

Paul's Allegory of the Covenants

by Peter Masters

The sermon emphasizes the importance of staying committed to the gospel and the apostles' teaching, and not being swayed by false teaching or the desire for wealth and prosperity.

Duration: 47:03

Scripture: Galatians 1:6-9, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:10, Galatians 3:13, Galatians 4:12, Galatians 4:22 - 5:1, Galatians 5:4, Galatians 6:8, Galatians 6:14

Topics: "Covenant Theology", "Salvation By Grace"

Description

This sermon delves into the allegory of the two covenants as explained by the Apostle Paul in Galatians. It contrasts the covenant of works, which relies on human effort and leads to bondage, with the covenant of grace, based on God's promise and salvation through faith in Christ. The narrative of Abraham's sons, Ishmael and Isaac, is used to illustrate this spiritual truth, emphasizing the superiority of the covenant of grace. The sermon warns against false teachings that promote salvation through works rather than grace, highlighting the need to trust in Christ alone for salvation.

Transcript

We shall come in due course to a great feature of this chapter, which is Paul's allegory of the two covenants. But I want to begin back in verse 12, chapter 4, verse 12, with the Apostle's words, Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are. Well, we've been considering this letter to the Galatians, probably Paul's first letter, written about A.D. 50 to A.D. 53 to the churches in the Roman province of Galatia, which is now modern Turkey.

And these churches had been founded through the preaching of the Apostle Paul, and the people were most certainly converted, and although he says he stands in doubt of them, he is perplexed by their turning to much false teaching, yet at the same time other sentiments in this letter show that he is not deeply in doubt of them. They were unquestionably converted, even though their behaviour leaves that open to question. They have been contaminated and spoiled by the so-called Judaizers of the time.

These were converted, no, we doubt it, but those who claimed to be converted among Jewish people, and who had begun to teach that Christ was not enough, and they would follow Paul's great evangelistic journeys, his missionary journeys, they would follow him, and he was not aware of this for some time, until at one stage he paused at a church at Antioch when he was reporting the work of his missions, and these false teachers caught up with him, and then it became obvious what was going on, and they were teaching

these young churches, rejoicing in Christ, Christ is not enough, you are Gentiles, but you must be circumcised, your men must be circumcised, and you must take up the full burdens of the Jewish ceremonial law, and without this you cannot be saved. So saved by faith in Christ, free salvation, purchased by the shed blood of Christ, but now they say no, you cannot be, after all you've got to work, you've got to earn your salvation by good works, and chiefly among them by adherence to the meticulous details of the Jewish ceremonial law. That's the great problem, and Paul is appealing to them.

It's the burden of this letter, to establish and to prove once again that we are saved by faith alone. Verse 12, Brethren, he says to them, I beseech you, be as I am. Well, he had ceased to be a Jew, and he had become virtually a Gentile.

He put no trust whatsoever in the Jewish law, which once he would have died for, but not now. No, he's come to grasp that salvation is through Christ alone, and that the Jewish law was given by God to the Jews only for a period of time, and it was meant to teach them. But of course the human heart is so proud, and on being given a ceremonial law and a moral law too, the assumption of so many, the majority in fact, was that, oh, we are so special, because we've been given this.

And therefore by virtue of being given the law, we may assume that we are God's special people, and that we are all heavenbound, and he loves us, and we can virtually do no wrong before him, as long as we keep this ceremonial law. They neglected the moral law, and they sought the ceremonial law as the ground of their righteousness. Oh, I beseech you, verse 12, be as I am.

I've given up all that pride and self-righteousness and foolish misinterpretation of the ways of God. I've become as ye are. I've become almost a Gentile, but trusting in Christ.

And then a new thought, ye have not injured me at all. When I came to you, when I preached to you at the first, persecuted by my fellow countrymen and many others, I was received so well by the people of the province of Galatia. And in verse 13, ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

Now I used to read that and think it meant that Paul preached to them while he was sick. That's probably true, but that's not what he means. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh.

The Greek perhaps is more clear than the English, though the English translation we have is clear enough. It was through his infirmity that he ever found himself in Galatia at all. Presumably whatever particular sickness he had at the time, well the climate in that region was better for him.

