Introduction

The teacher's guide for *CQ* is unlike anything previously produced for adult Sabbath Schools. It is an attempt to change the environment in today’s Sabbath School classes, to offer stimulating and practical approaches to the utilization of *CQ* in the study of God’s Word.

Most Sabbath School members consider a successful class as nothing more than a stimulating discussion. Although thought-provoking discussion questions make up a part of *CQ*’s teaching guide, exercises in active and interactive learning form the backbone of its approach. The goal is to improve the quality of teaching in our Sabbath Schools through the use of innovative teaching methods.

The following material describes in detail the purpose of each component of a week’s teaching guide. The contents for each of these sections are deliberate and specific:

**Surveying the Source**

The scriptural basis for the teaching plan. It corresponds exactly with the scriptural basis of the “Logos” section of the lesson in *CQ* and the content of the adult Bible study guide for the same lesson.

**Plotting the Course**

Three objectives for the teaching of the week’s Sabbath School lesson.

**Materials**

A detailed list of the components needed to conduct the various activities included in the teaching guide.

**Preparing to Lead**

A short paragraph explaining the background from which the week’s lesson is to be presented. This may include a pertinent quotation or a reference to something that will help to introduce the topic.

**Getting Started**

Two alternatives for introducing the week’s topic of study. It attempts to fulfill two goals: (1) to introduce the topic to class members, and (2) to foster a comfortable and open atmosphere.
Delving Into the Word

Two alternative approaches to the content of the lesson. Each alternative leads all class members into the use of their Bibles through some form of active or interactive learning exercise.

Discussing the Ideas

Six to eight questions that stimulate thought and encourage discussion.

Reproducible Activity

An item that may be photocopied for use in the Sabbath School session.

Closing the Activity

A way for the teacher to draw the class to a close and for members to make a personal application of what they have been studying in the week’s lesson. This activity furnishes a way to make the topic personally meaningful.

Visit CQ’s Web Site
http://www.cqbiblestudy.org/

Questions? Comments?
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Printed by
Pacific Press® Publishing Association
1350 North Kings Road, Nampa, ID 83687-3193, U.S.A.

Place orders with
Pacific Press® Publishing Association
P.O. Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353, U.S.A.
The Triune God

Surveying the Source
Gen. 1:26, 27; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14–16; Phil. 2:5, 6.

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Contemplate the mystery of God as three and one.
► Understand how the Trinity differs from polytheism, i.e., the belief in multiple gods.
► Explore ways to personally experience the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Preparing to Lead
By calling people into a personal commitment to God, Christianity moves beyond philosophy. Philosophies may be accepted or rejected based on what we know about something. Understanding God, however, reaches beyond the simple facts toward a shared experience with Him. Having an accurate picture of God is crucial to that experience.

Getting Started
A. Utilizing a lamp equipped with a three-way bulb, turn the lamp to the lowest light setting. Ask the class when they might use the lowest setting. Next, turn the light to the highest setting. Discuss what circumstances might dictate using the brighter light. Finally, switch to the intermediate setting. Discuss needs which might encourage utilizing this intensity.

Emphasize how God is also three-in-one, ministering through each member of the Godhead to humanity’s various spiritual needs: One daily sustains lost sinners, One provides salvation through sacrifice, One provides salvation through transformation.

B. Read each of the following four sets of phrases. After you read each set, discuss the mental picture suggested by each phrase in that set: Set One: (a) A peasant person; (b) A pleasant person; Set Two: (a) An immoral life; (b) An immortal life; Set Three: (a) Wanted: Man that does not smoke or drink to take care of family; (b) Wanted: Man to take care of family that does not smoke or drink; Set Four: (a) Will sell gasoline in approved containers to anyone over 18; (b) Will sell gasoline to anyone over 18 in approved containers.

Compare this to how slight aberrations in describing God can confuse our theology.

Delving Into the Word
A. Using the reproducible activity (p. 31), discuss the various roles of each member of the Godhead. List the attributes shared by the member of the Godhead. Then, using the verses in Surveying the Source as a starting point, discuss...
each member’s unique contribution to the plan of salvation. Incorporate into your discussion some of the additional passages found on the activity sheet (p. 31). Explore how the unique roles of each member of the Godhead are interwoven for accomplishing humanity’s salvation. Contrast this with pluralistic religions that feature a pantheon of competing deities who fight amongst themselves with no ultimate purpose. Discuss how the biblical portrayal of God significantly differs from polytheism. Ask how casual observers might think that the Trinity is simply another version of polytheism.

Discuss how class members might explain to their non-Christian friends the differences between the Trinity and polytheism. What illustrations, metaphors, or analogies might be utilized to make this doctrine clearer?

B. Say: “While identical twins share nearly everything in common, subtle differences such as speech patterns make it possible to distinguish between them. Although twins generally express tremendous mutual affection for each other, they maintain their personal identities. And people who marry a twin would never consider twins interchangeable!”

“Likewise, members of the Godhead share many characteristics, but these characteristics are not interchangeable. Heresies develop whenever believers fail to appreciate the uniqueness Scripture ascribes to each member of the Godhead. While these heresies are often unintentional, their negative consequences are unavoidable.”

Discuss the implications of the following doctrinal deviations for understanding salvation. Counter each with Scripture.

(A Scripture “bank” is offered after the fifth deviation.) (1) Jesus was the Father’s initial creation. (2) The Holy Spirit is terminology for the Father’s influence. (3) Christ and the Holy Spirit are subordinate to the Father. (4) The Trinity is three separate Gods. (5) The Godhead is three distinct ways of describing one person.


**Discussing the Ideas**

1. If Jesus was created, what would that suggest about salvation?
2. If the Godhead is merely different descriptions of the same person, how do we explain those passages where they converse with one another, are sent by one another, or are listed side by side?
3. How do you feel when people treat you as a non-person? How might the Holy Spirit feel when people treat Him as an impersonal influence rather than a person?
4. How can you establish a stronger connection with each member of the Godhead?
5. What do you appreciate about the unique characteristics of each member of the Godhead?
6. What contribution has each member of the Godhead made to your salvation?

**Closing the Activity**

Have each class member divide a blank sheet of paper into three columns—each column labeled with one of the following: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. For each column, have the students give the following information: (1) a brief description; (2) what role that member of the Godhead plays in their daily life; (3) something a person can do this coming week to establish a stronger connection with that member. Invite the classroom to share their responses to number three.

Daniel Solis, College Place, Washington, U.S.A.
Directions: Discuss the various roles of each member of the Godhead using the following texts: Genesis 1:26, 27; 6:3; Numbers 14:11; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:12; Psalms 95:6–9; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 53; 63:10–14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 28:19; John 1; 3:8; 5:17–26; 10:30–36; 11:41, 42; 14–16; Acts 5:32; 7:59, 60; 8:29; 10:19, 20; 13:2, 32, 33; Romans 8; Philippians 2:5, 6; Colossians 1; 2:9; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1; 3:7–9; 6:16–19; 1 Peter 3:20; Revelation 13:8; 14:13; 22:17.

