

still waters

home church studies

psalm 42

[Worship]

1 As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually, "Where is your God?" 4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I went with the throng, and led them in procession to the house of God, with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help 6 and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar. 7 Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your cataracts; all your waves and your billows have gone over me. 8 By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. 9 I say to God, my rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I walk about mournfully because the enemy oppresses me?" 10 As with a deadly wound in my body, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me continually, "Where is your God?" 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.

Luke 8.26, 27 & 30

[Think & Pray...]

Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him.

Consider:

Good questions - "What is the relationship between faith and the law?" Our early church leaders struggled with these questions as embodied in the letter to the Galatians.



In this week's reading, we hear words about Abraham being "saved" by "faith," and that this faith was unfulfilled until the coming of Christ. In between, the law was needed as a guardian to keep us on the right track and save us from veering too far from God's will.

This scripture is translated in very different ways, and the message itself, can become confused by our own theological viewpoint. We can read in the NRSV that before faith came, we were 'imprisoned and guarded' under the law, which was our 'disciplinarian,' while other translations say that the law was our 'schoolmaster,' 'custodian,' and 'guardian.'

"What it means to us, and in the context of the early church's debates over who was eligible for God's grace, rests very clearly on Paul's summation that there is "neither Jew, nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, that if we truly follow Christ (as expressed in the scriptures), we are safe because he will never lead us into sin, where law will judge us to be guilty.

Christ has rendered obsolete the practice of separating and judging on the basis of race, ethnicity, religious lineage, gender, economic status, or class. The human tendency to divide is deeply ingrained in us, but God's way of equality and unity is the new order of things. The consequences of that profound revelation are still unfolding in us today."

[The Scripture]

galatians 3.23-29

23 Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. 27 As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.