

The Good Old Days

Written by Steve Marr
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As I grow older, I reminisce about how times always seemed better in the past. King Solomon understood this issue when he wrote, "Don't long for 'the good old days.' This is not wise." (Ecclesiastes 7:10, NLT)

However, consider that toilet paper wasn't invented until 1857, relatively recent in the history of man.

Richard Russell compiled a list of basic living conditions in 1904, conditions familiar to my grandparents. When one longs for the good old days consider these facts:

- 14% of homes had a bathtub.
- Life expectancy was 47.
- 8% of homes had a telephone.
- A three-minute call across country was \$11, and this was at a time when eggs were \$.14 a dozen.
- For the 8,000 cars in the country, there were only 144 miles of paved roads with a maximum speed limit of 10 mph.
- The average wage was \$0.22 an hour.
- 95% of births were happened at home. (My father was born on the kitchen table.)
- Only 6% of the population graduated from high school.
- Pneumonia, tuberculosis and diarrhea were leading causes of death.
- Doctors normally did not attend college. Medical schools were generally considered substandard, which is why some physicians were called "Saw bones."
- Our country's population was distributed differently. Las Vegas had 30 people, and the state of California had less people than Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa and Tennessee.

Today, we need to remember that even a lower income family lives better in many respects than a king of 1900 did. However, there are aspects of the past that I long for. When I was in grade school, it was safe to walk a few blocks to the school's baseball diamond to play, probably not something a child should do today.

Thinking the past was so wonderful affects our business thinking, too. We can get locked into thinking that what happened in the past is good for today. We start believing that things don't need to change, which can be dangerous. Instead, embrace the good of the past; understand the advancements the Lord has allowed us to enjoy, and look to the future with anticipation.

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