

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?

A journey through the Epistle to the Galatians based on the teaching of Roger Forster.

The letter is not a polite theological treatise; it is an explosion of indignation. Paul is fighting for the soul of the church. The Galatians have been 'bewitched' (deluded by a spiritual glamour) into trading their new freedom for an old slavery.

Context Note: The term 'bewitched' suggests more than a mistake; it implies a spiritual seduction or a 'sideswipe' at supernatural powers deceiving the church.



The Crisis of the Early Church

The backdrop is the tension preceding the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). The early church faced a massive controversy: Can Gentiles enter the people of God simply by faith, or must they become Jews first?



THE LAW



The Conflict: The “Judaizers” (the party of circumcision) argued that faith in Christ was insufficient without the Law of Moses. They were imposing Jewish regulations on Gentile

Roger Forster Insight: The Council eventually decided that Gentiles did not need the Law, merely pragmatics for “table fellowship”. But Galatians addresses the moment when this freedom was under direct attack.



The Source of the Gospel

Paul's authority comes by revelation, not tradition.

Paul's first defense is that his gospel is not "man-made." He did not receive it from the other apostles in Jerusalem; he received it through a direct revelation of Jesus Christ.



RELIGION:

Learned by rote.
Taught by men.
Received through tradition.

GOSPEL:

Received by the
"apocalypse" (unveiling) of
Jesus Christ.

God was pleased to "reveal His Son *in me*." It wasn't just an external vision; it was an internal reality.

Confrontation at Antioch

When Peter withdrew from eating with Gentiles because he feared the “party of the circumcision,” Paul opposed him to his face.



THE CHARGE

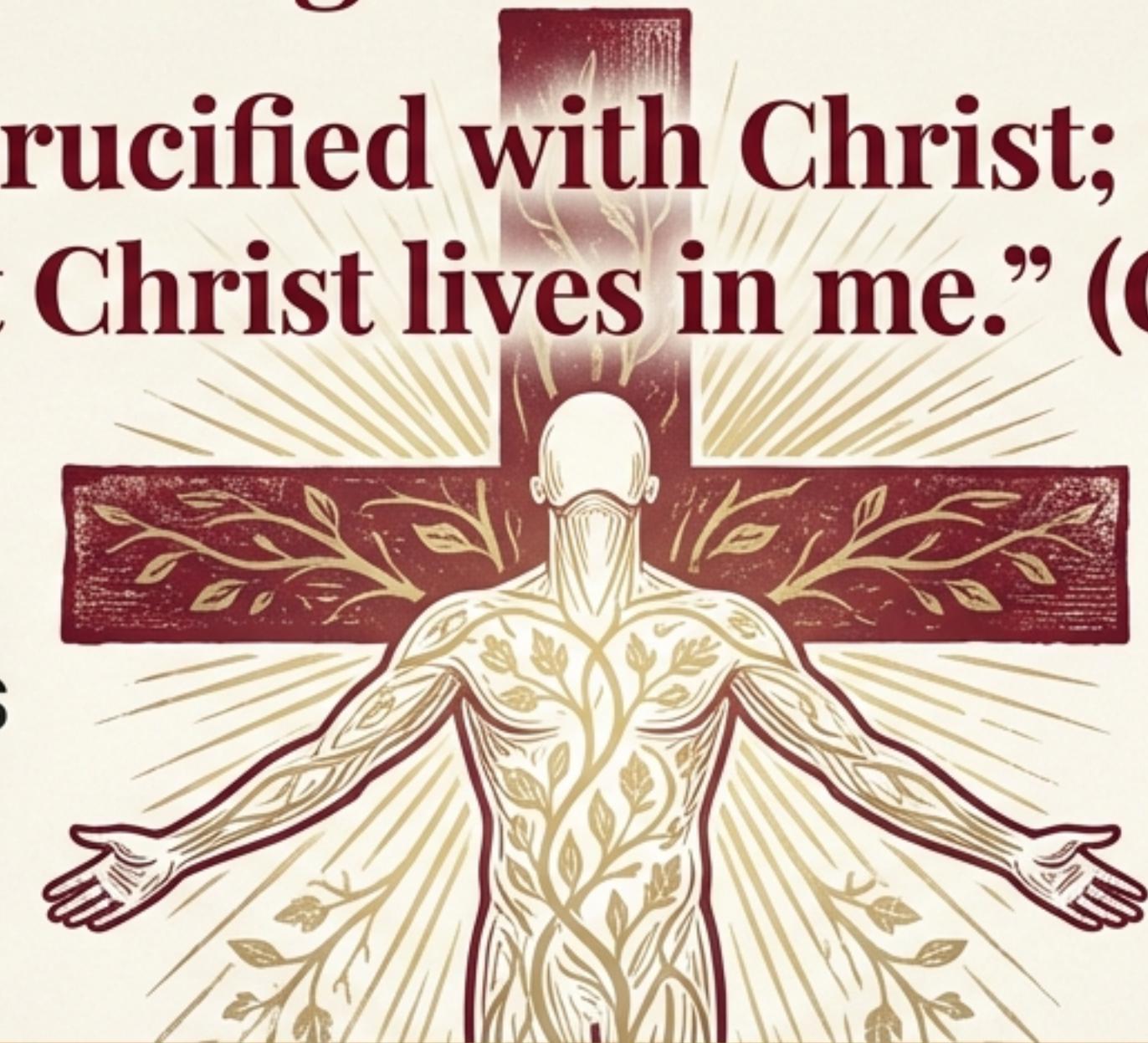
Hypocrisy. Peter knew the truth but acted out of fear. By withdrawing, he was “rebuilding the wall” of the Law that Christ had destroyed.

