

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 3 • Unit 8 • Week 4

PENTECOST

OBJECTIVE:

To teach the children the definition of the word Pentecost, when the New Testament Church began, what are firstfruits and what is the Holy Spirit.

ATTENTION GETTER

Ask: How many of you know the date of your birthday?

Is it always on the same day every year?

Is there anyone here who has a birthday on February 29?

Say: February 29 only comes around every four years and that year is called a leap year. For those years that do not have February 29 then the day after February 28 is March 1. So the person whose birthday is on February 29 must count 29 days from January 31 to find his birthday. Some years his birthday is on February 29, and some years it is on March 1.

Do: Bring a leap year calendar and a regular year calendar to show the class.

BIBLE LESSON:

Supplies: Counting chart (see end of lesson) for each student

Say: The New Testament Church of God has a beginning, it is June 17 A.D. 31. That day was the Feast of Pentecost. But Pentecost is not on the same date every year, even on God's calendar. We must count 50 days to find it.

When the New Testament was written, Greek was one of the languages spoken and Pentecost is a Greek word. Pentecost means 50th in Greek coming from counting 50 days to find it.

On God's calendar, the first and last days of Unleavened Bread always fall on the same days every year.

Do: Allow some of the children to read Leviticus 23:4-8.

Say: The First Day of Unleavened Bread is on the 15th day of the first month of God's calendar, and the Last Day of Unleavened Bread is on the 21st day. The Hebrew name for the first month of God's calendar is Abib. So these dates are Abib 15 and Abib 21.

Do: Allow some of the children to read Leviticus 23:15-21.

Say: The first and last days of the seven Days of Unleavened Bread are Holy Days—special Sabbath days. But in order to find the Feast of Pentecost, we begin to count 50 days from Sunday (the day after the weekly Sabbath).

Do: Pass out the counting charts.

Say: We will look at this chart and see how to count the fifty days. Begin counting on the day after the Sabbath. So Sunday is 1, Monday is 2, Tuesday is 3, and we continue until we get to 50. We see that the 50th day is on Sunday. This will be true for every year. Pentecost will always be on the day after the Sabbath.

This feast is called Pentecost because it is 50 days from the Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread, and we must count the days to find it.

Another name we call this feast is the Feast of Firstfruits. The reason for this is that God has chosen two seasons of time to bring people into His family. These two seasons are called harvest times. It is like how farmers plant certain crops, say peas, in early spring and when the peas are ready to be picked, it is the first harvest. The farmer also plants summer crops, say beans, to be picked in the early fall and that is the second harvest. The first harvest is called the firstfruits.

To get a better understanding, let's talk about tomato plants.

Ask: Did your father or mother ever plant tomato plants?

Who has seen tomato plants growing?

Say: At the time you planted tomato plants, they were probably about six inches tall. You watered them every day and they grew fast. One day you noticed they had some little yellow flowers and after some time the petals fell off and soon some little green balls began to form. Gradually the green balls got larger and began to turn red. And when they were completely red, the picking time had arrived. You began the harvest of tomatoes.

Ask: Who in your family picked and ate the first tomato?

Say: That first tomato is called the firstfruit of that plant. In the same way God has planted us in His church at this time and we will be the firstfruits of His family.

There will be another planting time after Jesus comes back to this earth. God will then plant the rest of humans into His Church, and they will become the second harvest to be in His kingdom and a part of His family.

The first harvest is a very small harvest, but the second harvest is tremendously large. There will be hundreds of millions, very possibly billions of people in that second harvest. But only the first harvest is called firstfruits simply because they are first.

Do: Allow someone to read James 1:18.

We call this day the Feast of Firstfruits because we are remembering and celebrating those whom God is calling now to be a part of His family.

This feast day is also called the Feast of Weeks. Look at the counting chart again and notice that we begin to count on the day after the normal weekly Sabbath which falls during the seven days of Unleavened Bread. That begins the first week and we count seven weeks. The end of the seven weeks (49 days) is the seventh Sabbath and then we add one more day to make it 50 days.

Ask: Who can say the three names of this Holy Day that is the first harvest of God's people into His family and kingdom?

Say: We've learned the three names of this feast, how to find the day on the calendar and what the word Pentecost means. Now let's learn what the Holy Spirit is, and how it is connected to Pentecost.

Do: Allow someone to read Romans 8:9.

Say: Pentecost teaches us that God will give His Holy Spirit to humans so that they can learn to be like Him. Being like God is having love, gentleness and kindness toward everyone.

Do: Allow a student to read Romans 8:14.

Say: When the Holy Spirit enters the human heart, it gives a person the power to overcome his human nature which is prone to sin. The person then works very hard, with the aid of God's Spirit, to change from his sinful nature to God's loving nature.

Now we will begin to understand what God's Holy Spirit is. Consider your hand, eye, ear and nose. These parts of your body send information to your brain and you get understanding.

If you touch a hot stove, a message goes from your hand to your brain and you know you must do something. You remove your hand from the stove. You then quickly obey that message.

If you are crossing a busy street and see a car coming too fast, a message goes from the eye to the brain and you know to quickly get out of the street.

If you hear the doorbell ring, a message goes to the brain and you know that someone is at the front door.

If you were to smell smoke in your bedroom, a danger message would go to your brain and you would quickly leave the house.

Now consider things that are not physical—things you cannot feel, see, hear, taste or smell.

When a person has an emotion of hate toward another because of a wrong action, that emotion of hate is a part of the mind and memory.

If a person sees another with a very desirable possession, an attitude of jealousy can enter his mind and memory.

If a person has an abundance of possessions and will not share with another who is in need, a spirit of selfishness can enter his mind and memory.

