



Jeff Sweeten

*Thus Saith the Lord*  
is presented by the

## **Park Heights Church of Christ**

1300 E. Boynton St.  
Hamilton  
254-386-3953

### **Schedule of Services**

#### **SUNDAY**

9:30 a.m. Bible Class  
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship  
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

#### **WEDNESDAY**

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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# *Thus Saith the Lord*

## **SOCIAL CONCERNS**

By Jeff Sweeten

Social activism is a hot-button issue with many folks. There remains this delusion among many religionists that even slightly political issues are off-limits to the Christian. Most have no problem with caring for the widows and orphans but the minute some Christian speaks out against abortion or euthanasia, well, “Katy bar the door.”

In Tom Minnery’s book *Why You Can’t Stay Silent, A Biblical Mandate to Shape Our Culture*, he lists several reservations bandied about by spiritually pacifists who demand political non-involvement, pointing out that the underlying motivation is usually an unreasoned phobia for controversy. Many religionists are scared silent in the face of conflict. The mistaken assumption is that conflict, controversy or criticism is always bad. He destroys such failed reasoning with an application of Matthew 5:13-16, which speaks of salt and light.

Addressing the inherently controversial nature of truth, Minnery says:

“Being salt and light in this age means contending responsibly for godly standards wherever they are under assault. This explains why there is no truth to the cliché that you shouldn’t mix religion and politics. That tired slogan is usually offered by those in politics who resent having moral pressure brought against them. Or it is voiced by religious people who don’t like the discomfort of exposing their deepest beliefs to ridicule and rejection. There is no escaping the mixture of religion and politics, because nearly every law is the result of someone’s judgment about what is good and what is bad.”

Minnery hit on several truths. It is a fact that when any truth is defended, there will be controversy (Jeremiah 36:31; Romans 11:2-4). It is a fact that choosing to follow God over all else will occasionally put us at odds with our government (Daniel 6:10; Acts 4:19). And, since God defines good and evil, our civil laws will be one or the other (John 17:17; Galatians 5:19-23).

In this country, we have a unique opportunity because “we the people” are those to whom the government must answer. Therefore, we are responsible for how this country is governed. Minnery also points out that to cry, “you can’t legislate morality” is equally lame.

“Suppose a ‘Society of Liars’ organized for the purpose of striking down those “old, outmoded” laws against lying under oath in court. Let’s say its members claimed that the perjury laws discriminate against those who believe lying is okay. Would we concede that laws against lying shouldn’t be ‘imposed’ on everyone? Or would we, with some resignation, begin to lay out the case against lying?”

He raises a salient question. How is speaking out against political candidates who openly promote a “Society of Liars” different from calling out those who support immorality? There’s no difference.

A Christian’s focus is on the soul, true, but one cannot ignore the social injustices of our day and restrict all Christian influence by excluding political positions. The phrase, “Jesus went about doing good,” is – by definition – social. Christians must be involved in culture (Matthew 25:35-36).