And so he diverted into that region and through, because of infirmity of the flesh, he happened to be, of course it was the overruling of God, in Galatia and began to preach the gospel to them. And that's how he puts it. He was ill of course, but it's illness that took him there.

So then in verse 14, my temptation which was in my flesh ye despise not, nor reject it. Now it's anybody's guess precisely what this means, so we cannot be dogmatic. It may mean, as some suggest, that the apostle Paul suffered from some terrible eye inflammation, some kind of ophthalmia, that this was part of his illness, so he was somewhat disfigured, and yet they didn't despise him for that.

It may mean that only in his weakness and his poor health, his preaching was hardly spectacular, through infirmity he preached to them in every sense, but they didn't despise him for that. It may be that the pagan hearers of Paul expected a preacher to be fit as a fiddle, otherwise they would say, as it were, physician,

heal thyself. It could mean any of those things, but whatever it means, they didn't despise his weakness, whether it was something that was evident in his appearance or not.

He certainly was unwell. And my temptation, verse 14, which was in my flesh ye despise not, nor reject it, but receive me as an angel of God. They were so glad to hear the gospel when the Spirit moved in their hearts, and this was just what they needed, the forgiveness, the cleansing of God, free salvation.

Even as Jesus Christ, they treated the messenger with the same love and affection that they found in their hearts for Christ himself. And then in verse 15, where is then the blessedness ye speak of? All their testimonies. I have found Christ Jesus, one would say.

Another would say, I lived in darkness all my life until now, and I've found the meaning of life and the way to heaven. And they were assured of salvation, and they had great happiness. Verse 15, second part, for I bear you record that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to me.

Wonderful proof, say those who think that the apostle Paul suffered from great eye inflammation. Wonderful proof of that, but not necessarily. The eye is your most precious organ, or so we might think externally.

And in their sympathy for him for any form of illness, they might just have said the same thing, so nothing is conclusive, but we know he was a sufferer in their presence, and they loved him greatly. And so verse 16, I'm hurrying by the way because I want to get to the covenants. Am I therefore, verse 16, become your enemy because I tell you the truth? I don't think they thought of that.

It was the Judaizers who were so running down Paul and undermining him. It was they, I think, who were saying to the Christians in the churches of Galatia, this man is your enemy. He's leading you astray.

He's telling you things from which you can't possibly get salvation. You must become like Jews. They were making him, I believe, their enemy.

And then in verse 17, mysterious words, they zealously affect you. Well, zeal is certainly there in the original terms. They have strong desire towards you.

They have seeming love and concern, these false teachers. I'm going to emphasize this for a moment because this is often the case with false teaching. It's like a courtship.

They're all over you. They're so far away and friendly. They're such nice people.

They want to help you. They come across so well. They zealously affect you, but not well.

Yea, they would exclude you, which means in the Greek, break you away. All they want to do is break you away from the apostles and their teaching and have you for themselves, that ye might affect them. Zeal is there in the original here, that you might zealously affect them or court them and love them and desire them and follow them.

Well, this is how false teaching works. Think of today, the amount of false teaching. Oh dear, if I digress into summarizing the false teachers who are about today in the name of Christ, we'll be here for the whole of the rest of the sermon.

But I think of just two classes. Think of these prosperity gospel teachers. These people who tell unwearied hearers, Christianity is a matter of God promising you that you can be rich.

What are the terms that you enrich them, usually? They're all over you. They zealously affect you so that you can zealously affect them. Give to them.

Make them rich. Some of them are so successful, they even own airplanes and helicopters. Extraordinary, isn't it? And yet people fall for it.

And you open the Bible, they're talking nonsense, rubbish. Their ideas that Christianity is a matter of being wealthy and prosperous and always well, it isn't in the New Testament. It isn't the message of Christ.

What scriptures do they use and twist into this dreadful message that they preach? Just watch. Most of the time they don't use scripture at all. And when they do, it should be perfectly obvious to anyone of modest intelligence that that scripture is being violently misused and twisted.

They're crooks, these people. They're outrageous. And then there are so many other false teachers who are teaching repentance-less Christianity.

All you have to do is make a simple assent to Jesus Christ. You don't have to repent. You don't have to be very deeply sincere.