These attitudes or emotions in the mind and memory are not physical. They cannot be taken out and looked at or touched. They are spiritual things. They need another spirit to correct them.

To aid us in becoming like God, we must know and have in our mind and memory the basic rules to live by and have God's Holy Spirit to help us. Pentecost reminds us of this very important part of God's plan.

When the Children of Israel left slavery in Egypt, they traveled for about 50 days and came to Mount Sinai. On that 50th day God came down upon the mountain in the cloud and spoke the Ten Commandments to them. Now humans had some real rules from God to live by that were written down for everyone to read and understand.

Most of the Children of Israel at that time did not have God's Holy Spirit to help them to obey the Ten Commandments in their hearts and minds. God then promised to send His Holy Spirit to man in the future. On Pentecost in A.D. 31 God sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples of Jesus, and the New Testament Church of God was begun. The planting of the first harvest to be the firstfruits of God's family was rapidly increased.

Do: Allow someone to read Acts 2:1-4.

Say: Pentecost shows us that after the return of Jesus to this earth God will make the Holy Spirit available to all the people of the world. The planting of the second harvest in God's plan will be even greater than the first planting. All the rest of the people who have ever lived will have the opportunity to enter into God's Kingdom.

Pentecost teaches us a very valuable lesson that God has two harvest seasons. It teaches us that God has given rules for man to obey so we can be like Him. It also teaches us that God will send His Holy Spirit of love to help us remove wrong attitudes from our mind and memory in order to become like Him. It also teaches us that firstfruits in a first harvest will be trained and taught to be helpers of people planted in the Church for the second harvest.

LESSON APPLICATION:

Prepare: Make copies of the 2000 sample calendar and a blank calendar for all students. Also bring a calendar for the current year.

Say: We will now make a calendar for this present year and count from the Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread to find the Feast of Pentecost.

Do: Use the year 2000 calendar as an example. Read one step at a time and have the students do that step before going on to the next step.

- Print the present year on the line after the word year.
- On the first line of the calendar print the month in which the Days of Unleavened Bread fall this year.
- Find the date of the First Day of Unleavened Bread and print it on the correct day of the first line.
- Find the date of the Last Day of Unleavened Bread which is seven days later and print the date on calendar.
- From a calendar of this year fill in all the following dates and months like the sample calendar of 2000.
- Place a circle around the date of the Sunday (day after the weekly Sabbath) that falls during the seven Days of Unleavened Bread.
- Now, starting with that Sunday, we will count 50 days to find the Feast of Pentecost. Print a small 1 in the corner of Sunday.
- Print a small 2 in the corner of the following day, Monday.
- Continue printing numbers on the following days of the calendar until you reach 50.
- That 50th day, a Sunday, will be Pentecost. Circle it and label it "P."

Music:

Sing this song of praise to God for His wonderful feast days (taken from the United Church of God hymnal).

PRAISE THE ETERNAL WITH A PSALM

Praise the Eternal with a psalm; sing to the God of Jacob;
Raise the chorus, make a joyful noise, bring out the harp and timbrel.
Blow on the trumpet, sound the drum, on our solemn feast day;
This is a statute and a law which God has ordained for Israel.

MEMORY VERSE:

Romans 8:14 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God."

family activity

THE POINT:

God has given us Holy Days to give us an understanding of His plan of salvation for man. Each Holy Day is a very important event in the process of entering God's Kingdom and being a part of His family. Pentecost teaches us about the order of God's calling people and the sending of His Holy Spirit.

ASK ME...

- How many days do we count from the Sunday (the day after the Sabbath) during the days of Unleavened Bread to find the Feast of Pentecost?
- What is another name for Pentecost?
- What did God send to the disciples on Pentecost in A.D. 31?
- How many weeks do we count to find Pentecost?
- What does the Holy Spirit do for us?
- When did the New Testament Church begin?

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

Talk about the Feast of Pentecost and how it fits into the God's plan of salvation. Talk about how God is not unfair, but that He has a time and place for everyone's calling and a special job for each one. Allow the children to tell the story of the lesson and give the examples they heard that explain first-fruits. Review the lesson application of building a calendar to find Pentecost.

MEMORY VERSE:

Romans 8:14 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God."

Pentecost

Counting Chart

Start counting with Sunday (the day after the Sabbath)

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
							0
Week 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Week 2	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Week 3	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Week 4	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Week 5	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Week 6	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Week 7	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
	50						

1 week = 7 days

7 weeks = 49 days

Pentecost is 7 weeks plus 1 day = 50 days

Pentecost

Year 2000

Month	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sabbath
April	16	17	18	19	UB 20	UB 21	UB 22
	UB 23 ¹	UB 24 ²	UB 25 ³	UB 26 ⁴	27 ⁵	28 ⁶	29 ⁷
	30 ⁸						
May		1 ⁹	2 ¹⁰	3 ¹¹	4 ¹²	5 ¹³	6 ¹⁴
	7 ¹⁵	8 ¹⁶	9 ¹⁷	10 ¹⁸	11 ¹⁹	12 ²⁰	13 ²¹
	14 ²²	15 ²³	16 ²⁴	17 ²⁵	18 ²⁶	19 ²⁷	20 ²⁸
	21 ²⁹	22 ³⁰	23 ³¹	24 ³²	25 ³³	26 ³⁴	27 ³⁵
	28 ³⁶	29 ³⁷	30 ³⁸	31 ³⁹			
June					1 ⁴⁰	2 ⁴¹	3 ⁴²
	4 ⁴³	5 ⁴⁴	6 ⁴⁵	7 ⁴⁶	8 ⁴⁷	9 ⁴⁸	10 ⁴⁹
	P 11 ⁵⁰	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	