.

2. *The participant's participation*

This theme describes which people join the family worship and what they do. So, in this theme, I integrate the categories (1,2,5, and 8) covering descriptions of participants, their form of participation, reactions, and parents' interaction/reactions as well as instruction related to this practice.

3. *The structure of family worship*

This theme describes how family worship is conducted from the beginning to the end. Its primary concerns are elements of worship that are performed in family worship. I incorporate the “faith understanding in worship” category (category 7) RQ-2 because I find the information is very closely connected to the meaning of family worship.

For RQ-2, I come up with just one theme which is “the meaning of family worship,” but I divide it into several sub-themes consisting of:

1. *Strengthening family relationship* (Category 1-Related to relationship within the family; Category 6-Related to housekeeping)
2. *Shaping Christian life* (Category 2-Related to knowledge and skill gained; Category 4-Related to understanding of God; Category 7-Related to faith understanding)
3. *Being a witness* (Category 3-Related to witness).

Discussion on the Result: Linking Themes to Four Voices Theology

By applying qualitative analysis, the research question is answered. The themes provide information for the description of family worship in Nias. This is basic information on the circumstances, the participation, and the structure of family worship. As for the meaning of family worship, this is articulated as strengthening the family relationship, shaping Christian life, and being a witness.

Following the methodology and theological framework of practical theology, which is explained in chapter 1, these results will be reflected on further to be able to identify the significant learning of the practice. In this thesis, as also indicated in chapter 1, the reflection is aided by the four voices theology concept

In this thesis, the four voices theology is adapted by assuming that what informants say about family worship (based on the transcriptions) is the *espoused theology*, and what they do in family worship is *operant theology*. To be able to describe what they do or to be able to identify the *operant theology*, I look into what kind of theological beliefs, values, norms are embodied in what they say they do.⁹⁹ Since I, a theology student, am presenting this operant and espoused theology, I represent a formal voice from the academic sphere. Yet, my voice as well as the informant's voice is informed by the normative voice. Thus, the four voices of theology are present in this discussion. As mentioned in chapter 1, the four voices of theology are always interrelated and always overlap, though they are distinct from each other.

In this discussion, however, the focus is more on the espoused and operant voices. The normative and formal voices are implicit. Nevertheless, the voices are in conversation with each other.

A. Description of Nias Family Worship

A.1. The Circumstances of Family Worship

Christian families in Nias have been practicing family worship ever since the informants can remember. The eldest informant, Candra, said that “we already practice family worship since our great grandparents.” The practice has been successfully handed down from generation to generation as confirmed by another older informant, Wati, who states that “I have known this practice since I was a kid. My parents teach us about this practice. Then I teach my children about it. Now, my children teach my grandchildren.”

The informants reveal that family worship is done twice a day; in the morning before

⁹⁹ Bhatti et al., *Talking About God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology*. 103

going out to work and in the evening before sleeping. The specific time to do it and the length of worship depend on each family. It usually lasts from 7 to 30 minutes. The place for worship is usually the living room, but two informants, Kurnia and Ariel, indicate that when someone is sick in their family, the worship is conducted in the bedroom of a sickly member. The intention is to provide an opportunity for the sick person to join the family worship as well as to enable the family to pray for his/her sickness.

As regards the use of language in family worship, some informants reveal that they use both Niassan and bahasa Indonesia in worship. Using two languages seems to be the practice of families residing in the city as many young people in the city do not know how to speak the Niassan language anymore. Ariel explains that in his family they use both languages so that the children can speak both Niassan and bahasa Indonesia. An indication that both languages are used can be seen in the worship materials (songbooks and Bible in both languages). Most families in the rural areas, however, continue to practice family worship in the Niassan language only.

Some informants described family worship as “solemn, reverent, peaceful and calm.” The expected behavior from participants is “quiet,” as Yamo points out. However, it is not always rigid and formal. It is also “relaxing, heartwarming, full of laughter,” especially during family-talks or during unexpected interruptions from babies or small children, as Ariel shares about his 3-year-old son who asked for milk or urgently needed to go to the toilet during family worship.

From this point (description of the circumstances of family worship as explained by the informants, or the espoused voice), the discussion moves to the operant voice, trying to articulate what could be the values or theological beliefs that shape and stimulate the practice. In this circumstance of family worship, it seems that its operant theology can be connected to Deuteronomy 6. As family worship is explained as a handed-down practice, it brings up the

message in Deuteronomy 6, in which parents are required to teach the children about worshipping God faithfully, constantly, and regularly. Thus, what can be said about what families in Nias are doing is that they are obeying God's commandment to worship God faithfully, constantly, and regularly.

A.2. The Participants' Participation

The informants revealed that the participants of family worship are all people who are in the house at the time of worship, regardless of age, gender, and social status. On participants of family worship, Wati explains: "everyone in the house, father, mother, children, in-laws, grandchildren, everyone." Even "the students (boarders) who are staying with us are also invited to join family worship," says Ariel. A similar explanation is shared by Neni as she says that "now that we have students boarding in our house, we also require them to join our family worship. Sometimes relatives come and stay with us. They are also invited to join family worship."

It is the parents who impose attendance in the first place. Candra says that "if someone is not joining, I, as a father, will scold him/her." Kurnia remarks that "my parents tend to force their children and those who are staying with us for a longer period to join family worship. However, they are a little bit lenient toward guests or relatives who have just arrived and are staying with us for some days." Although family worship is compulsory, guests and other newcomers are given the freedom to decide. As Yamo says, "it is up to them." Neni observes however that "very seldom the guests reject the invitation unless they have to be somewhere else at that time." In the case that an invitation is turned down, Wati comments that "we don't sin as long as we have invited them."

Each participant is expected to be more than physically present and to share in the leadership of the worship, as Yamo elaborates, "well, usually there is one person who is assigned to lead a song, then another person is assigned to read the scripture reading, then another person is assigned to lead the intercessory prayer." Another way of leading the family worship is by assigning one person to lead all worship elements in rotation, as explained by Neni: "we just take a turn. It starts with us, parents, me and my husband. Then, my eldest daughter, then my youngest daughter, then the students who are with us. Everybody has a chance to lead family worship." The one who assigns worship leaders is usually someone older, like in the family of Wati, it is she who decides the worship leaders although her son is the head of the family. In the family of Candra, it is Candra who decides the leaders too. However, he said that "if the grandparents are physically ill or do not wish to do it, then it can be the parents who assign the worship leader."

The present situation where everyone is welcome to lead family worship is not how it looked like in the past. Candra mentions that

in the past, it is only a father who leads family worship. A father is the head of the family so he should be the one who leads the family including leading the family to worship. However, there was a time when I went outside Nias for some years to work in the palm plantation. In my absence, my wife was the one who led my small children in family worship. When I return, I felt it is nice to share this responsibility. So, I and my wife took a turn or together in leading the family worship.

There are many theological beliefs and values embedded in this participants' participation information. One of the theological beliefs shown here is the inclusivity of the worship. As everyone in the house is expected to participate in the family worship, this carries out the scriptural message that God loves everyone and that everyone is welcomed to come before God. In worship, there is no separation because of race, age, gender, etc. In God, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. The families in Nias are inclusive, open, accepting, welcoming to everyone.

The failure to extend an invitation to join family worship is even considered a sin, as indicated by Wati, one of the informants. This shows how serious and significant the act of including everyone in the worship for families in Nias is. But this conscious act of including everyone also means that everyone is not automatically part of family worship. The guests need to be invited to join the family worship. No matter how much someone wants to be part of a certain family's worship, if there is no invitation, then that person will not participate in the family worship. It is similar to the students who are boarding in a house. Without an invitation from the house owner, they will not be part of the worship. The children will not be part of family worship if they are not encouraged, or even forced by the parents, at least in the beginning. Being part of family worship can happen because somebody, generally parents, encourage, invite or force the person to join family worship. So, while the espoused voice expresses the inclusiveness of family worship, the operant voice reveals that it is not an automatic inclusiveness, at least not in the beginning.

The participation of family members in the family worship in various forms also affirms the theological understanding of worship as the work of the whole people. Worship is not only performed by the clergy, or parents, or elite people. The informants indicate that they participate by doing certain parts of the worship such as scripture reading, prayer, or song leading. The family members also participate by sharing their experiences during family-talks. They participate verbally, physically, and silently. The espoused voice is in line with the operant voice here. However, the operant voice highlights that the form of participation of family members is not only diverse but has also changed over time. The confession of Candra reveals that his way of participating in the family worship has changed from being the only leader to being one of the leaders. The wife, a woman, is allowed to lead and so are the children and other family members. The leadership of family worship, which used to be male-centered, has changed to a gender-balanced leadership. The change in the Nias community that is starting

to give way to women leadership is perhaps the reason for this change of leadership in family worship. The operant voice shows that family worship is not a practice within the four walls of a house, but it is a practice that has dynamic interaction with its context, with a wider community.

Another observation on the participants' participation is that the elders in the family should be always respected. It is true that everyone participates, but not with the same power. The elders, such as parents or grandparents, are more powerful than children. "We are the one who designate the leaders for worship," said Wati and Candra although they are no longer the head of the family since they are staying with their children. The importance of honoring the parents is reflected in family worship. Thus, Nias family worship is not a practice of equal positions. Elderly people will be always the authoritative ones, who should be listened to and respected. Showing respect to the elderly is also very much part of Nias culture. Since both the Bible and Nias culture promote this value, it is very much practiced and internalized by Nias families. In family worship, a person interacts with others based on his/her position in the family, whether you are children, or parents, or grandparents, or boarders, or guests, etc. In the past, respecting parents was shown through complete obedience and never talking back, let alone criticizing the parents. However, as indicated by Neni, her children can express criticism to them during family-talks in family worship. Neni takes this criticism positively. Neni said that

I and my husband think that there should be openness between us and children. So, we teach them not to be afraid to voice their opinions, and even criticism, but in a kind manner. So, my children can protest to their father, saying like: papa, you are always angry and angry. We do not like it. We are scared of you. My husband is made to see his high emotional temperament.

This indicates that respecting parents is expressed differently in the present time. If there is a change in the way parents and children relate with each other, then likely there is also a change in the way family members relate with and treat each other. This means that when the espoused

voice says that everyone is participating in the family worship, the operant voice shows that participating is not only about reading scripture or leading the singing, but it is also about showing who that person is in the family, and from that position, how people treat and regard each other in the family. Participation in family worship is a mirror of how family members deal with one other.

A.3. The Structure of Family Worship

Generally, informants share similar information on the structure of family worship. In the past, as Candra points out, the pattern was very simple, “it is singing, praying, and family-talks.” However, at present, family worship also integrates the elements of scripture readings and reflections/meditations on the text. Perikopen¹⁰⁰ contains suggested songs and scripture text for daily use. The younger informants talk about the pattern of family worship in this expanded framework. Yamo says that “it is always started by singing, then scripture reading, family-talks, prayer, and ended with a closing song.” Ariel also mentions that it is started with “singing, reading a meditation book that has a scripture text, discussion about the text and family-talks, praying and singing again.” Kurnia confirms the same information, that “it starts with singing, scripture reading, reflection reading, family-talks, prayer and then singing again.” This general pattern, however, has variations in its practice, depending on the situation of the family. The variations indicate the differences in the morning and evening family worship. Yamo says that in the evening worship, they have a longer time for discussion. Ariel shares that “in the evening worship, the structure depends on the situation. Sometimes we sing, but sometimes not. We focus more on sharing and talking to each other. Then we pray.” Neni indicates that her family does not have a fixed pattern for family worship. In her family, they

¹⁰⁰ Perikopen is a lectionary that the BNKP church uses, containing scripture texts, suggested songs, and themes for Sunday worship as well as daily worship.

do prayer, scripture reading, singing, and family-talks but it can start with whatever element and elements can be selected. It is not necessary to use all elements in every family worship. The selection of elements depends on the situation and the choice of the worship leader.

