

## The Role Of Sunday School Teachers In The Character Building Of High School Children At GBIS Salatiga

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**Abstract.** Character is important in human life. Character building must begin at an early age. The church must also realize this, because the church has an important role in shaping character, especially the character of Christ in children. Through the teaching of Sunday school teachers, the church can take part in the formation of children's character at an early age. The role of a Sunday school teacher is quite large for the character building of Sunday school children. Therefore, Sunday school teachers must know the importance of childhood, the role of Sunday school teachers in the formation of children's character, the process of character formation, influencing factors in character formation and shaping children's character according to the stages of child development. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which the role of Sunday school teachers in GBIS Salatiga on the character building of Sunday school children in GBIS Salatiga. This research was conducted using qualitative method and data collection was done through interviews. The results of the research were then reviewed in detail and critically using theoretical studies so that it is known to what extent the role of Sunday school teachers regarding the character building of Sunday school children in GBIS Salatiga.

**Keywords:** Sunday school teacher's role, Character Building, Sunday school children.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the development of technology and information feels so fast, it can also have an impact on the development of social dynamics. The same thing also has an impact on social life including the smallest scope of society, namely the family. Amoriza Wiratri in 2018 said that family is understood as a unity of interaction and communication that is seen from the involvement of everyone in playing a role, be it as husband and wife, parents and children or children with siblings. At present, the structure and composition of families in Indonesia are very diverse (Amorisa Wiratri,2018)

The family is a social circle of lasting character, confirmed in binding ties that provide generational results and areas as another meaningful perspective for children. The family is a meaningful place where children gain a foundation in building skills so that later as a successful person in society.

The learning of the child's personality is the practice of the role of the family and the Church. In a Christian family, of course, the role of guiding and improving the child's personality is the responsibility of the parents. They are the older individuals in the household who are able to show where the 'character' of their children will lead in the future. as a result of having the principle that the character of children is created through the pattern of educating older people, by inaugurating them in the love of the heart, love and also

appropriate care, so that children are determined to multiply in a positive character. Where there is something that makes a person feel secure there is a solid foundation, one of which is the Bible, where all people have a good grip on life through biblical thinking.

The ministry for Sunday School children is an important part of the Church, because that is where the role of Sunday School Teachers can carry out their duties to carry out what is taught in the Bible, the opportunity can direct children towards the correct teachings in accordance with what the Lord Jesus taught the disciples. The Lord Jesus gave an important essence to show that His existence was to serve, not to seek power or glory, and provide pure teaching for all people." (Arifianto, Y. A.,2020)

Ratna Megawangi, in her book *Character Education*, quotes Thomas Lickona, a professor of education from Cortland University, who identifies ten signs of the times to watch out for. According to Lickona, if these signs appear, then a nation is on the verge of destruction. These signs include: (1) increasing acts of violence among teenagers, (2) deteriorating use of language and words, (3) the influence of peer groups that encourage violent behaviour, (4) increasing self-destructive behaviour such as drug abuse, alcohol, and free sex, (5) increasingly blurred moral boundaries between good and bad, (6) declining morale, (7) reduced respect for parents and teachers, (8) weakening individual and civic responsibility, (9) rampant culture of dishonesty, and (10) growing mutual suspicion and hatred among others. (Megawangi,2009)

From these data, the Church of God, in this case including GBIS Slatiga, is also faced with the phenomenon of the decline in the character of this nation, this is due to the weakness of character education in passing on national values during the transfer of generations.

