July 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 little girl had learned to paint pictures, and when visitors would come to the home the parents were very proud to take them into her room and show them her paintings. On one occasion the visitors had looked over the pictures and commented upon their beauty and remarked to the little girl, “Those are beautiful pictures you have painted.”

She thanked them, but then said, “But they aren’t my best pictures.”

The visitors were amazed and said, “Well, where are your best pictures? Take us into that room so we may have the pleasure of seeing them too.”

And then came the significant reply, “Oh, I have not painted my best pictures yet.”—By Adlai Albert Esteb, These Times, February 1955.

Quote: “Everything can be done better than it is being done. If we have an expert, we fire him. We don’t want men who know it all. We want men who see so much they have not done that they have no time to think about how good or efficient they are.”—By Henry Ford, These Times, February 1955.
Horseshoes or Watch Springs
(Notice, this story was written in 1929—thus the prices mentioned are far different than today. But you will understand what the author was saying!)

It is said that a piece of iron that will make twelve dollars’ worth of horseshoes will make twenty-five thousand dollars’ worth of watch springs.

The manufacturer who can take a piece of iron and transform it into a giant boiler could make that same material into hairsprings worth more than their weight in gold.

Stradivarius took a piece of wood, worked upon it, fashioned it, and from his hands came a violin. One of these instruments was recently valued at fifty thousand dollars. The weight of the violin was but twenty ounces. From this same amount of wood he might have made a few boxes of toothpicks worth less than a dollar.

Are we making toothpicks from the wood the Lord has given us? Perhaps to some of us He has given metal to make hairsprings. Are we making it into boilers?

Are we making the right use of our time? Our money can be made a blessing or a curse? A smile or a kind word may cheer some weary pilgrim. Perhaps we may be able to give only the cup of cold water.—By Charles L. Paddock, Signs of the Times, February 12, 1929.

Quote: “Some thousand famous writers come up in this century to be forgotten in the next. But the silver cord of the Bible is not loosed, nor its golden bowl broken, though time chronicles his tens of centuries passed by.”—By Theodore Parker, Signs of the Times, February 1, 1938.

NEW from Pacific Press—Against All Odds by Kari Paulsen. With her customary honesty and wit, Kari Paulsen tells a moving story of resilience born out of deep personal faith. This warm and candid spiritual memoir will be cherished by thousands of believers around the globe who are trying to understand the leading of God in their own stories of pain and grace. In reading Kari’s captivating story about human courage and God’s faithfulness, you’ll discover practical spiritual lessons refreshingly woven together with frankness and
One day I was behind a driver who stalled her engine just as the light turned green. As usual, I started fuming—fuming because the driver in front of me was slowing me down and it would be a full minute before I could go through the intersection.

A car drove up beside me on my left with the radio going full blast. It was tuned to Bing Crosby singing “Count Your Blessings.” It took a few seconds for the message to penetrate my cloak of irritation, and then I was struck with the full impact of it. I almost missed the second green light because of the idea that had zoomed into my time-burdened life.

At the next intersection the light was red. I applied my brakes and started to count my blessings. Perfect eyesight. Ears that could hear not only the sounds of traffic but music with a message.

Another block, and I was stopped again by a red light. “Thank You, Father,” I said quietly, “for this beautifully engineered car, for traffic controls that keep us all moving safely, for all the people in those other cars who make our city a good place to live in and who certainly have the same rights on the streets as I have.”—By Mary Ann Rheam, Signs of the Times, January 1963.

Quote: “Love one another in spite of your faults; do what you can to serve one another, to lighten one another’s trials and inconveniences, and burdens; above all, make the best of one another.”—By Dean Stanley, Signs of the Times, January 22, 1929.

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church. “How wonderful,” she thought as she tended her goats, “to worship Him, not alone in these hills, but with hundreds of other Christians! How great to praise Him in a splendid house of worship!”

The goat woman’s face gleamed with happiness and anticipation as she trudged the difficult, rocky trail to the little village where she would take a bus to the city. Her eyes were bright as she asked the ticket agent for a ticket, but they clouded when he told her that the pile of coins she emptied from her purse was not enough to pay her fare.

At last a passing motorist gave her a ride, and she arrived at the church just as the service began. The old woman, her face alight, ready to meet and greet her Master in this beautiful worship place, hurried eagerly down the aisle, determined not to miss a minute of the service. Surely the heavens had opened this morning, and God’s angels themselves were present. The sonorous, rolling tones of the organ heralded the entry of the robed choir. Gratefully she drifted into an empty pew, her hands clasped, her sun-and dust-cracked lips murmuring, “Thank you, dear Jesus,” as her eyes fastened on the angelic choir.

