

# SABBATH SCHOOL

## Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

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Level 2 • Unit 2 • Week 4

### GOD'S HOUSE

**OBJECTIVE:**

To inspire respect for God's holy Sabbath and His people at church services.

**ATTENTION GETTER:**

Have the children enter to find their normally tidy Sabbath school area in a state of total disarray. There could be papers strewn about, a chair turned over, and maybe even a trash can emptied onto the floor. You could dump cookies and/or chips onto a tablecloth (as refreshments) to add to the mess.

After seeing the responses of the children to the mess, you can ask them what they thought about the condition the room was in. Then assist the children in cleaning up the mess! Ask them if they like cleaning up a mess that somebody else made. Even if they liked the experience for the novelty of it, they may admit that it's better to walk into a place that someone has made nice and presentable for their arrival. Direct their attention to the fact that God cares about the place where we meet for church services. When we take care of it and act respectfully there, we are honoring Him.

**BIBLE LESSON:**

Did you know that keeping God's Sabbath holy is one of the Ten Commandments? The Fourth Commandment says "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy..." Something that is holy is something very special, to be treated with care.

One time, when Jesus came to God's house—called the temple—He noticed something very unusual going on. Some people had set up a livestock show and sale right there in the middle of it. They were selling cows and sheep...and even birds! It was noisy, it was messy, and it was smelly. At any rate, the temple just wasn't the place for such a thing, so Jesus got them out in a hurry. He told them to get out and not to make His Father's house a marketplace!

[Note to teacher: Technically, “church” refers to the called out members who assemble together to be the Church. For the sake of readability, however, we will at times use the term “go to church” to mean going to the Sabbath services of the church.]

We know from this story that some things are not appropriate at church services. Let’s see if we can identify what is and what is not OK at services in this day and age. I will read some things and you can make an “O” shape with your arms if you think its appropriate, or an “X” shape if it is not a good idea:

- Bringing toys that make noise.
- Smiling and shaking hands with the people you meet.
- Facing the front during services and keeping your things tidy in your area.
- Singing happily during the song part.
- Running happily inside the building.
- Bringing your pets.
- Bringing a flower to a nice lady that sits by herself.
- Giggling during services.
- Arguing with your parents about where you want to sit.
- Wearing your “grungy” clothes to church.
- Making Sabbath notes for your friends.

Can you come up with any other dos and don’ts about church? Can you give me some examples?

Did you know that God compares the people of His Church to the body of Christ? This is in 1 Corinthians 12, where it talks about how the parts of a person’s body all have different skills. For example, how many of you can throw a ball pretty well? What part of you does it? OK, imagine if your ear decided the hand and arm were getting all the attention and it wanted to do the ball throwing from now on. Well, that could end up being pretty strange, but you get the point.

Have you ever looked around at church and seen the different roles that people play to make the services happen? People use their own particular skills to honor God and serve His Church. There’s usually a piano player, a few speakers, people that set up chairs, others that put out refreshments—not to mention your beloved Sabbath school teacher. It takes a collective labor of love to make things nice and organized for those who come.

So how can kids put their skills to good use? Even small parts of the church “body” can be very useful. [Ask the class for ways they can think of to be helpful. Then, if there is a children’s choir, you might suggest what follows.] You have a part in the children’s choir. You can glorify God by learning the songs well and being at practice on time. You can also help the ushers out by leaving your area neat and tidy after services. You might even ask if you could gather up songbooks. Be especially careful with any food or drink that may be served. You can throw away your cup or plate and help someone else with their trash. In general, be considerate and enjoy having a nice place to come and worship God. Otherwise it might look like this place did when you first arrived for Sabbath school!

**LESSON APPLICATION:**

Supplies Needed:

Scissors

Fine point markers or crayons

Small paper sacks (one per child)

Badge saying "I'm a Good Example for God" (one per child) (see pattern at end of lesson)

Safety pins to attach the badges to child's outfit

After church today (or next week) why don't we help out by picking up litter left after services? Each of you can make a badge to wear as you are doing it. [Pass out paper sacks before sending them out to pick up around the seats.]

**MUSIC:**

Sing the following original words to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

**IN GOD'S HOUSE**

I am in God's house today,  
House today, house today.  
I will try hard to obey,  
And keep around me clean.

I will dress my best for God,  
Best for God, best for God,  
Trying to obey His laws,  
In thought and word and deed.

**MEMORY VERSE:**

1 Corinthians 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

# family activity

## **THE POINT:**

Have respect for God's holy Sabbath and His people at church services.

## **ASK ME...**

- How should we dress for church?
- How should we act at church?
- How should we treat others at church?

## **FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:**

**Practice introductions:** Mom and Dad can help their child learn a way to show respect and friendliness at church. Consult an etiquette book about introductions and gather the family together to play act introducing each other. Have one child "meet" a parent who can pretend to be someone new to the child. Stress to the child that, although they've been taught not to speak to strangers when they are alone, they can and should speak to adults at church when they are near family and friends.

When you act this out, have your child look right at the other person and SMILE as they reach out with their right hand to shake hands. Example:

Mom: "Hello, I am Mrs. Peabody. What is your name?"

John: "My name is John. I'm glad to meet you."

Vary this scenario to include introducing two people to each other. Continue to practice good manners with a "tea party" of juice and crackers for an extra treat!

**Make the Sabbath a "can do" day:** Help your children focus on what they CAN do on the Sabbath instead of what they CAN'T.

- Tell them they CAN help decide what to fix for the next church potluck.
- Say that they CAN have a friend sit with them if they will behave, and if they make the arrangements in advance before church is about to start.
- On Friday, tell them they CAN pick out what they would like to wear the next day with your help.
- They CAN pick flowers to make a centerpiece to make a Sabbath meal special.

These are just a few ideas that can make children feel an active part of the Sabbath. Look for other ways to make the Sabbath truly a delight for them.

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

1 Corinthians 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

