

Autumn 2015

THE DEAF MESSENGER

“Shout for joy to the Lord, everyone on earth. Worship the Lord with gladness. Come to him with songs of joy. Know that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him. We are his people. We are the sheep belonging to his flock.”
Psalm 100:1-3

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The Deaf Messenger magazine is published by:**Three Angels Deaf Ministries**

P.O. Box 1946

Greenbelt, MD 20768-1946

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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.

For Change of Address:

Monday through Thursday

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Having a Thankful Heart

By Esther M. Doss

I will never forget February 5, 2008. I spent the day in our town (Mountain View, Arkansas) doing errands. Everyone watched the weather. We could feel that storms with tornadoes would soon come. While getting my haircut, strong south winds were blowing through the trees. The hairdressers did not gossip as usual but talked about the weather. We did not know that a historic tornado was already on the ground and was headed right for our town.

About an hour later, a dangerous tornado ripped

through Mountain View. It was an EF-4 tornado with winds up to 200 mph. And it was on the ground for 123 miles! The people of Arkansas were shocked. Volunteers immediately went to work doing search and rescue and clearing the highways. Hospitals were packed with injured people.

My husband and I were deeply touched by the heartache and losses because of this ugly storm. We wanted to help our fellow Arkansans in any way we could and volunteered much time for the next few weeks. We heard many unbelievable



ESTHER DOSS

stories.

One man was living in a camper in the woods and he knew he was in a very unsafe place. The tornado could easily destroy the camper. He held the door with all his strength while the wind tried to pull it open. All of the surrounding trees were blown down to the ground but none fell on the camper. He was safe.

A family was living in a two-story house, and they hid in a storage room under the stairs. Everything was swept clean off the concrete slab except for that storage room. Their lives were saved.

An elderly woman could not walk quickly to a safe place so she stayed in her recliner and prayed. After the storm passed, the house was completely gone but the recliner was untouched. And the lady was not injured at all.

An elderly couple lived in a mobile home and they held each other tight. With eyes closed, they felt as if they were flying in the air and then landed on the ground. Shoes were sucked

off the woman's feet. Their son spent a few days trying to find any sign of the mobile home, but there was none. So it was completely gone. But the two people were not hurt.

A man and his daughter ran out of their home to a storm shelter. But the tornado was on top of them before they could make it. He threw her on the ground and lay on top of her. The tornado tried to suck them up like a vacuum cleaner. While they held on to the clumps of grass for dear life, they were upside down. They were okay.

My heart was deeply touched. Most people lost everything! Their beautiful homes were either completely gone or nasty heaps of garbage. Beautiful lawns and trees were now a horrible mess. It will take many years before lawns would look nice again. But no one complained about what they had lost. No one asked God, "Why?" Instead, they praised God! Can you believe it? THEY PRAISED GOD! They were very thankful that they and

their loved ones were still alive. Almost everyone had a miracle story. They knew God protected their lives. How could they complain? They knew that God was good to them.

Have you thought much about the first Thanksgiving feast? In the year 1620, the *Mayflower* ship with 102 Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock in the New World. They were not prepared for the long, cold winter. Nearly half of them died from hunger, cold, and sickness.

During the summer of 1621, the Pilgrims had new hope as they learned how to grow food and had a bountiful harvest. The governor William Bradford announced that a special day was to be set aside for feasting and prayer to show how thankful the Pilgrims were for still being alive. For days, food was prepared for this feast and they invited their Native American friends to celebrate with them.

Some might think the Pilgrims were odd for being joyful and praising God. They had experienced deep grief and suffered much

loss of life. How could they possibly be thankful? They still experienced sadness over their loved ones. But like the 2008 tornado survivors, they had great faith in God and were amazed at His goodness.

Thanksgiving should not be just a once-a-year holiday when families come together and stuff themselves with mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pies and much more. We should have a daily "Thanksgiving." A person with a thankful heart looks for the blessings from God, even during difficult times. God always blesses His people in many different ways. When we are thankful, we focus on what God has done for us. We remember that God always meets our true needs. We become joyful children of God.

What if we are not thankful? We could easily think more about what we do not have and complain. Let us not become like spoiled children!

In the Bible, we find a joyful letter from Paul to the people in Philippi. Paul

wrote this while in prison. Remember that prisons during Paul's time were much different from prisons in America today. They were small, dark, damp, and awful. But in this letter, we find that Paul was not angry or upset. Instead, he was grateful. He did not complain. He rejoiced! He was thankful no matter what.

