

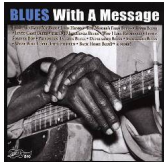
## Blues With A Message (2005)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 06 November 2015 16:58 - Last Updated Saturday, 07 November 2015 21:37

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1 –Sam Chatmon *I Have To Paint My Face* 2:50 2 –John Jackson *John Henry* 3:53 3  
–Mercy Dee *Walked Down So Many Turn Rows* 3:08 4 –Mance Lipscomb *Tom Moore's  
Farm* 3:41 5 –Lightnin' Hopkins *Tom Moore Blues* 5:01 6 –Lowell Fulson *River Blues, Pts.  
1-2* 5:19 7 –Fred McDowell *Levee Camp Blues* 5:35 8 –Essie Jenkins *The 1919  
Influenza Blues* 4:04 9 –Willie Eason *Why I Like Roosevelt* 5:59 10 –Doctor Ross  
*Little Soldier Boy* 3:03 11 –Robert Pete Williams *Prisoner's Talking Blues* 5:14 12 –Johnie  
Lewis *I Got To Climb A High Mountain* 3:15 13 –Herman E. Johnson *Depression Blues*  
4:46 14 –Johnny Young *And Big Walter Horton Stockyard Blues* 3:24 15 –Juke Boy  
Bonner *What Will I Tell The Children* 3:30 16 –Juke Boy Bonner *It's Enough* 2:59 17 –Bee  
Houston *Things Gonna Get Better* 3:10 18 –Big Joe Williams *Back Home Blues* 4:21

The Blues, contrary to popular conception, are not always concerned with love, razors, dice, & death. — Richard Wright, arhoolie.com

Blues With a Message isn't just about lost love and the toils of specific lives, the blues (particularly within the folk-blues traditions) spent some time dealing with sociopolitical issues on the side, primarily before the rise of electric blues. Here, Arhoolie has compiled a set of pieces related to a surprisingly large number of issues. Among them: Minstrel shows, the mechanization of cotton farming, and its related exodus to the North, sharecropping, segregation, the Korean War, the influenza epidemic, the New Deal, civil rights movements, Chicago employment opportunities -- all are given a song or two here. The music quality is roughly equivalent to many of the folk-blues recordings available, though the "big name" artists are largely absent from this one (Lightnin Hopkins does make an appearance singing about sharecropping, however). The songs are deliberately focused on the issues more than the

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music, but the music can still carry its soul. This one probably won't be on many highest-sales lists in the blues, but it's both historically important and musically enjoyable. ---Adam Greenberg, Rovi

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