



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

A CHANGED LIFE

By Jeff Sweeten

One can never say enough about a changed life. It is one of the most (if not *the* most) difficult undertaking in which a person can engage. We love our ruts and there is a certain level of “facesaving” that is impossible when one finally concedes the error that has been blindly practiced, sometimes for years. It makes climbing out of that rut a mountain almost too high to climb.

Nevertheless, and what is particularly noteworthy, it is a fact that if a person is still breathing, that person is not beyond change. Take as an example the listing of the lineage of Christ in the Matthew account and the many colorful characters it contains, specifically, the “unlikely-to-succeed” ladies on this list.

There is Tamar, who managed to birth a child to her father-in-law, by her father-in-law, in order to right a wrong done to her. Judah even had to confess: “She has been more righteous than I” (Genesis 38:26). There is Rahab, a Gentile lady-of-ill-repute (translational accommodations notwithstanding, she was a “harlot,” Joshua 2:1), whose common sense took over when Israel began the Canaan take-over. And there is Ruth, a Moabite – the sworn enemies of Israel to the tune of “tenth generation” (Deuteronomy 23:3-4), whose loyalty to her Jewish mother-in-law garnered her this honorable-mention in the history of humanity. Yet, here they are, listed in the lineage of the Messiah, *and*, in such a patriarchal setting, they were women! It should be noted that these three ladies had more going for them than some of the men listed in the lineage, whose mention is due purely to genetics with little to no reflection on their character or choices in life; these changed women were chosen women.

No one would ever argue that changing our perspective, direction or habits is an easy task but it is a fact that we all have experienced such in our physical life. The expression “growing pains” aptly identifies the process and the fact that we have all experienced it does not seem to dull the pain. Nevertheless, life is change; and the propensity to remain in our ruts (and defend them, sometimes maliciously) is sharply akin to Newton’s law of inertia that states: a body at rest tends to stay at rest; and, oh, how we love our rest!

This physical principle translates almost identically to the emotions, anxiety and angst of changing one’s religious belief. It is not an easy transition to question our traditions; frankly, many will not on that principle alone. *Because* we have been doing something or believing something for so long is almost a case in point for ignoring the challenge to “think outside the box.” This may be one of the most unique features of Christ’s teachings: follow truth, not tradition.

There is absolutely no telling where one might find oneself if one is willing to do whatever it takes to follow God. It will certainly change your place in history and in eternity.