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THE DEAF MESSENGER

An Inspirational Magazine for the Deaf



“The Word [Jesus] was in the world, and the world was made by him, but the world did not know him. He came to the world that was his own, but his own people did not accept him.”

John 1:10, 11, NCV

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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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The Gift the World Didn't Want

By David Trexler



HIGHER CLIPS

How would you feel if your friend rejected your expensive gift? That expensive gift was a necessary thing that would help your friend, but your friend rejected it because he wanted something else than your gift. He didn't like your gift, period! I am sure you would feel insulted or feel bad. You had a good thought of your friend, but he wouldn't accept your help because he didn't like it. Strange? Yes, it is strange, but that is how many people

are doing the same way as your friend.

More than 2,000 years ago the world didn't know about the greatest gift ever given to the world by God—the birth of the world's Redeemer and Savior. But, the Israelites who were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah didn't know about it! The Israelites were called God's people who had Scripture, but they didn't know about the Messiah who came to their place. Only a few people were

expecting something great to happen to bring good news of salvation for the whole world. For example: Anna, a prophetess; the wise men from the East; the humble shepherds at the field; and Simeon, the prophet who blessed Mary and Joseph with the baby Jesus. The wise men from the East were not Israelites, but they studied Scripture that told about the coming Messiah. They were searching for the truth with a honest heart.

Why didn't the Israelites know about it? They had Scripture that told a lot about the coming Messiah who would deliver people from sin. When Jesus became a man and started the ministry many people accepted Him, but they didn't know Him correctly. In the short time of His ministry He was crucified on the cross. He was treated as a bad person. What happened to them who rejected Him? Why the change from acceptance to rejection?

Before Jesus came to the world He knew that He would be rejected by His own people whom He came

to save from sin. The Apostle John said, "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive [accept] Him" (John 1:10, 11, NKJV).

In Jesus' time Israel was controlled by Rome. Israelites hated the Romans because they didn't like a pagan country to rule over them. Also, the Roman soldiers did not show respect to them. The Jews looked at the Romans as unclean pagans who didn't worship God, but idols. The Israelites were hoping for a Messiah who would free the country from the Roman rule. They believed that the Messiah would be a great and powerful leader who would take over David's throne. Yes, they did expect the Messiah to come according to Scripture, but they had the wrong idea about Him. They believed that if the Messiah had come and ruled the country they would have been the greatest of all nations of the world. God's people were blinded by their nationalistic pride. They did

not think of freedom from sin. They desired freedom from Rome, poverty, hunger, etc. Even Jesus' disciples had the wrong idea about Jesus, but they believed Jesus to be the Son of God. They thought Jesus would remove the Roman power and establish Israel as a new nation. Jesus' disciples were honest people but they had the wrong idea about the mission of Jesus.

For a while Jesus had many disciples who followed Him wherever He went and taught, but later most of them left Him because they felt that Jesus didn't satisfy their selfish desires. They wanted temporal things of the world—food, wealth, fame, honor and perfect health. They thought that they didn't need to change their way because they were God's people, a favored people. They were proud of their bloodline back to Abraham. They believed that they were "saved" because of their ancestry and good works. Jesus' truth and teachings insulted their pride. So, they completely rejected God, who created them

with loving hands and who came to save them from sin. Jesus told the truth about His "followers" why they followed Him. "Jesus answered, 'What I'm about to tell you is true. You are not looking for me because you saw miraculous signs. You are looking for me because you ate the loaves until you were full. Do not work for food that spoils. Work for food that lasts forever. That is the food the Son of Man will give you' " (John 6:26, 27). What food He was talking about? He talked about Himself as the Bread of Life. Clearly people preferred physical things more than the spiritual things that required the change of heart and life. People preferred to stay the way they were and expected to get something from Jesus. Jesus wanted everyone to believe in Him as the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

Misunderstanding of the Bible about the truth of Jesus Christ is dangerous. It can lead us to eternal loss. Let me tell you a story about a wealthy son who was expecting something

from his aging father for his graduation from high school. Before his graduation he told his father that he wanted a specific expensive car. He expected that his father would do what he wished. On the day of his graduation his father called his son to his office. He congratulated him for his achievement. Then he handed his son a package with a ribbon on the top. It is a book-sized package. His son appeared disappointed. That was not what he expected. But, he opened the package and there it was the Bible. You can guess how the son felt about it. He was upset and demanded why he didn't get a car. His father tried to explain to him that he believed that the Bible would be a blessing to him as his life guide for his future. As the father tried to explain, but his son refused to listen. He was very angry and left the Bible on the desk. He went out and didn't see his father again. The son rejected the gift that hurt his father.

