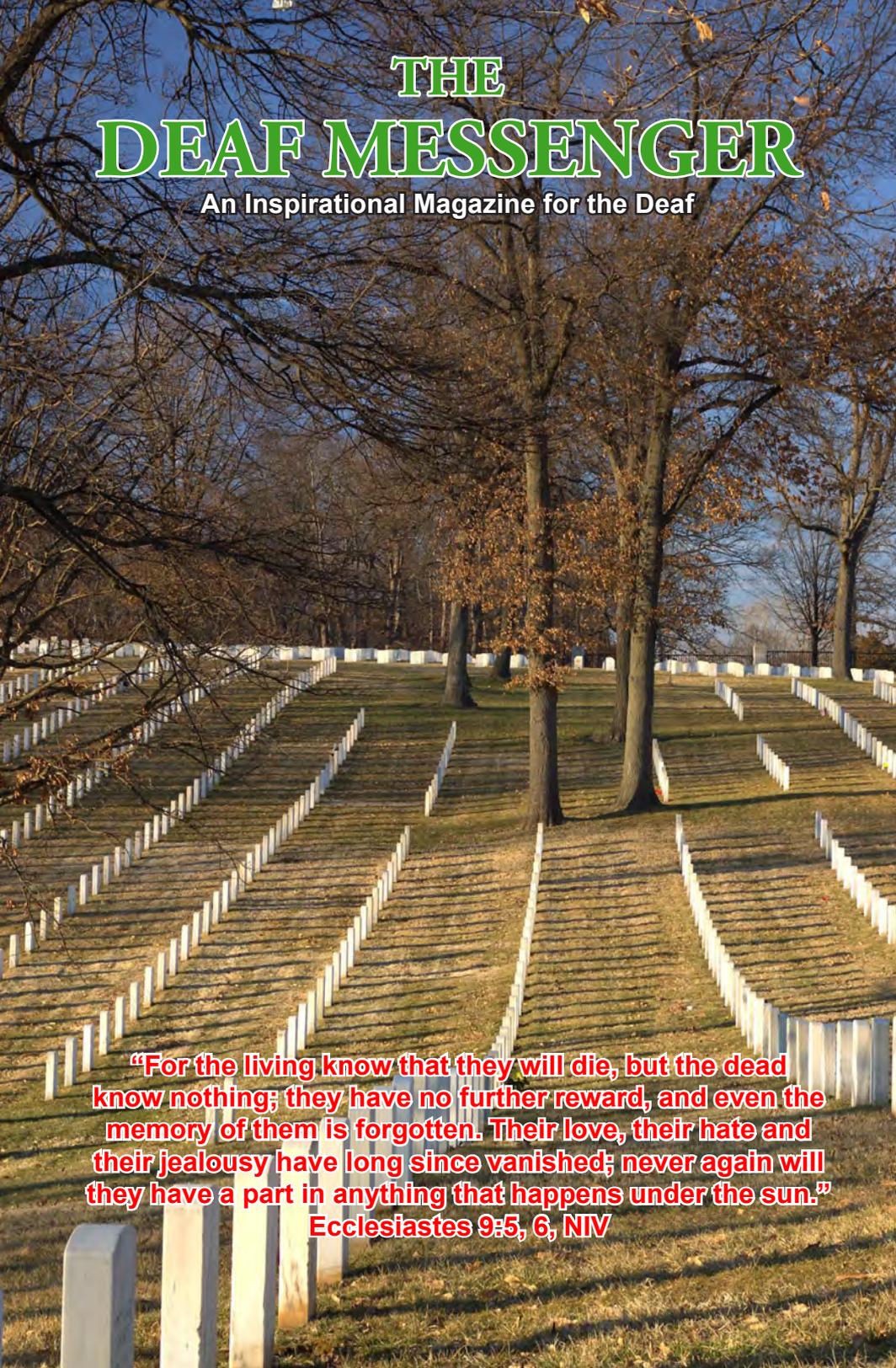


THE DEAF MESSENGER

An Inspirational Magazine for the Deaf

A photograph of a cemetery with rows of white headstones and bare trees under a blue sky. The headstones are arranged in neat, parallel rows on a grassy field. Several large, leafless trees are scattered throughout the scene, with their dark branches silhouetted against the sky. The lighting suggests a clear, bright day.

“For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.”

Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, NIV

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P.O. Box 6114
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TTY: (480) 986-7474
VP/Voice: (866) 389-1254
Fax: (480) 358-9393
E-mail: adm7@deafadventist.org
Editor: David M. Trexler
Consulting Editor: George Belser

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The purpose of this magazine is to inform the deaf reader about such topics as practical Christian living; basic Bible truths; and what the past, present, and future historical events mean to each of us. This magazine attempts to cover spiritual, mental, and physical aspects in its articles and columns.

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Call TTY 480-986-7474
Voice/VP 866-954-1284
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Are You Going Somewhere Right After Death?

By Paul Kelly



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Suddenly you got a heart attack or were in a car accident and you were rushed to an emergency room. You were dying in front of several doctors and nurses who were trying to resuscitate (bring you back to life) you. You found yourself coming out of your body, floating around for awhile and then going through a tunnel of light to a heavenly land. There you had a wonderful experience, seeing beautiful things and perhaps seeing your grandfather who passed

away some years ago. All of the sudden, you went back to your own body and woke up. Have you heard a story like this before? What you have just read is called an *out of body experience (OBE)* or a *near death experience (NDE)*. This experience has been written in books and told on television. Some people's lives have been changed by this experience. The fact is that only 51 percent of people who had accidents or illnesses had NDE. Other people did not have that

experience. We need to ask ourselves: Should we use the near death experience to prove that a person actually goes to heaven or hell right after his/her death? Since we all have sinned (Rom 3:23; 5:12), our experiences are not always reliable. We cannot always trust our experiences as they sometimes can mislead us.

The safest way is to put our trust in the Bible and follow what it actually teaches. Let us check with our Bible to find out what actually happens after a person dies.

1. Not one verse in the Bible describes a person's near death experience.

2. The prophets described what they have seen while they were alive, not while they were almost dead.

3. Hindu near-death experiences, Buddha near-death experiences, Muslim near-death experiences and Christian near-death experiences are all different. If their experiences are all the same, this could mean something but they do not. Why are their experiences all different? It is because they

have grown up in different cultural and religious backgrounds.

4. After Adam sinned, God told him that when he died, he would go back to the ground where he first came from. God never said anything about Adam going somewhere else such as heaven or hell after death (Genesis 3:19).

5. Job said nothing about going somewhere else except his grave as his home while he waited for the Second Coming (Job 17:13; 19:25-27).

6. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6 that a person would know nothing after he/she died. Everything would just simply goes away at death.

7. Psalms 6:7; 115:17 mentions that a person simply goes to the grave and does not go to heaven to praise God or even give God thanks.

8. Peter stated that David is still buried and his grave is still here. David has not ascended into heaven yet (Acts 2:29, 34).

9. Jesus mentioned that in the last days, all who are in

the graves will rise up to life when they hear His voice calling them (John 5:25, 28, 29; 6:40, 44).

10. Paul added that those who died in Christ would rise up once they heard His voice calling them and would meet Him in the air afterwards (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

11. Paul stated that we would be all changed and given a new body at the resurrection during Jesus' Second Coming. He also said that this is when we will receive immortal (cannot die but live forever) bodies (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

Many people in the past and present want to believe that they will go somewhere upon their death. They even believe that they have immortal souls meaning their spirit within their body cannot die but goes somewhere. But is that the truth? No one has immortality now except that he receives it at the resurrection when Jesus comes again (1 Cor. 15: 51-55). Only God has immortality (1 Timothy 6:14-16) and at the second coming, He will give it to those who love and obey

Him.

What causes people to believe that they will continue to live somewhere upon their death? It all started in the Garden of Eden when Satan deceived Adam and Eve. Satan told Eve that she would not surely die but become like God (Genesis 3:4,5). Jesus called Satan the "Father of lies" (John 8:44).

Now back to about the near death experience that people had. It is best to listen and follow the Biblical truth to protect ourselves than to let our emotions and experiences guide us. Who knows that Satan could deceive us as he did to Adam and Eve in the beginning?

Paul Kelly is a part-time pastor and a full-time teacher for the Deaf who resides in Rochester, NY.

Until Death Do Us Part

By David M. Trexler



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we were young we didn't think of or worry about death. But when we became older, we experienced the pain of death of our close friends, relatives, and loved ones. For some people, death is a welcome relief from the continuing physical and emotional pain. But, we normally are not looking forward to death.

