May 2011 Signs of the Times Email Newsletter

The Signs of the Times newsletter is a collection of stories and quotes from past issues of Signs and These Times.

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The “Classmate” tells a story of a preacher of the Gospel who had gone down into a coal mine during the noon hour to tell the miners about Jesus Christ. Meeting the foreman, he asked him what he thought of God’s way of salvation.

“O, it is too cheap; I cannot believe in such a religion as that.”

Without an immediate answer to his remark, the preacher asked: “How do you get out of this place?”

“Simply by getting into the cage,” was the reply.

“Well, that certainly is very easy and simple. But do you not need to help raise yourself?” said the preacher.

“Of course not,” replied the miner. “As I have said, you have nothing to do but get into the cage.”

“But what about the people who sank the shaft and perfected all this arrangement; was there much labor about it?”

“Indeed, yes; the shaft is eighteen hundred feet deep, and it was sunk at great cost to the proprietor.”

“Just so; and when God’s Word tells you that whosoever believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, you at once say: ‘Too cheap! Too cheap!’ forgetting that God’s work to bring you and others out of the pit of destruction and death was accomplished at a vast cost, the price being the death of His only Son. Men forget that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself purged our sins, and that their part is but to accept what has been done, and thank God for it.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, April 27, 1904.

Quote: “It will hurt you more to live a day without prayer than to live it without bread.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, August 28, 1901.

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Dr. Robert E. Speer tells of a boy raised in a Christian home where family worship and grace at meals were the common order. On being invited to a pal’s house for dinner where everyone pitched in and ate, the lad looked up and said, “Around our house we always give thanks and then eat. But you are just like my dog, Fido. He just eats!”—By George Wells Arms, These Times, November 1977.

Quote: “Children need models more than they need critics.”—By Joseph Houbert, These Times, March 1965.

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NEW from Pacific Press—Really Living 2 by Don Schneider with Ken Wade. New from Hope TV’s most-watched program, Really Living, comes Really Living 2—more amazing stories of people whose lives have been changed by Jesus. Read the stories behind faith giants like Doug Batchelor, Jim Ayer, Miroslav Kis, and others, and you will discover what happens when ordinary people invite Jesus to change their lives. You, too, can experience the abundant life He promises all believers and begin really living.

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What would you be thinking about if tomorrow you were to be made the President of the United States? Here is a story of one of our great Presidents, and what he thought about when he was inaugurated.

He lived in Cleveland, Ohio. A few days before the great ceremony, he wrote to his mother: “I want you to go to Washington with me.”
His mother was very much surprised, and, after thinking it all over, she wrote to her son, of whom she was very proud: “I cannot go to Washington. I would be quite out of place there among the great people whom you will meet. I will stay at home and pray for you.”

The man who was soon to be President sent this answer: “I will not go without you.” And so they traveled together to the capitol city.

They stayed at the same hotel, and when the time came for the ceremony, they went together, his mother leaning on his arm. They entered the carriage and drove to the capitol, where a great audience of over one hundred thousand people were waiting.

It was a gala occasion—the high platform and all the celebrated men from all over the country, governors, judges, and ministers—and all the great sea of faces turned to the one central place where he was. The people noticed that instead of taking the chair that was provided for him, he gave it to his mother. Then he delivered his inaugural address. After he had taken the oath to be true to his high office, and before he sat down, he put his arms around his mother, and kissed her.

His name was James A. Garfield. The way he took care of his mother was one of the most beautiful things he ever did, and all that great congregation of people, after the din was over, and they had gone to their homes, thought so.

Our mothers do for us far more than we can ever repay. Let us hope that no one will ever get too big, or too old, or go too far away to remember his mother, and to make her happy in his own happiness.—Author Unknown, Our Times, April 1950.

Quote: “When we get to the place where we pay more attention to the high chair, we will have less need for the electric chair.”—By Warden Lawes, formerly of the Sing Sing Penitentiary, Our Times, March 1950.

Who can pray like a thoroughly Christian mother? Many years ago there was a mother in Somerville, NJ, whose son, a young man, had begun to lead a dissolute life.

One evening she begged him not to spend that evening away from her, but he declared that he would. He said, “Mother, I’m not going to be tied to your apron strings; I am going to go.”

The mother replied, “Please try to remember every moment tonight that, until you come back, I am going to be on my knees asking God to save you.”

The son, with a rude gesture and muttered oath, rushed from her presence and spent the night in a shameful carousal. It was four o’clock in the morning when he got home. He had managed to keep his mother out of his mind during his revelry.

