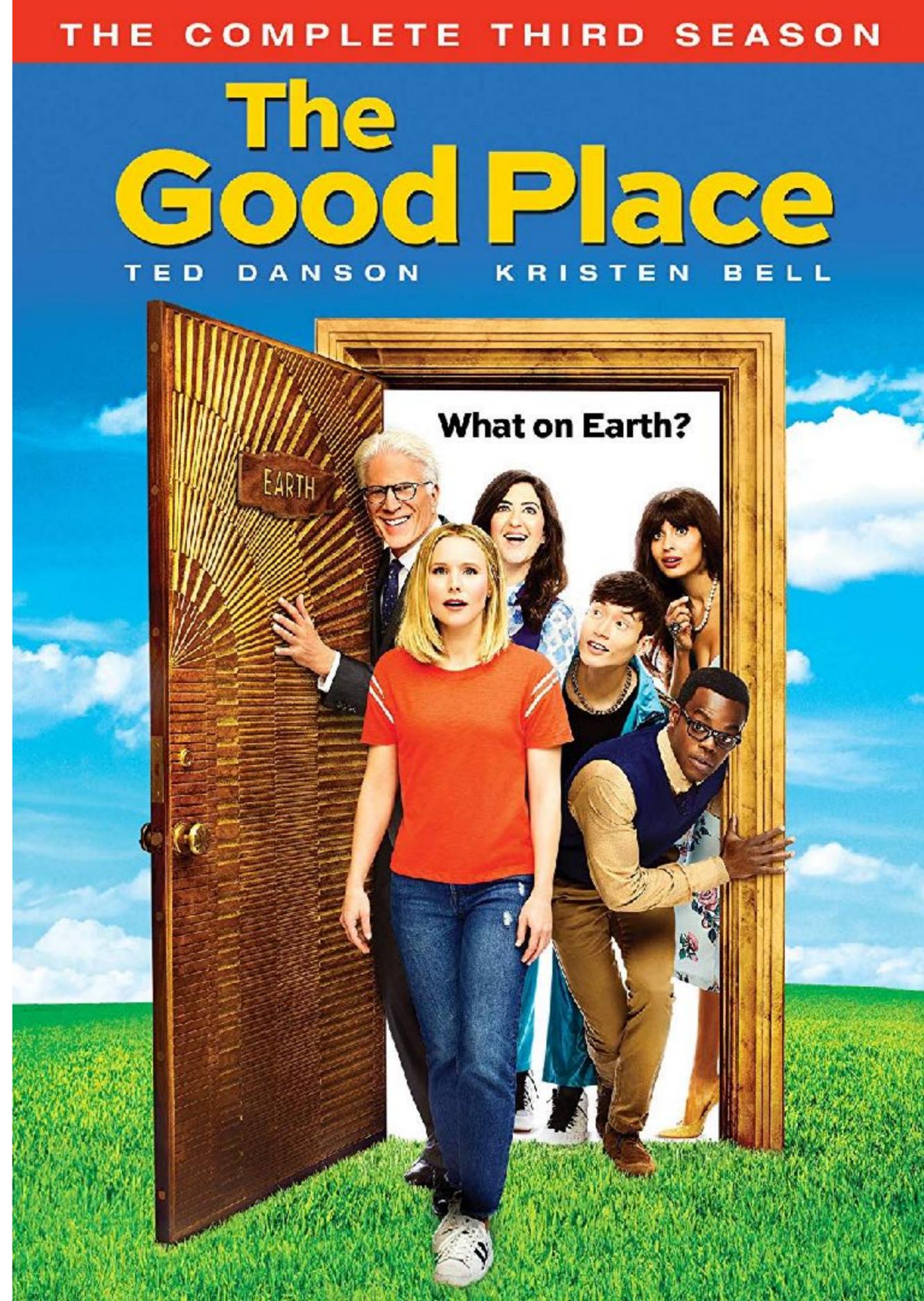


THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

- A good person?
- Someone who believes in God?
- Someone who reads the Bible?
- Someone who goes to church?
- Someone who talks about Jesus?



Galatians is all about the gospel—the gospel all of us need throughout all of our lives. It's dynamite, and I pray that its powerful message explodes in your heart as you read this book.”

