

# PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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*Thus Saith the Lord*

## ACTING CHRISTIAN

By Jeff Sweeten

Word of the day: cynicism. A simple phone call to the church's office and let me say without qualification that true Christians fully adhere to Paul's admonition, "*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men...*" (Galatians 6:10). However, there are exceptions; such is the following case for consideration.

The young lady was distraught and, through sobs and sniffles, let me know that she was a 15-year-old girl from a low-income, single parent home. When children are hurting, we give heed. And, then she mumbled: "I need \$99." "Why," I asked. "Because," she sobbed, "Mother won't give me the money for acting lessons."

I politely suggested that the fast-food industry is constantly looking for young up-and-comers like herself and that the church would likely not be able to help her... and wondered: what kind of society do we live in where a person's self-esteem, especially one so young, would dip to so low a level as to shamelessly assume that someone owes her an **acting career**? She had to be taught this behavior!

Government welfare has totally usurped the church's role in benevolence and has contributed to our entitlement generation. It has produced a bitter, ambivalent nation, who views the poor as excess baggage to be denigrated and ridiculed. To the degree we relegate our responsibilities of kindness, philanthropy, and charity to the government, we diminish our role in benevolence and invite socialism. We stand in danger, politically, economically and spiritually, when the bulk of a bum's sustenance is government subsidies while the truly needy suffer.

Bitterness, disappointment, and callousness aside, we must thaw our hearts to the true needs of those who suffer and be ready to share the bounty with which God has so richly blessed us. Good stewardship demands that we be discerning, but to say, "*Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*" (James 2:16). We must wrest from governmental hands the responsibility that the Lord has left to the church's charge. Acting "Christian" will invite Christ's critique: "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink...*" (cf. Matthew 26:40-46).

**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**