

1 Mixed Signals

2 SIGNS

- Where would we be without signs?
- You probably don't think about them that much, but you use them every day.
 - They tell which streets are one-way,
 - How fast you are allowed to drive,
 - When your favorite store is open,
 - Where to buy a meal,
 - What dangerous areas to avoid,
 - Where to find a sale, and a zillion other things that are part of daily life.

3 Signs

- Without signs, we'd be confused, unsure where we were, have no idea where to find our daily necessities and, a good bit of the time, actually getting lost.
- But what happens when signs give a mixed message or simply make no sense?
- That's the case more often than you might suppose.

4 Signspotting

- Recently Doug Lansky, author, columnist and occasional show host on the Discovery Channel, released a book containing photos of signs he and others have taken on travels around the world.
- Titled Signspotting, the book shows some signs that are:
 - unintentionally comical because they were composed by people for whom English was not their first language.
 - unintentionally comical because someone wasn't thinking.

5 Mixed Signal Signs

- From Los Angeles, California: Caution: Blind Drivers Backing Out.
- From San Diego, California: Cruise Ships / Use Airport Exit.
- From Lake District, England: Barf Bed & Breakfast.
- From Kanab, Utah: Six Mile Village / 3 miles.
- From Los Angeles, California: Antique Tables Made Daily!
- From Mill Valley, California: A sign reading Evacuation Route, with an arrow pointing straight ahead, but on the same post directly above it is another sign reading, Not a Through Street.
- From a portable sign in Racine, Wisconsin: Happy Easter! / We Rent Handguns.

6 Signspotting.com

7 God has a Sense of Humor?

8 The Signs of the Times

- Near the end of his ministry, Jesus and his disciples were walking outside the Temple.
- As they walked, Jesus' disciples couldn't stop remarking about the grandeur of all its buildings.
- Then Jesus told them, "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." (Matthew 24:2 NIV)
- "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3 NIV)

9 The Sign of His Coming

- Jesus first of all talked about a preliminary period called "Beginning of Birth Pangs," where one needs to be very careful not to be deceived.
- It will be a time of world and/or regional chaos.
 - Where many will lay claim to being the Messiah.
 - Wars & Rumors of Wars.
 - Nations against nations.
 - Famine & Earthquakes in various places
- However, Jesus then tells his disciples not to be alarmed.

10 The sign of His coming

- But then Jesus warned His disciples about a period, which He called the "Great Tribulation."
- It will begin, after what is called 'the abomination that causes desolation' (Matthew 24:15 NIV), when the "man of sin," will proclaim himself as god and force everyone to worship him and take his mark.
 - Immediately, run for the Hills . . .
 - Great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now — and never to be equaled again. (Matthew 24:21 NIV)
 - False Christs and False Prophets perform miracles.
 - Many will turn from the faith and betray and hate each other.

11 The sign of His coming

- Then Jesus says, "Immediately after the distress of those days
 - the sun will be darkened, and
 - the moon will not give its light;
 - the stars will fall from the sky, and
 - the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' (Matthew 24:29 NIV)
- Interesting enough, on the day of Pentecost, the first sermon of the church by Peter described this event.

- “I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.” (Acts 2:19–20 NIV)

12 Cosmic disturbances

- What could cause these “cosmic disturbances? What are the possibilities?
 - Volcanoes
 - Nuclear Explosions
 - Comet or Meteor strike from the heavens.

13 The Seven Seals

- According to the book of Revelation, God’s final act of redemption and judgment for the earth is contained in Seven Seals.
 - Seal 1 – White Horse (Conquest)
 - Seal 2 – Red Horse (War)
 - Seal 3 – Black Horse (Famine)
 - Seal 4 – Pale Horse (Death)
 - Seal 5 – Persecution & Martyrdom
 - Seal 6 – Sun, Moon, and Stars
 - Seal 7 – [Seven Trumpets]

14 Seal Seven

- Silence in heaven for about half an hour.
- Then an angel takes a censer filled with the prayers of the martyred saints and hurls it toward the earth.
- SEVEN TRUMPETS
 - Hail & Fire mixed with blood falls to the earth.
 - Huge mountain, all ablaze, is thrown into the sea.
 - Great star, blazing like a torch, falls from the sky—the name of that star was “Wormwood.”
 - A third of the sun is struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark.
 - When the star hits the earth, demons are released that torment people who have received the mark of the beast.
 - Four Angels are released with a great army to destroy $\frac{1}{3}$ of mankind.
 - Last Trumpet – Christ appears in the clouds and the saints are raptured. The statement is made, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15 NIV)

15 Wormwood

- The mystery of the cosmic disturbances of the sun, moon, and stars could very well be a description of the aftermath of a comet or meteor striking the earth.
- When it hits, the impact throws giant volumes of earth and debris up into the sky that blocks the sun's light, causing the moon to appear red at night, and where most of the stars are hidden from view.
- It will also be a sign of the start of God's wrath being poured on the earth in answer to the prayers of the saints.
- An event that will shortly precede the sign of Jesus' coming.

16 The sign of Jesus coming

- At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn.
- They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.
- And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. (Matthew 24:30-31 NIV)

17 Summary

- The Sign of the coming of Jesus is His appearance in the clouds with His angels in great glory.
- It will either occur simultaneously or right after a great cataclysmic cosmic event that causes the sun, moon, and stars to withhold a portion of their light.
- This cosmic event will mark the end of the Great Tribulation period and will put the world on notice that the time of God's Wrath has finally come.

18 Mixed Signals

- In the Apostle Paul's epistle to Titus, he refers to the "glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, as the "blessed hope."
- He is not all doom and gloom but knows and understands that we as God's saints have not been appointed for wrath.
 - For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:9 NIV)
 - and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead — Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. (1 Thessalonians 1:10 NIV)

19 The Blessed Hope

- For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
- After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.
- Therefore encourage each other with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 NIV)

20 No Separation from God's Love

- So even though we might have to go through some tribulation, we should also know that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.
- Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?
(Romans 8:35 NIV)
- For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 8:38–39 NIV)

21 God's promise to us

- Even though we might face trouble or hardship when all these things starts to appear, we shouldn't pessimistic or dismayed.
- In fact, since God's love is with us, it will be one of the most glorious times for those who remain faithful and ready.
 - We should expect and see miracles of God's provision and care.
 - As times get more perplexing, people will become more open to the Gospel. This will present a great opportunity for evangelism.
 - Because of persecution, the Bride of Christ will be purified and made ready for her groom.

22 No Mixed Signals

- So even though there are signs up ahead that point to trouble and hardship for the world, let us not forget about the promises that God has given specifically to us.
 - While the world is facing wrath, the church is facing redemption and full salvation.
 - While we ourselves may face a measure of hardship, God has promised never to leave us or forsake us.
 - In other words, God's love is sufficient for everything this world may want to throw at us. If God is for us who can be against us.
 - So when we see calamitous signs in our world as reasons to despair. Don't!
 - Let us instead, see them as signs to stand up and raise our heads, because our redemption is drawing near.