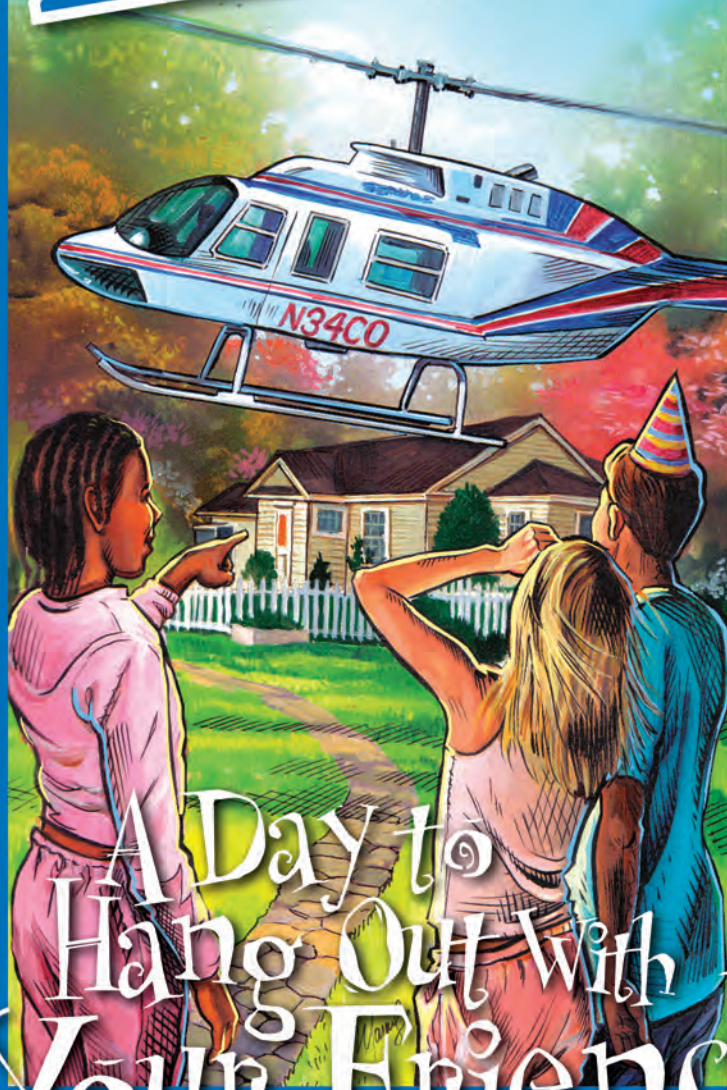


KidZone

Guide 11



A Day to
Hang Out With
Your Friend

“Hey, Josh, want to come to my birthday party next Sunday?”

“Absolutely! I wouldn’t miss it.” Josh knew that Randall’s birthday parties were not-to-be-missed extravaganzas. Who could forget Randall’s party last year, when an ice cream delivery truck had shown up loaded to capacity with every flavor and every kind of ice cream bar you could imagine—and you could pick your favorite? And then there was the year Randall’s parents had the presents delivered in a helicopter.

“We’re going to rent Kongo Kingdom before it even opens!” Randall explained.

“You’re kidding! You mean we’ll have the roller coaster all to ourselves?”

“And the Super Slide and the Tea Twister and the Gravity Grabber and the—well, at least until the park opens at eleven that morning.”

“Too cool!”

Josh was so pumped about the party he could hardly sleep that night. Not only did Randall host the best parties in town, he was also Josh’s closest buddy. When Josh’s parents divorced, Randall had come to the rescue and offered the support of a true friend. If it weren’t for Randall, Josh was sure he would have flunked English class last year. And it was Randall who showed up when Josh’s grandpa died. For Josh, there was no one he’d rather spend a day with than Randall.

For Jesus, there’s no one He’d rather spend a day with than you. That’s because He is the closest Friend you could





ever have. Jesus invites you to a weekly party—like a special birthday party—just to spend time with Him.

This special day is called the Sabbath. It's the time Jesus has set aside to spend with His special friends.

Why Sabbath matters

God says He gave us the Sabbath to be a “sign” between Him and us (Ezekiel 20:12). It's sort of like when

you share something special between just you and your best friend. Jesus wants to be your best Friend, so each week He gives you His own day—twenty-four hours—to spend with Him. The Sabbath is a special sign between Him and you that He has saved you and is changing your life.

1. The Sabbath is so important to God that He included it in the Ten Commandments. Read the fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8–11). What does God ask us to do—and not do—in this commandment?

DO:	DON'T DO:

Isn't it interesting how people often forget the one commandment that Jesus said to “remember”? Read verse 10

again and notice which day of the week the Lord commanded us to observe.

