

LESSON 12

THE SABBATH DAY OF REST

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy

After God spent six days creating the world, He rested on the seventh day. He blessed and sanctified this seventh day, for it was a holy day. This was the origin of the Sabbath. When the Israelites wandered in the desert, Moses told them of the Sabbath day of rest (Ex 16:23). From then on, the Israelites knew to rest on the seventh day and treat it with reverence. Keeping the Sabbath was of utmost importance, as it was included in the Ten Commandments given by God. It was the fourth commandment, which stated, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Breaking the fourth commandment and failing to observe the Sabbath resulted in extreme consequences. The prophet Jeremiah warned the Israelites that if they did not keep the Sabbath holy, a fire would destroy Jerusalem and its palaces (Jer 17:27). Unfortunately, the Israelites did not heed Jeremiah's warning, and the Babylonians came and burned down the temple and palaces in Jerusalem, while also taking the people of Judah captive (2 Chr 36:17-21). Seventy years later, the people returned to Jerusalem, but some of them continued to disobey God by not honoring the Sabbath. Nehemiah rebuked the people, telling them that their previous hardships had been brought by their failure to observe the Sabbath, and ordered the Levites to close the city gates on the Sabbath to keep it holy (Neh 13:15-22). The people faithfully observed the Sabbath from that point on.

The Purpose of the Sabbath

In Mark 2:27, Jesus clearly stated, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." From this, we can tell that God did not create the Sabbath so that He could rest, but so that we could rest. God does not need to rest, but as humans, we do. After a long, hard week, the best relief we can find at the end of the week is a day of worship and joy at church. God created the Sabbath so we could have a physical and spiritual rest, as well as a time to reflect upon God's creation and salvation. The Sabbath gives us time to remember that God has blessed us and sanctified us; it also gives us time to show our thanks to God in praise and worship. Lastly, the Sabbath day of rest is a representation of the true rest in heaven.

BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11;
Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Isaiah 58:13-14;
Mark 2:27; Matthew 12:12;
Hebrews 4:9-10; John 15:5-6

BIBLE TRUTHS

1. God rested on, blessed, and sanctified the seventh day.
2. The Sabbath day is from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To emphasize that keeping the Sabbath is a commandment.
2. To understand that the Sabbath is a holy and sacred day that is to be set apart for the Lord.
3. To learn that observing the Sabbath with faith will lead to earthly and heavenly blessings.

MEMORY VERSE

"Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

(Genesis 2:3)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Thank You for creating the Sabbath so that we can come here to worship and praise you every week. Today, we will learn about the importance of keeping the Sabbath day holy. Give us a heart of understanding so that we may know what You to teach us. May all glory be onto Your name. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

E1 students generally come to church and attend R.E. class to be with friends and have fun. Your students need to know that the primary reason for coming to church is to be with God. When they understand this concept, they will develop a regular habit of attending Sabbath services with a reverent attitude. You should remind your students of the importance of attending weekly Sabbath services. They

should not use birthday parties, athletic matches, shopping, etc., as an excuse to miss the Sabbath. Encourage them to spend more time in prayer and Bible reading. After the lesson, your students will understand that keeping the Sabbath is fundamental to having God's abidance throughout their lives.

VOCABULARY

sanctify: to make holy

blessed: honored, consecrated

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about the Holy Spirit and how it has the power to transform. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He asked His disciples to remain in Jerusalem to wait for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the Day of the Pentecost, the disciples prayed together and suddenly the Holy Spirit filled each of them. From that day on, they had the abidance of God, which gave them the power to preach boldly wherever they went. Today, we know that the Holy Spirit is a promise from God and also a guarantee of our inheritance of the heavenly kingdom. If we do not have the Holy Spirit, we must remember to pray persistently and fervently to ask God for it. If we do have the Holy Spirit, we must continue to pray zealously to ask for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides us on the correct path and leads us back to the path whenever we stray from it. With the Holy Spirit, we have the power to transform and overcome our weaknesses. We learned that it is important to pray for the Holy Spirit with persistence. Once we have received the Holy Spirit, we must transform ourselves to be holy like Jesus.