1. Attributes shared by all Members of the Godhead:

2. The Father’s Unique Attributes/Roles:

3. The Son’s Unique Attributes/Roles:

4. The Holy Spirit’s Unique Attributes/Roles:
In the Beginning

Surveying the Source
Deut. 32:10; Job 38:4–7; Psalm 19; John 1:1–14.

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Understand that God preexisted human history and that we are like spectators who see only the final seconds of a football match. We don’t need to know how the game was won, just who is winning!
► Learn that God knows everything because He was there from the beginning.
► Understand that God loves us and nothing we have done will make Him love us less and nothing we can do will make Him love us more.

Preparing to Lead
Our world, our lives, our relationships, our discussions—all must have a beginning or they are nothing. Either they began or they were fruitless imaginings. “A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”* This lesson is about the first steps in a journey of thousands of light years in distance and through many millennia in time. It is the story of a Creator so in love with His creation that He keeps us as the apple of His eye (Deut. 32:10).

Getting Started
A. Have two students compete in building a tower by stacking disposable plastic cups on a table. Allow another student to try to build a taller tower than the tallest so far. After each attempt, ask the observers what worked well. What didn’t work well? What would they do differently if they were building a tower? If the students do not independently conclude that a tower’s foundation is critical, have them rebuild their tower in the mirror image of their first tower. Then ask, “How important was a good beginning or foundation in the construction of the tower?”

B. Display the Christian fish symbol and have the students “draw” it without using a writing implement. Of course, they cannot unless the pen contacts the paper. State that even their drawing must have a beginning. Ask them if they can think of anything that has no beginning.

Delving Into the Word
A. Have volunteers read aloud the following texts that are italicized. After each text is read, discuss the following questions: Who is the active force in Deuteronomy 32:10? What are the implications when action is one sided? How does our barrenness compare with God’s abundance? How does that affect our ability to become the apple of His eye? Are there any prerequisites of being the apple of God’s eye and if so, what? What does this text tell us about salvation by God’s

* A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. - Confucius

Materials
- 60–100 disposable cups or empty plastic water bottles;
- two tables on which to build towers with the disposable cups;
- large copy of the “Christian fish” symbol;
- highlighters for the reproducible activity
even after all the time that has elapsed after Creation, He still loves and cares for us.

Discuss how knowing that Jesus actually created the world can help improve our lives.

Close with prayer, thanking God that

discussing the ideas

1. What difference would it make to your personal understanding of salvation if Jesus were not both Creator and Savior?

2. Why is it so important to believe that Jesus is God in every sense? What difference would it make if He wasn’t?

3. What does it mean to you personally that God is older, bigger, and wiser than everyone else? How could this alter the way you live?

4. What is the single most important reminder you have had that God is in control of your life?

5. What do you desire to hear most from your heavenly Father? Is there anything in your life that must occur so this can happen for you?

Closing the Activity

Discuss how knowing that Jesus actually created the world can help improve our lives.

Close with prayer, thanking God that

darrin parker, burpengary, queensland, australia

Psalm 19:1–14

1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.
2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.
3 There is no speech nor language Where their voice is not heard.
4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
5 Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.
6 Its rising is from one end of heaven, And its circuit to the other end; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.
7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
10 More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward.
12 Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.
13 Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression.
14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.*

God as Redeemer

Surveying the Source

- Recognize that redemption through Christ will bring the trials and suffering that have plagued this world throughout history to a permanent end.
- Define redemption as a free gift given through God’s grace.
- Analyze how God can both be a God of peace and yet One who will crush Satan (Rom.16:20).

Plotting the Course

The students will:
- Recognize that redemption through Christ will bring the trials and suffering that have plagued this world throughout history to a permanent end.
- Define redemption as a free gift given through God’s grace.

Preparing to Lead

- As noted in Acts 17:22, 23, the Greeks erected an altar to “An Unknown God,” seeking to make certain they were paying due attention to all possible deities. Paul discusses later in that chapter how we are all God’s children. Are you the child of an unknown God? Do you know whereof Paul speaks when he writes in Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” (NASB)? Our God redeems us, His faithful children.

Getting Started

A. After welcoming the students, discuss with them the nonspiritual concept of redemption, how by turning in some things they have earned or amassed (such as reward points or UPC barcodes) they can redeem them for services or merchandise. Ask them to compare and contrast this with the spiritual concept of redemption which one cannot earn or work toward because it is a gift given to those who are saved through faith. Ask if they, being redeemed, feel worthy, unworthy, at peace, conflicted, confused, or anything else.

B. Ask the students to recall times from their childhood when they enjoyed arcade games, perhaps as part of a birthday party with their friends, and earned tickets from the machines for points scored. How did they feel when they got lots of tickets or no tickets at all? Do they remember how they felt going to the redemption station to turn in their tickets for prizes, which often turned out to be cheap trinkets? Or perhaps not having enough tickets to get the best prizes? Ask them to contrast such experiences with the redemption offered to us as a gift from God.

Delving Into the Word

A. Using concordances, explore biblical examples of redemption by finding how that word (or the word redeem) is used by turning to and discussing the Bible passages referenced. Discuss if any of those examples are precursors to the
Can one be a serial redemption gift acceptor? Is someone “once saved, always saved” as the saying goes? Do you have the “peace of God” spoken of by Paul and Timothy (Phil. 4:7), resting in the knowledge that His grace is sufficient for you?”

Ask: “Can being actively aware of one’s redemption influence how one lives his or her life? If so, how? What happens if one accepts the free gift of salvation, then perhaps loses that assurance of salvation because of choices made, events experienced, or actions taken or endured?

B. Distribute the reproducible activity (p. 33) and ask the students to jot down their thoughts, reactions, feelings, etc., for each of the passages. Ask them to use what they wrote as a discussion springboard about their thoughts, reactions, feelings, etc., to help them gauge their own impression about their life and God’s offer to freely provide salvation to each of His faithful children. Does it seem too easy? Can acceptance of the gift of salvation actually be difficult?

Discussing the Ideas

1. Are we conditioned to believe we must work for what we receive? If so, what impact, if any, does such conditioning have on accepting God’s gift of salvation?

2. Many evangelists on television, radio, and the Internet appear to link donations to their organizations as a way to access God’s power or saving grace. Can this be justified? Explain your answer.

3. What does it mean to be saved through faith as stated in Ephesians 2:8?

4. Discuss the importance of Jesus taking on our penalty of death as the “wages” of our sin, and the gift of salvation He freely offers us.

5. Can you reconcile how God can be peaceful, yet forceful, such as when Satan will be crushed (Rom. 16:20)?

6. How can one be so burdened by life’s experiences as to lose sight of the fact that God offers a permanent end to the trials and pain this life includes?

7. If you were to stop breathing and die five minutes from now, do you know with assurance that you will be saved by God’s grace?

Closing the Activity

Ask: “Can being actively aware of one’s redemption influence how one lives his or her life? If so, how? What happens if one accepts the free gift of salvation, then perhaps loses that assurance of salvation because of choices made, events experienced, or actions taken or endured?