Interviews conducted with Sunday School teachers at GBIS Salatiga as respondents revealed several problems. Firstly, there is a lack of proper understanding of what it means to be a Sunday school teacher at GBIS Salatiga. The proposed solution is to provide a correct understanding of the meaning of Sunday school teacher where a Sunday school teacher is not only limited to telling stories about Christ but also needs to pay attention to his/her personality. Secondly, there is a lack of understanding about the basis of Sunday school children's ministry. As a Sunday school teacher, it is expected to pay attention to the basis of service for Sunday school children. Thirdly, there is a lack of proper understanding of the role of Sunday school teachers themselves. It is expected that as a Sunday school teacher, you can properly understand your role. Fourth, the lack of explanation regarding the requirements and criteria to become a Sunday school teacher. As a Sunday school teacher,

it is expected that you need to understand the requirements and criteria in becoming a children's servant in the church. Fifth, there is still a lack of preparation in teaching Sunday school. Sunday school teachers are expected to be able to prepare themselves before starting to teach Sunday school children. Sixth, there is a lack of understanding regarding the factors that influence the formation of a child's character. As a Sunday school teacher, it is also expected to have knowledge and understanding related to external and internal factors in the formation of children's character. Seventh, the Sunday school teachers at GBIS Salatiga also do not understand the values in children's character building. Teachers at GBIS Salatiga should properly understand that the teaching process also contains character values that need to be understood. Eighth, there is still a lack of understanding regarding the character building of Sunday school children, which needs to be done in accordance with the age stages. As a Sunday school teacher, you also need to understand the stages of children's character building.

Through an in-depth understanding of the problems at GBIS Salatiga, it is hoped that innovative solutions can be found to improve the quality of children's services at GBIS Salatiga.

## **2. METHODS**

The research method applied in this article is a qualitative method. According to Sugiyono, qualitative research method is defined as a research approach used to study objects in natural conditions, where the researcher acts as the main instrument. Data collection is done through triangulation or combination techniques. The data sources in this study come from a natural environment, with the main focus on events that occur in certain social contexts and situations. The author analyses the data by enriching information, looking for links from various sources, comparing data, and drawing conclusions based on data obtained factually (not in the form of numbers). The results of data analysis in this paper are presented in the form of a narrative that describes the situation under study in detail.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. General findings of the research background**

#### **a) History of the Establishment of Bethel Injil Sepenuh Church (GBIS) Salatiga**

The history of Bethel Injil Sepenuh Church in Salatiga began with a revival service in the village of 'Kalioso' in 1955. This revival service was led by a

missionary named Os Boren from Australia. This revival service produced new converts who eventually formed a household fellowship on Jalan Serayu, precisely at the residence of the late Pak Kirman (one of the defenders of the first congregation at GBIS Salatiga). Over time the fellowship grew, so that in 1960 the fellowship was moved to Jalan Kalipengging Salatiga. The fellowship was moved to Jalan Kalipengging Salatiga.

Bethel Injil Sepenuh Church Salatiga did not immediately have a church building after moving to Jalan Kalipengging Salatiga. The early congregation diligently and faithfully worshipped and prayed so that in the end the congregation obtained the results of their diligence and faithfulness, the congregation could finally enjoy worshipping in the existing church building until today.

b) Socioeconomic and Educational Situation of the Congregation

The people of Salatiga city still have a strong family system in their society. They live together, respect each other, help each other both in their own family activities and in community activities. The congregation of GBIS Salatiga is the people of Salatiga city itself. They live in an environment with different beliefs, including Islam, Catholicism, Buddhism and Christianity itself. Even in one family, there are family members who adhere to different religions, but still live in harmony. The education level of the congregation at GBIS Salatiga is elementary, junior high, high school, and university. The economic situation of the congregation of GBIS Salatiga is classified as a medium to high economy. On average, they already have their own place to live and their daily needs can be fulfilled. The professions of the congregation are civil servants, self-employed, farmers, retirees, and labourers.

c) Sunday School Service Programme at Bethel Injil Sepenuh Church Salatiga

The Sunday School service is held once a week for 2 hours (after the GBIS Salatiga worship service is over). Short-term programmes during the quarter, the first month of the last week held games or games together or combined or games, the second month of the last week held creativity, the third month of the last week held the development of children's talents. Prayer with Sunday School teachers is held once a month with the pastor of the congregation (last week).

**B. Special Findings of the Research Background**

In relation to the role of a Sunday school teacher in the character development of Sunday school children, the author found that there is still confusion in the understanding of Sunday school teachers, related to the role of Sunday school teachers

and how the process or procedure becomes a good Sunday school teacher. In this regard, Mr Sumarno as the pastor of the congregation at GBIS Salatiga also emphasised that as a Sunday school teacher there needs to be an emphasis on preparation in serving Sunday school children.

