

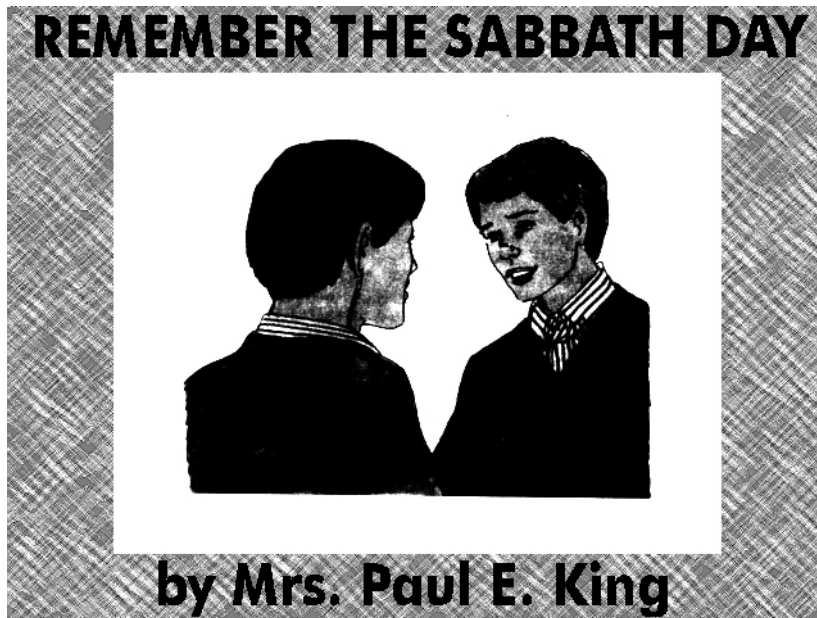
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REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY
By Mrs. Paul E. King

Taylor heard the roar of the motorcycle before it rounded the bend of the road to their driveway even. Jeff! It had to be him he knew, for no one else came up their lane in a motorcycle. At least no one whom Taylor knew. And this was Sunday, too. Could it be that Jeff was using his Sundays for joy riding and taking trips out of town instead of attending church, like he used to do?

Taylor sighed. He had overheard some of me young people from church as they were talking in the parking lot before leaving for home less than three weeks ago. Randall Carnahey told the group that Jeff's absence from the services was due to the fact that he was making a lot of out-of-town trips with his father on their motorcycles. He said Jeff said he was having the time of life, that, it was the best and greatest thing he and his father had ever done together; better even than fishing or hunting together, Randall declared that Jeff had said.

Was Randall's report true? Taylor wondered now as Jeff's motorcycle came into view.

"How about going with me for a ride?" Jeff asked, bringing the cycle to an abrupt halt beside Taylor.

"Thanks, Jeff but not today. Some other day, Lord willing."

"C'mon, Taylor. There's nothing wrong with going for a ride."

"Another day, maybe, God willing. Not today Jeff. Today is Sunday."

"So?"

"One of the Ten Commandments, Jeff -- 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,' "Taylor quoted.

"You take everything so seriously," Jeff countered quickly. "That may have been fine for the Israelites but you and I aren't Jewish and we live in a different time and age?"

"It's still one of God's Ten Commandments, Jeff We must never forget this."

"Can't you congratulate me, at least? After all, this is brand new. A surprise birthday gift from Dad. That promotion at his job really benefited me, wouldn't you say? Did you ever see anything so beautiful? And it rides like a dream. It's the greatest thing I've ever had."

"It's beautiful, Jeff" Taylor replied, "and I'm sure it's wonderful to ride, but it's wrong to miss church on Sunday and go joy riding instead."

"But you don't understand, Taylor, Dad and I are together this way. He takes his cycle and I take mine. We've never been as close to each other as we are now. We've developed a father-son relationship that's positively and absolutely incredible and wonderful through our Sunday trips together."

"We've been missing you from church, Jeff. We need the Sunday school and church services to help us grow spiritually and to become mature Christians. Doesn't it bother you to spend your weekends on the road instead of in church, listening to God's servant preaching and stirring and feeding our souls?"

"I can't say that it does, Taylor. After all, Dad and I are together and for me, this is a plus factor. Who knows, I may be able to win him to Christ by being with him every weekend."

"One never wins anything by compromise, Jeff. Never. In fact the compromiser loses every time. The spiritual warfare, like any warfare demands soldiers who will stand tall and walk straight and not give an inch to the enemy. Simply stated, it demands uncompromising action in the battle all the way to the end. Your father will be won to Christ far quicker by your firm, kind stand against what is wrong and sinful than by your giving in to him and his wishes and doing what he knows is not in compliance to and with the Word of God."

"I'm sure having fun," Jeff stated. "It's great being with Dad and riding around on this beautiful thing. Dad's proud of the way I handle it, he told me?"

"I'm sure he is, Jeff. But don't become over-confident. Accidents happen sometimes to even the best of drivers. Many times it isn't even their fault. I do wish though that you wouldn't desecrate the Sabbath by all these weekend trips and by missing the church services. I want you to go to Heaven, Jeff and not to miss it."

"Well, like I said, I'm sure having fun and being with Dad so much of the time has surely added a new dimension to my life. We're closer than we've ever been and we seem to understand each other like we never did before all these outings together. Dad has plans for just the two of us to go out to California together sometime in the fall of the year. I can hardly wait for it."

"Doesn't your mother mind that you're missing so many church services, Jeff?"