Tim Keller

The gospel is not
only the way to
enter the kingdom;
it is the way to live
in the kingdom.

**THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS IS MY
OWN LETTER. I HAVE BETROTHED
MYSELF TO IT. IT IS MY WIFE.**

Martin Luther

Asterix

THE GAUL

*Gaul was divided
into three parts*

No, four parts
for one small
village of
indomitable
Gauls still held
out against the
Roman invaders...



by
GOSCINNY
and
UDERZO

Some Gauls migrated all the way to Asia Minor (278 BC) to become mercenaries. Gave name to the Roman province Galatia. Known as strong warriors, and as "savages" because of their looks.



Thessalonica
Amphipolis
Berea
Apollonia
Thasos
Samotheace

Lemnos
Assos
Lesbos
Mitylene
Euboea
Chios

ACHAIA
Corinth
Cenchreae
Athens
Sparta

Patmos
Samos
Miletus
Cos
Santorini
Crete

MARMARA SEA
Troas
Assos

ASIA
Pergamum
Thyatira
Sardis
Smyrna
Philadelphia

CARIA
Ephesus
Hierapolis
Laodicea
Colossae

LYCIA
Attalia
Parga
Patara

GALATIA
Ankara (Ancyra)

Iconium
Lystra
Derbe

PANPHYLIA
Antioch in Pisidia

CYPRUS
Paphos
Salamis

CAPPADOCIA
Caesarea

COMMAGENE

CILICIA
Tarsus

Seleucia Pieria
Antioch

SYRIA
Aleppo

PHOENICIA
Sidon
Tyre

ABILENE
Damascus

JUDEA
Jerusalem
Ptolemais (Acco)
Caesarea Maritima

NABATEA



0 100 200 Miles
0 100 200 Kilometers

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

- City
- One of the "Seven Churches" - Rev. 2-3
- ← Paul's Route →

JUDAIZERS PREACH:

JESUS + THE LAW OF MOSES

GENTILE CHRISTIANS HAVE TO BE CIRCUMCISED AND KEEP THE LAW OF MOSES IN ORDER TO BELONG TO GOD'S PEOPLE.

STRUCTURE OF THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

1:1-5		Letter intro
1:6-9	Opening	There is only one gospel, which both he and the other apostles preach. The "gospel" of the Judaizers is not the gospel of Christ.
1:10 - 2:14	Case presentation	
2:15-21	Proposition/thesis	What is the role of the law of Moses for a Christian?
3:1 - 6:10	Argumentation	Even Abraham, who lived long before the law of Moses, was saved by faith and not by works. The law was only in effect until Jesus came. Christ has set us free to a life in the Spirit.
6:11-17	Ending	
6:18		Letter outro

OPENING (1:6-9)

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel..

7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!

9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!



- ➔ Turning away from **God** and his **grace**
- ➔ Any changing of the gospel → not the gospel at all
- ➔ **No one**, not even Paul himself, can present a new gospel
- ➔ Main theme: "What is the true gospel?"

PROPOSITION/THESIS (2:15-21)

"We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles ¹⁶ know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified." (Gal. 2:15-16 NIV)

- ▶ Several key words introduced: *Justify, law, works, faith, righteousness...*
- ▶ Case: What is the role of the law of Moses for a Christian?
- ▶ Specifically: Should the Galatians be circumcised?

JUSTIFICATION:

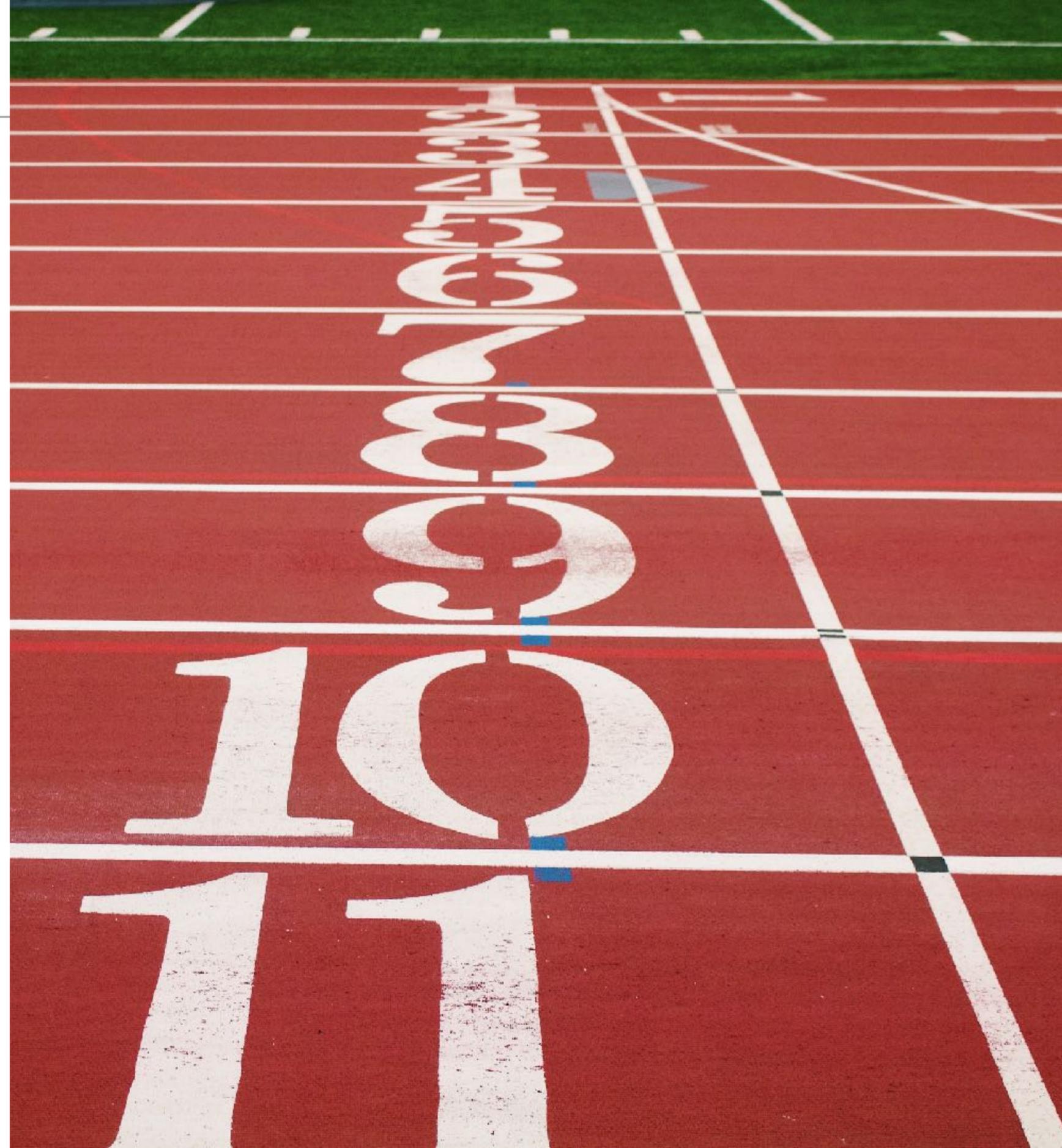
A JUDICIAL EXPRESSION, A PUBLIC PROCLAMATION BY A JUDGE THAT A PERSON IS DECLARED INNOCENT, NOT GUILTY.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS 3-4

3:1-5	Argument from experience	God gave them the Spirit and does miracles because they believe in Jesus (= "in the Spirit"), not because they follow the law (= "in the flesh").
3:6-14	Argument from the Old Testament	Even Abraham was declared righteous by faith, long before the law was given.
3:15-29	Example 1: A covenant/will	The covenant with Abraham can't be changed. God has not changed his way of saving people. It was never through the law, always by faith.
4:1-20	Example 2: Adoption	They used to be slaves under the law and under false gods, now they are God's children.
4:21-31	A metaphorical point from the Old Testament	"Summing up": Kick the Judaizers out of the church!