### **C. Definition of teacher and Sunday school teacher**

E.D. Homrighausen and I.H. Enklaar say that a 'teacher' is a shepherd to his students (Homrighausen,2011). In Webster 's dictionary the word educator means educator, specialist in education or educationist. The word teacher (Indonesian) is the equivalent of the word teacher which means a teacher is someone who teaches (Mudlofir,2013). So the definition of teacher can be concluded as a professional in educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in education, and can show exemplary to students. In this sense, we also need to understand the role of a teacher itself. According to Tampubolon, the role of the teacher is multifunctional, in which the teacher occupies the role as: (1) Parent, (2) Educator or teacher, (3) Leader or manager, (4) Producer or servant, (5) Guide or facilitator, (6) Motivator or stimulator, (7) Researcher or resource person. These roles can be graded downward, upward, or fixed according to the level of demand."(Suprihatiningrum,2013).

In church organisations, there are related terms about teachers. In general, the term teacher is pinned on individuals who have the role and responsibility to provide teaching including Sunday school teachers or often referred to as Sunday School Teachers. Sunday School teachers are teachers who have quality or quality as well as intelligence or special expertise in teaching Sunday school. One of the important factors in the success of Sunday School is the Sunday School teachers themselves. Teachers are more important than Sunday School materials. If you only have good materials, but do not have good teachers, then the effort to achieve the goal is futile. The success of Sunday School ministry, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, cannot be ignored.

Sidjabat, quoting Pullias and Young, says that a teacher is a guide, educator, reformer, role model, seeker of new ideas, counsellor, creator, authority, inspirer of ideals, storyteller and assessor (Sidjabat,2000). A better education will affect a person's way of thinking and will be able to analyse various problems around him. Someone who decides to become a Sunday School teacher is partly because he understands his potential, loves his job and most importantly realises his calling as a teacher in the field of spirituality.

Sunday school teachers according to Setiawani stated that: Sunday school teachers are involved in the ministry of ecclesiastical education, a holy spiritual office because it is a call from God, so Sunday school teachers must complete the tasks that have been entrusted by God faithfully (Setiawani,2000).

#### **D. Basis of Sunday School Children's Ministry**

The Bible gives a picture of how a child grows and develops by taking the example of Jesus. Jesus grew and developed (Luke 2:52); 'increased in size' means He grew and developed physically; 'increased in wisdom' means He grew and developed mentally and intellectually; 'more beloved of God' means He grew and developed spiritually; 'more beloved of men' means He grew and developed socially (Hendricks,2009).

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 explains the importance of education and teaching the Word of God. From Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we can conclude that the spiritual education of children should be the main concern where the child is given spiritual direction whose purpose is to teach the child to fear God. As well as diligently giving children a God-centred education where everything is connected to God and His ways.

In His ministry, Jesus gave special service to children. Jesus raised a 12-year-old boy from the dead son of Jairus-Mark 5:2-43). Jesus delivered a girl from an evil spirit (Mark 7:24-30). Jesus delivered a man from a mute spirit (Mark 9:17-27). Jesus blessed the children who came to Him (Mark 10:13-16)." (Hendricks,2009).

#### **E. Role of the Sunday School Teacher**

Although most Sunday School teachers know that teaching is part of the most important role of a teacher, many teachers do not give enough attention, time, and serious thought to teaching. This is because some teachers still do not have a clear idea of what it means to teach, and also because some teachers have wrong assumptions about teaching. For example, there are Sunday School teachers who think that they have taught well because they can make the children in their class happy and not bored. There are also Sunday School teachers who think that by giving a lot of Bible knowledge to children they have taught well.

