

LESSON 4: GOD'S COMMANDMENTS: THE SABBATH

Review Guide for Elementary

Classroom: Grades 1, 2, 3, & 4

 Exodus 20:8-11; Genesis 2:1-3

05/02/2020



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

Filled Up

Supplies

- inflated beach ball
- pump inflator

Inflate and Play With a Ball

Say: **We've been learning about how we have a special day for God. On that special day, God wants us to rest and spend time with him. Restful time with God is important for our bodies, our minds (point to your head), and our feelings. A day of rest fills us up when staying busy all week wears us out. It's a lot like this:**

- Have everyone sit in a circle facing each other.
- Hold up the inflated beach ball. Say: **Each morning, we wake up rested and full of energy like this ball is full of air.**
- Say: **Then we work and work** (let out some air) **and play and play** (let out some air), **and we run out of energy.**
- Pass the ball around the circle, and have each child share what he or she was busy doing this week, such as going to school, dance class, sports, swim time at a pool, a playground, and places with friends and family.
- Say: **Wow! There are so many activities that keep us busy!** Let all the air out of the ball. **Even if we're having fun staying busy, it can still leave us tired and feeling floppy like the ball.**
- Attach the ball to the inflator. Say: **When we rest and spend time with God, it fills us back up!** Help each child take a turn filling the ball. As each child has a turn, have him or her tell a way to rest, such as taking naps, looking at books, listening to favorite praise songs, or snuggle time with a parent.
- Say: **Look what rest did for the ball! All those restful things filled it up!**
- Allow kids to play with the ball for a few minutes, bopping it around the circle until the room is filled with joy.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you like about playing with the ball after it was filled up?**
Say: **There was more joy and fun when the ball was filled up. That's like us when we've rested and spent time talking with God—we're filled up with joy and energy. That's why we have a special day for God every week.**



DEEPER BIBLE

[15 min]

What About Playing Sports on Sundays?

Dig Deeper

You'll Be Teaching: *We have a special day for God.* The idea of Sabbath is one that isn't talked about or done very much in our culture—even among Christians. And yet, in this age where we may be busier than ever, we need a time to rest and recharge more than ever! Show kids that God gave us this commandment as a gift, knowing that a Sabbath day each week renews us for all the tasks that lie ahead.

Think About: Do you have a Sabbath day each week? If so, what do you like about it? If not, what are your obstacles?

Dig Deeper Activity

Supplies

- Bibles
- foam ball
- clean trash can
- soccer ball
- 4 chairs
- pool noodles (1 per child)
- paper wads (1 per child)
- "The Joy of Sabbath" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))
- pencils

Tip

- Although this question specifically mentions playing sports, don't feel limited to that topic. We chose that specific commitment because it's the most common one kids have that conflicts with church, but other kids might share about play rehearsal, music lessons, Saturday night sleepovers, and so on. Let kids connect to this question in a way that is most relevant to them.

Set It Up

Say: **We've been learning that we have a special day for God where we set aside time to go to church and do things that help us focus on God.**

But sometimes we have sports games or other things come up on Sundays, and we don't make it to church.

Ask: • **Tell about something that has caused a conflict and you had to choose between doing that or going to church.** Get kids started by sharing your own example.

Say: **So is it bad to choose another activity over going to church on Sunday? What about playing sports on Sunday? Let's dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Say: **First let's check the commandment again. As I read it, listen for the words *Sunday* and *church*.**

Ask: • **What does this commandment specifically say about Sundays or going to church?**

Say: **God never said that the Sabbath has to be Sunday. In fact, the Israelites who originally got this commandment observed the Sabbath on *Saturday*. Today most people think of God's day as Sunday because that's the day Jesus came back to life, but others continue to observe Sabbath on Saturday.**

So you can pick any day of the week that works best for you to be your Sabbath day. But most of the time, church meets on Sunday. How important is it to go to church? Let's see what else the Bible says.

Read Hebrews 10:25.

Ask: • **Why is going to church important?**

Say: **God says not to neglect meeting together with other Christians, because we need to encourage each other.** Let kids know about any non-Sunday options your church has for kids to attend, such as a Saturday night service or a midweek program.

Say: **So it's important to go to church. But sometimes we have to make a choice: soccer game or church? Here's a verse that can help you think through that choice.**

Read 1 John 5:21.

Ask: • **How would you know if a sport or other activity has taken God's place in your heart?**

Say: **Let's think about this for a minute. Think of something you spend a lot of time doing that might interfere with going to church or spending time with**

God. We'll take one quiet minute to ask God to show you whether that activity has taken God's place in your heart. Pause for reflection and prayer.

Play a Game

Say: Here's the bottom line: The Sabbath is important. Church is important. And God should be first in our hearts. My Sabbath might not look like your Sabbath, but we *all* need time to rest and refocus on God. Let's play a game that shows us why that is.

Set a clean trash can in the center of the room, and set up soccer goals by arranging two chairs on each side of the room. Get out the soccer ball and foam ball, and give each child a paper wad and a pool noodle.

Say: This game is a combination of running, soccer, basketball, baseball, and church. Your goal is to run laps around the room while also trying to make goals with the soccer ball and score baskets with the foam ball in the trash can. Meanwhile, I'll be pitching you paper wad baseballs, which you'll try to hit with your pool noodle bats. And I'll also be leading you in reciting John 3:16.

Begin the game, encouraging kids to keep all four sports going while reciting John 3:16 repeatedly with you: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (Note: We chose John 3:16 because it's the most likely verse for your kids to already know. However, if you have a lot of kids who don't know it, try having them repeat today's Bible point instead: We have a special day for God.)

Play for about three minutes, and then sit down with kids.

Ask: • How did you feel trying to do all those activities at once?

• If you had to pick just *one* of those things to do, which would you pick?

Why?

Say: None of the things we just did are bad to do. Playing basketball is fine! But sometimes we just can't do it all. We have to make choices about how to spend our time. God gives us a Sabbath day every week so we can recharge and find our strength in him. The Sabbath day is an amazing gift to us and a great way to spend time.

Let's check out a Bible passage that explains the Sabbath.

Give each child a "Joy of Sabbath" handout and a pencil. Read the verse aloud.

Ask: • What part jumps out to you the most?

Say: Draw a picture or write a prayer that shows your response to these verses. Pause for kids to draw and write.

Pray: God, thank you for the delight we can find when we have a special day for you. Thank you for that gift! In Jesus' name, amen.

Say: **So I have one last thing for you to think about. Given everything we've discussed...what's *your* answer to the question? Are you making other things more important than having a Sabbath? What does God want you to change or keep the same?** Pause for kids to reflect, and then invite willing kids to share what they think about the question.

Dig Into Prayer

Lead kids to pray. Ask God to give you and your kids a spirit of rest and renewal in him. If your children have any prayer request, please submit them on our website under "Kids Resources." We would love to pray over them.

Memory Verse

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." – Matthew 22:37