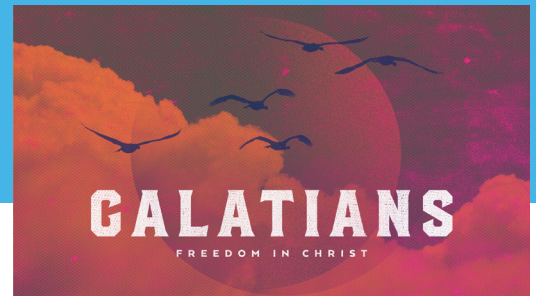


Discussion Questions

August 16, 2026



Galatians 5:19-24 - The Family Resemblance

Paul's two lists are not two ladders, one bad and one good, that determine whether we belong to God. They are two family resemblances, two households. Those who belong to Christ already belong to His family. The flesh has been crucified, so it may still have a voice, but it no longer has the throne. And the flesh does not only show up in obviously sinful behavior. It can wear religious clothing, producing comparison, rivalry, factions, and the need to prove ourselves right. More than half the works Paul names describe what people do to one another, and the list is framed on both sides by warnings about a church biting, devouring, provoking, and envying itself. The warning in verse 21 is not about a bad week but about a life that has made the old house its permanent address. In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is not nine virtues we manufacture but the life of Jesus being formed in us. We participate, we obey, we keep in step, and the Spirit produces the life.

1. The sermon opened with a father who could not find the napkins in the closet and suddenly had a lot more compassion for the son who could not find things either. What is a trait or habit you have found in yourself that clearly came from your family, even though nobody intentionally taught it to you?
2. Read Galatians 5:15 and 5:19-26. Eight of the fifteen works Paul names are relational, and the list is surrounded by warnings about how these Christians are treating one another. What does that framing reveal about how seriously Paul takes relational sin, including the kinds we have learned to excuse, rename, or simply stop noticing?
3. Read Galatians 3:2-3 and 5:19. Paul has spent the letter rejecting the works of the law, and now he speaks of the works of the flesh. Both can run on the same engine: I will prove myself, I will secure my place, I will make sure everybody knows I am right. How can the need to be right become fleshly even when the conviction itself may be right?

How difficult is it for you to befriend those who disagree with you about something you care deeply about?

4. Read Galatians 5:24. Paul identifies these people not by their performance but by possession, those who belong to Christ, and says the flesh has already been crucified. It can still speak, but it cannot climb down and take charge. How would remembering "I belong to Christ" change the way you answer that old voice this week?
5. Read Galatians 5:21 and Galatians 4:30. Paul uses the same inheritance language one chapter apart, and verse 21 describes those who live this way. He is not describing one failure. He is naming which household cannot inherit. What is the difference between struggling with sin and making peace with it?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. How does "that is what some of you were" shape the way you hear Paul's warning?

6. Read Galatians 4:19 and then 5:22-23. Paul is not in labor until they master nine virtues. He is in labor until Christ is formed in them. If that is the goal, what does the fruit of the Spirit actually describe?

Envy grieves another person's good, while Spirit-produced joy can rejoice in it. What happens inside you when someone receives the thing you wanted?

7. Read Galatians 5:25. Paul's next sentence is not "try harder to be loving and patient."

Outward: name specific fruit you see the Spirit growing in someone in this room. Not simply "you're a good person," but something concrete like, "I have watched you keep loving through a painful season."

Inward: silently ask, "Holy Spirit, what are You trying to bring into the light in me?" Name the actual thing rather than something vague. If someone else has been paying for it, what would a first step toward repair look like?

Closing Prayer

Thank God that we do not grow fruit in order to get into His family. In Christ, we already belong. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where the old household is still showing up, to give you courage to bring it into the light without despairing, and to keep forming the life of Jesus in you as you keep in step with Him.

Galatians 5:19-24 (NIV)

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

Galatians 5:13 (NIV)

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

You do not grow the fruit to get into the family.

If you belong to Christ you are already in and the Spirit is growing the family resemblance in you.

Galatians 3:29

If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 5:24

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:19-21 (NIV)

The acts [Works] of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies [carousing], and the like.

SEXUAL - 3

Sexual immorality · Impurity · Debauchery

WORSHIP - 2

Idolatry · Witchcraft

DRUNKEN EXCESS - 2

Drunkenness · Carousing

RELATIONAL - 8

Hatred · Discord · Jealousy · Fits of rage · Selfish · ambition · Dissensions · Factions · Envy

Galatians 5:15 (NIV)

If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Galatians 5:26

Conceited, provoking, envying.

Galatians 5:19

Acts/Works of the flesh - works of the law.

Galatians 3:3 (NIV)

After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?

The religious project and the obviously sinful project, run on the same engine.

Legalism does not just fail to cure the works of the flesh, it feeds it.

zelos = Jealous / Zeal

The flesh is very good at wearing religious clothing...

Calling our irritation or bitterness "righteous anger"

Calling doomscrolling, "staying informed"

calling defensiveness "standing up for truth"

Galatians 4:8 (NIV)

Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.

haireseis = factions (vs 20) = Camp

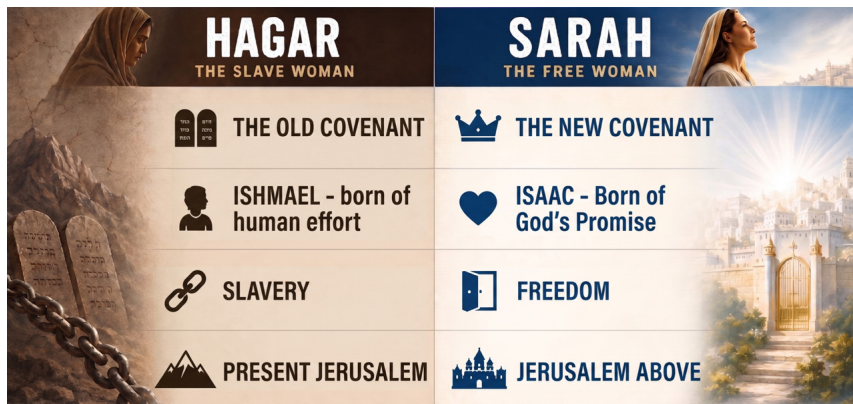
If your list of hills has grown so long that no faithful Christian can disagree with you and still belong to Jesus, that is NOT conviction anymore.

Paul calls it faction.

Jesus is bigger than our camp or faction and the Kingdom Table does not belong to our party. It belongs to Christ.

Galatians 5:21 (NIV)

I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.



Galatians 4:30

The slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son.

Galatians 5:21

Those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Do NOT mistake a life ruled by the flesh for life in the kingdom of God.

What happens when the Spirit brings something into the light through His Word, through another believer, or through the damage it is doing.

1 Corinthians 6:11 (NIV)

And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 4:19 (NIV)

My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.

1 Corinthians 9:19 (NIV)

Though I am free from all, I have made myself a slave to all.

Galatians 5:25 (NIV)

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

This is Christ being formed in you

(Vs 22) Patience = makrothymia

(Vs 20) Fits of Rage = thymoi

(Vs 22) Patience = makrothymia = Long Tempered

(Vs 20) Fits of Rage = thymoi = erupts fast

One thing outward, one thing inward

Outward: Name one work of the Spirit in somebody else, and tell them.

Inward: Ask, "Holy Spirit, what are You trying to bring into the light in me?"

Galatians 5:25 (NIV)

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.