Below is detailed information concerning the practice of family worship elements.

On Prayer

Regarding the element of prayer, Yamo mentions that the content of the family prayer usually not only concerns the needs and the life of their family but also concerns the leaders, authorities, the poor, and the marginalized in the community. Kurnia explains that whatever comes up during the family discussion should be the topic of family prayer. The family also prays for their relatives and loved ones. Ariel's family usually offers a thanksgiving prayer, then prays for the wider society, neighbors, and relatives. Wati emphasizes that the prayer should express gratitude to God for saving and redeeming their lives, asking God's forgiveness, and praying for the welfare of relatives and the wider community. Most of the prayers are ended by reciting the Lord's Prayer. All informants said that the prayers are extemporaneous prayers and that all family members can lead the prayer.

On Singing

On singing, all interviewees express that they usually use Buku Zinuno¹⁰¹ or Kidung Jemaat.¹⁰² Each family has different criteria on how to select the songs. Neni mentions that it depends on the leaders. In Ariel's case, they use Buku Zinuno in the morning and just follow the numbering of songs in sequence. In the evening, they use Kidung Jemaat, charismatic songs, and even children's songs. The charismatic songs are praise and worship songs that are usually sung in Pentecostal congregations. Many young people prefer these songs. In Candra's

¹⁰¹ Worship songbook in Nias language

¹⁰² Worship songbook in the Indonesian language

case, his family only uses Buku Zinuno and songs are selected based on the time (whether it is morning or evening) and also on the liturgical year. In Kurnia and Yamo' families, it is their mother who usually picks the songs for them because their mother is good at singing. Many informants express that they like and enjoy singing. It is not only about the melody of the songs, but the lyrics of the songs are very important too. Gita and Timo share that their favorite songs are based on the lyrics of the songs that touch their hearts.

On Scripture Reading

The Bible may be read in bahasa Indonesia or in the Niassan language, depending on the families. To select the text, the families make use of two sources, namely Perikopen and various reflection books.¹⁰³ The scripture reading can be read entirely by one person alone, as practiced in the family of Yamo, or by assigning one to two verses to each person, as practiced in the families of Neni, Kurnia, and Ariel. This followed by a reading from a reflection books for those families who want to use it. No one is asked or obliged to expound or to explain the meaning of the text. Not even the parents or the elders who are considered authoritative. The scripture is to be read, But its explanation is believed to be granted by the Holy Spirit in the heart of every family member. As some of the informants indicate, "the Holy Spirit will guide and enlighten to understand."

On Family-Talks

Family-talk is usually about the sharing of family members' experiences during the day. It can be about their activities, their feelings, their challenges, their relationship with other people, their questions, their funny encounters, as well as their aspirations. The parents also

¹⁰³ Books such as Manna Sorgawi, Roti Hidup, etc. In English, this book is similar to the Daily Bread or Living Water reflection books.

sometimes make use of this opportunity to give parental advice, instructions, or reminders to the entire household, particularly to their children. Yamo highlights how his father keeps reminding them about setting aside some food for beggars on a monthly basis to show love to other people. Important announcements or special messages are conveyed in this moment of family-talk. Yamo, further, shares that his father, who has always remained a strong manly character as defined by Nias culture, finally, breaks down as he sobs in tears telling about his pain and anguish at the passing away of his eldest daughter. A crying father is a weak father, but Yamo's father trusts his family enough to show his vulnerability during family-talks within family worship. The parents also sometimes use the opportunity of family-talks to reconcile their children who are discovered to be in dispute with each other. The conflicts are talked through and resolved. Candra's family has a habit of incorporating housekeeping during family-talks. During family-talks, they talk about who is going to farm, which farm will be attended to, who will stay in the house, who will go to the market, etc. Neni's family integrates relationship evaluation in family-talks. As a mother, she evaluates how she has behaved toward other family members during the day. It is the same thing with her husband, children, and other family members. Open critiques of each other are allowed, like moments when her children critique her and her husband for not practicing what they have been saying. She also mentions that sometimes during the family-talks they discuss the scripture text that was read.

The structure and the practice of family worship elements are very familiar to all family members. Most of the informants say that they invest very little time to prepare for family worship. This is in contradiction with the suggestion of some Evangelical family ministry literature that insists that family members should take time to sit down, discuss, and agree on how to proceed with family worship, such as: how many times a day, for how long, who will lead, what songs book are used, etc. Nias families do not discuss these things. Everyone has an idea of how to do it because the parents pass down this practice to them. Neni says that

"Everyone knows...we just follow the way we are taught by our parents before...we know how to do it." According to Yamo, the needed preparation just involves choosing the songs and the scripture text before all other members have gathered. Nevertheless, knowing what to do is one thing, applying what is known is another. Gita, for example, admits that she often gets annoyed when she has to stop watching cartoons because her parents call her for family worship. Ariel and Neni also share that they remind the children to turn off or silence the handphone during family worship. Neni explains that "we want our children to learn to focus during family worship. We expect them to follow what we are doing in family worship. If we sing, they sing. If we pray, they pray." These kind parental reminders reveal that it is quite a struggle to orient the children to get into this practice. Their attention and interest are lured to many things, such as handphones, TV, games, etc. Thus, family worship may look like a given practice, something that everyone knows about, but knowing does not mean it is automatically practiced. The parents play a significant role in introducing this practice as a compulsory practice and not optional, until it becomes an integrated part of the life of family members.

Reflecting on the structure of Nias family worship, it is easy to detect that it conforms to the Puritan church policy formulated in the *Directory of Westminster Family Worship* (1647) and also American Evangelical writings on family worship. At present, Nias family worship generally employs the three basic elements mentioned in this literature, namely singing, scripture reading, and praying.

However, alongside these elements (singing, reading, praying), families in Nias also practice family-talks as part of family worship. A family-talk seems a very natural and ordinary happening in every family. Familiarity perhaps makes it tend to be overlooked easily. Yet, the respondents acknowledge that it is practiced as part of their family worship. As this element is not mentioned in the literature as an element of family worship or as part of the structure of

family worship, but is consistently practiced by the informants, it may be worthwhile to examine this element further in the next chapter.

B. The Meaning of Family Worship

For the research question on the meaning of family worship, the collected data reveals three responses, namely: strengthening the family relationship, shaping Christian life, and being a witness. These collective responses are quite straightforward answers as indicated in the interview.

B.1. Strengthening Family Relationship

All informants emphasize that the meaning of family relationship for them is related to family worship as a way of strengthening relationship among family members. Ariel says that “family worship is about having fellowship with family members. It is a time to meet and to talk with my children.” Neni indicates that “the family worship is an opportunity to be with my husband and children and students in my house, to catch up with each other. If there is no family worship, there is little communication among us because we are all very busy from morning to evening. Family worship gives an opportunity for us to interact with each other.” Timo expresses much the same when he says that “family worship is significant because this is a time to gather and to share with other family members.”

This strong connection with each other is mainly built through conversation or talking with each other which usually focuses on sharing one’s activities, experiences, feelings and reflections on the scripture text. Gita says that

even when we do not share about the scripture text, we can share about our activities, our experiences, people we meet during the day, our plans, etc. Our parents usually confront our attitudes during family worship. They usually say something like this: I notice you often come late from school this week, what happened? Another time, my sister will report to my parents that she saw me walking with a boy today, and that must

be my boyfriend. I know she is just teasing me, but I get easily provoked. At the end, I find myself laughing with them. We joke and tease a lot during family worship, and that makes the bonding among us stronger.

Kurnia mentions that in her family they hold family discussions. They want to share even just in brief what has happened during the day. Ariel said that through this practice of sharing the family members learn to care, to support, and to listen to each other. Furthermore, Yamo shares that family worship can strengthen family relationship because it can be a time of reconciliation. Yamo says: that

We sometimes quarrel. Especially among us, the siblings. We are six children in the family. And we do not get along well all the time. There are times when we fight and we do not want to talk to each other. When we come to family worship, we are quiet to each other. My parents can detect that there is something wrong. So, during the discussion time in the family worship, my parents will find out the problem and they help us to make peace with each other. Later on, during the prayer this issue will also be prayed for. So, family worship is a reconciliation time for us.

Reflecting on what the informants said on the meaning of family worship as strengthening family relationship, it shows a conscious effort of family members to promote the basic Christian values of loving and caring for each other. It takes into account what the scripture says, that a family should be “a brother’s keeper” for each other (Gen.4:9; Ephesians 6:1-4). The element of family-talks seems play significant role in this relationship building and connection among family members. Family-talks facilitate or condition family members to have regular conversation where they can learn to understand and develop a sense of sympathy and care with each other. This shows the social dimension of family worship. It binds family members together. It can be imagined that if family worship is not practiced, then the family has also lost a stable or consistent opportunity to talk and to relate with each other.

However, how honestly and freely can a family member can talk in these family-talks? The Nias context as explained in chapter 2 is a patriarchal community. The Nias community also values seniority as indicated in the interview with Chandra and Neni. How possible is it for a wife to speak her mind in a patriarchal community? Or how possible is it for children to

disagree with their elders? Neni, in the interview, acknowledges that the practice in her family of allowing her children to critique their parents is not common. Since family members live together with people who have different interests and perspectives, are family-talks always able to resolve conflicts and become moments of reconciliation? In light of differences, don't they stimulate disruption? This indicates that there are many layers of family-talks which are not very visible in this research. The espoused voice may appear to be very positive about family worship because of the background of informants in this research. Operant theology, however, shows that family worship may not be always very positive, very easy, and very ideal to all families in Nias.

B.2. Shaping Christian Life

Many of the respondents express that the meaning of family worship is related to a process of being shaped into a Christian lifestyle. Ariel says that “family worship is nourishing Christian faith in our life. We will be very careful of our speech, our actions, our thoughts, because we are always reminded by God’s Word, through the scripture, prayers, and songs.” Gita states that “family worship is a way to be molded into Christian faith. It shapes me to be a prayerful person. It shapes me to be someone who is reflectively connecting the daily-life happenings with God's Word. I learn a lot about God through songs, prayers, and scripture reading.” Wati expresses that “family worship teaches us to have self-control. When we have self-control, we will refrain from doing things that are hurtful to our friends and God.”

The respondents acknowledge that the parents play a significant role in getting them into the practice of family worship. Kurnia and Theo mention learning songs and praying through family worship. Yamo says “the key here is the parents. The parents are the ones who introduce the children to family worship.” A similar view is stated by Neni, who says that

“parents educate children about Christian faith.” Candra says, “family worship is an opportunity to pass on faith to children.”

Timo mentions that sometimes he does not understand the scripture reading or the reflection which is read during the family worship. When he asked his parents about it, his parents said that it is all right, because he is still very young. Later on, he will understand it. Candra says that in his family, a scripture text is not explained or elaborated, but is simply read out. He says, “the scripture speaks for itself. The Holy Spirit will translate and enable us to understand and to practice it in our daily life.”

These insights from informants indicate the kind of learning or education that takes place in family worship. They acquire certain character traits, such as prayerfulness, self-control, faithfulness and strength. They also acquire skills, such as singing and praying. They also gain knowledge of God through elements of family worship. This learning is acquired by participating in the family worship. It is learning by experience and placing so much emphasis on the work of the Spirit. The families do not feel much need to elaborate or to explain what the scripture texts are saying. The interpretation is left to each person’s interpretation under the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

This kind of learning seems to be inherited from Pietism movements. The Reformation placed great emphasis on rationality and cognitive worship as shown for example in Martin Luther’s effort to write a catechism, an example which was also followed by John Calvin. Many Reformers engaged in discussions and debates on right doctrines and interpretations. Pietism is a reaction to this kind of debate. This movement appreciates the rational aspect of faith but finds it more important to experience a close relationship with God. The operant voice suggests that the kind of learning in family worship is prompted by Pietist values.