THE CONSEQUENCE: If righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died “needlessly” (in vain). You cannot mix the two systems without nullifying the grace of God.

The Great Exchange

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20)

We do not live by our own attempts to keep the Law.



We live by the **Faithfulness OF the Son of God.**

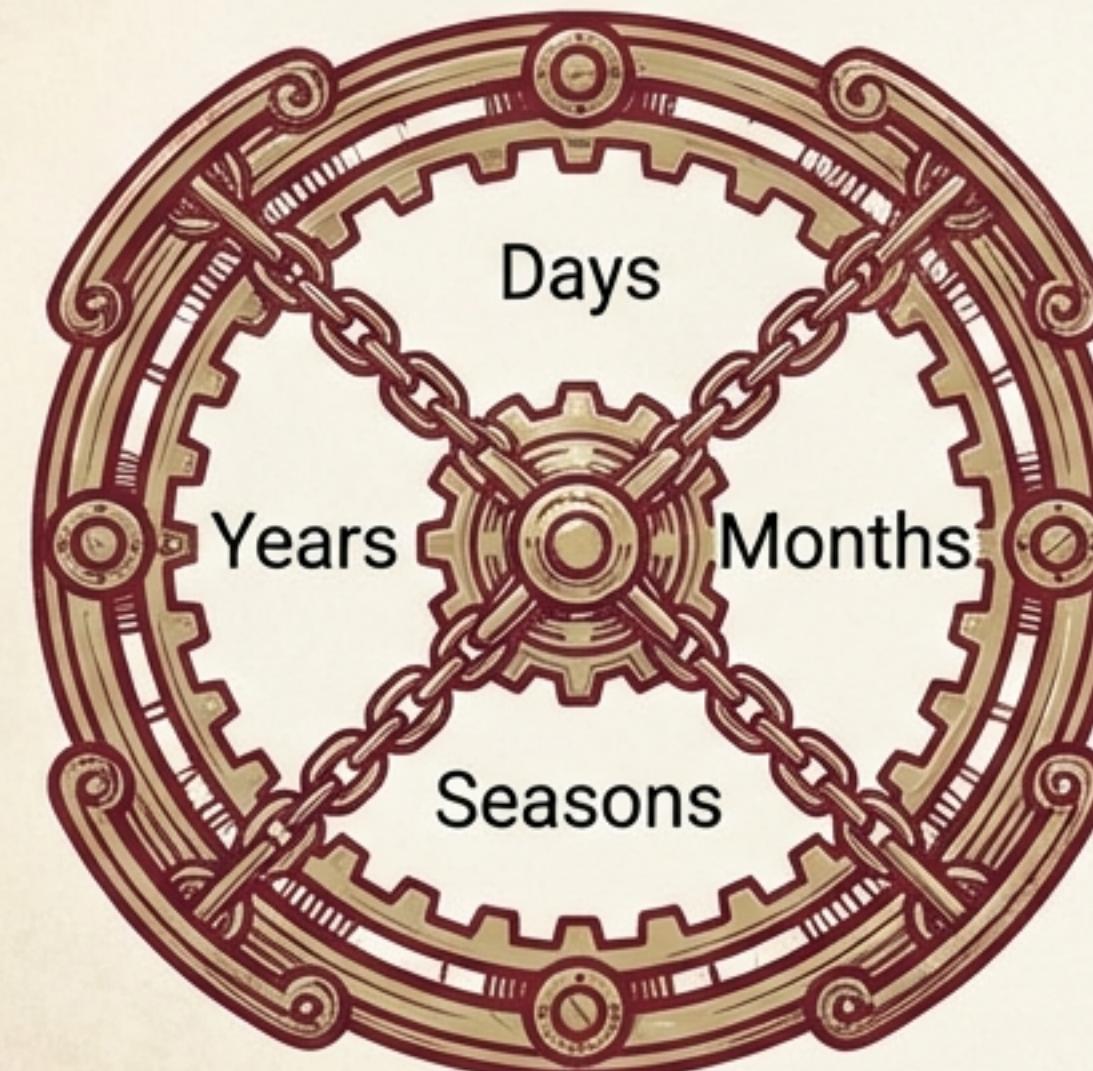
Forster's Nuance Box

Translation Insight: It is not primarily our faith *in* Him (our effort to believe), but His faithfulness to us (His work on the cross) that saves. The Law demands we do; the Gospel declares it is done.

Did you receive the Spirit by works or by hearing?

Paul asks a diagnostic question: “Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?”

The Treadmill of Law



The “Drift” back to **“weak and worthless elemental things”** (*stoicheia*). These encompass both Jewish legalism and pagan superstition. Both are systems of **slavery relying on human effort**.



The Spirit

The Tutor and the Heir

The Law was a Paidagogos—not a kindly teacher, but a strict slave-guardian who disciplined the child and led them to school. The Law kept God's people in custody until faith was revealed.



