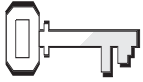


God's Special Gift



References

Genesis 2:1-3;
Exodus 20:8-11;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*, pp. 47, 48



Memory Verse

"And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy" (Genesis 2:3, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that God created the Sabbath to be a special day for us to come together, to remember what He made for us, and to worship Him.
Feel that Sabbath is the most important day of the week.
Respond by enjoying the Sabbath in special ways and thanking God for it.



The Message

I worship God when I enjoy His weekly gift, the Sabbath.

Monthly Theme

We learn why we worship God.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God makes the Sabbath day after His busy work of creating the world. He creates this day to spend special time with the people that He created.

This is a lesson about worship.

The Sabbath has been a special day since Creation. It is a time to rest, to enjoy the things God made for us, and to worship and praise Him for all He has done and continues to do for us.

Teacher Enrichment

Sabbath—"After God had 'finished' creating the earth He 'rested on the seventh day from all his work' (Genesis 2:1, 2). This 'rest' was not because of weariness or fatigue (Isaiah 40:28), but because the task was complete, and the world was perfect (see Genesis 1:31). . . . He ceased His labors because His handiwork could not be improved upon. . . . That the Creator intended the Sabbath blessing for all men of all time is evident from the declaration that it was 'made for man' (Mark 2:27), with the intention that man should use it for holy purposes. Accordingly, the [seventh] day is a day of rest for all who reckon their descent from Adam and Eve, not for the Jews alone. . . . The word 'remember,' with which the Sabbath command begins, does not imply that the observance of the fourth commandment is more important than the other nine, for all are of equal importance (see James 2:8-11). God's people were to 'remember' the Sabbath because 'in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day'—that is, as a memorial of the Creator and Creation" (*The SDA Bible Dictionary*, p. 959).

Room Decorations

Use large sheets of paper and trace around the children as they pose in prayer fashion. Write "(Child's name) Worships God," on each child's silhouette. Mount these praying figures on the walls around the room.

Bulletin board ideas:

(Choose those ideas that best suit your needs.)

1. Caption: "God Hears Our Prayers." Each child traces one pair of praying hands. Write their name on it and mount the hands on the board. Use multicolored paper.
2. Caption: "We Worship the God of Creation." Put Creation circles on the board. Felt Creation scenes are available at some Adventist Book Centers.

- Caption: "And God Blessed the Seventh Day and Made It Holy." Cut out a large number 7 the length of the board. Choose pictures of Sabbath activities and add to the numeral.

If you don't have bulletin boards, use masking tape on a wall to make a bulletin board shape.

Program Overview

Lesson Section

Minutes

Activities

Materials Needed

Welcome

ongoing

Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled

for each child: balloon with string or ribbon

1

Readiness Options

up to 10

A. *Worship Mimes*
B. *Troubles Box*

bowl, slips of paper
medium-size box, pens or pencils, paper

Any Time

Prayer and Praise*

up to 10

Fellowship
Songbook
Mission Offering

Prayer

Sing for Joy
Children's Mission
gift-wrapped box with slot for money
paper, pencils

2

Bible Lesson

up to 20

Experiencing the Story

Memory Verse

Bible Study

wrapped gift containing something to represent the Sabbath
paper, balloon for each memory verse word
Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

up to 15

Our Sabbath Plan

pencils, "Our Sabbath Plan" for each child (see page 141)

4

Sharing the Lesson

up to 15

Sabbath Is for Everyone

paper, markers, crayons, pencils, Bible

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

You Need:

- balloons with string or ribbon

Welcome

Prepare in advance: Blow up balloons and write “Happy Sabbath” on them. If possible, use helium. Tie a “Happy Sabbath” balloon on each child’s chair.

Greet the children at the door by saying **Happy Sabbath**. Say: **Sabbath is a gift from God, a special day! Welcome to Sabbath School. Let us rejoice and celebrate on this day the Lord has made.**

Then have the students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- bowl
- slips of paper

A. Worship Mimes

Ahead of time, write on slips of paper various ways to enjoy Sabbath. Fold the papers and mix them up in the bowl.

Ask for a volunteer to come up and pull a paper out of the bowl. That child must then act out the activity written on the paper without using words or sounds. The other children should call out guesses as to what the activity is until someone guesses correctly. Continue with other volunteers until the bowl is empty.

If you have a small class, adults may also participate in acting and guessing.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you do on Sabbath?** (Accept answers.) **How do you feel about your Sabbaths?** (Accept answers and discuss as needed.) **What are some special things that you and your family do on the Sabbath that help you to think about God and enjoy His gift?** (Allow discussion time.) **What can you do to make your Sabbaths even happier? Today’s message tells me:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I ENJOY HIS WEEKLY GIFT, THE SABBATH.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- medium-size box
- pens/pencils
- paper

B. Troubles Box

Before Sabbath, decorate the box and clearly label it “SABBATH.” Close the top so that there is only one large slit open.

