

# THE DEAF MESSENGER

An Inspirational Magazine for the Deaf



**“The message of the cross seems foolish to those who are lost and dying. But it is God’s power to us who are being saved.”**

**1 Corinthians 1:18, NIV**

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inform the deaf reader about such  
topics as practical Christian living;  
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present, and future historical events  
mean to each of us. This magazine  
attempts to cover spiritual, mental,  
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# Religion Without God's Power in Life

By David M. Trexler



In comparison with other wealthy nations in Western Europe and Australia, the United States has the greatest percentage of the population attending churches. Some people called the United States a Christian nation. In Europe many churches are almost empty on every Sunday. Christianity is dying in Western Europe and Australia while Christianity

appears to be growing stronger in the United States. Christians have much influence on American politics. But, the question is: Are all Christians having a true relationship with Jesus Christ? Of course, we cannot judge their minds and hearts, but are we different from Jesus' time when a majority of religious leaders had a great show of their faith while they really didn't have faith

in their hearts. Let me quote from the Bible: "You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. . . They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly" (2 Timothy 3:1, 5, New Living Translation). I believe that we are in the last days of the earth's history as proven by the signs we see everyday.

There is a great interest in religion of different faiths. More people are worried about the conditions of the world that are getting worse and worse. Every time the governments try to improve the lives of the people, we become more like animals than before. It is natural for the religious people to look to God for help. They pray to God to help the United States go back to God again. They pray and work hard to stop the evils in our society. Yes, we should pray and work together to improve our society, but we tend to focus on the wrong things for help. We are no different from the people of Israel when the Romans controlled the country. Religious leaders

and common people prayed for deliverance from Rome. They failed to focus on God because they focused on external things to solve the problem.

Today we see the same things again, but this time we face the possible death of the world because of pollutions, immorality, hate, etc. Instead of focusing on the world's events that distract us from focusing on Jesus Christ, we should listen to Apostle Paul's advice: "Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory" (Colossians 3:1-4, New Living Translation).

The true kingdom of God is not found here on earth where many people are trying to force the people to follow the rules of heaven.

It is dangerous for the government to try to force religion on us. Persecutions will follow easily if someone doesn't agree with the teachings of the church. It is easy to behave religiously when forced to do. Jesus is interested in the true kingdom of God in our hearts that prepares us for the heavenly kingdom. When Jesus faced the trial with

Pilate, He spoke the truth of His mission on earth, "My kingdom is not part of this world" (John 18:36). So, let us follow Paul's counsel in Colossians so we can have the power of God in our lives. Jesus is coming again soon to take those who have God's power in their lives—God's character and obedience to Him daily.

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## Guardian Angels

by Arthur W. Griffith

*"The angel of the Lord stands guard around those who have respect for him. And he saves them" (Psalm 34:7, NIV).*

I wonder how many times in our lives, our angel guards do things of which we are not aware. Once, in 1943, I was riding my bike fast in downhill traffic on Burnside Street in Portland, Oregon, and a woman stepped in front of my bike. I had no time to pray. Did I, or my angel, do it? I flipped my front wheel crosswise, and

sailed forward in a perfect airborne somersault that rolled me smoothly onto the pavement, and slid me to a stop. I had no injuries. I could have broken my neck or been killed.

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Arthur Griffith is a retired deaf pastor for the Deaf, and lives in Manteca, California.

# Wrong Love to God and to a Neighbor Is Not Real, But Is a Fake

By Paul Kelly



As we read Matthew 22:34-40, come with me to Jesus' time. Jesus was in the temple in Jerusalem. The people were eager to hear Him. There were also religious leaders: the Sadducees and the Pharisees, who questioned the teaching of Jesus. The Sadducees were the liberals and the Pharisees were the conservatives. The event

happened during the week before Jesus' crucifixion in AD 31. The Pharisees were impressed by how Jesus answered powerfully to the Sadducees' question. The Sadducees were not able to say any more to Him. The Pharisees decided to test Jesus. They hoped to find errors in His words. One

of them was a teacher of the law. He asked Him which was the greatest commandment in the law. Jesus answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment." He added the second one, "And the second is like it: You

shall love your neighbor as yourself.” He then said, “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophet” (NKJV). After another conversation, no one wanted to question Jesus any more from that day on (verse 46).

