

# PathLights

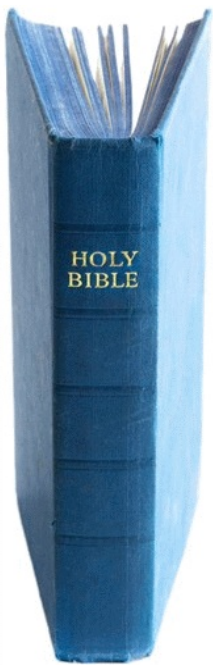
*"Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path"  
Psalm 119:104*

April 8, 2018

## Living in Fear

by Frank Himmel

Several New Testament verses urge Christians to live in fear.



“...Work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

“If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during your time of stay on earth” (1 Peter 1:17).

“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it” (Hebrews 4:1).

These verses are not intended to take away our confidence: we are adopted children of a loving God, not slaves of a grueling taskmaster (Romans 8:15; see 1 John 4:15-21). Their point is that we must live with the greatest reverence for God and a healthy fear of displeasing Him.

A Christian who lives in fear will...

*Worship God reverently.* We are invited to “draw near with confidence to the throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16), yet cautioned to “offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe” (12:28). We dare not become too casual in addressing the Almighty.

*Not be presumptuous.* We must not just guess at what is right or wrong, at what would or would not please God. His thoughts are not the same as ours (Isaiah 55:8-9). He has given us the Bible so we can know what He requires of us. “Do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:20-22).

*Flee temptation.* If one wants to “abstain from every form of evil,” common sense dictates that he should, to the extent he can, stay away from circumstances where temptation is the greatest. Be discreet about where you go, what you watch, and the company you keep. “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals’” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

*Not try to get by doing the least he can.* Jesus said the greatest commandment is, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). It is the opposite of the least-I-can-do-to-get-by-with approach that some seem to take. One who fears falling short will try to do the most he can, not the least.

“... Let us cleanse ourselves of all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). ■

# Methuselah

by Frank Himmel

Most folks I know want to live as long as they can. Why? The answer typically is because it gives us the opportunity to experience life to the full—to accomplish as much as possible through our work, to finish some long-term projects, to travel to exotic places, to watch our children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren grow up. But have we really pondered what a full life means?

Methuselah is mostly the answer to the trivia question, Who was the oldest man? He lived an incredible 969 years. (Can you begin to fathom the changes that have occurred from the year 1049 until the present?) Apart from his record age, however, we know nothing about Methuselah. Besides the brief record of his life in Genesis 5:22-27, he is mentioned only in the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1:3 and Luke 3:37.

Was Methuselah a man of faith? Did he obey God? Did he make any lasting contributions to posterity? The Bible is silent. If the Genesis genealogy can be used to establish a chronology—an admittedly uncertain approach—he evidently died the year of the flood. Was he among the wicked destroyed in it, or did he just coincidentally die of “old age” that year? Living as long as he did, he certainly had plenty of opportunities to serve God. What use of them he made we do not know.

By way of contrast, Methuselah’s father lived only about a third as long. Nevertheless, Enoch left an unmistakable mark. Jude mentions him as a prophet (Jude 14-15). And Hebrews 11:5 says, “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.”

Methuselah’s grandson also left his mark. “Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. . . . Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:8-9). Surely you know the rest of his story!

When it comes to life, quantity is not nearly as important as quality. Even a short life brings glory to God if it is used in His service. Remember, Jesus lived only to about age thirty-three! A full life is fearing God and keeping His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Thank God for the time you have, and resolve to live each day for Him. ■



## Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER	John Baucom	Howard Moore
SONG LEADER	Carlos Garcia	Greg Winget
OPENING PRAYER	Albert Lee Harrison	
LORD’S SUPPER		
BREAD	Mark Clifton	
CUP	Adam Gibson	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Bruce Williams	
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Brian Wilson
CLOSING PRAYER	Josh Baucom	Ian Brown