The roles of Sunday school teachers based on Setiawani are as follows: (Setiawani,2000).

a. Teaching (teaching) 1 Timothy 2:7

What is called 'teaching' is a Teaching-Learning Process. In the process of teaching and learning the teacher must be able to bring about a change in the student, for example a change in knowledge, attitude and behaviour.

b. Shepherding Ezekiel 34: 2-6; John 10:11-18

A good shepherd must have a self-sacrificing heart, even when facing difficulties, he will not abandon and neglect his sheep; he must know each of his sheep, as well as be willing to bring sheep who are outside to enter his pen; he is also obliged to provide and fulfil all the needs of his sheep, including intellectual, emotional, mental and spiritual needs.

c. Fathering I Corinthians 4:15

A teacher must not only be able to patronise, but must also have a father's heart.

d. Modelling(I Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; I Thessalonians 1:5-6; II Timothy 4:11-13)

A teacher will have a huge influence on his students because students easily imitate the words and behaviour of their teachers. Therefore, a teacher needs to always pay attention to himself whether he has become a good example for his students.

Ruth S. Kadarmento also wrote three important things about the role of a Sunday School Teacher, these three things are: (Kadarmento,2004)

a. As a Sunday school teacher, we are required to communicate the right things (Gen 18:19; 2 Tim 3:14-16).

God gave Abraham the main task, which was to live according to the path shown by God by doing righteousness and justice. The main task was then clarified by the Apostle Paul when he spoke to adults about the education of children, namely that children begin to be taught about the right way of life through the Bible since they were young.

b. Being a channel of blessing

When the Sunday school teacher serves the children, he tells stories, sings, plays with them, and let's not forget at that moment there is a sense of great joy and fun. That feeling of great joy convinces every Sunday school teacher that he or she has been used by God to be a channel of blessing for the children.

c. Serve according to one's ability

If someone can be a Sunday school teacher, then he should serve well (Romans 12:6-7), developing gifts means that someone will endeavour to discover what abilities are within him. Believe me, the different abilities will be used to do various activities in Sunday School. (Setiawani,2002)

Being a Sunday school teacher should be realised as a calling. As stated in John 15:16 'You did not choose me, but I chose you.' (Yahya, 2011). Realising that the role as a Sunday school teacher is a calling from God, the thing that Sunday School Teachers must do is to respond to God's call with full responsibility and commitment. Being responsible and committed means being able to provide time, energy, funds, thoughts, as well as feelings to serve the children who have been entrusted to Sunday school teachers. Giving Sunday school the priority it deserves (Yahya, 2011).

The job of a Sunday school teacher is one that is done voluntarily by those who feel called but that does not mean that Sunday school teachers can act as they please when teaching in Sunday school. Serving as a Sunday school teacher is also a gift from God because not everyone gets the opportunity to become a Sunday school teacher." Being a Sunday school teacher is not just about the burdens and sacrifices that Sunday school teachers have to make. Being a Sunday school teacher can also provide faith formation for Sunday school teachers themselves, experience in serving, spiritual growth, getting the opportunity to help others prepare for the future (in this case children who will grow into adults)."

**F. Requirements or Criteria for becoming a Sunday School teacher**

Mulyasa in the book *Implementation of the Education Unit Level Curriculum* suggests several requirements for a teacher in accordance with the standards of educators and education, including the following: (a) An educator must have academic qualifications and competence as a learning agent, be physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to realise national education goals; (b) What is meant by academic qualifications is the minimum level of education that must be met by an educator which must be proven by a diploma and / or certificate of relevant expertise in accordance with applicable laws and regulations; and (c) Competence as a learning agent at the primary and secondary education and early childhood education levels, including: pedagogical competence, personality, professional, social, and moral, spiritual competence proportionally." (Mulyasa,2009).



Martinis Yamin states that professional teachers must have the following requirements: Have talent as a teacher, Have teacher skills, Have good and integrated skills, Have a healthy mentality, Healthy body, Have extensive experience and knowledge, Teacher as a human being with Pancasila spirit, Teacher is a good citizen."(Yamin,2007).

Looking at the above requirements shows that a teacher is required to have qualifications. According to Ngalim Purwanto in his book theoretical and practical education, teachers are all people who have given a certain knowledge or intelligence to a person or group of people."(Purwanto, 2004).