Paul wrote:

"I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice."

"I am glad and rejoice with you all."

"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice."

"I rejoiced in the Lord greatly" (Philippians 1:18, 2:17, 4:4, 10, NKJV).

If you read Philippians in the Bible, you would think that Paul was living the good life. It is hard to believe that he was in prison. Paul chose to be thankful because he knew Jesus, the One who is the reason of all thanksgiving. In Jesus, we can also be thankful today, tomorrow, and forever.

The feasting on

Thanksgiving Day is soon here. Why not choose right now to have a thankful heart every day, no matter what? Do not complain when bad things happen. Instead, look for how God is taking care of you. God loves you so much and knows what is best for you. Choose joy!

"Shout for joy to the Lord, everyone on earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness.

Come to him with songs of joy.

Know that the Lord is God.

He made us, and we belong to him. We are his people.

We are the sheep belonging to his flock.

Give thanks as you enter the gates of his temple.

Give praise as you enter its courtyards.

Give thanks to him and praise his name.

The Lord is good. His faithful love continues forever.

It will last for all time to come" (Psalm 100).

Esther M. Doss is Public Relations for Three Angels Deaf Ministries who lives in Mountain View, AR.

Seeking God's Will

By Amanda Colgan



GOODSALT

You may have questions such as “How do I know that I’m doing what God wants me to do? How do I determine the will of God for my life?”

Do you think it is important to know God’s will? We trust in the Lord, daily living our lives for Him and He will direct us and guide us towards what He wants us to do in the future. In other words, we live by faith, trusting in the Lord. By this God will prepare us for future service and get us to where He wants us. He has wonderful plans for you and me!

Before I continue, please

know that it is God’s will for everyone to be saved.

2 Peter 3:9: *“The Lord is not slow to keep his promise. He is not slow in the way some people understand it. He is patient with you. He doesn’t want anyone to be destroyed. Instead, he wants all people to turn away from their sins.”*

I would like to share with you five principles about seeking God’s will for us.

First principle: Be willing and surrendered to His will.

The first step is the most important and often the most difficult: Be willing and surrendered.

Matthew 16:24: *“Then Jesus spoke to his disciples. He said, ‘If anyone wants to follow me, he must say no to himself. He must pick up his cross and follow me.’”*

God will let you know His will—if you are truly willing to do it once you know what it is. Ask God to give you a submissive and willing heart. We need to surrender ourselves to Jesus before expecting Him to lead you some place to work for Him.

Second principle: Be in harmony with God’s Word and Law.

If I want to know if what I want to do is in harmony of God’s will for me, I need to be sure that what I choose to do is not in conflict with the Bible. An example of this principle: some married Christians may wonder, “Should I leave my spouse and go off with another person?” They might say, “It just feels so right. We can see God’s blessing. We see this as God’s will for us.” The answer is right in the seventh commandment which says *‘Do not commit adultery’*” (**Exodus 20:14**). God has

clearly told His people never to do this kind of thing.

Third principle: Pray and Study His Words

Prayer and studying the Bible are such important parts of our relationship with God. These will help us know if we are doing what God wants from us. Pray for His wisdom, guidance and strength to do what He wants us to do.

James 1:5-6: *“If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone. He doesn’t find fault. But when you ask, you must believe. You must not doubt. People who doubt are like waves of the sea. The wind blows and tosses them around.”*

1 John 5:14: *“There is one thing we can be sure of when we come to God in prayer. If we ask anything in keeping with what he wants, he hears us.”*

Fourth principle: Glorify God

When you are seeking after God’s will, make sure you avoid options that don’t glorify Him. If one of your

options is going to harm His kingdom, then it is the wrong option.

1 Corinthians 10:31,

NKJV: *“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”*

Titus 2:11, 12: *“God’s saving grace has appeared to all people. It teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful longings. We must control ourselves. We must do what is right. We must lead godly lives in today’s world.”*

Fifth principle: Be Patient and Wait

In deciding the will of God, you must be patient. Sometimes we become restless and want to do just about anything but keep guessing at what we should do. We want to act sooner than later, but sometimes God wants you to wait. Believe me, you’re better off waiting for God’s will having the right job, the right spouse, or the right school than rushing ahead of the Lord and having the wrong job, the wrong spouse, or the wrong school.

Lamentations 3:25-26:

“The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.”

James 5:11: *“Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”*

God’s will is simply that we live today for Him, giving our lives to Him, and He will get us to where He wants us to be and use us as it pleases Him. We are to pray seeking God’s will and making ourselves available.

