

## Which decade was better?

I have seen posts lately stating that one decade (50's, 60's, 70's) was better than where we are now. I am amazed at the memory lapses people have or were they too wrapped up in what was happening in their life to remember. Someone said this week that the 60's were wonderful, full of children respecting their parents, a peaceful time where people respected each other. I hope that is what my children feel. A safe time, were they unaware or have they forgotten the assassination of President Kennedy, the assassination of Martin Luther King, the murder of Medgar Evers in the driveway of his home, the murder of Bobby Kennedy. The four little girls killed by a bomb that exploded as they were preparing for services at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist church in Birmingham Alabama, the killing of three young civil rights workers in Mississippi, the killing of Viola Liuzzo, a civil rights worker in Alabama. The Edmund Pettus Bridge where marchers were attacked and beaten now forever known as Bloody Sunday. Have we forgotten the marches, the riots, the sit-ins, the children who left home and became known as hippies and flower children who sought peace and an end to the draft. Did they forget Kent State and the killing of young protesters? Did they forget the sight of people in the south who only wanted the same rights as others had and when they tried to protest there were police dogs, fire hoses, and clubs turned on them. Do they remember the "Draft" and how it took the poor in disproportionate numbers compared to those with money enough to obtain a doctor's note or a faked medical condition to get out of it? There were more who served and felt it was their duty and I applaud them and did at the time, but many came home to a country they did not recognize. They say that the music was better. Did they listen, truly listen to songs like, "Where Have all the Flowers Gone"? or John Lennon's 'Give Peace a Chance'. The 60's did bring us a lot of great music, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Ray Charles, the Beatles, Brenda Lee, Frank Sinatra, Roy Orbison, Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra, Bobby Vinton and did I mention Frank Sinatra. The sixties brought us a lot of joy and good music but there were turbulent times just as there are now. No era has been without problems and challenges. I hope that those that love the 60s that it is because they are younger, and their childhoods were happy, and the problems of the country did not touch them.

What we have now is horrific! At least in the 60s our children were safer. There are school shootings, senseless shootings, war and destruction, inflation, lack of mental health facilities. This is an attack on our most vulnerable, our most innocent. Every decade has had its problems and that will continue. We can strive for perfection, but everyone's idea of perfection is different. We are a world of vastly different opinions and hopes. Christ has called us to love. To love not just those who we agree with but the hardest love, to love those who we vehemently disagree with. When we do that and honor each person and protect our children, we will achieve what Christ commanded "Love thy neighbor" and our world will be a better and safer place.

Mark 10:13-16 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them. For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it". And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Dear Lord, we thank you for this day. May we use it to honor you in all things. Be with us in our work, in our comings and goings, in all our day. Be with our children, our grandchildren, and our Great grandchildren. Protect them, Lord. Be with those that are suffering, those that are ill and those that grieve. Be with those who are with us, may we see their needs. Those that seek you in their lives, those that hunger for a friendly voice. May we seek them and find them. Bless our church and our mission to bring others to you. Be with Pastor Don, bless his ministry and his family. Be with our staff and leaders, grant them energy for the mission, and strength for the journey. Be with our friends and neighbors, may they know peace and love. We pray in the name of Jesus, Amen

Grace Epperson