

Train Whistles and Grandparents

I just love train whistles, especially the long slow ones in the middle of the night. The soft sound of that whistle wafting through the night sky, drifting across the fields, and into my ears as I lay there in bed is one of the most peaceful tranquilities in the entire world to my ears. There is something very nostalgic and sentimental for me in a train whistle, and it has a lot to do with the times I spent with my Grandpa and Grandma when I was a boy. Gramps was the kindest and sweetest man I think I have ever known. That's not to take anything away from my own Dad; he's a pretty great guy too, for sure. Nevertheless, Gramps would come over and help us on the farm quite often in the summers when I was a boy. He loved being out there on the baler keeping everything moving. Somehow, he and my Dad would get all six of us boys working to make the haymaking run smoothly. Don't ask me how they did it with a bunch of boys between the ages of six and thirteen, but they did. We all worked hard and tried to do a good job to please them. Gramps had arthritis in his knees and hands that caused him to limp, and curled his fingers into funny shapes, but he worked right on through the pain. He was our hero, and we all watched his every move as we knew he was a very special man. Grandma had broken her hip and was permanently in a wheel chair for a few years, and so each night Gramps would head for home at supper time to take care of his wife.

Because I was the youngest, and didn't have a lot of extra chores, I sometimes asked if I could go home with him and spend the night. Many times he obliged and I would run and grab my PJ's kiss my mom goodbye, and hop into his car. What a joy those times were. Grandma would see me coming and throw open her arms, pull me up into her chair and give me a big hug. She always had something wonderful cooking on the stove, and Gramps and I would go out to the garden and bring in whatever she needed to finish the meal. We washed up and sat down for supper just the three of us. I think I forgot just how lucky I was, and how blessed to have had such opportunities. They bowed their heads and Gramps thanked the Lord for the meal and for the good hard day's work. When we were all finished eating, I helped Gramps with the dishes and then we went back out to the garden to pick some raspberries or pull some weeds for a while.

Later, after I took a bath, I would sit and play on the floor with some toys that they kept on hand for their grandkids. It was fun to have them all to myself for a change. Gramps and Grandma would sit in their chairs and read their Bibles before bedtime while I played at their feet. Soon my eyes grew heavy and sleepy, and I crawled into bed and lay there waiting for the sound of the trains. They lived very near a train station, and the trains rolled in and out all night long. Those train whistles were the most wonderful sound to my little ears. So today every time I hear a train roll through Warren in the middle of the night with its soft long whistle, I think of the time I got to spend with my wonderful grandparents at their house.

I love my own grandchildren. What an amazing blessing they are. Psalms 103:17 reads; *"But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—"* I know that my Grandparents feared the Lord and believed in

Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord. What a blessing. It's pretty amazing how God is faithful from one generation to the next to those who love him and hear his call to salvation. Until next week, God bless!