You don't have to yield your life to him as well. This is dreadful, friends. Why, at the very beginning of this epistle, the Apostle Paul has these words to say, but though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

He's condemned. He's a child of Satan. He's an evildoer.

And yet there are so many. And how, like the Judaizing people, trying to exclude the converts from the genuine preachers of the gospel and just get their support and affection. And presumably we may add their money too.

Well, says the Apostle, verse 18, it is good to be zealously affected, to have great zeal, but always in a good thing. The gospel, that's the good thing, the noble thing. And not only when I am present with you, or if only the Galatians had exercised their discernment, but they'd grown cold.

What had they done, I wonder? Why were they so vulnerable to the Judaizers, the false teachers? Perhaps there's a message for us here. Maybe they hadn't reflected frequently and genuinely upon the glory of their salvation. Maybe they hadn't praised God as they should have done, read their scriptures, received the New Testament as it came to them, loved it, valued the doctrines, prayed for others, attended the gatherings, the meetings frequently, kept their souls and their hearts.

You know, we're all vulnerable, all of us. A small digression. This is a very complex life.

All kinds of things will happen to us. You'll have periods, times, when you cannot get out to weeknight meetings. Sickness in the family, serious sickness.

Maybe serious, you have to compel to work long hours. Maybe you go through a season if you're out at work when you have to get home so late. Maybe you've got unavoidable difficulties you've got to attend to.

And so you have to be somewhat patchy in your weeknight attendance. And maybe for a period of time you almost have to give it up. Yes, but when things change again, and the window of opportunity returns, and the liberty is there, are you right back to your obligation, to your attendance, to your commitment.

We need these things. We shouldn't forsake the assembling of ourselves together and drift away from our spiritual obligations and blessings. I need that oasis in the centre of the week.

I need to mix with God's people, hear his words, stir my heart. Oh no, I can go from weekend to weekend, I can stand, I'm spiritually strong, I can do it. You begin to think proudly the devil will surely bring you down.

And you'll skip meetings and leave things out, and your heart will grow cold, you will suffer defeats, the devil will play all kinds of tricks with you. And maybe the Galatians have done that. How is it they've lost their zeal, their love, their gratitude, their fervour.

How is it they can hear false teaching and not identify it, and react against it. Well dear friends, I do want to come to the covenants, because this is so precious and so valuable. Look at verse 19.

My little children of whom I travail in birth again. The original says I have birth pangs again until Christ be formed in you. And his character and his zeal, the apostle Paul is going through deep anxiety for them.

He is burdened for them. Verse 20 I desire to be present with you now and to change my voice for I stand in doubt of you. It is so astonishing to have your belief subverted by such people as these Judaising teachers.

Well now from verse 21, and here is such a rich passage. Tell me ye that desire to be under the law. Do ye not hear the law? I ask as the apostle.

Now you are Gentiles, you've never been under the Jewish law, but you who now as Gentiles want to come under the ceremonial law of the Jews. Have you ever heard the law? Do you not know what it says? Let me tell you what it says about all this. Let the law settle this.

Should you go back to the law and give up grace, or should you stay with grace? Now of course when I keep saying the law, the law, when we are converted and we are Christians, we are most certainly under the moral law of God. But we are not under it in this sense. Our salvation does not depend upon our success.

We are saved because Christ has atoned for us and borne away the punishment for our sin. We are saved because Christ lived a perfect life and his perfections are credited to us. We are saved through him, but because we are his and he is in our hearts and we have a new nature, we are given by God a great desire to fight against our sin and to obey the holy moral law.

For us it's the law of liberty because we do so out of desire and voluntarily, but we love the law of God. So when we speak about not being under the law, we mean this, that as Christians we are not under its condemnation. Our eternal future does not depend upon our success with the moral law, though we desire to obey it.

Christ has purchased salvation for us. But look here at this 21st verse. Tell me ye that desire to be under the law as being perfect according to it which is impossible and therefore being saved and under the

ceremonial law of the Jews, do you not hear what it says? Verse 22, For it is written in the book of Genesis, of course, when the apostle Paul refers to the law here, he's referring not only to the Ten Commandments and the ceremonial law given under Moses, but to the whole of the books of Moses, the first five books of the Bible.