So, as years went by the son graduated from college and got a very good job,

making a lot of money. He got married and had children. He started to wonder about his father and the gift. But, one day he received a telegram that his father had passed away and he must go to take care of his father's estate. Of course, he was sad about missing his father who loved him very much. While he was in his father's office he was surprised to see his new Bible on the desk. The same place he left years ago. He picked up the Bible and turned a page, but something fell from it. He was surprised to see a key with a tag that fell from the Bible. It was a key for a brand new car with a title and registration with his name on it.

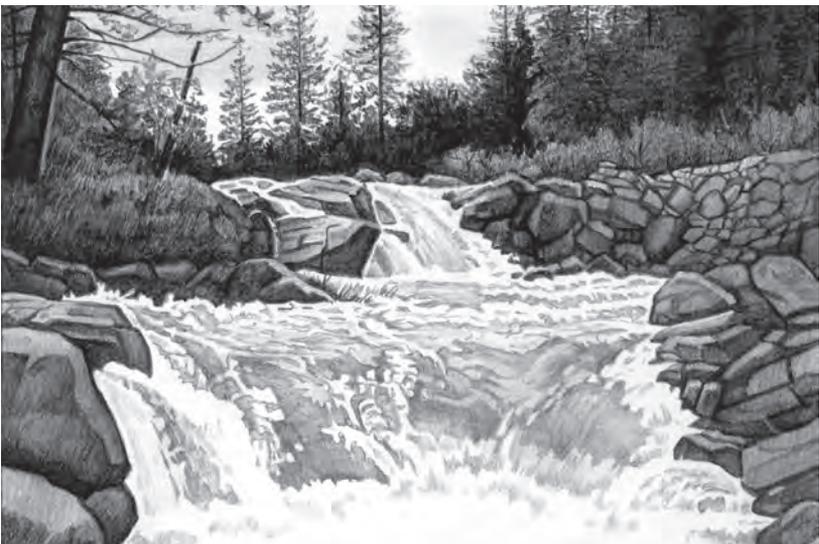
How would you think the son would feel about his wrong attitude toward his very kind father who gave him the precious gift that he rejected at once? His father was wise in giving him the Bible first because spiritual things are more important than physical things of the world. His father intended that his son would be surprised more

if he discovered the key for the brand new car if he had accepted the Bible as the gift. He would not have missed the chance, and he would not have hurt his loving father.

Jesus is saying right now, “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:31-33, NKJV, *emphasis supplied*).

The world and, unfortunately, even some Christians do not want Jesus and His righteousness. They just reject Jesus Christ— True Messiah— who had died for them. Jesus came here to die for all of us so we can have eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. Now, Christmas is coming soon to remind us of the Greatest of All Gifts—Jesus Christ. So let us accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord. Don’t miss the chance right now to accept Him through repentance. I want that Gift. Would you, too?

David M. Trexler is Speaker/ Director of Three Angels Deaf Ministries who lives in Lanham, MD.



“Dear God, Can I Have a Tattoo?”

By Paul Kelly



PROV/RB7/ISTOCK

Years ago, many young men who were in the navy got their tattoos done overseas. Today, tattooing is becoming popular. Many young people think it is cool to have one while others want to have it for many reasons. We see more and more people in our society accepting it. What people have accepted does not always mean that it is okay in God’s eyes. We want to avoid looking down on anyone with tattoos, especially Christians who may have one already. God loves and forgives us when we make mistakes. We want to help those who are thinking about getting a tattoo to make a right decision rather than

to be sorry about it later. We need to check with God through His holy word: the Bible, to see if having a tattoo is OK or not for a Christian.

When God through Moses led the Jewish people out of Egypt, God spoke to them, “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar [different] people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth (Deuteronomy 14:2 KJV). He wants His holy people to be different from other people around them in the way they live. The only place in the Bible that mentioned tattoo is Leviticus 19:28 (NKJV): “You shall

not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the LORD.” These acts were often done by pagans. Pagans were people who did not worship God in heaven and who worshiped more than one god. If God told the Jewish people to be different from the pagans and not to have any tattoos, does that mean He also prefers us not to do what pagans did?

