March 2014 *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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“Is your son buried there?” asked a tourist of an old man who was kneeling beside a soldier’s grave in a large Southern cemetery.

“No, my friend is buried here,” said the old man with feeling. “During the Civil War I was drafted; but my family were all sick, and it seemed impossible for me to go. This young neighbor came and said to me, ‘You stay at home with your family, and I will go in your place.’ He was killed in the battle on Lookout Mountain, and I have come a long, long way to write above the grave of this wonderful friend the words, ‘He died for me.’”

You and I have a Friend who died for us. We cannot write our gratitude above His resting place for He is now in heaven, pleading our cases before the Father; but we can write our gratitude on the hearts of others, by telling them of His wonderful love.—By Mrs. Matilda E. Andross, *Signs of the Times*, October 23, 1923.
Quote: "Liberty is the result of law—not, as many suppose, of the absence of law"—By Joseph Alden, Signs of the Times, June 22, 1915.

Don’t miss the April 2014 issue of Signs of the Times: To order Signs, call: 1-800-765-6955 or online at http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/signs-of-the-times-magazine-yearly-us-subscription.html

A blind man, says Dr. Torrey, was brought into the services at the Chicago Avenue Church, by a Christian young woman. He seemed very eager to hear the way of life, and soon accepted Christ as his Saviour. One night after this step had been taken, the preacher was urging the Christians to go to work to bring in the unconverted. There was no hearty response. At last the blind man could stand it no longer. “Why don’t you help?” he cried. “I can’t see to bring any one, but I’ll feel for somebody.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, April 12, 1899.

Quote: "Instead of being missionaries, some people are omissionaries."—By Charles G. Bellah, Signs of the Times, October 7, 1930.

NEW from Pacific Press—Kidnapped! by Greg Budd. Kidnapped! is the amazing true story of Paul Ratsara, president of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Paul was poisoned yet miraculously survived. He was kidnapped yet was providentially delivered. He was trapped in the middle of a brutal civil war yet surprisingly escaped. This is no ordinary story, and Paul Ratsara is no ordinary man. Your faith will soar as you read this extraordinary story of God’s divine deliverance. CLICK to read the first chapter of this book online. Order online or from your local Adventist Book Center--1-800-765-6955.

As the sun disappeared beyond a hill on the horizon, a caravan of covered wagons creaked to a stop. The men, tired from the long trip, began to make camp.

The Homestead Act of 1862 had passed Congress, and these men of adventure had decided to make the frontier their future.

Early the next morning the men staked out their claims. As one settler and his sons
were looking over their land, they drew up plans for the farm. "Now, boys," the father said, "I want you to dig a well here, build a house there, a barn over on the hill, and plant an orchard back of the house. I'll go back to get mother and the children."

The boys set to work at once. With the help of other settlers, they soon had dug the well, built the house, and planted the orchard. All that remained was building the barn. After looking the farm over, the boys decided it would be better to build the barn nearer the well. It would be easier to water the cattle.

Finally father returned with the rest of the family. The boys, anticipating his joy at finding his plans complete, were surprised when he said, "Boys, you've worked hard, and I appreciate it, but why did you disobey me? You haven't obeyed me at all."

Surprised, bewildered, the boys answered, "But, Father, we dug the well, built the house, and planted the orchard as you said. The only thing we didn't do as you said was to build the barn over on the hill. We built that nearer the well because it will be easier to water the cattle."

"Why did you build the barn over there?"
"Because it will save time."
"Why did you dig the well here?"
"Because you said to."

"No," said the wise father, "you dug the well here because you agreed that this is the best place. You built the house and planted the orchard where I said because you agreed with me that they should be there. You built the barn over there because you believe that is a better place for it. It is not obedience to do what I say when you would do the same thing anyhow. Obedience does what I say when your own judgment would have it otherwise. No, you haven’t obeyed me in anything."

This suggests what the Apostle James meant when he said, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."—By Donald E. Howe, These Times, May 1953.

Quote: In one of Tolstoy's books a hardworking farmer was once asked, "If you knew you had a short time to live, what would you do?" The farmer looked up for an instant from his plowing. "Why—keep on plowing, of course," he answered.—Tolstoy, These Times, January 1953.