As he got to the house, he saw a light shining through the shutters. Turning blinds down and looking in, he saw his mother on her knees, and heard her pray, “God, save my wandering boy.” Going to his room, he threw himself on his bed, but he could not sleep. After a while he arose, then he knelt down, and it seemed to him as though his wrestling mother was pleading with God, and it led him to cry out, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” And that very morning he was converted.

The news of his conversion soon spread in the neighborhood, and in three weeks from that time more than two hundred young people had been converted. Could that young man doubt that God hears and answers prayer? And what blessed encouragement this is to praying, Christian mothers. Hard praying leads to the conversion of hard sons.—Christian Advocate, Signs of the Times, February 21, 1895.

Quote: “We attract hearts by the qualities we display; we retain them by the qualities we possess.”—By Suard, Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896.

Ignaus, an Arctic mail-carrier, whose six dogs died in one night from some poison in the frozen fish which was part of the supplies, was a hundred miles from a trading post and the cold 40 degrees below zero.

Broken-hearted after his dogs, the poor fellow would have given up and died had he not a wife and little babe awaiting him at the end of his route, but even the thought of those who were dear to him failed sometimes to keep his mind from wandering.

Before, he had the variation of talking to the dogs, who seemed almost human. Now, no sound except the crackling of the ice, no sight but snow, snow, snow, in great stretches of dazzling whiteness; its crisp crust, many feet thick, seemed as solid as a glacier.
At last the poor fellow felt that he could not bear it any longer. He had lightened the load on his sledge, and drew it after him by day, and slept in his fur bag on it at night.

He cried to the Great Father in agony of pleading, "O, leave me not alone so long; send someone, O, send someone, or I die!"

Once more at night he lay down in his fur bag and slept. But what was this pushing him over? Ignaus opened his eyes, and there stood over him a great bear. Evidently the brute was curious; he had never seen anything like this before. Strangely enough Ignaus was not frightened. He rose and fed the bear with frozen fish from the sledge, the creature acted like a great wild dog, and when satisfied lay down on his side while Ignaus satisfied his own hunger; then when he started on his walk again the bear trotted beside him.

Surely the Great Father sent him, thought Ignaus. At night again he fed the bear, and the two lay down again side by side, the warmth of the shaggy brute putting new life into Ignaus.

When within five miles of the trading post, suddenly the bear turned toward a great forest in the distance and Ignaus saw him no more.

When he reached the post, the president, when he heard how Ignaus had come across the vast solitudes of ice and snow without his dogs, said, "He is the bravest man of the north; surely the good God sent the bear to save his reason."—Home Guard, Signs of the Times, December 3, 1896.

Quote: "It is one thing to preach the crucifixion of Christ; it is another thing to preach 'Christ crucified.'"—United Presbyterian, Signs of the Times, July 30, 1896.

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A very helpful book might be made up of the little happenings, the little deeds of kindness, the little exhibitions of unselfishness and brotherly love seen and heard on the streets by those who are on the lookout for the better and brighter things of life. It was the unselfishness of a little child that made up the wayside incident of which I write.

She was a child of the slums, a ragged, unkempt, forlorn little girl of about ten years of age. Someone had given her a penny, and she had hurried away to the penny store, and there purchased a long stick of striped red-and-white candy. She was running along the street, proud and happy in her new and rare possession, when I saw her. Suddenly another little girl, equally ragged and forlorn looking, came limping out of the dark hallway of a dilapidated old rookery of a tenement house. She was very lame, and had evidently suffered much in her short life. Her face had a drawn and prematurely old look, such as one is always sorry to see in the faces of children.

The two little girls met, and the one with the candy held it aloft, exclaiming: "See what I've got! Just see what I've got!"

"Where'd you git it, Janie?"

"Bought it."

"Where'd you git the money?"

"A man give it to me for scooting after his hat when the wind blowed it off."

"Gimme some of it, won't you, Janie? Please do."

There was a wistful, eager, hungry look in the drawn little face.

Janie hesitated. Evidently sticks of candy came rarely to her. She looked longingly at the candy and then at the little girl. Suddenly she rushed forward, saying, eagerly, joyously: "You take it all, Maggie; you take it all. You can't scoot after gentlemen's hats and earn pennies, and I can. So you take it all; and if I git a chance to earn another penny, I'll give it to you to buy anything you want to with it."

"Generous little heart, in which love of self had not yet found an abiding place.—Young Reader, Signs of the Times, April 1, 1903.

Quote: "No one can tell who the heroes are, and who the cowards, until some crisis comes to put us to the test."—H. E. S. Hopkins, Signs of the Times, June 13, 1900.

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