July 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.

Some time ago a man said to me: "There are so many different ideas about religion that I get all mixed up, and so I let the whole thing alone. I can't understand what it all means, and so I feel that the best way to do is to let it all alone." He seemed to think that his statement was a conclusive and unique rejoinder to my question to him.

"Well, my dear friend," I said, "may I ask you a question?"
"Surely," he replied.
"In your traveling you need to patronize many restaurants, do you not?"
"Yes."
"And do you not find many dishes served in many different ways, some of them very questionable at that?"
"I surely do, and some of them I simply can't get away with."
"And I suppose some of them are good, and some bad, and some very indifferent?"
"Yes."
"Then," I concluded, "I would advise you to follow your plan relative to religion, and leave them all alone, and simply stop eating."

He smiled and said, "Well, I guess you have me cornered."

It is a fact, friends, that altogether too many persons are neglecting salvation on flimsy pretexts and arguments that they would not dare to use in the everyday affairs of life.—By William A. Westworth, Signs of the Times, February 12, 1929.

Quote: "It was the outcast, the publican and sinner, the despised of the nations, that Christ called, and by His loving-kindness compelled to come unto Him. The one class that He would never countenance was those who stood apart in their self-esteem, and looked down upon others."—Anonymous, Signs of the Times, March 12, 1929.

Don't miss the August 2011 issue of Signs of the Times: "Sanctuary of Shadows", "How to Know You're Saved", "Costly Grace", "Children and Obesity", "Is Obedience a Condition of Salvation?", "Living as a Giver" and other important articles. To order Signs, call: 1-800-765-6955 or online at www.pacificpress.com/signs

A gentleman started across a busy street one day in one of our cities, when a woman suddenly pulled him by the arm and said, "Look at that red light!"

He replied, "But look at the people going across the street."

The woman said, "Don't look at the people: look at the light and follow it!" That was good advice. It really put the whole thing in a nutshell.

Are we taking our walking signals in this world from Christ or from the crowd?—By H. M. S. Richards, These Times, April 1969.

Quote: "I believe that all of the differences that rend the world today would find speedy solution if men and nations would but return in all humility to the plain teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. There, indeed, are the truths that set men free."—By Franklin D. Roosevelt, These Times, January 1961.

NEW from Pacific Press—The Connected Family by Paul and Carolyn Rayne. Anything worth doing takes effort, time, and perseverance—including parenting. In The Connected Family, Paul and Carolyn Rayne present a practical twenty-six step program designed to help parents make their children a priority, lead them to make a commitment to God, and teach them the tools for Christian living. Put these principles into practice and become a truly connected family!
A lad in Boston, rather small for his age, worked in an office as errand boy for four gentlemen who do business there.

One day the gentlemen were chaffing him a little for being so small, and said to him:

“You will never amount to much; you are too small.”

The little fellow looked at them.

“Well,” said he, “as small as I am, I can do something that neither of you can do.”

“Ah, what is that?” said they.

“I don’t know as I ought to tell you,” he replied.

But they were anxious to know, and urged him to tell what he could do that neither of them was able to do.

“I can keep from swearing,” said the little fellow.

There were some blushes on four faces, and there seemed to be no more anxiety for further information.—From Exchange, Signs of the Times, April 19, 1899.

Quote: “Outward reformation can never be accepted of God as a substitute for inward cleansing.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, April 10, 1893.

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The story has it that a Vermont newspaper editor, in order to fill a blank space in a column of his paper, printed the Ten Commandments verbatim and without comment. Several days later he received a brief letter: “Please cancel my subscription. Your newspaper is getting to be far too personal.”—By Kenneth J. Holland, These Times, March 1977.

Quote: “All my theology is reduced to this narrow compass—Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”—By Archibald Alexander, These Times, November 1971.

New from Signs of the Times—Life Matters—four special issues dealing with real life issues; health, relationships, family finances. For a free sample set, send your name and mailing address to: dalgal@pacificpress.com Offer good only in the US and Canada, and ends July 15, 2011.

Marie Ribot lived with her adopted daughter in two tiny spotless rooms. Her face showed the effects of privations of her life, yet somehow it always glowed with an inner joy. One day a friend who longed to know the secret of that radiance, called to see her.

Marie, apologizing for keeping at work while she talked, was fixing up a tiny jar of jam for a sick friend. From a store of wrapping papers she selected a white piece and cut it thriftily; from a box of string she chose a piece of green, tying it in a tiny rosette; last of all, she picked a leaf of sweet geranium from a plant in the window and slipped it through the bow.

“What an artist you are, Marie!” Mrs. Lindsay exclaimed, “How did you learn it?”

Marie was silent a moment before she answered. Finally she said, “From my grandmother. She—Grandmere—talked always of the gifts of the good God—always giving, giving to His children. So those who had His love in their hearts must give too. I was young then, and impatient; and we were very poor. I cried, ‘How, Grandmere, how can we give?’

“And she said, ‘The heart that loves never lacks a gift. Look about you and listen, Marie.’ So I looked and listened, especially to her. I saw how people came to her, and always she gave and gave; and I saw that often what she had to give was courage, or faith, or kind words about another; and after the blindness dropped from my eyes, I saw that that was what people wanted most. Madame’s kind words about my work—what was that but a gift? And then there are so many other things: bits of tin foil, ribbon, bright papers for the children—it is wonderful how they come—a leaf, a blossom. So the good God gives His children the joy of giving.”—By Inez Brasier, Our Times, October 1946.

Quote: “Sympathy, when expressed in words, soothes the troubled heart; but sympathy, when expressed in action, takes the trouble away from the heart.”—Unknown, These Times, December 1971.
Edward Payson’s memory is fragrant and strong. He was known as a man of prayer. The following is illustrative of this: When I was in Portland, Maine, having an hour to spend, I sought out the sexton of the old church where Edward Payson preached, and said to him:

“Where is the house in which Mr. Payson died?”
“Where are the remains of it,” he replied, pointing to a house partly torn down.
“Is it true,” I asked, “that they found the boards in the floor beside his bed worn by his knees where he had prayed?”
The old sexton said, “It is true.”

Morning and evening the man of God prayed there so long that the very boards felt the impress of his knees. When Payson lived, and when Payson died, he shook the State of Maine, and he shook New England. There was no man in all New England that had the power over men that he had.—Unknown, Signs of the Times, August 12, 1889.

Quote: “To the Bible men will return, and why? Because they cannot do without it.”—By Matthew Arnold, Signs of the Times, February 1, 1938.

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