

How could you top a trip to Hawaii as a Christmas gift?



America's Heartland
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A man boasted to his friends that he planned to take his wife to Hawaii for Christmas.

"That's going to be tough to beat," one friend said. "What are you going to do for her next Christmas?"

"I'm going to go back and get her," he responded.

Did you ever feel like you needed a break, not from your spouse, but from the grueling stresses of work.

God understands that

completely. That's why He insists that you take one day off work each week.

"You are to labor six days, but you must rest on the seventh day" (Exodus 34:21).

Folks who know would tell you that everyone need rest to stay sharp. There's an old story about two fellows who were in a contest to see who could chop the most wood in a day. One worked very hard, refusing to stop even for a brief rest. The other took several leisurely breaks during the day.

At the end of the day, the man who refused to rest was surprised to find that the other fellow chopped far more wood.

"I don't get it," he said. "Every time I checked, you were taking a rest, yet you chopped more wood than I did."

"Perhaps you didn't notice," the other fellow said. "I was sharpening my ax while I was taking those breaks."

People shouldn't feel like they're slacking off when they take time to

rest. It's absolutely necessary. And it's biblical.

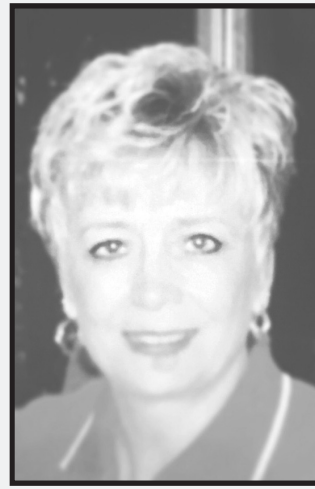
In fact, Jesus taught his disciples the importance of rest. At the height of Jesus' public ministry, He and his disciples had little time to relax. They were wearing themselves out physically.

"He said to them: 'Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest for a while.' For many people were coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat" (Mark 6:31).

Like the disciples, we sometimes find it difficult to get time to rest. Some seasons of life are naturally busier than others. But we still need to find time to rejuvenate.

The husband in that opening tale had it right when he and his wife took the trip to Hawaii to get away for some rest. Leaving her behind, well, that's another matter altogether.

Roger Alford offers words of encouragement to residents of America's heartland. Reach him at rogeralford1@gmail.com.



Times Remembered

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One day in the autumn of 1897, little Virginia O'Hanlon, (1889-1971), who lived in New York City and who was eight years old, had an argument with some of her classmates about Santa Claus. Virginia felt sure there was a Santa Claus but her friends said there was not. Virginia felt greatly disturbed about it, and that night she wrote a letter to the editor of The Sun, the newspaper that came every morning to their breakfast table. She soon had a reply.

One of the editorial writers for The Sun was Mr. Francis P. Church, a man with a big heart and fine appreciation of poetry. He sat down and wrote an answer to Virginia, and it was printed in the paper the next morning September 21, 1897. And this answer had in it so much sympathy and thought

"Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus"

that it has been printed again. Here it is:

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be, which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect as compared with the boundless world about him. As measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus, He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there was no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, and no romance, to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The external light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You

might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Estill County Farm Bureau receives 2017 Women's Gold Star Award of Excellence

Recognized for the achievements of its women's program this year, Estill County Farm Bureau received the 2017 Gold Star Award of Excellence during Kentucky Farm Bureau's annual meeting in Louisville. The award honors county Women's Committees for active participation in leadership development programs, agricultural promotion, educational initiatives and numerous other aspects of support to the local Farm Bureau.



Norma Stacy of the Estill County Farm Bureau Women's Committee, accepts the 2017 Gold Star Award of Excellence from Vicki Bryant, chair of the Kentucky Farm Bureau state Women's Committee. The award was presented during a December 1 recognition program at the 98th Kentucky Farm Bureau annual meeting.

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May God bless you and your family this Holiday Season!

Love,
Brian Crowe and family

Paid by Brian Crowe

Brian CROWE '18
Estill County Clerk