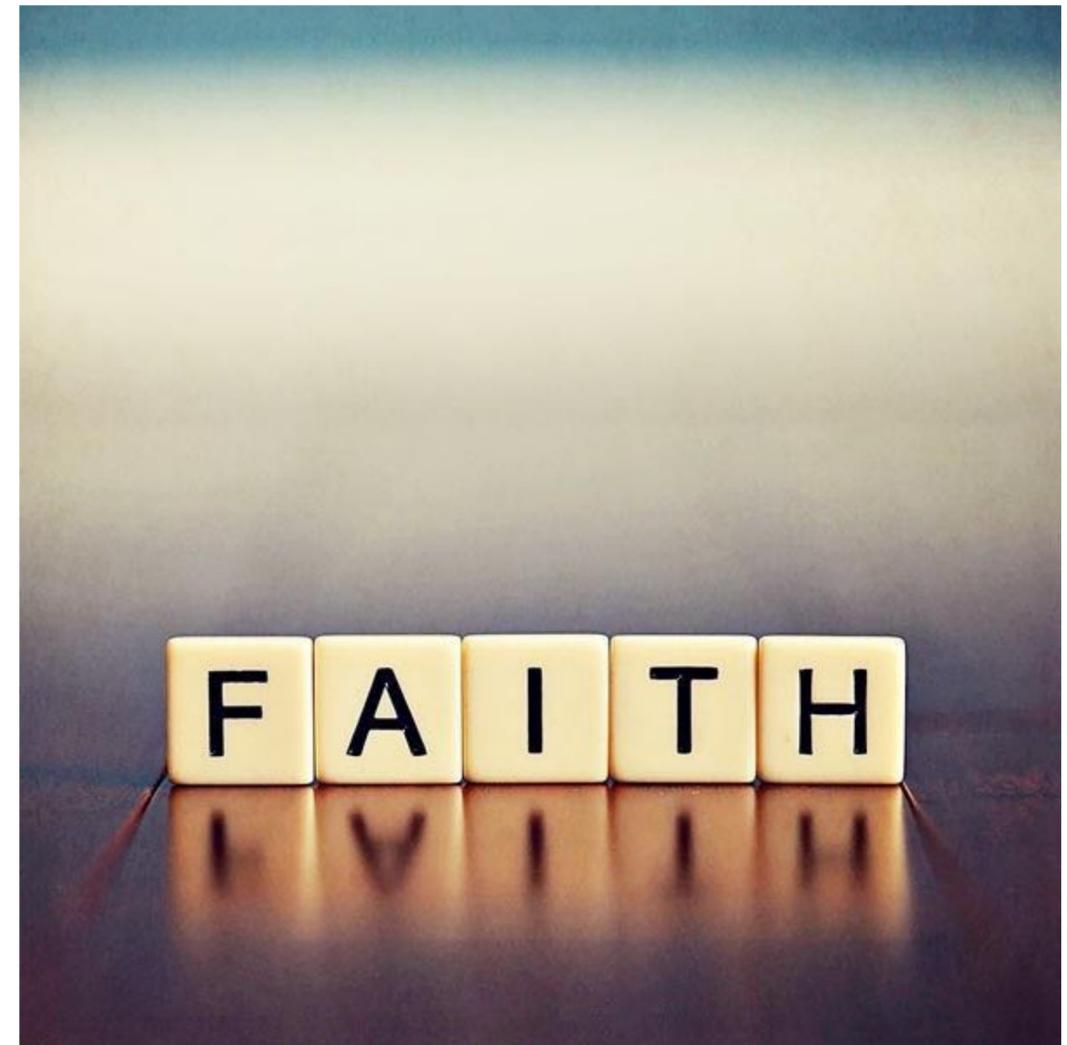
3:1-5

“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ² I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? ³ Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? ⁴ Have you experienced so much in vain-- if it really was in vain? ⁵ So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?”



3:6-7

“So also Abraham “*believed* God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” ⁷ Understand, then, that those who *have faith* are children of Abraham.”



3:6-7 → GENESIS 15:6

- ▶ *"He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars-- if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶ Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness." (Gen. 15:5-6 NIV)*
- ▶ Abraham believed and trusted God even though it looked hopeless, and he received promises and righteousness **before** and **without** circumcision.
- ▶ Believing that God exists doesn't save you. You have to have **faith in** God = trust that his promise saves you.
- ▶ "he credited it to him" = an accounting term: "to credit to someone's account"
- ▶ Everyone who is justified by faith is Abraham's children → 😲!!!

