

Leaves Of Hope #16

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

Jesus, lead thou on
Till our rest is won;
And although the way be cheerless
We will follow calm and fearless,
Guide us by thy hand -
To our Father's land.

L.H. 410, Verse 1

Ecclesiastes 7: 10

**Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?"
For it is not wise to ask such questions.**

We have all heard reference made to "*the good old days.*" Sometimes older people are inclined to say that they were better than the days in which we are now living. A quick glance at this tenth verse of chapter seven will indeed lead one to the conclusion that such a comparison is always wrong and out of order – for this conclusion would be contrary to Scripture itself. We know, for instance, that as the world moves on to the end of time, there are certain signs which point to the approach of judgment day. In describing the last day, Paul wrote to

Timothy: “But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lover so God – having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.” ॥

Timothy 3:1-5 This passage is certainly telling us that at the end times there will be an exceptional outpouring of evil. It is a sign of the last times which will serve as a warning to those who are tempted to follow the crowd. It would be folly to say: *“There is no change. It has always been that way.”* These days are characterized in the way in which Paul spoke in order that we may recognize that the end is indeed approaching.

But for someone to speak unwisely about the former days as compared with the present, this is the warning of our text. One makes a mistake if the impression is given that the human nature of man in former times was better and less inclined to evil than in our day. It is as true of one day as of the other that: **“The man without Spirit does not**

accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” I Corinthians 2:14

Even after the flood had destroyed all the unbelievers from the face of the earth, God said: “The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.” Genesis 8:21 It is folly for us to dwell on the evil of our times as though the people who lived in former days had a better chance of being saved than now. It is folly for us to give such attention to the perils of these last days so that we are led to despair and do not address ourselves to the mission which is ours today. We have a warning example from the case of the Thessalonians who sat around idly waiting for the last day to arrive. To them the apostle Paul wrote: “Aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you.” I Thessalonians 4:11

Surely there is a time to read the present on the background of the past, but never in such a way that we overlook the mission that lies before us in the present. Even today, though the times are perilous, the grace of God is rich in Christ Jesus our Lord. The forgiveness of sins is

available in just as great a measure as ever. Where sin did abound there did grace much more abound. We have here the very heart of the Gospel which we joyfully proclaim. God give us grace to be faithful in this mission.

And will the Judge descend, and must the dead arise
And not a single soul escape his all-discerning eyes?
Ye sinners, seek his grace, whose wrath ye cannot bear;
Fly to the shelter of his cross and find salvation there.

L.H. 610, Verses 1, 6