

Copyright 2001 By Lucille King  
All Rights Reserved and Duplication  
Of This Publication Is Forbidden,  
Except For Personal Use

\* \* \* \* \*

Digital Edition 08/22/2001  
By Holiness Data Ministry

\* \* \* \* \*

## Keeping His Commandments

By Mrs. Paul E. King

From the July 20, 1980 Sunday School Beacon

Richard Worley eased his six-foot-one frame behind the steering wheel of his old but freshly-painted and carefully-kept car, his heart pounding a happy rhythm inside his chest. At last he was in business -real estate business -- an agent for Ritter Realty, to be exact. It seemed unbelievable and almost unreal, but the box of personalized cards on the seat beside him attested to the fact.

Strange, he mused silently, how such a small thing as a box of new-printed, just-received, gold lettered, personalized cards could buoy one's spirits up and send him orbiting emotionally. But that's the effect the cards had upon him. Yes, indeed.



Reaching over, he removed the sample card from the top of the box lid and held it before him. It was beautiful, he mused. Ritter Reality sure did things up right, and in a big way -- an exclusive-looking way, really.

Laying the card on the dashboard, he started the car, deciding that he would put his learning into immediate practice. There was no more convenient time than now, especially since Harriet Kipling had told him less than a week ago that she wanted to sell the large two-story brick house and move into the smaller one a half-block away.

A smile turned the corners of his mouth. Harriett owned property all over the city. Her husband, now deceased, had been one of the wealthiest men in the community. Being childless, he had left everything to his wife. Who knew what Harriet might do once

she took the notion. Yes, who knew! She had always liked Richard and, knowing that he had been attending real estate classes, she had told him she'd delay selling the brick house until such a time when he could assist her in the selling of the property.

Richard whistled happily as he drove down the tree-lined streets. Sudbury was a grand place in which to live, he mused silently, even though he had thought (seven years ago when his father's company had transferred him here) that he would never survive leaving his many friends and the much smaller school in Bayview.

The church in Sudbury, however, proved to be every bit as spiritual and as evangelistic as the Bayview church, and through this body of Christian young people, Richard soon felt as much at home as if he had lived here all his life. His four years in Sudbury's Christian High School helped him not only scholastically and intellectually but spiritually, as well.

Looking back over the years now, the young man saw how the hand of God was in the Company's move for his father. God certainly did work in strangely mysterious but wonderful ways, he realized, turning the car into the elderly woman's driveway.

Straightening his tie, he got out of the car and strolled leisurely toward the front door, his eyes taking in the beautifully manicured lawn and the strategically located, weed-free, heavily-mulched flower beds. A brightly-colored humming bird whizzed past him and Richard followed its flight with his keen eyes, noting its pause in mid-air in the petunia bed.

"Something else, these birds! Eh?"

Started, Richard did a quick about-face.

"Sorry if I frightened you, Richard," the gardener apologized. "But I saw you watching that humming bird and I guess I sort of figured you saw me, too."

Richard laughed good-naturedly. "That's all right, Ed. I was totally absorbed and forgot everything else. Those humming birds seem to travel with almost the speed of light. And just look at the little fellow; he's having a real feast from those petunias you planted for Mrs. Kipling. By the way, is she home?"

Wiping the perspiration from his face, Ed said, "I'm not sure, but we'll go and find out. Come along to the back door; Opal will know. And who knows, if we're in luck, we may be able to get a sample of that chocolate cake she baked an hour or so ago."

Slapping Ed on the shoulder playfully, Richard said, "I see you're still up to your old tricks -- eating between meals, in spite of your doctor's orders."

"Well, I always did say I wasn't going to starve myself for any doctor. I'll die only once."

Sobering, Richard replied quickly, "True, Ed. True. You will die once. But after death, what?"

Lightly, the gardener quipped, "I'll think of that some other time. Now come, we'll soon know if Mrs. Kipling's home or not."

"That isn't really important to me now, Ed; what is important is your soul's welfare. Hebrews 9:27 tells us that ". . . it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' "

"Yeah, I know all that. Maybe someday I'll change, but not now. You coming with me?" Ed asked, hurrying along the side of the house to the back door.

Opal me, them at the door. Swinging a scrub cloth playfully in front of them she exclaimed authoritatively, "Not a step father for either of you! I just finished scrubbing Miss Harriet's floor on my hands and knees and no one is going to mess it up again."

"Aw, Opal!" Ed cajoled. "My joints are hurting, my muscles are aching and my stomach's telling me that just one piece of your chocolate cake will fix me up as good as new again. Please, Opal, just one piece."

Laughing jovially, Opal said, "Sure as I'm standing here, Richard, that husband of mine must have hollow legs -- or something like hollow legs. He's forever hungry."

"Now Opal, you know I work hard."

"Sure. Sure, Ed. I know. Well, OK. But just one piece before dinner. Now mind you, only one piece. And don't you dare set foot on this shiny-clean floor, not until I've waxed and buffed it." And away Opal hurried to cut the cake.

