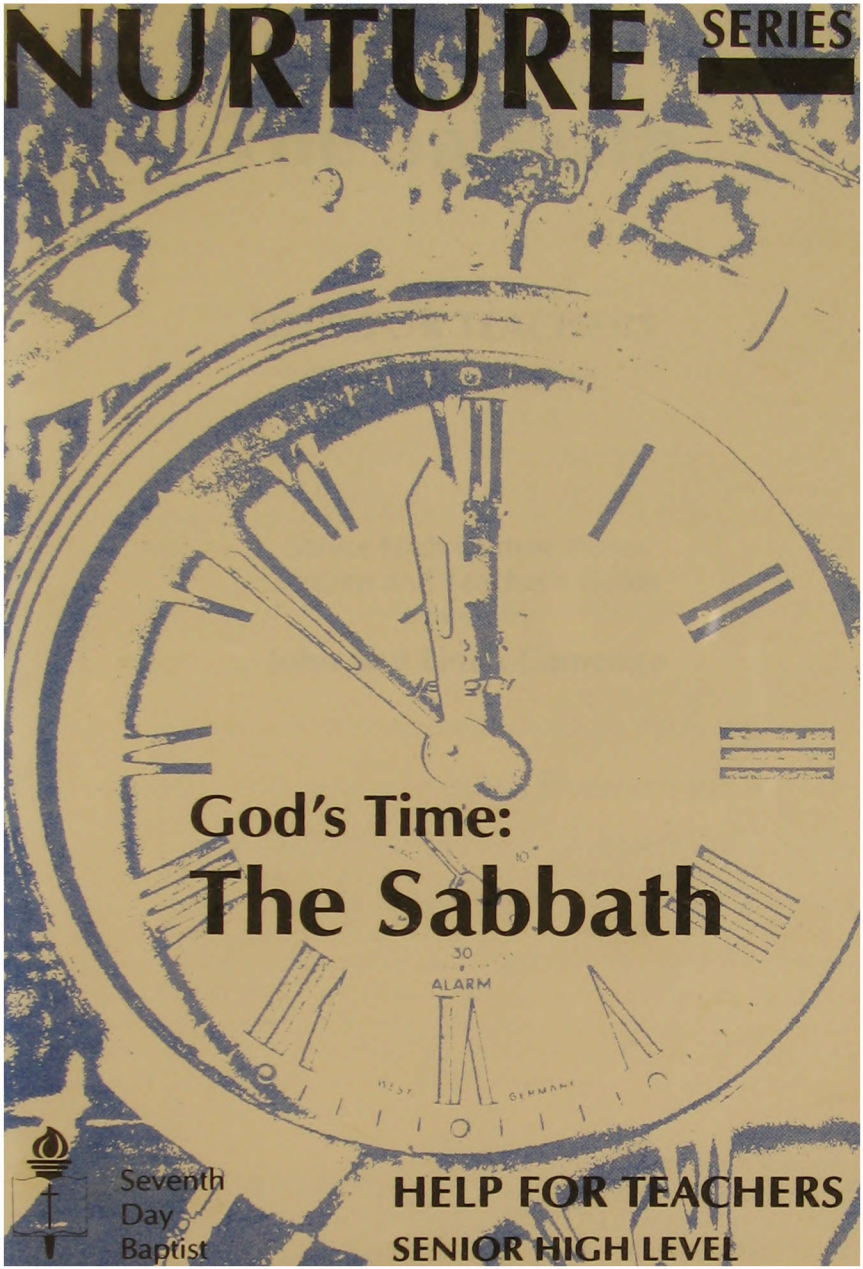


NURTURE SERIES



God's Time:
The Sabbath



Seventh
Day
Baptist

HELP FOR TEACHERS
SENIOR HIGH LEVEL

God's Time:
The Sabbath

HELP FOR TEACHERS
SENIOR HIGH LEVEL

Senior High Nurture Series
Lessons and Teacher's Guide
written by

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Senior High Nurture Series

Help for Teachers

Welcome to this series of lessons on the Sabbath. You will probably use them in place of your regular Sabbath School materials for a quarter. They are designed to assist high school young people in developing a more complete understanding of the Sabbath as a part of the Christian life. Other applications of these lessons might include camping programs, use by young adults and use as an introduction to the Sabbath for new converts. You will have an exciting and challenging opportunity to help your students deal with both the “facts” and the “feelings” associated with Sabbath observance.

This series has been developed with an awareness of the fact that some of your students will have been exposed to a great deal of teaching about the Sabbath. Effort has been made to minimize the sense of “going over old ground,” while still highlighting basic Sabbath concepts that all students need to absorb. Part of your challenge as a teacher will be to help your students discover new aspects of the Sabbath truth and to apply these truths to their own style of Sabbathkeeping. Being defensive about personal or family Sabbathkeeping patterns may cause some students to react negatively to the series. Help such students understand that neither you nor the lessons are designed to condemn anybody. Suggest that they study the lessons and then decide how they should apply the Bible principles presented in their own situation. Hopefully, you will find that most of your students are eager to know more about this important issue.