As for today, God again called us to be holy and to be different than people around us. Paul wrote in Titus 2:13,14 (KJV), “Our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem [save] us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar [different] people, zealous of good works.” Peter wrote similarly in 1 Peter 2:9 that we are to be a *peculiar* people. *Since God is holy, He* expected Jewish people to be holy (Leviticus 19:2). God asks us to be holy too.

Apostle Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 and 6:19, 20 that our bodies are the temple of God and that the temple of God is holy. God expects us to be holy.

Paul pointed out that we do NOT own our bodies but God does. Also, we are asked to glorify (honor) God in our bodies which belong to God. For example, if you made a beautiful wood piece, you would not be happy if I draw or write on it. We need to ask ourselves, “Am I seeking to glorify God or draw attention to myself?”

Tattoos do not make us better Christians. It is our characters, copying Jesus, that make us Christians. Even though some individuals want to wear tattoos resembling Christianity (picture of Jesus, angel or bible verse) they do not attract people to God. It is our Christian characters that lead people to God. Apostle Peter clearly wrote in 1 Peter 3:3, 4 that our beauty is just not the exterior part of our body. He explained that our beauty should be our characters coming from our heart, inside of us, with a gentle and quiet spirit that lasts forever that is very valuable to God. As the Apostle Paul informed us that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in us (1 Corinthians 6:19), he further added in Galatians

6:22, 23 that we need to have the fruits of the Spirit that are “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...” These are what we need to be developed in us with the help of Holy Spirit.

The Apostle John added in 1 John 2:6 (NKJV) that we should follow Jesus’ example, “he who says he abides in Him, ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” Apostle Paul similarly said in Galatians 5:25 that “if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” We need to avoid trying to please our friends, family, or ourselves. Apostle Paul encouraged us to do everything to glorify God, “Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31, NKJV).

Lastly, it is not that easy for us to make a right decision since we have a habit of following what we want. The Apostle James encouraged us to ask God for wisdom. He wrote, “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” I

encourage you to give your ways and your life to God and allow Christ Jesus to live in you just as the Apostle Paul said, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20, NKJV). Once we get to know Jesus more and more through daily Bible reading and through daily prayer, I am sure that you will be able to make decisions much easier, especially your decision of whether or not to have a tattoo.

For those who already have a tattoo, you may realize your mistake of having one and may feel stupid or guilty. Always remember that God DOES love you (John 3:16) and is so willing to FORGIVE you of your past mistakes (1 John 1:9). If you are so uncomfortable with a tattoo that you have already, there is a laser treatment that can remove it, but it will come with a cost. Or, you can wait until Christ comes again to make you a new person permanently without any tattoo.

Paul Kelly is a Deaf teacher for the Deaf and lay pastor who lives in Rochester, NY.

Confession

By Ellen G. White



HIGHER CLIPS

“You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins. Confess them [sins] and give them up; then God will show mercy to you” (Proverbs 28:13).

The rules for receiving the mercy of God are simple, fair, and reasonable. God does not ask us to do something hard and painful so that our sins may be forgiven. We do not need to make long, tiring journeys. We cannot pay for our sins by suffering. People who confess their sins and stop doing the sins will receive mercy and forgiveness.

The Apostle James

says, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed” (James 5:16, KJV). We confess our sins to God because only God can forgive sins. We confess our faults to other persons. If we have done something wrong to another person, we must admit the wrong. The person to whom we did wrong should forgive us. Then we need to ask God to forgive us because that person belongs to God. We sin against our Creator and Redeemer when we hurt people.

We give our problems to Jesus Christ. Jesus is

our great High Priest. “Our High Priest is not one who cannot feel sympathy for our weakness. ... We have a High Priest who was tempted in every way that we are [tempted] but [He] did not sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He is able to forgive every sin and make our hearts clean.

The first rule for having God accept us is to humble ourselves before God and admit that we have sinned. If we have not repented, humbled ourselves, and with sorrow confessed our sins, we have not truly asked for forgiveness. If we do not hate our sins, we do not truly want to be forgiven. Also, we will not have the peace of God.