Distribute paper and writing utensils to the children. Instruct them to write on the paper all the things they have been worrying about and chores they have to do next week (visit sick friend or relative, test in school, parent wanting them to clean their room, etc.). When they finish, have them fold the paper and stick it through the slot in the box marked “SABBATH.”

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you spend a lot of time thinking about the things you wrote? Do you ever wish you could just stop thinking about them for a while?** (yes, no, sometimes) **Do you ever wish they would just go away?** (yes) **Why do you suppose we put the lists in a box marked “SABBATH”?** (don’t know; because you said to) **Can you see your lists through the box?** (no, of course not)

Say: **The box is like the Sabbath. God gave us the Sabbath as a place where we can put away our troubles and not look at them for a whole day. Then we can focus on worshipping God and experiencing His love for us. That's what our message means when it says:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I ENJOY HIS WEEKLY GIFT, THE SABBATH.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 18)

"Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 12)

"Lord, We Praise You" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 17)

"Come Into His Presence" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 14)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Tell the children that boys and girls all over the world worship and enjoy God's gift of the Sabbath.



Offering

Say: **The Sabbath is a special gift from God to us. Let's say Thank You to God by giving a gift to Him.**

You Need:

- gift-wrapped box with slot for money



Prayer

Have each child tell one thing that they enjoy about Sabbath. Then try a popcorn prayer. Form a circle and kneel. Ask the children to thank God for Sabbath and for the one thing they mentioned. Have them do this like popcorn popping—speaking out from anywhere in the circle at any time. Close with a prayer of thanks for God's Sabbath gift and the opportunity to worship God on His holy day.

You Need:

- paper
- pencils

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- wrapped gift with something inside to represent the Sabbath, such as the number 7

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Mom and Tyler

Props: Sitting on couch or chair that seats two, wrapped gift with something inside to represent Sabbath

Note: Sabbath School leaders in some countries may prefer to mention another local festive holiday or a birthday instead of Christmas.

Read or tell the story.

"I can't wait until Christmas!" Tyler announced. Mom looked up and laughed. "Tyler! It's only May! *[or a month far away from the alternate holiday you've chosen]* I'd say you have a while to wait!"

"I know," Tyler groaned.

"So tell me why you can't wait until Christmas," coaxed Mom.

"OK, but may I play Christmas music?"

As Tyler put the CD into the player he said, "I wish it was Christmas because I love being together with our whole family—grandpas, grandmas, cousins, everybody! I like having time to play games and do things that we don't always get to do. Of course I love the presents, but I really liked giving that food basket to the Johnsons last year. And, I'm starving for some of your famous Christmas rolls!" *[or special local food]*

"You've been thinking about this quite a bit today, haven't you?" Mom smiled.

"Yeah, I guess so!" Tyler plopped down beside Mom on the couch.

"I've got good news for you, son!" She watched Tyler's face light up. "Jesus knows how you feel! In fact, that's ex-

actly why He created the Sabbath for us." Mom laughed again, seeing Tyler's confused look. "OK, think about it. God made the Sabbath day after His busy work of Creation. He created a day just to spend with the people He created! It's His favorite day of the week! He wants the Sabbath to be a kind of holiday every single week. A time to forget about all of the regular things we do all week, and just have a special day with Him.

"All of the things you mentioned enjoying about Christmas are things we enjoy about Sabbath, too. We get to be with people we love; we do special things that don't happen every day, and we love to do things that can help make others happy. We even love having special food!" Mom grinned and reached over with a hug.

"I never thought about Sabbath being like a holiday," Tyler responded. He was really thinking about what Mom had just said.

"You know," Mom added, "Jesus really looks forward to spending Sabbath with us. His love for us is so big. When He gave us the Ten Commandments, He said 'Remember the Sabbath day. Work hard with Me all week, and then have a holiday with Me every Sabbath.' Taking that special time with Him at the end of our busy week, and thanking Him for the beautiful things He's made for us to enjoy are ways we tell Jesus that we love Him too!" Mom could tell that Tyler had forgotten how far away Christmas was.

How about you? Sabbath is God's gift to you each week! *[Open wrapped gift with something inside to represent the Sabbath.]* When God finished creating the world in six days, He rested on the seventh day. He blessed it and made it holy. Ever since Creation, the Sabbath holiday has been a special day to worship God, to tell Him

how much we love Him. It is a holy holiday! This Sabbath and every Sabbath, Jesus looks forward to the extra time we spend in worship.