Be prepared for discussion in your class. It is important that you develop an environment in which your students are free to raise questions about all aspects of the Sabbath and Sabbathkeeping. Concerns and doubts need to be aired so they can be dealt with. Your editors are convinced that the Scriptures will provide the answers to any serious questions your students present. You may find that some issues raised by students can be better handled in conjunction with a later class. Explain that another lesson will be dealing with the question, but make note of the student’s name and concern so you can help him see the connection when his subject is addressed.

Neither you nor your students may be familiar with some of the material presented. A bibliography is included to help you in your preparation.

This series is divided into three units.

Unit One

Lessons 1 through 7 present factual material related to the Sabbath and the transition to Sunday by the majority of Christian churches.

Unit Two

Lessons 8 and 9 deal with the Scripture passages most often used in an attempt to discredit the Sabbath as a Christian institution. We will discover that they are either misquoted or misinterpreted. This material will need to be presented in such a way that we do not appear to be condemning those who have misunderstood these passages. These lessons are not intended to offend anyone, but they seek to deal pointedly with significant Bible passages some have used to oppose the Sabbath truth.

Unit Three

Lessons 10 through 13 deal with practical application of Sabbathkeeping to modern living. The titles: "The Sabbath and Service to God," "The Sabbath and Service to Others" and "The Sabbath and Service to Self" are developed from thoughts presented by Dr. Samuelle Bacchiocchi in his book, *Divine Rest for Human Restlessness*.

Teaching this Quarter

Real, life-changing learning is possible. You may see changes in the lives of your students. You are certain to be challenged to a deeper level of commitment to Christ and His Sabbath as you prepare to teach.

Prepare Yourself

Someone has said that all of life is preparation. Be conscious of your example and of circumstances that affect the lives of your students. In the rush of modern living take time to quietly contemplate God's goodness to you and His purpose for your life. In addition to such activities as worship, Bible study and family devotions, select some activity or course of study that helps keep you on your toes spiritually and mentally.

We have all heard the statement that Christianity is "caught, not taught." Our example and attitude are of more importance than our teaching ability. As you approach this series of lessons, take time to evaluate your own position on the Sabbath. It would be far better to openly admit struggles about how the Sabbath should be kept than to be defensive about your personal style of Sabbath keeping. Write out your own personal "Sabbath philosophy" before the quarter begins. Make a list of questions you would like answered. Read the Sabbath tracts your church has available. Talk with your pastor or write the editors of this series for help with particular questions or problems.

Plan the Series

Read the lesson titles and the description of the units in this section to get an overview of the quarter. Take a quick look at the lesson helps provided, noting in particular the "aim" and "emphasis" for each lesson. This will provide you with a better understanding of how the lessons fit together and where specific questions or issues may best be addressed.

Prepare the Lessons

Read both the teacher's and student's lessons. Take time to look up all Scripture references (even the ones you "know by heart") and consider the context. Compare two or more translations. If you have students who use the Living Bible or some other paraphrase, be sure to read the interpretation it places on the passages listed.

Focus on the following issues:

1. Where are my students in their thinking? Evaluate how each lesson may impact your students and in what way the material presented can speak to a need in their lives.
2. Consider the main points presented and how they can become a part of your students' knowledge banks.
3. Application: Since these lessons are a closely related series, most of the application is found in unit 3. However, there will be specific points in each lesson that can affect our actions.

Basics for the Quarter

In addition to the "Helps for Teacher," you will need:

Student's book

Bibles (several versions plus "extras" for students)

Chalk or marker board or substitute

Craft/office supplies—paper, pencils, scissors, tape, etc.

Extra Resources

Complete Sabbath Commentary by James Bailey (American Sabbath Tract Society)

Divine Rest for Human Restlessness by Samuelle Bacchiocchi (from the author, 230 Lisa Lane, Berrien Springs, MI 49103)

The Sabbath, Symbol of Creation and Re-creation by Herbert Saunders (American Sabbath Tract Society)

Sabbath and Sunday by A. H. Lewis (American Sabbath Tract Society)

Introduction

Read the Introduction in the Student's Book. It is a brief acknowledgement of the tensions many young people from Sabbathkeeping homes feel toward the Sabbath. It is important that the students read this introduction as a background for what comes later in the lessons.

Give your students an opportunity to react to the introduction and to the suggestions for study.

Lesson 1

“What Can You Trust?”

Bible Background: Genesis 1:27-2:3; Psalm 100:3; Proverbs 16:18-25

Memory Verses: 2 Timothy 3:16-17: “All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to aid students in understanding the position of the Bible as our “final authority,” particularly in reference to the Sabbath. (A brief review of creation and the Sabbath concludes the lesson.)

Lesson Emphasis: The Bible is to be trusted.

Lesson Summary

The issues of the authority of the Bible and its inspiration are explored, with comparisons to our usual attitude toward modern writing.

The students are cautioned about using “circular reasoning” and personal feelings as the foundation for their acceptance of the Bible as the “final authority in matters of faith and practice.”

A series of logical steps in coming to acceptance of the authority of the Bible is presented. (Your students may want to talk about this.)

Our place in God's creation is considered and the Sabbath is presented as an important tool in keeping perspective in our relationship with God.

The student book includes a thought starter concerning the Sabbath as a break from school and work pressure. A matchup section will help your students develop an understanding of terms used in this lesson.