The only reason God does not forgive us is because we are not willing to humble ourselves and obey God’s laws. God has told us exactly how we need to humble ourselves and obey God’s laws and ask forgiveness. We must confess our sins and be sorry we have sinned. If we are truly sorry we have sinned and confess our sins to God, He will hear us and forgive us. David wrote in the Psalms, “The Lord is near to those [people] who have a broken heart, and saves such as

[people who] have a contrite spirit [sorry for sin]” (Psalms 34:18, NKJV).

True confession is asking forgiveness for a specific sin. A person may need to confess some sins only to God. Some sins need to be confessed to the person who was hurt. Some sins may need to be confessed in public. Every time people confess their sins, they should tell what sins they are guilty of doing.

When Samuel was alive, the people of Israel were not following God. They had lost faith in God and felt God had stopped leading them. The people did not understand God was wise and powerful, and they did not trust God to care for them. The people turned from God and asked for a king, the same as other nations had. They rejected the Ruler of the universe.

God gave His people a king, but they had many troubles. Before they could have peace with God, they confessed, “We now realize that, besides all our other sins, we have sinned by asking for a king” (1 Samuel 12:19). The people had to confess the exact sin that had caused their trouble. They were not thankful to God for

His leading. The people had separated themselves from God.

God accepts our confession only after we have repented and made changes in our lives. When we are truly sorry for sin, we will stop doing everything that is not pleasing to God. The work we must do is: “Wash yourselves clean. Stop all this evil that I see you doing. Yes, stop doing evil and learn to do right. See [make sure] that justice is done—help those [people] who are oppressed, give orphans their right and defend widows” (Isaiah 1:16, 17).

“If he [an evil man] returns the security he took for a loan or gives back what he stole—if he stops sinning and follows the laws that give life, he will not die, but live” (Ezekiel 33:15).

Paul was speaking about repentance when he said: “See what God did with this sadness [godly sorrow] of yours: how earnest it has made you, how eager to prove your innocence! Such indignation, such alarm, such feelings, such devotion, such readiness to punish wrongdoing! You have shown yourselves to be without

fault in the whole matter” (2 Corinthians 7:11).

Sin weakens the senses that tell us what is right or wrong. The sinner does not realize the defects of his character. His sins do not seem bad to him. If he does not allow the Holy Spirit to work in his life, he will not realize his sin is terrible. A person who does not have the Holy Spirit working in his life is not really sorry when he confesses his sins. He excuses his sins. He says he would not have done wrong if things had been different.

After Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they felt guilty and were afraid. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin and escape death. When God asked Adam and Eve about their sin, Adam blamed God and Eve.

Adam said, “ ‘The woman you put here with me gave me the fruit, and I ate it [fruit].’ ” The woman blamed the snake. She said, “ ‘The snake tricked me into eating it [fruit].’ ” (Genesis 3:12, 13). Eve was saying to God, “Why did You make the snake? Why did You let the snake come into Eden?” Eve was excusing herself and blaming God for her sin.

The desire to make excuses for our sins comes from Satan. Confessing our sins by blaming someone else is not true confession. God will not accept our confession if we blame our sins on someone else. True repentance will lead a person to admit his guilt without trying to blame other people for his mistakes. An honest person will do the same as the tax collector that Luke tells about. The tax collector prayed, "God, have pity on me a sinner." God will forgive people who admit they are guilty. Jesus gave His life to save sinners who repent. Jesus is our great High Priest in heaven.

We read in the Bible of people who truly repented. They were humble and confessed their sins. They did not try to make excuses or defend what they had done. The apostle Paul told of his sin of putting Christians in prison. Paul did not try to make his sin seem small. He made his sin seem as bad as he could.

Paul wrote, "I received authority from the chief priests and put many of God's people in prison; and when they were sentenced to death, I also

voted against them. Many times I had them punished in the synagogues and tried to make them deny their faith. I was furious with them that I even went to foreign cities to persecute them' " (Acts 26:10, 11).

Paul was eager to say, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I am the worst of them [sinners]" (1 Timothy 1:15).

A humble person who truly repents will understand how much God loves him. He will understand the cost of Calvary. The sinner who is really sorry will confess his sins to God. He will confess his sins to God as easily as a son confesses to a loving father.

John wrote, "If we confess our sins to God, He will keep His promise and do what is right: He will forgive us our sin and purify us from all our wrongdoing" (1 John 1:9).

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.

