

“Grandpa, Tell Me About the Good Old Days”

by Tom Wacaster

Discouragement comes to the best of men; even great men of faith. Elijah had his moment(s) of discouragement, as I am sure did Abraham, Moses, and Noah. Having studied and written now on 143 chapters in the Psalms, I think I can safely say that David had his moments of discouragement and disappointments. How did he handle it? Where did he flee for refuge? Well, why not let him tell you. In Psalms 143:4 he acknowledges that his spirit was “overwhelmed within,” and that his “heart” was “desolate.” Now listen to the beginning of verse 5: “I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy doings.”

I once heard someone say that dwelling on the “good old days” is a waste of time and demonstrates a lack of faith rather than a confidence in the God Who has promised to care for us. When I was a young preacher I would listen to the “elders” (i.e. those up in years; not those who necessarily held the office of elder) speak of “the good old days.” And now that I am only 60 days away from drawing my first Social Security check, I occasionally find myself thinking about “the good old days” as well. If looking back on the “good old days” is always bad, then why did David tell us that he would “remember the days of old” as if it were something good; something that helped him make it through this particular moment of despair in his life? I think it was because David wanted us to note the focus point of our nostalgia when, in fact, we are tempted to “remember the good old days.” David did not look back on those days with melancholy sadness, but with a fond reflection upon the “doings” of God. He recalled those days when God blessed him, and delivered him from the enemies of old. He remembered the victories, the answered prayers, the forgiveness granted (oh, the forgiveness granted!), and the promised protection.

I think perhaps the church needs to “remember the good old days” with the same focus of purpose. Some of you can remember the days when cottage classes were the norm, and knocking doors and visitation was not considered “outmoded” or “outdated.” Can you remember when two week gospel meetings were considered “short,” and a two hour sermons was a blessing? “Ah, do you remember these?” Maybe we need to remind ourselves of what the world was like when the church was actively seeking and saving the lost; when men and women had a respect for the Bible, and families were still families and marriage was for a life time rather than “till we get tired of one another.”

Some years ago *The Judds* had a country song that quickly became a number one hit. The title was, “Grandpa, Tell Me About the Good Old Days.” It reflects a time not all that long ago when the influence of God’s word was still having an impact upon our society. I am not a country and western fan, and most of the lyrics in today’s pop country music are not worth repeating, but I think the lyrics of that song are noteworthy.

Grandpa (Tell Me 'Bout The Good Old Days)
(The Judds)

Grandpa, tell me 'bout the good old days
Sometimes it feels like this world's gone crazy
And Grandpa, take me back to yesterday
When the line between right and wrong
Didn't seem so hazy

Did lovers really fall in love to stay
And stand beside each other, come what may?
Was a promise really something people kept
Not just something they would say?
Did families really bow their heads to pray
Did daddies really never go away?
Oh, Grandpa, tell me 'bout the good old days

Grandpa, everything is changing fast
We call it progress, but I just don't know
And Grandpa, let's wander back into the past
And paint me the picture of long ago

Did lovers really fall in love to stay
And stand beside each other, come what may?
Was a promise really something people kept
Not just something they would say?
Did families really bow their heads to pray
Did daddies really never go away?
Oh, Grandpa, tell me 'bout the good old days
Oh, Grandpa, tell me 'bout the good old days

Maybe we should reflect upon the values that “grandpa” practiced, and then remind ourselves that such values of “the good old days” were the fruit of God’s word planted in the hearts of men. If we would ever hope to return to that kind of Godly living, then perhaps we need to be actively preaching and teaching that same gospel that was preached and taught “in the good old days.” Think about it.