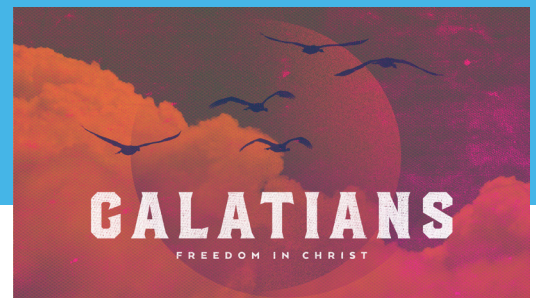


Discussion Questions

June 7, 2026



Galatians 4:19 - Until Christ is Formed in You

Galatians 4:19 contains a phrase Paul uses nowhere else in his letters. He doesn't say that we are being formed; he says that Christ is being formed in us. The Greek word *morphoō* carries the image of a child taking shape in the womb: slowly, hiddenly, often imperceptibly. Where the false teachers in Galatia were demanding external marks like circumcision, Paul points to an inside-out transformation. He flips the grammar. Christ is the subject, and we are the place where the forming happens. This isn't "Gospel Plus." Galatians 2:20 says Christ already lives in us, so what is being formed isn't someone new. It's the Christ already there, taking up more room. The Holy Spirit is the agent. Our part isn't to manufacture change by willpower, and it isn't to give up because we can't see anything happening. It's to stay joined to Jesus through the practices and people God uses, trusting Romans 8's guarantee that the One who started this work will finish it. Paul's you is plural. This happens in community, together, so a watching world meets something it can't explain. The sermon closed at the Communion table, a meal for people in the in-between, who hold out empty hands and receive.

1. Share about an area of growth that you did not notice at the time, but only over time did you begin to recognize that deep change had occurred.
2. Read Galatians 4:19–20. Paul intentionally uses the word formed, picturing a child taking shape in the womb, rather than conformed or reformed. And he makes Christ the subject of the verb, not us. What does that specific imagery and grammar tell us about how spiritual growth actually happens?
3. Read Galatians 2:20 alongside Romans 8:29–30. The sermon called Romans 8 the guaranteed destination and Galatians 4:19 the means, the how.

If Christ already lives in you (2:20), what does it mean that He is being formed, getting bigger, taking up more room, rather than something new being added?

How does the certainty of Romans 8 change how you carry your own slow, sometimes frustrating progress?

4. Before the Spirit changes our behavior, He first settles our status, crying "Abba, Father" in our chest. Why does it matter so much that being God's child comes first, before any growth happens?
5. What's the practical difference between imitating Jesus by willpower, versus Christ being formed in you by the Spirit?
6. Willard's test. When life bumps or offends you and you don't have time to think, what comes out automatically? That's what's actually been formed inside. Where have you been confronted by this reality?
7. Paul's you in 4:19 is plural. Christ is being formed in all of you, together. Read Galatians 5:22–25. That fruit grows visibly in relationship. Why is it impossible for Christ to be fully formed in us if we isolate from the messy, difficult realities of community?

Galatians 4:19-20 (NIV)

My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you."

**Galatians 4:19 (NIV)**

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

Romans 8:29 (NIV)

..conformed to the image of His Son.

Romans 8:29-30 (NIV)

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters...And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

John Calvin

That Christ should be formed in us is the same thing with our being formed in Christ; for we are born so as to become new creatures in him; and he, on the other hand, is born in us, so that we live his life.

Dallas Willard - Renovation of the Heart

Spiritual formation as the Spirit driven process of forming the inner world of a person until it becomes like the inner being of CHRIST.

Information does not equal formation.**Spiritual Formation is not the new circumcision...**

You are not the sculptor. You are the womb

Nothing is added

Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

...I no longer live, but Christ lives in me..." -

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

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

Galatians 5:25 (NIV)

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

Philippians 2:12 (NIV)

..work out your salvation with fear and trembling..

Philippians 2:13 (NIV)

..for it is God who works in you.

Dallas Willard

Grace is not opposed to effort. It is opposed to earning.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer - The Cost of Discipleship

We cannot transform ourselves into [Christ's] image; it is rather the form of Christ which seeks to be formed in us.

Vampire Christianity.

Jesus, I'd like a little of your blood, please. But I don't care to be your student or have your character

There is no microwave discipleship.

Potential dangers of Christ being Formed in us.

Discouragement

Manufacturing Change

The disciplines are not where you form Christ in yourself. They are where you show up to meet the Spirit who is doing the forming.

Augustine

You will not change me into you; you will be changed into me.