

Steeple News

December 2024

The Memory of Home

Most of us believe that there was a time, in the past that was far better than the present day. It was a time when we did not feel so stressed, so overwhelmed, and so unbalanced. It is as a time when the fall colors were brighter, a time when we felt love was more abundant and our relationships more secure. It's the idea of a Thanksgiving or a Christmas years ago which the same holidays today don't quite measure up to. The details don't matter, but most of us do carry a vision just beyond recollection of a sweeter and happier yesterday.

Many scholars tell us that those almost universal feelings date back to our childhood, those sunshine days that trail behind us no matter how old we get. When we think of going home, we remember things like homemade clothes, the wool suit, and pies cooling on the kitchen table. We remember trees that were planted which are now so tall and stout. We remember our mother's hands which were so warm and comforting, and life held a security that we never dreamed was so fragile. Going home was a cascade of different images but there was always a common denominator. When we were divided and shaken, or when the world dealt us a cruel blow, we could always limp home and be made whole.

Home, from as long as we can remember, had a special meaning for us. "Homeless" was the saddest term we could call another.

It should come as no surprise that going home also means returning to Jesus. That other home, which we don't quite understand; has got to have all the heart and passion of this world's best homes; a father and mother who sense our slightest need, first awareness that burst upon our senses with incompatible joy, and arms outstretched to us. And now, when we are divided and shaken, or when the world or even the church has dealt us a cruel blow, we can limp to that other home in prayer and be made whole.

The wise may be right, then, when they say our sense of a lost golden age, the good old days, is merely a shadowed sense of a lost golden age of our childhood. It may be a memory of something even before that, of another home and a Father who loves us still.

Rev. Hans Lillejord