

Grain Trucks and Faith

For several years now I sure have enjoyed sitting down at the computer and writing about my life as a kid growing up on the farm back in the sixties and seventies. There are so many things that pop into my mind each time I get ready to write this column. I have written about memories on the farm with my parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and of course, my siblings. I have also written about the farm animals, our tractors, trucks and machinery and even though these things weren't human, they were almost like family to us. That may seem a little strange to most people, but somehow, we did get very attached to everything on the farm. For instance, we had a green 1961 Ford pick-up that we called strangely enough, "the pickup". She had a "three on the tree" and all of us boys were able to learn to drive a manual out in the field in this beauty. She had a big steel grill over the front end protecting the radiator which was probably a good thing. I remember sitting on the very edge of the seat trying to reach the clutch as I learned to drive her.

Along with the pickup, we also had a blue 1955 Ford grain truck that held about 150 bushel that we called "the little truck". The "little truck" had a five speed transmission with a V8 under the hood which was pretty unusual in those days. It could really go down the highway. Finally, we had a 1947 International grain truck which we called "the big truck" because it held the most, about 250 bushel. Now I realize these names aren't too elaborate, but they made perfect sense to us kids. The two grain trucks didn't have hoists to raise their beds when we first got them, so when we hauled grain into the elevator Grandpa, Dad or one of our Uncles would pull right up on a wooden platform with the front tires. The platform was raised and lowered by chains and pulleys that were run by a motor. The man operating the elevator would throw the switch and that platform would start to rise up, lifting the whole front end of the truck into the air so the grain would slide out the back and down into the pit where it would be augered into bins. I remember sitting up in the cabs while the trucks went up up and thinking how cool it was.

We would park the "little truck" on one end of the field and the "big truck" on the other end and fire up the old IH 303 combine and really go to town picking corn, beans or cutting wheat. It seemed like we were farming big time in those days. When it came time to do the evening dairy chores, my older brothers would take turns running the combine and I would go help in the barn. Sometimes when my grandpa got off work at the steel mill in the afternoon, he would hurry over and try to get the trucks emptied at the elevator before it closed. That's when us younger boys got to ride along. Gramps would sometimes buy us a bottle of pop. They only cost a dime and tasted so good. Every time I drink an orange crush in a bottle, it puts me back in that Boone Grove, Indiana grain elevator. Sitting in the "little truck" or the "big truck" with Gramps.

On Saturdays we had Gramps at the farm all day long driving those grain trucks. Sometimes Grandma would come too and at lunch time he would say a beautiful prayer at the dinner table thanking God for "these our children". In these very trying days in which we live, I'm so glad that I have the peace that only Jesus brings to a heart and I'm so thankful that this faith has been passed down from generation to generation. Genesis 17:7 reads; *And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.* Now I know I can't get to heaven on my parents or grandparents' faith, but I'm sure glad they taught me the truth of God's word.