

Tools for Thought

*The other day I was re-reading passages from my fathers' book, **'Wine and Gall'**. On page 153 there is a concise dissertation about what was 'changing' in the culture of the young. This article was written in the late 60's. After reading this article again, I reflected on a few things in it that got my attention.*

The first was his observation about the culture of 'youth'. Changing attitudes about patriotism, religion, responsibility, sexual mores, and the work ethic were bothering him.

My father's experience taught him there was no substitute for hard work. He distressed at the changing belief in the value of work. The amelioration of prohibitions against pre-marital sex, drug use, gaming the system, fidelity, and love of country made him wonder where the parents of his day and the education system of that time had failed. His concern for the moral development of that generation was profound.

In this article his focus was no physical laziness, but intellectual and emotional laziness. He defined life's hard work in this manner: "it's hard to live by a religious code. It is hard to work for the good of your nation and its people. Work is hard. Self-indulgence is much easier than the self-denial good living requires."

Easy for him to say, right? My parents faced many challenges. I never heard him complain once. Through the loss of 3 babies, a tough job for which he accepted under-compensation, and the normal struggles of raising five children I never heard a note of self-pity or reproach. Even in the greatest professional crisis of his life, my father refused to disparage those who destroyed his dreams.

They were disciplined people who loved God above all else. Sometimes I think all of us could use some old-time religion.