BIBLE STORY

Let us imagine that we are having a busy day. We wake up at 6:00am to get ready for school. At school, we spend the day reading books, answering the teacher's questions, calculating answers to math problems, and writing stories. After school, we have music lessons and do our homework. Then we help our mom set the table for dinner. After dinner, we help clear up the dishes. Before bed, we clean our room and put all our toys back in the closet. After this long and busy day, what would we most like to do? Yes, we would probably like to lie down and rest.

In the beginning, the earth was formless, empty, and filled with darkness. Then, God began the great work of creating the heavens and the earth. God was busy each day. In six days, God made everything that we see in the world today. He made the light, the sun, the moon, and the stars. He made the trees and vegetation on the land; He caused the sea to be filled with all kinds of fish and sea creatures. He made birds to fill the sky and animals to live on the land. Lastly, God created humans such as you and me.

At the end of six days, God examined all that He created and saw that it was good. On the seventh day, God did three very important things. What were they? [Read Genesis 2:2-3 with the students.]

- He rested on the seventh day.
- He blessed the seventh day.
- He sanctified the seventh day.

God called the seventh day the Sabbath. The word "Sabbath" signifies a day of rest.

Why would the almighty God need rest? The Bible tells us that God does not need rest or sleep; however, He knows that human beings do. Thus, God made the Sabbath for man (Mk 2:27).

The Sabbath was such an important day that God included it in the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:8-11). For the fourth commandment, God commanded the Israelites to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. On that day, they could do no work.

What type of day is the Sabbath day?

A. It is a day of rest.

The Sabbath day is a special day for God's children. God knew that men need rest from their work. Thus, He set the seventh day as the Sabbath day so that men could have a day to rest.

In the Old Testament, the Jewish people added their own rules to what they thought was a day of rest. They were not allowed to light fires to cook. They were only permitted to walk a certain distance. No work was allowed on the Sabbath. Those that broke these laws were stoned to death. The Israelites therefore felt a great fear and burden on the Sabbath.

But this was not what God had intended. God intended the Sabbath to be a day of rest and enjoyment. But does a day of rest mean that we can sleep or watch television all day? The rest that God wished to give us was a rest from our regular work, such as going to school or to work. God knew that if men did not have a day to rest, their bodies would become exhausted and they would have little time for their families, friends, and church. God knew that these connections were important to men.

The Sabbath day rest prefigures the eternal rest we will enjoy with the Lord Jesus in heaven. In heaven, we will no longer work, but enjoy complete rest with the Lord. But to enjoy eternal rest in heaven, we need to observe the Sabbath on earth.

B. It is a sanctified day.

The Sabbath is a sanctified day, which means that God separated this day from the other six days. How can we sanctify the Sabbath day (Isa 58:13)?

- We should not do our own things nor find our own pleasure on the Sabbath.
- We should not speak whatever we want.

Note: Write the following on the board, then list students' responses under the following categories:

Sunday – Friday

Things that please ME

Words that please ME

Friday – Saturday

Things that please GOD

Words that please GOD

1. Do not do our own things nor find our own pleasure.

Isaiah 58:13 teaches us that during the first six days of the week, we can do our own things, but when the holy Sabbath day comes, we must observe it by doing things pleasing to God. What things do we normally do during the week? [Write students' answers on the board.] We go to school, do our homework, play with our friends, have art/music lessons, watch television, practice sports, go shopping, and do whatever we enjoy doing.

But the seventh day is a special day that belongs to

God. This means that on the Sabbath, instead of doing things that gives us pleasure, we need to do things that please God. So, on the Sabbath day can we do all the things that we do on the previous six days? [Refer to the list.] On the Sabbath, we should avoid doing things that we normally do. We are God's chosen people and we need to honor God on the Sabbath. He doesn't want us to come to church reluctantly, but to enjoy it. He hopes that we can draw close to Him, listen to His words, and spend time with our church brothers and sisters, while worshipping and praising Him. Also, while we are at church, we can demonstrate our love for God by doing good deeds, such as cleaning the church.