Many ask about how to become an ideal Sunday School teacher? Setiawani, in his book entitled Teaching Renewal, states that there are at least 8 requirements to become a Sunday School Teacher, namely: (a) A person who has been born again or saved, (b) A growing Christian, (c) A Christian who is faithful to the church, (d) A person who understands that the ministry of education is God's calling, (e) A person who likes the object of his education, (f) A good witness in his life, (g) A person who has received basic training as a teacher, and (h) A person who serves by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit.

Meanwhile, in the Sunday School Guidebook, it is mentioned that there are 5 characteristics required by a Sunday School Teacher, namely: Confidence and Firmness, Patience, Fantasy, Love, knowing and teaching the Bible."

Sidjabat suggests several things that Sunday school teachers should develop in order to play an active role as a motivator for their students, namely: (a) Improve abilities that can display mastery of materials or knowledge. Therefore, a teacher is required to always learn related to their field; (b) Show a deep understanding of the feelings and experiences of students. An empathetic attitude will give students a 'second chance' to change; (c) Showing a passion for the field of study they are in, because this will give students a passion for learning; and (d) Providing explanations for things that are still 'fuzzy' or unclear, with language and attitudes that are understandable."

Although all of the above are important for a teacher to have, it should not be 'discouraging' or even 'discouraging' for prospective Sunday School Teachers. This is where the Sunday School really plays a role to take part in the education of children. By winning the children, there is also an opportunity to win the parents. There are many cases where the testimony of a child eventually leads to the conversion of his parents.

## **G. Sunday School Teacher Preparation**

Some people think that teaching in Sunday School is not a difficult job. This assumption is often the cause of failure in teaching. Because in addition to careful teaching preparation, a Sunday School Teacher is required to understand or pay attention to the psychological development of children based on their age. This will affect the teaching techniques that must be used in accordance with their age development. It is recommended that a Sunday School Teacher has prepared his teaching materials at least one week before the D-day.

Some things that need to be owned by a Sunday school teacher in preparing himself are:

a. Believing in His calling as a full-time teacher

Every teacher is called to be a 'full-time' teacher. The term 'full-time' is deliberately taken to emphasise that a good teacher is one who does not give half of himself/herself, but gives the totality of himself/herself to serve."

b. Understanding his vision and mission as a teacher

Every teacher must understand his vision and mission as a teacher, both his personal vision and mission (according to God's calling to him), as well as the vision and mission of his church (and/or his church's children's commission).

c. Living led by and relying on the Holy Spirit

The Sunday School teacher who wants to succeed in his ministry must realise that he who is limited can do nothing without God the Holy Spirit accompanying his ministry. Living in obedience to His leading allows the Holy Spirit to use us more and more as instruments of service for His glory and work."

d. Willing to dedicate one's totality to children's ministry

A Sunday School teacher must dare to 'pay the price for the holy calling he received from God'. He is willing to offer everything to God, be it time, energy, thought, or money, for the children's ministry. In order for her ministry to be successful, she must prepare herself as well as possible, both personally and with fellow teachers. Teaching preparation is something that must be done by Sunday School teachers, both personally and together with other teachers. In order to prepare for teaching well, teachers must be willing to dedicate time, energy, thought and maybe even money."

e. Intercessory prayer for children

A good Sunday School teacher must be a good intercessor for the children. For this is also a 'spiritual warfare' to snatch the children from the bad influences of this world (and all that the world has to offer). This struggle is all the more difficult because the devil is not idle. He keeps trying to thwart our ministry, both by tempting us (as a teacher) and by tempting the Sunday School children. So, prayer is the best fortress and weapon for every Sunday School teacher."

f. Be present and teach with love

Love greatly affects the manner and atmosphere. Love for God and love for children will make the way we serve lively, vibrant, friendly and joyful. Conversely, without love for God and for the children, it will only make the ministry full of problems, and become a heavy and unpleasant burden of obligation that brings no joy because there are only disappointments and problems."

g. Being a shepherd to the children

The Sunday School teacher is called not only to teach in class (during Sunday School activities), but also as a shepherd for his students. He is a shepherd by: first, being a close friend who accompanies his students when they are experiencing difficulties, grief, illness, or problems. Second, being a good priest (prayer warrior) when his students need prayer support. Third, being an example in every good deed. Fourth, being a parent when they need companionship, care, security. Fifth, be the bearer of the Word that they desperately need.

