

# What is a day off, really?

By: Dr. James L. Snyder

I'm not one who gets excited about holidays. If up to me there would be one holiday per month, and that's it.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage loves holidays, no matter what it is. For her it is a time to have a "Day Off." If anybody knows how to celebrate a day off it is her.

By January, she has all the holidays noted on her calendar and what she is going to do on those holidays.

I do not even want to celebrate my birthday. With all my birthdays, you would think I would get tired of celebrating them. And, I have. The birthday just reminds you are getting older. I do not need that kind of reminder; the pain in my body does that for me.

The problem with my birthday is it is two days before my wife's birthday. I am not quite sure how I planned that, but if I had to do it over again, I am not sure our birthdays would be that close.

In order for her to celebrate her birthday, I must celebrate my birthday. And, oh boy, is that a challenge for me. After as many birthdays as I have had, I do not know what I could do differently in celebrating my next birthday. Of course, I do not have to think this through; I have someone in our residence that takes care of this.

A certain holiday was coming up and my wife said to me very gingerly, "What are we going to do on our day off?" My response was, "Huh?"

"You know," she said, "this Thursday we are having a holiday and so it is a day off for us. So, what are we going to do?" I knew what I wanted to do, but I was not going to express it in audible words.

"Well," I said as thoughtfully as I could, "I need to do some more work on the book I'm writing now." Then I smiled at her.

Looking at me with one of "those looks," and both hands on her hips, she said, "Absolutely not. Thursday is a day off and we are going to take the day off. End of the subject."

When she says "End of the subject," it really means it is the end and the subject is settled.

In nervous anticipation, I was looking forward to "our day off."

I'm not quite sure what that means. For me every day I'm off my mark, so to speak. However, that is not what she was talking about.

The best days of my life are when I am working on one of my projects. The day seems to go by so quickly when I am doing what I love.

My wife recently informed me that at my age I need to start

slowing down. I told her that I would slow down in my walking, but that was not what she meant.

"You work too much, you need to take time off every once in a while."

Because I do not say something, does not mean I am not thinking of something. What I wanted to ask her at the time was, "Would you please explain to me what 'once in a while' means? What day of the week is it?"

However, I kept the thought to myself and for good reasons. According to her definition of "day off" it is doing things that you really love that you cannot do on a workday.

When I wore a younger man's suit, many things I could do would fit her category. Since I have traded the younger man's suit for a more mature man's suit, many things I cannot do even if I wanted to.

I wrestle with this "day off syndrome" that seems to occupy my wife's mind. Every time I take a day off, all I can think of is the work I could be doing. That does not make me a happy camper, to say the least.

Getting older, I have come to appreciate certain variations in life. I am not trying to live yesterday because that is past. I am trying to learn how to live today and if it were not for my wife, I would not know what that means.

My father once told me, "Son, remember this. If your wife is happy, everybody in the house is happy." At the time, I did not understand what he meant. After years of living with the wife, I discovered exactly what he meant.

So, after so many years of being married, I have discovered what this "Day Off" really means. I wish I would have seen this when I was younger. However, I am so glad I have finally come to terms with what it really means.

A "Day Off" to put it very simply, is a day to spend with your wife. No other agenda on my schedule, but what is making her happy. We spend a day together and if she is happy then the rest of the week is a melody of happiness.

I wonder if this is what Solomon was thinking of when he wrote, "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her" (Proverbs 3:18).

I have discovered a day off with my wife is the supreme recipe for a happy day.

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# Stormy Weather

By: Dawn Reed

It was a terrible storm; a squall even. And it had come out of nowhere!

It was worse on the water, but the men knew what to do-at first. Many of them had spent most of their lives there. Still, they were terrified. Huge waves broke over the boat threatening to overturn it. Water was filling the vessel!

After doing everything they could think of...and fearing for their lives, they cried out to Jesus.

He was asleep in the stern.

Picture the scene from Mark 4: waves, water and wailing!

The disciples had gotten in the boat with Jesus. He told them, "Let's go to the other side." He DID NOT tell them, "Let's go out on the water and die in a storm." When He tells us something, we can trust it will be accomplished.

The storm came after the disciples obeyed Jesus. When we follow Christ, we are not always guaranteed safety and sunshine. Expect waves and sometimes thunder and lightning.

The disciples could not save themselves. They had been with Jesus, heard His Words, seen many miracles and even done some themselves, yet they still needed

a Savior. No matter what good we do or how good we think we are, we will ALWAYS need a Savior, too!

The disciples woke up Jesus and said, "Teacher, don't you care...?" Storms come into our lives in all shapes and sizes: death, financial woes, marital crisis. Have you ever felt like a storm was besting you and Jesus was asleep somewhere else?

I read years ago that it wasn't the storm that woke Jesus. It was the cry of the ones He loved. Let that soak in for a minute.

He got up, rebuked the wind and spoke to the waves. Sometimes our storm is not around us, but within. Our minds spin and hearts race with fear. "Quiet! Be still!" might have been for the disciples' anxious thoughts!

Jesus asked them two questions. "Why are you so afraid?" That was a fair question then and still is. What is it we are so afraid of?

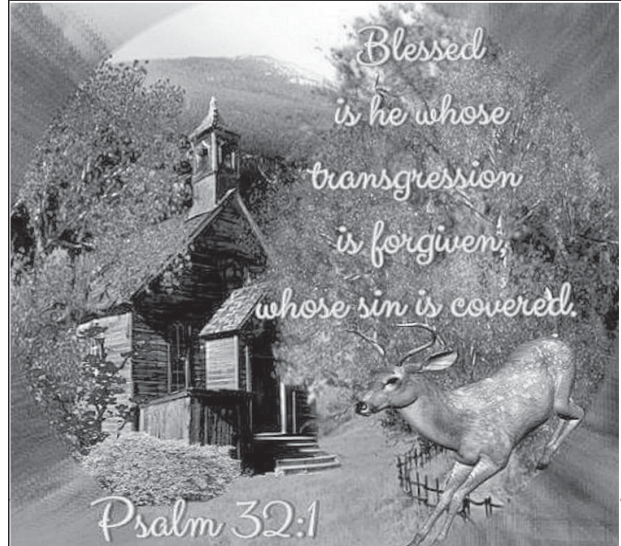
"Do you still have no faith?" When we are in the midst of a storm it can be hard to remember what God has already done and Who He is.

Storms will come. Count on it. When they do, cry out to Jesus! He will quiet your wind and still your waves!

# RUSSELL COUNTY CHURCH DIRECTORY

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