Preparation Time

Start early in the week with a review of the Scripture references used in this lesson.

Notice how the Psalmist reminded his listeners of their position as a part of creation. People still need to have a clear understanding of the Creator-creature relationship.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 from several translations. List the practical applications of Scripture mentioned. You may wish to have your students do this as well. Consider your personal use of the Bible. How many of the applications listed are you accustomed to using?

Skim the introduction and this lesson in the Student's book.

Read through again, marking ideas that are new or unfamiliar to you.

Consider questions or issues that might come up with your class members. Compare these with your overview of the quarter. If you anticipate questions that will be better handled later, you might be able to answer students briefly and then mention when the questions will be dealt with more thoroughly.

Class Time

The introduction is designed to help students express any reservations they have about the study topic. You will need to guide the discussion, allowing the class members to be open, without encouraging negative or judgmental comments.

We need to recognize that high school and college age students are still involved in the process of making beliefs they have received from their family and their church into something that belongs to them personally. As on many other subjects, they may be able to give the "right" answers about the Sabbath without any personal sense of involvement or "ownership."

In moving into Lesson 1, we are giving the students an opportunity to deal with the issue of the authority and reliability of the Bible.

Guide the discussion so that students can see how values based on popular opinions or what "everyone" is doing means that there are no moral absolutes. Discuss the use of the Bible as the "final authority" for the Christian.

You may wish to use the matchup sheet as a discussion starter.

The Early Days

Bible Background: Exodus 16:22-30; Exodus 20:1-17; 2 Kings 22 and 23

Memory Verses: Matthew 5:17-18: “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students understand the importance God placed on the Sabbath as a part of His moral law.

Lesson Emphasis: Difficulty in keeping the Sabbath is not a new problem.

Lesson Summary

God wanted Israel to observe the Sabbath. How the manna was given and what was included in the Ten Commandments demonstrate this. It is evident that there were many times when the Israelites fell far short of God’s will in this area. The account of the rediscovery of the scroll in 2 Kings points out how little attention had been paid to the law in previous generations.

Some argue that the original day of rest and worship was so poorly observed by the Jews that we have no way of knowing what relation it has to the modern week. But we do know that there has been no break in the seven day cycle since the days of Jesus. This means that our seventh day (“Saturday”) is the same day that Jesus observed as the Sabbath.

An important point in this lesson is the way in which God included the Sabbath in the moral law—the Ten Commandments. You may wish to remind your students of how these laws were written on enduring stone while the regulations God designed for just the Israelites were put on parchment. Even in the Ten Commandments the Sabbath was to be observed by Israelites, servants, cattle and “sojourners.” Sojourners were foreigners living with or among the Israelites. It was the responsibility of the “head of the house” to see that everyone shared in this special blessing. Hebrews 4:9-11 speaks of a Sabbath-like rest remaining for the people of God. Some see this relating to a future heavenly rest while others believe this refers to keeping Sabbath now. In either case, it warns against the disobedience of ignoring this Sabbath principle with the resulting damage to others as well as to ourselves.

Ignoring God’s law led to lost freedom and the destruction of the temple. Israelites held captive in Babylon began to meet on the Sabbath for worship and study. These meetings developed into the first synagogues. The synagogue was an important institution in the New Testament and served as the “model” for the first Christian churches.

Preparation Time

Review the Scripture references used in this lesson. Look up “Sabbath” in a concordance to find the passages in which the prophets urged better Sabbathkeeping.

Collect bulletins from several churches. (Your pastor may receive some from other SDB churches. You might ask students to help. —See “Class Time” heading for how to use these.)

Consider 2 Kings 22 and 23. Is there a parallel between this story and the way in which God’s law is “lost” for many people today?

The lesson in the Student’s book does not include all the details you may wish to emphasize. Compare the lesson with the Scripture passages, making note of your own reactions.

Read the lesson again, marking ideas that are new or unfamiliar to you.

Review how your students reacted to the last session. Were there positive reactions you can build on? Can you develop methods around negative reactions?

Class Time

Help your students see the relationship between the Bible passages and trends we are facing in our day. The seven day week is “under attack” in many ways. Stores and airlines regularly list Sunday as the last day of the week. Many calendars (including some featuring popular cartoon characters such as Garfield) begin the week on Monday. Rotating shifts in many industries tend to confuse us about the passing of time. Perhaps your students will have other examples.

Discuss with your students the implications of including the Sabbath with such other moral absolutes as “you shall not murder.” Note the quote from Verkler and how it underlines our need to obey after we have accepted Christ.

A guest in our home noted the change of pace as the Sabbath began late Friday afternoon and commented on how you could feel the difference. This “sojourner” entered the Sabbath rest with us. Suggest that your students try to think like a sojourner as they observe how the Sabbath is kept in their homes and in the homes of friends. (Note: caution your students about critical attitudes. Help them use this exercise as a method of developing a more positive Sabbath experience.)

The Exile and After

Bible Background: Nehemiah 13:15-22; Isaiah 58:12-14

Memory Verses: John 15:10-11: "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students understand how the Sabbath grew in importance for the Jews and how this was both good and bad.

