

PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

1301 E. Boynton St. • Hamilton • www.parkheightscoc.com

Thus Saith the Lord

REASONABLE FAITH

By Jeff Sweeten

It is amazing that religious snake-oil vendors are so successful. How it is that people can be sold the notion that true faith denies or even contradicts the exercise of reason? There is no end of sincere people (sincerely mistaken people) whose notion of a faith “better-felt-than-told” is grounded in the Bible. Some have even stated: “I wouldn’t take a stack of Bibles for how I feel.” To the contrary, the Bible says: “*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God*” (Romans 10:17), meaning, one cannot have Bible faith unless it can be read and understood from the Bible. True, biblical faith, then, does not require that we leave our brain at the door in order to enter the Lord’s church; that has never been God’s message or intention.

Through the prophet Isaiah (and one shouldn’t miss the irony of a passage discussing salvation through Jesus’ blood being contingent upon right thinking), God said, “*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye **be willing and obedient**, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye **refuse and rebel**, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it*” (Isaiah 1:18-20).

Two things are obvious: (1) true salvation is based upon a faith that is logical, reasonable, and intellectual, not an exercise in fanatic, emotional psychosis, and (2) you must do something based upon what you know, not what you feel. In order to respond appropriately to God’s invitation, one should not sit in a faithless stupor, waiting for some religious experience to “bink” one on the head and out of the blue to signal one’s salvation; that kind of response is not biblically grounded. Therefore, “*Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion*” (Hebrews 3:15).

This is not to say that informed decisions are void of emotion. The Ethiopian, after being baptized into Christ (Acts 8:38), “*went on his way rejoicing*” (v. 39). The emotion is a consequent of knowing; and Jesus is quite clear: “*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). Accepting truth leads to salvation.

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