Place this in your church bulletin or newsletter: The thought of 'witnessing' can be daunting but Signs of the Times makes it EASY. Each monthly issue offers a colorful and interesting presentation of the full gospel message. The result is changed lives! Send a
I shall never forget sitting with a prisoner on death row and listening to his story. Only twenty-six years old, he was condemned to die for murdering a young woman. His record of robberies, forgeries, and assaults went all the way back to his early teens. While waiting for trial, he was visited by a sincere Christian layman who gave him a Bible. The prisoner promised he would read it. But let him tell you the story:

“I found a place where a man named Jesus sent some of His gang to bring Him a mule. For this I thought Him a horse thief. Then I ran across a place where He made wine. For this I called Him a bootlegger. Then I found a place where He raised the dead, healed all manner of sickness, and cast out evil. Now I wondered, what manner of man is this? So I started at Matthew, and read all the part called the New Testament. By that time I found Him not a horse thief or bootlegger, but the Son of God. I knew of people who prayed and served that God and who lived up to His law, but that wasn’t me. I was an ex-con, a murderer, but yet I read where people in the Bible were also outside of the law.

“Then I was troubled. I wanted that peace of mind this God was giving away, but how could I get word to Him? Can He really hear you when you pray? And will He answer a man who has never heard of Him? To these questions and many more I wanted an answer.”

As the young prisoner continued to read and ponder these questions, the conviction of the past weighed even more heavily on him. The inward struggle was intense.

“Then I made one more try to reach that God who could give me peace of mind. I got on my knees and truly confessed every wrong I could think of, and asked that God please help me. I told Him if I had forgotten any of my sins to have mercy on me and add them to the list, because I was guilty of them too.

“Let me tell you, I never had such a wonderful feeling in my life. I wanted to shout it to the world. I felt the Spirit of God as He truly brought His love into my heart. After I settled down to bed along about morning, I slept peacefully for the first time in my adult life. . . . I never tire of telling my love for my Jesus. . . . Yes, I was a man with a heart of stone. I was up to my chin in sin, with blood on my hands. . . . Now I am ready to take Jesus by the hand and stand before that mighty Judge. I can truly say there is no sin too black that the blood of Jesus Christ can’t wash white as snow.”

The young man had to pay the supreme penalty, but before his death he became a giant in knowledge of the Scriptures. By his request, I was with him at his execution.
Although he had spent most of his adult life uselessly behind bars, he and I spent those final three hours reviewing the precious promises of the Scriptures. He went to the electric chair full of courage, hope, and certainty for the future.

Is any book outdated that can bring such a tremendous change in a life? Certainly not!

I am firmly convinced that every person on earth would benefit immeasurably by adopting the motto of the psalmist as a rule of life: “Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105—By William A. Fagal, These Times, November 1972.

Quote: “A man is rich according to what he gives, not what he has.”—From Grit, These Times, June 1972.

The story is told of a little girl who went to visit her grandparents. When her mother came to get her, she was delighted to see her, but declined to accompany her home. The astonished mother said, “Why Bessie, don’t you love mamma?”

Her answer was, “Yes, mamma, I love you; but I don’t want to go home. There is no God at our house, and I like to live with grandpa, where there is a God.” The little one recognized the true spirit of love, and longed to abide where God was.—By Flora H. Williams, Signs of the Times, February 4, 1936.

Quote: “It is not genius, nor glory, nor love the measure that elevation of the soul, but kindness.”—By Lacordaire, Signs of the Times, September 23, 1930.

A friend says to me, “I have not time or room in my life for Christianity. If it were not so full! You don’t know how hard I work from morning till night. When have I time, where have I room, for Christianity in such a life as mine?”

It is as if the engine had said it had no room for the steam. It is as if the tree had said it had no room for the sap. It is as if the ocean had said it had no room for the tide. It is as if the life had said it had no time to live, when it is life. It is not something added to life; it is life. A man is not living without it. And for man to say, “I am so full in life that I have no room for life,” you see immediately to what absurdity it reduces itself.—By Phillips Brooks, Signs of the Times, December 17, 1935,