Lesson Emphasis: The style of Sabbath observance that developed among the Jews did not fulfill God's original purpose for the day.

Lesson Summary

Israel divided into two kingdoms following Solomon's death. Neither country did very well at keeping God's law and both were destroyed by foreign nations. The Northern Kingdom went out of existence, but Judah was reestablished later. Sabbath observance came to be more important following the Jews' return from Babylon. Nehemiah led some of the former captives and emphasized the importance of the Sabbath. Groups we read about in the New Testament (scribes, pharisees, sadducees) developed during this time. Although they disagreed on their interpretation of Scripture, each of these groups stressed faithfulness to their understanding of God's law.

Many of their efforts to apply the law seem picky and silly. These man-made rules had become a terrible burden by the time Jesus lived.

Preparation Time

Read Isaiah 58. Consider how these promises still apply to us today.

Have large scale maps of the Holy Land available to help your students understand what happened in the captivity.

Review how Nehemiah enforced the Sabbath. Be prepared to discuss this kind of approach with your class.

Compare the captivity of Judah to the struggle of Christians in authoritarian countries today. (Our SDB groups in such places as Poland and South Africa could be mentioned.)

Class Time

Discuss Nehemiah's methods of enforcing the Sabbath commandment. Ask your students for their reactions. Would they use the same methods? Why or why not?

The "Ten Lost Tribes" disappeared. Is it harder to hold on to the truth when you are all by yourself? How would your students react to being cut off from their home church?

Compare and contrast the picture of Sabbathkeeping presented in Isaiah 58 and Nehemiah 13.

What Jesus Said and Did

Bible Background: Mark 2:27-28; Matthew 5:17-20; Luke 4:16; John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16-17

Memory Verse: Matthew 5:17: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to review Jesus’ standards concerning the Sabbath.

Lesson Emphasis: Jesus wanted the Sabbath to be observed as a joyful day of rest and worship without man-made restraints.

Lesson Summary

Jesus stated that the “Law and the Prophets” would not be abolished. “Law and Prophets” was one common way of referring to what we think of as the Old Testament. Since the Sabbath is part of God’s moral law that applies to all people everywhere, Jesus was confirming it as part of God’s continuing plan. (The “Law and Prophets” also includes record of God’s special instructions to His chosen people—the Israelites. This is the so-called “ceremonial law” including such things as the sacrifices and other practices God provided for ancient Israel.)

Jesus described himself as the “Lord of the Sabbath.” He never questioned the importance of Sabbath observance, but he did take issue with the pharisees and others who had set up their own interpretation of how the Sabbath should be kept. Jesus lived.

Jesus’ custom was to attend worship services on the Sabbath. He gave an example of common sense observance of the day.

Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Creator, so even the Sabbath’s connection to creation honors Christ.

Preparation Time

Read the Scripture passages carefully. Note the way in which some translations tend to “slant” the meaning. Consider how *Bailey’s Complete Sabbath Commentary* deals with these verses.

Consider the implications of the “Christ as Creator” theme. This may be an unfamiliar Bible truth for some of your students.

Consider what lordship means. Look it up in a dictionary. What modern comparisons can you think of that give the same general meaning?

Class Time

Discuss the concept of “Christ the Creator” with your class. Try to get them to react to this as it relates to the Sabbath.

Review Jesus’ custom and example concerning the Sabbath. How was his use like that of the pharisees? How was it different?

Emphasize for whom the Sabbath was made. Help your students understand this important concept. Note that we are invited to share the Sabbath with God, not use it as we choose.

Develop the idea of Helps to Sabbath Observance. What do your students see as helpful? (See student book for suggestions.)

The Sabbath & The New Testament Church

Bible Background: Acts 13:14,27,42-44; 15:21; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4; 20:7

Memory Verse: Acts 17:2: "And according to Paul's custom, he went to them and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures." (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to show that the Sabbath was observed in the New Testament church.

Lesson Emphasis: The book of Acts shows that the early followers of Jesus observed the Sabbath.

Lesson Summary

Some suggest that the early followers of Jesus replaced the Sabbath with Sunday to honor Jesus' resurrection. One "first day of the week" meeting is mentioned in Acts (20:7). This was a farewell meeting and does not reflect the usual practice of the early church. Today's English Version translates it "On Saturday night."

The Sabbath is mentioned frequently in Acts, usually as a day of worship and study. Some scholars say that 84 specific Sabbaths are mentioned in the book of Acts.

Even in a gentile city like Antioch of Pisidia, (Acts 13) Paul and Barnabas met with both Jews and gentiles on the Sabbath. When they were no longer welcome in the synagogue they continued to meet on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath and the rest of the Ten Commandments were not an issue at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) because all Christians agreed that the moral law was binding on all people.

It is interesting to consider how the Sabbath is presented in the book of Acts when we remember that it was written by a gentile. The pattern of the New Testament church as presented in the book of Acts is one of consistent Sabbath observance.

Preparation Time

You will need to read the Scripture passages noting their context carefully. Prepare yourself to help your students see how important it is to know the setting in which a particular statement is made. You might plan a role play of the Jerusalem Council, or have the students record interviews with some of the participants. Bring some concordances and help them look for references to the Sabbath in the book of Acts. (Note: some translations will use "week" instead of Sabbath in some locations.)

