May 2015 *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*.

A famous Chinese gentleman stood in the New York Stock Exchange not so long ago, after having visited our half-empty churches. He was so impressed with the furor and intensity of the exchange that he cried, “Ah, this is their real religion! This is what they care about!” Well, is it?—By Frank S. Mead, *Signs of the Times*, November 23, 1954.

Quote: “There are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets, and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach.”—By John Milton, *Signs of the Times*, February 1, 1938.

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A doctor in Africa, who was semi-retired, opened two small offices in communities about 40 miles on either side of the city in which he resided. He did this because there was no medical service available in these areas and most of the people, being very poor, found it difficult to get into the city.

Because the offices were open only one day each week, the number who came for help was very small, and he was about to close them when he caught this primary objective idea—the real aim for his profession.

He started to pray, not for opportunities to render medical assistance, but for opportunities to share the good news of salvation. The results were immediate. Each office was filled from morning to night on the days he visited them. His opportunities to witness were unlimited. It seemed everyone who came not only needed medical attention but was eager to listen to his advice for better living, and to hear the wonderful news of a loving God and the home He was preparing where sickness would be unknown.

His face shone with elation as he told of this experience. He concluded, “When I finally realized why I am a doctor, and what my profession really is, then God could work a miracle through me. Now I know that my profession is my religion in practice.”—By Mel Rees, These Times, May 1983.

Quote: “It is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.”—Unknown, These Times, January 1969.

NEW from Pacific Press—Survivors by Jack J. Blanco. Daniel was tossed to ravenous lions. Esther approached the king’s throne at the risk of death. Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Malachi daringly delivered messages of warning and love. Each of their lives is a story of boldness and beauty, hardship and victory. No matter what came, they had the godly audacity to stand for the right. In his signature style, beloved storyteller Jack J. Blanco brings to life the biblical books of Daniel through Malachi. Using easy-to-understand language and an uninterrupted flow, he weaves together the powerful closing stories of the Old Testament. Survivors is book 3 in Blanco’s chronological telling of the stories of the Bible.

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The artist Stenburg who lived in the old city of Dusseldorf, had been taught Christian
doctrines by his church, but he knew nothing of Christ as a personal Saviour able to save from the guilt and power of sin.

Stenburg had been engaged to paint a picture of the crucifixion. This he was doing not from any real love to Christ or faith in Him, but for money and fame.

One beautiful spring morning Stenburg was seeking recreation in the forest near Dusseldorf when he came upon a gypsy girl plaiting straw baskets. Stenburg was strongly impressed by her beauty, for she possessed more than the usual charm. He determined to engage her as a model for a picture of a Spanish dancing girl he was working on. It was arranged for Pepita to come to his studio to pose three times a week.

The girl arrived at the appointed time, and the scene was quite a new and strange one to her. It was therefore little wonder that her big black eyes roamed from picture to picture in sheer amazement and astonishment. The canvas of the crucifixion scene suddenly held them, and she asked in an awed voice, pointing to the figure on the cross in the center, “Who is that?”


“What is being done to Him?”

“They are crucifying Him.”

“Who are those about Him with the hard faces?”

“Now look here,” said the artist, “I cannot talk. You have nothing to do but stand as I tell you.”

The girl dared not speak again, but she continued to gaze and wonder.

She was more fascinated with the picture every time she came to the studio. Once again she ventured to ask a question, for she longed to know more of its meaning. “Why did they crucify Him? Was He bad, very bad?”

“No, very good.”

How strange, she thought; yet she was glad for a little more knowledge. She did not speak again, but still fastened her black eyes upon the scene.

At last, seeing how anxious she was to know the meaning of the picture, Stenburg one day said: “Listen I will tell you once for all, and then ask no more questions.”

The whole story of the cross was related. It was new to Pepita, but so old to the artist that it had ceased to touch him. He could paint that dying agony, and not a nerve quiver; but the very thought of it wrung her heart. Tears filled her eyes, and she could hardly control her emotions.

The last visit to the studio had come. Pepita stood before the great picture, the story of which she now knew, and she was loath to leave it.

“Come,” said the artist, “Here is your wages, and a gold piece extra.”

“Thanks, master.” Then, again turning to the picture, she said, “You must love Him very
much when He has done all that for you, do you not?"

Stenburg was silent; he could not speak. Pepita went back to her people. Her last words, however, had pierced Stenburg like an arrow. He could not forget them. “All that for you” rang in his ears.

He became restless, and for the first time a desire was awakened within him to find that which would satisfy him.

In his wanderings he came upon a group of poor people, who were gathered in a retired place to hear the Bible read and the gospel preached. As he sat and listened, suddenly he realized why Christ hung upon the cross for sinners; a new conviction came that he was a sinner, and therefore Christ was there for him, bearing his sins.

In that lowly place Stenburg found salvation through Jesus.