Debriefing

Ask: **How is Sabbath like a special holiday?** (no work, no school, special family time, food, special time with the One we love the most—God) **What are some things you do to make your Sabbaths the best day of all?** (worship God in church, spend time with God’s creation, family time, music, etc.) **When are you happier—on Friday night when Sabbath comes or on Saturday night when Sabbath is over?** (Accept answers and discuss as needed. Place emphasis on positive reasons for enjoying Sabbath activities.) **Let’s say our message together:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I ENJOY HIS WEEKLY GIFT, THE SABBATH.

Memory Verse

Prepare in advance: Write each word of the memory verse on an individual piece of paper. Insert the papers into balloons, one paper for each balloon. (This may be part of your room decor for the day.) Attach the balloons to the wall, table, or floor.

Ask each child to find and read today’s memory verse. **“And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy” (Genesis 2:3, NIV).** Allow the children to

You Need:

- small pieces of paper
- balloon for each memory verse word

burst the balloons. The children are to gather the words collected from the balloons and arrange them in their proper order. Scramble the papers and repeat until children know the verse.

You may want to teach the fourth commandment to the children, or challenge them to learn it on their own.

Bible Study

Read aloud Exodus 20:8-11. Ask: **When the text says we should not do any work, does it mean that we should just sit and do nothing?** Allow discussion time. **No. There are some things we should not do, but there are others that are especially good to do on the Sabbath.**

Let’s read some texts about Sabbath activities. If the text tells about things you might enjoy doing on Sabbath, stand up.

Assign students to read one text each.

- Luke 13:10 (teaching in church)
- Psalms 41:3 (visiting/healing the sick)
- John 5:8, 9 (healing a cripple)
- Matthew 17:18 (casting out demons)
- Matthew 12:11, 13 (doing good)
- Psalms 146:7 (feeding the hungry)

Debriefing

Ask: **What did Jesus do on Sabbath?** (things that helped people) **What do you think about helping others on Sabbath? What can you do to help people this Sabbath? Let’s say our message together:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I ENJOY HIS WEEKLY GIFT, THE SABBATH.

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- pencils
- “Our Sabbath Plan” for each child (see page 141)

Our Sabbath Plan

Distribute “Our Sabbath Plan” to each child. (See page 141.)

Say: **Holidays are different from other days. We do different things to celebrate them. Earlier you shared some of the special things that you and your family do on God’s holy holiday—the Sabbath—that help you to think about God and enjoy His gift.**

Think about next Sabbath. Write on your Sabbath Plan paper some ideas that will make Sabbath a happy day for your family. (See page 141.) **Remember that Sabbath is a day to spend special family time with Jesus and to enjoy His creation. Share your ideas with your family and plan to have a very happy Sabbath next week.** Allow time. Adults assist as necessary.

Debriefing

Ask: **What is your favorite food for Sabbath?** (Accept answers.) **What is your favorite activity? What do you think about helping to plan your next Sabbath?** (Happy that I can have a part in my family’s plans; I don’t have any ideas, etc.)

Why is it good to plan ahead for Sabbath? (We will be ready to enjoy it more.) **How would God like us to celebrate Sabbath?** (Spend time with family and friends; help people; go to Sabbath School and church; read our Bibles; pray; rest; enjoy nature; praise God; etc.) **Let’s say today’s message:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I ENJOY HIS WEEKLY GIFT, THE SABBATH.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Sabbath Is for Everyone

Have the children create an invitation to Sabbath School to give to a friend who is not a Seventh-day Adventist. They might wish to include an invitation to Sabbath dinner and a Sabbath afternoon activity.

Option: Have the class invite friends to a special Visitors Day that includes a potluck meal following Sabbath services.

Debriefing

Ask: **To whom do you plan to give the invitation that you made?** (Accept answers.) **How do you feel when you share the Sabbath with someone else?**

(Making someone else happy makes me happy, etc.) **Why should we share the joy of the Sabbath with others who might not know about it? Let's read Mark 2:27.** (Because Sabbath was made for everyone to enjoy.) **What does our message say?** Say together with enthusiasm:



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
ENJOY HIS WEEKLY GIFT, THE
SABBATH.**

Closing

Sing together "Psalm 118:24" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 94) and close with a joyful prayer of thanks for God's Sabbath gift.

You Need:

- paper
- markers, crayons, pencils
- Bible

God's Special Gift

References

Genesis 2:1-3;
Exodus 20:8-11;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*,
pp. 47, 48

Memory Verse

"And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy" (Genesis 2:3, NIV).

The Message

I worship God when I enjoy His weekly gift, the Sabbath.

When do you start planning for your birthday? Is it the day of your birthday? Or do you start thinking about it weeks ahead of time? Isn't it fun to look forward to special days? We can do special things, eat special foods, and even wear special clothes. Let's see what we can learn about God's holiday. A special holiday. A holy holiday.

"I can't wait until Christmas!" Tyler announced. Mom looked up and laughed. "But it's only May! I'd say you have a while to wait!"

"I know," Tyler groaned.