2. Do not speak whatever we want.

From Isaiah 58:13, we also learn that on the Sabbath, we need to devote our speech to God and not speak about worldly things. [Ask the students what they talk about from Sunday to Friday. Write their responses on the board.] God has given us Sunday through Friday to talk about the matters of the world, but the seventh day is devoted to God.

On this day, we need to speak of things that please God. [Ask the students what kinds of words would please God. Write their responses on the board.] On the Sabbath, we should use our speech to greet church brothers, sisters, and friends; to speak of matters concerning God; and to tell others how Jesus has blessed us during the week.

C. It is a blessed day.

When God established the Sabbath day, He blessed it. If we honor and observe the Sabbath, then God will bless us tremendously. How will God bless us? [Read Isaiah 58:13-14.]

God promised us that if we honor the Sabbath, we would receive joy and peace from God. Because we honor His Sabbath, God will help us in times of troubles. He will answer our prayers and provide everything that we need so that we will never be lacking. But most importantly, God will bless us with eternal rest in heaven, which is the "heritage of Jacob."

What happens if we do not keep the Sabbath? In the Old Testament, one of the reasons why God severely punished the Israelites was because they failed to observe the Sabbath. God allowed their enemies to destroy their cities and hold them captive in a foreign land for seventy years. Their enemies destroyed the temple and burned the gates of Jerusalem. God departed from them and they suffered great shame.

Similarly, if we fail to observe the Sabbath, we will lose our faith and become a captive of Satan. Moreover, God will not allow us to enjoy the eternal rest in heaven. Thus, it is very important to observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Since the Sabbath day is a day of rest, we can stay at home to watch television and play video games.** False; the Sabbath is a holy day and we need to go to church to observe it.
2. **To remember the Sabbath and keep it holy is the fifth commandment.** False; it is the fourth commandment.
3. **After God finished creating the world and everything in it, He established the Sabbath day.** True.
4. **God rested on, sanctified, and blessed the seventh day.** True.
5. **The Sabbath is on Saturday only.** False; the Sabbath starts Friday sundown and ends Saturday sundown.
6. **One of the reasons why the Jews were captured and taken to a foreign land was because they did not obey their parents.** False; it was because they did not observe the Sabbath.
7. **What kind of blessings will we receive for keeping the Sabbath?**
 We can draw closer to God through the learning of His words and prayer.
 God will bless us.
 We will be able to enter heaven in the future.
8. **What are some of the things you will do or say on the Sabbath to please and honor God?** Answers may vary.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
 You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” (Genesis 2:3)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. C
6. B
7. C
8. A
9. Answers may vary.
10. “Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” (Genesis 2:3)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

Testimonies

Testimony 1

One day, in a church in Taiwan, there was a brother assigned to usher that day. The chapel that he attended was large and grand, but the number of members who attended service was very low. The brother felt sorrowful that so few members attended service and he cried in his prayers because of this. While he was praying, he saw a vision of an angel entering the chapel holding an attendance book. The names of all the churches were recorded in the book and all the names of the members were also written down. The angel started to take roll. The brother was very surprised that the angel took note of those who did or did not come to attend services.

The brother was curious as to what the angel was doing, so he followed him. The brother saw that the angel would make a mark next to each member's name based on the member's attendance and attitude.

The angel would mark a circle next to a member's name if the member's body and heart were at church. This meant that the person was sitting in the chapel and listening attentively to the sermon.

The angel would mark a slash next to a member's name if the member was physically at church while his heart was still in the world. This meant that though the member was at church, his mind was busy thinking of the matters of the world and all the things he had to do once the service was over.

The angel would mark a check next to the name of members who were absent from church, but whose hearts desired to be at church. The angel explained that some members try their best to arrive at church, but due to unforeseen circumstances, they are delayed. Despite these obstacles, they still continue to make their best efforts to arrive at church, even if they are late.