For it is written in Genesis that Abraham had two sons. Now actually, as you know, he had more than two sons, but there are only two of the sons that concern us for this illustration. So the text here is quite accurate.

It's two particular sons which are in mind. For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, one was born to Hagar. Sarah was Abraham's wife.

She could not have children, well not until Abraham was 100. When Abraham was approaching 86, they were very, very concerned, Abraham and Sarah. They had no children, no capacity to have children, yet God had promised an heir and through this heir would come the saviour of the world, the one to whom all nations would be blessed.

But Abraham and Sarah had no children, they were well, well past the age, and you might say they took matters into their own hands. I am not going to be critical of them. In Mesopotamia, where they lived, it was the practice, if you could not have children and you had a handmaid, a servant, a slave, as Sarah did, to give your handmaid to your husband, and so she would bear your husband's child on your behalf.

And they succumbed to the practice of their Mesopotamian surroundings, and so by their own works they meant well but by their own works, their own action, they had a child, Ishmael, when Abraham was 86. And that's what this is about. For it is written, verse 22, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, Sarah's handmaid, Hagar, the other by a free woman, Sarah, 14 years later, conceived herself well, well, well beyond the age, and the promised child was born.

But then verse 23, he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh. That was a wholly natural thing, it was something devised between Sarah and Abraham, that this would be the arrangement. He who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh, by works if you like, but he of the free woman by Sarah herself, that is Isaac, was by promise, he was the promised seed.

Which things are in allegory? For these are, or represent, the two covenants, the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar, and so on. This is a wonderful thing, a wonderful picture. I'm going to tell you just for a moment about the two covenants before we proceed.

There are two great covenants in the Bible. I'm sure you know this, you must all have it written on your minds, it's so important. This is the core of understanding all spiritual things.

There are two great covenants, call them contracts if you like, or agreements. One is called the covenant of works, the contract of works, and the other is called the covenant or the contract of grace, that's what we call them. Now the covenant of works started life in the Garden of Eden.

When God said to our first parents, this is the arrangement, all blessing and bliss is yours, but you must obey me. And it was put in these terms, there is the tree with the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not take of that tree, that is the only prohibition in the Garden. Because if you do, the day you eat of that, you will surely die, spiritually and in due course physically.

The covenant of works, bliss and happiness everlastingly for the human race, on condition the human race performs and works and keeps the covenant and keeps the rules of God. And it was all reduced to one simple rule. It wasn't even a rule which said strive, succeed, they were given the power it seems to do that automatically.

The rule was negative, avoid that. And the human race fell and Adam sinned and the covenant of works collapsed, worthless, it couldn't work. In the Garden of Eden it was established that any arrangement which God makes with the human race, which says do this and live, is doomed to failure.

I'm not going into the details of that right now, I just want to compare the covenants. So it fell in the Garden of Eden and then in that same place the covenant of grace was announced. Now we love to say the covenant of grace actually came first because it was conceived in the mind of God before the world began.

But nevertheless as far as it being manifested is concerned, it came second in human history. After the fall of man, in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15, there is the first promise of a saviour, a promised seed who will crush the head of the serpent, the devil, who will win salvation for us. And that promise is enlarged upon and repeated through the Pentateuch, through the Old Testament, and of course it is kept in the coming of Christ Jesus, the saviour of the world.

So the covenant of grace is announced. Salvation cannot be by works, works mankind cannot do it. Salvation must be a free gift through faith in Christ.

Before Christ came through faith in the promise of Christ that a saviour is coming who will bear away, God will deal with human sin. So there are the two covenants. Paul is effectively saying to these Galatians, you've been saved by grace through faith.

You've believed in Christ and you've yielded to him and you've confessed your sins sincerely and you've received life freely through his atoning death, his purchasing it for you. Do you want to go back to works? That fell in the garden of Eden, the covenant of works. Man could not do it and you Galatians want to be taken back to that.

But then you see, on Mount Sinai at the time of Moses, the covenant of works was reiterated, repeated. It was re-announced. Why? When the Ten Commandments were given, they were given in the form of a covenant of works.

Do this and live. Keep these perfectly and live. Why would God do that when that had already been shown to be an unworkable arrangement which the human race would fail? Why did he do it? Well, for two chief reasons.