Can one be a serial redemption gift acceptor? Is someone “once saved, always saved” as the saying goes? Do you have the ‘peace of God’ spoken of by Paul and Timothy (Phil. 4:7), resting in the knowledge that His grace is sufficient for you?”

Rick Blondo, Clarksville, Maryland, U.S.A.
Your Thoughts, Reactions, Feelings, Etc., Regarding . . 

Genesis 3:15

Matthew 27:46

Mark 10:32–45

Acts 17:22, 23

Romans 1:18, 19; 16:20

Ephesians 2:8

1 Peter 1:18, 19
The God of Grace and Judgment

Surveying the Source

Genesis 3; 6; John 3:17–21; 1 Cor. 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 14:6, 7.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Describe at least three reasons why God’s judgment is good news for His children.
► Justify the need for God to judge as well as to be merciful.
► Distinguish between the judgment standards of humans and God.
► Respond to God’s love by deciding to commune with Him on a daily basis.

Preparining to Lead

“The law requires righteousness—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God’s holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. . . . By His life and His death, Christ proved that God’s justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed.”*

Getting Started

A. Discuss how the ongoing situation of humankind is like the game of “freeze tag.” In this game, the person who is “it” will chase the rest of the group. Anyone who is touched by “it” will have to freeze. One may be “released” only if a free person (other than “it”) touches him/her. The game continues until all are in a “freeze” position.

Identify the roles of Satan and Jesus in the “freeze tag” game of life. Describe how the game of “freeze tag” is comparable to God’s judgment and grace. Write the ideas generated on a flipchart or other such board.

B. Google the lyrics to the song “Trust Your Heart” by Babbie Mason and Eddie Carswell. Write the words to the refrain on a flipchart or other such writing board. Have the group sing the refrain or a member read it out loud. Distribute index cards and pens and let the members write what they understand the refrain to mean in relationship to God’s justice and grace. Have volunteers share their ideas.

Delving Into the Word

A. Tell the class that the themes of judgment and grace permeate the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Mention the stories of Adam and Eve in Genesis and the first angel’s message of Revelation.

Divide the class into two groups. Have Group 1 discuss the meaning of Genesis 3 and 6 (Adam and Eve’s sin and the
Through this lesson, share what changes you would like to make in the way you deal with others.

Close with prayer, asking God to give you and the students the strength and wisdom to make these changes.

Discussing the Ideas

1. Why is judgment in a courthouse looked upon with fear by most people? What makes God’s judgment fear-free for those who love Him?

2. Do you believe that in the controversy between good and evil, God is on trial? Why? Why not?

3. What is the importance of distinguishing between justification by faith and cheap grace that gives license to sinning?

4. It is evident from Scripture that God’s grace and His judgment go hand in hand: Israelites saved—Egyptians judged; David and Israel saved—Goliath and Philistines judged; we are saved—Jesus judged and died for us. What other such parallels of God’s saving mercy and judgment can you think of in Scripture?

5. What experiences in your own life demonstrate God’s judgment and grace at work?

Closing the Activity

Say: “God’s judgment states that the penalty for sin is eternal death. But instead of us receiving this punishment, God let Jesus take it upon Himself. Such is the amazing connection between God’s judgment and His grace. Having learned about God’s character more closely through this lesson, share what changes you would like to make in the way you deal with others.”

Close with prayer, asking God to give you and the students the strength and wisdom to make these changes.

Prema Gaikwad, Silang, Philippines

*The Desire of Ages, p. 762.*
**Judgment Is Good News**

Make one complete handout for every three members. Have each group of three cut vertically into three parts for distribution, giving one member the Member 1 section, another member the Member 2 section, and the third member the Member 3 section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member 1:</th>
<th>Member 2:</th>
<th>Member 3:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God’s judgment is good news because it is fair.</td>
<td>God’s judgment is good news because it clears our record.</td>
<td>God’s judgment is good news because both the defense attorney and judge are on our side.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scripture**

| Rev. 15:3; 22:12 | 1 John 1:9 | 2 Cor. 5:19–21 |

**Explanation**

| God does not punish His children arbitrarily. All wrongs which are confessed can be cleared. God’s children will get a chance one day to evaluate the records of heaven. | With God’s help we can search out all our sins, including the secret sins and evil thoughts and ask for forgiveness. God forgives as Jesus has already paid the penalty for our sins. | Both our heavenly Father and His Son want a verdict in our favor. Jesus is handling our case in court. He pleads for us to be free based on His sacrifice. |

The Holiness of God

Surveying the Source

Gen. 2:3; Job 42:5, 6; Isa. 6:1–3; Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 4:31–36; 5:1–11; Rev. 4:8, 9.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Explore the holiness of God.
► Identify what it means to surrender to a holy God and His holy mission for our lives.

Preventing to Lead

God’s holiness compels us to worship and praise Him. It also leads us to recognize our great need for His mercy and forgiveness. The Sabbath illuminates the holiness of God the Creator, and leads us closer to Him as we set aside this special weekly time to be with Him. The presence of God is holy and requires reverent behavior. When we pursue an understanding of the immeasurable holiness of God, we will be attracted to Him and desire His holy mission for our lives. As we draw closer to Him, He transforms us into His likeness.

Getting Started

A. Say: “We are not holy, but we are made by a holy God, saved by His holy Son, and called to become holy through Him. Imagine an iceberg—a jagged mass of ice protruding above water. It seems huge, but about 90 percent of icebergs are underwater. As we read the Bible, our ability to understand God is like viewing the tip of an iceberg. ‘For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known’ ” (1 Cor. 13:12).

B. Say: “Although God knows we are but dust, He still calls us to be morally pure” (Ps. 103:13, 14). Have someone read Micah 6:6–8. Say: “We can’t be good by ourselves. We need the Holy Spirit to transform our hearts continually.” Have someone read Isaiah 64:8.

Say: “Spending quality time with God everyday is the only way we can grow into His likeness. All the distractions in life are Satan’s plans. Apart from God, our spiritual lives become weak and sickly. Think of seeds planted in a garden. They die if they are not nourished and cared for properly.” Read and discuss Matthew 12:1–8, 8–23, 18–23.

Delving Into the Word

A. Give everyone a copy of the reproducible activity (p. 35). Divide into groups of two. Allow about 15 minutes to complete the worksheet. Once the time is...
up, ask each student to share two ideas she or he wrote down.

**B. Say:** “The life and experiences of John the Baptist give us insight on what it means to be committed to a holy God and His holy mission. In *The Desire of Ages*, on page 100, we read that ‘John was to go forth as Jehovah’s messenger, to bring to men the light of God. . . . Such a messenger must be holy. He must impress them with the holiness of God’s requirements and their need of His perfect righteousness.’

‘John lived a life of simplicity, which helped him focus on his mission—to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah. He called people to repent of their wicked ways ‘for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matt. 3:2).’

