

## Galatians 3 explained-Faith

*Galatians Explained*

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**Bible Text:** Galatians 3:23-29  
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Congregation, young people, I see a building. It's actually a prison. Do you see it too? And the door of that prison has been opened and some people have left the prison and I see them there, it seems there is before that prison an extremely rich family actually all dressed in white, all holding hands, all smiling. So keep that picture in mind: a prison, the door is opened, the family extremely rich, smiling, holding hands with white robes. If you remember that picture, it might be easier to understand the sermon because I see that in Galatians 3. In Galatians 3:23-29, we revisit also a few verses, we go back a little bit, but read those verses and see if you can see that prison, if you can see that freedom, if you can see that family, if you can see them dressed, if you can see them smiling, if you can see them in that freedom, extremely rich.

Galatians 3:23-29,

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. [Do you see the prison?] 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. [Do you see them smiling?] 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. [They're free. The door is open. No longer under the schoolmaster.] 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. [So is that family, the family, all the children of God by faith.] 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [See the clothing? Have put on Christ.] 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. [They're holding hands. Do you see it? One.] 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. [Extremely super rich.]

So faith makes all the difference. The word "faith" is repeated all the time. Faith makes all the difference. Seven verses and seven thoughts and seven pictures. Shut up unto faith. That's the first, verse 23, because they're in prison. Secondly, justified by faith in verse 24, they're smiling. In the third place, free by faith is the prison is opened. And fourth, the family of faith because they are all adopted. And five, dressed by faith, some people with

new coats on. And sixth, one in faith, verse 28, because they're holding hands. And seventh, heirs by faith as they are extremely rich.

Remember why the Apostle Paul is writing this? He sees God's children falling back. The believers in the congregation in Galatia are getting back into darkness instead of proceeding. They go backwards because there has been a time of the Old Testament dispensation of Moses that the church was kind of in bondage, the church was kind of in prison, not in a maximum security prison, let me say in a minimum security prison. They're God's people but God's people were in the old dispensation kind of under the law and kept unto the faith and in bondage because the law of Moses was after them, the schoolmaster was keeping them in that prison. So you see the picture of the schoolmaster and prison blurring because the time of grace was not so clear yet in the old dispensation with believers absolutely, but believers in darkness.

Verse 23, "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Do you see that? Before and afterwards it says. Before it was so and so and afterwards it was different. So before faith came, let me say before the clear revelation of faith came, before Christ came, before the new dispensation came, before Pentecost came, before that faith came, we were kept under the law in the dispensation of the law of Moses, of the Old Testament. There was faith, yes, there was faith but not so clear.

So it says, "But before faith came," it does not deny that Abraham had faith, right? Abraham was a believer so it doesn't say before faith came there was not faith, but before that clear revelation of faith came, before Christ came, the church was under the law, shut up to the faith and until the faith. Both unto the faith because that will be the next step that the clear revelation of Christ would come, unto the faith also until the faith which should afterwards be revealed. It was not revealed so well yet so in the time of Moses there was the gospel, there was Christ, there was faith, it was not so clearly revealed yet, it was suppressed a little bit. It was time the Lord prepared the people for more so that Christ should be revealed afterwards.

So that's the prison. Do you see the prison, children? Prison, what is the prison? The old dispensation of Moses. And who are in the prison? Do you know now who's in the prison? In the prison are God's people. No, I'm not talking about unconverted ones in their prison, I'm not talking about hell, that's a different prison. You will never leave that prison. You're talking about here about the prison God's people are in in the old dispensation, a minimum security prison only for the time being because there will be more revealed afterwards and someday they would stand outside and be free and smile.

Before we go to the next thought, let me say this. It is possible that in the time we live in that is the New Testament dispensation, that the prison doors have been opened, that still some of God's children are living as if they are in the old dispensation yet. They're not but it feels like that, as if they're still under the law. They're God's people. They're really God's people and they still feel so much bondage and fear and so little freedom and smiling and happiness and something is lacking.

