

# GUARDING



# THE SABBATH

By Jeri Schille

At age 16, I began working as a lifeguard and teaching swimming lessons at an outdoor swimming pool in the center of the town. It was my dream job. Two years later I became the pool manager with a lot of responsibility.

As summer approached, I interviewed and hired all the lifeguards, arranged the work schedules, and organized the swimming lesson schedule. My days were full of lifeguarding and teaching lessons, and each night I counted all the money and took it to City Hall after we cleaned and locked up the pool.

The summer was going well and I loved my job. Then one day, several of the guards came to me wanting the following Sunday off; they all planned to be out of town. The pool had always been open on Sundays, but I had never had to work them because I never scheduled myself and the others weren't bothered by working on Sunday.

I could almost hear the tempter's voice in my ear saying, "Just work one Sunday. What's the big deal?" But I wanted to remain firm in my commitment to never work on Sunday. It took a lot of arranging, but I finally was able to fill that shift and didn't have to work.

Over the next several weeks, I felt more and more anxiety about the whole Sunday situation. I realized that there might be some day in the future where I would have to work because no one else was available or might call in sick. I had made a commitment to keep the Sabbath day holy, and I didn't want to break it, but I needed a solution or I would have to find a job elsewhere for the next summer.

I gave the problem a lot of thought and decided I might be able to figure out a way

to get the pool closed on Sundays. Could it even be possible? I would have to approach the city council, since they were the ones who were in charge of the city pool.

So I brainstormed all the ideas I could think of to justify closing the pool. I figured out how many people usually came to swim each Sunday and what the average revenue was. I deducted the costs of operating the pool, heating the water, and paying the lifeguards. Typically, Sundays were slow at the pool—and my minor research had confirmed that. Closing the pool could save the city money.

A friend of mine helped me find more reasons why closing the pool on Sundays was beneficial to the city. Together we worked on a proposal, and a few weeks later I took the proposal to the city council. To my great surprise, they agreed and accepted my proposal. Within a short time that summer the pool was open each week only Monday through Saturday.

I learned several lessons from this experience:

1. The Lord opens up ways for us to keep the commandments if we are committed to doing so.
2. He blesses us for trying our best to keep the commandments.
3. We always have a choice—no matter what situation we're in, we can exercise agency.
4. We can bless the lives of others, as well as our own, with the proper use of agency.

I am grateful to know that if we do our part, the Lord can help us do amazing things. **NE**

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