When the informants are asked about what they feel when they fail to practice family worship, Yamo says that he "did not feel good, not at peace, something was not right when I

did not participate in family worship." Ariel says that in his experience "when we do not do family worship, we lose an opportunity to nourish intimacy with family members. We are not ready to face challenges in life. We easily get hopeless and despair because we rely so much on ourselves. We also lose the opportunity to introduce the Christian values and stories to our children." Neni gives a similar answer. She says that "she feels empty, not at peace, not whole, feeling lost." The answer indicates that the practice of family worship has been internalized or integrated well in the life of informants.

However, when the informants are asked about the difference between the practice of family worship before and now, some of them express that unlike in the past when all families practiced family worship, now many young families do not practice it anymore. This situation raises a question: how can a practice decline that is considered meaningful and important? If it gives strength and a peaceful life, why do people do not want it? Here there seems inconsistency between the espoused and operant voices.

B.3. Being a Witness of God's Love

Many respondents indicate that the meaning of family worship is related to being a witness of God's love. Wati says that "we sing and pray because we want to give thanks to God for protection and blessing." Yamo says that "through family worship, I am taught to show compassion and love to people outside my family circles. We pray for our personal and family needs, but my father always asks us to pray first for other people." Ariel points out that "when people sing out loudly praising God, people around listen about God." Candra says that "when our families are united, are in harmony, people will see that the Holy Spirit is in our midst. It becomes a testimony to other people."

The respondents seem to relate family worship with making known God's love to other people. Through family worship, the respondents acknowledge what God has done in their

lives and by practicing it they share this conviction with others. They share it by “praying for other people, by singing loud about God, and by living a life of harmony in the family.” The theological values behind this view are very strong as scripture instructs every Christian to show God’s love to others, to make known God’s deeds to other people, to be a witness of God’s love. However, it can be asked further how powerful the practice of family worship is as a witness of God’s love. Does the family that prays and sings together truly share God’s love? Christianity is the biggest religion in the island, almost 90% of the population are Christian (ch. 2). In this Christian island, social problems such as crime, poverty, unemployment, etc. are very serious. If the espoused voice is placed into a conversation with the context of the people, the tension is palpable. How come the rate of violence is high in a Christian island? How come corruption is rife in a place where family worship is consistently practiced? Has God’s love truly been shared and witnessed in this situation?

Conclusion

Regarding the research question, it can be said that the description of family worship in Nias very much resembles the description of family worship in the *Directory of Family Worship* from 1647. However, there is a practice that is not mentioned in this directory but is found among families in Nias, and that is family-talk.

On the meaning of family worship, the informants have a positive view about the practice of family worship. However, this positive view does not represent all the perspective of families in Nias on family worship.

Furthermore, the discussion of the meaning of family worship also relates to family-talk. Thus the role of family-talks is introduced into the discussion, especially in the aspect of strengthening family relationship. Family-talks become a significant finding in this chapter as

they appear to be a unique element of family worship and significant for the meaning of family worship.

Chapter 4

Theological Reflection

Introduction

In chapter 3, I attempted to answer the research question on the description and the meaning of family worship as perceived by Nias families. The answer highlights the element of family-talks as an important feature of Nias family worship. It emerges in the discussion on the description of family worship and in the discussion on the meaning of family worship for Nias families. Noting its significance, I will attempt to elaborate more on this element of family-talks as part of family worship in this section, I will try to explain the nature of family-talks in the Nias context, the place of family-talks in family worship, and the theological view of family-talks.

The Nature of Family-Talks

In chapter 3, the usual content of family-talks has been cited. Observing the content of family-talks, it is obvious that the topics are as varied as anything. In terms of substance, family-talks can consist of a serious matter, but they may also involve casual remarks. Any topics that a member feels comfortable to share and to talk about are allowed during family-talks. What matters is that the family-talks are always directed towards the building up of other family members. It is a conversation that is carried out to show genuine concern and care for other family members and life together as a family. Its aim is always the well-being of all

members. This intention sets a boundary to the topics which can be brought up during family-talks. As mentioned by Neni, parents will not say something that will embarrass their children during family-talks in the presence of their guests. Candra mentions that some sensitive matters are not discussed in family-talks, although he was not specific about what these sensitive matters are.

The way family-talks are held appears to be natural, not structured, very flexible, spontaneous, informal, and relaxing. The atmosphere of family-talks explains why Nias family worship is not all about solemnity and quiet. Other elements of family worship may be performed in a mood of quiet, intensity, and solemnity, but when family-talks come up, family members start to talk with each other and the atmosphere changes to a relaxing mood. They even laugh and tease each other as conveyed by Kurnia or even cry as shared by Yamo.

Candra said that, usually, the family-talk starts by the worship leader or by the parents asking how everyone is doing or by reminding everyone about something. The family members respond freely based on what they feel comfortable to share about their experiences on that particular day. Thus, family-talks usually have a different agenda or topic every day.

The literature review reveals that missionaries who came to Nias introduced the family worship practice as they knew it in the Puritan and Pietist tradition. This means family worship is conducted by singing, reading, and praying. Family-talk is not part of the practice introduced by missionaries. So, where does this practice come from? Reflecting on this question and realizing how well-integrated this element of family-talks is in family worship, it seems Nias culture might play a significant role in introducing family-talks as part of family worship. The culture of Nias is very verbal. It cultivates discussion as the ideal approach in dealing with issues. As a result, Niassans always talk with each other to discuss everything. No decision, especially concerning the welfare of many people, can be made without discussing it with all the people involved. When a family wants to open a new farm, this should be discussed with

the elders in the family and the village. When parents want to send their children to school, they should inform the elders in the community so that the elders can pray about it. When meeting each other anywhere, you should greet each other in the Niassan dialect. It is unthinkable for Niassans to meet without talking to each other, without any sign of interest in or concern for other people. It seems this habit of talking and discussing things with each other also influences the way family worship is conducted in Nias. During the interview, Candra remarks that "talking to each other is very important. This is what makes the family stronger and able to survive the challenges of bad times." This explains why family-talks are very important in the family worship.

The Place of Family-Talks in Family Worship

In the pattern of family worship described by the informants, family-talks are always located somewhere in the middle part of the family worship. They usually come after the scripture reading and meditation reading, just before the element of praying. This is the complete pattern and general sequence of Nias family worship. However, some families do not strictly observe this pattern and sequence. Neni indicates that in her family the pattern and sequence of family worship are very flexible. It can start and end with whatever element of family worship, depending on the worship leader.

In certain situations, especially in the morning, when everyone is in a hurry, the families are not able to practice the complete pattern of family worship. They just choose to perform one or two worship elements. However, as Kurnia mentions, her family maintains the family-talk. The incomplete pattern of family worship may look like the one Ariel describes in his family, that at certain times his family just pray or just sing but always there is room to talk to each other, a room for family-talk no matter how brief it is.

Gita mentions that her parents insist on having regular family worship: even if she is about to be late for school, her family will still perform family worship. So, in rush moments like this, she usually just comes to the living room, their place for worship, and finishes her preparation in the living room, such as combing her hair, placing books inside her bag, etc. While she is doing all of this, she has a conversation with the rest of the family members. Her parents will remind her about studying hard, behaving well, will ask her about what exams she will have on that day, that kind of question. When she is finally done, they will sit together, and one of her parents will pray, and she hears her name being mentioned, that she may do well in school today. For Gita, this shows how her parents are so insistent on performing family worship that she is allowed to finish her preparation in the living room rather than miss family worship. However, this incident is not only about insisting on family worship but also about insisting on having family-talks, catching up with family members at the beginning of the day, before everyone goes to do their own thing for the rest of the day. In Gita's story, it may look as if her family just practices the element of praying during family worship, but actually, the ordinary familiar conversation she has with her parents while getting prepared is already a family-talk. Without being aware of it, everyone in her family accommodates this element of family-talks. In this situation, family worship has started far before they sit and bow their heads together in prayer. It has started when Gita intentionally comes to the living room and has a chat with her family members although she is also doing something else.

Yet, is it possible to have family worship without family-talk? Is it possible to pray or sing or read the scripture without engaging in family-talk, without talking or having conversation with each other? Candra says, "If you do not talk, there must be something wrong. Maybe you are angry or upset, and you do not want to be reconciled. As long as you talk to each other, that means you have good intention to maintain relationship. But if you do not talk to each other, that means you detach yourself from the rest of the family."

This shows that from the informants' point of view, it is possible not to talk, but this is not a genuine family worship. Family worship cannot be performed genuinely without talking to each other, regardless of how brief, how simple, how trivial the conversation is. Nias family worship is not practiced in the same manner as Sunday worship where a member can just come, sit, pray, sing, listen to the sermon and go without uttering a word to other people throughout the worship. As the element of family-talk is indispensable in the family worship, its place in the family worship is fixed or permanent, but its location can be in the middle part (especially during the complete version of family worship) or at the beginning (especially during the incomplete version of family worship).

The Theological View of Family-Talks

A. Family-talk links Christian faith with practitioners' everyday life

It has been shown that the element of family-talks is a constant in family worship. Other elements can be given up, but not family-talks. However, family-talks are never practiced exclusively, but always in combination with other elements, such as with praying, singing, or scripture reading. The informants indicate that "whatever comes up in the family-talks should be brought before God in prayer, in singing, or scripture reading or all these elements." It is not enough to keep the talks to themselves, but they should be conveyed, talked about, and entrusted to God. God should be explicitly included in the conversation. God's name should be mentioned and voiced.

As family members reflect on and share their daily experiences and bring these experiences as well as their entire life before God, the family recognizes God's power that permeates and pervades their life. There is no event outside God's watchful eye. In this view, the boundary between the sacred and the profane is blurred. In this view, faith and action are

inseparable. They all come together in everyday happenings and experiences. Faith in God is embedded and expressed in every action and event, and every action and every event are bearers of faith. Family-talks articulate this view of how everyday events are not exclusively human endeavors, but are fundamentally the place where family members meet and encounter God's presence. Family-talks are a way of acknowledging that God is present during farming, collecting latex, doing an exam, traveling, making a decision, quarreling, gossiping, etc. God is not only present on the intense and concentrated occasion of faith expression such as the occasion of family worship, but God infiltrates every dimension of the family's life. God is present in every ordinary, familiar, common happening in family members' lives. The evidence of this acknowledgment is not only shown to one's family members, but it is shown to God by bringing those life experiences before God in prayer, in singing, in reading.

As the family bring their daily experiences in prayer, singing, and reading, their faith is strengthened and nourished by these elements. The worship elements become meaningful and have power to family members because family members appropriate the elements based on their life experiences. The prayer is not made up of collective empty words, but is a source of hope and strength because the family members can see themselves in the prayer as their names are mentioned, as their struggles are named, as their doubts are identified before God in God's presence. The prayer becomes something that they can say Amen to.

The singing becomes a source of hope and strength as the lyrics of the songs are understood and interpreted in light of their experiences. Gita says that "as I listen to the scripture and lyrics of the song, I learn something about God and about myself." Family worship nourishes and sustains faith because it is a contextual worship. A worship that is shaped by the daily experiences of family members.

B. Family-talks express the immanent and transcendental nature of God

Feminist theologians play a significant role in articulating daily experiences as a locus and a source of theology. Before this concept, theology was formulated by relying only on the scripture and church tradition as a source of theology. At this time, theology was viewed 'objectively.'¹⁰⁴

The informants share who God is for them in a more personal way. Timo says that "God is a good friend." Wati confesses that "God has been so gracious to me. I cannot repay God's goodness in my life." Ariel says that "God is the source of hope, strength. We can tell God anything we need in life." So, what could be the nature of the concept of God depicted in the family-talks based on these insights? What could be the construction of God that seems to be active in family-talks?

