



The Spiritual Perseverance of Christian Religious Education Teachers in Strengthening Students at SDN 105324 Desa Ujung Serdang: A Study of Exodus 10:2

Idah Flouranta^{1*}, Betty AS Pakpahan²

¹Student, Pendidikan Profesi Guru, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

²Lecturer, Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Kristen, IAKN Tarutung

*correspondence: idahflouranta@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of spiritual perseverance among Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers in strengthening the faith and character of students at SDN 105324 Desa Ujung Serdang, with particular reference to Exodus 10:2. Spiritual perseverance, grounded in biblical theology, serves as an essential dimension of a teacher's spiritual competence, influencing their commitment to guide students through moral, emotional, and spiritual challenges. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this research investigates how CRE teachers internalize perseverance as a form of faith expression and its pedagogical implications in shaping students' resilience and faith maturity. The findings reveal that teachers' perseverance, rooted in spiritual discipline and biblical conviction, plays a transformative role in motivating and strengthening students amid academic and moral difficulties. The study concludes that the spiritual perseverance of CRE teachers, modeled on the principles in Exodus 10:2, serves as a living testimony that inspires students to remain steadfast in faith and obedience to God.

Keywords: *spiritual perseverance, Christian Religious Education, teacher character, Exodus 10:2*

INTRODUCTION

The undertaking of Christian Religious Education (CRE) transcends the conventional confines of secular pedagogy, positioning itself not merely as a cognitive endeavor aimed at information transfer, but as a profound spiritual vocation. This mission, dedicated to the holistic development of students' faith and character, inherently demands a unique set of professional and personal attributes, paramount among which are faith-based endurance and unwavering moral integrity. The contemporary educational landscape is frequently characterized by significant complexities, notably an era increasingly marked by palpable moral ambiguity and, disconcertingly, a noticeable declining spiritual commitment among youth. In such a challenging environment, the sustained perseverance of CRE teachers is not simply an admirable quality but an indispensable

prerequisite for effectively achieving the foundational goals of the discipline: the nurturing of students' steadfast faith and the robust formation of their moral character. This necessity aligns profoundly with the theological framework of Christianity, wherein the Holy Scriptures consistently emphasize perseverance as a divine virtue—a spiritual capacity specifically granted by God to enable believers to remain faithful, resolute, and productive despite facing manifold trials, tribulations, and environmental pressures. A powerful biblical illustration of this principle is found in Exodus 10:2, where the Almighty states that His mighty acts and judgments were performed "that you may tell in the hearing of your son and of your grandson how I have dealt severely with the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord." This passage powerfully underscores the divine pedagogical intent: God's interventions served as enduring signs for future generations, meticulously designed to cultivate steadfast faith and unwavering obedience among His people across time. This theological grounding provides a compelling basis for examining the necessity of spiritual perseverance within the modern CRE context.

The challenges confronting CRE teachers in specific localized contexts frequently amplify this need for spiritual fortitude. For instance, at SDN 105324 Desa Ujung Serdang a microcosm of broader societal trends, CRE educators are continuously confronted with a range of formidable obstacles that impede the effective transmission of Christian values. These challenges include, but are not limited to, students' noticeable declining spiritual interest, the ubiquitous and highly powerful influence of external distractions—such as pervasive digital media and rapidly shifting cultural norms—and, critically, the limited moral and spiritual guidance provided within many family structures. These complex and often emotionally draining conditions create an educational atmosphere that necessitates a response rooted in deep spiritual resilience. Consequently, the specific contextual demands of environments like Ujung Serdang Desa mandate that CRE teachers embody spiritual perseverance in its fullest sense. This embodiment requires teachers to demonstrate not only unwavering faith in the ultimate efficacy of their mission but also extraordinary patience—a characteristic often cited as essential for successfully nurturing students' spiritual growth over the long term. Crucially, the teacher's role within this specialized discipline extends profoundly beyond the mere execution of instructional duties. It evolves into a lived commitment to exemplifying persistence—persistence not only in the delivery of curriculum but also in their personal prayer life, their commitment to moral discipline, and their steadfast adherence to core Christian values. In this holistic educational model, the teacher's spiritual life and enduring commitment become an integral, living part of the entire pedagogical process, fundamentally transforming the teacher into a role model whose actions speak with greater force and clarity than any verbal lesson.