2. What day is that?

If you look at most calendars, you'll see that Sunday is the first day of the week. Saturday is the seventh day of the week. This weekly pattern hasn't changed since creation. Like your birthday, the seventh day is a specific date. God's Sabbath has always been celebrated on the seventh day as a memorial of creation. This means that the seventh day, Saturday, is God's Sabbath. In many languages, the word for Saturday is Sabbath, such as the word *Sábado* in Spanish.

3. Read Genesis 2:1-3. What did God do on the seventh day of creation week?

God made the Sabbath when He made our world. He rested on the seventh day. He blessed it (made it a day with special benefits for us) and made it holy (set it aside for a special spiritual use). It's a memorial of Creation—both of God's power to create our world and also His power to create a new life in us. He asks us to worship Him on the seventh-day Sabbath and to keep it holy.

So why do so many people go to church on Sunday, the first day of the week, instead? After all, the Bible doesn't say anything about the Sabbath being changed to a different day. Jesus and His disciples didn't change the day. History tells us that it was church and government leaders who decided to have people worship on Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath. Some examples are the Roman leader Constantine and the church councils a number of years after Jesus' death.

There are at least three good reasons why keeping the Sabbath holy is an ideal way for Jesus' friends to express their love and loyalty to Him.

1. The Sabbath is the ideal response to what Jesus has done

Think about what Jesus has done. He took your punishment for sin. He has a free gift that He wants to give you. This free gift means you never have to worry about being good enough to go to heaven.

Your part in receiving this free gift— a new life— from Jesus is to believe that Jesus has really saved you. Accept the fact that He has forgiven you. He has given you an entirely new and changed life.

Jesus gives you what you can never earn— a right standing with God.



4. Read Ephesians 2:13. Write the words that describe how close we were to God before and after Jesus' death.

BEFORE:	AFTER:

Nothing we do can add to what Jesus has done. His death on the cross makes us friends with God again.

The Sabbath is the ideal response to this gift. When God finished His work at Creation, He created the Sabbath for rest.

The Sabbath reminds us to rest from our impossible struggle to be good enough to be saved and to stop trying to earn our right to heaven. Every week God places before us the gift of the Sabbath as a reminder to rest. Just enjoy being with your Friend, Jesus.

2. The Sabbath is an ideal test of loyalty to God

Justin's Boy Scout troop posted its rules:

Rule 1: No firearms or explosives allowed at any Boy Scout activity.

Rule 2: Lock the gymnasium if you're the last one to leave.

Rule 3: Pay your monthly dues.

Rule 4: Attend all meetings.

Rule 5: Wear your uniform to all events.

Justin understood why they had all the rules. Except one. He understood why firearms and explosives were banned. He had seen enough terrorist bomb explosions on television news reports. He knew the damage they created.

And Rule 2 made sense. What Boy Scout couldn't remember the time George forgot to lock the back door and the gym was vandalized by neighborhood hoodlums? Right down the list—all the rules made sense. Except one.

"Why do we have to wear these crazy uniforms?" Justin asked the scoutmaster.

"Because it's a symbol of your loyalty to Boy Scouts," Mr. Nate responded.

In the same way, the Sabbath is a symbol of our loyalty to God. All of the Ten Commandments make sense and should be followed. Even non-Christians believe that people shouldn't steal or kill or lie. Almost everyone observes nine of God's Ten Commandments. But only a few keep the fourth commandment.



Of what value, then, is the fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day"? It shows unquestioned loyalty to God.

Researchers have learned that humans function best when they take one day in seven to rest and relax. But why the seventh day specifically? Only because God says so. We obey because God is a personal Friend in whom we can fully trust. And that's all the logic His true followers need.

3. The Sabbath is the ideal symbol of following Jesus all the way

Jesus kept the Sabbath (see Luke 4:16). He set an example for His followers.

A writer named Rosa Veal tells of meeting Ruby Free, a remarkable woman with a secret. “I met her when she was conducting a Holy Land tour. ‘She must have a secret,’ I said to myself enviously. ‘How else can she accomplish so much, so easily?’ She was a good listener, a troubleshooter, an organizer, and a mother-hen to seventy-two tourists—yet she was never tired.

“Then I visited Ruby. And I think I discovered her secret. There it was—a two-word motto over her sink: ‘Yes, Lord.’ ”

That’s a great motto for all of God’s followers. “Yes, Lord.” Because they enjoy a close friendship with Him, their prayer will be: “Since Jesus kept the Sabbath and wants me to follow His example, then, ‘Yes Lord!’ ”

Talking to God

*Dear Father, I choose to follow
Your example and keep your
Sabbath holy. Whatever You ask
me to do, my answer is: “Yes,
Lord!” In Jesus’ name, Amen.*



kidZone

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