When we hear Jesus spoke so greatly about these two great commandments, we notice the word “LOVE” in relation to God and to our neighbor. The word “LOVE” is the most popular and powerful word ever spoken or written since the world was made. People showed it in many ways. Many books have been written about it. The Deaf and hearing people throughout the world flash “ILY” in sign language. It seems so simple to say or to sing “I love you.” But the big question is how we can properly show our love to God and to our neighbor? We get different opinions about how we show our love. One person says this is the right way to do it. Another person says it is not. The third person may give a confusing answer.

We can get the true

understanding of love when we look at Jesus’ life. Throughout the Gospel books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus’ life showed His disciples, people and religious leaders what true, unselfish love really is. Jesus commanded His disciples that they love one another, as He had loved them (John 15:12). He prayed to the Father. He preached the word of God. He comforted and healed the people. He met the people’s needs. Some religious leaders became angry with Him because He and His disciples did not obey the traditions and commandments of men that they made. Jesus rebuked them for not following the commandment of God which is more important (Matthew 15:1-9). Adam and Eve’s son, Cain, did the same thing by being angry with God for not accepting his fruit offering (Genesis 4:5).

Jesus did not present the two great commandments on love as something new. During His time, the New Testament was not written until many years later.

When the teacher of the law asked Him which was the great commandment *in the law*, he was talking about the Holy Scriptures (the Old Testament) that had already been written in their time. Jesus quoted the two great commandments from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, which are in the Old Testament. He said that all the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets (the Old Testament) were based on these two commandments (Matthew 22:40). Some people think that these two great commandments on love replaced or canceled the Ten Commandments, but again how do we know how to show our love to God and to our neighbor? In the Ten Commandments the first four commandments (Exodus 20:3 to 11) show us how to love God. The last six commandments (Exodus 20: 12 to 17) help us how to love our neighbor. Apostle Paul clearly explained in Romans 13:9,10. He added that the law expects us to love our neighbor. We cannot separate love from

the law. Apostle John wrote, “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” (1 John 5:2, 3, NKJV).

When the Pharisees were afraid to test Jesus any more, Jesus rebuked them for trying to look so good on the outside while serving God but totally failed to love and serve their neighbor (Matthew 23). The love to God and the love to the neighbor cannot be separated. If we truly love God, we would truly love our neighbor. It is the power of love for God that motivates us to truly obey God’s commandments.

Lastly, Apostle John strongly warns us in the Bible against those who say that they know and love God but refuse to keep His commandments (1 John 2:4,5). That kind of love is not real but is a fake.

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# Jesus and a Roman Coin

By John Blake



I have been studying the Gospels in the New Testament for some months as I'm writing the story of Jesus' life for a signed DVD set about His life. It is inspiring to take a very close look at what Jesus said and did. Today I was reading about a question people asked Jesus.

Perhaps you remember how during the week just before Jesus died, the Jewish leaders sent some younger men to test and trap

Jesus. Both the Pharisees and the Herodians, or ruling class, were not usually friends. But, now they combined together to work against Jesus. The leaders wanted to get Jesus to say something so that either the people and Jewish leaders would condemn Him, or the Roman government would condemn Him. But, it seemed that every time they thought they were close to catching Jesus, something would happen to delay

their plans. Now they were getting desperate to catch and kill Jesus. The leaders were worried that a popular uprising might go against them, and that they might lose their power and wealth.

The younger men didn't come alone. Some of the ruling class also came along to carefully watch and listen to Jesus' answers. They first asked a simple question. They tried to act friendly with the question "What do you think?" Then they asked the question that they expected would trap Jesus: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" If Jesus answered that it was not lawful, then they could say that Jesus was working against the Roman government. They could accuse Jesus of starting a rebellion. If Jesus said that it is was lawful, then they planned to say that Jesus was breaking God's law. The question really was asking if a man could be a good Jew, when he accepted the authority of the Romans.

But Jesus knew their hearts and their evil plans. He immediately asked them why they were testing

him. Jesus called them hypocrites! Then Jesus asked them for a denarius. A denarius was a silver Roman coin. It was the usual wage for one day for a laborer. Taxes had to be paid using Roman coins. The copper coins were not used to pay for taxes. The copper coins were made by a local country that was conquered by the Romans.

On one side of this coin was the picture of the Roman Caesar. On the other was the picture of a Roman god. Jesus now asked them a question. Holding up the side of the coin with Caesar's picture on it, Jesus asked: Whose picture is this? They answered, Caesar's.