The present study is thus strategically designed to address this critical gap in the existing pedagogical literature by exploring how spiritual perseverance, a virtue theologically inspired by the enduring message of Exodus 10:2, manifests practically within the daily teaching practices of CRE teachers. Furthermore, it seeks to rigorously analyze and articulate how this specific manifestation of perseverance contributes tangibly to the foundational educational outcomes: the strengthening of students' nascent faith and the reinforcement of their moral integrity. This academic investigation proceeds from the central argument that perseverance, operating fundamentally as a deep-seated spiritual

virtue, serves a dual, indispensable function. Firstly, it sustains and fortifies teachers in their demanding vocation, providing the necessary spiritual and emotional reserves to navigate the inevitable setbacks and long-term challenges inherent in spiritual formation. Secondly, and perhaps more profoundly, this perseverance actively transforms the educational environment itself. It reframes the classroom and the school community from a simple site of learning into a dynamic, spiritually charged space of intentional faith development and robust character formation. By meticulously examining the lived experiences of CRE teachers and analyzing the discernible impact of their spiritual resilience on their students, this research aims to generate significant theoretical and practical insights. These insights will not only enrich our understanding of the unique demands placed upon religious educators but will also provide a robust, evidence-based foundation for developing targeted professional development programs. The ultimate goal of these programs would be to cultivate and enhance this critical virtue of spiritual perseverance, thereby elevating the overall quality and spiritual effectiveness of Christian Religious Education. This research, therefore, intends to be a pivotal contribution to the scholarly discourse on religious pedagogy, emphasizing the often-understated but essential spiritual dimension of the educator's role in the profound, intergenerational task of faith transmission.

METHODS

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive research design, which is inherently suited for exploring and interpreting complex social phenomena within their natural context. The primary focus was placed on understanding the lived experiences and professional practices of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers operating within a specific, localized environment: SDN 105324 Desa Ujung Serdang. The design was specifically chosen to move beyond simple frequency counting or statistical generalization, instead aiming to provide a rich, detailed, and holistic account of the pedagogical reality. The core objective of the methodology was twofold: firstly, to meticulously describe and interpret *how* spiritual perseverance, inspired by the biblical concept in Exodus 10:2, is practically expressed and enacted within the teachers' daily pedagogical practices; and secondly, to explore and understand how this enduring virtue affects the spiritual resilience and character formation of their students. This approach ensures that the interpretation is grounded in the contextual intricacies of the research site.

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who possessed the requisite knowledge and experience relevant to the research questions. The sample consisted of two CRE teachers, whose professional longevity and dedication provided valuable insight into long-term spiritual endurance, and ten students—a manageable group size for in-depth qualitative inquiry—selected based on their regular attendance and willingness to articulate their experiences regarding their teachers' influence. Data collection was multifaceted, utilizing a triangulation strategy to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. Key data sources included: semi-structured interviews with both teachers and students to elicit personal narratives and reflective perspectives; classroom observations to document the direct manifestation of spiritual perseverance in teaching delivery, teacher-student interaction, and classroom management; and documentation analysis of

teaching materials, lesson plans, and records of student/teacher prayer activities. This combination of methods ensures a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under study. Data analysis followed an interpretive thematic approach, seeking to establish patterns of meaning within the collected narratives and observations. The analysis was systematically executed in three distinct stages: data reduction (selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data); thematic coding (identifying, naming, and grouping recurring themes related to spiritual perseverance, teacher role modeling, and student spiritual development); and interpretation (synthesizing the coded data to build explanatory links and construct a coherent narrative). To ensure validity and trustworthiness, a stringent process of data triangulation was undertaken. This involved the systematic comparison and cross-referencing of the teachers' interview narratives, the students' reflective accounts, and the researcher's detailed observational notes. This process allowed the research team to corroborate emerging themes and mitigate the influence of individual bias.