And the Apostle Paul is writing to the congregations of Galatia and he knows they're God's people but he's afraid that they fall back and that's why he says in chapter 5, if I may go forward to chapter 5, verse 1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." So he's talking about people who were set free and have fallen back into bondage. He's talking to the people of God that had that smile on their face and that comfort in their hearts and that knows the Lord Jesus Christ and their hope, but they fall backwards. They don't stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and they're entangled again with the yoke of bondage. So some of God's children are still in that old dispensation and some fall back into the old dispensation.

So children, young people, what do you see? What picture do you see? I see a prison, right? Minimum security prison that is Moses under the law, and that door has been opened. So let's go to the second thought: justified by faith or smiling. Verse 24, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." We talked about that already but I feel I should bring it up again. So the law, the ceremonial law, the law about holy times and holy places and holy actions and all those holy ceremonies, that law but also the moral law wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, it was good for us to be in prison, it was good to have that guard there, it was good to have that schoolmaster that was tough, it was good because it is to bring us unto Christ that we may be justified by faith.

So I see people having left that prison door, through the prison door and are standing outside, all of them, that family dressed in white, but I see on their faces there is a happy family because they have been freed and they have been justified by faith. So it is not by works they were kind of sweating, they were trying, it was not so clear yet it was completely free, and how they have been relieved, and how they have been set free, and are justified by faith. You know, it is kind of repetitive, I understand that, let me just for the young people say it again: justified by faith. What is justified? Justified. You know about justice, right? Justice, something that's right. And to justify is to make right because it was not right, something was wrong between God and mankind. It was terribly wrong. There was a gulf. There was guilt. God could not get over that guilt. He could not ignore that sin and people didn't know how to solve it and how to bridge the gulf, so God was angry with sin, had to punish sin, and they had to make it right and they could not make it right, so the Lord has given his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to bridge that gulf and now people have to come over that bridge and that bridge is Christ, and walking over the bridge is faith.

Justified by faith and therefore the Apostle Paul makes it very clear to the Galatians it's not by works but by doing nothing, by hearing, by hearing the word of the Gospel and believing that in its utter simplicity. Not by works but by faith. Faith is the very opposite of working, the very opposite of doing something. Believing is you quit, you stop doing things and you only rely on someone else's work which is Christ. You know, I see that prison, I see that family stand there and they smile because by faith only, justified, they

feel justified, not their sins have been justified but they have been justified. Their sins have been taken away. It's by grace only, by faith only.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Now when did that law come? Some had some questions about that and asked pastor, "That law, did it only come at the time of Moses then? There was no law before?" Of course there was. The law is as old as God is. The law is God. God is his law. He is holiness and he is pure, he is the very opposite of sin, so the law is from eternity in God's mind. When Adam and Eve were created, they were made in God's image and likeness and that knowledge and righteous and holiness and they knew it was, by nature they knew the law and obeyed the law. And even after their fall, the fall of Adam and Eve, people fell deep into sin and corruption, total corruption, but yet there was a conscience, and also in the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, people knew, kind of knew what the law of God is. It was still in their hearts. But through the time of Moses it was made clear and more blunt and more open what the Lord requires, there was more pressure, and the Lord gave Moses those laws, those commandments to bring that people unto Christ, to let them leave jail someday and to stand there together in white robes and smile with their heart, to be justified by faith only.

Just in between, do you belong to that people that was for a while under the bondage of the law and now have been set free and justified by faith only? Oh, that is such a blessed people, right, because they experienced that freedom. The next verse talks about, verse 25, "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." No longer under a schoolmaster but family and adopted. What a blessing. Adopted to belong to God's family.

Verse 25, "But after that faith is come, we are no longer," do you see that, "no longer under a schoolmaster," but set free so that the prison door is open and we're justified by faith and the Lord said, "Now go and leave." It's the new dispensation. But after that faith is come, meaning the clear revelation of faith, then Christ has come because before it was different. I'll show you that from Hebrews 9, "But into the second," tabernacle, "went the high priest alone once every year," on the Day of Atonement, "not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." So the way to the holiest was not yet made manifest and then the Lord Jesus died, a veil of the tabernacle of the temple rent from the top to the bottom. The Lord is indicating it's open, now there's freedom so that justified by faith and after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. He's not behind with a stick anymore. It can't shut us up in darkness anymore. There's light and liberty and abundant freedom.