First of all because obviously the law must be published. God's requirements, God's standards, God's holy nature, the human race must know what sin is. But secondly, because alongside the covenant of works and of law was always strapped the message of grace.

And by giving this broken, fallen, hopeless covenant again, do this and you will live. The purpose is that people are brought to see, I cannot do this. I can't do this.

Lord, you examine me with these Ten Commandments and all their implications. This law, I'm a sinner, I cannot keep it, I've failed it, I cannot do it. And it drives you to grace.

This alternative, wonderful message, well then you may be freely forgiven. A saviour is coming. Here are the pictures attached to the law of sacrifices, atonement for sin.

Go into the temple, look at the beautiful scenes inscribed in gold, all symbols of mercy and pardon. There in the Holy of Holies, sealed behind a curtain, there is a mercy seat. There is mercy, cherubims of justice, but all mercy is available.

And the law is an unworkable covenant, but just the very specter of it drives us to grace. Unless one's heart is so proud that instead of being humbled by the law and prepared for grace you say, I can keep this. What a foolish, self-righteous person I used to be, says Paul, as a proud Pharisee, thinking I could stand before God.

But then the Spirit worked in his heart and that law crushed him and he realised his need of Christ. You see the two covenants? The covenant of works in the Garden of Eden, reissued, reiterated on Mount Sinai. The covenant of grace, Genesis 3.15, a saviour is promised, ever so many pictures of grace, the preaching of grace, grace even in the arrangements that God made through Moses for the Jews, in their worship, in their rituals, lessons, pictures of grace.

Then Christ came and we have grace and grace is preached, salvation through Christ. But many, many Jews, many were saved, but many more living in Jerusalem at the time of Christ and the time of Paul, they hated this message, like the Judaising brethren. And they went about saying, no, no, you must become as Jews and you must keep the law.

Well then, just coming back to these verses again, verse 23, it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond made, the other by a free woman, an allegory. By the way, people don't like allegories in the Bible today. The modern commentaries, they don't like allegories.

They're trying to say there are no allegories in the Bible. Of course there are. I notice most of the modern translations, when it comes to verse 24, which things are an allegory, they translate it a symbol or something else.

I don't like the word allegory. The word allegory is a very good translation because it is actually a Greek word, the very word which is here in the New Testament. In other words, when you're reading which things are an allegory, you are not reading translation, you're reading the Greek.

It's exactly the word that God has appointed to be used. What is an allegory? Well nowadays, if you look in a dictionary, it has changed its meaning. It'll tell you that it's a fictional story with a meaning.

But no, in the Greek, it doesn't have to be fictional. It can be literal history. It could be a fictional allegory.

It could be an historic allegory. An allegory in the Greek is proclaiming something else. That's what it means.

Here is a story or a literal historical event. Take it at face value, it really happened, but it has a meaning. It also says something else.

It has significance. And that's what we have here. It says the scripture, when Abraham and Sarah worked out that they needed this child, but they couldn't have it, they couldn't have it.

So the child would be born to Sarah's handmaid, and then later, Isaac was born to Sarah. When that happened, don't you know God was superintending those events? They literally happened, but one of the reasons they happened was also to provide an illustration. God would make use of them.

He would harness these events, and he would provide, he would superintend a picture of the two covenants, and this is what Paul briefly explains. He who was, verse 23, was of the bond woman, was born after the flesh, according to nature and works, but he of the free woman was by promise, like the promise of a saviour. Which things are an allegory? Here is the hidden meaning.

They represent two covenants, the covenant of works, which fell in the garden of Eden. Here it is pictured, in Hagar's child, Ishmael. And of course, it's re-announced on Mount Sinai.

And it gendereth to bondage, which means it gives birth to bondage. That's what it did for the Jews. They get the commandments, the moral law, and the ceremonial law, and immediately they say, we can do this, which they can't, and so they put themselves under the condemnation of that law, under the bondage of that law, to try to keep all the commandments and the ritual in order to be blessed of God and go to heaven.

Verse 25, this Hagar, it refers to the maid servant of Sarah. This Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, where the law was given. And answereth to Jerusalem.

The Greek word means, marches alongside. Answereth is therefore a good translation, which means these things line up with each other, they correspond with each other. And lines up with Jerusalem, which now is.

