



Three Angels Deaf Ministries Report

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“It Is Too Hard to Be . . .”

When my wife, Francisca was a Gallaudet student she was baptized as an Adventist in Arizona where she lived. One day she met her aunt who was interested in knowing how Francisca became a Seventh-day Adventist since almost all of her Mexican relatives were Catholics. Her aunt asked her why she became an Adventist. Francisca was not shy about her conversion as she enthusiastically shared her faith of how God led her to the truth and why she kept the seventh-day Sabbath. Her aunt then asked her about what she did on the Sabbath. Francisca didn't tell her what she can't and what she can do. She only explained that she is attending church on the seventh-day Sabbath which is Saturday. She didn't work, but rest and worship. Actually, her aunt knew that Francisca didn't drink alcoholic beverages and didn't smoke. After a good conversation her aunt was

impressed with Francisca's determination to be an Adventist alone as she was the only Adventist in her family. Then she admitted that it would be too hard for her to be an Adventist. She felt that being an Adventist would require her to give up many things that she enjoyed in her life. She liked the way she lived. She didn't want to be burdened with keeping the laws of God. She wanted to be free as she wanted live according to the family traditions and the world's standards.

I am sad that many people in the world are like her aunt. Most people, especially the Christians, are having a very difficult time to live as true Christians because of strong temptations that keep them from enjoying being Christians. They are like Pharisees who were trying to save themselves by good works. They tried to please God by keeping many rules in order get God's favor. I know of some Adventists who left the church because of what they called too many restrictions and rules that put too much burden on them. They feel relieved after they quit the church and join back to the world or other Christian churches that follow the world.

“Too hard to” follow the Bible is like a wolf that wanted to be a sheep and live as a sheep eating grass. That wolf was tired of killing other animals for meat. So, he decided to wear a sheepskin and join the

flock of sheep. He tried his best to be like sheep, his urge to kill them for food was very strong. Suddenly he gave up and killed one of them. Why couldn't he be like the sheep? It is because of his nature that it was still a wolf. Wolves naturally kill the animals. He couldn't say “baaa” like them. He couldn't think like a sheep. All he was thinking was to kill them. That was his nature. He didn't have sheep's nature. It is fixed at birth and it is in his DNA. Unfortunately, we are like that wolf. By nature we are fighting against God's laws.

“When people's thinking is controlled by the sinful self, they are against God, because they refuse to obey God's law and really are not even able to obey God's law. Those people who are ruled by their sinful selves cannot please God” (Romans 8:7, 8, NCV). Everyone is born with sinful nature. See David's words about himself. “I was brought into this world in sin. In sin my mother gave birth to me” (Psalm 51:5, NCV). Like that poor wolf we tend to get angry and fight with each other, cheat, lie, steal, covet, etc. We are not following God's law of love. David admitted it and he repented and confessed to God, asking for a clean heart.

I agree with Francisca's aunt that “it is hard to be . . .” but I also agree with Francisca that it is not hard to follow Jesus. So, why the two different views? According to Romans 8:7, 8, it is true for aunt who might not

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know God. I am afraid that she might never have read the Bible in her lifetime. I do not want to judge her, but apparently she might not have the experience of getting know Jesus, the Law Giver. She needed to experience as the psalmist expresses: "Examine and see how good the Lord is. Happy is the person who trusts him" (Psalm 34:8, NCV). Before I knew God and the Bible it was true for me as her aunt said. But, after I learned about the wonderful God and His teachings and surrendered my life to God I found that it was possible to keep the laws of love despite my many mistakes in my lifetime. I enjoyed following Him all the way because I love God and His way. God did many wonderful things for me. The same is true for Francisca. Here is one of my favorite verses that explains why we enjoy following God's laws.

"Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves the one born of the Father. By this we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this

is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is born of God overcomes the world, and the victory that overcomes the world is our faith" (1 John 5:1-4, MEV). We all need to be born from above in order to love God, who is the example of God's laws.

So, let us stop thinking "It is hard ..." or "I can't obey God." Christians should be the happiest people in the world as long as they are in Christ through repentance and love relationship with Christ who died for us. According to God's covenant with His people, "I will put My law within them and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Jeremiah 31:33, MEV). It is God's promise to help us to obey His commandments of love. It is not too hard for me to follow God's will because I love Him very much in the same way I do for Francisca.

David M. Trexler, Speaker/Director

It Is Written Hope Awaken in ASL



The It Is Written (IIW) evangelistic team's original plan was to provide an evangelistic series in Indianapolis, Indiana, in April of this year right before the General Conference Session. This plan, however, was interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic—COVID-19. Instead of accepting this as a defeat, the IIW team became creative by deciding to do the series via live streaming online. God is good!

Hope Awakens was launched on April 18 with Pastor John Bradshaw as the speaker. They reached out to Melissa Jordan, IIW ASL interpreter for the daily devotional video called "Every Word," and invited her to partner with them by providing Hope Awakens in American Sign Language for Deaf viewers.

But before the launch date arrived, Satan

wasn't happy so he threw in tornadoes on April 13 and many homes and buildings were destroyed but not the IIW headquarters in Collegedale, Tennessee. The tornadoes only destroyed some trees surrounding the building but the building itself was fine. God is good!