You know, imagine that you can't walk anymore, imagine that you're in a wheelchair, imagine that you are bound into your house and it's dark, and all those things together, and there's an opportunity to leave the house and to walk again and to be free again to just walk wherever you want to go, you were not able to do that before, you were so sick, and now you have that freedom to go wherever you want again. "But after that faith is

come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." So Christ opened the door and the church was allowed to leave with a blessing.

Let's go to the next thought. Verse 27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." So I see a prison, the door opens, they have left, I see a family standing there, they're all dressed in white, not in their prison garb but in their white clothes and they smile, they're holding hands. So this is the part of being dressed in white, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, baptized into Christ is the same as having put on Christ. Being baptized in Christ is the same as having put on Christ.

So let me explain those two. Baptism in the olden days was by immersion in the Jordan River, for example, and you went completely under and you were in contact with the water completely. You were wet, completely wet even your head, your hair. Everything was wet. And we didn't see you for a while and then you came up again out of the water as if you're a new person. So you're baptized into the Father, completely baptized in that water, in contact with that water, and that water is an example of who Christ is. Baptized into Christ, completely in him, under him, submerged, completely washed and cleansed.

So that's what he's talking about, all adopted children, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ." When someone believes in the Lord Jesus, then he is kind of baptized into Christ and he just disappears into Christ, and he is grafted into Christ, then he is in the Lord Jesus Christ, then he is surrounded by the Lord Jesus Christ and that is also what is to put on Christ. It's a coat, that's the same example, to take your old clothes off and to put a new coat on and to be enveloped in Christ, to put on Christ.

Dressed by faith. You know, some people say that this probably refers to the practice of baptism, that people are baptized first and then they came out of the water and they received a new coat, new clothes. That's really now possible but right or not, all God's children have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ. They were offered that coat and they received that coat and they put it on, put on Christ, because by nature our clothes are so vile and so worn and so dirty, you can't appear before God. And in the time of the Old Testament, people tried to clean up themselves and there appear before God as good people, and more and more they came to the conclusion it's impossible. It's only possible to be baptized into Christ, into Christ and to put on Christ.

Do you see those people standing there, prison doors open, together there all dressed in Christ? Do you belong to that people? Would you love to? I see them happy. I see them holding hands. They're extremely rich. They're heirs of God's property, co-heirs with Christ. It can't be better. They're so elated. They were for a time under bondage in the Old Testament dispensation and now faith has come and they're free and they smile and they are accepted by the Lord and God's people, and they are in Christ, a new creature.

You know, I think of God's children receiving that awareness, receiving awareness of having left the prison, that awareness of being justified by faith, and the awareness of having been adopted by the Lord in his family, and that awareness of being in Christ, [unintelligible], in Christ, and dressed with his robe, with his holiness, with his

righteousness, and to feel clean and to feel safe and to feel right with God. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels." That's later, right, in heaven, but here on earth already God's children are dressed in Christ, and later on in heaven in this example when they overcome, they also shall be clothed in white raiment and then, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." It's in there and it stays in there. "I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."

So baptism is not only an entrance rite into the church, a ceremony of entrance into the church, but it needs to become an internal reality. You may have been baptized but you need to be baptized with the real baptism, and that is to be baptized in Christ because if you're only baptized with water, it won't help you. It's important, it's a message, it's special, it's dear to us, we emphasize it all the time, you're sanctified out in Christ but it's not sufficient for salvation, you need to be baptized in Christ. All that water needs to go over you and be completely immersed in him.

"And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." Again an example of what the church is like and will be like, but also is like. "And after this I beheld a great multitude," you know, the people before that prison have left, it's not just a small amount. "After this I beheld a great multitude which no man could number of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands and praising God."