"So tell me why you can't wait until Christmas," coaxed Mom.

"OK, but may I play Christmas music?"

As Tyler put the CD into the player he said, "I wish it was Christmas because I love being together with our whole family—grandpas, grandmas, cousins, everybody! I like having time to play games and do things that we don't always get

to do. Of course I love the presents, but I really liked giving that food basket to the Johnsons last year. And I'm starving for some of your famous Christmas rolls!"

"You've been thinking about this quite a bit today, haven't you?" Mom smiled.

"Yeah, I guess so!" Tyler plopped down beside Mom on the couch.

"I've got good news for you!" She

watched Tyler's face light up. "Jesus knows how you feel! In fact, that's exactly why He created the Sabbath for us." Mom laughed again, seeing Tyler's confused look. "OK, son, think about it. God made the Sabbath day after His busy work of Creation. He created a day just to spend with the people He created! It's His favorite day of the week! He wants the Sabbath to be a kind of holiday every single week. He wants us to forget about all of the regular things we do all week, and just have a special day with Him.

"All of the things you mentioned about Christmas are things we enjoy about Sabbath, too. We get to be with people we love. We do special things that don't happen every day. And we love to do things that can help make others happy. We even love having special food!" Mom grinned and reached over to hug Tyler.

"I never thought about Sabbath being like a holiday," Tyler responded. He was really thinking about what Mom had just said.

"You know," Mom added, "Jesus really looks forward to spending Sabbath with us. His love for us is so big. When He

gave us the Ten Commandments, He said 'Remember the Sabbath day. Work hard with Me all week, and then have a holiday with Me every Sabbath.' That time with Him at the end of our busy week is so special! We can enjoy the beautiful things He's made for us. We can study His Word and learn more about His love. All of these are ways we tell Jesus that we love Him, too!"



Tyler seemed to have forgotten how far away Christmas was.

"You're right, Mom," Tyler spoke thoughtfully. "Sabbath really is a special day. It's like having Christmas every week. Let's ask Grandma and Grandpa to be with us this Sabbath. It will make God's special day even more special."

How about you? Sabbath is God's gift to you each week! When God finished creating the world in six days, He rested on the seventh day. He blessed it and made it holy. Ever since Creation, the Sabbath holiday has been a special day to worship God. To enjoy the world He created. To tell Him how much we love Him. It is a holy holiday! This Sabbath, Jesus is looking forward to that special time with you!

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Find a quiet place in nature and read your lesson story with your family. Try to find things God made on each of the days of Creation.
- Share your list of ideas for making Sabbath a special day. Ask your family to do one thing.
- Teach your memory verse to your family.
- Thank God for family time.

Sunday

- During worship time, read and discuss Exodus 20:8 together.
- Make a clock face out of stiff paper or a paper plate. Attach the hour and minute hands with a fastener. Write on the clock "Sabbath Begins At . . ." Find out when sunset comes this Friday. (Look at a sunset schedule or church bulletin.) Set the clock hands to that time. Put your clock on your refrigerator to remind you to be ready for Sabbath at sundown Friday.
- Say your memory verse together. Thank God for His love and for the Sabbath.

Monday

- During family worship, ask someone to read about the first Sabbath (Genesis 2:1-3). Draw a picture of the first Sabbath. Write your memory verse at the bottom. Pray that you will think about Jesus every day this week, and that you will be ready for His special Sabbath time.
- Ask your family to help you learn God's Sabbath commandment (Exodus 20:8-11).

Tuesday

- Today would be a good day to give the invitation to Sabbath School to your friend. At worship tonight talk about your friend's response.

- Say your memory verse together. Tell your family: "Sabbath is a gift from God. I love Sabbath because _____."
- Read or say together God's Sabbath commandment in Exodus 20:8-11. Then say this commandment in your own words. Thank God for His special holy holiday.

Wednesday

- With your family read and discuss these texts. List what you discover about ways to worship God on Sabbath.
Proverbs 25:11 Exodus 15:1 Matthew 6:6
Romans 15:31 Psalm 47:1 Matthew 2:11
Psalm 145:1
- Must you wait until Sabbath to do these things? Ask Jesus to help you worship Him every day.

Thursday

- During family worship, read about preparing for Sabbath in Exodus 16:14, 15, 21-26. Then say your memory verse together. With your family, make a Sabbath plan. Make sundown worship part of your Friday evening plans. Ask others in your family to do special things. Choose some songs. Ask God to bless your plans.

Friday

- Light some candles for sundown worship. Say the fourth (Sabbath) commandment together. Follow the worship plans you made yesterday. As part of your worship, have your family join you in saying your memory verse.
- Read Mark 2:27. Why did God make the Sabbath? Thank Him for it.
- Is your friend coming to Sabbath School with you tomorrow? Pray for a happy Sabbath day.