Read Matthew 3 as a group having each person reading one or two verses. Discuss John’s reaction to the Pharisees and Sadducees who claimed they wanted to repent and be baptized. **Say:** “In *The Desire of Ages*, on page 107, we read that ‘John declared to the Jews that their standing before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless. If their life and character were not in harmony with God’s law, they were not His people.’”

Discuss what can we learn from the life of John the Baptist.

### Discussing the Ideas

1. How can the Sabbath lead us into a closer relationship with God?
2. Why do you think God declared the Sabbath holy, but not the other six days?
3. How can we make ourselves more distinct from the world as John the Baptist did? (Discuss the internal concepts—love, compassion, simplicity, joy, unselfishness—and try to avoid a debate about modesty, jewelry, etc.)
4. How can Christians today experience what Job, Isaiah, and Peter felt and recognized when they more deeply understood the holiness of God?
5. Discuss specific ways we can act when in the holy presence of God during worship at home or church.
6. Discuss why we notice our own unworthiness when we see how holy God is. Think of some practical illustrations—a “white” dingy sock next to a brand new sock, a mowed lawn next to a shaggy lawn in need of grooming, etc.

### Closing the Activity

**Say:** “The sin-sick world around us is our current reality. However, God’s Word points us to holiness and heaven, salvation, and eternal life. God’s holy Sabbath stands as a weekly reminder of His goodness and holiness, and of His plan for us. Satan wants us to get so mesmerized by all the flashy, fun, exciting, and sensational experiences available in this world that we no longer desire holiness or heaven. We need Christ to live in our hearts so that He can transform us daily and save us from the traps Satan has set out to catch us.”

Close with prayer.

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**Debbie Battin Sasser, Friendswood, Texas, U.S.A.**
In the Presence of a Holy God

Explore the reactions of Moses, Job, Isaiah, and Peter as they encounter the holiness of God.

1. Read Exodus 3:1–5. Write down your thoughts on reverence.

2. Read Job 42:5, 6. Job's submission to God shows that he recognized the holiness of God, and even extreme trials could not change his perspective on who God is and his need for God's mercy and forgiveness. How have trials in your life affected your relationship with God?

3. Read Isaiah 6:1–3. When you imagine God, what words describe Him? How does being in His presence make you feel?

4. Read Luke 5:1–11. Peter recognized how holy Jesus was when they cast their nets on the other side of the boat and caught a huge amount of fish. What experiences in your life have revealed the holiness of God? Think of other Bible characters that have suddenly been surprised by the holiness of God.
God the Lawgiver

Surveying the Source
Exod. 16:4–30; Job 24:14, 15; Rom. 7:8–13; 13:8–10; Heb. 8:10; 10:16; 12:21.

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Examine the nature, reasons, and principles of God’s laws, particularly the Ten Commandments.
► Recognize and review the behaviors, attitudes, and effects of living outside one or more of God’s expectations.
► Resolve to harmonize Christian living with God’s expectations.

Preparing to Lead
Is it fair to assume that as children growing up, we cared very little for many of our parent’s rules? Their rules most likely seemed arbitrary, although we never used that word. Perhaps family laws were clear, but often we were not sure that they served a good purpose.

The Israelites may have felt the same about God’s laws. For example, many of them seemed to understand the command to honor the Sabbath. If fresh bread for two days were delivered to your door on Friday so you wouldn’t have to work on the Sabbath, you probably would feel the same way.

However, we feel badly for the Jews who on multiple occasions ignored the rest of God’s expectations. This study reviews not just Israel’s woeful ways but shows us that laws are useful and even rewarding, especially God’s laws.

Getting Started
A. Start with a story that describes an experience involving how someone related to a particular law. The story may be actual or hypothetical, first or third person. End the story by citing the impact or value that incident had on you or on another, but withhold any mention of a moral.

B. Divide the class into approximately three groups. (more if you have a large class.) Have each member in each group do the reproducible activity (p. 36). Then have each group discuss the various answers given by its members. Finally, have volunteers from each group share with the class why they answered the questions as they did.

Delving Into the Word
A. Write the following texts on a whiteboard: Exodus 16:4–30; 20:1–17; Deuteronomy 10:1, 4; 11:8, 9; Matthew 22:37–40; John 13:34, 35; Romans 7:21—8:1–4. After the students silently review each text, have them respond to it by discussing the nature of the law that the text deals with, reasons for the law, and the principle(s) behind it. Then have the students share their per-
sonal response to the law.

B. Have your class form small groups and have each group write two or three laws that would seem appropriate for inclusion in Scripture as if written by Moses, David, or Paul and as modeled in Exodus, Psalms, or Romans. Bibles and concordances could be helpful for this activity. (Or have them create two or three civil laws for the city or country in which they reside. This might include laws that Adventists believe will emerge before the end of time.)

Then discuss the following questions depending on which type of laws they wrote: Why did they choose to write that particular law? How can society benefit from such a law? How can that law help us grow in Christ? How could this law bring about the time of the end? How should Adventists or Christians in general respond to this law?

**Discussing the Ideas**

1. How is it that one believer may find some of God’s laws burdensome while another believer finds them a delight?
2. How would you make a case for the following statement? *One’s attitude about the Lawgiver may change once one complies with the law.*
3. Make a case for the following simile: Laws are like giant hedges built around venomous snake pits.
4. An acquaintance says to you: “The Ten Commandments are no longer in vogue.” How would you answer?
5. What were God’s motives for giving us His laws?
6. What role, if any, does presumption play in predicting how others will keep the laws of the land, including traffic laws?

**Closing the Activity**

Ask for volunteers to finish this sentence: “Today’s study applies to me . . . .”

Next, read the following poem by Michelangelo Buonarroti:

“My unassisted heart is barren clay, / Which of its native self can nothing feed: / Of good and pious works Thou art the seed, / Which quickens only where

Loren Dickinson, College Place, Washington, U.S.A.
Directions: After each member of your group has answered the questions below, share and discuss your answers with each other. Then share and discuss your answers with the rest of the class. (For the true/false questions, state why you chose either true or false.)

1. True or False. The Ten Commandments offer more do’s than don’ts.

2. True or False. The point of God’s Ten Commandments is to help us develop healthy relationships with one another and with Him.

3. True or False. The point of secular laws is to limit certain human behavior.

4. Why did God write the Ten Commandments and not the Eleven Commandments or the Twenty Commandments?

5. Why do you agree or disagree that God’s laws should become a country’s laws?
Lord of the Sabbath

Surveying the Source


Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Understand the importance of the Sabbath and how they can find delight in it.
► Discover three ways they can remember the Sabbath throughout the coming week.
► Give references for three Bible texts that show how they can find joy in the Sabbath.

Preparing to Lead

Psalm 92 “is a liturgical anthem celebrating the destruction of evil and the triumph and happiness of God’s faithful children. The psalm was inspired by the poet’s communion with the Creator on the Sabbath day and his observation of God’s power in nature.”*

As you read Psalm 92 in preparation for teaching this week’s lesson, ask yourself what it teaches us about the Lord of the Sabbath and how this knowledge can enrich our Sabbath keeping.