The acknowledgment of family members that God is present in their daily life speaks of a God who is immanent, who is close, who is intimate with the family members. God is with family members when family members are in the world, carrying out their activities and responsibilities. The world is the object of God's actions. God creates it and God is still working in the world. The world for family members is the arena of experiencing God's actions. Being in the world is God's calling for family members and throughout the period of being in the world, the family members are led, sustained, and loved by God. The families are not alone when they live and work in the world, but they are with God. God is in their midst. This view of God is imparted in the family-talks. Acknowledging God's companionship in their life in the world, the families are giving praise and honor to God.

However, God remains beyond the comprehension of the human mind. God is an eternal, powerful, and sovereign being. God is very close, not detached from the family's life, and yet, God cannot be completely understood, God remains a mystery. Candra says, "do you remember when tsunami happen, can we stop the shaking of the ground? Now corona is

¹⁰⁴ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (Orbis Books, 2002). 15

happening. We do not understand. We can only rely on God's power." Thus, acknowledging the immanent aspect of God also affirms the transcendence of God. Thus, in family-talks the family bring all their concerns before God, not only expressing that God is present in all their concerns, but that God may rule, direct, govern all the concerns of their lives. Confronted by the sovereignty of God, the family cannot do otherwise but put their trust into the living and loving God.

C. Family-talks affirm the Imago Dei

Interaction and conversation in family-talks imply that each family member sees the other as a good creation who has the Imago Dei in them. It affirms the infinite worth and value of every human being as every human being is created and bears God's image. It is this view that guides and is expressed in family-talks regardless of differences in opinions, preferences, characteristics, age, or gender among family members. Family-talks significantly connect family members because they embrace the concept of Imago Dei.

It is not always easy to consistently practice this concept, especially in family relationship. Husband and wife do not always agree with each other. Parents can be very demanding and suppressive toward the children. Sibling relationships can be very frustrating. No family is without its own struggles and challenges. Nevertheless, having a constant conversation that is grounded in the Imago Dei perspective will help a family to resolve conflicts.

All families experience hurt and pain sometimes, but the prospect of healing and recovery is near when it is openly talked about and discussed.

Family-talks are essentially aimed to help family members to grow and to develop into better persons and to experience harmony in the family. It is a practice designed to realize God's intention for human life, which is to have a flourishing life, able to experience life in its

fullness.¹⁰⁵ Family-talks indicate how important it is to talk and to have a conversation with each other in the family as they brings understanding, intimacy and healing in the family.

D. Family-talk as worship

Family-talk is worship because this kind of conversation is grounded in the awareness of God's sovereignty and the limitations of human beings. As family members narrate their daily experiences, they discern and discover God's presence. The discernment prompts family members to give praise and to glorify God. Family-talk is the response of family members to God. Family-talk is a conversation that is participated in by God and addressed to God, which is the core of Christian worship.

Family-talks take into account the notion of worship as a dialogue, not only between God and human beings (vertical dimension), but also between human beings in their context. In public worship, especially Sunday worship, people do not have much room to talk to each other during worship. In personal worship, the presence of a community is implied as a person is worshiping alone. In family worship, this horizontal dialogue becomes explicit in the family-talks.

¹⁰⁵ Anne-Claire Mulder, "Empowering Those Who Suffer Domestic Violence: The Necessity of Different Theological Imagery" (n.d.).

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusions

The findings on the research question related to the description of Nias family worship reveal that Nias family worship is patterned after the Puritan formulation of family worship in the *Directory of Family Worship* from the 17th century. This is understandable since the missionaries who came to Nias were greatly shaped by the Puritan and Pietist movements.

The description of Nias family worship, then, can be described as a faith practice of worshipping God together that is participated in by all the people who are present in the house at the time family worship is conducted. It is done on a regular basis, two times a day, in the morning and the evening. The length of family worship is about 7-15 minutes. Families living in rural areas prefer to use the Niassan language in family worship, while a family in the urban area prefers to use both languages, Niassan and bahasa Indonesia, in family worship.

In family worship, the participants singing together, usually from Buku Zinuno or Kidung Jemaat. However, families are also free to sing songs from other sources. After singing, the families listen to the scripture reading read out by one assigned person or by all the family members with each reading a specific portion of the scripture reading. The text of the scripture reading follows the prescribed text of the Perikopen BNKP or for families who use meditation books, such as Manna Sorgawi or Roti Surgawi, they follow the prescribed text in these books. After the scripture and meditation readings, the families engage in the family-talks. These are about their activities of the day, their feelings, their problems, their needs, everything that the members want to share. The parents also use this moment to settle disputes among siblings if they notice one and also give advice, instructions, reminders to their children. Sometimes the

families also share their understanding or questions on the text just read. Everything that has transpired during family-talks becomes the topic of the prayer which usually follows right after the family-talk. The members take turns to lead in family prayer. Alongside things related to family members and the family's welfare, the family prayer also contains praise and gratitude to God, confession and request for forgiveness from God, and also things that are happening in the wider community. The family prayer is usually ended by reciting the family's prayer by all family members. After praying, the family begins to sing again. Then the full pattern of family worship is ended, and all family members continue with their other activities.

In certain conditions, the families are not able to perform the full pattern of family worship due to a hectic schedule, sickness, etc. In this case, the families only perform one or two elements of family worship, but family-talks are always held. There is no family worship without talking to each other about the day, plans, feelings, etc., no matter how brief the conversation is. This characterizes the uniqueness of family worship in Nias, which is that family-talks are always part of family worship. This element has been always accommodated consciously or unconsciously by Nias family members.

When research question two, which is about the meaning of family worship, is asked, the respondents identify three significant meanings of family worship, namely: strengthening family relationship, shaping Christian life, and being a witness of God's love. Family-talk has a significant role in the strengthening of family relationship. The theological reflection on family-talks as part of family worship reveals that family-talks link Christian faith with everyday life, they express the immanent and transcendental nature of God, they affirm the concept of *Imago Dei*, and they are worship.

Suggestions

Reflecting on what to do with insights gained from this research, I connect them with the institutional church and also academic further study. Taking into account the significance of family worship in building relationships between family members, molding the family members into the Christian life, and shaping the family members to be a witness, this study perhaps can motivate the church in Nias to explore ways to strengthen family worship. The church should not only be concerned with Sunday worship (public worship), as it seems now, but should start to give more attention and priority to family worship. Strengthening family worship becomes even more important in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, when most of Sunday worship is done virtually. Family worship then becomes the place where Christians can experience physical worship. While virtual worship has its benefits, nevertheless people are still in need of physical worship.

In terms of further study, the topic of Nias family worship has several potential themes to be explored. I think the relationship between Nias culture and family-talks as part of family worship can be further studied. As family-talks were not originally or intentionally introduced by the missionaries, perhaps it can be confirmed that Nias culture was the catalyst. The tension between the positive responses the respondents on the meaning of family worship with the reality of serious social problems and the decline of worship practice among new families could also be something to study further.

In the end, it is my hope that this study may offer something useful for practitioners, the church, and the academic study of liturgy, especially family worship.

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Appendix 1

List of Questions for Interview

1. Can you please tell me how do you do family worship in your family?
2. Why do you participate in such practice?
3. What do you think is the uniqueness of family worship?
4. Does it have impact in your life and family life? If it does, in what way?
5. Can you share one or two events of family worship that you find very memorable?

Appendix 2

List of relevant data that is coded

Name of Informants	Relevant Data	Descriptive Code	In Vivo Code
Firman	Family worship is conducted regularly in our family	Description of fw concerning the intensity	
	In the morning and in evening before everyone goes to sleep	Description of fw concerning the time	
	It is led by all family members	Description of fw concerning the leadership/persons in-charge	
	We take turns in leading the worship	Description of fw concerning the process of leading	
	Everyone is asked to join family worship	Description of fw concerning the participants	
	Even if they do not have blood relationship with us, but if they are with us at that time, they are asked to join the worship	Description of fw concerning the participants	
	So, sometimes guests from the village come and stay in our house for some days. Then, they will be asked to join family worship	Description of fw concerning the participants	

	Well, they are invited, but if they do not want to join, it is up to them	Description of fw concerning the choice that new participants have	
	Well, usually there is one person who is assigned to lead a song, then another person is assigned to read the scripture reading, then another person is assigned to lead intercessory prayer	Description of fw concerning the pattern of fw Description of fw concerning the action of participants	
	It always starts with singing, followed by scripture reading, followed by discussion on the passage just read, then intercessory prayer, and ended with a closing song.	Description of fw concerning the pattern of fw	
	We use Bahasa Indonesia and the Niassan language	Description of fw concerning the language	
	Whatever language the leader feels convenient	Description of fw concerning the rights/privileges of worship' leader	
	It is about 7-15 minutes	Description of fw concerning the time	
	No one reminds. When we know it is about time to worship, we just gather in the living room	Description of fw concerning the action of participants	
	There is no formal preparation, but usually the song leader should select the songs before the worship or the one who read the scripture	Description of fw concerning the preparation of worship leaders	

	reading should read the text beforehand.		
	My father always sees to it that we read the scripture clearly. If he feels it is not clear, he asks that person to read it again and again until he feels it is good enough.	Description of fw concerning the authority of father	
	Yes, there is a little bit of individual preparation for those who are leading	Description of fw concerning the preparation of worship leaders	
	Almost the same. But in the evening, we have longer time for discussion	Description of fw concerning the difference between evening and morning family worship.	
			The meaning of family worship is "a fellowship value"
			The meaning of family worship is "it teaches us to listen to each other"
			The meaning of family worship is "a bonding time among family members."
	It is very rare to find time to be together. Even during meals, we cannot be together. Everyone has their own activities and schedules.	Description of fw concerning the busy life of family	
			The meaning of family worship is "to enjoy the company of each other."
			The meaning of family worship is "not only

			strengthening relationship among us, family members, but it also teaches us to strengthen our relationship with other people, outside our family.”
	During intercessory prayer, we are taught to pray for our leaders, for our government, for those who are sick, who are poor, who are homeless, who are suffering.	Description of fw concerning the content of prayer	
			The meaning of family worship is “by remembering these people in prayer, I learn to care and to pay attention to other people.”
	We also pray for our personal and family needs, but my father always asks us to pray first for other people	Description of fw concerning the content of prayer Description of fw concerning the authority of father	The meaning of family worship is “to pray first for other people.”
	My father always reminds us during the family worship to set aside some rice	Description of fw concerning the authority of father Description of fw concerning the content of family talks	The meaning of family worship is “my father always reminds us during the family worship to...”
	My father always uses the time of family worship to advise us what he considers the	Description of fw concerning the authority of father	The meaning of family worship is “my father always uses the time of fw to advise us what he

	most important thing in life	Description of fw concerning the content of family-talks	considers the most important thing in life.”
	We worship God, because we are grateful for what God has given to us	Description of fw concerning family’s understanding about God	The meaning of family worship is “grateful for what God has given to us.”
	Giving thanks to God is very important in life	Description of fw concerning family’s understanding about God	The meaning of family worship is “giving thanks to God.”
	My father never fails to remind us of life lessons	Description of fw concerning the authority of father Description of fw concerning the content of family-talks	The meaning of family worship is “reminding us of life lessons”
	I learn about worshipping God and glorifying God for the first time in my family during family worship	Description of fw concerning family’s understanding about God	The meaning of fw is “I learn about worshipping God and glorifying God for the first time in my family during family worship.”
			The meaning of fw is “not feeling good, not at peace, something not right when I did not participate in family worship.”
	We are used to doing it	Description of fw concerning the intensity	
	Family worship is a very good practice	Description of fw concerning participant’s opinion about fw	
			The meaning of fw is bringing “several impacts in my life. I learn to be grateful to God.”

