

# Rules or Relationship

By Nance Keyes

for use as  
**STEP 1**

**Lesson 2****Focus:**

God gives us a special day to enjoy Him!

**Lesson 2****Bible Basis:**

Exodus 20:8-11;  
Matthew 12:1-15

**Lesson 2****Memory Verse:**

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”  
—Exodus 20:8

**Students will distinguish between following rules on the Sabbath and enjoying a relationship that desires a Sabbath time with God.**

**Materials:**

Internet access

Different states and churches within states are adopting various policies about meeting together on Sundays during the pandemic. Be sure to embrace what your church leaders have decided as they have done so after prayer and consideration. Adapt the following to fit your group’s experiences.

Read the following list of actual laws to your students:

1. It is against the law for a man to knit during the fishing season (New Jersey)
2. Law forbids eating in a place that is on fire (Illinois)
3. It’s forbidden to fish while sitting on a giraffe’s neck (Illinois)
4. Horses may not be kept in bathtubs (South Carolina)
5. One may not dye a duckling blue and offer it for sale unless more than six are for sale at once (Kentucky)

➤ **So what are your thoughts on these laws? Can you think of any good reasons that these rules became laws that people should live by?** (Encourage your students to discuss why the laws seem good or bad, whether they serve any value, and why they might have been important at one time.)

Have your students think of some rules that might have reason behind them during the COVID-19 pandemic but might not make any sense 50 to 75 years from now. Example: It is against the law to wear a purple mask if you are under 65 years of age (perhaps in a pandemic world masks become color coded to identify persons at greater risk). Let your students have fun with this.

Read one last law to your students:

6. It’s illegal to sell a car on a Sunday (several states)

Explain that the law about not selling a car on Sunday is a type of Blue Law. **“Blue Laws” were moral laws that used to be honored in our country. Under these laws, people didn’t work on Sundays and stores didn’t open on Sundays. Sundays were set aside for religious activities. There are still a few states that have some type of Blue Laws such as not selling a vehicle on a Sunday.**

Share the following video [2:46]:

Sunday Blue Laws - CNN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyWmZSziHrM>

➤ **The Blue Laws have been around for decades. Why do some consider these laws to be old fashioned?** (Answers will vary.)

➤ **What do you think about keeping the Blue Laws in places where they are still present?** (Encourage your students to discuss pros and cons of keeping/doing away with these laws.)

➤ **Do you think Blue Laws make people concentrate more on God on Sundays or more on the rules? Explain your answer.**

**Blue Laws in America were put in place to set aside Sundays for religious activities. Certain activities were allowed, and certain activities were forbidden. Today we are going to learn about the true meaning of God’s command to keep the Sabbath, a day that isn’t necessarily about rules.**

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher’s guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

# Rules or Relationship

for use as  
**STEP 4** 

**Lesson 2****Focus:**

God gives us a special day to enjoy Him!

**Lesson 2****Bible Basis:**

Exodus 20:8-11;  
Matthew 12:1-15

**Lesson 2****Memory Verse:**

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”  
—Exodus 20:8

**Materials:**

- Internet access
- Index cards
- Paperclip or rubber band
- Pens/pencils

As we learned today, setting aside time for God is about our relationship with God, not about rules we have to follow. We don’t need Blue Laws in order to keep Sunday—or any day—special for God. We need a heart that wants to obey God’s command. We need a desire to be in a relationship with the God who wants to be in a relationship with us.

Let’s prepare to set aside a special Sabbath time this week. Plan to make time when you won’t have to rush to be somewhere else and when you have finished anything your parents may have asked you to do. This time should be all about your relationship with God.

Make sure your students have access to index cards, pens/pencils, and a paperclip or rubber band. As you ask the following questions, ask your students to write down their favorite ideas on the index cards (they can write one idea or multiple ideas on the front and back of the cards, but they should leave room for notes and comments to be added later). Once they have finished, instruct them to keep the index cards together with the paperclip or rubber band.

➤ **What kind of things might we do in a Sabbath time?** (As your students give answers, write them on the whiteboard. Encourage them to think outside the box. In addition to prayer, reading God’s Word, praise, worship, etc., ask them to consider stargazing to reflect on how big and creative God is, taking a nature walk with Jesus, writing Him a poem, playing a Bible game with other family members, and so forth.)

When it’s time for your Sabbath with God, shuffle your cards and pick one. When you’ve completed that activity with God, mark down the date and any special thoughts or comments you have about that time together. Return the card to the rest of the deck; you may want to repeat that same relationship-building activity with Him again—soon!

Challenge your students to be prepared to share how they spent their Sabbath time with God when

you meet again.

Close in prayer, asking God to help you and your students keep your personal Sabbaths with Him, learning to enjoy Him in new ways that build your relationship with Him.

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