

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 5 • Unit 3 • Week 4

THE SABBATH DAY

OBJECTIVE:

To learn the value and purpose of God's Sabbath and to learn principles for deciding how to keep the Sabbath.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Supplies Needed:

- Pennies (2 or 3 for each student)
- Numismatic guide for U.S. coins

Do: Bring two or three pennies for each student in the class. Tell them that what you are about to do is only for illustration. It is a "model," a "for instance," an example—not the truth. Give each child two or three pennies. (The denomination doesn't matter, but the coins should all be of the same value. Briefly say that they represent an amount that we all are familiar with.

Say: One of your coins is more valuable than the other. You can keep it, but please give me back the other coin(s). [This should cause the cry of, "Which is which?" Then tell the kids that because of time constraints they must choose NOW! Don't be pushy, but insist that they return all coins except the most valuable.]

Do: When you have received the coins back (and the students are disappointed, if not a little upset), ask them: Why are you a little unsettled? They will give various reasons. You are looking for:

- I didn't have enough time to choose.
- I didn't have the proper criteria to choose.
- I didn't know which was more valuable.

Do: Allow them to have a little time to express their feelings.

Say: You know, I don't really know which one is the most valuable either. But this book does!

Do: Hold up a copy of a numismatic guide to the value of U.S. coins. You can get one from the library or from a coin collector in your congregation. Explain to them that this book explains which coins are of more value than others and they can look through the book after services.

Say: You couldn't choose because you didn't have time to choose. You couldn't choose because you didn't know what was valuable. Now, let's put away the coins, and let's look at another "value book" that we all have, and let's check some true values.

BIBLE LESSON:

Say: Open your Bibles to Genesis. Let's start with Genesis 1:31. Let's read verse 31 of chapter 1, and verses 1-3 of chapter 2.

Ask: Why did God create the Sabbath Day? [If we have done the Attention Getter correctly, their answer should be something like: "God made the Sabbath Day so that Adam and Eve had time to think about what is valuable."]

Say: Now someone might say, "But, they didn't have the Book to tell them what was valuable." But they did have something else! If you did your homework last week, you might recall reading John 1:1-3 with your parents. Have someone read that passage.

Say: All things were made by the Word. Who was the Word? [Let them guess.]

Do: Have them read John 1:14-17 and Ephesians 3:9.

Say: So we may say all things were made by Jesus Christ. Adam and Eve were there in the garden of Eden with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was called the Word, the Spokesman. Why? Because He was the one who commanded, spoke, and it (the world, the universe) was created (Psalm 148:5; Genesis 1:1). That means that Jesus Christ was in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve who He had just made. He was there with them because He was their creator, but He was there with them because He was also their teacher and they had to be taught. They were pretty ignorant. They were just made and they had a lot to learn. But they were blessed! They had their Maker, but they also had the author of the instruction book!

Go to Hebrews 1:1. Read verses 1 and 2. That pretty much sums it up: Jesus Christ, the Son of God speaks to us now—in the last days—through the Bible, the written Word of God. (When Peter and the other early disciples were alive, they actually listened to Christ speak. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote down what He said so we can read it. But the point is, the one who inspired the prophets and all writers of the Bible was the same God who created everything, Jesus Christ. So even though Adam and Eve didn't have a Bible in print, they had the author of the Bible in person! And because they were ignorant (they didn't know much) and humble (they didn't worry about anything), God, Jesus Christ, the Spokesman could speak, and they would listen and learn, really soak it up! Interestingly Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day of the week. Not long after the creation of Eve, the Sabbath arrived.

Do you have a good time on God's Sabbath? I do! I look forward to the Sabbath all week. But one of the things I like most about the Sabbath is that I have time to do some things that I don't have time to do the rest of the week.

I pray and do Bible study every day, in the morning before I go to work. But at a certain time I have to stop to go to work. Like all days there are 24 hours, but on the Sabbath I can use the time differently.

God knew this when He created everything, because there was no time until it was created. The sun especially, but also the moon and the stars mark time. God could see right down to our own time and He knew that humans would jam pack themselves into artificial constraints and run out of the commodity they need most—time. So on the seventh day God created the Sabbath, by setting aside 24 hours of the most precious stuff that we humans can use, or abuse, time! Do not attempt to defeat its purpose!

