

# PathLights

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

June 30, 2019

## Jesus Did Not Quit

by Frank Himmel

*Jesus did not quit preaching.* Sometimes His audience did not understand Him (Matthew 13:13). Some who understood Him did not believe Him (John 8:46). Others, such as the rich young ruler, understood Him and may well have believed what He said but would not obey the truth (Matthew 19:22). Some scoffed at Him (Luke 16:14). His enemies listened to Him "plotting against Him to catch Him in something He might say" (Luke 11:54). His own townspeople "all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips" (Luke 4:22)... yet by the end of the sermon they angrily tried to throw Him down a cliff! (vv. 28-29). Nevertheless, Jesus did not quit preaching. That is what He came to do (Mark 1:38).

*Jesus did not quit meeting with the disciples.* To the end, Judas was a thief (John 12:6), whose greed ultimately led to Jesus' death. Peter was fickle, confessing Jesus one moment, rebuking Him the next (Mark 8:29, 32). James and John were occasionally hot-headed (Luke 9:51-56); Jesus even nicknamed them "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). The disciples were slow to understand, slow to believe, and slow to make the right application. While Jesus at times was frustrated

with them, He did not sever ties with them or give up on them. To the contrary, He kept them (John 17:12).

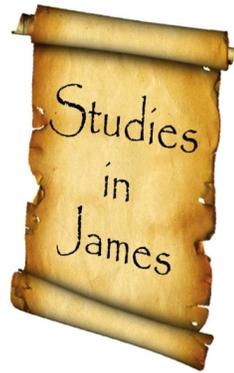
*Jesus did not quit praying.* From the Jordan to Gethsemane, Jesus was in constant communication with His Father. He prayed early in the morning (Mark 1:35) and late at night, in fact, all night (Luke 6:12). He prayed before eating (John 6:11). He prayed publicly and privately, sometimes briefly and at other times extensively. He prayed for Himself and others. Even after the Father said no to perhaps His most intense request—"let this cup pass from Me" (Matthew 26:39)—Jesus continued praying. On the cross He prayed for His executioners (Luke 23:34). Jesus perfectly exemplified Paul's instruction: "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

*Jesus did not quit obeying.* Jesus set the tone for His life when He told His parents He had to be about His Father's business (Luke 2:49). Though sinless, He was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:13-15). Jesus continued to do the Father's will, occasionally to the extent that He had no time to eat. His disposition was, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4:34). Jesus obeyed what the Father actually said, not popular notions of what was right. And He obeyed, even when it was hard. "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). Jesus did not quit obeying, even after His ascension. He is now doing His God-assigned work in heaven (Hebrews 7:25; 1 Corinthians 15:25). Jesus did not quit. Let's follow His example. ■

**DON'T  
QUIT**

# The “Heart” of the Problem

by Frank Himmel



James 4 opens with startling language. Writing to Christians, James uses the terms *quarrel*, *conflict*, *war*, *fight*, and even *murder* to describe their interaction with each other!

Actually, the preceding paragraph set the stage. James had noted that two kinds of wisdom were at work: heavenly wisdom, which yields peace, and earthly wisdom, which is often characterized by jealousy and selfish ambition, resulting in every evil thing (3:16).

Commentators often dismiss a literal or physical application of James’s language, assuming that groups of Christians would surely not be so out of control. But the first century was a turbulent era. Violent uprisings in Jewish communities were not uncommon (Mark 15:7; Acts 21:38). In such an environment it is not unthinkable that immature Christians might see such conduct as far less egregious than it is.

That said, James’s language is certainly capable of a broad application, an extension into conflicts of all kinds, especially church fusses. A. T. Robertson rightly observed, “Basically, ecclesiastical strife does not differ in origin and spirit from wars between nations.” James

does not detail the specifics of the conflict; instead, he focuses on the real issue, the “heart” of the problem.

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel” (4:1-2b).

According to James, the reason that we have conflicts with others is that we have not properly resolved the conflict within. Paul described that conflict this way: “For the flesh sets its desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to each other, so that you may not do the things that you please” (Galatians 5:17). Peter wrote, “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11).

James bluntly says the problem occurs when we do not get what we want... and what we want is dictated by our own pleasure or envy toward another. Experience confirms James’s analysis. *Most church fights can be traced to brethren who insist on getting their way for selfish reasons.* It is an ugly truth, one that surely calls for a great deal of self-examination.

Jesus warned that anger and bitterness are equivalent to murder (Matthew 5:21-22). Why not? They are its breeding ground: left unchecked, they lead to it. John added, “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in Him” (1 John 3:15). ■

## Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER	John Baucom	Josh Baucom
SONG LEADER	Frank Himmel	Brian Wilson
OPENING PRAYER	Kerry Gray	
LORD’S SUPPER		
BREAD	Steven Turner	
CUP	Carlos Garcia	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Jason Chandler	
SERMON/INVITATION	Sam Walters	Adam Gibson
CLOSING PRAYER	Greg Winget	Justin Candella