Tradition brings us this story of two rabbis: As they were approaching Jerusalem, they observed a fox running upon the hill Zion. Rabbi Joshua wept, but Rabbi Eliezer laughed.

“Wherefore dost thou laugh?” said he who wept.

“Nay, wherefore dost thou weep?” demanded Rabbi Eliezer.

“Teeep,” replied the Rabbi Joshua, “because I see what is written in Lamentations fulfilled: ‘Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.’ “

“And therefore,” said Rabbi Eliezer, “do I laugh; for when I see with mine own eyes that God has fulfilled His threatening to the very letter, I have thereby a pledge that not one of His promises shall fail; for He is ever more ready to show mercy than judgment.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, October 13, 1909.

Quote: “It is the best thing for a stricken heart to be helping others.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, October 13, 1909.
When Phillips Brooks died it was felt everywhere that America had lost one of its greatest preachers. A magnetic current went out from this man, drawing thousands to the Christ whom he loved. When he preached his farewell sermon at Trinity Church, Boston, in 1891, preparatory to taking up the new duties of bishop, he made no emotional appeal, but the vast audience was moved as if by some strange undertow of feeling. Even men were not ashamed of their tears.

What was the mysterious power of this great leader? Harvard University once had a good illustration of it. A series of lectures had been arranged in which prominent men told of the interesting aspects of their vocations. Phillips Brooks represented the clergy.

On the day that he was to speak, the hall was packed with young men, many standing and some even sitting on the window seats. The speaker began like all his predecessors, in a matter-of-fact manner, pointing out the ordinary advantages of his profession.

Then something happened. As he saw that amphitheater filled with eager young listeners so intent on his every word, the barriers broke down. That mass of hopeful, upturned faces ignited the spark within him. He burst forth, “I can’t come here and talk to you of the ministry as one of the professions. I must tell you it is the noblest and most glorious calling to which a man can give himself!”

In another minute he had launched on a thrilling account of what it meant to be a preacher, and straight from his heart poured the message he could not withhold. His words tumbled over one another in his desire to impress upon all those listeners the joy of a full-time Christian vocation, the field in which he had found such delight.

When Phillips Brooks ended, his remarks and his personality had charged the atmosphere with an overwhelming enthusiasm. It would have needed but a single word on the speaker’s part, as a boy said later, and the entire audience would have come forward crying, “Here am I! Send me!”—By Vincent Edwards, These Times, March 1961.

Quote: “I’d rather be dumb and clean than smart and dirty, anytime.”—By Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, These Times, November 1969.

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A minister had a deacon who was continually lamenting about his great sins. One day the minister said: “Deacon, you remember your son stoutly rebelled against your authority some time ago, but afterward felt sorry and repented of his sin, and humbly asked your forgiveness. Did you forgive him?"

“Of course I did.”

“What did you forgive him for?”

“Because I could not help it, when I saw how sorry he was.”

“And does he still ask forgiveness?”

“No! No! Nothing is said about it. It is all settled forever.”

“Now do you believe that you can be better to your son than God is to you? He forgives like a father.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, July 22, 1899.

Quote: “Without Jesus, none can be saved. With Him, none can be lost.”—By Charles G. Bellah, Signs of the Times, August 20, 1929.

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In the second century they brought a Christian before a King who wanted him to recant and give up Christ and Christianity. But the man spurned the proposition. The King said: “If you don’t do it, I will banish you.”
The man smiled, and answered, “You can’t banish me from Christ, for He says He will never leave me nor forsake me.”

The King got angry and said, “Well, I will confiscate your property and take it all from you.”

And the man replied, “My treasures are laid up on high; you cannot get them.”

The King became still more angry, and said, “I will kill you.”

“Why,” the man answered, “I have been dead forty years; I have been dead with Christ, dead to the world, and my life is hid with Christ in God, and you cannot touch it.”

“What are you going to do with such a fanatic!” said the King.—Selected, Signs of the Times, April 18, 1911.

Quote: “We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to make us happy is something to be enthusiastic about.”—By Charles Kingsley, Signs of the Times, December 1992.

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As Mike Wallace of “60 Minutes” introduced a story about Nazi Adolf Eichmann, a principal architect of the Holocaust, he posed a central question at the program’s outset: “How is it possible. . . . for a man to act as Eichmann acted? Was he a monster? A madman? Or was he perhaps something even more terrifying: Was he normal?”

The startling answer to Wallace’s shocking question came in an interview with Yehiel Dinur, a concentration camp survivor who testified against Eichmann at the Nuremberg trials. A film clip from Eichmann’s 1961 trial showed Dinur walking into the courtroom, stopping short, and seeing Eichmann for the first time since the Nazi had sent him to Auschwitz 18 years earlier. Dinur began to sob uncontrollably, then fainted, collapsing in a heap on the floor.
Was Dinur overcome by hatred? Fear? Horrid memories?

No, it was none of these. Rather, as Dinur explained to Wallace, all at once he realized Eichmann was not the godlike army officer who had sent so many to their deaths. This Eichmann was an ordinary man. "I was afraid about myself," said Dinur. "I saw that I am capable to do this. I am . . . exactly like him."

Wallace’s summation of Dinur’s terrible discovery—“Eichmann is in all of us”—is a horrifying statement, but it indeed captures the central truth of man’s nature. **Sin is in each of us**—not just the susceptibility to sin, but sin itself.

I know this most intimately from personal experience. During the throes of Watergate, I sat alone in my car one night as my own sin—not just dirty politics, but the hatred and pride and evil so deep within me—was thrust before my eyes, forcefully and painfully. For the first time in my life I felt unclean. And worst of all, I could not escape. In those moments of clarity I found myself irresistibly driven into the arms of the living God.

In the years since that night, I’ve grown increasingly aware of my own sinful nature. But now I also know beyond all doubt that what is good in me comes only through knowing Jesus Christ.

Science and education have done nothing to alter man’s evil moral nature. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can change hearts. And the simplicity of that gospel makes God’s promise of freedom from our sin so appealing—and necessary.—By Chuck Colson, *Signs of the Times*, January 1988.

Quote: “I’ve struggled with enough sin in my own life that it’s hard to see people use their circumstances as a reason to accuse God rather than a reason to grow close to Him.”—By Joni Eareckson Tada, *Signs of the Times*, January 1989.

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grace is boundless.—Selected, *Signs of the Times*, May 17, 1883.

Quote: “It is only now and then that a man can grow much in grace while people are praising him.”—From Ram’s Horn, *Signs of the Times*, January 21, 1919.


A children’s Bible class teacher one day took in hand a class which had no teacher, and which had recently been gathered from the streets. He commenced talking with them of sin and salvation. In the course of his conversation inquired, “Is there any sinner in this class?” Instantly one of the brightest boys pointed to another boy at the end of the seat, “Yes, that fellow down there.”

The number of persons who can see sinfulness in “that fellow” is very large.—Unknown, *Signs of the Times*, December 8, 1881.

Quote: A man said to Bishop Wilberforce, “Pray, sir, can you tell a plain man in a single sentence the way to go to heaven!” “Certainly,” was the instant reply, “Turn to the right and go straight ahead.”—Unknown, *Signs of the Times*, August 29, 1911.

**Money Will Buy. . . .**

A bed but not sleep.
Books but not brains.
Food but not appetite.
Finery but not beauty.
A house but not a home.
Medicine but not health.
Luxuries but not culture.
Amusements but not happiness.
A crucifix but not a Saviour.
A church but not a heaven.—Unknown, *These Times*, February 1966.