

PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

1300 E. Boynton St. • Hamilton • www.parkheightscoc.com

Thus Saith the Lord

HE WILL LIFT YOU UP

By Jeff Sweeten

So, we are told: *“humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up”* (James 4:10). It is often quoted in connection with: *“Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall”* (1 Corinthians 10:12), emphasizing that one ought *“not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think”* (Romans 12:3). So, are we to humble ourselves so as to graciously give God the opportunity to elevate us to that lofty and, evidently, Divinely deserved podium of personal prowess? Nope.

Those who most appreciate the James passage are those whose vainglorious arrogance has been completely crushed; they have finally embraced the fact that *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23). Overwhelmed by the weight of *“the sin that so easily ensnares us”* (Hebrews 12:1) and the accumulated consequences of poor decisions, they’ve accepted reality. Life’s scars leave us ugly, most are self-inflicted, and personal pride is a pipe-dream.

However, it is in this humility of mind that the harlot, Rahab, found an escape from her past (Hebrews 11:31), that the Christian killer, Saul, found a fresh, new identity (not Paul, actually, but Christian, Acts 11:28), and that anyone willing to embrace the fact that we are knee-deep in pig mire (deeper than we could have ever imagined) that we become suitable candidates for the *“lift...up”* that God is able to give us. It is only when we realize that we cannot affect our salvation on our own, whether it be some imagined, emotional experience we arbitrarily appropriate as Divine approbation or by some meritorious work by which we earn our throne in Heaven, only then are we able to come to ourselves and find our way back to the Father (cf. Luke 15:17).

It is through an immersion in humility that we can access God’s lifting us up, which has no reference at all to any proud or lofty elevation but is, instead, a rescue from an abyss of eternal disaster. Where once we were without sin, as innocent as a child (Matthew 19:14), our personal choice to sin against God has consequences (Ezekiel 18:4) that we cannot overcome by our own efforts (Romans 6:23). We need Jesus, and access Him through total submission (James 4:10). Then, He will lift us up.

JOIN US ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY!

SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study • 10:25 a.m. Morning Worship • 1:30 p.m. Bible Study

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study • Contact the minister at 254-370-4130