



Jeff Sweeten

*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

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# Thus Saith the Lord

## RACE

By Jeff Sweeten

Race relations is a hot topic. Some still hang on the bigoted caste and status systems that plagued provincial China and Medieval Europe, which holds that some humans are endowed with an artificial, self-imposed importance. Others find their bias based in the pseudo-science of macroevolutionary theory (once very popular in Nazi Germany) that quantifies human value by such anomalies as skin color, nose size or the slant of one's eyes. One would like to think that the stupidity of "race" differentiation was passé but, unfortunately, racism is alive and well, and such narrow-mindedness is a special negative in a country like America that boasts its freedoms.

The Bible recognizes inequities in humanity. Slaves of the Old Testament were not color-coded and Israel was even ordered to raise the bar of behavior toward indentured servants (Exodus 21, 22). During the *Pax Romana* of the New Testament era, discrimination was not racial but based instead upon conquer/conquered distinctions. In fact, a uniqueness reserved for churches of Christ was their discarding of all contrived barriers in the doctrine of equality in Christ: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). The *coup de gras*, however, is found in a Jew's sermon to a Grecian audience. Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, explaining the essence of the true God and, as an aside, stated that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). While there is some discussion about the use of the phrase "of...blood," there is no doubt as to what Paul meant. God made Adam and, prior to all of the environmental, nutritional, and geographical impacts on our micro-evolutionary changes, humans had value above all other creation. Conspicuously absent is the notion that human beings have gradient, distinguishable, or variant value.

The ugliness of racism is a hard habit to break. It is not an American phenomenon but has been, and continues to be, prevalent in other cultures and countries without respect to order of government, persuasion of religion, or brand of economy. What is plain from Paul's preaching, however, is that it should not be an issue with the Christian. As in every other aspect of life, the Christian runs by a different, more stringent set of standards. The world may retain the trappings of racism, but the church is the big equalizer. A child of God does not sacrifice the obvious, viz. the different roles and responsibilities of employee/employer, husband/wife, et al., by recognizing that, **in Christ**, we hold an inherent, **equal** value in God's sight. Therefore, to relegate one "race" to a position lower than another is completely human in origin, and sinful.

A brother in Christ in Philadelphia, John Smith, rightly stated, "There's only one race of people and that's the **human** race.