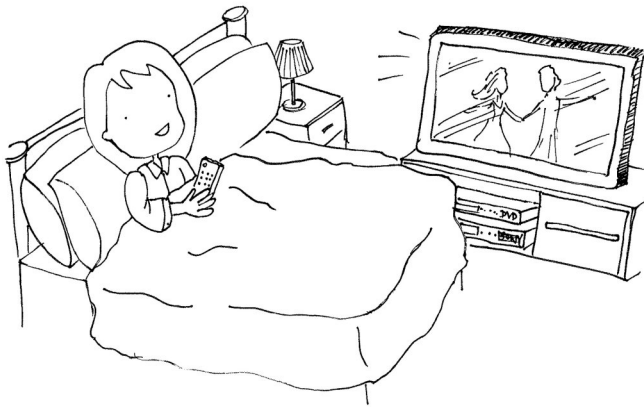


The angel would mark a triangle next to the name of members who had the time to come to church, but did not make any effort to do so. These members stayed at home to watch television or to do their own things. They had no desire to seek God's truth or to build a relationship with Him. Eventually, God will leave these members.

Finally, the brother that saw the angel would mark an X next to the name of members who neither came to church nor cared about it.

After this vision, the brother understood that God is carefully watching to see who attends services and whether or not we are attentive during service.

This testimony reminds us that the Lord carefully records when we come to church or not. However, we should not only attend services physically with our bodies, but also listen to and understand the sermons with our hearts and minds.



Testimony 2

Once, there was a sister who loved to watch television. She had a very comfortable bedroom where she would watch television for hours. On one Sabbath, she wanted to keep watching a soap opera, so she told her daughter to go to church with her grandparents and said that she would join them later in the day.

The daughter returned from church joyful because she enjoyed the lesson taught in her religious education class. She asked her mother, "Why did you spend the day at home and not at church?" Her mother lied and said, "I was busy at home washing the dishes and doing other things." She had actually spent the day in bed watching the soap opera.

On another Sabbath, the sister again failed to attend church in order to watch more television. While she lay in bed watching television, she fell asleep. She dreamed that an angel came and slapped her very hard. The pain from the slap was so great that it woke her. Even when she awoke, the pain persisted and did not fade. It was so unbearable that she called the church brothers and sisters to pray for her. Eventually, she confessed to the pastor that she skipped attending services in order to watch her television shows. The pastor encouraged her to repent for her unfaithfulness in observing the Sabbath and for her lies. After she repented, the pain disappeared.

Testimony 3

There was one brother who wished to focus on his studies. So, he prayed to God and said that he would not be attending services for three years while he focused on his academics. When the Sabbath came, this brother told his family that he had made a special arrangement with God and would not be attending service. That Sabbath, this brother stayed at home while his family went to church.

He got into a comfortable chair, turned on the air conditioning, and began to study. As he was reading, he could feel sharp pains in different parts of his body. He tried to ignore them and continued to study his book.

After the church service had ended, his niece came to visit him. She walked to his room, but stopped at the doorway. She suddenly shouted to him, "Watch out! Be careful! Your rear will hurt!" Immediately after she said this, the brother felt a sharp pain on his rear. "How did you know this?" he asked her.

"I know this because I see an angel dressed in a white robe standing next to you. He is holding a long reed and he's about to whip you again!" she replied.

The brother looked to either side but saw no one. The niece saw that the angel was about to strike her uncle again. The angel then said to the brother, "How dare you twist the word of God! Do you not know that the Bible says if you are neither hot nor cold, God will spit you out of His mouth?" The brother then understood that God was punishing him for not observing the Sabbath and for not seeking after God with all his heart.





Testimony 4

Once, there was a family that only attended the Sabbath morning services. Each Sabbath after morning service ended, the family would quickly leave church to do their own things. A member saw this and knew that this practice was not in accordance with God's commandment on observing the Sabbath. She spoke to the family and encouraged them to spend the entire Sabbath at church and attend the afternoon services. She told them that keeping only half the Sabbath would result in God giving them only half His blessings, and that God wanted to give them all His blessings. The member then showed them the blessing recorded in Isaiah 58:13-14. After reading those verses, the family had faith to spend the entire Sabbath at church. As a result, God blessed the family

immensely. The father accepted the doctrine and received water baptism. The mother attended the afternoon Bible study and was edified by what she learned. Eventually, she became a church council member. The family now serves God fervently.

