The Good Old Days

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Hosea 4.6

Vance Havner once said, “We shouldn’t want to go back to the good-old-days, because they weren’t so good after all.”

As a few of us walked into the church early this morning, we realized that something had gone wrong with our $300 handy-dandy, electronic thermostat. It was recently installed and works wonderfully – starting the air conditioning early enough in the morning that, by church time, the sanctuary is nice and cool. Somehow, between Wednesday evening and this morning it had been readjusted to 90 degrees. The sanctuary was not quite that warm – only 86 degrees. Working without a break, the unit would never make up the difference between where it began and where we wanted it to be.

I remembered the “good-old-days” - the days when we worshiped with the windows of the church up in order to catch the cross breeze. I remembered the “good-old days” – the days when I visited my grandparents who rented a house with three bedrooms and a path (and used a wood-fired stove). I remembered the “good-old-days” – the days when the well went dry during the summer months.

Yes, I remember the “good-old-days.”

Lest I sound completely cynical, there were some good things about the “good-old-days.”

During the days of my youth, there was a genuine respect for God, His Word, and His church. When someone mentioned the Bible, everyone knew what was intended. During church services, when the pastor announced his text, no one asked which version. When speaking of Jesus, we all knew He was/is God’s only “begotten” Son because the Bible says so. (John 3.16 – check that in the modern versions)

In today’s Christian society, versions of the Sacred Word of God proliferate causing many pastors to have copies of their text printed in the church bulletin so that all in attendance will have, at least, a similar passage to reference. Many pastors announce their text by saying, “Please turn in your copy of the Scriptures to…..” What ever happened to the “good-old-days” when the pastor said, “Turn in your Bibles”? 
Arguments abound for the use of newer, more modern versions of the Bible because they are easier to read; however, we must ask the question, “Has this proliferation positively affected the Body of Christ?”

Years ago, even the lost believed in the sanctity of God’s Word. Years ago, the principles of God’s Word were commonly used in teaching ethics. Years ago, churches were not locked because even the thieves realized there was something special about churches. Today, the lost offer sneers and jeers at the Word of God as though it was the misguided recordings of some religious fanatics. Today, the ethics teachers have students come to their own conclusions based upon their own personal reasonings. Today, the thieves would prefer to rob churches because they often have better sound systems.

Many modern believers would rather go to a church gathering, hear a self-help message, and read the book “Christianity for Dummies” rather than learn, really learn the depths of the wisdom of God. While much modern preaching revolves around interpersonal relationships, the greater part of Christianity revolves around the knowledge of God. God warns that as we reject knowledge, He will reject us. As we turn away from learning how to deepen our walk with the Almighty, we also subject our Christian community to being forsaken by God – including our children.

In order to procure God’s blessings for us and for our children, we need to turn back to God and learn of Him. We need to go back to the “good-old-days” when Mom and Dad sat around the Family Altar and read God’s Word together – to their children. We need to turn off the televisions, cell phones, and entertainment centers and focus on learning about God and His goodness.

Go, now. Get your Bible. Find a quiet place. Get alone with God.

Rev. John H Hill