

A 2020 Letter to Family and Friends

(Updated from 2012, *Looking Forward With Hope*)

Our World is in Turmoil and we continue to ask, “Where do we go from here?” It appears we may once again be on the verge of a **total readjustment of society world-wide!** And many of us are apprehensive and looking for answers.

In August, I will celebrate my 95th Birthday. Each season of life has brought new challenges and new rewards. The 1920’s were the era of post-World War I excitement, culminating in the Stock Market crash of 1929. My boyhood was spent in the difficult years of the drought and economic disaster of the Great Depression in the 1930’s.

The 1940’s found us attempting to bring peace and stability to the world by defeating the dictatorships of Germany, Italy and Japan. We won, but troubles didn’t end and utopia didn’t arrive. Instead, America immersed itself for the decades of the 1950’s, 1960’s, 1970’s, and most of the 1980’s trying to contain the threat of Communism all over the world in the Korean War, the Viet Nam War and the Cold War with Russia.

The 1990’s found us beginning a new Information Age with “*economic exuberance*” and hopes for a bright new 21st Century—only to find our expectations were short lived as we experienced the new challenge of Islamic radicalism and the War against Terror with the bombings of September 11, 2001, and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now we are reeling from the Pandemic Virus and the Economic and Racial tensions that are constantly in the news. This autumn we will engage in an historic national election. The consequences are important and will have serious effects for many years to come. But when we put these events in perspective, we realize they are no more challenging than those our people have faced in the past. More importantly, as we read the Bible, it is quickly apparent that we in America in the year 2020 are not facing anything worse than people have faced since the beginning of time!

In looking back it is clear to me that the great national and international problems we experienced over the years are not the main thrust of my

memories. Instead, I recall a boyhood working on our little farm surrounded by the love of our family and friends and teachers. World War II was a time for adventure and manhood. The Korean, Viet Nam and Cold War eras brought college and love and marriage and children and friends, followed by years in the work-world and the opportunity to grow ever closer to Jesus and the brothers and sisters in His Kingdom. And my more recent years in this new century are full of personal relationships—not national or international problems!

In summary, I have found that life, like politics, is primarily local! We *talk* about the weather and big problems most of us can do little about. But we *live* and are *eternally affected* by people and events that surround us each and every day!

When we are young, many of us believe our generation can change the world and make it right. But when we near the end, we know we didn't. And we never will, because an imperfect mankind cannot fix itself.

As I age, I now read Ecclesiastes with a sense of comradeship, rather than discouragement, and I recognize there truly is “*a time for everything*”... and that God “*has made everything beautiful in its time*”. (Eccl 3) (NIV)

I have concluded my job is not to fix the world. Rather it is to be who God has created me to be, and then (like King David) allow Him to use me to “... *serve His purpose in (my) own generation...*” (Acts 13:36) (NIV)

It is my prayer these thoughts will help you as they have me, to Trust the Lord and keep on “*Looking Forward With Hope*”!

From Grandpa With Love

*“And hope does not disappoint us,
because God has poured out His love into our hearts
by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.”
(Romans 5:5)(NIV)*

(The original 2012 *Looking Forward With Hope* is in Part VIII of Volume V *Passing It On*, in the *From Grandpa With Love* series)