			The meaning of fw is “to care and to share with other people.”
			The meaning of fw is “Christian values are taught to me and they become part of me. I practice them.”
			The meaning of fw is “to care for others.”
			The meaning of fw is “increases my knowledge of God and it deepens my faith.”
	We read and study the family in family worship	Description of fw concerning the action of participants.	
			The meaning of fw is “having a stock of knowledge of God and Bible.”
			The meaning of fw is “I know more than other friends.”
			The meaning of fw is “already familiar with the stories or the lessons because I heard them before in our fw. It is easier for me to understand the topic. I also know more songs because we sing them in family worship.”
	My Mom teaches us to sing based on the score	Description of fw concerning mother’s role/participation in fw	
	There are at least two different songs we sing during family worship,	Description of fw concerning the element of singing	

	the opening and the closing songs.		
	We enjoy this learning	Description of fw concerning participant's feeling about fw	
	When we come to family worship, we are quiet to each other	Description of fw concerning the atmosphere	
	During the discussion time in the family worship, my parents will find out about the problem and they try to help us to make peace with each other	Description of fw concerning the content of family-talks Description of fw concerning the role of parents	
			The meaning of family worship is "a reconciliation time for us."
	During the intercessory prayer this specific problem will also be prayed about	Description of fw concerning the content of prayer	
	The parents are the ones who introduce this practice and make us familiar and internalize this practice	Description of fw concerning the authority of parents	
	When I was a child, I always heard my neighbors in the left, right, in front, in the back, they are all singing in the morning and in the evening. This means they are having family worship. Now it is different. I am no longer hearing the families	Description of fw concerning the singing Description of fw concerning the difference of fw before and now	

	singing anymore. Not as often as before.		
			The meaning of family worship is “cultivates care for others in our hearts.”
			The meaning of family worship is “reminds us to give thanks to God.”
			The meaning of family worship is “we did not put ourselves in the center of our life.”
			The meaning of family worship is “it makes us humble.”
	The key here is the parents. Their awareness should be rebuilt that family worship is important	Description of fw concerning the role of parents	
	My father chooses this moment, this family worship, to reveal his honest feeling, his vulnerability.	Description of fw concerning the content of family-talks Description of fw concerning the action of participants	The meaning of family worship is “to reveal his honest feeling, his vulnerability.”
			The meaning of family worship is “we feel closer, we are one in this pain.”
	Later on, my mother leads a prayer	Description of fw concerning the action of participants Description of fw concerning the prayer	

			The meaning of family worship is “a memory of machinery.”
			The meaning of family worship is “conveying an important message.”
Gustav	I have practiced family worship ever since I am a kid till now, till I have a family of my own.	Description of fw concerning the intensity of fw	
	In my family, we start family worship at 5.30-6.00 Am and 9.00-9.30 PM.	Description of fw concerning the time	
	Twice a day	Description of fw concerning the quantity	
	No special room, but we usually have it in the living room. But when one is sick, we do family worship in his/her room so that she/he can join family worship even if he/she is just lying on the bed	Description of fw concerning the place	
	Everyone can take the initiative. Sometime it is me, sometime it is my wife, even the children also do it when they wake up early. My children already know our time for family worship, so sometimes they also call or remind us to have family worship.	Description of fw concerning how participants of fw assemble themselves for family worship	

	Everyone in the house should join family worship. I, my wife, and children.	Description of fw concerning the participants of fw	
	We invite them too. You see, sometimes there are students staying with us. So, we also invite them to join us. And in the evening, sometimes we have guests. We also invite them to join us in family worship before they go home	Description of fw concerning the participants of fw	
	In the morning worship, we start by singing from Buku Zinuno, then we read the "Daily Bread" then we pray, and then we sing again.	Description of fw concerning the pattern of morning fw Description of fw concerning the liturgical material used in fw	
	I am the one who always leads the morning worship	Description of fw concerning the leadership in fw	
	For evening worship, the structure depends on the situation. Sometimes we sing, sometimes not. We focus more on the sharing and talking to each other.	Description of fw concerning the pattern of evening fw	
	We share what happens during the day, we evaluate our activities, we listen to the stories and experiences of our children, and then we pray	Description of fw concerning the content of family-talks	

	My children take turns to pray during the evening prayer. They are enthusiastic to lead prayers.	Description of fw concerning the participation of children in fw	
	At the end of worship, we will shake hands, or hug, or kiss our children while wishing them a good day, or a good study or a good night	Description of fw concerning the way fw is ended. Description of fw concerning the actions in worship	
	Yes, we can adjust to the situation, but usually the basic elements are singing, reading Daily Bread, sharing and praying	Description of fw concerning the flexibility of the pattern of fw	
	In the Daily Bread, there is already a text of the Bible, so we just read that one	Description of fw concerning the scripture reading and reflection	
	We want our children to speak Niassan and bahasa Indonesia	Description of fw concerning the language in fw	
	That is why we sing using Buku Zinuno and Kidung Jemaat	Description of fw concerning the material used for singing	
	In the evening, our songs are even more varied. We can sing Sunday School songs and charismatic songs	Description of fw concerning the singing	
	No special preparation. We all know what to do.	Description of fw concerning the action of participants	

	The Bible, Daily Bread, Buku Zinuno and Kidung Jemaat have been always put on the table. We just need to distribute them during family worship.	Description of fw concerning the material used in fw.	
	In the morning, we sing on sequence. So, if today we sing song number 1, tomorrow we will sing song number 2, and so on, except if the song does not fit the situation, for example the book is showing an evening song, while it is morning, so we will skip that song, or it is a Christmas song while it is not yet Christmas, we just skip that part	Description of fw concerning the selection of songs in fw	
	My children already know these things	Description of fw concerning things children learn from fw	
	We teach them about it. So, they understand why certain songs cannot be sung on that day. We also tell them the meaning of all these liturgical celebrations. Like now, we are in Lenten season. My children choose Lenten songs during our family worship	Description of fw concerning things children learn from fw	
	In general, the situation of our family worship is solemn, peaceful, and calm.	Description of fw concerning the atmosphere of fw	

	But sometimes the children open their eyes during praying. Usually other children will report it to me after the worship.	Description of fw concerning children's participation in fw	
	We understand them. They are just kids, so we just tell them that next time they should close their eyes during praying.	Description of fw concerning parents' reaction to children' behavior in fw	
	We give thanks to God because God has blessed us. After that, we pray for our jobs or activities in that day. We mention them one by one. The job of the father, mother, children, and those who are present in the family. We also pray for our relatives who stay in Nias and outside Nias. We also pray for our neighbors. We also pray for wider society. We also pray for friends who have asked me to pray for them.	Description of fw concerning family's understanding about God Description of fw concerning the content of prayer	The meaning of fw is to "give thanks to God because God has blessed us."
	I also have my individual time to pray. But family worship is about having fellowship with family members.		The meaning of fw is "having fellowship with family members."
	For us, family worship is a time for us to meet and to talk with our children. Especially in the evening worship, we really spend time to listen to each other.	Description of fw concerning the content of family-talks. Description of fw concerning parents' relationship to children	The meaning of fw is "to meet and to talk with our children. Especially in the evening worship, we really spend time to listen to each other."

	For me, this practice means strengthening the relationship among family members.		The meaning of fw is “strengthening the relationship among family members.”
	We learn to care, to support and to listen to each other		The meaning of fw is “learn to care, to support, and to listen to each other.”
	This practice also nourishes Christian faith in our life. We will be very careful of our speech, our actions, our thoughts, because we are always reminded by God’s Word, through scripture, in the prayer, and in the songs. The lyrics of our songs are telling us about God.	Description of fw concerning the effect of worship elements in a person’s life.	The meaning of fw is “nourishing Christian faith in our life.”
	In my experience, I really experience trouble when I did not do family worship. In that day, I feel restless, I did not feel at peace.	Description of fw concerning the feeling or situation of a person when she/he did not do family worship	The meaning of fw is “experience trouble...restless...not feel at peace” when it is not practiced.
	So, for me, family worship is about family fellowship, spiritual nourishment, and a source of strength to face difficulty in life.		The meaning of fw is “family fellowship, spiritual nourishment, and a source of strength to face difficulty in life.”
	We impart these values to our children that they can grow in faith and in knowledge of God		The meaning of fw is “impart these values to our children that they can grow in faith and in knowledge of God.”
	I do think that parents are domestic missionaries		The meaning of fw is being “domestic missionaries.”

	We teach our children that God is the source of hope, strength, and wisdom. We can tell and ask God for anything we need in our life	Description of fw concerning things children learn in fw. Description of fw concerning family's understanding about God	The meaning of fw is "teach our children that God is the source of hope, strength, and wisdom. We can tell and ask God for anything we need in our life."
	Then they will say "oh ok, we can pray about it in our family prayer. That is why if my children pray you will sometime hear them saying: God bless my father and my mother that they have much money."	Description of fw concerning things children learn in fw Description of fw concerning family' understanding about God Description of fw concerning children's participation in fw	
	Yes, in the past, people always sing when they have family worship. So, we know that our neighbors practice family worship. Now, particularly in the city, families are no longer singing. But we cannot say that they do not practice family worship because they may just pray and read the scripture in family.	Description of fw concerning the difference between before and now. Description of fw concerning the difference of fw in the city and in the village Description of fw concerning the singing.	
	In my observation, many young families are no longer practicing family	Description of fw concerning the	

	worship because they are very busy	difference between before and now Description of fw concerning the busy life of family	
	In my experience, when we did not do family worship, we lose an opportunity to nourish intimacy with family members.		The meaning of fw is “an opportunity to nourish intimacy with family members.”
	And we also are not ready to face challenges in life. We get easily hopeless and desperate because we rely so much on ourselves and not on God		The meaning of fw is “ready to face challenges in life.”
	We also lose the opportunity to introduce the Christian values and stories to our children		The meaning of fw is “the opportunity to introduce the Christian values and stories to our children”
	As I said, family worship is a precious time to be with family. We do not have an opportunity to be together during the day except during family worship.		The meaning of fw is “time to be with family.”
	Actually, it all depends on what we think of as our priority in life. Even when we are busy, we can accommodate 10-15 minutes daily to worship together, to be together, if we think it is important.	Description of family worship concerning the principles of fw.	

	This is all about giving time and commitment	Description of family worship concerning the principles of fw	
	Yes, you should have a strong will in life to get and to keep what you believe important and necessary	Description of family worship concerning the principles of fw	
	What sticks in my mind is that when I do not worship, my day is full of trouble. I do not know how to cope with it. I feel so lost and not at peace.	Description of fw concerning the feeling or situation of a person when she/he did do family worship	
	And you know, God indeed blesses us. God's blessing is endless	Description of fw concerning family's understanding about God	
	But there are also funny moments, such as when we were in the middle of singing, and my son, 3 yrs old, suddenly speaks, requesting his milk, or when he suddenly asks us to stop the scripture reading because he needs to go to toilet.	Description of fw concerning children's participation in the fw	
	We tell him that next time, if he has urgent needs, he can just go and do it quietly.	Description of fw concerning parents' reaction/interaction toward children's behavior in family worship	
	But he makes us laugh with his unexpected interruptions	Description of fw concerning the atmosphere of fw	

	And it warms our hearts	Description of fw concerning the feeling transpire in fw	
Nek Indah	My family worships in the morning and in the evening	Description of family worship concerning the time of fw	
	We sing and pray	Description of family worship concerning the action taking place in fw Description of family worship concerning the elements of family worship	
	We do it because we want to give thanks to God because God has protected us, has blessed us.	Description of family's understanding about God	The meaning of family worship is "to give thanks to God because God has protected us, has blessed us."
	In the family worship we sing, pray and we also read the Bible	Description of family worship concerning the action taking place in fw Description of family worship concerning the elements of family worship	
	You know, we have to come before God and ask God's forgiveness for all our wicked thoughts, for all our sins. We ask God to show mercy to us. Then, we entrust again our life into God's hand.	Description of family worship concerning the content of family talks Description of fw concerning the content of prayer	The meaning of family worship is "to come before God and ask God's forgiveness for all our wicked thoughts, for all our sins. We ask God to show mercy to us. Then, we entrust again our life into God's hand."