Compare the four requirements mentioned in Acts 15 with Leviticus 17:8-18, 23. This Old Testament passage laid out moral standards that applied to gentiles living among the Israelites as well as for the Israelites themselves.

This seems to be the background for the requirements in Acts. This means that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were accepting gentile believers as they were, but believed that they should observe the “minimum standards” expected of sojourners in the Old Testament. Be ready to help your students see how these requirements were designed to make it easy for Jewish and gentile believers to fellowship together.

Consider questions that come to your mind as you read the Scripture passages. If you feel uncertain about portions of the lesson, try to deal with your questions before presenting the lesson to your class. Again, you may find the Bailey commentary helpful.

Review next week’s lesson and be ready to make assignments to your students.

Class Time

Have your students find references to the Sabbath in Acts using a concordance. This is a good way to help them learn how to use this valuable study tool.

Divide your class. Have one group read and prepare to retell the incident surrounding Acts 13:42 (13:14-50). Assign the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-30) to the other group. Have them discuss the following questions:

1. Is it fair to make a case for or against the Sabbath because it is not mentioned?
2. Are there dangers in this kind of “argument from silence”? If so, what are the dangers?
3. What things were gentile Christians to avoid? Why? Discuss the “consistent pattern” of the Sabbath in Acts. Ask what they think of the Acts 20:7 reference to a meeting on “the first day of the week.” Compare this verse in several versions. (Show the tremendous difference between TEV and Living Bible.)

Use extra class time for the word search in the student’s book. Ask questions about the importance of consistency in various areas of life using the comments in the student’s book as a starting point.

Make assignments for next week. Ask students to research people mentioned in the lesson. Suggest they look for news stories that show how Christian faith is being challenged today.

The Church Drifts to Sunday

Bible Background: Matthew 5:17-20; 15:1-9; Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "But examine everything carefully; hold to that which is good." (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students understand why some Christians quit observing the Sabbath.

Lesson Emphasis: Anti-Jewish feelings, fear of the government, lack of Bible knowledge and holding on to pagan customs all worked against continued Sabbath-keeping in the second century.

Lesson Summary

To understand the change from Sabbath to Sunday, we must study early church history since the change did not occur during the time recorded in the New Testament. It appears that the switch began some time after 100 A.D. and that several reasons were involved. The Roman dictatorship became increasingly anti-Jewish throughout the late first and early second centuries. Some Christian leaders advocated a change to Sunday so Christians would not be confused with Jews. Other church members brought anti-Jewish feelings with them from their pagan backgrounds. Emperor Hadrian made circumcision and Sabbath observance illegal in 135 A.D. The epistle of Barnabas (a forgery) comes from about this time. Justin Martyr wrote around 150. These two documents contain the earliest explanation for observing Sunday. "Barnabas" calls Sunday the eighth day and claims it should be kept in honor of the beginning of a "new creation." He is the first to suggest that it should be kept in honor of the resurrection. Justin Martyr argues in favor of Sunday as the "birthday" of creation.

Sunday had been a day for worship of the sun among many pagans. When it became convenient to avoid confusion with the Jews, the alternative seemed to be to follow pagan custom. Constantine's order in 321 established Sunday as "a day off."

It is obvious that no good reason can be established from the Bible for the change in the day.

Preparation Time

Gather materials needed for the reports on the people mentioned in the student's book. Prepare brief sketches on some of them, or assign this to your students.

Look for articles and news stories that highlight the ways in which faith in

Christ is being challenged today. Have students bring in material they have found.

Have materials ready for a poster or banner.

Copies of the epistle of Barnabas and/or Justin Martyr may be available from your pastor or from your local library. You might want to have these available for your students.

Read the "hold fast" Scriptures. Personalize them. (Hebrews 3:6; 4:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:21)

Review the class time activities.

Class Time

Discuss the power of the Roman government in the first and second century. Ask questions about why they controlled religion. (Your students should be able to draw conclusions from the lesson material.)

Ask why the Roman treatment of Jews changed. Do your students feel the Roman treatment was understandable?

Discuss the way in which some Christians "put distance" between themselves and the Jews. What other ways of handling the problem could have been used? Ask your students how they think they would have reacted.

Review Matthew 5:17-20 and 15:1-9. Ask your students how these verses apply to what happened in the change from Sabbath to Sunday.

Prepare a banner or poster for your room or for each student.

Theme:

Hold Fast

. . . Our Confession

. . . Our Confidence

. . . To That Which Is Good.

What the Bible Does Say About the First Day of the Week

Bible Background: Genesis 1:1-5; Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1; Luke 23:54; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Romans 6:4

Memory Verses: Romans 12:1-2: “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to equip students with the facts concerning actual references to the first day of the week in the New Testament.

Lesson Emphasis: There is no New Testament basis for substituting Sunday for Sabbath.

Lesson Summary

The New Testament has eight references to the first day of the week.

Six of these refer to the day the empty tomb was discovered. One refers to a special farewell meeting held before Paul left town. The final reference is in Paul’s instructions on planning what you can give to help those in need.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important event recorded in the New Testament—or anywhere else. But the Gospels do not describe the resurrection. They tell about the discovery of the empty tomb. Romans 6:2-6 shows how baptism is to be our testimony to belief in the resurrection.

