

**FROM THE
BACK PORCH
SWING**

A YEAR'S WORTH OF THOUGHTS

BY

**BILL GRIFFIN
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INTRODUCTION

I started years ago to jot down some of my childhood memories of the farm and mountains of Ellijay, Georgia so my children could have a continuing history of life before television, palm pilots, pagers, and cell phones. When I was growing up in Ellijay, we barely had electricity, much less all the other amenities. I was 10 years old before we ever got our first television and it was a hand-me-down, used, [black and white no less]. A phone was a luxury enjoyed by those with money living in town. Running water – yes, about 50 yards down the bank in the creek. Inside plumbing – forget it. Our imaginations were our entertainment when we could get out from behind a mule working in the fields or the woods. I knew that if I did not get out of Ellijay and from behind that mule, my view of the world was never going to change.

I did get out – the night I graduated from High School, I walked up one side of the stage and received my diploma and walked down the other side, picked up my sack of clothes, and left town under the cover of darkness. I never wanted to live in Ellijay again. My, my, how things change as we get older. Not that I want to live in Ellijay but I realize just how meaningful the old expression is: “You can take the boy out of the mountains, but you can’t take the mountains out of the boy.” I would love to move back into the mountains and just get laid back in an old cane-back rocker with good books and let the thoughts keep coming. Ahhhhh! but I guess it ain’t to be.

I guess the hard work and the raising must have paid off somehow. If I had gotten what I deserved over the years, God would have sent a bolt of lightning to zap me. I am glad HE can see the end of all things before they happen as easy as He can see the beginning.

Anyway - Many of these thoughts are written around such stories but it seems God would not let me off without applying a spiritual application. If I had the thought, HE had the verse and if I had the verse, HE soon gave me the thought. I have not intentionally plagiarized others material but I can not help remembering stories heard and read that gave thought to my own mind. I have tried to give credit to any I can remember but too many are things remembered over years of time without remembrance of origin.

I have shared most of these individually with a network of friends over the years through copies or that marvelous invention, e-mail. Many have urged me to sort these and put them in a book for publication. I thought it was finally time I responded to their urging and put some of them together in a daily devotional booklet. Guess what--- I did not have quite as many as I thought, some were studies and too large to include in daily thoughts. I have added a few of my favorites collected over the years to finish the year.

If you have all of these, then you can just discard this booklet; if not, then I hope you enjoy it as much as I have enjoyed writing them over the years.

The thoughts are in no particular order as far as trying to match stories to dates on the calendar or events. God has a way of using them even when they are not around a special occasion. The index listed is in alphabetical order, not in the order of appearance.

May God bless you and may He speak to you somehow through these simple thoughts from a country boy HE chose to bless many years ago.

Bill Griffin
June 22, 2004

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