		Description of fw concerning family's understanding about God	
	Then, we pray for our children, for our grandchildren, for our relatives near and far. We also pray for our neighborhood. We pray for those who are in prison, the widows, the orphans, those who have much debt, those who are homeless, those who are suffering, we should remember them in our family prayer. May God show them the way. May God uplift their burdens.	Description of fw concerning the content of prayer Description of fw concerning family's understanding of God	
	In the evening, it is very important that we put our lives into God's hand. We will sleep and we do not know what will happen to us. The time we live is a troubled time. We need to pray more.	Description of fw concerning the content of evening prayer Description of fw concerning family's understanding about God	
	When we gather as a family, it gives glory to God	Description of family's understanding about God	The meaning of fw is "gives glory to God."
	When we are united, one heart, coming before God, parents and children, it is so lovely, it is a witness of God's love and God will certainly hear our prayers. God said, knock and it will be	Description of family's understanding about God.	The meaning of fw is "a witness of God's love and God will certainly hear our prayers."

	opened; seek, and you will find. God has been so gracious to me. I cannot repay his Goodness in my life	Description of family's interaction in family worship	
	Family worship is like a boundary, a reminder for all of us, not to do bad things in life.		The meaning of fw is "a boundary, a reminder for all of us, not to do bad things in life."
	Family worship teaches us to have self-control. When we have self-control, we will refrain from doing things that is hurtful to our friends and God.		The meaning of fw is "teaches us to have self-control, we will refrain ourselves from doing things that is hurting to our friends and God."
	Family worship also reminds us of the hope that we have in God. God is our hope. That is why whatever problems we have we should not be discouraged because God is always with us.	Description of family's understanding about God.	The meaning of fw is "remind us of the hope that we have in God. God is our hope."
	Everyone in the house. Father, mother, children, in-laws, grandchildren, everyone.	Description of participants of fw	
	In that case, we do not have sin because we have invited them	Description of participants of fw Description of family's understanding about sin	
	We take turns.	Description of family worship concerning form of participation in fw	

	I am usually the one who decides who leads the worship for that day	Description of fw concerning decision maker	
	Oh, I have known this practice since I was a kid. Before, my parents also taught us about this practice. Then I taught my children. Now my children teach my grandchildren	Description of fw concerning intensity Description of fw concerning the passing of the practice to younger generation	
	This is a very important practice	Description of fw concerning the opinion of fw	
	When we do it, there is peace in our family		The meaning of fw is “peace in our family.”
	We are empowered to face conflicts and problems		The meaning of fw is “empowered to face conflicts and problems”
	There is harmony in our family. We will not grumble and blame each other. We can work on our different opinions as well.		The meaning of fw is “harmony in the family.”
	It is the same. But before, if there was a pandemic like now, the leaders will pray in all streets in the village and all villagers will follow behind. We will walk and pray. Now, no one is doing this anymore.	Description of village prayer.	
	There was a time when we did not have a family worship. We were so tired and we just slept. But then, I was not able	Description of family worship concerning the situation when it is not done.	

	to sleep. Suddenly I felt itchy and so warm. It was such an uncomfortable feeling. Then I prayed, and all the itchiness is gone. I am able to sleep well.		
Grace	I enjoy our family worship very much	Description of family worship concerning the feeling about family worship	
	Because I learn many new songs, and then, we chat together.	Description of family worship concerning things learned in family worship	
	This is our regular time to communicate with each other		The meaning of family worship is “regular time to communicate with each other.”
	I look forward to hear the stories of my siblings, the response of my parents, the jokes, the teasing.	Description of family worship concerning the content of family talks. Description of family worship concerning the interaction in family worship	
	Family worship is a very pleasant moment	Description of family worship concerning the feeling about family worship	
	Well, first we sing. It can be from Kidung Jemaat or Buku Zinuno. Then we read the scripture and then we read the reflection. Then we have family sharing. Things that have come up during	Description of family worship concerning the pattern of family worship. Description of family worship concerning the	

	<p>the family discussion will be prayed for during the prayer time. After somebody prays, we will sing again, and then we shake hands, and we go to our individual work</p>	<p>elements of family worship.</p> <p>Description of family worship concerning the materials used in family worship.</p> <p>Description of family worship concerning the content of prayer</p> <p>Description of family worship concerning the actions taking place in the family worship</p>	
	<p>Then we have family sharing about what we are going to do today, whom we are meeting, or if we have problems, worries, etc. Sometimes my siblings make funny remarks or suggestions, and then we laugh. Or my naughty siblings will make mocking remarks, and we argue. The thing is in family worship, we communicate with each other.</p>	<p>Description of family worship concerning the content of family talks.</p> <p>Description of family worship concerning the interaction during family talks.</p>	
	<p>After somebody prays, we will sing again, and then we shake hands, and we go to our individual work</p>	<p>Description of family worship concerning how family worship is ended.</p>	

	Twice	Description of family worship concerning the quantity	
	Morning and evening for 15-30 minutes	Description of family worship concerning the time and duration.	
	When it is about time for worship, we just gather in the living room. When we were small, my mom always called us to gather, but now everyone can read the time. No need to call, just come to the living room	Description of family worship concerning the action of mother Description of family worship concerning the changes in the actions/attitudes toward family worship due to age.	
	In the evening we have shorter family worship. Sometimes, we just pray because everyone is already very tired. Or we sing and pray, but we do not read the scripture anymore. However, we maintain family discussion. We want to share even just briefly on what has happened during the day	Description of family worship concerning the difference between morning and evening worship Description of family worship on the pattern of evening worship	
	Yes, it is helpful. Family worship shapes my spirituality, to be close to God, to have strong faith.		The meaning of family worship is “shapes my spirituality, to be close to God, to have strong faith.”
	I am not ashamed to praise God in public, not ashamed if I am asked to sing or to pray in the church, because I am used to do it in our family	Description of family worship concerning things learned in the family worship	

	But more importantly for me, family worship is family time. It connects us.		The meaning of family worship is “family time. It connects us.”
	Family worship keeps us close to each other		The meaning of family worship is “to keep us close to each other.”
	We just gather. No one calls us. In the morning, around 6 AM, we assemble in our living room.	Description of family worship concerning the self-directed action of the participants	
	Then we start to sing. Everyone can suggest a song, but usually it is my mom who picks the song for us. Then my mom is also the one reading the scripture...But sometimes we also take turns in reading the scripture. One person reads a certain portion of the scripture text. This is to have variations in the family worship so that it is not very monotonous.	Description of family worship concerning the pattern of family worship Description of family worship concerning the role of mother Description of family worship concerning the participation in family worship	
	For praying, we take turns. When we were still small, it starts with the parents, then the eldest to the youngest, and then the cycle starts again. But now that we have all grown up, anyone who feels like leading the prayer, she/he can do it. No need to be instructed or asked.	Description of family worship concerning the pattern of family worship. Description of family worship concerning the participation in family worship.	

		Description of family worship concerning the change of the form of participation in family worship	
	Usually in the living room, but if someone is sick, we will have worship in his/her room so that she/he can join us.	Description of family worship concerning the place of fw.	
	All of us. Everyone in the house should join the family worship. My parents tend to force their own children and those who are staying with them for longer period of time to join family worship, but are a little bit lenient toward guests or relatives who have just arrived and are staying with us for some days	Description of family worship concerning the participants	
	However, usually everyone always agrees to join the family worship	Description of family worship concerning the reaction of participants.	
	In my family everyone participates.	Description of family worship concerning the participants.	
	It would be weird if someone will not join family worship because she/he is acting as if he/she is not a family member, and she/he does not value our family fellowship		The meaning of family worship is to indicate somebody is "a family member."

	In our family worship we have small presentations, like someone will sing solo, or read a poem, or play a drama.	Description of actions/participations in family worship	
	There is variation in our family worship and it is very fun	Description of family worship concerning the pattern	
	Worshipping together is really fun. I am too lazy to pray and to meditate alone. I think I will dry up spiritually if I do not have family worship. Family worship inspires and motivates me.		The meaning of family worship is to nourish "spirituality."
	It also strengthens our relationship. Without family worship, we have very little opportunity to communicate with each other.		The meaning of family worship is to "strengthen our relationship...communicate with each other."
	I also like the meditation in Daily Bread. The reflection is really true to my own experiences.	Description of fw concerning elements in family worship. Description of fw concerning the action in fw	
	I would like to add also that family worship teaches me to love other persons. Now that some of the siblings are in other places studying, when we pray, we remember them. We also remember our relatives, the congregations of my fathers, things that are		The meaning of fw is "teaches me to love other persons."

	happening in our surroundings. It teaches me to think of something beyond myself		
	My parents reprimand us for being noisy during family worship. We have to sit properly and quietly, but during family discussion we can talk. We also have to dress properly. It does not mean nice expensive clothes. It just means not showing a lot of body parts.	Description of fw concerning the expected behaviors during fw. Description of fw concerning insight how to approach God in worship	
	Sure, we fight sometimes. But during family worship, our parents will bring this up, then advise us, and ask us to reconcile. Then this reconciliation will be one of the prayer's topics. So, family worship is usually also a reconciliation time.	Description of fw concerning parents' role in fw. Description of fw concerning the content of prayer	The meaning of fw is "a reconciliation time."
Yunerlis	We do not regularly follow the complete or usual pattern of family worship. I mean we do not always sing-pray-read the scripture as observed in many families. When we are busy, we just pray. But before praying, we read a certain text in the Bible.	Description of fw concerning the flexible pattern of fw	
	However, when we have time, we sing, pray, and read the scripture	Description of fw concerning the full pattern of fw	

	<p>Before praying, we usually have a sharing about our days and we also try to evaluate our relationship. How did we treat each other on that day? As a mother, how did I treat my husband and my children. As children, how have they treated their siblings, their friends, their parents on that day. We also share what has happened throughout the day, any good things, funny things, any difficulties, etc.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the content of family talk</p>	
	<p>So, there is no strict pattern that we follow daily for our family worship. We are very flexible. It all depends on the situation.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the flexible pattern of fw.</p>	
	<p>The sharing however is mostly done in the evening. During morning worship, we do not have time.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the difference between morning worship and evening worship</p>	
	<p>However, in the evening, we gather together to have a family worship before we go to sleep.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the evening family worship</p>	
	<p>As I said earlier, we have no fixed pattern for family worship, but usually it is praying, scripture reading, singing and sharing/discussion. It can start with whatever element, maybe beginning with prayer or</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the elements of fw</p>	

	with singing or discussion.		
	Actually it all depends on the worship leader at that time	Description of fw concerning the rights of worship leaders	
	Everyone in the house should join family worship. Now that we have students boarding in our house, we also require them to worship with us. Sometimes relatives come and stay with us, so they also participate in our family worship	Description of fw concerning the participants of fw.	
	We invite the guests to have family worship with us. However, the guests are not forced to join, they are invited.	Description of fw concerning the participants of fw	
	However, very seldom the guests reject the invitation because they have to be somewhere else at that time	Description of fw concerning the reactions of guests	
	I think, as parents, we are wise enough to see what things to discuss during family worship. For example, during family worship, we, parents, usually reprimand our children about their behaviors. But when we have guests, we try not to discuss it or we bring it up carefully so as not to make our children embarrassed.	Description of fw concerning the attitude of parents in family talks	

	<p>From the time they are born. Even when my children are still small, you know babies, toddlers... they join the family worship. I usually hug my babies while they are joining the family worship. It does not matter if the babies are not able to sing or to pray yet, and just sleep or just look at us. Sometimes the baby is babbling. It is fine. What is important is that she is part of the practice, part of the family.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the babies' participation in family worship</p>	<p>The meaning of fw is "she is part of the practice, part of the family."</p>
	<p>The Holy Spirit will be the one giving her understanding</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the role of the Holy Spirit in fw</p>	
	<p>We want our children to learn to focus during family worship. We expect them to follow what we are doing in family worship. If we sing, they sing, if we pray, they pray. Just like that. We do not want the children to be doing something else during family worship</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the parents instruction in fw</p> <p>Description of fw concerning the things children learned in family worship</p>	
	<p>I do not think it is a big deal, it is something that everyone knows. I mean, we just follow the way we were taught by our parents before. There is no big decision to make on family worship that you have to talk about it.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the fw as a handed-down practice.</p> <p>Description of fw as a strongly established practice</p>	