Recently, a death of a family member hurt me,

Ministers who pronounce the wedding vows to the couples end their statement with "until death do us part." The word "death" is something we often do not want to think about because death separates us from our loved ones and it cuts off our life on earth too soon if we enjoy it here. When

my family, siblings, relatives, and friends. We didn't invite death at all. It invaded and destroyed our happiness and togetherness. On August 17, my father, a veteran of three wars, passed away because of cancer. He was 87 years old, but he had a good full life. We miss him very much. We miss his teasing and

stories. I will no longer see him again when I visit his home where his beloved wife still lives. I will no longer receive his newsy letter. I still have questions about his interesting past and my curiosity is not satisfied. I will no longer be able to talk with him about our good memories of the past. It had been a joy to visit and help him. Six years ago I lost my mom who was 85 years of age. Although it has been long past, I still miss her. Some of our friends younger and older than I am have died. Death is the way of life in this world. As Solomon said, there is “a time to be born and a time to die” (Ecclesiastes 3:2, NIV).

It is true that death is part of our lives. We cannot avoid it. Some people are trying to postpone death by changing their lifestyle, exercising, eating the right food, avoiding high-risk activities, etc. Scientists are working hard in finding ways to stop aging. In our country, our lifespan has improved but death is still there. The question is: why do we die if we were born to live here?

Why are we seeing too many people dying from diseases, war, poverty, bad habits, and accidents? What is the purpose for us to live if we are going to face sufferings and death? Did God make a mistake in creating us with faulty bodies that can die easily? Is there any hope of having life without death and sufferings?

Yes, there is hope, but we need to find out why we are experiencing death and sufferings. Let the Bible show you why we have death and sufferings.

In the beginning God created everything perfectly. God didn't create us to get older and die. No, He didn't plan the world that way. In Genesis 1, God said that everything was good after each day of creation. Then He said that everything was very good after He created Adam and Eve on the sixth day. God created them for happiness, joy and peace eternally. Adam and Eve and their descendents were to live happily forever. Death was not part of God's plan. But, then something happened. We don't know

how long after the creation that death appeared. "Sin entered the world because one man sinned. And death came because of sin. Everyone sinned, so death came to all people" (Romans 5:12). Adam and Eve started death and sadness when they rebelled against God's warning: "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:17, NIV). Now, we know why! Death has passed unto all of us since our first parents' disobedience. You can read about the Fall in Genesis 3.

Is there any hope for freedom from death and sufferings? Yes, there is. "One man sinned, and death ruled because of his sin. But we are even more sure of what will happen because of what the one man, Jesus Christ, has done. Those who receive the rich supply of God's grace will rule with Christ in his kingdom. They have received God's gift and have been made right with him. One man's sin brought guilt to all people. So also one right act made all

people right with God. And all who are right with God will live" (Romans 5:17, 18). Through Jesus Christ we can have eternal life. Jesus said clearly, "What I'm about to tell you is true. Anyone who hears my word and believe him who sent me has eternal life. He will not be found guilty. He has crossed over from death to life. What I'm about to tell you is true. A time is coming for me to give life. In fact, it has already begun. The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God. Thos who hear it will live." (John 5:24, 25).

That is wonderful news for every one of us. We only need to accept what Jesus has done for us. Jesus died for us. If we truly believe in Him and obey Him through the work of the Holy Spirit we shall not have to suffer the penalty of eternal death. He did it for us. We need to accept His act of love so we can have eternal life. Jesus promises us that we can have eternal life if we repent and accept His gracious gift of love.

At Jesus' second coming, the dead in Christ will rise

from the grave. Instantly, we will have new youthful bodies, the same as Adam and Eve before sin that came into this world. “Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 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 for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16-18, NIV).

Now about our new bodies at Jesus’ coming: “Listen! I am telling you a mystery. We will not all die. But we will all be changed. That will happen in a flash,

as quickly as you can wink an eye. It will happen when the last trumpet sounds. The trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised to live forever. And we will be changed. Our natural bodies don’t last forever. They must be dressed with what does last forever. What dies must be dressed with what does not die. In fact, that is going to happen. What does not last will be dressed with what lasts forever. What dies will be dressed with what does not die. Then what is written will come true. It says, ‘Death has been swallowed up. It has lost the battle.’ ” (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

Praise the Lord! Death will be no more! No more separation, no more sickness, no more pain, no more crying as we experience in this dying old world. In the Old Testament, God gave a vision of hope about when we will live in the new earth. “They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of

a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands” (Isaiah 65:21, 22, NIV)

Many people leave a will so their homes and things will be given to who they want. When they died, they no longer live in their houses. Their houses would be given to their friends or children or sold to someone. In the new earth we will never have to give up our homes because there will be no war, death, or foreclosures.