Look at Jerusalem, says Paul, which now is, at his time and even to this day, in a measure. There they were, all the ritual in the temple, everybody thinking that by keeping the ceremonial law, they'll go to heaven. And they're in slavery to it.

They won't go to heaven. They're under condemnation. They're in bondage to it.

So you see a line traced in these verses. There it is, governance of works, Garden of Eden, pictured in the works effort of Abraham and Sarah to get a child, Ishmael. Pictured ever so many times in the Old Testament.

Reannounced on Mount Sinai. Covenant of works, done away with finally, when Christ came. But it's still here today.

People think they can earn their way to heaven. They put themselves under a covenant of works. But then verse 26, but Jerusalem which is above the true kingdom of God, which will one day come down from heaven, when earth and heaven are combined at the coming of Christ, for the glorious hereafter.

But Jerusalem which is above the people of God of all ages, is free, which is the mother of us all. And because time is virtually up, I just wanted to tell you one or two things about, in closing, about this illustration, this allegory. You may say, this is rather complicated.

I understand about the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. I understand that there are these two contracts available. The covenant of works which fell at the very dawn of human history.

I don't want to be under that. It will fail. The covenant of grace.

Ah, you may say I see these things. The covenant of works is between God and man, but man can't keep it. He never could.

The covenant of grace, here's the glorious difference. It isn't between God and man. It isn't between God and us.

Here's the wonder and the genius of it. It's between God the Father and God the Son. And God the Father says to God the Son, this is how we like to portray it.

If you will go down into the world and you will suffer and die for a vast, vast number of sinners, and pay the penalty and the price of sin for them, and offer up your perfect righteousness on their behalf as their representative. If you will do that for your parts, then I the Father will give you those people for your everlasting possession, and to populate heaven for you, and the Holy Spirit for his part will in due time work in their hearts and bring them to salvation, and bring them to know you and love you. The covenant of grace is between the Father and the Son.

The covenant between God and us is doomed to failure because of our weakness and sinfulness. The covenant between God the Father and God the Son cannot fail, because God the Son will successfully atone for us, and successfully offer up his righteousness. If my salvation is based on some idea that God will deal with me if I can live a perfect life for him, doomed.

If my salvation is based on this concept, God has given all believers to Christ and he will represent them. It is successful trusting in Christ under his blood, under his wing, I shall be saved, I shall be secure, I shall be everlastingly safe because he cannot fail. He is God.

What a difference. Now how is this reflected in the history of Ishmael and Isaac? Well very simply in this way. Paul is saying, you see this picture shows you something.

Here are the Judaizing brethren, they want you to become as if you are Jews. Look at Abraham's children, not all of them were saved. Ishmael the first born, what happened to him? He was cast out.

He was offensive within the family, and so was his mother. He was circumcised at the age of thirteen, he was a child of Abraham. He represents the covenants of works.

It fails, it is cast out. Isaac is the child of promise, a gift from God. Salvation is a gift.

You see there is a comparison there. And then here is another one. Ishmael scorned Isaac.

Isaac was weaned three years of age. It is quite an occasion. There is a feast to commemorate it.

His seventeen year old older brother Ishmael scorns and derides him. No doubt Sarah did too, she has a history of that. Not Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael's mother.

And so they were to be cast out. So it is today. Why says Paul? That is exactly what is happening here.

These Judaizing people are scorning you Gentile Christians. He makes use of this. Down here in verse 29.

But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture cast out the bond woman and her son for the son of the bond

woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. What an illustration.

What an allegory says Paul. The two can never live together. And here are these Judaizing people who want to be under law.

They are proud. They think they can keep it. You can't share with them if you believe in grace and in Christ alone as the way of salvation.

These are the aspects of comparison to which Paul calls attention. So I must close then with verse 31. So then brethren we are not children of the bond woman but of the free.

These are glorious things. Our salvation depends not upon our works though we want to honor the law of God and obey our consciences and the promptings of the spirit and live lives by the help of the Lord to please him. But our salvation does not depend upon us.

The contract isn't with me. It's not between God and me. It's between the Father and the Son and Christ has purchased salvation for me and I tuck in under his wing, under his blood and because I am in him I am in the glorious covenant of grace.

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