Sharing God through Personification

By Margie English



GOODSALT CLIPART

When we use personification, we give non-living things human emotion or behavior so that they seem alive. Personification helps us make examples in fun and dramatic stories. For example, in Psalms 98:8 (NIV) we read: “Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy.” It’s fun to see nature active like this, right? When we say that things have feelings or behavior, we experience our world in a new way.

Jesus uses personification in the Bible to

teach us important lessons. Jesus helps us understand how we need to depend on God when He gave us this example: “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything” (John 15:5). There are many more examples of personification in the Bible.

Using personification in stories helps us create pictures in our heads. Here is another example: “The wind is blowing” helps us see a picture of the “wind”

with a face blowing hard at us. Talking about things in a different way is fun, because we can use our imagination!

Sometimes we go too far with our imagination when we play with words. Sometimes we may talk about God's character or gifts as if they come from things that are not alive, instead of God Himself. When we talk about things that God have done for us, we choose words like "Life," "Mother Nature," or other worldly names. We praise false gods when we give God's character to things that are not alive.

When we talk about our experience here on Earth, we may say things like: "Life is good," or "Life works in funny ways," or even "Life has blessed me." Is "Life" a living person? When we do this, are we refusing to give God His rightful praise? Why don't we say: God is good; God works in mysterious ways; or God has blessed me? "Jesus said... 'I am the resurrection and the life' " (John 11:25). We know life comes from God. Is it okay to choose to say "Life" instead

of "God"?

Some people call Earth "Mother Nature," because, like a mother, it nurtures (feeds) life. When some people talk about things we see in nature, we say things like: "Mother Nature is giving us rain today," "Mother Nature is acting strange," or "Mother Nature inspires me (causes me to feel strong emotions)." We make Earth seem like a god when we talk this way. We know from Genesis 1 that God created everything we see in nature, so this kind of praise belongs to only God.

Let us honor our relationship with God by being careful about how we choose our words. Personification may help us explain God's promises to us by making stories more dramatic. At the same time, we need to avoid using personification that may hide our faith. As our Creator and Redeemer, God deserves to be celebrated for all that He has done for us with eternal praise!

Margie English is a Deaf writer who lives in Vienna, VA.

The Benefits of Tofu

By Sue Radd

Tofu has been the poor man's food in Asian menus for centuries, but in recent years tofu has become popular with Westerners seeking superfoods.

Tofu is a wonderful source of healthy, plant-based protein. It is also low in saturated fat. Depending on the different types, it can give a particularly good source of iron and calcium too.

But the greatest interest in tofu comes from research showing that it and other soy foods can provide important protection against many killer diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, and osteoporosis. Also it can even help to reduce menopausal problems in many women.

Tofu also takes on the flavor of any seasoning. And, best of all, it is not expensive!

There are different types of toful. All types of tofu are made from soybeans, water, and a setting agent. The difference has to do with the amount of water in the final product, which determines the texture and nutritional content of tofu.

Classic, or regular, is the most common type. It is similar to firm custard.

Silken is smooth and

delicate. It has a texture similar to pudding, and has the highest moisture content

Firm is pressed for a longer period to remove more water, making it firmer, chewier, and meatier in texture.

Which tofu you choose depends on your purpose

Classic is ideal to steam and enjoy, drizzled with soy sauce, mashed to make a scrambled egg alternative, or crumbled and used in chili dishes and tacos.

Silken is perfect cubed and slipped into soups, to replace eggs and/or cream in baking, or pureed as a base for sauces, dressings, or mousse.

Firm, being the most hardy, can be cut into various shapes, then pan-fried, stir-fried, skewered, marinated, grilled, or made into a dairy-free version of ricotta.

The best way to store leftover tofu is to cover it with water in an airtight container and refrigerate it. It will store for up to a week if the water is changed daily.

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

Vegetarian Recipe

Lentil-Vegetable Soup



- 2 cups lentils
- 8 cups water
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped carrots
- 3 Tablespoons parsley
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoon oregano, crushed
- 2 cups tomatoes

Be sure you wash the dry lentil before you put in the hot water. Place all ingredients, except tomatoes, in a soup kettle. Cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours. Add tomatoes, break up any large pieces. Simmer covered, 30 minutes longer. Season to taste, if desired. You can add the herbs such as cumin and chili powder. Don't use too much chili powder, it would be too hot to eat the soup.

Soup goes along with salad and corn bread or tofu cheese with corn tortilla.

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