Getting Started

A. Share the following incident with the class. Then ask how these people could find joy on that particular Sabbath day:

It was a “high” Sabbath with a special Sabbath School, church service, and baptism. As the members and visitors gathered in the gym for potluck, someone noticed that the restrooms were not draining properly. Soon water was flowing under the restroom doors and into the gym. After the youth pastor discovered the cause of the problem, church members worked together to stop the flow, clean up, and call for professional help.

B. Divide your class into groups of three or four. Ask each member to tell the others in their group about a time when they felt that a specific Sabbath was a delight to them.

Then have each group find Bible verses that describe what they can do to make the Sabbath a day of gladness. Have enough concordances for each group to use. Have the groups share their results with the rest of the class.

Delving Into the Word

A. Divide your class into two equal or nearly equal groups. Give one group Part A of the reproducible activity (p. 37) and the other group Part B. Have each...
group appoint a spokesperson to read the questions, take discussion notes, and report to the other group.

After each group has completed its part of the activity, have each spokesperson give his or her report. (Encourage other class members to make comments or ask questions during the reports as they feel inspired to do so.)

B. Divide your class into three groups. Give each group one of the following scenarios to discuss. After an appropriate amount of time, have each group share their scenario and answers with the rest of the class.

1. Lisa’s boyfriend has left her because she is pregnant. She is afraid to return to church because of what others might think of her. For her, the Sabbath is no longer delightful. Using the Bible, how would you encourage Lisa?

2. Jordan is leaving for a military assignment in a part of the world that is plagued by war. How will he be able to find delight in the Sabbath while he is there? What Bible verses would you share with him?

3. Carl and Candy have four children under the age of eight. They are having trouble keeping them quiet in church and don’t know how to help them find delight on their Sabbath afternoons. How can they teach their children that the Sabbath can be a happy day?

Discussing the Ideas

1. What changes can we make in our church service to make it more of a delight for us and for God?

2. Find three texts to help someone understand the delight that is found in the Sabbath.

3. How can you help others in your church to have a more delightful Sabbath experience?

4. Paula, a medical student, faces life and death decisions on a daily basis that affect people and their health. Frequently she is expected to work in the hospital on the Sabbath. In her heart she questions whether or not she should do so. What biblical counsel would you give Paula? If she is called into the hospital on the Sabbath, how can she still make it a delight?

5. Alexia is a cashier at a drug store. How can she “remember” the Sabbath during that week?

6. How should an Adventist teacher respond when a parent tries to hand in a school tuition payment on the Sabbath? How does this affect the teacher’s day of rest.

Closing the Activity

Say: “The first full day of Adam and Eve’s life was the first Sabbath. Imagine them spending this day with the Lord of the Sabbath, who is also their God.

Ask: “How do you think they must have felt that first Sabbath?” “What do you suppose they talked about?” “What questions might they have asked God?”

“What can we personally do to make every Sabbath the first day of the rest of our lives and the Lord of the Sabbath our Lord?”

Close by praying that you and your students will draw ever closer to God, the Lord of the Sabbath, so that each Sabbath will be a day of delight.

Karen Pires, Pendleton, South Carolina, U.S.A.

Part A

What does each text below say about the Sabbath in general? How can we specifically apply these texts to keeping the Sabbath today?

Isaiah 58:12‒14

Ezekiel 20:19‒20

Mark 2:27, 28

Acts 16:13

Acts 7:2, 3

Part B

Answers to the following questions are found in Testimonies, volume 2, pages 582–585 and Testimonies, volume 6, pages 351–368.

Why is it so important to keep the Sabbath holy?

How should we prepare for the Sabbath?

What should we think about during the Sabbath hours?

What activities should we engage in during the Sabbath?

What should Sabbath meetings be like?
Creation Care

Surveying the Source

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Express an understanding of God’s care for the earth as seen in Scripture.
► Demonstrate an understanding that we should care for God’s creation (including the Sabbath) because we want to be like Him.
► Identify why caring for the environment is important even in light of end-time events.

Preparing to Lead
Reflect on what this lesson says about God. Ultimately, His love for Adam and Eve was the reason He put them in the garden—a special place He meant for them to care for. He could have taken care of the garden without their help, but He knew it would be beneficial for them to do so. Caring for the environment is less about what we should do and more about a joyful response to a loving Creator. Pray that God will reveal more about His character to your class.

Getting Started
A. Ask those in the class who have animals to express to the rest of the class how they benefit from caring for them. Connect this with the idea of caring for all of God’s creation.
B. Have the class identify some of the hot-button environmental issues currently being debated. Are some more important than others? If so, why?

Delving Into the Word
A. In several small groups (depending on the size of your class), have everyone work together on the reproducible activity (p. 38). Have each group share some of their responses with the rest of the class. Ask if they have additional comments about God’s character not linked to specific actions.
B. Divide the class into groups. Assign each group one or two of the texts found in Surveying the Source. Have them study the verse(s) in the larger context of the surrounding verses and the chapter. Those who have cross references in their Bibles may also want to refer to these verses. Have each group choose a spokesperson to share with the rest of the class a summary of questions and comments generated by their Bible study. Allow the group at large to respond.
Discussing the Ideas

1. Since we know that the earth “will be destroyed by fire” (2 Pet. 3:10, NIV), why should we take care of it?
2. How might people try to protect the environment in ways that do not glorify God?
3. How is the Garden of Eden connected to the new earth we read about in the book of Revelation?
4. The Sabbath is an important part of God’s creation. In what practical ways does the Sabbath relate to the topic of taking care of God’s creation?
5. Should politics play a role in environmental issues? Why, or why not?
6. Using biblical examples, explain what you think is meant by the word *dominion* in the King James Version of Genesis 1:26.

Closing the Activity

Have class members share in the reading of Psalm 100. Then give each member a sheet of white paper and some markers. Allow time for them to draw a visual representation of the psalmist’s words. Ask for volunteers to share their praises to the Creator God. Consider playing some sacred music in the background that fits the topic.

Christy Yingling Gusse, Conroe, Texas, U.S.A.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scripture References from Logos Article</th>
<th>God’s Actions</th>
<th>What God’s Actions Say about His Character</th>
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<tr>
<td>Genesis 1:26–28</td>
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<td>Genesis 2:15</td>
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<td>Psalm 100</td>
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<td>Romans 1:25</td>
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<td>2 Peter 3:10–14</td>
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The Bible and History

Surveying the Source
Ps. 104:1–9; Daniel 2; Rom. 16:20; 2 Cor. 5:17–19; 2 Pet. 1:21; Rev. 1:1–3; 2:7–17.

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Understand that God is in control regardless of what happens.
► Recognize that they can be God’s agents for change.
► Take the God perspective when they meet difficulties.

