

May 16 2021

Galatians 3: 1-9, 23-29

One in Christ

Children's Message: At the start of the reading this morning, Paul asks the Galatian's, what has bewitched them? Who or what has put a spell on you? We could ask the same questions to ourselves two thousand years later. I will loop back to that question later.

When I read this part of scripture my mind goes to the word spell. I recall the song written and performed by Screamin Jay Hawkins, "I put a spell on you". He performed this song in 1966 on the Merv Griffin show. Look it up and watch it. I got the tar scared out of myself from just watching and listening to it. The skull with the cigarette was cool though. Screamin Jay does live up to his title. I encourage you to look it up. His song was also used in Hocus Pocus in the nineties.

A spell is put on someone in order to control their minds and bodies. So that they come under the control of the one casting the spell. Most of the times the person under the spell has no control over their thoughts or bodies actions. Almost like a mindless zombie. Some would say it is similar to a young man whose heart is smitten by a frolicsome young maid.

During this time that we are all experiencing, what has bewitched you? Has Facebook or Twitter cast a spell on you? Are you more under the spell of the Voice or American Idol? These are healthy questions to be

asking. It never hurts to look at our lives and where and what eats up out time. How could our time be better spent if we didn't do these things? Would we even miss these things if we didn't do them? Do they make a big difference in our lives?

We have 168 hours in a week. Let's say we spend 56 hours a week at sleep. That leaves us with 112 hours of awake time to do what we need or want too. You know, I am going to ask this, so how many minutes a week do you spend talking with God or thinking of Him and the things He has done for us? If you do, that is great. One of the best ways to pray is to reflect on the blessings in your life or by being that blessing in another person's life. Living a good Christian life is the greatest prayer and way to talk to God. It shows Him that your life is a living prayer by how you live your life. So use your 168 hours a week wisely.

Adult's Message: The opening verses of this morning's reading show Paul's great frustration with the Galatians. He is sarcastic and upset in this address. There is probably a lot of fear that the work done to bring them to Christ is in jeopardy. Where is the Holy Spirit in all this confusion? The Galatians were a beautiful Christian community. They came to believe in Jesus Christ and received the Holy Spirit. Their faith use to be very strong. The Holy Spirit use to move strongly among them and laid the foundation of the faith upon them. Paul is now very disappointed in them. The Galatians have become foolish and have rejected life in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Galatians are now saying that we are made perfect by the flesh. This is a nice way of

saying you need to become circumcised. This small amount of flesh is becoming a big problem in the early church.

Paul needs to pull out his aces and get the Galatian Christians back on the correct path. The faith in Jesus Christ is being divided between the old and new covenant Christians. Chaos and ignorance are ruling the church in Galatia. Paul goes back to the fundamental basics of the faith. The Holy Spirit is not a spirit of confusion, chaos or division. It is a spirit of unity. What is the element that unifies these diverse Christian groups? Paul focuses on that in verses 26-29.

That all Christians are one in Jesus Christ. There is no Jew, Greek, free, slave, male or female. We are all one because of our baptism. Being baptised into Christ we have put on Christ. At baptism our font has become our tomb and upon coming out of the water we rise to new life in Christ. Very similar to His resurrection. Actually verse 27 is a very ancient Christian hymn that was used and sung at baptisms in the early church. All the baptised share one human nature in Christ. We are all new creations because of our baptisms. There is no place in the church for divisions by ethnicity, pride, social status or gender. We are all one in nature because of our baptism and so we are all equal in dignity. Paul has beautifully connected faith in Jesus Christ and baptism together as the glue that binds all Christians together. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. It seems to be moving in Paul at this critical moment in the Galatian church. Never underestimate the Holy Spirit or where It moves or in who.

Paul's words remind the Galatians of who they truly are. He firmly establishes their identity as first and foremost Christians baptised in Jesus Christ. The other identifying factors no longer matter. They are

first and only Christians. Paul will also give them a detailed understanding of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. In order to guide their church and keep it on the correct path. The works of the Holy Spirit guides the church with unity and not division and chaos.

Paul's words are a good reminder for us today. We are all one in Christ regardless of our self- created divisions. We make up the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit continues to work in and guides the church in spite of ourselves. Our baptism is that powerful unifying force amongst us. All the time inspired and moved by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the difficult part of being a Christian is working with the Holy Spirit and discerning if the spirit is the Holy one. God bless stay safe and get your job, Pastor D