The Shift

Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. We move from being minors under guard to being **Sons and Heirs**.



Two Covenants: The Allegory



HAGAR (The Slave Woman).
Mount Sinai. Earthly Jerusalem.
Produces children for slavery (Flesh).

SARAH (The Free Woman).
The Promise. Heavenly Jerusalem.
Produces children for freedom (Spirit).

The Command: "Cast out the bondwoman." You cannot mix Law and Grace. You cannot have "Christ plus Circumcision."

Standing Firm in Freedom Falling from Grace

This does not mean falling into moral sin; it means falling out of the sphere of grace and back into the sphere of law. It is seeking to be justified by merit rather than by the Spirit.



The Binary Choice

You cannot be in both camps. If you accept Circumcision (Law) as necessary, Christ is of no benefit to you. You are either in the water of Grace, or on the dry land of Law.

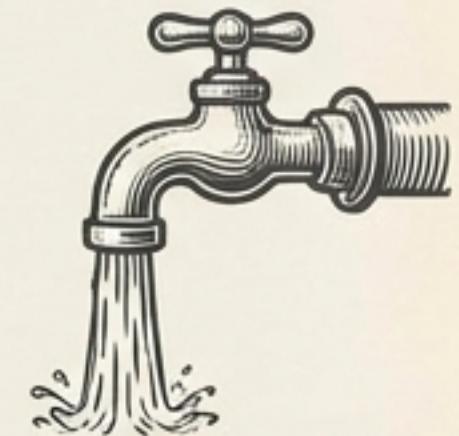
The Internal War



The battlefield is not external rules, but internal desires. The Flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.

We do not “patch up the flesh” or try to improve it.
We crucify the flesh and walk by the Spirit.

