May 2012 *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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At a missionary meeting a canvasser related the following experience:

In a certain town he was stopped by a policeman and questioned as to his work. The policeman then saw his book bag and said, "I judge from your bag you are an optician carrying glasses."

"Yes," he answered.

The policeman asked him to open his bag and let him see the glasses. When he saw the Bibles and other books he exclaimed, "Why, these are books!"

The canvasser replied: "Yes; but they are glasses for the souls of men. Man is in darkness, but these help him to see. The Bible is a light to our feet. There are many people needing these to help them find the way into the kingdom of God."

After having shown these glasses, he was allowed to go on his way in peace.—L. V. Finster, *Signs of the Times*, November 14, 1916.

Quote: "Stars may be seen from the bottom of a deep well, when they cannot be discerned from the top of a mountain. So are many things learned in adversity which the prosperous man dreams not of."—Unknown, *Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1881.

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Don't miss the June 2012 issue of *Signs of the Times*: “Boost Your Spiritual Intelligence”, “A Thief in the Night”, “Killer Stress”, “What Is a Soul?”, “Give Yourself a Day”, “How to Understand the Truth” and other important articles.

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On our list of things to forget—because they are barriers on the road to successful living—are one's past sins and mistakes, provided of course that confession and restitution have been made. It is not only an indication of lack of faith to dwell on past sins once they have been taken to God, but the practice will also pave the way for further defects. As one psychologist put it, "Whatever gets your attention will sooner or later get you."

A certain middle-aged pastor for many years spoiled his good sermons by his nervous way of delivering them. But one day his nervous mannerisms mysteriously and permanently vanished. Some of his parishioners, not satisfied to let good enough alone, looked into the reason. When he was a little boy, he at one time muffed his lines while reciting a poem. Because of this whenever he got up in public, he recalled that embarrassing experience and practically repeated it. One day he received the counsel to forget his childhood blunder; God helped him do so, and, although belatedly, he began to be a successful pulpit orator.—By Paul K. Freiwirth, *These Times*, April 1954.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three.
One lived and died for self; One died for you and me.
The Greek died on a throne; Christ died on a cross;
One's life a triumph seemed; the Other's but a loss.
One led vast armies forth; the Other walked alone;
One shed the whole world's blood; the Other gave His own.
The Greek forever died; Christ forever lives.
He loses all who gets, and wins all things who gives.—By Charles Ross Weede, *These Times*, February 1961.

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NEW from Pacific Press—*James: the Brother of Jesus* by Trudy J. Morgan-Cole. Imagine growing up in the same family as Jesus. *The Desire of Ages* observes that tensions in the home were fueled by Jesus’ unwillingness to follow
many of the religious traditions so important to His brothers. And, to be fair to them, they were expecting God to send them a Messiah, not raise one up from right in their midst! What about us? Have we become so familiar with the words and stories of Jesus that we can no longer see Him with fresh eyes? In *James: the Brother of Jesus* Trudy Morgan-Cole masterfully paints a soul-stirring picture of a Savior unafraid to risk doing the unexpected in order to redeem His family for eternity.

Read the first chapter of this book online at [http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/Detail.tpl?sku=081632512X](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/Detail.tpl?sku=081632512X) Order online or from your local Adventist Book Center--1-800-765-6955.

The story is told of a Persian prince preparing for the throne. Aware of his need for more knowledge, he summoned his wise men and commanded them to prepare a history of mankind. Twenty years later the scholars brought him six thousand books. Too busy with the affairs of state to wade through that many books, the king told his wise men to edit their work and to condense their findings into one book.

Another twenty years passed, and the scholars presented the king with the book he had asked for. The king, however, was dying and was not able to read any of the book. From his deathbed he looked up at his wise men and cried, “Then I shall die without knowing the history of mankind!”

“Sir,” said one of the group, “I will sum it up for you in a few words: They were born; they suffered; they died.”—By C. William Fisher, *These Times*, June 1983.

Quote: “Faith is not trying to believe something regardless of the evidence. Faith is daring to do something regardless of consequences.”—From, *The Nazarene Preacher, These Times*, April 1971.

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I remember a man who had been a Christian for two years, but he was bemoaning his hard and sinful heart. I said to him one day, “Did you ever know a sinner who had not a hard heart?”

