

239.1: Sabbath and Sacred Time (D&C Gospel Doctrine Lesson 16, Updated)
“Thou Shalt ... Offer Up Thy Sacraments upon My Holy Day”

Manual Goal: To help class members strengthen their desire to keep the Sabbath day holy.

EGD Goal: (But what does the manual goal MEAN?) To help class members understand what the Sabbath is and the benefits of observing it so that they can rest and be renewed.

Outline

- I. Framing
- II. Discussion of new resources
- III. Productive Sunday Schooling
 - a. What is the Sabbath?
 - b. Why is the Sabbath important?
 - c. What should we do on the Sabbath?
 - d. The Sabbath, balance, and renewal
- IV. Lesson: Sabbath as a sacred reset and renewal
 - a. Full episode points (History of Sabbath, discussion of assigned passages, discussion of the sacrament)
 - i. Sabbath for rest: The value of doing nothing (sleep isn't nothing)
 - ii. Sabbath as ritual (Evaluate the past week, take inventory, plan for next week)
 - iii. Sabbath for renewal (Choose activities that nourish yourself and relationships)
 1. Create, use your hands, cook, art, listen to music, etc)
 - iv. Put all these together and you have a powerful recipe for wellness
- V. Conclusion

Framing

Talk about sacred time and the importance of organizing our day and week and year to renew us, remind us of our values. We do this in the Church without thinking about it. Have you ever noticed that “holiday” is a contraction of “holy day”? (Not that our holidays usually are, each one having its own theme candy)

Discussion of new resources

Lesson 16: “Thou Shalt . . . Offer Up Thy Sacraments upon My Holy Day”

- “The Journey of the Colesville Branch”: This article gives context for the revelation now known as Doctrine and Covenants 59. D&C 59 includes words of comfort for Polly Knight, Joseph Knight Sr.’s wife who died shortly before the saints arrived in Missouri.
“Our Living Room Became the Sacrament Hall”: This two-minute video describes how Saints in Ghana kept the Sabbath at a time when the government banned formal Latter-day Saint meetings. I appreciate how this resource demonstrates the flexibility of worship.

On June 14, 1989, the government of Ghana banned all LDS Church activities in the country. This ban became known as the “freeze.” Meetinghouses were locked up, and foreign missionaries were sent home. Without a place to meet and with no indication of if or when the freeze would end, members worried about the future.

In response to the freeze, Church leaders authorized members in Ghana to hold sacrament meetings in their homes. Families met together, often including in their meetings others who lacked confidence to worship on their own. The Church in Ghana functioned at the family level.

Charlotte Acquah, describing the small meetings held in the home with her husband, William, and their children, said: “We dressed in our Sunday best as though we were going to church. We sang a hymn. He blessed the sacrament and passed it around as though we were in church. And we really felt the Spirit.”

- “Revelation, 7 August 1831 [D&C 59]”: This page from the Joseph Smith Papers website gives an in-depth historical introduction for Doctrine and Covenants 59. Hmm, gotta appreciate the 19th century Northern/Southern prejudice. And I doubt Sabbath observance was among the biggest differences... That said, this resource presents helpful context for D&C 59. These details help Church history feel more accessible.

Productive Sunday Schooling

What is the Sabbath?

What does “Sabbath” mean? The Hebrew verb “Shabbat” means to pause or rest. I don’t think it means doing nothing however. I know that for many of us, Sundays are very busy! Sunday is a rest from our normal way of moving through the world. It can be busy and even challenging, but hopefully differently, the way we rest one muscle group by working out another.

What is sacred:

“Sacred” refers to those aspects of life bigger than our ability to engage with rationally. The Sacred is powerful. The Sacred is bigger than we are. Because it is bigger than we are, interacting with it leads to unintended consequences. Because it is bigger than we are, we must interact with it carefully, even ritually. Because it is bigger than we are, these interactions will move and even transform us.

What is sacred time:

Sacred time happens when we put aside our normal day-to-day routine and engage differently with ourselves and others.

Why is the Sabbath important?

What should we do on the Sabbath?

Discussion: How can we make the Sabbath (Sunday) different, meaningful, renewing? I don’t think a list of don’s or do’s is as helpful as targeting outcomes: Rest. Ritual. Renewal.

The Sabbath, balance, and renewal

Lesson: Sabbath as a sacred reset and renewal

Full episode points (History of Sabbath, discussion of assigned passages, discussion of the sacrament)

Sabbath for rest: The value of doing nothing (sleep isn’t nothing)

Sabbath as ritual (Evaluate the past week, take inventory, plan for next week)

Sabbath for renewal (Choose activities that nourish yourself and relationships)

Create, use your hands, cook, art, listen to music, etc)

Put all these together and you have a powerful recipe for wellness

Conclusion

https://www.amazon.com/This-Day-Collected-Sabbath-Poems/dp/1619024365/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_img_0?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=1A4EGTGKVOV60JXFM92R

https://www.amazon.com/24-Prescription-Healthier-Happier-Life/dp/1414372280/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

<https://www.amazon.com/Sabbath-Practices-Dan-Allender-PLLC/dp/0849946042>

Need for the Sabbath, how to make it meaningful

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1994/04/remember-the-sabbath-day?lang=eng>

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/2001/04/call-the-sabbath-a-delight-isa-5813?lang=eng>

Let's bring out those Handbook quotes again.

Thanks to Jason:

Handbook 2: 19.1.1

A person must be called of God to serve in the Church (see Articles of Faith 1:5). Leaders seek the guidance of the Spirit in determining whom to call. They consider the worthiness that may be required for the calling. They also consider the member's personal or family circumstances. Each calling should benefit the people who are served, the member, and the member's family.

Although service in Church callings requires sacrifice, it should not compromise a member's ability to fulfill family and employment responsibilities (see 17.2.1). Before calling a married person to an assignment that requires a significant time commitment, Church leaders consider the effect of the calling on the marriage and family.

17.2.1

Family Circumstances

When extending callings, scheduling leadership meetings, and planning activities, leaders consider the family circumstances of members. Church service and participation always entail a measure of sacrifice. However, strong families are vital to the Church, and members should not be asked to make excessive family sacrifices to serve or to support programs or activities.

One family circumstance to consider is the Church calling(s) held by a member's husband or wife. Individual families should not be overburdened with Church responsibilities. Another circumstance to consider is the overall time demands that members face in supporting their families and taking care of other personal matters. In some areas of the world, members of necessity work two or three jobs. These are legitimate considerations for leaders to weigh in extending callings, scheduling leadership meetings, and planning activities.