



SABBATH SCHOOL

For Life

FOCUS

Sabbath School (SS) is an ideal environment for spiritual growth, relationship building and mission impact. This Sabbath School framework takes members and visitors alike on an exciting and intentional journey of becoming more like Jesus in every way.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Talk to your pastor, Sabbath School Superintendent and church board about using this suggested model for an existing or new Sabbath School (SS) class.
2. Once you have the support of your local church, take two weeks to pray daily over this new SS class direction - for:
NEW CLASS: Pray about who to share the concept with and invite to join the new class. Pray for God to prepare their hearts to join this new and exciting Sabbath School project.
EXISTING CLASS: Pray for wisdom on how to share the concept and for the receptiveness of members to embrace this new direction for the class.
3. Share concept with potential participants.
4. When you have a small core group ready to go , set a start date – ideally the beginning of a new quarter.
5. Where possible think of participants who live closer to each other allowing greater interaction during the week.



MISSIONAL

SABBATH SCHOOL MODEL

[Based on class time of 45-60 minutes]

1. Welcome
2. Loving Others
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Care
 - c. Share
3. Loving God
 - a. Ask
 - b. Analyse
 - c. Apply
4. Prayer

WELCOME: 1-2 MINUTES

Welcome participants and new members. Share/introduce each other and outline the structure of the lesson (useful when starting a new class or for visitors).

LOVING OTHERS: 15-21 MINUTES

The first component of 15-21 minutes provides opportunities to grow closer together as a Sabbath School group and reach out to others in the community.

1. PRAYER: 5-7 MINUTES

- a. Pray specifically for the salvation of others that group members know (family, friends, colleagues, neighbours)
- b. Short, focused prayers
- c. Keep a diary/journal/record of people being prayed for
- d. Review names and answered prayers each Sabbath
- e. Keep praying for these people, add new names as well
- f. Keep an empty chair in class as a reminder of the person you are praying for
- g. You can also use this time to pray specifically for church members not attending SS – for God to impress upon them the value of participating in this missional SS and that they might attend regularly and punctually



2. CARE: 5-7 MINUTES

- a. Discuss and plan how to support each other and grow closer together as a family

ASSISTANCE – Anything practical we can do to help each other?

Examples: Garden/home maintenance, child-minding, transport

SOCIAL – What can we do/celebrate together?

Examples: Birthdays, anniversaries, Sabbath afternoon lunch/picnics, Sunday BBQ's, public holidays, any opportunity to spend time getting to know each other

- b. Use this time to identify activities, locations, dates and logistics (who is doing/bringing/organizing what and when?)

3. SHARE: 5-7 MINUTES

- a. Discuss and plan simple ways to show the love of Jesus to others
- b. Ideally these are small, personal activities to serve those in the community and build better relationships with them

EXAMPLE QUESTION – Do you have any friends, neighbours, colleagues we can support as a group in any way?

EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- *Help an elderly person or single parent with domestic/ maintenance jobs around the house.*
- *Prepare meals/hamper for those in need or going through crisis.*
- *Child-minding for a single-parent*
- *Mentor/socialise with at-risk youth*
- *Provide financial assistance with utility bills for someone in crisis*

- c. Use this time to identify needs and delegate group members to lead and participate in the initiative





PRAYER

CARE

SHARE



LOVING GOD: 30-45 MINUTES

The second component involves studying the Bible in a meaningful and practical manner.



1. ASK: 5 MINUTES

- a. Start the conversation with an opening question that engages every single person in the group

Relate the question to the theme of the week's lesson but something that will encourage people to share their personal experiences

EXAMPLE — If the lesson was on Jesus' parable of the Lost Sheep, you could ask something like: "Tell us about a time you were lost or lost something of value?"

- b. Look for creative, sensory ways to involve all participants in sharing

EXAMPLES

- *Throw a snack bar to a random participant and ask them to answer first, they then throw the snack bar to another random person to share – the last person to share gets to keep the snack bar*
- *Invite members to re-organize themselves based on birth day/month (not year) – and then ask them to answer the question in this order*
- *Sticky notes under each chair with numbers/letters – share in numerical alphabetical order (or reverse)*

- c. The purpose of this segment is to:

- Connect spiritual lessons about to be explored with real life experiences
- Encourage all participants to engage in the discussion – when a participant has shared at least once, it makes it easier and more likely they will continue to engage in the rest of the discussion
- It sets the tone for a group discussion rather than a sermon or monologue



2. ANALYSE: 20-35 MINUTES

- a. Explore one key Bible passage from the week's lesson in depth
 - Read passage together
 - Exegete passage
 - Who wrote it?
 - When did they write it?
 - Who were they writing it to?
 - Why was this passage written?
 - What was the world of the author/recipient like? Cultural, religious, economic, geographical context?
 - What was happening in the world/community/life of both the author and recipient at the time?
 - Further questions:
 - What does this passage reveal about the character of God?
 - What does this passage suggest about human nature?
 - What does this passage highlight about God's will for us?
 - What similarities are there between the experiences/context of the author/recipient and ours today?
 - How can we translate the lessons intended for the original recipients to our lives today?
- b. The purpose of this component is to:
 - Gain greater insights in to the context of a Biblical passage
 - Appreciate similarities and differences between the world/life of the original recipients and us today
 - Explore how Biblical truths from history apply to our lives today
 - Discover practical applications from Biblical insights





3. APPLY: 5 MINUTES

- a. Provide suggestion for practical application from what has been discussed

EXAMPLES

- I will pray for...
 - I will spend 5 minutes with God in Bible study each day
 - I will do a random act of kindness for a work colleague
 - I will share a book/DVD with a friend/colleague/neighbour
 - I will go for a walk 3 days this week
 - I will read a book on...
- b. Encourage accountability. Ask: "Who will keep you accountable for applying what you have learnt"?
- c. The purpose of this segment is to:
- Link learning with real life
 - Encourage personal, spiritual, communal growth now (this week)
 - Provide an opportunity to develop a culture of spiritual accountability – just as Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs
 - Enable Sabbath School to be a life-changing experience rather than purely a theoretical/theological discussion

PRAYER:

Finish with prayer asking for divine guidance and support to apply what was learnt.





RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a. Look for opportunities to disciple group members:
 - Delegate/rotate members to lead out discussion for each of the “Loving Others” segment
 - Delegate/rotate leadership in activities as well (e.g. fellowship gatherings, community service, etc)
 - Mentor members in the “Loving God” segment by:
 - Delegating/rotating members to teach/lead
 - Coach/Train: Lesson preparation, leading an effective group discussion, and choosing another person to mentor
 - Short de-brief/feedback after lesson/church on Sabbath School experience
- b. Personal preparation both spiritually and in relation to the Bible passage/theme to be discussed is essential
 - Download ‘The Journey’ personal preparation guide from www.disciple.org.au/resources
- c. Group size
 - Aim for 12-15 max
 - When group gets bigger, look for opportunities to multiply (by geographic residence may be helpful)



www.disciple.org.au

