

# PathLights

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

December 31, 2017

## "He Must Increase, But I Must Decrease"

by Frank Himmel

John the Baptizer was the forerunner of Jesus. He came to prepare the way, as prophesied by both Isaiah (40:3) and Malachi (4:5-6). John introduced Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). His testimony was based on the prearranged sign of the Spirit descending upon Jesus when He was baptized (John 1:32-34). Jesus later remarked that there was no one greater than John (Matthew 11:11).

As John continued his work of preaching and baptizing, Jesus also began to preach and baptize (His disciples did the actual baptizing). Some of John's disciples became troubled. "And they came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him'" (John 3:26). They were jealous for their teacher. John did not share their concern. He likened himself to the best man who rejoices with the groom. John's disposition was, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

John's attitude is the essence of Christianity. Putting Jesus first is the basic requirement of discipleship. Jesus taught, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up His cross daily and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). Our "cross" is whatever

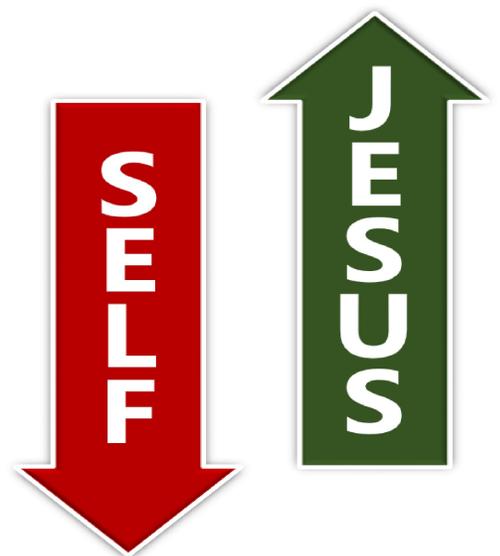
difficulty might come our way because we are following Jesus, because we are putting Him first.

Not only must Jesus' will come first, His mind must become our mind. "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5, NRSV).

The mind of Christ must then translate into the character of Christ. "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:4). Jesus left us an example; we are to follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21).

Paul summed it up this way: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Galatians 2:20).

May our disposition always be, "He must increase, but I must decrease." ■



# Wise Words

## About Speech

📖 “The heart of the righteous man ponders how to answer, but the mouth of fools pours out evil things” (Proverbs 15:28).

📖 “Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word fitly spoken in right circumstances” (Proverbs 25:11).

📖 “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him” (Proverbs 26:4).

📖 “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).

📖 “The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out” (Proverbs 17:14).

📖 “He kisses the lips who gives an honest answer” (Proverbs 24:26).

📖 “He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him” (Proverbs 18:13).

📖 “The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin” (Proverbs 13:3).

📖 “A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back” (Proverbs 29:11, NKJV).



The new year means it's time for new adult Bible classes. This Wednesday evening we will begin a study of the very practical book of James. On Sundays next quarter

our study is about David, whom God once described as “a man after My own heart.”

This would be the ideal time for you to resolve to be at Bible class every time. You will learn, and you will be a help and encouragement to others as they learn, too.

📖 “When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise” (Proverbs 11:19).

📖 “Words from the mouth of a wise man are gracious, while the lips of a fool consume him; the beginning of his talking is folly, and the end of it is wicked madness. Yet the fool multiplies words...” (Ecclesiastes 10:12-14).

📖 “The words of the wise heard in quietness are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools” (Ecclesiastes 9:17).

📖 “Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken...” (Ecclesiastes 7:21).

### Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Josh Baucom	Howard Moore	David Gray
SONG LEADER	Gary Hagler	Bruce Williams	Bruce Hollander
OPENING PRAYER	Greg Winget	Steven Turner	
LORD'S SUPPER			
BREAD	Sam Walters	Sam Walters	
CUP	Kerry Gray	Kerry Gray	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Ian Brown		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Sam Walters	Gary Hagler
CLOSING PRAYER	Albert Lee Harrison	John Baucom	Ian Brown