January 2013 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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It is said that John Wesley was once walking along a road with a brother, who related to him his troubles, saying he did not know what he should do. They were at that moment passing a stone fence to a meadow, over which a cow was looking.

“Do you know,” said Wesley, “why the cow looks over that wall?”

“No,” replied the one in trouble.

“I will tell you,” said Wesley, “because she cannot look through it; and that is what you must do with your troubles: look over and above them.”—Geo. Mcdonald, Signs of the Times, February 22, 1883.

Quote: “You may be poor in this world’s goods; you may not be numbered among the leaders in society; your position may be a very humble one; yet, if you stand with a face set toward God’s eternal mansions, and your heart and mind are filled with God’s sure Word of truth, you are living a life which God will smile upon and angels rejoice in.”—By Eliza Veeder Dow, Signs of the Times, October 7, 1903.

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Do you see that man with a rake in his hand—an old muckrake? He gives his whole attention to the straws and sticks and dust. He is interested in muck. He is a specialist in garbage. Above his head stands a bright Being with a celestial crown in His hand. This beautiful crown He offers to the man with the muckrake, but he won't look up. He is more interested in mud than in majesty. So he hisses the crown. He does not believe in it; he will not look up.

John Bunyan, who tells this story of the man with the muckrake in his Pilgrim's Progress—which, by the way, he wrote while he was in jail at Bedford—says that it describes some people who consider heaven only a fable and things here on earth the only real things. In other words Bunyan is speaking of those who will not look up. He pictures people who look down at the dust and dirt of this world so long that they forget that there is something better in another direction. They scratch about with their little muckrakes and never look up to the glory and peace of heaven. They need to turn from the clod to God.—By H. M. S. Richards, Our Times, May 1950.

Quote: “To be silent, to suffer, to pray, when we cannot act, is acceptable to God. A disappointment, a contradiction, a harsh word, received and endured as in His presence, is worth much.”—By Fenelon, Signs of the Times, December 7, 1948.

NEW from Pacific Press—SHARING BOOKS FOR 2013:

End-Time Hope by Mark Finley is the sharing book for 2013. In the pages of this book you will look beyond what is to what will be and joy will be yours as you discover hope for today, tomorrow, and forever. Help your friends, neighbors, and business associates look to the future with confidence—share End-Time Hope! Read the first chapter of this book
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During a British conference on comparative religions, experts from around the world were discussing whether any one belief was unique to the Christian faith. They began eliminating possibilities. Incarnation? Other religions had different versions of gods appearing in human form. Resurrection? Again, other religions had accounts of return from death.

The debate went on for some time until C. S. Lewis wandered into the room. “What’s the rumpus about?” he asked, and heard in reply that his colleagues were discussing Christianity’s unique contribution among world religions.

In his forthright manner Lewis responded, “Oh, that’s easy. It’s grace.”—By Philip D. Yancey, Signs of the Times, October 1998.

Quote: “A wise man reflects before he speaks; a fool speaks and reflects on what he has uttered.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, May 24, 1883

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Worry can make even the strongest person physically ill. General Ulysses S. Grant discovered that fact during the closing days of the Civil War.

Grant’s soldiers had been besieging Richmond for nine months. Knowing the end was near, Lee’s troops had set fire to the cotton and tobacco warehouses in Richmond, burned the arsenal, and fled from the city. General Grant and his army followed in hot pursuit, defeating Confederate units at every contact. Obviously, the Civil War was coming to an end. But during those final hours, Grant began suffering a headache so intense that he fell behind his troops, stopping at a farmhouse. “I spent the night,” he records in his memoirs, “in bathing my feet in hot water and mustard and putting mustard plasters on my wrists and the back part of my neck, hoping to be cured by morning.”

The next morning he was cured, instantly. But it wasn’t the mustard plasters that cured him. Rather, a horseman who galloped up the road to the farmhouse where Grant was recuperating brought the cure: a letter from General Lee saying that he wanted to surrender. “The instant I saw the contents of the note,” Grant wrote, “I was cured.”