Jeremiah 29:11, NIV:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Amanda Colgan is a Deaf homemaker who lives in Hyannis, MA.

Growing Up Into Christ

By Ellen G. White



HIGHER CLIPS

Our characters change when we become children of God. The Bible says this change is the same as a birth. The character change is compared to the growth of good seed a farmer plants. People who have just learned to love Christ are as

“newborn babies” (1 Peter 2:2). They will grow up to be men and women in Christ Jesus. The same as good seed planted in a field, they are to grow spiritually and teach other people about God.

Isaiah says that the

children of God “will be like trees that the Lord Himself has planted. They will all do what is right, and God will be praised for what He has done” (Isaiah 61:3). God gives us many lessons from nature to help us understand spiritual truths.

With all the wisdom and skill people have, they cannot create life. Only God can give life to plants, animals, and people. Only God can give people spiritual life. Every person must be “born again” (John 3:3). When a person is born again, he receives spiritual life from Christ.

God gives life, and He makes things grow. He makes the buds on trees bloom into flowers, and the flowers turn into fruit. God’s power makes the grain grow. “First the tender stalk appears, then the head, and finally the head full of grain” (Mark 4:28).

The prophet Hosea said the people of Israel “will blossom like flowers.” “They will grow crops of grain and be fruitful like a vineyard” (Hosea 14:5, 7). Jesus tells us to “look how the

wild flowers grow” (Luke 12:27). Plants do not take care of themselves or worry or work. They grow because God gives them sunshine and rain to make them grow. A child’s own willpower or worrying will not make him taller. Worrying or depending on our own strength will not make our spiritual life grow.

Plants and children grow because they receive air, sunshine and food. These gifts of nature meet the needs of plants and animals. Christ meets the spiritual needs of people who trust in Him.

Christ is the “eternal light” (Isaiah 60:19). He is “a sun and shield” (Psalm 84:11, KJV). Christ is compared to “rain in a dry land” (Hosea 14:5), and to “rain on the fields” (Psalm 72:6). Christ is the living water, and “the bread of God ... [that] comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world” (John 6:33, RSV).

God gave the most valuable gift to the world— His Son. Through Jesus God filled the world with grace. God’s grace is as real as the air that covers the earth.

If we accept God's grace, we will grow spiritually and become more and more like Jesus.

The flower turns to the sun to receive the sun's bright rays. The light helps flowers become beautiful and perfect. We should turn to Jesus, who is the Sun of Righteousness. He will help us understand the gospel, then our characters will become as Jesus' character.

Jesus teaches us the same things when He says, "Remain [stay] united to Me, and I will remain [stay] united to you. A branch cannot bear [have] fruit by itself; it [branch] can do so only if it [branch] remains [stays] in the vine. In the same way, . . . you can do nothing without Me" (John 15:4, 5). The branch depends on the vine for growth. We must depend on Christ so we can live a holy life. Without Christ we have no life. Christ gives us power to grow in grace and holiness. Christ in our lives is compared to a tree planted by a river. The river gives the tree water that the tree needs to grow. The water from the river helps the

tree grow. Christ in our lives helps us to grow spiritually.

Many people think that they must do some part of the work alone. They trust Christ to forgive their sins, but they try to do right with their own strength. We will fail when we try to do right without Christ's help. Christ says, "You can do nothing without Me."

Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness, all depend on our close relationship with Christ. To grow in grace we must have Christ in our lives every hour of the day. We must daily talk with Christ. We need Christ to begin our spiritual life. Christ helps us become mature Christians.

Christ must be first, last, and always. David said, "I am always aware of the Lord's presence; He is near, and nothing can shake me [make me forget God]" (Psalm 16:8).

Do you ask, "How am I to live in Christ?" You live in Him the same way you first accepted Him. "Since you have accepted Christ Jesus as Lord, live in union with Him" (Colossians 2:6).

“My righteous people . . . will believe and live” (Hebrews 10:38). You gave yourself to God to serve and obey Him. You took Christ as your Saviour. You could not pay for your sins or change your life. When you gave yourself to God, you believed that God forgave you and changed your life.

Through faith you accepted Christ. Through faith you will grow spiritually in Christ. Faith requires giving and taking. Give all to Christ—your heart, your mind, your work. Give yourself to Him to obey all that He asks. You must take all to have power to obey. The all is Christ the blessed One, living in your heart to be your strength, your righteousness, and your helper forever.