The “Tap” Analogy



The “Tap” Analogy:
Living by the Spirit is like being connected to the water mains. The resource is always there (the source), but we must “turn the tap” (walk in step) to release the flow.

Works of Flesh vs. Fruit of Spirit

Strife & Factions

Jealousy

Biting and devouring
one another

Legalism breeds competition
and destruction.

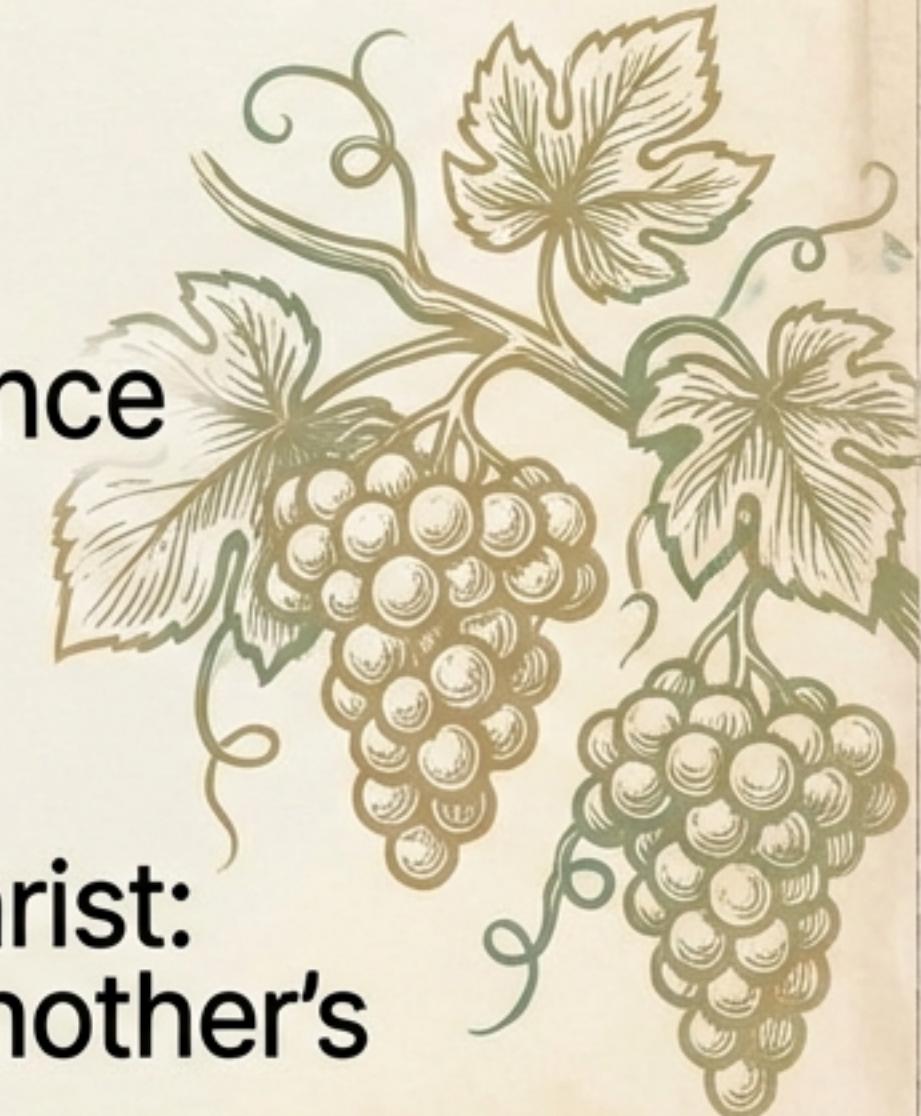
Love & Joy

Peace & Patience

Kindness

The Law of Christ:
Bearing one another's
burdens.

While we abandon the Law of Moses,
we fulfill the Law of Christ through love.

