

GIVE ME THAT OLD TIME RELIGION

PASTOR TIMOTHY GREEN

I grew up in an old-fashion church. The first church I remember my father pastoring was built out of cinderblock and everybody set on wood benches. The congregation was mostly elderly people. We sang old songs and they played old instruments. One of the favorite passages of Scripture was Jeremiah 6:16 "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths , where is the good way, and walk therein.."

One of the favorite songs was, "Give me that old time religion." This was repeated three times and then the last line was, "It's good enough for me." The second verse was, "It makes me love everybody", and this was repeated also three times. The next verse was, "It was good for Paul and Silas", repeated three times. The next verse was, "It will do when I am dying," repeated three times. The last verse was, "It will take us all to heaven," repeated three times and then, "It's good enough for me."

I agree with all the words of that song, but I'm not sure that everybody who sang them actually lived by them. I don't think that some of the people practiced what they were singing. Especially that second verse that says, "It makes me love everybody."

I was raised in the church and have been around church people all my life but I haven't always seen that old time religion make people love everybody. The truth of the matter is, I've witnessed a lot of hate from professing Christians.

Didn't Jesus say that by our love one for another, the world would know that we are His disciples? Yes He did!

Can I submit to you today that the true measure of our spiritual growth and maturity is not in how long we pray or in how much Scripture we read but in how much we love. Everybody. Not just other Christians. Not just people who agree with us. God loves everybody and so should we.

Jesus met a woman at a well and loved her in a way that five husbands never had. He saved a woman from being stoned to death and loved her in a way that the rock carry legalist never did. He loved a thief dying beside Him on the cross in such a way that the man ended up with Him in paradise.

What I'm saying is that Jesus truly did love everybody and the more like Him we become, the more people we will love.

True "Old time religion" goes back much farther than 1961, the year I was born; it goes all the way back to Jesus.

That's the kind of "Old time religion" the church of 2017 needs today. The kind that makes us love everybody.