	You just have to do it because you know how to do it. After all, you have been doing it all your life.		
	It is a common understanding between me and my husband that we have to do it twice a day, morning and evening.	Description of fw concerning the time	
	It lasts around 10 minutes. Maximum 30 minutes.	Description of fw concerning the duration	
	The rest depends on the leaders, such as the songs, the scripture, as I said, our family is very flexible	Description of fw concerning the right of worship leader	
	For scripture reading, we follow Perikopen BNKP. Usually one to two verses are read by one person.	Description of fw concerning the element of scripture reading	
	For the song, it depends on the leaders. Sometime we sing from Buku Zinuno, sometimes from Kidung Jemaat, sometimes praise and worship songs, and even Sunday School songs. Whatever the leaders choose, we just follow	Description of fw concerning the element of singing	
	No, we just pray whatever is in our hearts at that moment	Description of fw concerning the element of prayer.	
	We just take turns. It starts with us, parents, me and my husband, and then my eldest daughter,	Description of fw concerning the participation in fw	

	then my youngest daughter, then the students who are with us. Everybody has a chance to lead family worship		
	In my opinion, family worship is important because it shows the fellowship aspect of the family. It binds us together.		The meaning of fw is “shows the fellowship aspect of the family. It binds us together.”
	As we listen and we reflect on the scripture text, it builds up our faith in God. The scripture text is like a mirror, very useful for self-examination		The meaning of fw is “builds up our faith in God.” Faith building is related to self-examination.
	During our family talks, we can learn to critique others in a loving way	Description of fw concerning the content of family talks	
	This family worship is our chance for us, parents, to pass to our children the Christian faith. We teach our children about worshipping God, and instill in their minds that worshipping God should be their life-style. We want them to have strong roots in Christian faith. We want our children to be able to show Christian values in their daily lives.		The meaning of fw is “pass to our children the Christian faith.”
	Family worship is a way of saying to people around that we are Christians. So, it is a kind		The meaning of fw is “witness about God.”

	of witness about God to our neighborhood		
	Every Christian family should practice worshiping together in their family.	Description of fw concerning the compulsory aspect of fw	
	This family worship has helped me to discipline myself to set aside time regularly to pray and to meditate on God's Word. Then the songs we sing also influence my life. The lyrics speak to me.		The meaning of fw is "discipline myself."
	Then family worship is an opportunity to be with my husband and children and students to catch up with each other		The meaning of fw is "an opportunity to be with my husband, children, students."
	The thing is, this kind of conversation where we can really talk with each other in honesty and humility is possible because of family worship	Description of fw concerning the interaction in family talks.	
	I and my husband think that there should be openness between us and our children. So, we teach them not to be afraid to voice their opinions and even criticism but in a kind manner.	Description of fw concerning the interaction in family talks.	
	During that time, I feel empty, not at peace, not whole, feeling a little bit lost.	Description of fw concerning the feeling when it is not practiced	

	But of course, the children get bored easily...but when we start sharing, and they are given a chance to talk, many times we forget the time. We have to remind them that it is time to sleep or they have to study.	Description of fw concerning children's participation	
Solo'o Daeli	We already have had the habit of practicing family worship since our great grandparents.	Description of fw concerning the family worship as a strongly established practice	
	Before we pray, we talk to each other about our feelings and our plans for the day, like who will go to the farm, which farm will be tilled on that day, who will stay in the house, etc.	Description of fw concerning the content of family talks	
	Everything that has been decided will be prayed for.	Description of fw concerning the content of prayer	
	In the past, it was only a father who prayed	Description of fw concerning the role of father	
	My wife will call all other members to gather, while I, as the father, wait in the living room, ready to lead the family in worship	Description of fw concerning the role of father and mother	
	Twice a day, lasting around 15-30 minutes	Description of fw concerning the quantity and duration	
	In the morning family-talks focus on division of work	Description of fw concerning the content	

		of family talks in the morning	
	In the evening family members share about what happen during the day. Funny stories, teasing each other	Description of fw concerning the content of family talks in the evening Description of fw concerning the atmosphere of family talks	
	All of us in the house	Description of fw concerning the participants	
	If someone is not joining, I, as a father, I will scold him/her, but this never happens.	Description of fw concerning the authority of parents Description of fw concerning the compulsory participation	
			The meaning of fw is “like a family meeting or gathering. It is like a family reunion.”
	Yes, they are invited to join. Rather than cancelling the family worship because of the guests, we just invite the guests to worship with us, and their presence adds more dynamic to our worship	Description of fw concerning the participants	
	There is nothing to hide about our family. Everyone knows about what is happening to us.	Description of fw concerning the content of family talks	

	<p>We are free to share our days and experiences. But sometimes there are sensitive matters which may be good to discuss in the presence of only a few people</p>		
	<p>We start by singing. We sing from the Buku Zinuno, the songs are chosen based on the situation. If it is in the morning, we choose a morning praise song. If it is in the evening, we choose an evening praise song. We also consider the liturgical year to choose the songs. Now, because we have Perikopen, there are also suggested songs in it, so we just follow the suggestion. Our family only uses Buku Zinuno for singing</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the element of singing</p>	
	<p>Usually praying. In the past, the pattern was very simple, it is just singing-praying-family sharing or discussion. But now, there is also scripture reading and meditation. Especially now that BNKP has Perikopen with suggested songs and daily scripture texts, our families follow it.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the pattern of worship.</p> <p>Description of fw concerning the difference between before and now</p>	
	<p>After scripture reading, I or my wife will lead in prayer, and it is ended</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the role of father and mother</p>	

	<p>with the Lord’s Prayer. Then we sing again, one or two stanzas, and we shake hands with each other and we part company.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the element of prayer</p> <p>Description of fw concerning how to end family worship</p>	
	<p>The scripture speaks for itself. The Holy Spirit will translate it and enable us to understand and to practice it in our daily life. So, I just read it.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the element of scripture reading and meditation.</p> <p>Description of fw concerning the understanding of the role of Holy Spirit in family worship</p>	
	<p>I do not discuss it. I just continue the way my parents did it. You know, it is something that your family and all other families have doing for a long time. No need to discuss, you just have to do it.</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning fw as an established practice.</p> <p>Description of fw concerning fw as a handed-down practice</p>	
	<p>It is a must in every Christian family</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the opinion of fw</p>	
	<p>Family worship allows us to talk to each other. Talking to each other is very important. This is what makes a family stronger and able to survive the challenges and bad times.</p>		<p>The meaning of fw is to “allow us to talk to each other.”</p>

	You learn to care about others		The meaning of fw is to “learn to care about others.”
	When our families are united, are in harmony, people will see that the Holy Spirit is in our midst. It becomes a testimony to other people		The meaning of fw is to “become a testimony to other people.”
	We will be respected too. Can you imagine if we are not in harmony with each other, we will quarrel in the house, people will talk badly about our families. They will mock us behind our backs.		The meaning of fw is to have a “respected” family
	When you search for God together as a family, you will find God’s blessing in your endeavors.	Description of fw concerning family understanding about God.	
	It is important when you wake up in the morning, you give thanks to God, and the same thing in the evening.		The meaning of fw is to “give thanks to God.”
	Throughout the day, whatever you do, you are mindful of God’s presence		The meaning of fw is to be “mindful of God’s presence.”
	Faith in God is what gives you strength in this life. We should be humble and not over confident with our minds and our competencies. This is what we want to say in family worship.	Description of fw concerning family’s understanding about faith in God.	The meaning of fw is to have “faith in God.”

	There is no special preparation. Usually in the table in our living room, there is already a song book. So, I just look for the song we are going to sing on that day while waiting for family members to gather.	Description of fw concerning the preparation to lead fw.	
	I pray as the Holy Spirit leads. I do not write my prayer.	Description of fw concerning the element of prayer	
	Family worship is conducted in living room	Description of fw concerning the place of fw	
	It is total surrender to God. Solemn. Reverence to God. We encourage everyone to focus on God during family worship	Description of fw concerning the atmosphere of fw.	
			The meaning of fw is "it gives the feeling of connectedness with each other."
			The meaning of fw is "it shows that we start and we end our days in God's sovereignty."
			The meaning of fw is "an opportunity to pass faith to the children."
			The meaning of fw is to "witness to other faiths."
	That family will miss an opportunity to grow together in faith to God. They will feel empty	Description of fw concerning the situation when a family does not practice family worship	

	Many families do not practice family worship anymore	Description of fw concerning the difference between before and now.	
	Yes, parents play significant role in sustaining this practice	Description of fw concerning the role of parents in fw	
	Everyone asks forgiveness from each other		The meaning of fw is "asking forgiveness from each other."
August	Yes, we practice it. Usually in the morning and in the evening	Description of fw concerning the time	
	Yes, we have to. Otherwise, my parents will scold me	Description of fw concerning the role of parents. Description of fw concerning the compulsory participation	
	In the beginning, yes, but now I enjoy it	Description of fw concerning the change of feelings and perspective	
	When I was small, my mother always woke me up early in the morning because we need to pray together before my father goes to work and my sister goes to school. I still want to sleep. They disturb my sleeping time. In the evening, while in the middle of my favorite cartoons, my mother or my father will call me for evening prayer. This	Description of fw concerning reasons to dislike fw	

	means the end of watching TV. It has to be turned off. I keep saying, wait a minute, but my parents always insist that I should stop whatever I am doing and gather in our living room to pray. So, I do not like it		
	My parents pray very long. I get bored	Description of fw concerning the prayer	
	But I remember there was one time in the school when my teacher asks who can recite the Lord's Prayer in our class. I raise my hand because I do know it. We always end our family prayer with the Lord's Prayer.	Description of fw concerning things children learn in fw	
	I also remember my teacher asking me to teach a song in the class. I choose one song that my mother taught me during our family worship.	Description of fw concerning things children learn in fw	
	As I grow up, I and my sister simply just stop whatever we are doing when we know it is our family time and go to our living room. It becomes a habit. I do not feel a burden anymore. Maybe because I am getting mature	Description of fw concerning the change of perspective	
	Family worship gives me knowledge that I can boast to my friends about		The meaning of fw is "gives me knowledge."

	Well, at first, I feel like that. But later on, I also realize that it is not necessary for looking great among friends, but family worship really shapes me into the Christian faith.	Description of fw concerning the change of perspective	The meaning of fw is “shapes me into Christian faith.”
	As I listen to the scripture or the lyric of the song, I learn something about God and about myself	Description of fw concerning things learned in fw	
	Reading the scripture with them is more interesting because everyone can share their opinion about the text and it is enriching	Description of fw concerning interaction in fw	
	Not always, but quite often. But even when we do not share about the text, it is still interesting for me. Sometimes, we have no idea what to say about the text, it is ok. We always have something to say about our activities, our experiences, people we meet during the day, our plans, etc. Our parents usually confront our attitudes during family worship...We joke and tease a lot during family worship, and that makes the bonding among us stronger	Description of fw concerning things learned in fw	
	This practice helps me to be a prayerful person. When I stay in the boarding house, I keep	Description of fw concerning things learned in fw.	