Then Jesus told them to give back to Caesar what was his, but they must also give back to God what was God's property (Matthew 22:21).

So, Jesus was really telling them that "yes, it was right to pay our 'taxes'" But, even more important, we should always give back to God what is His. Everything we own really belongs to God. "The earth

and everything it contains are the LORD's. The world and all who live in it are his" (Psalm 24:1, God's Word translation).

In Scripture, our responsibility to God does involve money. God asks for us to return His 10% as our "Tithe." God says, "I am the LORD all-Powerful, and I challenge you to put me to the test. Bring the entire ten percent into the storehouse, so there will be food in my house. Then I will open the windows of heaven and flood you with blessing after blessing" (Malachi 3:10, CEV). In addition, God asks us to decide for ourselves what is our fair share of offerings. God then promises to bless us, as we follow Him in faith.

God tells us that He will provide for our needs. "That's the way God clothes the grass in the field. Today it's alive, and tomorrow it's thrown into an incinerator. So how much more will he clothe you people who have so little faith? 'Don't ever worry and say, 'What are we going to eat?' or 'What are we going to drink?' or

'What are we going to wear?' Everyone is concerned about these things, and your heavenly Father certainly knows you need all of them. But first, be concerned about his kingdom and what has his approval. Then all these things will be provided for you" (Matthew 6:30-33, GW).

But there is a larger message for us, too. All we have and are really belong to God. We are the caretakers of what God has kindly given to us! We can selfishly try and keep all 'our' things and manage "our own" business by our own thinking, values and plans. But God really tells us that if we do things without His guidance, it is really like putting our money in a bag with holes in it. Amazingly, 90% can go further with God's blessings than 100% without his blessing.

I think back to my own father. He became a sincere Christian and carefully tithed his money. He also gave liberally. He was very honest and fair in business. He tried to put God first in his life. God gave him funds to work with, and he ended life with

many financial blessings. Those funds have been a great blessing to Deaf ministry.

In fact, if we know better, we actually are cursed if we don't give back what is God's. God's curses are a removal of His blessings. Israel as a nation had already suffered that type of a curse. Why were the Jews being ruled by Rome? Had not God made Israel many promises about being the head and not the tail? Did God really want them to be ruled by the cruel Romans? No, that was not God's first plan.

Israel was being ruled by the Romans because they had failed to give to God what was really His. The leadership of the Jewish nation in Jesus time had become very self-centered and interested in money and power. They feared Jesus because they were afraid they could lose their power.

Isn't that similar to some of the reasons why people today so often don't give their lives to Jesus? They are afraid that Jesus might ask them to sacrifice for

Him. They might lose their popularity or friends. They might lose their job or have to change to a job that a Christian can do with a clear conscience.

But, look at the eleven disciples. They became leaders in taking the gospel to the world. True, ten of them lost their lives here, but all of them will gain eternal life with Jesus in Heaven.

What about you? Have you been touched by the great sacrifices that Jesus made to save you? Have you seen Jesus hanging on the cross to save you? If you had been the only one, Jesus still would have been willing to die just for you?

I've decided that any sacrifice here is a small thing that I can do. I thank Jesus for all He has done for me! Anything I can do, is so little compared to the joyful life Jesus has waiting for me in eternity.

What about you?

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John Blake is a retired pastor who has been involved with Deaf ministries for many years. He lives in Clive, Alberta, Canada.

# Frightening Events Around the World

By Beth Ann Dobson

Are events spinning out of control these days? We have had serious natural disasters and events in the United States and other countries.

The 2008 Midwestern floods have already damaged many homes, office buildings, and crops. Gas, food, and airline prices are increasing a lot. Home values are terrible. More and more poor people are starving in Africa. There are more and more foreclosures (the act of foreclosing a mortgage means that the home owner cannot afford to pay for his/her home anymore) being reported on the news. There are wars that do not seem to end in Iraq and Afghanistan. The war against terrorism seems forever. The China earthquake on May 12, 2008 killed more than 69,000 people. There have been many tornadoes in the USA already. “110 people have been killed by tornadoes this year, which may put 2008 on track to be one of the deadliest years in recent history” according to Kate King, the author of “2008

could set records for tornado deaths” (CNN.com). 78,000 people were killed in the Myanmar cyclone. There have been a lot of rumors about Israel making plans to destroy Iran’s nuclear weapons. There are possible civil wars happening in other parts of the world. There is a lot of cruel oppression of the people by their own government in other parts of the world. These are a few of the many terrible happenings around the world. They are very scary. What is going on in the world? Should we be worried and concerned? We might turn to the Bible for answers.

