

# PathLights

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

January 1, 2017

## Hope

by Frank Himmel

Titus 2:11-14 is the climax of that book and one of the great summary passages of the Bible.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Consider briefly what this marvelous text says about our hope.

*What is the basis of our hope?* God's grace. We cannot earn our way into heaven, and we do not deserve God's favor. Our hope is in the fact that He is gracious despite our unworthiness.

*What has God's grace done to give us hope?* Two things. It brought salvation, offering it to all people, regardless of race, gender, or social standing, and despite whatever wrongs they may have done. It also instructs us, enabling us to learn how to be saved and how to live the best kind of life.

*Who can be hopeful?* Those who belong to Christ. He gave Himself for us to redeem us, a common Old

Testament picture of one in bondage receiving his freedom. We were in bondage to sin, but Christ set us free. Since we are bought with His precious blood, we belong to Him (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We are His body, the church (Ephesians 5:23).

*What does the hopeful life look like?* It is purified. It replaces a secular outlook with a godly one. It denies worldly desires — that includes both sinful things and right things that are given too much emphasis. It is sensible, exercising self-restraint. It is righteous, living according to God's standard. It is godly, focused on the Savior. It is zealous for good works.

*Is the benefit of hope limited to future blessings?* Not at all! Godliness "holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). Grace's instruction about how to live in the present age brings immediate benefits as well as preparing us for eternity. And hope itself is a blessing, comforting us amidst hardships and anchoring our souls (Hebrews 6:19).

*When will our hope be fully realized?* When our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, appears.

In the coming year we will give particular attention to one of the themes of this text: **live godly in the present age**. That can indeed be a challenge. We look forward to thinking together about how to meet that challenge and grow in hope. ■



# God Is the God of...

by Frank Himmel

God is often said to be the God of various people: of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel, Jews, Gentiles, Jesus, etc. But the Bible also presents Him as the God of...

**Glory.** Stephen began his famous speech, “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham...” (Acts 7:2). That is literally “the God of the glory.” God’s glory surpasses all. We see glimpses of it in His creation and more of it in His word (see Romans 11:33-36), but only in eternity will we fully comprehend it.

**Hope.** “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13). Paul had just quoted Isaiah’s prophecy about Messiah bringing hope to Gentiles (Isaiah 11:10). God gives hope to all who will come to Him through His Son.

**Peace.** The expression the *God of peace* occurs several times. In Romans 15:33 its focus is on peace between Jews and Gentiles in Christ. In Romans 16:20 it points to our victory over Satan’s temptations and errors. In Philippians 4:9 it occurs in a context of conquering anxiety. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 13:20 it encourages Christians who were facing active persecution. An especially interesting occurrence is in 1 Corinthians 14:33, where it emphasizes God’s will for calm and orderliness in our

assemblies, in contrast to the Corinthians noisy and conflicted practices.

## New Bible Classes



New adult Bible classes begin this week. Our Sunday morning class is *Dealing with Life*, a topical study of how Bible characters dealt with some of life’s issues. Our Wednesday night class is *The Sermon on the Mount*. Come learn and grow with us.

**Comfort.** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort” (2 Corinthians 1:3). God comforts us through His power, His provisions, His promises, His providence, and His people (cf. 7:6-13).

**Grace.** “After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you” (1 Peter 1:10). God’s grace may allow us to suffer on occasion, but He will surely provide along with that the strength we need to endure it. Never question God’s favorable disposition toward you.

**Love.** “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you” (2 Corinthians 13:11). ■

Service Leaders for the Week			
	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Greg Winget	David Gray	John Baucom
SONG LEADER	Gary Hagler	Bruce Williams	Albert Harrison Sr
OPENING PRAYER	Brian Wilson	Kerry Gray	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Howard Moore	Howard Moore	
CUP	Chris Brooks	Chris Brooks	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	John Baucom		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Gary Hagler
CLOSING PRAYER	Don Rapp	Josh Baucom	Ron Cunningham