	<p>this ritual morning and evening prayer. I do not feel comfortable when I did not pray. Even if I do it alone in the boarding house, I grow to connect my daily lives with God's Word. Family worship plays role in making me like this person.</p>		
Theos	<p>I like it because I like being with my parents and siblings</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the relationship in family</p>	
	<p>Yes, but only during family worship do we get together and talk to each other</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the relationship in family</p>	
	<p>So, only during family worship do we meet and talk together</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the relationship in family</p>	
	<p>Our family worship is full of stories and chattering</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the atmosphere of family talks</p>	
	<p>When we pray, sing and listen to scripture reading, we are quiet. But during family talks, we are a little bit noisy</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the different atmosphere in family talks and the rest of family worship</p>	
	<p>Anything, it can be about my friends, my school, my games, I also listen to my sisters story about her favorite teacher, her low grade...many things</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the content of family talks</p>	
	<p>What I like best is the singing. We usually sing from Buku Zinuno and Kidung Jemaat. I can</p>	<p>Description of fw concerning the element of singing</p>	

	relate better to the lyrics of the songs.		
	The songs tell something about God, about me, and I understand it.	Description of fw concerning the things learned in fw	
	It is different with the scripture text. I do not understand it. We also read the Daily Bread. But I find it very hard to understand.	Description of fw concerning the difficulty in fw	
	For prayer, we take turns to pray.	Description of fw concerning the participation in fw.	
	Yes, for my parents it is ok, because I am still very young. Later on, I will understand it.	Description of fw concerning the reaction of parents to children's questions	
	Yes, it is important especially because it is a time to talk with other family members. I usually tease my sister. I love to see her expression when she is pretending to be mad at me. I think we are a little bit of a dramatic family.	Description of fw concerning the interaction in fw	The meaning of fw is "a time to talk with other family members."
	Another thing is that it is important because I learn many Christian songs. I really like to sing	Description of fw concerning things learned in fw	
	I like the song "Amazing Grace." That is my favorite song. This song teaches me that God loves us even when we do not deserve it. I like the song "What a friend we have in Jesus." It is	Description of fw concerning the understanding of God	

	comforting to know that God is always with us, like a good friend. When I am sad, I always sing these songs and it gives me motivation again.		
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From the first coding, I have 70 descriptive codes and 92 in vivo codes as listed below:

List of Codes

Descriptive codes

1.Intensity	11.Preparation of worship leaders	21.Difference before and now	31.The way family worship is ended	41.Effect of worship elements in a person's life	51.Passing the practice to younger generation	61.approaching God in worship
2.Time	12.Authority of father	22.Role of parents	32.Actions in worship	42.Feeling and situation when not doing family worship	52. Village prayer	62.Full pattern of family worship
3.Leadership/Person in-charge	13.Difference between evening and morning family worship	23.Prayer	33.Flexibility of the pattern of family worship	43.Difference in city and village	53.Duration	63.Reaction of guests
4.Process of leading	14.Busy life of family	24.Quantity	34.Scripture reading and reflection	44.Feeling about	54.Action of mother	64.Attitudes of parents in

				family worship		family talks
5.Participants	15.Content of prayer	25.Place	35.Material used for singing	45.Eleme nt of family worship	55. Change in action/atti tude	65.Babies' participati on in family talks
6.Choices of participants	16.Content of family talks	26.How participa nts assemble d themselv es	36.Selection of songs in family worship	46.Conten t of evening prayer	56. Role of mother	66.Role of Holy Spirit
7.Pattern of family worship	17.Family's understan ding about God	27. Pattern of morning family worship	37. Things learned in family worship	47.Family' s interactio n	57.Self- initiative actions of the participan ts	67.Parents instruction in family worship
8.Action of participants	18.Particip ant's opinion about family worship	28. Liturgical material used in family worship	38.Atmospher e of family worship	48.Family' s understan ding about sin	58. The change in the form of participati on	68.Reason to dislike family worship
9.Language	19.Authori ty of parents	29.Patter n of evening family worship	39.Parents reaction/inter action to children's behavior	49.Form of participati on in family worship	59. Reaction of participan ts	69.Family worship as a strongly establishe d practiced
10.The right or privilege of worship leaders	20.Singing	30. Participat ion of children in family worship	40.Parents' relationship to children	50.Decisio n maker	60.Expecte d behaviors	70.Compul sory aspect of family worship

In Vivo Codes

1.A fellowship value	2.It teaches us to listen to each other	3.A bonding time among family members	4.To enjoy the company of each other
5.Strengthening relationship among us, family members, but it also teaches us to strengthen our relationship with other people	6.Remembering these people in prayer, I learn to care and to pay attention to other people	7.To pray first for other people	8.Reminds us during family worship
9.Advise us about most important things.	10.Grateful for what God has given to us	11. Giving thanks	12.Remind us of life lessons
13.I learn about worshiping God and glorifying God for the first time in my life during family worship	14.Not feeling good, not at peace, something not right when I did not participate in family worship	15.I learn to be grateful to God	16.To care and to share with other people
17.Christian values are taught to me and they become part of me. I practice them.	18.To care for others	19.Increases my knowledge of God and it deepens my faith	20.Having a stock of knowledge of God and Bible
21.I know more than other friends.	22.I am already familiar with the stories	23.It's easier for me to understand the topics	24.I know more songs
25.Cultivates care for others in our hearts	26.Give thanks to God	27. We don't put ourselves into the center of our life	28. It makes us humble
29.Reveals his honest feeling, his vulnerability	30.We feel closer, we are one in his pain	31.A memory machinery	32.Conveying important message

33. Give thanks to God because God has blessed us	34. Having fellowship with family members	35. To meet and to talk with our children	36. Strengthening relationship among family members
37. Learn to care, to support, and to listen to each other	38. Nourishing Christian faith in our life	39. Experience trouble...restless...not feel at peace, when it is not practiced	40. Family fellowship
41. Spiritual nourishment	42. Source of strength	43. Imparting Christian values to children	44. Domestic missionaries
45. Teaching our children that God is the source of hope, strength and wisdom	46. An opportunity to nourish intimacy with family members	47. Ready to face challenges in life	48. The opportunity to introduce the Christian values and stories to our children
49. Time to be with family	50. To give thanks to God because God has protected us, has blessed us	51. To come before God and ask God's forgiveness for all our wicked thoughts, our sins	52. We ask God to show mercy to us
53. We entrust again our life into God's hand	54. Gives glory to God	55. Witness of God's love	56. A boundary, a reminder for all of us
57. Teaches us to have self-control	58. Reminds us of hope we have in God	59. Peace in our family	60. Empowered to face conflicts
61. Harmony in the family	62. Shapes my spirituality, to be close to God, to have strong faith	63. Regular time to communicate with each other	64. Family time, it connects us
65. To keep us close to each other	66. Indicating a family member	67. Nourish spirituality	68. Strengthening relationship...communicating with each other
69. Teaches me to love other persons	70. Reconciliation time	71. She is part of the family	72. Shows the fellowship aspect of the family. It binds us together

73. Builds up our faith to God	74. Pass to our children the Christian faith	75. Witness about God	76. Discipline myself
77. An opportunity to be with my husband, children, students	78. Like a family meeting or gathering, like a family reunion	79. Allows us to talk to each other	80. Learn to care about others
81. Become a testimony to other people	82. To have a respected family	83. Give thanks to God	84. Mindful of God's presence
85. Have faith in God	86. It gives the feeling of connectedness with each other	87. It shows that we start and we end our days in God's sovereignty	88. An opportunity to pass faith to children
89. Witness to other faiths	90. Asking forgiveness from each other	91. Gives me knowledge	92. Shapes me into Christian faith

Appendix 3

Categories for RQ 1: Description of Family Worship

List of sorted and merger coded

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5	Category 6	Category 7	Category 8
Participants	Act of worship	Circumstances of worship	Structure of worship	Relationship/ Interaction in worship	Changes in worship	Faith understanding in worship	Principle in worship
Participants	Preparation of worship leaders	Intensity	The way worship ended	Authority of the father	Difference before and now	Way of approaching God	Parents instruction in worship
Reaction of guests	Actions in worship	Time	The effect of elements of worship	Role of parents	Difference in city and village	Role of Holy Spirit	Compulsory
	Leadership/person in-charge	Duration	Full pattern of worship	Action of mother	Change in action/attitude	Family's understanding of God	
	Process of leading	Quantity	Difference between evening and morning pattern of fw	Attitudes of parents in family talks	The change in family worship	Understanding of sin	
	Babies participation	Place	Prayer	Role of mother	Decision maker		
	Choice of participants	Atmosphere	Flexibility of the pattern	Family's interaction			
	Self-initiative actions	Language	Scripture reading and reflection	Authority of parents			
	Action of participants		Content of prayer	Parents' reaction to			

				children's behavior			
	Form of participation		Material used for singing	Parents' relationship to children			
	Reaction of participants		Elements of family worship				
	Expected behavior		Content of family talks				
	Participation of children		How participants assembled themselves				
	The privileges of leader		Selection of songs				
			Content of evening prayer				
			Pattern of family worship				
			Pattern of morning family worship				
			Liturgical material used				
			Pattern of evening family worship				

			Singing				
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Appendix 4

Categories for RQ 2: The Meaning of Family Worship as Perceived by Family Members

List of sorted and merger coded

<i>Category 1</i>	<i>Category 2</i>	<i>Category 3</i>	<i>Category 4</i>	<i>Category 5</i>	<i>Category 6</i>
Related to relationship within family	Related to knowledge and skill gained (education)	Related to witness (effect outside family)	Related to the understanding of God	Related to the effect of failure to practice it	Related to housekeeping
Fellowship	Fellowship	Learn to care and to pay attention	Grateful for what God has given to us	Not feeling good	Reminder about domestic things
Listening to each other	Teach to listen to each other	To care and to share with other people	Giving thanks	Not in peace	
A bonding time	Learn to care and to pay attention to other people	To care for others	Worshiping and glorifying God	Something not right	
Enjoying company	Strengthening relationship	Domestic missionaries	Learn to be grateful	Experience trouble	
Strengthening relationship	To pray first for other people	Witness of God's love	Give thanks to God	Restless	
To care for others	Advised about most important things	Teaches me to love other persons	Giving thanks to God	Not feel at peace	
Cultivates care of others in our hearts	Remind us of life lessons	Witness about God	Source of strength	Not ready to face challenges in life	

Reveals his honest, vulnerable feeling	To care and to share with other people	Learn to care	Source of hope, strength and wisdom		
We feel closer, we are one in this pain	Christian values are taught to me and they become part of me.	Become a testimony to other people	To give thanks to God		
A memory machinery	To care for others	Witness to other faiths	To come before God and ask forgiveness		
Having fellowship with family members	Increases my knowledge of God and it deepens my faith		To ask for mercy		
To meet and to talk with our children	Having a stock of knowledge of God and Bible		Entrusting our life to God		
Strengthening relationship among family members	I know more than other friends		Gives glory to God		
Learn to care, to support and to listen to each other	I am already familiar with the stories		Reminder of hope		
Family fellowship	It is easier for me to understand the topics		Give thanks to God		
Nourish intimacy with family members	I know more songs		Mindful of God's presence		
Time to be with family	A memory machinery		Starting and ending days in God's sovereignty		

Peace in family	Conveying important message				
Harmony in the family	Nourishing Christian faith in our life				
Regular time to communicate with each other	Spiritual nourishment				
Family time, it connects us	Imparting Christian values to children				
To keep us close to each other	Teaching our children that God is source of hope, strength, and wisdom				
Indicating part of the family	Opportunity to introduce the Christian values and stories to our children				
Strengthening relationship, communicate with each other	Teaches self-control				
Reconciliation time	Empowered to face conflicts				
She is part of the family	Shapes my spirituality, to be close to God, to have strong faith				
Fellowship aspect. It binds us together	Nourish spirituality				
An opportunity to be with my husband, children, students	Teaches me to love others person				

Like a family meeting or gathering. Like a family reunion	Build up our faith in God				
Allow us to talk to each other	Pass to our children the Christian faith				
Learn to care	Discipline myself				
Respected family	Learn to care				
It gives the feeling of connectedness with each other	Have faith in God				
Asking forgiveness from each other	An opportunity to pass faith to children				
	Shapes me into Christian faith				
	Gives me knowledge				