“No,” he said, “but mine is getting no better.”

I arose and closed all the shutters, and made the room quite dark.

“Why did you do that?” he asked.

“I want to teach you how to drive away the darkness,” I said. So I handed him a long broom and a duster. “Now, sweep out the darkness.”

“I can’t,” he said.

“Can’t you if you try very hard? Will no amount of physical force do it?”

“Certainly not,” he said.

Then I opened the shutters and the room was beautifully illuminated. “So you see that, if you want the darkness and dread of your heart to be dispelled, it is not by any amount of effort of your own, but by letting in the light of the Son of Righteousness. But now that we have such a beautiful light in the room, we may close the shutters again; we shall want to more, I suppose, for a month,” I said.

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that we are not to expect to have a stock of grace laid up on which we may draw; but that, if we would continue in the light, we must keep looking up to the Son, and receiving His blessed rays into our souls.”—Selected, *Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1886.

Quote: “You don’t get any joy out of your religion, eh? Well, perhaps no one else is getting any joy out of your religion either.”—Unknown, *Signs of the Times*, February 27, 1893.
She replied, “I wish you would mind you own business, sir. Good day!”

This young lady went to the ball and danced all night. She went home, and when her head was at rest upon her pillow, conscience began to do its work. She thought how she had insulted her pastor, the best friend she had perhaps in all the earth. This torment of conscience was kept up for three days, until she could endure it no longer.

Going to her pastor’s study she told him how sorry she was that she had said words that caused his heart to ache. “I have been the most miserable girl in the world for the past three days,” she said, “and I want to become a Christian; I want to be saved. Oh, what must I do to be saved?”

The old pastor, with his heart full of compassion and sympathy and love for the contrite spirit before him, pointed her to the Lamb of God, and told her how she must give herself to God just as she was.

“What! Just as I am, and I one of the most sinful creatures in the world? You surely do not mean to say that God will accept me just as I am?”

“I mean just that,” was the pastor’s reply. “God wants you to come to Him just as you are.”

The young lady went home, and retiring to her room, kneeled beside her bed and prayed God to take her, just as she was. Reaching to a chair that stood by the bed, she took a piece of paper and a pencil that were there, and under these holy influences wrote the verses of that hymn so dear to the heart of every Christian:*

Just as I am without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bids’t me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
With fears within and foes without,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am; Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, thy love unknown,
Has broken every barrier down;
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!

*The lady was Miss Charlotte Elliott. The poem was written in 1834.—Selected, Signs of the Times, August 26, 1886.

Quote: “Temper is such a good thing that we should never lose it.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, May 3, 1877.

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A man set out to walk a hundred miles. Two days later another man followed on the same road and on the fourth day overtook the first man. The latter remarked: “This is the worst road I ever traveled. There is the greatest lot of barking little dogs I ever saw, and it has taken half my time to drive them off.”

“Why,” said the second man, “I didn’t pay any attention to them, but came right along as if they weren’t there.”—Selected, Signs of the Times, April 26, 1905.
Quote: “Do you know the commonest command in Scripture is ‘Fear not.’ Times without number in the Word of God rings out upon us, ‘Thou shalt not be afraid.’ For courage is at the roots of life, and it is the soil in which every virtue flourishes.”—By George H. Morrison, Signs of the Times, July 30, 1929.

Lifting and Leaning

There are two kinds of people on earth today,
Just two kinds of people, nor more, I say.

Not the good and the bad, for ‘tis well understood
The good are half bad and the bad are half good.

Not the happy and sad, for the swift-flying years
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.

Not the rich and the poor, for to count a man’s wealth
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.

Not the humble and proud, for in life’s busy span,
He who puts on vain airs is not counted a man.

No! the two kinds of people on earth I mean
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.

Wherever you go you will find the world’s masses
Are ever divided in just these two classes.

And, strangely enough, you will find, too, I ween,
There is only one lifter to twenty who lean.

In which class are you? Are you easing the load
Of overtaxed lifters who toil down the road?

Or are you a leaner who lets others bear
Your portion of worry and labor and care?—By Ella Wheeler Wilcox, These Times, January 1965.

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