

Confirming a Deaf Adult

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A retired teacher, she is the mother of two deaf adult sons.*

Talk about a challenge! Instructing any adult for confirmation can be a difficult task, depending on their level of commitment and communication.

But confirming a deaf adult? Where do I begin? How do I communicate with the person? How do I know if the person understands what I am teaching?

WELS Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has completed a rework of the adult instruction manual *By Grace Alone* by Pastor Rolfe Westendorf (NPH, 1979).

By Grace Alone: An Instruction Manual for Deaf Adults uses simple, short sentences and Scripture quotes from *The Holy Bible: English Version for the Deaf*. This manual should be used with a sign interpreter, a flow-through communicator who is not expected to do explaining. These days, sign interpreters are available via smart phones or tablets using a service called "Video Remote Interpreting."

If the deaf person is a good reader of English and a good lip-reader (understands what is being said by looking at the person's lips while hearing little or no sound), the teacher might use the usual Bible Information Class (BIC) material. However, lipreading is difficult, inexact, and exhausting. New terminology adds challenges. One-on-one is best for understanding and encourages questions.

Some deaf people do not speak, are poor readers of English, and do not lip-read at all. They often rely solely on American Sign Language (ASL) as their language for communication. ASL is not equal to English, because it has a different sentence structure. When an ASL user is asked to write something, the English is often poor and the person appears uneducated. He often is not good at reading English either. Reading and understanding the usual BIC material is challenging; therefore, it is strongly suggested that the new manual be used with this group.

This instruction manual for deaf adults is available at no charge from:

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