And, the Devil still wasn't happy. On the opening evening, it is believed that there was a cyber attack on the servers for the live streaming as John Bradshaw preached. Thousands of people weren't able to tune in and this was discouraging. But the video was taped and posted online, anyway. Many were able to watch it at a later time. For the remaining 19 meetings, it ran smoothly without a glitch. God is good!

For four evenings per week plus Sabbath morning presentations, Alisa Barnes teamed up with Melissa at the It Is Written headquarters in interpreting the messages from spoken English into ASL for Deaf viewers. A total of 20 meetings which ended on May 16 drew 10,363 views in total of the ASL program.

The Hope Awakens in ASL video series is being planned to be posted on Hope Channel Deaf this month. You can also go now to hopeawakens.org and view all the presentations in ASL.

Pastor Jeff Jordan

In Memory—Ernest A. Mitchell

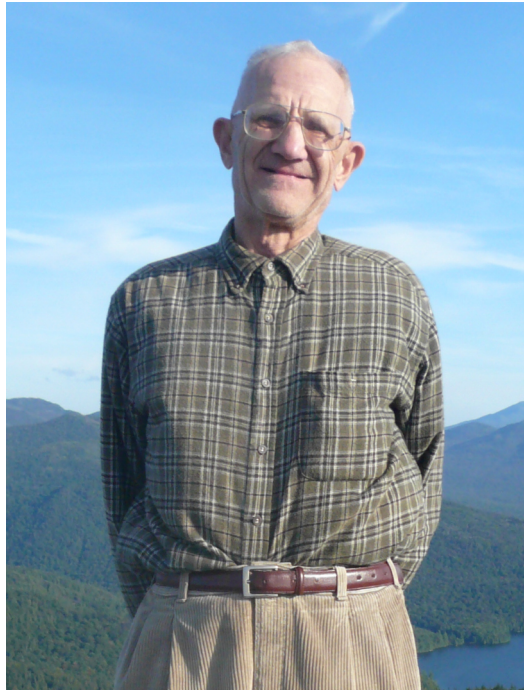
Death has struck again. On Saturday, May 9th at 3:20 pm Ernest A. Mitchell passed away. He did not suffer or struggle, but I am told that he died peacefully. Ernest went to his final Sabbath's rest. This year we planned to celebrate Ernest's 90th birthday, but our meeting was canceled because all churches were closed because of the Corona Virus. We looked forward to meeting again to celebrate with Ernest when churches reopened in the future. Now we will plan a memorial for Ernest when the churches reopen.

Ernest was a farmer and loved to garden. He grew up helping his father and brothers on their farm in Northampton, MA. He loved to talk about how when he was younger he hoed 25 acres of corn by hand.

When young, Ernest attended the Clarke School for the Deaf, and interestingly was one of few living people who still communicated using the Rochester Method of communication in sign language. As we knew Ernest through the years, and he interacted with our DEAF group he began to use more ASL signs.

Ernest loved our DEAF group. We feel like Ernest is part of our family because for many years he would stay at our home for the weekend so that he could attend DEAF events. Ernest especially loved going to DEAF camp where he could get out in nature. He loved to sit at Camp Cherokee and watch hummingbirds or just to walk around the camp and to be with other Deaf people. For many years, Ernest lived isolated in Connecticut where he had no access to communication. Our DEAF events were sometimes the only time in a month when Ernest could express himself in his own heart's (sign) language and be understood.

Most of all, Ernest loved Jesus. Ernest was raised in the Seventh-Day Adventist church. He grew up going to church. In recent years, Ernest was a member of the Norwich Seventh-Day Adventist Church and then the Stoneham Memorial SDA Church. Ernest always looked forward to going to church every Sabbath, and when he could not go to church he always asked



when the next time he could go to church. Ernest loved to talk about and read about Jesus. Ernest always had religious books, magazines and a Bible near him. He often wrote out and made pictures of Bible verses that meant a lot to him. In Norwich, CT where he lived before he had a beautiful picture on the wall that he made with Exodus 20:4-11 and some Bible quotes about the Sabbath on the picture. When it was time for Ernest to pray, he would often recite a Bible verse from memory. He had many Bible verses memorized. Ernest loved to see pictures of Jesus and to talk about heaven. We know that Ernest loved Jesus

and we have a blessed hope to see him again in heaven someday.

We can take comfort in knowing that Ernest had a strong faith and that he loved Jesus. Now Ernest is sleeping in Jesus until Jesus comes again to take us all home to heaven. I look forward to seeing Ernest in heaven someday, happy with his family and taking care of his garden while telling one of his long stories—in heaven we will have eternity to listen to him and we won't have to cut the time short.

Let us all be ready when Jesus comes so that we can see Ernest and never part again. Please pray for our DEAF family who are mourning his sad loss.

Jessica McGowan Smith
Coordinator for Deaf Everywhere Are Family

Notice

Western Deaf Camp Meeting at Milo, Oregon; Southern Deaf Camp Meeting at Cohutta Springs, GA; and SNEC Camp Meeting at Cherokee Camp, Saranac Lake, NY are cancelled due to pandemic Coronavirus. DEAR and DYAC at Mt. Aetna Conference Center, Hagerstown, MD are still open, but we will let you know if they are to be cancelled depending on the situations with Coronavirus.

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