

# American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 [www.americandecency.org](http://www.americandecency.org)  
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart August 2025

## In His Time by Steve Huston



“Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.” Ecclesiastes 7:10

I’ve always loved history, particularly Biblical and American, looking back with nostalgia and even wishing I was there. I’ve also spent much time looking toward the future, wondering what it might bring, concerned about the health of others, and speculating where trends might lead. With so much attention to the past and the future, I, in my teen and young adult years, largely missed out on the present. It took some time before I would appreciate the past, while living in the present, and leaving the future in God’s Hands – trusting His time and His placement.

It’s likely that many find

it difficult to follow this instruction found in Ecclesiastes 7:10, particularly on a national level, but also, sometimes, personally. Nationally, we think of our founding and consider those men of old who seemed to naturally and eloquently intertwine Scripture, words of liberty, and ideals of governance which set boundaries upon the government, more so than the governed. Even those few who may have not been committed Christians knew the Bible thoroughly; it influenced their thinking. We may think of those bygone days and how the Hand of Providence moved upon our land, bringing prosperity and blessing, as well as times of hardship, to remind us to turn back to the God of Heaven.

Yet, God tells us it's not wise to dwell on "the good ole days." While it is good to remember Who was responsible for yesterday's blessings, we, instead of resting there, are to be ever growing forward, setting our affection on things above, and

looking unto Jesus - the Author and Finisher of our faith. Instead of trying to figure out what made those days better, let us consider our present state and set our hearts to God’s command of “keeping” His law – both treasuring it in our heart and living it out in our life and training our children to do likewise – not from the hope of gain, but from the motive of pure love for our Creator and for our neighbor too.

Looking back with longing for those days which are behind us, nationally or personally, can cause us sadness or anxiety as we compare them with today. It could also become a form of idolatry.

Worrying about the future, nationally or personally, may cause us stress, insecurity, and fear; these are forms of distrust in our Father's sovereignty and love. That's not God's will for us. He's given us a spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. Better for us to follow Proverbs 3:5-7. “Trust in the LORD

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*with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."*

It's right to remember the past and to consider the future, but not inordinately so. They both have their place, but the present is where we are to live, pray, and have our being.

If we hope to live out holy aspirations and "rejoice evermore" in the present, while facing the future with peace of mind and contentment of heart, let us practice the words of Samuel Rutherford: "*The great Master Gardener, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a wonderful providence with His own hand planted me here where by His grace in this part of His vineyard I grow; and here I will abide till the great Master of the vineyard thinks it fit to transplant me.*"

It's reminiscent of how Peter began his first letter to "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia..." These believers were scattered like seed, where God saw fit to put them. They weren't to focus on their past comforts, nor were they to have fear or anxiety regarding their present situation or where God might "plant" them next. God, the Master Gardener, chose (elected) them to be where they were – sometimes in hard places, other times not so bad – to proclaim the goodness and grace of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ's shed blood for the believer, and the Holy Spirit's sanctification of the believer to obedience. (1 Peter 1:2) Because they believed and loved Jesus, they could, in any situation, "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (v. 8) We, like these hand-picked fellow believers, should live out our present situations in obedience with joy, "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (v. 9)

Let us also be sure to follow the example set before us by Paul, not looking back upon past

failures or successes, but pursuing forward after holiness, in the present:

*"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14*

Paul knew that it was by God's grace and the ever-sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit that he would press on. As we walk our present path, may we be encouraged by S.D. Gordon's accurate assessment: "*Jesus never sends a man ahead alone. He blazes a clear way through every thicket and wood, and then softly calls, "Follow Me. Let's go on together, you and I."*

Wherever we are in life, may the joy of the Lord be our strength and might Jesus be the song on our lips as we press forward in holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.



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