Jesus and His disciples were on the Mount of Olives when they asked Him about the sign of His coming and the end of the world. Christ explained to the disciples, “You will hear about wars. You will also hear people talking about future wars. Don’t be alarmed. Those things must happen. But, the end still isn’t here. Nation will fight against nation. Kingdom will fight against kingdom.

People will go hungry. There will be earthquakes in many places" (Matthew 24:3-7). You can be certain that Jesus will return to the Earth the second time according to Hebrews 9:28 and Matthew 26:64. It is His promise to us, and He has never once failed us. Therefore, we can all look forward to his Second Coming.

Christ will make sure we all see Him in the clouds. "Look! He is coming with the clouds! Every eye will see him" (Revelation 1:7). "Lightning that comes from the east can be seen in the west. It will be the same when the Son of Man comes" (Matthew 24:27). Christ is coming back the second time for a real purpose. It is to bring to an end to all of the terrifying events around the world. There are no terrible happenings in heaven where He is living right now. Christ wants to give a reward to us according to our works (Revelation 22:12). This is one thrilling event we can look forward to. But, the wicked people are going to be really scared because the earth will have a huge earthquake at the coming of the Lord. The

earthquake will be so powerful that it will destroy the world.

Christ's second coming seems very near. Please pray daily and be ready for His return. He wants to see you smiling and excited like little children when you see Him in the clouds. He wants to be able to say to you personally, "Hello. I am here to take you to heaven. No more scary events for you!" Many people ask, "Just how near is the Lord's second coming?" Matthew 24:32-34 is the answer. "Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all those things happening, you know that the end is near. It is right at the door. What I'm about to tell you is true."

We know that Christ is coming quickly because he says so. Therefore, we need to say, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" May "the grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen" Revelation 22:20, 21).

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# Pornography

By Francisca Trexler



Pornography is printed or visual material that shows pictures of nude bodies of both men and women, and even some of the small children. It is used in printed literature like Playboy, photos, sculpture, drawings, paintings, recording, film, videos and video games. The purpose of pornography is to cause people to have sinful sexual desire or excitement. Pornography is now very popular. It has grown greatly in the past years through VCR, DVD's and the Internet. Our generation has accepted pornography more than ever before.

The origin of the word,

pornography, is from Greek “pornographos.” “Pornographos” is made up of two words—“porné” and “graphein.” “Porné” means “prostitute.” “Graphein” means “write.” What does “prostitute” mean? A prostitute is a person, often a woman, who is involved in a sexual activity (for example, having sexual relations with a man) for payment.

Clearly, pornography is not healthful for people, especially a married couple. It can cause people to have sexual imagination with a woman in the picture, the video, or the Internet. It is the same way as having

sexual excitement with a “prostitute.” What does God say about pornography? It is true that the Bible has no word for pornography because it was not written at that time, but the Bible does give principles that show pornography as sinful and wrong. It is the same way the Bible doesn’t have the word, “cigarette” that is unhealthy and sinful.

Pornography does not offer the natural and real beauty of love from God. It is not in agreement with the true love that a loving God gives to us. Pornography can easily destroy the marriage and harm the relationship between the husband and wife. Also, pornography can influence either men or women to stay single to enjoy sex with different partners. A person who is involved with pornography has sinned against God according to the Bible. “But I tell you that if anyone looks at a woman and wants to sin sexually with her, in his mind he has already done that sin with the woman [committed adultery with her in his heart]” (Matthew 5:28,

NCV). “Marriage should be honored by everyone, and husband and wife should keep their marriage pure. God will judge as guilty those who take part in sexual sins” (Hebrews 13:4, NCV).

