An artist once made use of a piece of inferior canvas for what he intended as a mere study; but the picture developed unexpected excellence, and eventually was hung in one of the great galleries of Europe, and brought the painter the highest honors he ever received.

But he was ever afterward haunted by the fear that the canvas would crack. How often did he regret that he had not taken the pains to secure a better one! When we do not at all anticipate how permanent are to be the results of our course—at a time, perhaps, when we have allowed ourselves to be unwontedly lax—then we may be deciding the quality of our life's best achievement—By A. D. W., Signs of the Times, December 7, 1915.

Quote: “Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present; it is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart.”—By Longfellow, Signs of the Times, September 18, 1923.
Sir Thomas More, chancellor of England during the reign of Henry VIII, refused to consent to Henry’s divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. As a result of his attitude toward Henry’s actions, More finally resigned his post as chancellor and went to live quietly away from the court. He carefully refrained from making any comment, even to his family, regarding his opinion on the divorce.

But eventually the king had him imprisoned, and after this failed to bring him to terms, the king had him put on trial for high treason. Richard Rich, a former law student of More’s, testified against him for the reward of a high office—Attorney General of Wales. A most dramatic scene occurred at the end of More’s trial when Rich gave perjured testimony and refused to withdraw it in the face of More’s denial. Then, as Rich left the witness stand and passed his chair, More put out his hand to detain him and said, “There is one question I would like to ask the witness, with the judge's consent.”

He placed his finger on the medallion of office which Rich wore around his neck and asked, “What is the chain of office you are wearing—the red dragon?”

The judge answered for Rich, “He is Attorney General of Wales.”

More shook his head sadly; then he said, “Oh, Rich, it profits a man nothing to give his soul for the whole world—but for Wales?” How small Wales seemed in the face of perjury and treachery to a good friend. And how often do men barter their souls, not for the world but for just a minute portion, for baubles, or for less.—By Godfrey T. Anderson, These Times, December 1972.

Quote: “When I am confused how to decide some problem in human relations, I can usually find the wise answer in the Book of Proverbs or in the Psalms.”—By Gilbert Grosvenor, These Times, May 1953.

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NEW from Pacific Press—100 Creative Worship Ideas for Busy Families by Karen Holford. One of the most important gifts we can give our children is the desire to love God and to follow and serve Him. The challenge facing parents today—as never before—is carving out time for daily family worship. 100 Creative Worship Ideas for Busy Families is the answer to that challenge! An introduction for parents provides an outline on how to help your child grow spiritually and gives guidelines on how to enjoy great family worships. It’s simple, practical and easy to use. A heaven-sent blessing to families everywhere.
“The king is coming to your town!” a royal courtier cried as he rode through the place. “Make ready now your home, for he will dine with one of you.”

The village rose in one accord to make the place ready for the king. The streets were swept; the homes were cleaned.

Nor did the people stop at this. They rushed to the mountain side and plucked great loads of flowers, shrubs, and limbs. They strove together, each to find and pluck the best.

And then they decked their homes, inside and out. They hung long strands of flowers from the gables of the houses; they strewed the paths with petals and with palms.

But there was one who did not adorn his home. “I’d rather clean and sweep my heart.” He said. “I’ll right whatever wrongs I’ve done unto my fellow men. And thus I shall prepare to meet the king.”

The day arrived. The king rode into town, and the people stood with bated breath to see which home he would choose. And after going up and down the streets, looking this way and that, he finally saw one house whose only ornament was a white rose upon the window’s ledge.

“This is the place,” the king then said; “the other folks, I fear, have tried to cover up their wrongs. This man, I know, has beautified his heart. Today I dine with him.”—By Madge H. Morrill, Signs of the Times, May 8, 1934.

Quote: “Don’t talk of the shame of the cross. Talk of its glory.”—By Charles G. Bellah, Signs of the Times, April 8, 1930.

In a small-town home the old wall clock went berserk while striking the noon hour. On
and on it bonged—thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen. . . . 

Little Linda, alarmed by the clock’s wild demeanor, dashed into the kitchen. “Mamma! Mamma!” she cried breathlessly. “It’s later than it’s ever been before! It’s later than it’s ever been before.”

Indeed it is later than it’s ever been before and God is trying to speak to us through the moral devaluation of our day, telling us “that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”—By Robert H. Pierson, These Times, January 1974.

Quote: “Read the Bible, and read it again. Do not despair of help to understand something of the will and mind of God, though you think they are fast locked up from you. Pray and read, and read and pray, for a little from God is better than a great deal from man. Also what is from man is uncertain, and is often lost and tumbled over by man; but what is from God is fixed as a nail in a sure place”—By John Bunyan, These Times, Special Issue 1974.

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We have all heard, as school children, the tale of Peter the Great—how he left the throne of Russia and in lowly disguise apprenticed himself as a shipwright at the town of Zaandam and in Amsterdam. Among the common laborers he wrought, dressed in working clothes, living in a hut, preparing his own food, making his own bed. Yet all the time he never ceased to be the emperor of Russia. His royal splendor was but laid aside for a time.

So Jesus laid aside the glory of heaven and came here to earth and took human nature. He appeared in the likeness of men that He might die for our sins. Divinity was clothed with humanity. But someday He will come all glorious, the Lord victorious, before whom all evil shall forever flee away.—By H. M. S. Richards, These Times, December 1952.

Quote: “We want our children to look upon religion not as something to be inherited, but rather as something to be discovered.”—By Leonard I. Beerman, These Times, April 1972.

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The story is told of a girl and her brother who were fleeing for their lives from enemy soldiers. The girl succeeded in escaping over a wall, but her brother was killed before her eyes. This girl became a nurse, and sometime later the very man who had killed her brother was desperately wounded and in the hospital under her care.

Immediately she recognized him, and her first feelings were to let him die. A little neglect would do it, and no one would know. But with the coming of sober thought she knew that she could not do it. She was a Christian. It was hers to forgive. She nursed him back, first to consciousness, then to health.

Before he left the hospital she told him who she was. Said he: “Why didn’t you let me die when you had me in your power?”

“I couldn’t,” she replied, “for I am a Christian, and my own Master forgave His enemies who crucified Him. I must do the same for His sake.”

“If that is what it means to be a Christian,” declared the man, “I want to be one.”—By Dallas Youngs, *Signs of the Times*, September 1959.

Quote: “The large-hearted man will forgive with generous liberality. He will cherish no grudges. He will remember that he is himself forgiven. So he will keep his heavens clear of any clouds of hatred that in clear airs of mercy he may see both himself and his debtor as they really are and find it joyful to forgive.”—By Hilton Jones, *Signs of the Times*, March 11, 1930.

A minister requested a lady to engage in a charitable work to which he thought her adapted. She declined, saying: “My stay here will be probably too short to be of use. I do not know that I shall be here three months.”

He answered her, “I do not know that I shall be here one.”

She felt his reproof, and accepted the proffered duty.—Unknown, *Signs of the Times*, July 26, 1910.

Prayer for Aging

Lord, Thou knowest that I am growing older.
Keep me from becoming talkative and possessed with the idea that I must express myself on every subject.
Release me from the craving to straighten out everyone’s affairs.
Keep my mind free from the recital of endless detail. Give me wings to get to the point.
Seal my lips when I am inclined to tell of my aches and pains. They are increasing with the years and my love to speak of them grows sweeter as time goes by.
Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be wrong.
Make me thoughtful, but not nosy; helpful, but not bossy.
Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end. Amen.—Author Unknown, These Times, May 1966.