There are no New Testament instructions to change the day of rest and worship in honor of the resurrection, or for any other reason.

Preparation Time

Read the lesson in the student’s book carefully. Since many people claim to observe Sunday “in honor of the resurrection,” the explanation of how little the New Testament says on this subject is important. Opinions vary concerning the precise chronology of the events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection. It is more important for your students to understand that our Sabbath observance does not mean rejection of the resurrection. It is appropriate to show how baptism is the New Testament symbol for belief in the resurrection.

Prepare a chart of the references to the first day of the week in the New Testament.

Review the creative ideas at the close of the lesson. Prepare to help your students use them.

Preview next week's lesson so you can make assignments to your students.

Class Time

Discuss the passages on your chart. Ask your students about the details of each reference. Point out the lack of any eyewitness account of the actual resurrection. Compare the discovery of the empty tomb using several translations. What times are mentioned? Who is involved? What explanations can your students make for the differences in the details in the four Gospels?

Compare Luke 23:54 (burial) and Matthew 28:1 (empty tomb). Ask your students why "epiphosko" is translated "drew on" in one case and "dawn" in the other.

Read Acts 20:7 from several translations (including TEV). Why are there such differences in how this passage is translated? (Note: Remember that the day began with sunset.) Does it seem reasonable to think that this was a regular worship service? Why or why not?

Draw your students' attention to 1 Corinthians 16:2. Note how it says "lay by him in store" indicating a private, at-home activity.

Why do non-Sabbathkeepers use texts like these to try to prove Sunday observance in the New Testament? Would they use passages like this if they had better ones available?

Consider what the New Testament does tell us to do in honor of the resurrection. Involve your students in dialog concerning the meaning of baptism.

If time permits, use the search-a-word as a discussion starter.

Make assignments for next week.

Some Troublesome Texts, Part One

Bible Background: Acts 2; John 20:26; Revelation 1:10

Memory Verses: Mark 2:27-28: “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students have an accurate understanding of some passages that are quoted against the Sabbath.

Lesson Emphasis: Bible verses that seem to support a change from Sabbath to Sunday need to be carefully considered.

Lesson Summary

John 20:26 says Jesus met with His disciples eight days after His resurrection. Some people claim that “after eight days” means “one week later.” They do this to claim that all of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances occurred on “Sundays.” This does not seem to fit with the facts. Such a claim falls far short of finding any New Testament instruction to change the day.

A similar idea tries to justify Sunday observance because it is claimed that the Holy Spirit was given on that day. The argument claims that the feast of Pentecost always fell on the first day of the week. Since the Spirit came during that festival, they argue that this is support for a change in the day of worship. Pentecost was also known as the feast of first fruits and was the traditional date for the giving of the Ten Commandments. The significance of when the Spirit was given relates to the festival, not the day of the week.

Revelation 1:10 says “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.” Some people will try to claim that this is the first use of “Lord’s day” to refer to Sunday. It is more likely that this term means the same thing as “the day of the Lord” used by several Old Testament prophets. The day of the Lord was how the Prophets described the coming day of judgement. Since this is the primary theme of the book of Revelation, it seems probable that John was saying “I had a vision of the day of the Lord.”

If this refers to a day of the week, we need to remember that Jesus called himself Lord of the Sabbath.

Preparation Time

Prepare 25 review questions drawn from earlier chapters to use with the “Tiddlywinks Review” in the Student’s book. Design your questions to include items from class discussion. This will help your students maintain what they have learned. You might prefer to divide your group into teams and have them work up lists of questions before class. In either case you will need to be the “umpire.”

Read the lesson carefully, noting items you may wish to study further. Read next week's lesson for continuity.

Compare the "eight days" and "Lord's day" passages in several translations. Be ready to share this with your students.

Use a Bible dictionary or other reference book to discover more about Pentecost, the day of the Lord, and the Lord's day. Note how many such help present the position of Sundaykeepers. Compare these with Bailey's commentary and similar materials written by Sabbathkeepers.

Class Time

Help your students evaluate the three passages in the lesson. They may have difficulty understanding why these passages are even used to try to prove first day observance in the New Testament. Remind them of how most Sundaykeeping Christians really want to believe that they are doing what the Bible instructs.

Consider the "eight day week"—Help them understand that all languages do have "idioms" (words or phrases that don't mean exactly what they say). Ask them for examples in our language. Help them to see that even if this phrase means "one week," that it does not prove anything regarding Sabbath and Sunday.

Discuss.

Review the material covered so far using the Tiddlywinks Review.

Give the students time to talk about what they have learned so far and how it has affected them.

Encourage your students to read next week's lesson before class.

Some Troublesome Texts, Part Two

Bible Background: Mark 2:27-28; Philippians 3:2-7; Acts 21:17-26; 24:13-14; Romans 6:1-2; Galatians 4:10-11; Colossians 2:9, 13-14, 16-17

Memory Verse: John 14:15: "If you love Me you will keep My commandments." (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students have an accurate understanding of some passages that are quoted against the Sabbath.

Lesson Emphasis: Bible verses that seem to support a change from Sabbath to Sunday need to be carefully considered.

