

# PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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*Thus Saith the Lord*

## TO THE ROMANS

By Jeff Sweeten

In the same book that emphasized our salvation by faith in obedience. These two requirements are not in competition. One is not more important than the other or have more impact than the other. To the contrary, both are equally binding and essential.

Paul introduces the issue thusly: "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) and "...the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Now that we know the issue to be addressed, how does one remedy this sin problem?

Few would argue: we are saved by God's grace, "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:24; cf. Galatians 3:27). So, close the book and walk away – we're saved? Not so fast! God said "freely"; He didn't say "only." These two terms are not synonymous because salvation is not automatic, as if God selects a few and leaves the rest lost (Matthew 7:13-14); God's not partial (Acts 10:34).

Not surprisingly, there is yet another element of salvation as essential as grace. It is also by "the righteousness of faith" that we access this salvific grace, "for there is no difference" between persons that have access to salvation (Romans 3:21-22). God did, after all, love the whole world (John 3:16). Evidently, if we must have faith, grace alone doesn't save.

However, are grace and faith the only elements in this package deal? Not according to Paul. That sin issue evidently doesn't disappear the instant we believe because "though ye the servants of sin, ...ye obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:17b-18). Interesting! Yet another element in the formula of salvation from sin. When we obey, based upon our faith, by virtue of God's grace, we are go from lost in sin to free from sin.

It should all begin to make sense: the consistency of Paul's message to the Romans reveals our new life in Christ. "Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

**JOIN US ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY!**

**SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study • 10:25 a.m. Morning Worship • 1:30 p.m. Bible Study**

**WEDNESDAY: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study • Contact the minister at 254-370-4130**