After he began to know and realize the love of Christ, he longed to make that wondrous love known to others, and wondered how he could do it. Suddenly it flashed upon him that he could paint; he would finish the canvas of the crucifixion.

With a new aim and a great desire in his heart, he painted now as he had never painted before. This particular picture was placed among other paintings in the famous gallery of Dusseldorf. Under the picture he placed the words, “All this I did for thee; what has thou done for Me?” Only eternity will reveal how many souls were led to Christ by the words and the picture.

One day as Stenburg passed his picture, he saw a poorly dressed girl weeping bitterly as she stood before it. How surprised he was to recognize Pepita!

“Oh, master, if He had but loved me too," she cried.

The artist did not weary now of answering all her questions. He was as anxious to tell her of the universal love of Christ as she was to hear it and receive it.

Many years after, a wealthy young nobleman found his way into that picture gallery. As he gazed upon that picture and read the words below it, they had a new meaning for him also. That man was Count Zinzendorf, who from that day became a power in spreading the name of Christ to all the world.—By Erna Meier, Signs of the Times, February 19, 1929.

Quote: “Prayer is so necessary, and the source of so many blessings, that he who has discovered the treasure cannot be prevented from having recourse to it whenever he has an opportunity.”—By Fenelon, Signs of the Times, November 2, 1954.

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Place this in your church bulletin or newsletter: Signs of the Times helps your friends and neighbors find hope and meaning. Each month it takes on a broken world and directs
It was a cold winter evening in old Boston. Crowds of tired workers from offices and shops were hurrying to the Back Bay Station, bound for home and their families. In front of the Public Library sat an old man, thinly clad, making a noble effort to play a battered old violin.

Of the hundreds who hurried by, none seemed to pay too much attention to the old violinist. A music student from the Boston University School of Music was attracted by the old man’s attempts to play the violin. She stopped for a moment to see who might be making such a poor success at playing the instrument. It was very evident to her that the poor fellow had not had much tutoring. She was touched by his condition, his need, his efforts.

Walking over to him, she interrupted him by asking, “Please, Sir, won’t you let me see your violin for just a minute?”

Rather hesitantly, doubtingly, he handed it to her.

“May I play it, Sir?”

He was not accustomed to being called “Sir.”

“Sure, Miss, you can play it,” he said, smiling.

She spent a moment in tuning the instrument, and then began to play with assurance and confidence. It was very evident that she was a trained musician. The music was soft, sweet, and entrancingly beautiful. Passers-by slowed down as if to enjoy the music as long as they could. Some stopped, and, soon, scores of people had forgotten their hurry momentarily, and were enjoying the touching strains.

The lovely young woman continued her playing. As she played, she smiled at the crowd, and nodded her pretty head toward the old man’s tin cup. They understood, for coin after coin was dropped into the container—and not only coins, for someone pushed through the crowd and stuffed a five-dollar bill in among the coins.

There was an expression of happiness and gratitude on the old man’s face as the young woman handed the violin back to him, and started on her way. Tears came to his eyes and found their way down the wrinkles of his face.

The people who had stopped to listen had been changed. The tense lines of their faces had relaxed. Their cares dismissed, for a time, they went on their way with a song in their hearts. Their world had been changed.—By James Wallace, Our Times, July 1949.
Quote: “The church can no longer be a stately cathedral calling men to withdraw from work and play in order to worship. Rather, it must be a bridge which helps support them in their busy, dashing lives. It must also seek to link everything they do with the Creator of everything there is.”—By Robert M. Herhold, These Times, July 1971.

Yes, I Remember Ellen White—DVD. This movie, filmed in the 1970s features four individuals who knew Ellen White. CLICK to watch a segment of the movie.

A physician who was called to prescribe for a case of incipient consumption, wrote his directions: “One pill to be taken three times a day, in any convenient vehicle.” The family looked in the dictionary to get the meaning of the word “vehicle.” They found “cart, wagon, carriage, buggy, wheel-barrow.” They came to the conclusion that the doctor meant the patient should ride out, and while in the vehicle take the pill. He followed the advice to the letter, and in a few weeks the fresh air and exercise secured the advantage, which otherwise might not have come.—Selected, Signs of the Times, March 16, 1888.

Quote: “I am only one, but I am one. I can’t do everything, but I can do something. And what I can do, that I ought to do. And what I ought to do, by the grace of God, I shall do.”—By Edward Hale, These Times, January 1967.

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Take Time

TO THINK: It is the source of power.
TO WORK: It is the price of success.
TO PLAY: It is the secret of perpetual youth.
TO READ: It is the fountain of wisdom.
TO LOVE AND BE LOVED: It is a God-given privilege.
TO BE FRIENDLY: It is the road to happiness.
TO LAUGH: It is the music of the soul.
TO GIVE: It is too short a day to be selfish.
TO PRAY: It is the greatest power on earth.
TO WORSHIP: It is the soul's great need.—From Dateline, These Times, November 1965.

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