The first thing you should do each morning is to give yourself fully to God. You should pray, “Take me, O Lord, as wholly Yours. I give You all my plans. Use me today in Your service. Be with me, and let all my work honor You.”

Each morning dedicate yourself to God for that day.

Give God your plans for the day. Then let God guide you to continue your plans or to change them. Letting God guide your life will make your life more and more like the life of Christ.

A life in Christ is a restful life. There may not be a feeling of great excitement, but there is a continual peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself. Your hope is in Christ. Your weakness is joined to His strength. Your lack of spiritual understanding is joined with His wisdom. Do not think about yourself and your feelings. Look to Christ. Think of His love and His perfect character.

Think of Christ and how He humbled Himself and lived for other people. Think of His purity, of His holiness, and of His wonderful love. To become like Christ you must love Him, depend on Him, and copy His ways. Then He will change you to be like Himself.

Jesus says, “Remain united to Me” (John 15:4). John 15:4 gives the idea of rest, trust, and depending on Him. Again, He invites

us, “ ‘Come to Me, . . . and I will give you rest’ ” (Matthew 11:28). David gives the same thought, “Be patient and wait for the Lord to act” (Psalm 37:7). Isaiah gives us God’s invitation, “ ‘Come back and quietly trust in Me. Then you will be strong and secure’ ” (Isaiah 30:15).

The rest that Jesus wants to give us does not mean doing nothing and stopping all work. God’s promise of rest includes a call to work. “ ‘Take My yoke and put it on you; . . . and you will find rest [peace]’ ” (Matthew 11:29). People who rest most on Christ will work hard for Him.

When we are thinking about self, we forget Christ, who gives us strength and life. Satan tries to keep us from thinking about Christ. Satan tries to keep us from living with Christ and talking to Christ.

Satan uses the pleasures of the world to turn our thoughts away from Christ. Satan uses life’s worries and sorrows to keep us from thinking about God. Satan uses the faults of other people, and our own faults and weaknesses, to turn our

thoughts from God. We must not let Satan trick us.

Many people who really desire to do God’s will spend too much time thinking of their faults. Then Satan separates them from God. We should not make self our most important thought. We should not worry if we will be saved. Thinking about self turns our minds from God, who gives us strength. We should give ourselves to God. We should talk and think of Jesus and forget ourselves.

We must stop our doubts and fears. Then we can say with the apostle Paul, “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. This life that I live now, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave His life for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Rest in God. He can keep us safe. As long as we rest in Him, He will give us strength to win the fight against sin.

When Christ became a man, He connected the people of this world to Himself with His love. Christ will never break our connection with Him. But we can choose to break

our connection with Christ. Satan is always trying to make us want to break our connection with Christ.

We need to be careful and to pray that nothing will cause us to choose another master. We are always free to make our own choices.

We must keep our faith in Christ, and He will keep us from losing salvation. Our relationship with Jesus keeps us safe from Satan's power. Nothing can break our relationship with Jesus. If we keep thinking about Jesus, "that same glory, coming from the Lord, . . . transforms [changes] us into His likeness" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

The early disciples became more and more like Jesus as they were with Him. When the disciples heard Jesus' words, they felt they needed Him. They searched for Jesus, found Him, and followed Him. The disciples were with Jesus in the house. They ate with Him. They prayed with Jesus. They were in the fields with Him.

The disciples looked to Jesus as their teacher. They

listened daily to His lessons of holy truth. They looked to Jesus to learn their duty, the same as a servant looks to the master.

Jesus' disciples were men, the same as people today. (Read James 5:17.) The disciples had the same problems with sin. They needed the same grace to live a holy life.

John was the disciple most like Jesus. But John did not naturally have a wonderful character. John was selfish, bold, and wanted honor. John became angry easily. But John saw Jesus' wonderful character. Then John saw his own faults, and he became humble.

John saw the strength and patience of Jesus. John saw Jesus' love and power. John saw that Jesus was humble. John was filled with love for Jesus as he [John] watched Jesus. Daily, John was drawn to Jesus. John forgot about himself as his love for Jesus increased. John's bad temper was changed by Jesus' power. The Holy Spirit changed John's heart. The power of

Jesus' love changed John's character.

We will change when we join ourselves to Christ. When Jesus lives in us, our entire life is changed. Jesus' love and the Holy Spirit change our lives and turn our thoughts and desires to God and heaven.