Preparing to Lead
The opening two verses of Daniel provide two perspectives on life. Verse 1 gives the human, factual, and historical perspective: Nebuchadnezzar lays siege to Jerusalem. Verse 2 gives the long view, or God’s perspective: God delivers Judah to Nebuchadnezzar. Depending on which perspective we adopt determines how we live and how we relate to negative events in our lives and the world around us.

Getting Started
A. If you have a computer with Internet access, use Google Maps® to call up a street map. Look at it as a normal map, aerial view, and ground level. Alternatively, use a street map and an actual picture of a point on the map. Ask: “What is the difference between the views?” (Answer: Both show the same thing, but from different perspectives.)

Then have someone read Romans 15:4.
Say: “The biblical record of humanity teaches endurance and gives encouragement and hope. When events happen that we do not understand, the Bible teaches us to have endurance, to change our perspective, and to look beyond immediate circumstances to the eternal.”

B. Place an item in a bag, pass it around, and ask people to feel it and guess what it is. (If you have a large class, you may want to have several bags.) Take the item out and show it.
Ask: “What is the difference between knowing it is a [name of item] and seeing it? (Accept responses.) When you see it rather than feel it, you have a different perspective of it.
“The Bible shows events from a human perspective and then lifts the curtain to show God’s perspective. How does this biblical view affect our perspective on life?”

Delving Into the Word
A. With the class, survey Daniel 1 and 2 from the perspective of Daniel’s individual story. On a whiteboard, list the events that placed him in challenging circumstances. For example: being taken captive, placed in the king’s university, given food from the royal table. Have the students discuss what the natural human response to each of these events would be. Ask: (1) “How does
Daniel’s response differ from the normal human responses?” (2) “What motivates them not to be victims and give in?”

Discuss with the class the two world views presented in Daniel 1:1, 2. Ask: “What two perspectives does Daniel introduce?” Say: “There are always two ways of viewing events: the human perspective and God’s perspective. How does this translate into Daniel’s life choices?” Discuss other Bible characters who made life choices that demonstrated their belief that God is in control. Ask what would happen in our lives if we applied the same understanding.

B. Give each student a copy of the reproducible activity (p. 39). Say: “Nebuchadnezzar was given a dream that showed an overview of world history. We’ll be using this activity sheet to review the dream and its meaning.”

After the class has reviewed the dream, say: “Following Daniel’s interpretation of the dream, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God as the Lord of lords (Dan. 2:47). However, his wise men influenced him to build a similar image to represent his kingdom and set it where all might see it.”*

Ask: “What message was he sending by building this golden image and claiming the right to be worshiped?” After this question has been sufficiently discussed, break the class into small groups and discuss the following:

- How did the earlier experiences of Daniel and his friends (not eating the king’s food and interpreting the king’s dream) help them stand firm when it came to worshiping the statue?
- How do their stories help us understand God’s plan for us as individuals and the hope we have for the future?
- What impact does the prophecy of Daniel 2 have on your view of history? How does it affect your future? What other prophecies give you hope?

Close by saying: “Even when everything suggests otherwise, our faith helps us understand that God is in control.”

Discussing the Ideas

1. How would you explain your belief that God is control to a friend who does not believe in God?
2. How does knowing that God has a plan for you as an individual and for the world make it easier to deal with difficult situations?
3. God has chosen to reveal many things through prophecy. What does this tell us about His character and about His attitude toward us?
4. How does your life story help you better understand God’s solution?
5. How does your life story help you better understand God’s solution?

Closing the Activity

Distribute paper and pens or pencils. Have everyone write a word or draw something that symbolizes a problem they are currently facing. Next ask them to reflect on how significant this problem might be in a week’s time, a year’s time, five year’s time, and in God’s time.

Audrey Andersson, Lindesberg, Sweden

*See Prophets and Kings, p. 504, 505.
The Image of Daniel 2
Review Daniel 2 and fill in the missing information in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Sections</th>
<th>Metal</th>
<th>Empire</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
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<td>Head</td>
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<td>Chest/Arms</td>
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<td>Mid-section</td>
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<td>Legs</td>
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<td>Feet</td>
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The Promise of Prayer

Surveying the Source
Matt. 26:34–44; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17; Heb. 11:6; James 4:2.

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Recognize the role of prayer in strengthening their witness and their faith in the Creator.
► Develop the courage to pray bold prayers for themselves and for others.
► Come to see prayer not as a ritual or an academic exercise, but as part of their daily lives.

Preparing to Lead
“The best sword in the world,” writes Pastor Randy Maxwell, “won’t defeat one enemy if the person wielding it isn’t engaged in battle. . . . Without prayer, we are as the Israelite army was when they stood on a mountain facing Goliath and and nowhere to go.”

Prayer is a well-known concept, but an under-utilized power. Encouraging your students to transfer prayer from their basket of ideas to their spiritual tool kit is what this week’s lesson is about.

Getting Started
A. Divide the class into groups. Ask one group to do a “speed art” project and the other to do a “speed writing” exercise. Ask the art group to produce something that illustrates prayer as an act of praise. Ask the writing group to write a psalm containing thanks from group members for answered prayers. Allow 10 minutes for each group to finish their project.

B. Ask the students to think about the balance between faith and surrender as you tell them this true story: “A father prayed constantly for his 20-year-old daughter from the time she was diagnosed with brain cancer. He just ‘knew’ she would get better and fulfill her ambition to become either a doctor or a veterinarian. One day the phone rang, and he learned that she had died. If you had been with the father when he got that message, what would you have told him?”

After hearing their answers, tell them the rest of the story. “Although the Father ‘knew’ God would heal his daughter, he told God that if He chose not to heal her, then he, like the three Hebrew boys in Daniel 3, would ‘not bow down and worship the statue.’ So on hearing the news, he knelt and prayed for strength to carry out that second part of his prayer. This is faith tempered by surrender!”

Delving Into the Word
A. This could be a group or an individual exercise. Distribute the reproducible activity (p. 40). Explain that the purpose of this exercise is to reflect on how we
can talk to God the same way He talks to us. Ask students to read each of the texts in the first column, then indicate in the second column the way in which God is talking to us. In the third column, they are to identify how we can talk to Him in the same way or a similar way. The fourth column may be filled in later if time is limited. Follow this activity with a brief discussion about the importance of communicating with God.

B. This could also be either a group or an individual exercise. Ask students to classify each prayer or type of prayer mentioned in the following texts as either (1) strong and bold or (2) weak and lame: 1 Kings 17:21–24; 1 Kings 18:25–39; 1 Kings 19:2–4; Matthew 14:19–21; Acts 19:13–16; James 1:6, 7; James 4:2, 3; Revelation 22:20 (the last sentence).

**Discussing the Ideas**

1. How do you feel about the idea that God refuses to answer certain prayers? What are some conditions that God places on His promises? [Teacher, prepare yourself by identifying the conditions in these texts beforehand: Exod. 15:26; Prov. 28:9; James 5:14, 15; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 1:9.]

2. How do you reconcile Jesus’ teachings about faith (believing if we pray for something, we will get it) with His teachings and practices regarding surrender to God (“Thy will be done”)? [Teachers, be prepared to reflect on the three Hebrew boys in Daniel 3.]

