

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 3 • Unit 2 • Week 4

GOD IS CHANGING US

OBJECTIVE:

To should show that God is changing the people that He calls into His church. God has a method of changing the evil heart and mind of humans to become like Him—to be like the God of love and sometime in the future to be in the family of God.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Can a lion change from what he is? A lion hunts for his food. He stalks and chases the more defenseless type of animals. He eats the more gentle animals. The lion survives by chasing weaker animals.

Question: Can anyone tell us how safe it would be to pet a great large roaring lion that had just escaped from his cage? [Allow response.]

Animals cannot learn to read or write. You cannot put a group of lions in a classroom and teach them not to chase, catch and eat a deer. You cannot teach them to eat grass or leaves. You cannot teach them to lie down peacefully beside a sheep, except perhaps for a zoo or circus show.

Animals were created with instinct—that means they do not think and plan what to do. They are like computers.

But what about humans? Could you teach a schoolyard bully to be nice and kind? Is it possible for him to learn to help people instead of hurt them?

Question: Can anyone tell us how we could change a bully and make him nice? [Allow response.]

We will now see what God can do to change a bad person and train him to be in the family of God.

BIBLE LESSON:

There was a time when humans, animals, insects and plant life were all in harmony with the way of God. The way of God is a way of not biting, not stinging, not poisoning, not hitting and not killing. The way of God is inspired and influenced by the Spirit of God, which is a spirit of love. It is a spirit of being nice and helpful. The Spirit of God is a spirit of giving life.

There came a time when Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God and then the earth was cursed. At that time many of the animals became wild and ferocious and insects began to bite and sting. Sin brings a curse upon people who sin. The sin of humans also causes the earth to be under this curse.

Under the influence of Satan and his demons, man began to be jealous, selfish, hateful and mean. Some men then began to mistreat other men.

People fight and kill and steal and lie because the nature of man has been influenced by Satan the devil. Satan began with Eve. He deceived her and talked her into disobeying God. From that time until this very day all humans have sinned in some way against God. Jesus is the only human who never sinned.

God created humans with a different mind than that of the animals. Man must learn everything. People are not programmed like a computer, they don't have the kind of instinct that animals have. People can learn to be nice and people can also learn to be bad and hateful. All humans have learned to be a bit nice and also they have learned to be a bit bad and hateful. Man can learn to fight, kill, steal and lie.

But God has a way to change humans to become like Him and have His nature of giving so that in the future men and women can be in His family. We will see that God has a way to help people become like His Spirit of love and to delete, or remove, the training from Satan of jealousy, selfishness and hate. Every person can choose to do right or wrong—good or bad. But under the influence of Satan, humans can not make a permanent change.

When God begins to bring a person into His Church and finally into His family, there is a method He uses to help that person change and put away the bad training from Satan. God begins to show him through personal Bible study and teaching at church services that he needs to repent of sinning. That means he must ask God to forgive him and then work very hard not to sin again.

Question: Can anyone tell us about a teaching in the Bible that shows us what sin is? [Allow response.]

Once a person asks God to forgive him of disobeying the commandments then he asks the minister to baptize him. After baptism, the minister lays hands on him and asks God to give the Holy Spirit to him. This Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. It is the spirit of love. It is the spirit of being nice and helpful and giving.

When this Holy Spirit from God enters a human it becomes a helper spirit to the life spirit in that person. The Holy Spirit then helps train the person to be like God so that he can be in God's family. The

person begins to build godlike character. All of God's children will have His character of love.

Question: Can anyone give an example of God's love that we are to be learning? [Allow response.]

We will now look at a person in the Bible who began changing after he received God's Holy Spirit. In Matthew 26 we read about the time of Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus was telling the disciples about His death and that they would all forsake Him, run away and hide. Peter said to Jesus that even if everyone else abandoned Christ, he wouldn't. Jesus said to Peter, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me [say that you do not know Me] three times."

When the Roman soldiers came and took Jesus, all of the disciples were so afraid that they ran away and hid. Before the night was over Peter had told three people that he did not know Jesus and then the rooster crowed. Peter did not have God's Holy Spirit to help him to not be afraid and to trust in God.

Question: How do you think Peter felt after the rooster crowed and he realized he had denied knowing Jesus? [Allow response.]

In Acts 2 we read that the Holy Spirit was sent from God into all of Jesus' disciples. Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 4 we read of the boldness of Peter. He was no longer afraid because the Holy Spirit had helped him to change. [Read the highlights of Acts 4:1-22.]

First, we find that before receiving God's Holy Spirit, Peter was so afraid of what the soldiers might do to him that he denied knowing Jesus three times. Then after he received the Holy Spirit he was very brave. He was even put in prison. He was bold enough to speak to the Jewish leaders to defend Jesus. Peter was changing with the help of God's Holy Spirit.

We can also change with the help of God's Holy Spirit to have God's attitude of love and giving in us. Because you are children of members of God's Church, you have the opportunity to be in touch with God. God's Spirit will be helping you if you seek to obey God.

Question: What are some things that people change in their lives to become more like God? [Allow response.]

There is another time coming when the earth will be a beautiful garden and all humans and animals and insects and plants will be in harmony with the Spirit of God. People will change with the help of God's Holy Spirit and the family of God will be filled with God's love.

LESSON APPLICATION:

We will now make a rooster. [How to make the rooster is up to the teacher. Here are some ideas to consider: You can have the students make a rooster out of clay. You can have them glue colored tissue paper on a construction paper drawing of a rooster. You can let them draw and color a rooster.]

The rooster reminded Peter that he had failed to trust in God. It can remind us also that we need to allow God's Spirit to help us. Because we are children of members of God's Church then we can have faith in God.

Music:

This song is taken from the United Church of God hymnal (p. 16).

FOR EVEN FROM MY YOUTH, O GOD

For even from my youth, O God, by You have I been taught;
And hitherto I have declared the wonders You have wrought.
And now O God, forsake me not, when I am old and gray;
Till I proclaim Your wondrous deeds to this and every age.

MEMORY SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 71:17 "O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works."

family activity

THE POINT:

Satan the devil has trained humans through his evil influence to be jealous, selfish, hateful and mean. God has a method of helping the people He calls into His Church to change. With the help of God's Holy Spirit people can change and have God's spirit of love and giving.

ASK ME...

How much do human babies know when they are born?

What causes people to fight, kill, steal and lie?

How do people learn to love and give?

What will the family of God be like?

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

Talk about the kingdom of God and how the earth will be when God's government is here. Discuss the family of God and the godly character each member will have. Allow the children to ask all their questions.

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalm 71:17 "O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works."