Let me share a true story of a broken marriage. Their names are not real. Clem, the husband, worked very hard at his job. Lucy, his wife, was a schoolteacher in an elementary school. Both of them were successful people and had a lot of money. Both Clem and Lucy looked very happy and lived in a big and lovely home. But, Lucy didn’t know that her husband was addicted to pornography in the computer at work and at home as well. Both of them were very busy and didn’t have much time for each other. One day Clem was caught at his work looking at pornography in his computer. Clem was fired from the job because he broke the rule that employees were not supposed to use the computer for personal use and for looking at pornography. Lucy didn’t know about it until when she came home and saw

Clem, who was very sad. Clem finally admitted to his wife that he was addicted to pornography. Of course, Lucy was hurt about her husband's addiction to sexual fantasies. Also, she was shocked and thought that she gave much satisfaction to her husband. Naturally, she lost her trust in Clem. She decided to see a marriage counselor to save their marriage, but Clem was not interested in it because he thought that pornography was not wrong at all. He enjoyed it very much. Clem thought that pornography wasn't harmful because he didn't get involved in sexual activities physically with other women. Their marriage didn't last because Clem chose other women through pornography rather than his legally married wife. How sad it was!

Clem could have saved their marriage and followed God's serious advice about pornography. See 1 Corinthians 7:2, NCV, "But because sexual sin is a danger, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own

husband." See what God mentions in the Bible, (1 Corinthians 6:18, NCV): "So run away from sexual sin. Every other sin people do is outside their bodies, but those who sin sexually sin against their own bodies." Similar to what Jesus had said, "Do not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14, NIrV).

Some people say that pornography is not that bad at all. They think that God understands our human weaknesses. But the problem with their thinking is that they love sin, and they don't consider pornography as sinful. They don't believe in what the Bible says. They believe in themselves more than the Bible.

The Bible clearly has shown that God hates sin of all forms that destroy the happiness of people such as what happened to Clem and Lucy. They became very unhappy people. Clem lusted over other "prostitutes" in the Internet. The Bible warns strongly against going with a prostitute. "For the lips of a prostitute are as sweet as honey, and smooth

flattery is her stock in trade. But afterwards only a bitter conscience is left to you, sharp as a double-edged sword. She leads you down to death and hell" (Proverbs 5:3-5, TLB). Doing wrong things according to feelings and desires leads us to many problems. Sin is dangerous to our character and ruins our hope to be in heaven with Jesus.

The Bible says more about sins that God hated and destroyed. "Also, remember the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the other towns around them. In the same way they were full of sexual sin and people who desired sexual relations that God does not allow. They suffer the punishment of eternal fire, as an example for all to see" (Jude 7, NCV).

It is clear that sexual immorality is sickening! God wants us to do the right way with our lives and stay away from pornography. "God wants you to be holy and to say away from sexual sins" (1 Thessalonians 4:3, NCV). In Revelation 2:21, NCV, "I have given her time to change her heart and turn

away from her sin, but she does not want to change." God is very loving and patient with us. There is no love in sin so God cannot accept sin, even sexual sins.

But, here is the good news from God, "Brothers and sisters, I know that I have not reached that goal, but there is one thing I always do. Forgetting the past [sinful life] and straining toward what is ahead [God's way]" (Philippians 3:13, NCV). The Bible tells us that we need to give up our sinful lives and give our addictions and sinful desires to Jesus Christ. He will help us to give up sinful habits. With God nothing is impossible, so let us give our old sinful habits to Jesus Christ. Keep in your mind, "With men [without God in our lives] it is impossible!" (Mark 10:27). Give your heart to Jesus and He will give you victory over all kinds of sins.

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# Walnut Oat Burgers



1 cup quick oats  
1 cup seasoned bread crumbs  
1 cup sautéed onion, finely chopped  
1 cup walnut, finely chopped  
1/4 cup soy flour  
2 Tablespoon cashew nut butter (optional)  
1 Tablespoons soy sauce (Braggs)  
salt, accent, sage to taste  
dash thyme

Mix well together. Add just enough hot water to hold together. Mix well. Brown in oiled skillet on both sides. Or make patties on the cookie sheet and bake them in the oven with 350 for 15 minutes or so. Serve in burger buns or with gravy as meatless main dish.

## Country Style Milk Gravy

2 cups water  
1/2 cup cashew nuts (be sure to wash them well)  
2 Tablespoons arrowroot powder or 3 Tablespoons browned flour  
1/2 teaspoons onion powder  
2 Tablespoons oil (olive oil)  
2 Tablespoons soy sauce (optional) or 1/4 teaspoon celery seed powder

Liquefy the above ingredients together. Pour into saucepan and stir until thickened. Serve with your favorite loaf or patties.

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