

The
New
Testament
in a Year

Week 23

Galatians 2-6

This week's reflector is

Dave Jagger.

*He is the pastor at
Trinity United Church in Elmira.*

*"As the church reads Galatians,
then, we are constantly challenged
to reject the wisdom of business as
usual -including the business of
religion- and to see reality as
redefined by the cross. We will live,
manifesting the fruit of the Spirit,
and our life together will be a sign of
the world to come."*

The New Interpreter's Bible vol. XI.

Monday

Galatians 2

In this chapter, Paul continues to tell his version of his own story. The echoes of Paul's past continue to resound in his decisions and understandings of the present. Paul the reformed Pharisee: persistent, stubborn, self-assured, certain, argumentative. But now for Christ.

How does your past continue to manifest itself in your present?

*"...then Christ died for nothing."
Shocking words!*

What does Christ's death mean to you?

Tuesday

Galatians 3

I wonder how seriously we in the church (especially we leaders) take this chapter? The Very Reverend Peter Short, during his term as Moderator, talked about "Functional Atheism" within the church. The bumper sticker says it clearly, "Work harder, Jesus is coming!" Paul says, "Jesus already did the work, believe, relax and enjoy your life with God."

Which comes first in your life, faith or works?

Would an outsider following you around for a month come to the same conclusion?

Wednesday

Galatians 4

Today, as you read this chapter, put yourself in the place of the Galatians, rather than in the place of Paul. Hear Paul speaking and arguing with you. After all, most of us are non-Jewish outsiders. We did not grow up under the Law of Moses. Jewish culture is not our culture. But through God's grace, we outsiders are also insiders, with complete access to the inheritance!! (If you already read the chapter before reading this, go back and read it again)

Thursday

Galatians 5

This chapter is talking about circumcision/law as opposed to freedom/faith. Whichever one you choose, determines how you will live; your choices, your behaviours, the focus of your life.

If Paul was writing to you, or to your church, what would he substitute for circumcision?

What issue needs to be "cut off" in order for you to be free to bear the fruit of faith expressed in love?

Friday

Galatians 6

So after pointing out the foibles and trials and hopelessness of trying to live completely defined by a set of rules to cover every aspect of life, Paul ends this letter with some general principles for healthy, faithful Christian community.

What principles does Paul offer to the Galatian Churches?

Which of those principles do you or your church find easiest to put into practise? Find difficult?

May what our Master Jesus Christ gives freely be deeply and personally yours, my friends. Oh yes!!
(Galatians 6:18 – The Message)