But an usher touched her shoulder. “This pew is reserved,” he said, and led her to a seat in the rear. Eyes turned, necks craned, lips smiled.

“I’m not wanted here!” the mountain woman thought, but she reassured herself: “This is God’s house; these are God’s people. I am one of His children; therefore these people are my brothers. They are only inching away from me to make more room.”

So again the light and shine came to the old woman’s face, and she sang and prayed the Lord’s Prayer and worshiped with the others. When an usher pushed an offering plate into her hand, she looked at it in amazement! It was bulging with small, fat envelopes, bills, and silver. She had her coin ready, but now she was sick with disgust at herself.

“My all is not too much,” she chided herself, and with an apologetic smile for the usher, she emptied her treasury of coins into the plate. Now she felt better. She belonged.

The little goat woman sat up straight and proud and listened to the words of the great preacher. She couldn’t always follow, but she felt that Jesus came and sat in the seat beside her and was pleased that she had made this sacrifice—the preparation, the long walk without food, the gift of all her savings.

At the close of the preaching service the Communion bread was passed. Ah, she knew the meaning of this, even before the preacher said the words, “. . . my body. . . . broken for you.” She reached out, humbly, for the bread. Through her bent body surged an unutterable joy that here, in this beautiful place, in quiet and peace and companionship, she could celebrate the Lord’s Supper with Jesus. Then a voice whispered, “Only for those who have accepted Christ,” and the plate was whisked away.

“Only for those. . . .” Why, not only had she accepted Jesus, but He had accepted her!
How could she have endured the cruel winters in the little shack, the hot summers on the hillside, without Christ? She had talked to Him in the cool of the night, there on the mountain, seeing Him in the bright little stars, feeling Him in the breezes that whispered through the pines.

At the close of the service the preacher raised his eyes to the mighty beams of the ceiling and said, “We have done this in memory of Thee, our Master, our Jesus.”

The old woman felt that a curtain had suddenly descended, shutting her out. She raised her hands in a gesture that was meant to tear the curtain away, and cried, in a voice that held as much authority in this church—this triumph of architecture, acoustics, and elegance—as it did for the goats out on the mountain, “He is my Jesus, too!”

Every sound quieted, every head turned toward the little old goat woman. Limping down the aisle, she turned and faced the congregation.

“I’ll tell you why I know He’s my Jesus. He was poor like me. He forgave the woman who was a sinner. Long ago He forgave me. He washed the feet of those who were weary, as I’m weary. He said, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ He meant me, too, because often I have gone to Him and He has given me rest. He mingled with the ugly, the twisted, the unclean. He even touched lepers. He came and sat beside me this morning when others of you pulled away.

“I saw your offering plate overflowing with money today, and I was ashamed of my own small coins until I remembered that He praised the widow who gave her mite. You shut me out of your service, and you shut Him out, too. He is standing beside me, and He’ll go back with me to my hills and my goats and my shack. Stone and brick and fine glass and reserved pews don’t attract Him. You’ve been fooled when you thought He was here with you.”

The old woman turned and faced the preacher.

“I’m sorry for you all,” she said. “He would have been happy to be your Jesus, too, if you had wanted Him.” She stated it simply.

A look of yearning filled the eyes of the preacher. “You have preached the noblest sermon ever heard in this church,” he said, “and you are right. Jesus has been absent. But stay with us; teach us. We want to say, ‘He is our Jesus,’ as you did.”

The old woman shook her head. “I must get back to my goats,” she said aloud. To herself she thought, “They do want Jesus, and they’ll find Him. They just got lost for a while. Their souls got tangled up in too much wealth and elegance.”

Every head turned to watch the old woman make her way out of the church. But this time there was respect and admiration on their faces.

“Let us pray,” the preacher said as he went down on his knees.

There was a rustle and a swish and a creaking of joints as, for the first time in years,
the congregation of the city’s largest church went onto its knees.

In the foyer of the great church the goat woman paused. Looking back at the kneeling congregation, she murmured, “My Jesus, your Jesus, everybody’s Jesus.”—By Mildred Cole, *These Times*, December 1955.

Quote: “It is an old and true maxim that ‘a drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gall.’ So with men—if you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend. Therein is a drop of honey that catches his heart, which, say what you will, is the great high road to his reason.”—By Abraham Lincoln, *These Times*, November 1964.

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**What Am I . . . ?**

I am a little thing with a big meaning. . .
I help everybody. . .
I unlock doors, open hearts, do away with prejudices. . .
I create friendship and goodwill. . .
I inspire respect and confidence. . .
Everybody loves me. . .
I bore nobody. . .
I violate no law. . .
I cost nothing. . .
Many have praised me, none have condemned me. . .
I am pleasing to everyone. . .
I am useful every moment of the day. . .

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