



# PathLights

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

December 17, 2017

## Killing in the Name of God

by Frank Himmel

This past week brought yet another suicide bomber attack in New York City. Fortunately in this case, the only one seriously injured was the bomber himself.

**HOLY  
WAR**

We never cease to be amazed at the number of people who volunteer for such acts. Is there no end to those who will wrap themselves in explosives, walk into public places, and detonate themselves?

Or those who will fill the trunk of a car with bombs, drive through crowded streets (in some cases going through barricades with people shooting at them), then blow up the car while sitting in it?

I remember a political cartoon a few years back. It was suicide bomber school. The instructor was fully decked out in bombs and grenades. He urged his students, "Now pay attention; I'm only going to show you this once!"

### Wrong Application

Much of the explanation for this demented behavior is that it is being done in the name of one's god. Radical Islamic clerics depict these incidents as acts of heroism

in defense of the faith. The conflict with the West is Jihad, holy war. Allah will surely be pleased with this self-sacrifice. Great rewards are therefore in store.

There is, of course, nothing new about killing in the name of one's god. Jesus warned the apostles, "They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God" (John 16:2). That was precisely Saul's mind-set.

So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them (Acts 26:9-10).

Saul soon learned that he was wrong about Jesus. He also learned that he was wrong about the way he was conducting a spiritual war. He later wrote, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal..." (2 Corinthians 10:3-4, NKJV). Sadly, some who profess Christ have never learned this principle.

### Right Application

There is a realm in which every Christian must be busy killing in the name of God.

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of

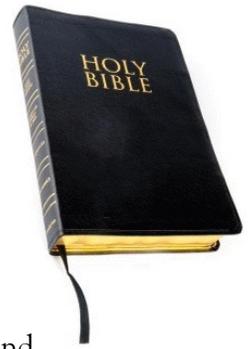
these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator (Col. 1:5-9, ESV).

This is what Jesus was referring to when He said “that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).

This kind of killing does not involve bombs and grenades. It takes the sword of the Spirit and turns it inward, cutting away attitudes, thinking, speech, or conduct that is contrary to God’s will.

This killing does not result in bloodshed. Neither does it have any potential for “collateral damage,” unintended secondary victims. The fact is, when we do this kind of killing, everyone benefits: we are better people for it; others will not have to bear the brunt of our sinful conduct; and as the influence of a godly character grows, our getting rid of these things may help persuade others to do the same. Could there be a more “holy war” in which to engage? ■

# The Bible Is...



by Frank Himmel

*The word of God;* it must be respected. “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

*The implanted word;* it must be taken to heart. “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21).

*The faithful word;* it must be held fast. “Holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict” (Titus 1:9).

*The word of life;* it must be held forth. “Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life...” (Philippians 2:14-16, NASU footnote).

*The word of truth;* it must be handled accurately. “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). ■

## Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	David Gray	Adam Gibson	Mark Clifton
SONG LEADER	Sam Walters	Bruce Williams	John Baucom
OPENING PRAYER	Mike Zachry	Albert Lee Harrison	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Mark Clifton	Mark Clifton	
CUP	Josh Baucom	Josh Baucom	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Daven Daniel		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Greg Winget
CLOSING PRAYER	Justin Candella	Adam Wilson	Kerry Gray