



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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DELIBERATE

By Jeff Sweeten

dī-līb'ar-īt – 1. Done with or marked by full consciousness of the nature and effects; intentional. 2. Arising from or marked by careful consideration; synonym: voluntary. 3.

Unhurried and careful.

There is this great line from *The Princess Bride* in which Count Rugen states: "Get some rest. If you haven't got your health, then you haven't got anything." A week of lying flat of my back coughing up chunks of lung (TMI, I know) where every movement caused pain convinced me that there is some truth in that line. The product of this misery, however, was educational: I became **DELIBERATE**. For every movement, there was an instant price tag attached. Simple, non-mental reflex actions employed without so much as a thought became cause for contemplation and a counting of the cost. "Do I really need to do this?" was always a real question with eminent consequences.

No one really enjoys being sick or getting old. Among the diminishing returns our physical body delivers, there are those random movements that were so often accomplished without a second thought that must now be **deliberate**, performed with precision and steady resolve, instead of the usual, carefree flick of the wrist; now, you care. We become much more aware of the frailty of the human frame, its propensity to damage and the ever-looming threat of death on the horizon. Simple changes of the body's position must now be planned and choreographed. Whereas this may sound gloomy (and I suppose it is for those who have no hope), for a Christian, it becomes the welcome sight of the tape across the finish line; being on your last leg in track and field is not all bad. There is a heightened sense of purpose, a taste of victory (no matter that you're first or last, it's personal) and the satisfaction of having finished.

Being **deliberate** makes it is easier to prioritize. Those pesky distractions that plague the healthy, whose physical frame has so much reserve energy and life, are more easily categorized in the "unimportant folder" when each moment matters. And, matters of real, sometimes eternal, import come to the forefront on the "things to do" list more quickly; time is short. Being **deliberate** replaces things with relationships. Loving the world is not nearly so glamorous when "things" diminish in value and people acquire renewed precedence. A hand to hold, a familiar voice and a kind word almost make that garage full of junk we haven't touched in years seem as worthless as it really is. Being **deliberate** demands attention to permanence as the reality of the temporary sets in. All of those easily-dismissed, theoretic conundrums over self-realization and self-worth, to which we gave such little attention, become a rubber-meets-the-road, right-now, "deal with it" issues; eternity looms large in these moments.

Don't let panic motivate your **deliberate** life. Start now: intentional, voluntary, unhurried and careful. "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness*" (Matthew 6:33).