



Jeff Sweeten

# Thus Saith the Lord

## GODLY LIVING

By Jeff Sweeten

Living in today's society has its challenges. The evil and immorality that abound would lead one to believe it is almost impossible to live a pure Christian life. However, the problem of living clean in a dirty society is not a new one.

Corinth was the site of one of the largest churches in the Roman Empire. The city had been destroyed in 146 BC only to be rebuilt 100 years later as a Roman colony. It rapidly attracted a large assortment of people during the resettlement that brought with them their divers and diverse religions.

The temple of Aphrodite stood on the peak of a 2000-foot plateau overlooking the city. It once boasted a thousand priestesses whose ample revenue from prostitution supported the priests. Much of the wealth of Corinth came from this ritual prostitution. Richard L. Niswonger states: "The city's reputation gave rise to the Greek term *korinthiazesthai*, which meant to behave immorally like the people of Corinth" (p. 227).

Adding to this depravity were the numerous idolatrous festivals known for their self-indulgent and sensual qualities. Bingeing and purging were almost competitive events among the partygoers whose immoralities were legendary.

It also boasted an active support of athletic contests. One of the most grandiose was the Isthmian Games. Every three years, bronzed-bodied athletes gathered from every corner of the Empire to compete, often nude, in various events ranging from boxing to chariot races.

It was in this setting that Paul wrote the Corinthian church, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.' Therefore 'Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you'" (2 Corinthians 14-17).

Was this a reasonable demand! Could a Christian in this environment maintain any semblance of purity? How could the Corinthian Christian be expected to be separate in a city where "everybody is doing it" ... literally? Yet, Paul emphatically states that to do otherwise is not only contradictory to pure Christianity but also an inherent absurdity. Light and darkness cannot dwell together. To attempt to reconcile the two is addlebrained, unreasoned, and illogical mental gymnastics, a wresting of the body of right thinking.

Paul further admonished them, "beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

We are no more handicapped than the Corinthians and our society is no worse than theirs. We are without excuse. "We should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:12), our environment notwithstanding

Thus Saith the Lord  
is presented by the

## Park Heights Church of Christ

1300 E. Boynton St.  
Hamilton  
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### 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

Please call or email if you  
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