If every Sunday School class has good shepherds, then the class will grow and develop, not only in terms of quantity, but especially the development or progress of the quality of the students' faith growth.'

## **H. Influential Factors in Character Building**

Character is the Aki-psychic that expresses itself in the form of behaviour and the entirety of the human I. Partly due to innate talents and traits. Partly due to innate talent and hereditary traits from birth: partly influenced by meleniu or environment. This character displays a striking human I, which is characteristic, which is unique with individual characteristics.

Masnur Muslich explains that character is the moral and mental quality of a person whose formation is influenced by innate factors (fitrah, nature) and the environment (educational socialisation, nurture). The potential for good character is

owned by humans before they are born, but these potentials must be fostered through socialisation and education from an early age.

Character is not just formed, but formed through several influencing factors, namely: biological factors and environmental factors.

a. Internal (Biological) Factors

Biological factors are factors that come from within the person himself. This factor comes from heredity or innate brought from birth and the influence of heredity from one of the traits possessed by one of the two.

b. External (Environmental) Factors

In addition to the factors of heredity (endogenous factors) which are relatively constant in nature, the milieu consisting of, among others, the environment, education, living conditions and situations and the condition of society (all of which are exogenous factors) all have a major influence on character formation.

This includes the customs of the prevailing rules and the language that is mobilised. From the moment a child is born, he or she begins to associate with the people around him or her. First of all with the family. The family has a leading position in influencing the formation of children's character. The family is the first environment that fosters and develops the child's personality. Character development can be done through habituation and real examples.

From this description, it can be concluded that a person's character grows and develops based on two forces, namely internal forces in the form of biological factors and external forces, namely environmental factors.

## **I. Values in Character Building**

Character values that should be owned and displayed in everyday life in Muchlas Samani and Hariyanto, namely:

- **Range of Attitudes and Behaviours**

- **Value Points attitude and behaviour in relation to God**

Discipline, faith, piety, forward thinking, gratitude, honesty, introspection, forgiveness, generosity, devotion.

- **Attitude and behaviour in relation to oneself.**

Hard working, risk taker, disciplined, soft hearted or empathetic, mature thinking, future oriented, visionary, unpretentious, passionate, constructive, responsible, wise, clever, careful, dynamic, efficient, persistent, frugal, honest, strong willed, creative, resolute, straightforward, independent,

introspective, respectful of time, forgiving, generous, devotion, self-control, productive, diligent, hospitable, compassion, self-confidence, self-sacrificing, patient, loyal, fair, respectful, orderly, sportive, moral, tough, firm, diligent, precise or trustworthy. open tenacious.

➤ **Attitudes and behaviour in relation to family.**

Working hard, thinking ahead, wise, clever, careful, honest, strong-willed, straightforward, respectful of health, respectful of time, orderly, forgiving, generous, devoted, friendly, compassionate, self-sacrificing, patient, loyal, fair, respectful, sportive, moral, firm, precise or trustworthy, open.

➤ **Attitudes and behaviour in relation to society and the nation.**

Working hard, thinking ahead, tolerant, wise, clever, careful, honest, strong-willed, straightforward, loyal, respect for health, respect for time, generous, devotion, hospitality, compassion, willing to sacrifice, fair, respectful, orderly, sportive, moral, firm, precise promises or trustworthy, open.

➤ **Shaping Character according to the Stages of Child Development**

In character building, parents or educators need to understand about the stages of child development, as follows

a. Age 0-18 Months

The first year of a child's life is important in building the child's character. The trick is to build the quality of the relationship between mother-father and child. Mothers and fathers' sensitivity to their children's needs is the root of their children's character building. If the mother-father is sensitive or responsive to the child's needs, the child will feel comfortable and grow a sense of trust in himself. For example, when the child cries, the mother or father immediately comes and soothes him; when hungry, the mother immediately breastfeeds him. From this the child learns that being sensitive or responsive to the needs of others is a good thing to do because it creates a sense of comfort and trust. Conversely, if the mother-father is not sensitive or responsive to their child's needs in the first year of life, the child will feel uncomfortable, so that a sense of sensitivity and trust towards others does not grow in them.

b. Age 18 months - 3 years.