Ed looked at Richard and gave him a knowing wink; Richard laughed. He had known the couple as long as he had known Harriett Kipling -- seven years -- and always they jostled and teased each other. "Makes life a heap more pleasant for each of us," Ed had told him once when he was here.

Opal came bustling out in her stocking feet -- "Lest I dirty the floor," she told the men -- and handed each a generous piece of the still barely-warm delicious dessert. Then, waiting till they had tasted it, she asked. "Well, what do you say? Good? Just ordinary? Or super, and fit for a king's table?" Her dark eyes danced with mischief.

"Fit for a king!" both exclaimed simultaneously. "Ah! Those are pleasant words to hear. So very pleasant!" she teased. "Now if Miss Harriet will say as much -- well, I will have received my pay."

"By the way, is she here? Mrs. Kipling, I mean?" Richard asked suddenly. "She told me to come over when I became an agent for Ritter's Realty -- said she wanted to sell here and move into something smaller."

Opal stood inside the doorway. "You're out of luck, Richard," she said. "Both answers are negative."

"Meaning . . . ?"

"Miss Harriett's not home -- gone to her daughter's for the day. And she changed her mind about selling here. Said she'd miss the sprawling lawn and the summer house out back too much. She plans to sell a couple of her properties on Brandyvine, though; so you'll no doubt be hearing from her regarding these when she returns. Frankly, I'm glad she changed her mind; Ed and I love it here."

"But you'd both have had less work at the other house, Opal," Richard said quickly. "That might not have been too bad for either of you. You work hard here."

"Tsk, tsk!" Opal rebuked, "We're not complaining, are we, Richard?"

"Well, no; but . . . "

"We love it here, my boy," Ed said, scraping the cake crumbs together with his fork and relishing the final bite with utter delight and satisfaction. "This is home to Opal and me. Miss Harriett's a fine person to work for. She treats us more like kin than hired help."

"Oh, I know that, Ed. But I still think it would be nice if you had less work to do, both of you."

"Trouble with you younguns is that you have too much leisure. Now you take my boyhood for instance. . . ."

Getting quickly to his feet, Richard said, "Look, Ed, I hate to interrupt you, but I must be going. Thanks for the treat, Opal. If I don't go now I'll not make it home till well after supper -- once Ed begins on his youthful days." And waving good-bye to the jolly couple Richard hurled away.

His mother was waiting for him when he arrived home. "Mr. Ritter called," she informed him. "I wonder what he wants; did he say?"

"He wants you to call him; that's all I know, Richard."

"Thanks, Mom," the young man said, going to the phone and dialing the head of the real estate firm's number.

"Mr. Ritter, this is Richard; Mother said for me to call you . . ."

"Ye-es, Richard," the senior Ritter purred. "I want a sharp picture of you; a glossy, preferably." "A picture?"

"Of course. Of course, my boy. For the Sunday edition of The Sudbury News. Everybody reads the Sunday paper . . ."

Richard gasped. "Not 'everybody,' Mr. Ritter," he ventured quickly. "We don't; neither do the people where we go to church. And as to the picture, well, I don't object to you putting a picture in during the week, but not on Sunday, Mr. Ritter. I am a strict observer of the Sabbath."

Mr. Ritter's tone of voice was sharp. "There isn't a thing wrong with using a picture in a Sunday paper, Richard!" he retorted. "That's our biggest day for advertising anymore."

"But you told me there would be no Sunday sales, Mr. Ritter. This was one of my big reasons for becoming one of your agents . . ."

"That's right; there aren't any Sunday sales -- mainly because there are so many religious fanatics in these parts. But that certainly doesn't negate our fight to Sunday advertising. A new approach, I'll confess now that you are one of us. So get that sharp glossy down here as quickly as possible and I guarantee you you'll be in real business. We have quite a write-up on you; it's ready for the printers. You hold the honor of being the younger agent in the cry, from what I hear."

Richard spoke quickly. "I'm sorry to sound disrespectful, Mr. Ritter, especially since you are quite a few years my senior, but I can't do that. It's wickedness. I'm a Christian, not in name only but from the very inside of my heart. God for Christ's sake saved my soul and forgave me of every sin I ever committed, and later He sanctified me wholly. There are certain things I cannot do . . . things like desecrating the Sabbath with advertising and such things."

Richard heard the man pound his fist on the desk before he boomed into the mouth-piece, "Get that glossy down here! But quick!"

The phone on the other end of the line was slammed into place. A long while after, Richard discovered that he was standing like one mesmerized with the mouth-piece still held in his hand.

Coming suddenly out of his state of shock, he reached for the well-worn, much-used family Bible on the near-by shelf. Turning to Leviticus 26 he read, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

"If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them:

"Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

"And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: And ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

"And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall be down, and none shall make you afraid . . . "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

Closing the precious Book, Richard hurried to his room for prayer. No matter what happened, he would obey the Book! He would keep God's commandments and by obeying, he would keep his testimony. Under no circumstances would he mar his testimony nor being reproach upon the name and cause of Christ!

Dropping on his knees, a great peace engulfed him as God's voice whispered through the silence, ". . . them that honour me, I will honour . . ."

\* \* \* \* \*

THE END