



Last week I shared with you the photo taken on the hay ride through Cades Cove. This week I will tell you how I got to go on the hay ride. When I called to make reservations for the ride, I was placed on the waiting list because every ride that night was already booked, and the only way I could make the journey was if someone canceled. The ticket person attempted to encourage me by saying that it is suppose to rain and some people would not show up if it rained. I wanted to go so badly that I was willing to set in some soggy hay if that was what it took.

This photo was taken about an hour before dark on the evening of the hay ride. There was a light mist of rain as I voyage through the park waiting for the time of the midnight adventure. The clouds looked very menacing as the winds began to rage through the trees. Then the strangest thing happened as nightfall came to this massive valley; the clouds parted, the stars began to twinkle, and moon showed his face. And when I reached the spot where the trip began the wagon was only about half full and the straw was perfectly dry and comfortable.

The clouds that an hour before threatened rain, winds, and soggy straw only brought me the best seat on the farm cart when time came to begin. How often is that the case? We imagine the worst; we expect bad things to happen when we see a dark cloud and forget that there is someone in heaven watching out for us. We are so prone to worry when things seem to not be going our way that we are surprised when the very thing that caused us to worry works together for our good. We are like the man who said, "Don't tell me that worry doesn't do any good. I know better. The things I worry about don't happen."

We clog our happiness with care, destroying what is, with thoughts of what may be, every time we spend our time in anxiety. To worry about tomorrow is to be unhappy today. To me, faith means not worrying about what might be and instead investing our time doing the good we know to do. Why do we anticipate trouble, or worry about what may never happen? Keep in the sunlight and meet whatever comes your way, whether soggy hay or dry with a smile and the assurance that all things will work together for our good.

Something to think about:

- We bring God to the bar of our judgment and say hard things about him: "Why does God bring thunderclouds and disasters when we want green pastures and still waters?" Bit by bit we find, behind the clouds, the Father's feet; behind the lightning, an abiding day that has no night; behind the thunder a still, small voice that comforts with a comfort that is unspeakable.
- Those who are the happiest are not necessarily those for whom life has been easiest. Emotional stability is an attitude. It is refusing to yield to depression and fear, even when black clouds float overhead. It is improving that which can be improved and accepting that which is inevitable.
- Measure not God's love and favor by your own feeling. The sun shines as clearly in the darkest day as it does in the brightest. The difference is not in the sun, but in some clouds.
- Clouds are always connected with God. Clouds are those sorrows or sufferings or providences without or within our personal lives which seem to dispute the empire of God. If there were no clouds we would not need faith. Seen apart from God, the clouds or difficulties are accidents, but by those very clouds we are taught to walk by faith.
- Worry pulls tomorrow's cloud over today's sunshine.

Your friendly storm chaser
Rickey Moore