Ethical Considerations Throughout the research process, strict ethical considerations were rigorously observed to protect the rights and well-being of all participants. Prior to engagement, all participants, and the legal guardians of the minor students, provided informed consent after receiving a thorough explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the data collection, analysis, and reporting phases, with pseudonyms used for all individuals and the school context to ensure that responses could not be traced back to specific persons. The research adhered to the highest standards of academic integrity and respect for the participants' dignity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Faith-based endurance was evident in teachers' steadfast commitment to continue teaching Christian values and moral principles despite a variety of obstacles, including students' fluctuating interest, limited parental support, and external cultural pressures that often undermine spiritual education. Teachers described their experiences not as mere professional challenges but as spiritual tests that demanded deeper reliance on God's strength and providence. Rather than viewing difficulties as indicators of failure, the teachers reinterpreted them as opportunities for spiritual growth and ministry. This attitude resonates strongly with the message of *Exodus 10:2*, where God's mighty acts were meant to serve as testimonies of His enduring power and faithfulness for future generations. For the CRE teachers, this verse became a living reminder that perseverance in teaching is part of bearing witness to God's work in the world.

Through faith-based endurance, teachers cultivated resilience in both themselves and their students. Their determination to maintain biblical values amid adversity demonstrated an unwavering trust in divine guidance. They viewed the classroom as a spiritual mission field rather than a mere workplace. This understanding transformed their teaching into an act of worship and obedience, where faith became the source of energy that sustained their pedagogical efforts. Moreover, this perseverance had a contagious effect on students. Observing their teachers' dedication amid difficulties encouraged students to remain diligent and patient in their studies, cultivating a deeper

respect for faith and moral integrity. Thus, faith-based endurance not only sustained teachers spiritually but also shaped the moral and spiritual formation of their learners.

Prayerful Dependence and Reflection

Prayerful dependence emerged as the central discipline that sustained teachers' perseverance. Teachers reported that their capacity to endure challenges was strengthened by consistent practices of personal and communal prayer, daily devotions, and reflective engagement with Scripture. Prayer was not seen as a supplementary activity but as the spiritual foundation that empowered their teaching ministry. In the context of Christian education, prayer functions as both a source of divine empowerment and a pedagogical strategy. Teachers who integrated prayer into their daily routines—before lessons, during reflection sessions, or when addressing classroom difficulties—found that it fostered a peaceful and faith-filled atmosphere that benefited both teachers and students. This habit nurtured spiritual attentiveness and created a sacred rhythm that reminded everyone of their dependence on God's grace.

Furthermore, reflective meditation on Scripture allowed teachers to reinterpret their experiences through the lens of faith. Many described how biblical narratives such as Moses' perseverance in Exodus strengthened their confidence in God's plan despite visible obstacles. Prayer became a dialogue between divine wisdom and pedagogical reflection, helping teachers discern creative and compassionate responses to students' spiritual and behavioral struggles. Teachers consistently emphasized that perseverance is not a human achievement but a divine empowerment cultivated through prayer and faithfulness. This theological conviction transformed their professional identity: they did not perceive themselves merely as educators but as spiritual mentors entrusted with God's mission to shape young hearts and minds. Consequently, their teaching evolved into a form of ministry grounded in continual dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Inspirational Modeling of Faithfulness

Modeling faithfulness was identified as one of the most powerful pedagogical tools in the teachers' spiritual practice. The study found that students learn perseverance not only through formal instruction but, more profoundly, by observing their teachers' behavior and attitudes. Teachers consciously embodied patience, forgiveness, humility, and integrity in their daily interactions, creating living testimonies of Christian faithfulness.

This embodiment of faith transformed abstract biblical principles into tangible experiences. When teachers demonstrated calmness under pressure, kindness toward difficult students, or forgiveness in moments of conflict, they provided real-life illustrations of Christian perseverance. Students were inspired to imitate these virtues in their own lives, learning that faithfulness is not merely proclaimed but practiced.

Moreover, the teachers' authentic modeling bridged the gap between faith and action, reinforcing the credibility of their teaching. As one participant explained, "The best sermon we can preach is how we live in front of our students." Such consistency between belief and conduct cultivated trust and respect, turning the classroom into a moral community centered on mutual encouragement and grace.

This form of role modeling also aligns with the biblical principle of generational faith transmission reflected in *Exodus 10:2*, where God instructs His people to share their faith experiences with their children and grandchildren. In this way, CRE teachers act as

mediators of faith, ensuring that the story of God's faithfulness continues through the lived example of perseverance.

