

# PathLights

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

April 9, 2017

## "Lord, I Believe"

by Frank Himmel

The gospel of John depicts numerous people coming in contact with Jesus, listening to His claims and examining the evidence, then reaching a conclusion about who He was. Among those conclusions...

✓ "I myself have seen, and testified that this is the Son of God" – *John the Baptist* (1:34). John's testimony was largely based on the Spirit descending on Jesus at His baptism, which was a sign to John (vv. 31-33).

✓ "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; You are the king of Israel" – *Nathaniel* (1:49). Nathaniel was convinced by Jesus' supernatural knowledge of the private circumstances in which Philip invited Nathaniel to come and learn about Him (vv. 45-48). Jesus assured Nathaniel he would see much greater evidence than that.

✓ "Come see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?" – *Samaritan Woman* (4:29). A total stranger knowing all about her life convinced her that Jesus must be at least a prophet (v. 19). Jesus further revealed to her that He was the Christ, the Messiah (vv. 25-26).

✓ "We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God" – *Peter* (6:69). Peter was ever-present with Jesus, able to hear His teaching and see His miracles, such as the one performed at the

wedding in Cana. These "manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him" (3:11).

✓ "Lord, I believe" – *Blind Man* (9:38). This was the blind man's response to Jesus' question, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" (v. 35). The blind man's faith was based on the fact that Jesus made him see (vv. 17, 24ff).

✓ "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world" – *Martha* (11:26). The text does not indicate how Martha initially came to believe in Jesus. It does go on to relate how Jesus miraculously raised her brother, Lazarus, from the dead. That surely strengthened her faith, as well as causing many others to believe (v. 45)!

✓ "My Lord and My God" – *Thomas* (20:28). Thomas, doubtful at first, was convinced when he saw the resurrected Lord. Jesus responded, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed" (v. 29).

Of course, not all who came in contact with Jesus believed in Him. Some were prejudiced (9:16), some were too self-centered (5:44), some were too proud (7:48-49), and some loved their sinful ways too much (3:19). John also notes that some who believed in Him would not act on that belief (12:42-43).

This gospel contains sufficient evidence (20:30-31). What is your conclusion about Jesus? ■



# The Importance of Obedience

by Frank Himmel

Years ago in a Bible study, a man who believed we are saved by faith only asked me, “Where does the Bible ever say we are saved by obedience?” The book of Hebrews is a good place to start.

Hebrews emphasizes the essentiality of faith: “without faith it is impossible to please God” (11:6). It also points out the importance of obedience, the expression of our faith.

In chapters 3-4, the author draws a lesson from Israel’s failure to find rest in the promised land. What was the problem? You could say it was lack of faith: “So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief” (3:19). But the author also identified the problem as disobedience. “And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?” (3:18). “... Those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience” (4:6). Then came the application: “Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience” (4:11).

In the next chapter, the author said that Jesus is the source of salvation “to all those who obey Him” (5:9).

Can you see the importance of obedience? ■

# Enduring Trials

by Frank Himmel



“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial: for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him” (James 1:12).

James’s opening theme is enduring trials or temptations. The word he uses means to try or test. It can be used in the good sense of proving a thing’s value (vv. 2-3) or the bad sense of enticement to do wrong (vv. 13-14). God does not tempt us with evil, but He does allow us to undergo testing (Hebrews 12:5ff).

While enticement to sin serves only the devil’s heinous purposes, broader testing is actually beneficial: it strengthens our faith, builds character, and enhances hope (Romans 5:3-5). These blessings come when we pass the test, when we continue to trust and obey God regardless of our situation.

It is hard to “consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials” (v. 2). James therefore encourages us to pray for wisdom on such occasions (v. 5), and at all times not to make too much of our circumstances (vv. 9-11). ■

## Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Bruce Williams	John Baucom	Adam Gibson
SONG LEADER	Carlos Garcia	Gary Hagler	Greg Winget
OPENING PRAYER	Albert Lee Harrison	Jason Chandler	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Howard Moore	Howard Moore	
CUP	Greg Winget	Greg Winget	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Rawland Daniel		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Albert Lee Harrison
CLOSING PRAYER	Adam Gibson	David Gray	Bruce Williams