

A Day You Should Never Forget

Having been born in 1948, I am too young to remember first-hand the "Day of Infamy." But, I have vivid memories of my Uncle Harold talking about Pearl Harbor and how he immediately went to the army recruiter and enlisted.

He fought across the Philippines and was in some of the worst battles of those islands. My father would not speak about his combat experience. He would talk about Pearl Harbor. The only reference to his war experience would come when another piece of shrapnel would surface in his leg or arm and we would pull a little piece of metal out of his skin.

My cousins and I would fantasize about fighting in Europe or the Pacific defending the Red, White, and Blue. Singing with all our heart "the caissons go rolling along." It was deep in our heart, we must never forget the day that will go down in infamy. That was right alongside "Remember the Alamo!" Oh, we played that also. I was always Davy Crockett, "King of the wild frontier."

My family was a flag waving, tears in our eyes as we sang the national anthem, kind of family. "We must never forget" was spoken around the dinner table often.

Another memory is very vivid; one that I was old enough to personally experience. I remember everything about that morning. I was listening to the news while shaving. I couldn't believe what I was hearing and ran downstairs to the family room and turned on the television; then watched in horror as the second airplane flew directly into the twin towers. I fell to my knees weeping and crying out to God.

This was no movie with special effects.

This was a live feed of an attack as great and horrible as Pearl Harbor, happening before my very eyes!

"We must never forget," ran through my heart. I was living what my father and my uncle had lived seventy years earlier.

There are important events that must never be forgotten. They should be rehearsed; stories told to the children; families sharing the memories; and the emotion of that moment passed to the next generation.

July 3, 1964 is such a day in my life.

I have shared the story many times with my children around the dinner table. It is so significant in my life that I invited my son to share a day with me as I took him to the very place it happened.

We left early in the morning and I drove him Sanders Camp, Idaho. It is a Free-Methodist camp ground south of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, where my life was transformed by receiving Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.

The old tabernacle was still standing. Sawdust still covered the floor. The large bull pine altar remained at the front. The old rough wood pews were in the same place so I could show my son where I was sitting when I heard Rev. Kirkpatrick preach on the love of God.

As he preached that night my heart was being stirred, so I slid down that old pew and hid behind one of the bull pine pillars so he could not see me. But, I soon found myself running down the "old saw dust trail" to that large altar at the front.

I took my son to the very place on that altar where I knelt and prayed earnestly for my sins to be forgiven and Jesus to come into my heart.

It was amazing.

I could feel the emotions of that night 47 years earlier, all over again. So we knelt together and prayed, thanking God for

saving my soul and making it possible to raise a godly family.

Do you remember the day you were saved from your sin?

I walked my son to the A-frame cabin where the boys stayed during the camp.

I ran from the altar, that night so long ago, to the A-frame. Sat in the dark on the floor in a corner, begging God to not let the love and freedom I felt go away.

It was the first time in my life I felt loved.

Believing I was a throw-away human being, I thought I was incapable of being loved.

July 3, 1964, I discovered Almighty God loved me from the day I was born and He redeemed my life through the blood of Jesus Christ and the cross of Calvary.

I must never forget!

Dr. F. Dean Hackett *has served in full-time Christian ministry since October 1971. He has ministered throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, serving as pastor, conference speaker and mentor. He has planted four churches, assisted in planting 15 others, and currently serves as Lead Pastor of Living Faith Church in Hermiston, Oregon. Dr. Hackett founded Spirit Life Ministries International in 2001 to facilitate ministries in Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina and to open a training center for workers in those nations. You can find him at F. Dean Hackett – Foundational, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.*