I would like to close with a Revelation of hope about the future. It is found in Revelation 21:3-5—“I heard a loud voice from the throne. It said, ‘Now God makes his home with people. He will live with them. They will be his people. And God himself will be with them and be

their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or sadness. There will be no more crying or pain. Things are no longer the way they used to be. He who was sitting on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said, ‘Write this down You can trust these words. They are true.’”

Do you want to live with Jesus Christ in the new heavens and new earth? Give your heart to Jesus Christ, and let Him be your God who is the Creator of life. Your life in Christ guarantees that you have eternal life. We will enjoy of being with our loved ones again forever without worrying about bad health, loss of job, separation, or death.



There Is Joy in Giving

By C. L. Paddock



“In everything I did, I showed you that we must work hard and help the weak. We must remember the words of the Lord Jesus. He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

A train was going south and it stopped at a little town in the Northwest. A friendly Pullman porter helped a young mother with a tiny baby onto his car. He helped her to her seat and did everything he could to be

sure that she and the baby would be comfortable. She thanked him. She told him that it was her first time she had ever ridden on a train.

The baby was asleep when the dinner call was made. The porter offered to watch the baby while she went to the diner for a bite to eat. After her dinner she returned and said that she had a wonderful meal. She thanked the porter for his kindness.

In a few minutes a waiter from the dining car entered and whispered to the porter. The porter was embarrassed and he went to the young woman's seat. He said, "The waiter tells me that you forgot to pay for your meal in the diner. It was \$3."

Since this was her first trip by train she had the idea that her meals were paid for when she bought her ticket. She opened her purse and looked for it until she had found the \$3. The porter had watched her as she fingered through her purse, and noticed that she took out the last bill she had to pay for the meal. He thought he noticed a few cents in change.

"Is that all the money you have?" he asked gently. Yes, that was all she had. Her soldier husband was going to school in southern California. He found a couple of small rooms where they could all be together. He had sent her money to make the trip. It was just about enough for her ticket and her berth. Now her money was gone. There was another day and a night on the train, with no money for food.

The kind porter told her, "Don't you worry, ma'am! We will get you there all right."

Then he started through the car and whispered for a little while with each passenger. He had told each one briefly of the young mother's difficulty. "The young lady over there with the baby is traveling for the first time. She is going to Los Angeles to meet her soldier husband. She has just spent all her money for food. She is going to need some money to get something for herself and the baby to eat until she reaches her destination. Though you might like to help just a little."

In just a few minutes

he returned to the young woman's seat. He had a broad smile on his face as he handed her a roll of bills. Then he went back to his work. The young mother was in tears, but greatly relieved. All the passengers in the car, and the porter, were happy that they could have a part in helping this young mother with her problem.

Anyone who gives willingly, sincerely, always get a blessing from the

giving. There is real joy in helping others. The happiest persons in our old world are those who are giving most. Our gift need not be money. It may be a kind word, a smile, a flower, a letter. Give what you have. It will bring more joy than you would imagine.

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Your Bible Questions

By Arthur W. Griffith

Q: In Isaiah 26:9 is there a difference between spirit and soul?

A: You are reading from the King James Version which may be the most popular version. When it was made in England in 1611 people there thought a soul was just a living being, not a spirit person. But people's ideas changed slowly, and now most churches teach that a soul is a spirit person which goes either to heaven or to hell after the body dies. Poets of that time did not think so. Notice this line:

"Red wine he drank with his thirsty soul."—From *The Vision*

of Sir Launfal by James Russell Lowell.

Compare Revelation 16:3 in KJV with NKJV (New King James Version). KJV says "every living soul." The NKJV says: "every living creature" = all the fish, whales and marine creatures. See also Genesis 2:7 in both these versions. See also Ecclesiastes 3:19 "spirit" has several meanings in the Bible. It can mean the breath of life from God, or our feelings, or refer to the angels—Hebrews 1:7.

Arthur W. Griffith is a retired Deaf pastor who resides in Manteca, CA.

Is it Safe to Depend on Feelings As a Guide?

By Francisca Trexler



moods or feelings to make decisions. Actually, it is not best to depend on feelings because they can lead us to make a wrong decision and have the wrong view of ourselves. Feelings are not trustworthy and they can deceive us.

The well-known sayings I have seen are: “I don’t feel like going to the church,” or “I don’t feel like studying the Bible because I am not in the mood.”