What is the purpose of the Sabbath? We need to imagine ourselves with Jesus Christ (God) and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The two new humans were probably full of questions. Or perhaps Adam and Eve were so at peace with their Creator that no particular questions at all came up that first Sabbath. But I tend to think that just like when a parent is explaining something to his child, that it would be rare that the child would not ask "why?" or "what about this?" Adam had a job and so did Eve. In Genesis 2:15 Adam was given the job to dress and keep the garden. This not only takes physical work, but mental thought to decide where things should grow and streams should run. Find out what an agriculturist must know to do his job!

Adam, in Genesis 2:19-20, was given the job to name the animals. Think of how many names you would need to come up with for the variety of animals we have. [Maybe show the children some pictures of animals and ask them what they would call a few of them.] Adam probably was to take care of them. If you have a dog or cat at home, what needs to be done to take care of it? The animals were tame at this time, and lions have long manes that would have needed brushing. So there is another occupation—animal husbandry.

When Adam and Eve worked and fulfilled their chores and duties to provide for themselves and their family, they worked six days just like God. When they "Sabbathed" or rested, they rested and worshiped their creator on the seventh day Sabbath. In so doing, they followed the example of their Creator who "rested" to show the whole creation that they needed to rest. God (the Father or Son) neither tires nor gets weary (Isaiah 40:28). But the Sabbath is so important that God rested, blessed and sanctified this special 24 hours of time (Genesis 2:2-3).

When Adam and Eve were created, they needed instruction, whether they were aware of their need or not. It was always God's intention to instruct and teach and train our first parents. And God did just that. But God did not create robots or automatons (or even monkey-people or angel-people). God created a man and a woman who would have to choose. So man today has to choose whether he will use the Sabbath for what God intended, or let the day slip by either gaining no instruction, or filling the time with endless personal pursuits.

LESSON APPLICATION:

If you have many students, use a group to look up and discuss each of the first and second points below. If you don't, then lead them through a discussion of each.

Now that we can see the big picture of God's Sabbath, let's look at some applications of its true values. Here are two principles we can learn from why God created the Sabbath.

1. Healing and doing good works is appropriate for the Sabbath (Matthew 12:9-13).
2. Assembling congregationally—going to church—is important for the Sabbath (Hebrews 10:25).

Here are two more categories that are also sometimes necessary for the Sabbath because we are human:

1. Emergencies (Luke 14:5).
2. Necessities (Mark 2:23).

And finally remember that Jesus Christ hasn't changed (Hebrews 13:8)! If Jesus Christ thought it was a good idea at creation, He still thinks it is a good idea today (Malachi 3:6).

Consider Isaiah 58:13-14 for a discussion on how God wants us to keep the Sabbath.

1. Not having your own fun. We need to learn that what God says is fun, what is true fun. This comes by practice.
2. Not doing your own business or work. This is talking about our daily jobs. (Discuss what children do as work. Schoolwork is sometimes their job six days a week. No homework on the Sabbath.)
3. Not following your own desires and pleasure. Take a break from what you do for fun on the other six days: skateboarding, surfing, baseball or other activities. If you do it six days, make the seventh different.
4. Nor talking idly. Try to find things to talk about that are uplifting. This is hard, but we all have to work at this.
5. Then the Lord will be your delight. (Choose God, and He will not forget you.)
6. And He will see to it that you ride high.
7. He will see to it that you get your full share of the blessings.

Music:

Sing "O How Love I Thy Law," page 44 of the United Church of God hymnal.

MEMORY VERSE:

Genesis 2:2-3 "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

family activity

THE POINT:

To learn the value and purpose of God's Sabbath and to learn principles for deciding how to keep the Sabbath.

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

As a family, review the following principles and scriptures:

1. It is good to do good on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:9-13).
2. It is good to assemble on the Sabbath (Hebrews 10:25).
3. Emergencies can be attended to on the Sabbath (Luke 14:5).
4. You may do what is necessary (Mark 2:23).

As a family, discuss how to keep Isaiah 58:13-14.

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Genesis 2:2-3 "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."