3. What are some of your favorite Bible promises? Are any of them conditional?

4. How does praying increase your belief in God? How does it make you a better witness? Do bold prayers make you a better believer and witness than lame prayers?

5. If someone sent you an e-mail containing a prayer that he or she says has been proven to “work” once you forward it to 20 people and return it to the sender within 24 hours, how would you respond? Do you think that kind of prayer is meaningful or ritualistic?

6. What things, if any, do you not have because you have not asked? (James 4:2).

7. How did Thursday’s lesson help you remember that worry is futile when God invites you to cast all your cares upon Him because He cares for you (1 Pet. 5:7)?

**Closing the Activity**

Have a student read the part of Monday’s lesson entitled “Prayer Is an Asking Faith.” Then have the class discuss ways they can personally ensure that when they leave class they will not return to a lame or nonexistent prayer life. Examples they can mention include prayer lists, prayer partners, prayer walks, prayer journals, fixed prayer times, and the habit of silent prayers for protection, guidance, etc., as needed at various times. Also mention the idea of “praying right now.” Then have small-group prayers or silent individual prayers. You or a previously designated student should pray to bring the session to a close.

**Frank A. Campbell, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada**


2. The author of this teacher’s guide can personally attest to the accuracy of this story because he is the father.
### Communicating with God the Way He Communicates with Us

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bible Text</th>
<th>How Is God Communicating With His People in This Text?</th>
<th>How Can We Communicate with God in a Similar Way?</th>
<th>What Will You Do About This?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 6:6, 7</td>
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<td>Judges 6:7, 8</td>
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<td>1 Kings 19:9–13</td>
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<td>Nehemiah 8:1–3; Isaiah 8:20</td>
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<td>Psalm 19:1, 7</td>
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God as Artist

Surveying the Source

Gen. 1:26, 27; 1 Chron. 23:5; Ps. 19:1; 51:10; 139:14; Isa. 64:5–8; Acts 9:1–22; Rom. 11:33–36; Heb. 8:1–5.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Sharpen their mind’s eye to find evidence of God’s artistry in both nature and the human body.
► Consider ways in which God’s character might be reflected in young people today.
► Develop a greater appreciation for the beauty in God’s pursuit of humankind.

Preparing to Lead

A popular saying says that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” However, God’s concept of beauty defies this shallow, individualistic approach. Beauty originates with Him. From the beginning, He lavished splendor upon this planet—an act of generosity and love.

In addition to all that, before the first seed of discontent took hold in the heart of an angel, God designed a master plan to recover the lost world. Today we wonder at the images captured by the Hubble Telescope, and marvel at the intricacies of the human brain—all evidence of God’s artistry. Let us also open our hearts and allow the Master Artist to renew His beauty in us.

Getting Started

A. Read Genesis 1—2:2. Have the students cut out images from nature magazines to make a collage on poster board that depicts the six days of Creation. Then ask them to share evidence they have seen of God’s creative power.

B. God outlines His standards for a beautiful Christian character in the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:2–11). Ask students to think of modern representations of these qualities.

Delving Into the Word

A. Divide your class into three groups. Have the first group find a psalm that points to God’s creative power; have the second group find a text in Ecclesiastes that deals with beauty; and have the third group look in the book of John to find a text that best portrays redemption.

Have each group share their Bible passage and explain what it tells them about God. You might need extra Bibles and concordances for this exercise.

B. Use the reproducible activity (p. 41). After the students have completed it, ask them to share which of the stories/texts they personally believe portrays God’s grace and why.
Discussing the Ideas

1. What does God’s beauty consist of? Give texts to back up your answer.
2. Where can we see evidence of God’s love in nature?
3. What are the differences between God’s concept of beauty and our own? Why do these differences exist?
4. How can we best defend God as the Creator of this world? Or do we even need to defend Him?
5. How can our character best emulate God’s character? What part, if any, do we play in such emulation?
6. What part of God’s plan of salvation is most meaningful to you, and why?
7. What, to you, are some human expressions of beauty, and why do you find them beautiful?

Closing the Activity

The lyrics of the hymn “How Great Thou Art” express in a powerful way the role of God as Creator, Artist, and Redeemer. Sing this hymn with your class as a worshipful response to all He has done for us. When finished, allow a moment or two of silence during which they can meditate on the words to this hymn. Close with prayer.

Sandra Araújo-Delgado, Apison, Tennessee, U.S.A.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Bible Text</th>
<th>Person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“‘Surely the Lord is in this place’”</td>
<td>Genesis 28:16 (NIV; also read verses 10–15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“‘Now forgive my sin once more’”</td>
<td>Exodus 10:17 (NIV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“‘the Lord looks at the heart’”</td>
<td>1 Samuel 16:7 (NKJV)</td>
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<td>“Create in me a clean heart”</td>
<td>Psalm 51:10 (NKJV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“‘Though your sins are like scarlet, / They shall be as white as snow’”</td>
<td>Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“We are the clay”</td>
<td>Isaiah 64:8 (NIV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>“‘Then neither do I condemn you’”</td>
<td>John 8:11 (NIV)</td>
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Love Stories

Surveying the Source
Gen. 2:21–25; Exod. 20:5; Isa. 43:4; 62:5; Rom. 5:8; 8:37–39.

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Explore bride and groom as a metaphor for Christ and the church.
► Review the covenant God made with the nation of Israel.
► Understand that God desires a relationship with each one of us.

Preparing to Lead
“Many waters cannot quench love / nor can the floods drown it” (Song of Sol. 8:7, NKJV).
“She walks in beauty, like the night / Of cloudless climes and starry skies, / And all that’s best of dark and bright / Meets in her aspect and her eyes.”* This quarter is about seeing the different attributes of God. Today’s lesson is about the romantic God. The Bible paints a picture of a God who courts us because He desires to have a relationship with us. Any type of wholesome earthly love we experience comes from God because God equals love.

Getting Started
A. Hand out card-making materials to each member of the class. Instruct them to make a card for someone they love. This could be a parent, grandparent, sibling, friend, or a romantic interest. Each card should include at least one text from the Bible that expresses love. Provide concordances or, if there is Internet access, the students can search for appropriate texts online. Have them decorate the cards as they wish and take them with them at the end of class.
B. Say: “Often a bride and a groom will buy each other a present they give to one another on their wedding day. The Bible uses the image of the church being the bride of Christ. Using this analogy, what do you think the bride (the church) and the groom (Christ) would give each other?” Then divide the class in half, or, if you have a large class, divide into groups of 4 to 6. Have half the class brainstorm ideas for a gift Christ could give His bride—the church. Assign the other half to think of things the church could give to the groom—Christ. Have someone from each group record their group’s ideas. Have each group present their ideas to the rest of the class.