"Dad gives the orders at our house, Taylor, and while he doesn't order me to go riding with him on the weekends, it's just a foregone conclusion that I'll be going with him when he says, 'It's to the mountains this weekend Jeff,' or wherever he planned to go for that particular weekend."

"A lot of us have been missing you," Taylor said, "and we've been praying for you too."

"Thanks. I appreciate your concern. When you're ready for a ride, let me know," and starting the motor, Jeff wheeled around and drove down the lane and was soon lost to sight.

Taylor felt a heaviness settle down upon him for his friend. How very clever and cunning Satan's tactics were, he thought, and how subtle too. Jeff's walk with God had been one of victory and blessing until the motorcycle had come into his life. Not only was Satan robbing him of the victory he once had but he had deceived him, as well, trying to make him believe that by being with his father and spending his weekends on the road instead of in church, he could possibly win him for Christ. What a deceiver!

Taylor walked into the apple orchard and fell on his knees in prayer for Jeff, knowing that prayer was the most powerful weapon that could be used and utilized to bring his friend back to the strait and narrow way. Prayer was effective and mighty, to the pulling down of strongholds. It could do what talk could and would not do.

He stayed for a long time in the orchard, communing with and talking to the Lord. How Jeff could have left One so faithful, true and loving as the Savior, was beyond his human comprehension. Without Christ life was meaningless and empty and void. The heart was restless and like a homeless wanderer, it was ever in search of something to satisfy, something to fill the void to quench the soul thirst and to bring meaning to one's existence. Jeff knew this, every bit of it. There was no peace or soul rest to the one outside of Christ.

Deep in thought, Taylor walked back to the house. Whatever had happened to mankind, he wondered that the Sabbath was no longer a day to be kept holy; a day in which to rest one's body from its ordinary weekday

labor and a day in which to worship God and have the soul fed and strengthened and revived?

He recalled his grandparents telling him how the Sabbath, in their day, was indeed kept holy and sacred. No unnecessary work was done, not ever. There was no rowdy, noisy playing of games and never -- never! -- anything done in either the field or the garden. As much as could be made without it spoiling, Sunday's meal was prepared the day before, on Saturday.

Even the animals observed their Sabbath of rest. Yes indeed His grandparents, whose main industry was agriculture -- farming and had many horses and mules and much cattle, were strict adherents to God's commands as given to Moses in Exodus 20:8-11.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

"Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:

"But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son nor thy daughter, thy manservant nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

His own parents, too, kept the Sabbath day holy. While not farmers, Taylor's parents, who owned and operated a fruit orchard, followed strictly the Sabbath day commandment. All weekday work and labor ended on Saturday: their thriving and very busy fruit stand was closed by eight o'clock every Saturday evening and not opened again until nine o'clock on Monday morning.

Sunday was such a special day for Taylor; there was something warm and spiritually uplifting in the quieter, gentler pace of the day, and the church services stirred and revived his spirit wondrously. The day was like an oasis of peace and beauty in his otherwise busy week of books and study and work in the orchard and at the stand. He loved the work every part of it; loved his schooling, too but Sunday was, for his family and him a day of rest and of a spiritual feast. Always, he felt like the week before him was one of the

challenges and victories through the God whose command to "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" would help him to be more than a conqueror.

Taylor was almost ready to leave for the young people's service at church when telephone rang. Picking it up he was surprised to hear Jeff's mother's voice. She sounded like she was crying.

"Are you all right, Mrs. Addington?" he asked anxiously.

Instead of answering his question, the woman asked, "Can you come over to the hospital Taylor? Please! Right away."

"The hospital? Wh . . . ?"

"It's Jeff" she cried "He was in an accident He wants to see you. Please, can you come?"

"I'll be there. Yes, God willing, I'll be there. Let me call my pastor first so he'll know why I'm not on time for the young people's meeting."

"Oh, thank you Taylor. Please hurry."

Taylor was shocked when he saw Jeff. Swathed in bandages, he resembled a mummy of sorts.

"What happened?" he asked anxiously trying to pat Jeff's bandaged hand.

With eyes peering from a nearly totally bandaged face, Jeff said, "I hit a rock; a big one. I swerved trying to avoid being hit head on by a fellow coming toward me -- in my lane. He must have been doing 80 miles an hour. I was scared, Taylor. Everything you told me came back to me in a moment of time. When I saw I was going to hit the rock I cried out to God to save me, and He did it.

"I'll be coming back to church regularly, God helping me, Taylor. This would not have happened if I hadn't been out joy riding and desecrating the Sabbath day. It's a painful lesson but one well learned I see that it's impossible to break and violate God's Commandments and not pay for it sometime and somewhere. I've never been more convinced of this than now.

I told Dad that I'll not be going out anymore on Sundays with him; nor any joy riding by myself either."

Taylor felt tears sting his eyes. "God will bless you for this," he said to Jeff.

Jeff's reply had a ring to it. "He has blessed me already, Taylor: Dad said he was sorry that he had kept me out of church these many weeks. He wants me to start back again, the way I used to do. I believe God is moving on his heart."

"It looks like you'll have quite a lot of time to pray, Jeff. Who knows, your dad may be nearer to being converted than either of us can imagine. Prayer can move God to break the hardest of hearts."

"I know," Jeff stated, "and from here on out God helping me, I'll not compromise."

Taylor lifted his eyes upward and said a soft Amen. There were tears in his eyes, tears of joy.

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THE END