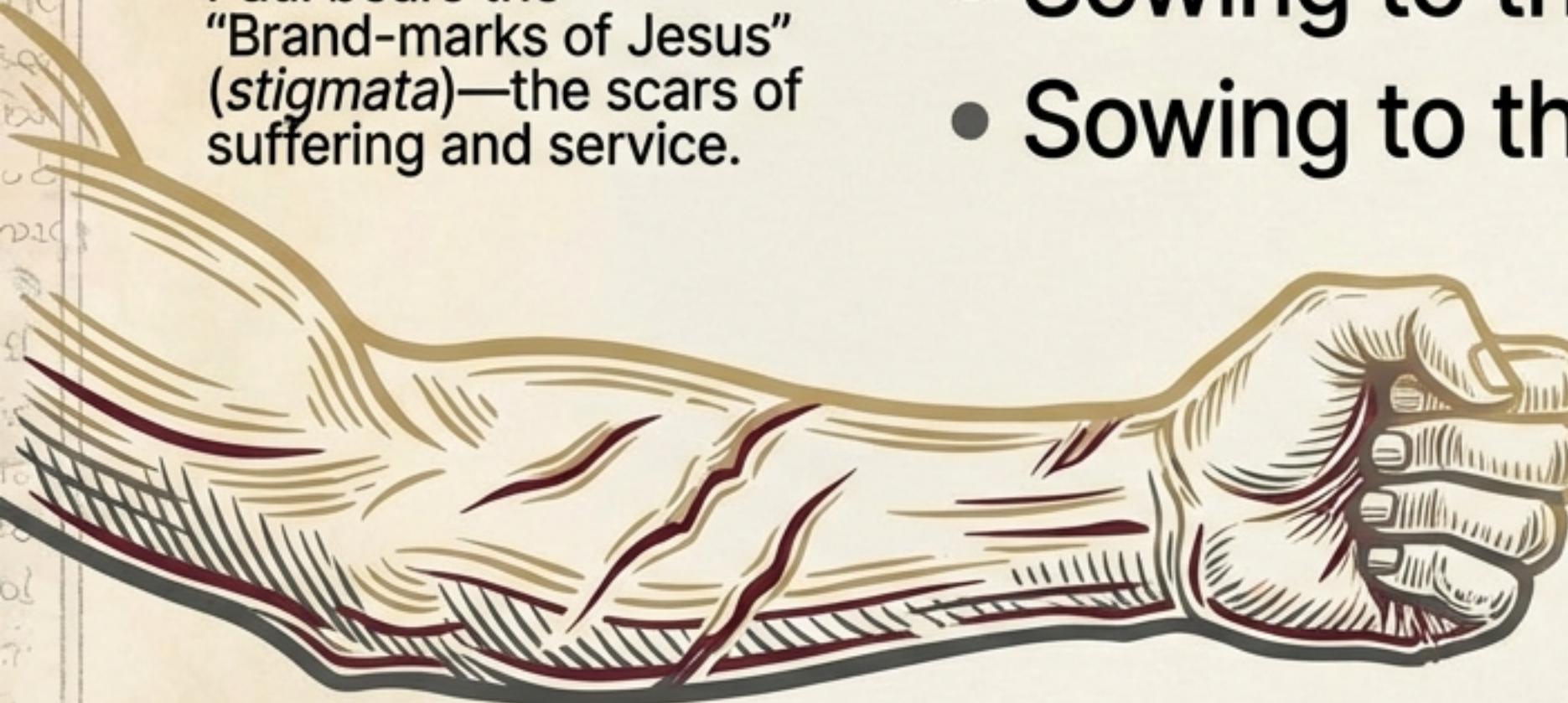


Sowing and Reaping

The Judaizers want to make a good showing in the flesh (circumcision). Paul bears the “Brand-marks of Jesus” (*stigmata*)—the scars of suffering and service.

God is not mocked. We reap what we sow.

- **Sowing to the Flesh → Reaps corruption.**
- **Sowing to the Spirit → Reaps eternal life.**



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Do not grow weary in doing good.

The Israel of God

Chapters 1-2: Law vs. Jesus (The Source)

Chapters 3-4: Law vs. Faith (The Status)

Chapters 5-6: Law vs. Spirit (The Life)

“For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”



The only thing that counts is faith working through love.