Lesson Summary

There are some isolated passages in Paul's writings that some use to justify eliminating the Sabbath.

Some people believe that Sunday replaced the Sabbath. Others insist that the Sabbath was abolished and that Sunday was just a convenient substitute.

As an important Christian leader, Paul would have instructed his converts about any change in the Sabbath. Paul was a Jew brought up to observe the Ten Commandments. He preached about Christ on the Sabbath. His letters deal with problems churches were facing. Two big problems were Jewish legalism and pagan practices. He stated that we were to refrain from sin, even though we receive forgiveness through belief in Jesus Christ.

The passages used against the Sabbath say far less about this subject than some people claim. Most of them deal with issues of the ceremonial law or with pagan practice.

Preparation Time

Read the lesson carefully. Read Bailey's comments on these passages.

Develop questions and collect markers for the Tic Tac Toe Review. If you have material left over from last week's review, include it.

Be prepared to deal with the concepts of law and grace. If grace is God's unmerited favor given to believers, why should we obey God's law? Be ready to help your students understand that we are not "earning our salvation" by obeying, but are expressing thanks to God for the gift of salvation.

Class Time

Review who Paul was. Point out the kind of education and upbringing he had. Help your students grasp how his faith in Jesus changed his motive for obeying God. Ask what happened to the way he lived after his conversion. (Your students may need help understanding that Paul's understanding of Christian freedom still included obedience to God.)

Discuss how Romans 6:1 relates to the Sabbath issue. Ask what grace is.

Ask: "If we don't keep the Commandments (including the Sabbath) to be good enough to please God, why do we do it?"

Consider the Colossians 2 passage. Our Sabbath observance is not to be judged by others. How do we help others grow without condemning or sounding like we are judging? What standards can we apply to our own Sabbath observance?

Use the Tic Tac Toe Review to help students remember points from previous lessons.

The Sabbath and Service to God

Bible Background: Romans 12:1-2; Luke 9:23; Psalm 100:3.

Memory Verse: Psalm 100:3 “Know that the Lord is God; it is He Who has made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students understand the Sabbath as a special opportunity to draw near to God.

Lesson Emphasis: The Sabbath was designed by God for special fellowship with him.

Lesson Summary

The Sabbath concept includes more than physical rest. The modern forty hour week does not do away with the need for this special day. Nor does the argument that we love and serve God every day do away with the need for Sabbath. Bacchiochi compares week day service and Sabbath service to that of Mary and Martha. The active daily service is made complete by the restful service of the Sabbath.

The forty hour week does not replace the need for the Sabbath. The creation story reports that God set up the Sabbath the day after he created mankind. Physical fatigue was not the primary need. We do rest from our work, but primarily we rest in celebration of God’s work. It becomes a reminder of our dependence on him, the point of this week’s memory verse.

Recreation is an inadequate substitute for Sabbath observance. Both private contemplation and public worship enrich our appreciation of God’s goodness.

Preparation Time

Read the lesson through carefully. Consider the practices and attitudes of your students and your church. You will be dealing with issues of personal Sabbath observance. Be prepared to challenge your students to a more complete Sabbath practice without appearing judgmental of patterns which they or their families may have developed without much thought. You may find that you will be dealing with defensiveness or that your students may feel threatened by what is presented. Such reactions may be positive signs of an inner struggle to make the Sabbath something more meaningful.

If you are aware of particular areas of conflict that may come up in class, pray about them and try to be ready to deal with them in a constructive way.

Class Time

Review the lesson with your students giving opportunity for them to react honestly to the material. If they are defensive or begin to refer to what others say is "ok" to do on the Sabbath, refocus their attention on the material presented. The Sabbath is not an inconvenience developed to keep us from desired activities. It is time God has set aside for us to share with him in ways our other activities may hinder us from doing.

Go through the "Input-Output" exercise in the student's book. Discuss the various pressures your students experience that tend to cut in on the feeling of the Sabbath as time to serve God in a special way.

Ask, "Why do you suppose God set up the Sabbath?" Ask, "Why is it important to God to have us rest **with** him?"

The Sabbath and Service to Self

Bible Background: Mark 2:23-28; Isaiah 58:13-14

Memory Verse: John 14:15: “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students see that the Sabbath is something God intended as a personal blessing for them.

Lesson Emphasis: The Sabbath is more than a religious tradition. It is an ongoing source of blessing for the believer.

Lesson Summary

The Sabbath is intended to benefit the individual. In Christian circles we tend to frown on questions which boil down to “What’s in it for me?” Yet that question is in the back of our minds on many occasions. We struggle against a perception of the Sabbath as a restrictive, non-enjoyable time that many people—young and old alike—view as a burden rather than a joy.

“The Sabbath was made for man” was how Jesus expressed the issue we have at hand. This means that it does have value for each of us as individuals. In a sense we are looking at the mirror image of what was discussed last week. The Sabbath does provide time to maintain our relationship with a loving heavenly Father. It does provide time for us to break from the “rat race.”

An interesting factor in Sabbath observance is the reordering of priorities mentioned in Isaiah 58. The turning back of the foot from the Sabbath (not “stepping all over it”) and the revision of values so that we can call it a delight while not “doing our own pleasures” calls for a degree of spiritual maturity.

