

Positively Speaking

By Mark Wilson

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The Good Old Days

The past is a nice place to visit from time to time -- but it's a terrible place to live.

Sometimes we see a television show or visit a museum exhibit showing life a couple hundred years ago. Perhaps you've thought, "Those were the good old days! I wish we could go back and live like that."

Are you sure about that?

A couple hundred years ago the life expectancy was 38 years, the average work week was 72 hours, and the median annual income was \$300.

Cholera, typhoid and yellow fever were common. For instance, one out of five people in Philadelphia in 1793 died from these diseases.

Many women died in childbirth, and the flu also claimed the lives of many. Almost every home experienced the sorrow of losing a child.

No indoor plumbing, no refrigerators, no microwaves, no soft mattresses, no internet, no electric heat, no lights, no cars, no TV, no computers, no recorded music, no Tupperware, no soft drinks, no cheeseburgers.

Everybody milked their own cows!

Nah -- you really wouldn't want to go back there and live.

Thank God you live in 2009 instead of 1809!

Yet, there is something special about yesteryear. Perhaps we should bring yesterday's treasures into the present and appreciate them.

Rich family values are passed along from one generation to another. Some of the greatest music was written two or three hundred years ago. The Bible, of course, composed in ancient times, brings fresh inspiration and insight today.

St. Augustine said, *"You can only understand backwards, but you must live forwards."*

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