



PathLights

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

July 2, 2017

Conformed To Christ

by Frank Himmel

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren” (Romans 8:29). God predetermined several things relative to our salvation. This text identifies one of them: conformity to Christ.

Conform means to become similar in form, nature, or character. From beginning to end, God’s plan is for the Christian to be like Christ.

We conform to Christ in the **new birth**. Baptism or immersion is a likeness of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection on our behalf (Romans 6:4-11). We are freed from sin when we obey that form or mold of teaching (vs. 17-18).

We are to conform to Christ in our daily **life**. “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former

lusts which were yours in ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your behavior” (1 Peter 2:14-15). “For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, for you to follow in His steps” (1 Peter 2:21).

Paul desired to be conformed to Jesus’ **death** (Philippians 3:10). That does not necessarily refer to the *means* of His death, although it may. The *manner* in which Jesus conducted himself in death—controlling Himself, submitting to the Father’s will, forgiving others, etc.—is the way we must conduct ourselves, in life or death.

If we conform to Christ in the new birth, in life, and in death, we will be conformed to Him in the **resurrection**. He “will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (Philippians 3:21; see also 1 John 3:2).

God’s plan glorifies Christ. Are you honoring Him by conforming to Him? ■



What Preachers Need

by Frank Himmel

“And pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel” (Ephesians 6:19).



Preachers need the prayers of the saints. Paul had just encouraged Christians to pray with reference to their own struggles against the devil (v. 18). Now he asks to be included in those prayers, not just with reference to his fight against temptation but also in reference to his work.

Preachers need an opportunity to speak. Paul did not ask brethren to pray for his release from prison per se, but for an utterance or words to speak, which necessarily implies an opportunity to do so.

Preachers need courage. Paul calls it the boldness to speak as he ought (v. 20). It takes little courage to tell men that God loves them and wants to bless them. It takes a great deal of courage to tell them that God does not approve of what they are thinking, saying, or doing, and so they must change.

Preachers need faithfulness to the gospel. Paul’s desire was to “make known . . . the mystery of the gospel,” not to preach his opinions, feel-good stories, or pop psychology. “Preach the word” (2 Timothy 4:2). ■

Merciful

by Frank Himmel



“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy” (Matthew 5:7).

Thayer’s Lexicon says mercy is “kindness or good will toward the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them.” Vine calls it “the active manifestation of pity.”

The Bible is clear that mercy, not merit, is the basis of our salvation (Titus 3:5). It is no surprise that the God who has such mercy on us calls on us to be merciful to one another.

We often think of mercy in a context of guilt. Mercy forgives, even repeated wrongs or wrongs of great magnitude. Mercy is not permissiveness, however, a carefree attitude toward transgressions. That becomes clear as you study Jesus’ mercy to those He encountered.

Mercy applies equally to relief of other afflictions as well. The Good Samaritan felt “compassion” toward the beaten traveler and so did all he could to relieve him. Mercy, like love or grace or faith, is empty apart from action. ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Bruce Williams	David Gray	John Baucom
SONG LEADER	Carlos Garcia	Bruce Williams	Albert Lee Harrison
OPENING PRAYER	Bruce Hollander	Jason Chandler	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Steven Turner	Steven Turner	
CUP	Adam Gibson	Adam Gibson	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	John Baucom		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Mark Clifton
CLOSING PRAYER	Greg WInget	Chris Brooks	Daven Daniel