

SQUARE BOXES

But Lord,
I've always bought brown sugar
in square boxes
with brown letters on the box.

I saw the plastic bags of sugar in the grocery store yesterday.
I could tell by looking that this was a better way.
The strong, air-tight bags would keep the sugar soft and usable.
But I've always bought brown sugar in boxes.
And I reached for the box.

Now, back at home, I wonder why.

Lord, why are we . . .
why am I . . .
so reluctant to change old ways?
Some old ways are valid,
but some need changing.
And I cling to square boxes with unthinking tenacity,
just because I've always bought square boxes.

That is not reason enough.
Times have changed—and are changing
so fast it makes my head swim.
I am obligated to face my days intentionally!
The container that brown sugar comes in is no great thing.
But there are other, weightier matters
that require rethinking—and perhaps revising.
If I am going to live significantly,
I must make my big decisions purposefully,
intentionally,
comprehensively.

New occasions teach new duties; time makes ancient good uncouth.
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth.

Lord, forgive my square boxes.¹

¹From Jo Carr and Imogene Sorley, *Bless This Mess and Other Prayers* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1969).

Our Lord taught, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old” (Matthew 13.52). And again, “No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved” (Matthew 9.16-17).² Challenge your lives in 1989 with new thinking and new action!

²From the *New Revised Standard Version* (1989).