How Can I Honor the Sabbath?

Hand out the Life Application worksheet to the students. Read the scenarios to the students and have them check their answers in the box. Review the questions with the students and provide the appropriate Biblical teachings.

ACTIVITY

1 A Day of Rest

Objective: To give students a chance to reflect on what they do on the Sabbath.

Instructions: The Sabbath is a day of rest. It's a day when we can spend time with God, our family members, and our church family. In each of the squares below, draw how you would enjoy your day of rest...

Sabbath with God	Sabbath with my family	Sabbath with my church family

How Can I Honor the Sabbath?	Yes	No
1. I will sleep early on Friday night so that I am fresh and awake for the Sabbath.		
2. Friday night services and Saturday morning services are for adults. I only need to attend the afternoon RE class.		
3. I can worship God any day of the week. It does not need to be on a Saturday.		
4. I'm excited that it's Saturday. I can play hide and seek with my friends at church.		
5. It is okay to have my birthday party after the church services and R.E. classes are completed.		
6. I can stay at home because R.E. classes are boring and I don't learn anything.		
7. At church, I talk with my friends about video games and school.		
8. I will focus on my R.E. class and prayer during the Sabbath.		
9. I will greet the brothers and sisters at church.		
10. I have piano lessons on Saturday mornings, so I will skip the morning services and only attend the R.E. classes in the afternoon.		
11. I will listen attentively to the word of God with my heart.		
12. I can make the classroom neat by placing all the Bibles and hymn books on the shelves. This is how I can show God that I love Him.		
13. It's okay to bring my toys and electronics to church on the Sabbath.		
14. I can watch television and play with my games once the services are over.		
15. My parents say that learning Chinese is very important. It's fine for me to miss my R.E. classes to attend Chinese school.		
16. Since I do not understand the adult sermons, I can do my school homework during the services.		
17. The Sabbath is a day of rest, which means that I can stay at home and rest.		
18. The reason I come to church is so that I can see and play with my friends.		
19. Coming to Sabbath services is important because I can be close to God and learn His words.		



E1 Year 3 Book 4 Lesson 12—The Sabbath Day of Rest

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truths: 1. God rested on, blessed, and sanctified the seventh day.
 2. The Sabbath day is from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.

Lesson Objectives: 1. To emphasize that keeping the Sabbath is a commandment.
 2. To understand that the Sabbath is a holy and sacred day that is to be set apart for the Lord.
 3. To learn that observing the Sabbath with faith will lead to earthly and heavenly blessings.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Genesis 2:3)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

True or False

1. Since the Sabbath is a day of rest, we can stay at home to watch television and play video games. _____
2. To remember the Sabbath and keep it holy is the fifth commandment. _____
3. After God finished creating the world and everything in it, God created the Sabbath day. _____
4. God rested on, sanctified, and blessed the seventh day. _____

Multiple Choice

5. _____ : Sabbath is _____.
 - a. On Sunday
 - b. On Saturday only
 - c. From Friday sunset to Saturday sunset
6. _____ : How do we keep the Sabbath day?
 - a. We rest and play at home.
 - b. We worship and praise God in church.
 - c. We worship and praise God at home.
7. _____ : What kind of blessings will we receive for keeping the Sabbath?
 - a. We draw closer to God by learning His words and praying.
 - b. In the future, we will be able to enter heaven.
 - c. All of the above.
8. _____ : One of the reasons why the Jews were captured and taken to a foreign land was because _____.
 - a. They did not keep the Sabbath.
 - b. They did not obey their parents.
 - c. They stole from others.

Short Answer

9. What will you do on the Sabbath to please and honor God?

10. Write out the memory verse. Circle the three important things that God did on that day.
