**Healing a Woman on the Sabbath**

**Aim:**  To look at why we have rules, and what the purpose of the Sabbath is

**Occasion:** Ordinary 21

**Scripture: Luke 13:10-17**

**Game: (for the older children) hospital tag   
Preparation:** nothing!   
**What to do:** This is exactly like a normal game of tag except that wherever a person gets tagged e.g. on their arm, that part of their body is to go ‘numb’ and they can’t use it anymore.

So if you tag a person’s legs, then they will have to crawl around on the floor without using their legs. This game ends when everyone is rolling around on the floor laughing coz no one can move!

**Game: (for the younger children) stuck in the mud   
Preparation:** nothing!   
**What to do:** Choose one or two children to be in. Whoever they tag must freeze where they are tagging. The only way they can get free is if someone who is not in tags their ankles.

**Story: (Luke 13:10 -17) Healing a Woman on the Sabbath**

One Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in a Jewish meeting place, and a woman was there who had been crippled by an evil spirit for eighteen years. She was completely bent over and could not straighten up. When Jesus saw the woman, he called her over and said, “You are now well.”

Then Jesus placed his hands on the woman, and right away she stood up straight and praised God.

The man in charge of the meeting place was angry because Jesus had healed someone on the Sabbath. So he said to the people, “Each week has six days when we can work. Come and be healed on one of those days, but not the Sabbath.”

Jesus replied, “Are you trying to fool someone?   Won’t any one of you untie your horse or donkey and lead it out to drink on a Sabbath? This woman belongs to the family of Abraham, but Satan has kept her bound for eighteen years. Isn’t it right to set her free on the Sabbath?”

Jesus’ words made his enemies ashamed. But everyone else in the crowd was happy about the wonderful things he was doing.

**Talk:** Who can tell me a rule that they have to obey? Something like ‘you must brush your teeth after breakfast’, or ‘look both ways before cr oss ing the street’. (Pause for answers). Wow, we live by a lot of rules don’t we? I have another question for you, what is the purpose of having rules? (Pause) Well, I think we have rules so that we can keep safe and avoid bigger problems later on. Like if you never brushed your teeth then eventually you would have cavities; or if you never looked before crossing the street you might get hit by a car.

In today’s story, Jesus healed a woman on the Sabbath and a man got upset because Jesus had broken the rule that says no work is to be done on the Sabbath.

What do you think is the reason for having the rule ‘No work is to be done on the Sabbath’? (Pause) Well, I believe that it was to make sure people realise that it is important to rest. After all, when God created the world he rested on the seventh day.

When Jesus healed the woman, he was freeing her from eighteen years of suffering. Now she was free to do whatever she wanted, including resting on the Sabbath!!!!!

So do you think Jesus was wrong to heal the woman? I mean, he could have waited until the next day and then he wouldn’t have been breaking the rules would he?

Well, in the story Jesus says that the woman had been suffering for eighteen years because of Satan, so it is right to set her free on the Sabbath and I agree. The Sabbath is not just a day of rest, it is a day to remember God and setting a woman free from Satan was definitely remembering and honouring God!!! So the question I will leave you with is how do you honour God?

**Questions:**

* What is a rule that you have to obey?
* What is the purpose of having rules?
* Why should we not work on the Sabbath?
* Do you think Jesus was wrong to heal on the Sabbath and why?
* How do you honour God on the Sabbath?

**Activity: (Group poster activity) How do you honour God?**

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**What you need:** Large piece of paper, ‘How do you honour God’ poster template. Pens, felts, stuff etc to decorate.   
**What to do:** Stick the template picture in the centre of the large piece of paper.

Get the children to think about ways they can honour God in what they do. Eg share their lunch with a friend who doesn’t have any, tidy their room without being asked, etc.

Then, on the space around the centre, get them to write/draw how they can honour God.

**Extension:** Shrink the template on the photo copier and give each of the children a copy. Get them to write down one thing they are going to try and do this week to honour God. Next week at the start of the lesson, ask them if they did it or not.