So go back, verse 23, "before faith came, we were kept under the law," in prison, "shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." So it's a new time and so God's children also today can have a time of little faith, of not advancing so much, of getting stuck in the beginning and in bondage, and then it may please the Lord to give them more freedom, to also in faith be baptized in Christ and to put him on. Then God's children advance and grow up in grace, not so unstable anymore but they got enclosed with life and Christ becomes more important, dear unto them.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." That's the purpose, to not get stuck in the beginning but to bring unto Christ, "that we might be justified by faith." Not by works, by faith and in a holy sense smile.

"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." You know, sometimes young people feel that bondage at home, right, and they look forward to graduation and to move out and to have your driver's license and to be free, right? I can see that. I can understand that. But spiritually we are under a schoolmaster, under the law, under bondage, you can't experience that freedom. Then God's children are sometimes set free, what a special time is that. No longer under a schoolmaster.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." All adopted.

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." That faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. May I encourage sinners to put on Christ. To be baptized in him. To have that robe around you. It's God's gift to God's children put it on themselves. They put it on. They believe by God's grace, that by God's grace they believe. It's not so that by God's grace God believes for them or someone else. No, they believe by God's grace and they repent. So it's necessary to put on Christ by grace.

But then I see that crowd of people holding hands and I see that they're extremely rich. So two more thoughts. The first we see, now congregation, look at that people. It's a multitude, they've all been accepted, they're God's people, they belong to the Lord's family, to his household, all dressed in white, but look at those faces, look at who they are. I see many different types of people: Jews and Greek and bond and free and male and female. You know, there are prayers found in the Jewish writings with thanksgiving. One of those Jewish prayers is something like this, "I thank God that I am not a Gentile. And I thank God I'm not a slave. And I thank God I am not a woman." And this is so contrary to that. "There is neither Jew nor Greek," Gentiles, "there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." So I said they're holding hands, so to speak. They're one in Christ.

Now I'd like to warn you, it does not say that before it mattered and now it does not anymore. It doesn't say, well, in the old dispensation it was a big thing, Gentiles were lost anyway and the slaves didn't count at all, and then the women are cursed, and now it changes. No, it's not so that the position of women and slaves and Gentiles really changed but it was made clear there's no difference. No difference in what? No difference in the standing before God.

Now think of someone in those olden days extremely rich, a farmer with many farms and many employees, many slaves, and one of those slaves is coming to his house and they talk to each other about spiritual things, and they feel close. But he's the boss, he's the owner and he's a slave, but they don't care. They feel close and the owner doesn't say, "I'll give you half my property." No. He is still his slave but they are also brothers in Christ. And that was true in the old dispensation, that is also true in the new dispensation but in the new dispensation even clearer. In Christ, think about that. In his robe. In his clothing. There is, of course, as never has been, there is neither Jew nor Greek. There's neither bond nor free. There is neither male nor female.

But this was written in a time that people thought there was a difference. So from God's perspective in the old dispensation there was not such a difference, but in the time of the Lord Jesus the people saw a difference and the Lord Jesus said, "There is no difference." Josephus, one of the historians of the first century, wrote that women were in all things inferior to men and that has never been based on the Bible, it was their culture, and that culture was absolutely wrong.

So now the Apostle Paul writing to the Colossians, he says, you know, in that faith, in that true and saving faith there is no difference in the standing before God. No difference between Jew and Greek. Did they rebel against those Judaizers, they said, "You need to

be Jewish," right? And if you came to the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you had to be circumcised otherwise you didn't really count and the apostle writes, "No, in Christ there is no Jew and there is no Greek, as there is also no bond and no free, as there is no male nor female." So in the old dispensation there was not a difference. In the time of the Lord Jesus people made a difference but it was wrong and the Apostle Paul and the Lord Jesus made us see there is no difference in the standing before God, I mean.