It was stress—worry—that had sickened Grant.—By Victor M. Parachin, *Signs of the Times*, May 2000.

Quote worth pondering: A little girl in Aberdeen brought a basket of strawberries to the minister very early one morning. “Thank you, my little girl,” he said. “They are very beautiful. But I hope you didn’t gather them yesterday, which was the Sabbath day.” “No sir,” replied the child, “I pulled them this morning; but they was growin’ all yesterday.”—*Quaint Sayings of Children by David Macrae, Signs of the Times*, September 17, 1896.

NEW from *Signs of the Times: When Life Is Unfair*—this 16-page special issue of *Signs* is created especially to share with those who question how a God of love can allow so much pain and heartache. Written by Evangelist Mark Finley, it is a powerful reminder of how much God cares for us. For a FREE sample copy, please send your mailing address to Dalgal@pacificpress.com before January 15, 2013. (Offer good in the US and Canada only.)

A legend from India tells about a mouse who was terrified of cats until a magician agreed to transform him into a cat. That resolved his fear. . . until he met a dog, so the magician changed him into a dog. The mouse-turned-cat-turned-dog was content until he
met a tiger—so, once again, the magician changed him into what he feared. But when the
tiger came complaining that he had met a hunter, the magician refused to help. “I will
make you into a mouse again, for though you have a body of a tiger, you still have the
heart of a mouse.”

Courage is an outgrowth of who we are. Exterior supports may temporarily sustain, but
only inward character creates courage.—By Max Lucado, Signs of the Times, May 1997.

Quote: “O, for closest communion with God, till soul and body, head, face, and heart shine
with divine brilliancy! But, O, for a holy ignorance of our shining!”—By Rutherford, Signs of
the Times, August 28, 1901.

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Once I knew a working man—a potter by trade—who had one small invalid child at
home. He wrought at his trade with exemplary fidelity, being always in the shop with the
opening of the day. He managed, however to bear each evening to the bedside of the
“wee lad,” as he called him a flower, a bit of ribbon, a fragment of crimson glass—indeed,
anything that would lie out on the white counterpane, and gave a color in the room. He
was a quiet, unsentimental man, but never went he home at night-fall without some toy or
trinket, showing that he had remembered the wan face that lit up so when he came in.
I presume he never said to a living soul that he loved that sick boy so much; still he
went on patiently loving him. And by and by he moved that whole shop into positively real,
but unconscious, fellowship with him. The workmen made curious little jars and tea-cups
upon their wheels, and painted diminutive pictures down their sides, before they struck
them in corners of the kiln at burning-time. One brought some fruit in the bulge of his
apron, and another brought some engravings in a rude scrapbook. Not one of them all
whispered a word, for this solemn thing was not to be talked about.

They put them in the old man’s hat, where he found them; so he understood all about
it. And I tell you seriously, that entire pottery, full of men of rather coarse fiber by nature,
grew quiet as the months drifted, becoming gentle and kind, and some of the
ungovernable ones stopped swearing, as the weary look on their patient fellow-worker’s
face told them beyond any mistake that the inevitable shadow was drawing nearer.
Everyday now somebody did a piece of his work for him, and put it upon the sanded plank
to dry; thus he could come later and go earlier.

So when the bell tolled, and the little coffin came out of the door of the lowly house,
right around the corner, out of sight, there stood a hundred stalwart workingmen from the
pottery, with their clean clothes on, most of whom gave a half day of time for the privilege
of taking off their hats to the simple procession, filing in behind it, and following across the village green to its grave that small burden of a child, which not one of them had ever seen with his own eyes.—Examiner, Signs of the Times, October 13, 1890.

Quote: “Christians who are much in secret prayer and contemplation, are men of greatest life and joy; because they have all more immediately from God Himself.”—By Baxter, Signs of the Times, August 28, 1901.

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Compiled by Dale Galusha. Please pass this newsletter on to others.

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