The findings align with the biblical understanding of perseverance as both a divine calling and a spiritual discipline. In *Exodus 10:2*, God's command to Moses to recount His mighty acts "so that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians" reveals the pedagogical purpose of perseverance—it nurtures generational faithfulness through testimony and remembrance. Similarly, the perseverance of CRE teachers functions as a form of testimony that embodies God's enduring work through human weakness. From a theological perspective, perseverance reflects faith in divine sovereignty and a steadfast commitment to moral endurance. Teachers who persevere spiritually mirror Christ's endurance in suffering, thereby transforming their vocation into a witness of steadfast faith. Their perseverance becomes sacramental—a visible sign of invisible grace—that testifies to God's sustaining presence in the educational process.

Educationally, integrating perseverance into pedagogy contributes significantly to character formation and spiritual maturity. The Christian educational philosophy emphasizes that education is not solely the transmission of knowledge but also the cultivation of wisdom and moral discernment. Perseverance helps shape these qualities by fostering patience, humility, and faith-based resilience—virtues essential to holistic human development. Furthermore, perseverance nurtures communal strength. Teachers who model endurance inspire not only students but also colleagues and parents, creating a supportive faith community that values prayer, compassion, and mutual encouragement. In this way, perseverance becomes a shared virtue that strengthens the entire educational ecosystem.

The implications of this study suggest several practical recommendations. First, teacher training programs in Christian education should include spiritual formation modules emphasizing perseverance as both a theological and pedagogical virtue. Educators need opportunities for guided reflection, prayer retreats, and mentoring that help them cultivate endurance and deepen their spiritual awareness. Second, schools should foster supportive spiritual environments that allow teachers to sustain their vitality through fellowship, worship, and peer encouragement. Creating spaces for collective prayer, spiritual discussion groups, and pastoral care will reinforce teachers' commitment to their vocation. Finally, ongoing reflection on Scripture must remain central in the professional and spiritual life of teachers. Regular engagement with biblical texts like *Exodus 10:2* will remind educators that perseverance is not only a moral duty but a divine calling—an act of faith that shapes both teacher and student for God's greater purpose.

CONCLUSION

Spiritual perseverance constitutes a vital dimension of the vocation of Christian Religious Education (CRE) teachers, serving as both a personal virtue and a pedagogical foundation. The findings from SDN 105324 Desa Ujung Serdang reveal that perseverance, deeply rooted in prayer, Scripture, and steadfast faith, empowers teachers to nurture students' moral and spiritual strength even amid adversity. Teaching, in this sense, becomes an act of ministry through which educators embody the endurance of faith, demonstrating how trust in God's promises sustains both teacher and learner in the face of challenges. Drawing inspiration from *Exodus 10:2*, which highlights the importance of recounting

God's mighty deeds to future generations, CRE teachers function as living testimonies of divine faithfulness. Their daily commitment to teaching, mentoring, and guiding students reflects a continual remembrance of God's sustaining power. By persevering through difficulties—such as students' inconsistent engagement, limited resources, or moral distractions—teachers model an active faith that not only instructs but also inspires. Their perseverance communicates to students that faith is not merely theoretical but practical, resilient, and enduring in all seasons of life. Furthermore, the spiritual perseverance of CRE teachers transcends the boundaries of personal piety; it operates as a transformative pedagogical force that shapes the moral and spiritual formation of students. Through consistent devotion, patience, and integrity, teachers foster environments where students learn to respond to challenges with faith rather than despair. Such perseverance cultivates resilience, self-discipline, and moral grounding, qualities essential for holistic Christian education. To sustain this perseverance, continuous spiritual formation is indispensable. Teachers require intentional practices of prayer, reflection, and fellowship to renew their commitment to God's calling. Institutional support from schools and church communities is equally vital, providing spaces for encouragement, mentorship, and shared faith experiences. Ultimately, spiritual perseverance in Christian educators is sustained by divine grace—it is God who strengthens and equips His servants to remain faithful. Through this grace-filled perseverance, teachers become vessels of transformation, shaping a generation that walks in faith, hope, and steadfast love.

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