

ADVENT WEEK THREE

December 19, 2019

Embracing Freedom

Galatians 3:23-29

But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. Galatians 3:25-27

What Paul faced in his life before Christ was a never-good-enough mentality, with stringent dogma and impossible rules, with confining hierarchies and divisions. What he dealt with was constant struggle and defeat—a life without grace, without unconditional *belonging* in the family of God.

And then he encountered the risen Christ, who had said, “It is finished.” The struggle is finished. Through Christ, Paul came to know a faith that is freeing rather than burdensome. Paul’s newfound freedom in Christ makes room for joy, room for everyone to flourish.

During this season of Advent, are your burdens heavy? Are you suffering under unrealistic expectations and joyless tasks? Each night as you unplug the tree lights and go to bed, do you wonder if you’ve been good enough or if you’ve done enough, if God could really love you or accept you?

These words of scripture might be just what you need to hear. If your spiritual life is heavy, then maybe it’s time to change clothes. Get out of that stifling suit in which you can barely move. Take off the weight that clings so closely, whatever that may be. “Clothing ourselves with Christ” means embracing *freedom*—a grace-filled freedom that leads us to follow the Spirit without constraint. We are no longer imprisoned, labeled, or divided. We are released into the joy of knowing that we are children of God, beloved and free.

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