Children are not yet able to understand what is right and wrong. Children do not yet understand that hitting others is wrong, for example. Children know what they can and cannot do because their mothers and fathers tell them or because their mothers and fathers give them consequences. At this stage the child learns that obeying mum and dad is the norm.

c. Age 3 years - 6 years.

The child begins to internalise the values applied by the mother-father in the family. The child also begins to understand that every action can have certain consequences according to what is taught by the mother-father. For example, if you hit a younger sibling, the younger sibling will cry; the hand is used not to hit but to do good things such as stroking, rubbing, and cuddling.

d. Age 6 years - 8 years.

Physically, they start primary school, start to grow fast and dislike old activities. They have a lot of energy and want to be active to do things. They seem to have excess energy and experience uneven growth with their peers. Thus their body size should not be compared. At this age their fine muscles are uncoordinated.

Mentally they are concerned observers who enjoy watching things work and show great interest in the process rather than the result. They enjoy taking things apart but usually give up when putting them back together. Vocabulary, literacy and numeracy develop quickly. Parents and teachers need to do all they can to encourage and build these children into a full self-concept.

Emotionally, they are very sympathetic to their own age. They may be moved or cry if they identify with a child who is hurt, sick or abused. Socially, they usually make friends quickly, even with strangers. At their age they rarely make friends with the opposite sex. Spiritually, in simple ways, they are ready to receive teaching about salvation. Parents and teachers can serve as role models through their activities in the church. In guiding parents and teachers, they grow, even witnessing for God."[39]

e. Age 9 years - 11 years.

Physically, they (grades 4-6) are full of energy. They are active and never get tired. They have excellent health and love being outdoors. Their lives are filled with many adventures. However, they grow slower and have poor coordination of both large and fine muscles. Mentally they are eager to be taught. They think critically and sharply. Emotionally they have little fear. They like it when people are impressed by

their courage and do not like being called cowards or sissies. Socially, 9 to 11 year olds are aware of their peers and want to be part of them. Spiritually they are ready to be taught more fully the teachings of salvation. With proper guidance, they are able to investigate and search for the truths revealed in the Bible on their own. They can distinguish between right and wrong and have a tender conscience. They can make the decision to accept the Lord Jesus Christ and dedicate themselves to serving the Lord Jesus."[40].

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Sunday School teachers at GBIS Salatiga consider that the role of a Sunday School teacher is important. The awareness of the importance of the role of a Sunday School teacher is what makes them have the heart to serve the Sunday School children at GBIS Salatiga. The challenges in teaching Sunday School children are also felt, ranging from Sunday School children who have a quiet, closed nature, cannot concentrate when listening to the story of God's Word because other children are noisy, there are also children who like to disturb their friends, bully their friends and even the challenges also arise from the Sunday School teacher himself.

Sunday School teachers at GBIS Salatiga also consider the importance of character education in Sunday School children. However, they lack a sense of responsibility when faced with their duties as educators of Sunday School children at GBIS Salatiga. Sunday School teachers consider that character building for Sunday School children in GBIS Salatiga is better done by parents at home, although they know that character building in children is also influenced by their surrounding environment.

The Sunday School teachers in GBIS Salatiga recognise that the character of GBIS Salatiga Sunday School children needs to be shaped from an early age so that they can become good individuals with Christ-like character in the future.

The Sunday School teachers at GBIS Salatiga believe that they have very little time with the Sunday School children, therefore their responsibility is not great in the character building process of the Sunday School children. They also think that even their own personalities still need improvement in terms of character, because sometimes what they say contradicts what they do. But even so, Sunday School teachers still rejoice in serving and they see a change in character in the Sunday School children at GBIS Salatiga after the children attend Sunday School services.

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