Have you felt that “you got up from the wrong side of the bed?” Have you felt that God doesn’t love you because He didn’t answer your prayer? It is true that many people depend on

Where do negative feelings come from? Negative feelings or moods naturally come from our bad experiences, unbalanced chemistry in our bodies, and our personalities. But, some negative moods and feelings come from Satan who encourages us to be sad and moody. Satan does not want us to be happy. He wants us to be sad while God has a

wonderful plan for us.

Here is what the Bible says about how to have positive thoughts: “Finally, my friends, keep your minds on whatever is true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and proper. Don’t ever stop thinking about what is truly worthwhile and worthy of praise” (Philippians 4:8, CEV). God truly wants us to use our mind to control our emotions in the proper way. He wants us to think positively. We should not allow negative emotions to control us.

Another reason for people not wanting to go to church is because of their secret sins. Practicing secret sins can cause a person to feel guilty and hopeless because he/she felt that he/she cannot overcome them. Negative feelings and moods often cause people to have low motivation to do right or to have a closer relationship with God.

Here are some beautiful promises to help us think positively when we are not in a good mood. “We know that our old life died with Christ on the cross so

that our sinful selves would have no power over us and we would not be slaves to sin” (Romans 6:6, NCV). “Blessed are they whose sins are forgiven, whose wrongs are pardoned. Blessed is the person whom the Lord does not consider guilty” (Romans 4:7, 8, NCV). “Think about things that are in heaven. Don’t think about things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:2). “None of you should look out just for your own good. You should also look out for the good of others. You should think in the same way Christ Jesus does” (Philippians 2:4,5). We could do more for Jesus by visiting people who need to be uplifted or giving a Bible study to a group. This will help us to feel better and be more motivated. We can get rid of the old habit of saying “I am not in mood to do so” with Jesus’ help.

In his book *A Trip into the Supernatural*, Roger J. Morneau said, “the evil spirits would encourage people to listen to their feelings instead of the word of Christ and His prophets. In no surer way could the evil

spirits get control of people's lives without the individuals realizing what was happening. The evil spirits would suggest all kinds of wrong doctrines (teachings) and ideas, and people would readily accept them because they felt strongly about them" (page 43). We need to ask Jesus to help us overcome our dependence on moods or feelings. We all can do this with the help of Jesus: "Brothers and sisters, . . . I forget what is behind me. I push hard toward what is ahead of me." (Philippians 3:13). Jesus asks us to give our life to Him and let Him take care of us. We can do with His help. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). It shows that we cannot do it by ourselves to overcome the bad habit of depending only on our feelings. We are like the branches and Jesus is the vine. You know that if the branches break off from the vine, they wither away. It is like us if we focus on ourselves and our own moods, our relationship with Jesus will be weakened and

soon we would be strangers to Jesus.

Here are the remedies for the person who habitually says, "I am not in mood" or "I don't feel like doing . . ."

1. Make an effort to tell Jesus in your prayer when you are becoming more negative. Jesus says, "I have told you these things, so that you can have peace because of me. In this world you will have trouble. But cheer up! I have won the battle over the world" (John 16:33).

2. Confess to Jesus your secret sins in your prayer. No one knows your secret, but Jesus always knows what you have done and even your own secret thoughts. Here is what the Bible says God will do if you confess your sins: "I will not remember their sins anymore. I will not remember the evil things they have done" (Hebrews 10:17). This verse tells us that once we tell Jesus, He will forgive our sins and forget them. You would have the wonderful peace from Jesus.

3. Trust Jesus fully in your own heart. "Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have.

The One who promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23). God wants us to be strong when we are tempted. Satan loves to attack us in our weaknesses so that we go away from God. “Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way. He guided you in the desert for these 40 years. He wanted to take your pride away. He wanted to put you to the test and know what was in your hearts. He wanted to see whether you would obey his commands” (Deuteronomy 8:2).

The Holy Spirit will guide

you in the right path. You will hear your Teacher’s voice behind you. You will hear it whether you turn to the right or the left. It will say, “Here is the path I want you to take. So walk on it” (Isaiah 30:21). Ask Jesus to give you the strength so you can be strong with perseverance as Jesus was when He was here. Finally, which one will you always follow? Feelings or God’s Word?

Francisca Trexler has a Master’s degree in Marriage and Family Therapy, and is active in Deaf work in different capacities. She lives in Lanham, MD.



Vegetarian Recipes



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Strawberry Tofu Shake

- 1 1/2 cup frozen strawberries
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 2 bananas
- 1 12-oz block silken tofu (firm)
- 1 cup ice (depending on preference)
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar (optional)

Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.
Serve immediately.

Serves 4.

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