Jesus returned to heaven. His disciples still felt His presence with them. They felt His love. Jesus, the Saviour, had walked and talked and prayed with them. Jesus had spoken words of hope and comfort. Jesus was talking to the disciples as He rose to heaven and the angels met Him. Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20, KJV).

Jesus went to heaven in His human body. The disciples knew that Jesus was still their Friend and Saviour. They knew that Jesus was with God in heaven, but He still loved them. Jesus was part of suffering humanity. Jesus showed God His [Jesus'] wounded hands and feet. Jesus' wounds were

reminders of the price He [Jesus] paid to save people. The disciples knew that Jesus went to heaven to prepare homes for them. They knew Jesus would come again and take them [disciples] to heaven to live with Him.

The disciples met together after Jesus went to heaven. The disciples were eager to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. Reverently they knelt in prayer, repeating the promise of Jesus:

" 'The Father will give you whatever you ask of Him in My name. Until now you have not asked for anything in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete' " (John 16:23, 24).

Their faith grew stronger and stronger as they prayed. "[Christ] was raised to life and is at the right side of God, pleading with Him [God] for us!" (Romans 8:34).

On the day of Pentecost the Comforter [Holy Spirit] came to them. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be with them. Jesus said, " 'It is better for you that

I go away, because if I do not go, the Helper [Holy Spirit] will not come to you. But if I do go away, then I will send Him to you' ” (John 16:7).

Jesus would always live in the hearts [lives] of His children through the Holy Spirit. Jesus would be closer to His disciples through the Holy Spirit than when He lived on earth. People would see Jesus' love and power in the disciples. People who saw the disciples “were amazed. . . . They [people] realized then that they [disciples] had been companions of Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

The same as Jesus did for His disciples, He wants to do for His children today. In Jesus' last prayer with His disciples, Jesus prayed, “ ‘I pray not only for them [disciples], but also for

people who believe in Me because of their message' ” (John 17:20).

Jesus prayed for us. He asked that we might be united with Him as He is united with the Father. Being united with Jesus is wonderful! Jesus said about Himself, “ ‘The Son can do nothing on His own' ” (John 5:19). “ ‘The Father, who remains in Me, does His own work' ” (John 14:10).

If Jesus is living in us, He will help us be “willing and able to obey His own purpose” (Philippians 2:13). We will work as Jesus worked and have His unselfish, sweet spirit. When we love Jesus and live in Him, we shall “grow up in every way to become as Christ, who is the head [of the church]” (Ephesians 4:15).

Ellen G. White was a well-known religious writer and speaker on three continents. This article is from “Steps to Christ, Easy Reading Edition.” “Steps to Christ” is the most popular and widely read book.

Super Sprouts

By Sue Radd

Remember alfalfa in sandwiches and at salad bars? Sprouts are becoming popular again, and now many more kinds are available.

What are sprouts?

Sprouts are any legumes, grains, nuts, or seeds that have been soaked (usually for 8 to 12 hours), drained, and then allowed to grow over a few days. They can be made from many different kinds of superfoods. Think quinoa, amaranth, wheat, rye, millet, brown rice, lentils, soybeans, peas, fenugreek, radish, and broccoli seeds, just to name a few!

Why are they so super?

Compared to their mature plants, sprouts have higher levels of many nutrients, such as vitamin C, vitamin E, beta-carotene, riboflavin, and folate. They also help minerals like zinc and iron to be absorbed more readily into your body. Their protein has been found to be more easily digestible. When sprouting, starchy carbohydrates are converted to sugars. That increases food tolerance and reducing the flatulence (gas) factor created by legumes!

Research on sprouts is a new field. Scientists are

interested in these little nutrition gems because they can also have remarkably high levels of antioxidants and polyphenols—phytonutrients known to guard against and fight chronic diseases. For example, broccoli sprouts have 50-100 times more sulforaphane than mature broccoli, which is a powerful natural stimulator of detox enzymes in your liver, and it helps to block cancer.

Using your sprouts

Sprouts can add texture, flavor, and an important boost to your nutritional intake. In addition to salads and sandwiches, you can use them in soups and stir-frys, eat them as snacks (think sprouted lentils) or as pizza toppings. You can also blend them into smoothies and dips, or mash and dehydrate them to make crackers, pizza base, and tacos. In addition, you can enjoy sprouted-grain bread!

You can buy sprouts from some grocery stores and supermarkets, or you can buy sprouting kits and grow them yourself.

Sue Radd is a nutritionist who is the award-winning author of "The Breakfast Book" and coauthor of "Eat to Live." www.sueradd.com

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