So then a Jew and a Greek came to the faith, there was still a difference, right, genetic, still a difference. He was Gentile by origin and he had Jewish blood in his veins so there was a difference but not in the standing before God. And that slave, that slave had to obey but if he was a slave in Christ, he was still the brother, the spiritual brother of his owner. But he was still a slave, right? And so with male and female and by God's grace there has never been a difference in the standing before God. People made that difference in the time of the Lord Jesus. But of course, there is a difference but not in the standing before God. There are different responsibilities, different roles, different genes. Women are way better at empathizing and having compassion and have special gifts and men have different gifts so we have to respect those differences as well. Male and female complement each other. In spiritual things they're equal, of course, but you compare male and female and they do the same job and have the same responsibilities in society, they also should be paid the same amount, right? Of course. It's strange if two people, male and female doing exactly the same thing and have different pay. That's not right. We're not talking about that now. Equal in standing before God. So those distinctions are abolished or stronger, those distinctions the Lord Jesus said were never right.

I see the prison and do you see it now? By now you understand it, right? Maybe at home you can talk about it. I see a prison, the door opened, I see people standing before that, they are free, they smile, they are dressed in white, they're holding hands, with all their differences they're holding hands, and they're extremely rich. Last thought, verse 29, "And if ye be Christ's," if there is not, in case there has not been but because. The word "if" often means "because." "And because ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs," heirs, "according to the promise." You know, God's children are extremely rich. In the next chapter it's explained that you can have a family with a slave and a child and an owner, and the owner possesses everything and the slave and the child don't possess anything, but the child is heir but cannot use the property, has no freedom to take the money, neither does the slave, but yet although there is no difference visible between the slave and the child, there is a huge difference because the one is the heir and extremely rich.

Now think of people extremely rich like Bill Gates or someone. It's just mindboggling. I think he could buy the whole property in the United States, just the whole country, something like that. Extremely rich, but you know, if you miss Christ and faith, they are so extremely poor because when you die, you have absolutely nothing left and if you're not saved, you're lost forever and your tree falls. Where it falls it will forever be. But God's children, even the poorest of God's people, the slaves, they are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if so

be that they suffer with him, that sometimes happens that we also be glorified together. Being glorified with Christ.

What the Lord said unto the servant, the faithful servant, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make you a ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." So ruler over many things, the Bible says. They will inherit the earth, it says, and they may enter into the joy of the Lord. I explained that before but I would like to take my time to explain it again. It's very tender, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." What is the joy of thy Lord? Is that the joy the Lord will give you? "Enter you into the joy of the Lord, there will be so much joy for you, you will get all the joy possible. Enter into the joy of the Lord, the Lord gives so much joy." I don't think that's what it means. Of course there will be joy and, of course, the Lord will give that, but I don't think that's what it says here. "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It is God's joy. Entering into the Lord's joy, what's that? It's not the joy the Lord gives but the Lord says, "Come in and share in the joy I have." So the Lord is rejoicing himself. So what is the Lord so joyful about that he rejoices in himself? Because he has a delight in being God, but he also has a delight in his people. He rejoices in his church. "You are my people." I see a reference to a happy God, a God rejoicing in his people like the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so thy God will rejoice over thee. So that's what heaven is like, a happy God, happy with his people. "You are my people." And they say, "O my God!"

So that is the joy of the Lord, that togetherness. There is nothing better that is ultimate riches and it goes in eternity. So I see those people standing there justified by faith, one in Christ, smile on their faces, yes, robed in white and freed from prison, and they are extremely rich. They have everything. They have only comfort. They belong to Christ with body and soul. They don't have to worry about anything. It will all be right anyhow, anyway. And they may say, "Our Father which art in heaven." Extremely blessed people God's people are if they would only know it, if they would only experience it and believe it.

You know, do you see the prison? The prison is the prison of the old dispensation, Moses. It's a minimum security prison and God's people are in there. But not anymore. In the new dispensation they have been freed out of that Moses prison. They are now not in bondage anymore, not under the schoolmaster any longer but that in salvation history ours now personally. Are you in a different prison, in the prison of sin yet? Bound in sin? You have been freed from that prison. That's not a good prison. You have been freed and that door is open as well and the Lord is calling us, inviting us. There's still some people in church today and they wonder if the Lord has a message for them and I would like to repeat what I have said yesterday to the young people, this evening to the young people: the Lord calls you. The Lord says, "Did you hear it? You don't like this? You won't see this?" That's so strange if you can see so much and you ignore it. How will you escape if you don't pay attention to such great salvation? Seek it. It's free. Amen.