Delving Into the Word
A. Ask if anyone knows any lame pickup lines. Two examples are: (1) “Do you believe in love at first sight, or do I have to walk by you again?” (2) “Were you in Pathfinders, because my heart is tied in a knot?”
Say: “God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Now we are waiting for Him to come back to us like a bride waits for her groom. We are in the ‘engagement’ phase, or what Jewish custom referred to as ‘kiddushin’. [Review Thursday’s lesson in the CQ Bible study guide.] The Bible shows how much God loves us and how much He desires us to be in a relationship with Him.”

Next, divide the class into groups of 4 to 6 and have each group look up either the things we do or the things God will do. Then compare the two parts of the covenant with the whole class. Have the following material written on any type of board for them to refer to during this activity: (1) The Part of the Covenant We Do: Exodus 20:2–17; Deuteronomy 5:6–21; 11:1; 12:13; 30:19, 20; (2) The Part of the Covenant God Does: Deuteronomy 6:10,11; 7:13–15; 8:7–9; 11:13–15; 28:9–12.

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Discussing the Ideas

1. If we are in the engagement phase of our relationship with Jesus, what do you think is the proposal?
2. How do you feel about the idea of the church being the bride of Christ. Why do you feel this way?
3. Why do you think the Song of Solomon was included in the biblical canon?
4. How does a relationship with God change or enhance an earthly love relationship?
5. If God is love, how are non-Christians able to have loving relationships?
6. Think of an example of how God has shown His love to you personally.
7. What kind of counsel on love would you give to a young adult couple just starting their first romantic relationship?

Closing the Activity

“A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Eccles. 4:12, NIV). Give each member of the class three pieces of yarn, string, or three pipe cleaners. Explain that one strand represents God. The other strand represents Christ. And the third strand represents the student holding the strands. Have them tie the three strands at one end and make a short braid. Then ask someone to read Ecclesiastes 4:12. Explain that God is the center of all healthy relationships and invite them to take the braided cord with them as a reminder.

Kris Stevenson, Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada

HEAVENLY PICK-UP LINES

Look up the following texts and write the line in the space provided.

Psalm 37:4

Isaiah 40:1

Isaiah 43:4

Jeremiah 29:11

Jeremiah 31:3

Zephaniah 3:17

Romans 8:31

Romans 8:38, 39

Ephesians 1:5

I John 4:16
The Promise of His Return

Surveying the Source


Plotting the Course

The students will:
- Realize that Jesus’ return will put an end to this world’s pain and suffering.
- Acknowledge that Jesus will return once the gospel has been preached to all people and that we have a role to play in spreading the gospel.
- Understand that they must be ready every day for Jesus’ return.

Preparing to Lead

While on earth, Jesus promised that He would soon return to take His people home to live with Him forever. Two thousand years later, with natural disasters tearing apart our world, political unrest, death, heartache, and pain, Jesus’ Second Coming is getting closer every day. He has not forgotten us. Matthew 24:14 says that the gospel must be preached to the whole earth, and then the end will come. We are to be the bearers of this good news. We can give hope to those experiencing all types of pain. We can aid in preparing people for Jesus’ soon return. What a privilege to be able to share the promise that His second coming will once and for all eradicate death, sorrow, pain, and mourning, and that His kingdom of love will reign forever.

Getting Started

A. Play the song “I Can Only Imagine” by Mercy Me. Perhaps someone in your class can play it on the guitar or piano, while the rest of the class sings along. Or you could find a YouTube rendition of it to play. Then Ask: “How does this song make you feel?” “How do you think you will respond when you see Jesus for the first time?” “Does this song give you a yearning for the Second Coming? Explain.”

B. Have students share a time when they excitedly waited for something. Ask: “What feelings did you experience?” “How long did you have to wait?” “What was it like when it actually came?” “Do you have the same feelings about Jesus’ return? Why or why not?”

Delving Into the Word

A. Divide the class up into groups of three or four. Then share with them the following scenario: “There is a young woman in your community whose husband has just passed away from cancer. She has three children, one of which has recently been diagnosed with leukemia. Just last night she received a phone call that her best friend was killed in a car accident. This woman is at a breaking
point and feels that life could not get any worse. These circumstances have caused her to ask if there really is a God, and if there is, how long will He let the pain and suffering continue.”

Next, using the messages in the following Bible texts, have each group write a conversational script between them and this woman which would encourage her in the hope of the soon coming of Jesus. Have each group present their script in drama form to the rest of the class. Here are the texts: Matthew 24:7, 12; John 14:1–4, 18; Romans 8:35–39; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 1:6, 7; Revelation 21:4.

B. Have someone read Matthew 24:14. Ask: “What does this verse say needs to happen before Jesus’ return? (Answer: the gospel must be preached to all people.)

Say: “God calls upon us to preach the gospel. 2 Peter 3:9 says that God is being patient until He returns because He does not want anyone to be lost. We need to take the good news of Jesus to our community before Jesus comes.”

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Have each group form an action plan stating how they can share the good news of Jesus to their friends, family, and surrounding community. Have them base this plan on the following texts: Matthew 5:14–16; 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; Acts 2:42, 45–47; 4:32; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.

When all the groups are done, have them share their plans with the others.

Discussing the Ideas

1. Do you think the current state of the world is a reflection of Jesus’ soon return? Why or why not?
2. Is there anything in your life that you want to change before Jesus returns? If so, what is it, and how can you make this a reality?
3. What specific moment/s in your life caused you to wish that Jesus would return quickly?
4. What aspects of Jesus’ return frighten you, and why?
5. Do you think your community is ready for Jesus’ return? Why or why not?
6. What will be the first question you ask Jesus when you see Him?
7. Explain why you think your church might be lethargic to the reality of Jesus’ soon return. What can be done to wake up church members?

Closing the Activity

Give each student a red, blue, or green felt-tipped pen and the portion of the reproducible activity that matches his or her color pen (p. 43). When they are finished with the activity, have them share their answers.

Close with a prayer that each student will be ready for Jesus’ soon return and that they will do all they can to ensure that their friends, family, and community have heard the Good News.

Amy Turner, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia
Application Sentences

Give each student who has a red felt-tipped pen one of the following unfinished application sentences. Give a small amount of time for each person to reflect on their unfinished sentence.

The thing that excites me most about Jesus’ return is. . . .

The thing that excites me most about Jesus’ return is. . . .

The thing that excites me most about Jesus’ return is. . . .

The thing that excites me most about Jesus’ return is. . . .

Give each student who has a green felt-tipped pen one of the following unfinished application sentences. Give a small amount of time for each person to reflect on their unfinished sentence.

The Bible verse that challenges me the most is. . . .

The Bible verse that challenges me the most is. . . .

The Bible verse that challenges me the most is. . . .

The Bible verse that challenges me the most is. . . .

Give each student who has a blue felt-tipped pen one of the following unfinished application sentence. Give a small amount of time for each person to reflect on their unfinished sentence.

Knowing of Jesus’ soon return changes the way I. . . .

Knowing of Jesus’ soon return changes the way I. . . .

Knowing of Jesus’ soon return changes the way I. . . .

Knowing of Jesus’ soon return changes the way I. . . .