

A Day of Delight

Making Sunday the Best Day of the Week

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Throughout this book, we list many books, tapes, crafts, and activities as potential aids in making your Sunday a delight, noting each with a number within brackets. For your convenience in locating a source for these materials, we have included a "Resources" page at the end of this book. Each company is numbered, corresponding to the bracketed numbers. If an item is followed by a [3], for example, look under "Resources" for Number 3 and you will find a company that carries that item.

This is not an exhaustive list, but simply a selection of mail order companies that we have found helpful in supplying these materials.

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*Please visit our web page or send SASE for a free catalog of other
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1-891206-03-6

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Sunday Morning

"Where's my other sock?"

"Quit playing! We're going to be late!"

"Let me in the bathroom!"

"Where's my sock?"

"My shirt's missing a button!"

"Let me in the bathroom!"

"Leave her alone!"

"Where's my Bible?"

"That's **my** sock!"

"No, it's mine!"

"No, it isn't!"

"I'm hungry!"

"Where's my shoes?"

"Come on! We're leaving **now!**"

"I have to go to the bathroom!"

"Hurry up!"

"Oh-oh..."

"Oh, no!"

"Hurry up!"

"We have to stop and get gas."

"Can we drive a little slower?"

"Don't you think we should have stopped at that stop sign?"

"Hurry and get out of the car!"

"Where's your other shoe?!"

Sound familiar? What is Sunday like at your house?

A Commandment

God told us, in the Ten Commandments, "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work. . . Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:9-11).

*God has given us 52 days of vacation each year--that's 7-1/2 weeks in which we are commanded **not** to work! A day of rest each week is a gift from God; we should not view it as a*

burden or sacrifice. Jesus reminded the Pharisees, in Mark 2:27, that "the Sabbath was made **for** man."

Isaiah 58:13 says that we should "call the Sabbath a delight." It is a sanctified day, a holy day, a holiday. It is a celebration that commemorates creation on the Old Testament seventh day, and Christ's resurrection on the New Testament Lord's Day or Sunday.

We looked at our family and how we were observing the Sabbath and concluded that we were not truly obeying God's command. We did manage to get everyone out the door and into church each week, but we could not really call Sunday a "delight."

That is how this booklet happened! It is the result of our own family's desire to make the Lord's Day a day that would be pleasing to the Lord. We wanted to make Sunday different from all other days. What could we do to make Sunday delightful--not frightful? How could we honor the Lord of the Sabbath in our Lord's Day observance? How could we make Sunday **the best day of the week for the whole family?**

We offer you a description of what we have done, along with lists of ideas that you may want to try with your own family.

What Shall We Do Instead?

There are six main areas that we concentrate on each Sunday:

1. Rest from all our normal, weekday activities
2. Meditating on God and His Word
3. Fellowship with other believers
4. Acts of mercy and justice
5. Remembering God's work in creation
6. Remembering Christ's redemptive work in His death, burial and resurrection

Isaiah 58:14 tells us, "You shall delight yourself in the Lord," when we turn away from doing our own pleasure, and turn toward honoring the Lord, calling the Sabbath a delight. We will gain new love for our Saviour and new desire to do His will.

Anticipate

A major change in our Sundays occurred when we decided to make Sunday the focal point of our week. Our week began to revolve around Sunday. Saturday became a preparation day. I wrote down all the tasks I needed to complete in order to be ready to rest on Sunday. Then I scheduled those tasks throughout the week.

This is what my schedule looks like:

Monday:

Wash Sunday dishes, reorganize "Sunday Bag," put away special Sunday materials ("Sunday Box," pictures on wall, etc.).

Tuesday:

Plan menu for Saturday evening and Sunday. Make any food that can be made ahead and freeze it.

Wednesday:

Plan and prepare Sunday activities (especially activities for the children).

Thursday:

Prepare Sunday clothes (wash, press, and hang up, polish shoes, find hair ribbons, socks, etc.), pack diaper bag.

Friday:

Prepare for Saturday evening and Sunday meals; pay children for weekly chores and separate out tithes (I put each child's tithe in a separate sandwich bag); mix Sabbath bread dough or take frozen loaf out of freezer and put into refrigerator to thaw overnight.

Saturday:

Finish meal preparations; set table and arrange centerpiece; hang "Sabbath pictures" in dining area; bake bread; bathe children or older children bathe; serve special Saturday dinner.

This is what I aim for ideally each week in anticipation of the upcoming day of rest. It doesn't always happen this way, but we're improving! When I am faithful to finish each of these tasks on the designated day, Sunday has truly become a day of rest. No more dashing around all Sunday morning trying to get myself and everyone else organized!

A side benefit of scheduling all my "Sunday tasks" is that it has inspired me to set up a basic schedule for the rest of my regular housekeeping duties--laundry, cleaning, baking, paperwork, and so on. I am finding that my entire week is becoming more organized as I center it on being prepared for our day of rest.

The Saturday Dinner

We welcome the arrival of God's day with a special Saturday evening meal, patterned after the Jewish tradition on Friday evening. **Making Sunday Special**, by Karen Mains [6], (Word Books), is an excellent book about the Sabbath. It suggests a special meal on Lord's Day Eve. As nice as it sounded, I resisted this idea for a long time because I thought it would just be another burden added to an already hectic Saturday. Our Saturdays are typically filled with family outings, garage sale shopping, gardening, canning, household projects and more. I didn't want to add anything else to my "To Do" list.

But with some planning, the Saturday dinner has made our Saturdays--and our whole week--more enjoyable. Instead of staggering in the door at bedtime, with tired, cranky children and a van full of dirty clothes, berries to freeze, or groceries to put away, we're usually home in time for dinner now. Instead of gardening until it's so dark that we can't find the tools to put them away, we usually stop in time to clean up and still have a leisurely meal together and sometimes even a walk before bedtime!

There are still times, of course, when everything doesn't go as smoothly as we'd like. The kids are restless at the table, or we still have to finish up a mess in the kitchen after the little ones are all in bed.

But our goal is to be able to begin our time of rest after the Saturday dinner, and we're improving! It has not been a burden. It has been a real blessing!

Our Saturday dinner is the time for special dishes, stemware, candles, napkins and centerpieces. In spite of what the rest of our meals are like with 5 young children, we almost look civilized on Saturday nights! The kids are usually fresh out of a bath, and haven't had enough time to get dirty yet; the table is beautiful, the music is playing.

Here is what we do:

Saturday afternoon, or early in the morning if we're going to be gone during the day, I take the plastic table cloth off the maple kitchen table to expose the handcrafted beauty that would be ruined by felt pens, play dough and berry stains if it were uncovered all the time. We set the table with pottery dishes that are glazed with a landscape design. We put out cloth napkins and even attempt to put out matching sets of silverware at each place! We use crystal stemware that we bought at a garage sale for \$1 a piece (so I wouldn't be too worried about breaking them).

In the center of the table is a bouquet of fresh flowers, a fruit bowl, or some other centerpiece created with elements from God's creation. Two white candles in brass candlesticks flank the centerpiece, and next to them is a tall brass goblet, a brass bowl of water, a small towel, an enameled brass container filled with spices, and a brass frame with the words, "Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."