Preparation Time

Start early in the week with a review of the Scripture references used in this lesson. Consider the changes you have found happening in your own Sabbath observance as you have gone through this series of lessons. If appropriate, be ready to share some of the new insights and practices that you are developing. Don’t be afraid of letting your students realize that you are still growing in your understanding of spiritual matters.

Physical conditioning is required for increased athletic performance. The spiritual conditioning the Sabbath can provide is a major source of improved spiritual performance.

Read the lesson again, marking ideas that are new or unfamiliar to you.

Review the points of view your students demonstrated at the last sessions. Are there positive reactions you can build on? Can you develop methods around negative reactions?

Class Time

Discuss how the Sabbath can be viewed as service to self. Help your students explore the benefits of the change of pace in activities. See how many different areas of their lives they think should be affected.

Review with your students the implications of including the Sabbath with such other moral absolutes as "You shall not murder." Ask how they view submission to Christ as being real freedom. Ask how they can get beyond thinking of what they "have to give up" to keep the Sabbath in order to focus on what they gain.

Explore the "what's in it for me" syndrome and help them focus on the positive benefits of Sabbath observance for them personally.

The Sabbath and Service to Others

Bible Background: Exodus 20:10; Luke 4:16-20; Matthew 28:18-20

Memory Verses: Matthew 28:19-20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to help students see that the Sabbath provides special opportunity to be of service to others.

Lesson Emphasis: The Sabbath is more than a religious tradition. It is an opportunity to put our faith into action in relation to other people.

Lesson Summary

"But the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you" (Exodus 20:10 NASV). It is important to remember that the Sabbath commandment carried with it sweeping language which expressed the desire that aliens, servants and beasts of burden be included.

Jesus followed the well established pattern of synagogue attendance on the Sabbath. Our involvement in worship and study times in our local church on the Sabbath enriches ourselves, but also enriches one another.

As opportunities came along for service to others on the Sabbath, Jesus took advantage of them. He demonstrated that spiritual and physical needs of individuals could be worked into appropriate observance of the Sabbath.

Perhaps one "rule" we could all use as a starting place would be to avoid those things which tend to interfere with awareness of the Sabbath as special time set aside by God.

Preparation Time

As you consider the issue of the Sabbath as service to others, develop discussion starters that may be familiar to your students that will help them see both the corporate and individual dimensions of this idea. Our participation in worship and study may be one method of enriching others as well as ourselves. What other ways of enriching others do you think your students may mention? Review Jesus' use of the Sabbath for the assistance of the needy. Develop a statement summing up your understanding of how he used the day. Consider the objections of the pharisees. Their preoccupation with details and traditions robbed them of the joy that comes with serving others.

On a recent Sabbath Emphasis day I noticed several missing faces. One of the points I made in the sermon was that acts of mercy fit well with one of the

ways in which the Sabbath should be kept. I later learned that several of those missing faces were involved in three separate situations of helping friends and neighbors. Two situations were medical emergencies. The third dealt with a death in the family. These are the exceptions that prove the rule concerning the importance of our worship and study time.

Evaluate the family aspect of the Sabbath and serving others. Pray about the content and intent of this lesson.

Class Time

Use the discussion starters in the student's book and above to stimulate responses from your class. Help them evaluate the balance between service to God, service to self and service to others. Do they feel that the Sabbath can be used in all three ways?

Discuss the Sabbath in relation to the family. Guide the discussion to positive ways of expressing the service to others concept within the family unit.

What responsibility does a Sabbathkeeping employer have to his workers?

Can "service to others" become an excuse for avoiding the other two areas of Sabbath service? How can such a conflict be avoided?

A Quick Review

Bible Background: Scripture references from all previous lessons.

Memory Verse: 2 Peter 3:18: “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” (NASV)

Lesson Aim: to encourage the students to continued growth throughout life.

Lesson Emphasis: Increased understanding of the importance of the Sabbath needs to be linked to increased use of the Sabbath in ways that please God.

Lesson Summary

This summary lesson will provide opportunity to help your students get a firm grasp on the material presented during the quarter. It is more important for us to demonstrate the importance of the Sabbath in our lives than to try to argue about “which day is the Sabbath.”

The facts presented during the quarter need to be put into action!

Jesus had conflicts with some people of **how** the Sabbath should be kept. Nothing he said or did raised the issue of **whether** it should be kept.

Jesus spent Sabbath time in:

- worship and study (in the synagogue);
- helping people in need;
- resting.

His use of the Sabbath is an example to us.

The Sabbath is blessing, not burden!

Preparation Time

Review the quarter. Perhaps some issues need to be discussed further. Make note of such issues. Plan for the students to work with you on the outline. Be prepared to give your students an opportunity to react to the quarter as a whole.

Stress the practical aspects of lessons 10, 11 and 12 which help put “legs” on the material learned earlier.

Class Time

Discuss the lesson material presented. Have the students compare their feelings at the beginning of the series with how they feel now.

As time permits, allow free discussion of all issues related to the Sabbath, applying the principles learned during the quarter. Use the outline to help students gain a firm understanding of the major issues of the series.

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