3:8-9

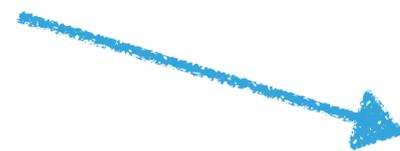
“Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles *by faith*, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”⁹ So those who rely *on faith* are blessed along with Abraham, the man *of faith*.”



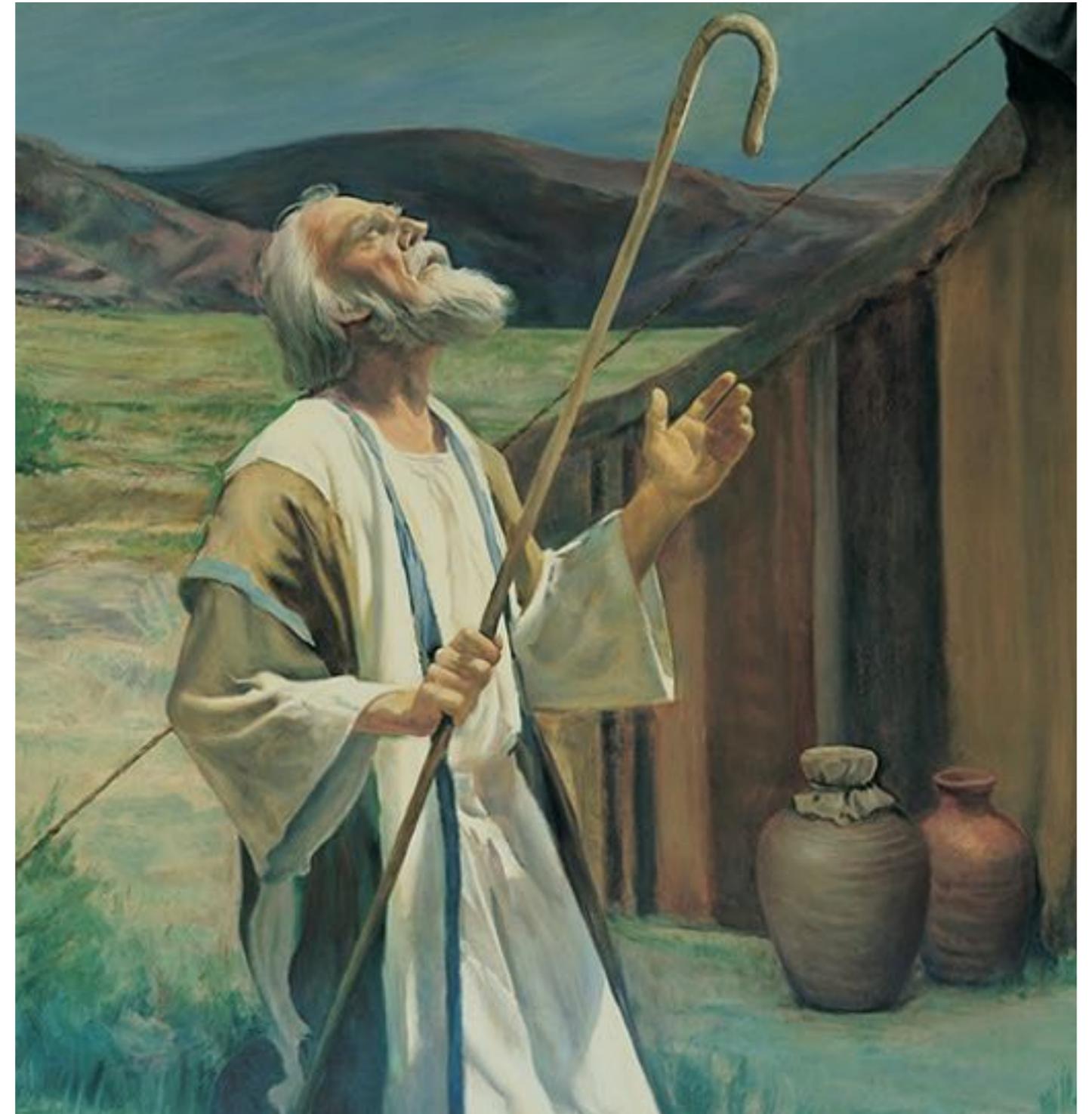
3:8-9 → GENESIS 12:3

*"The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and **all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.**""*

(Gen 12:1-3)

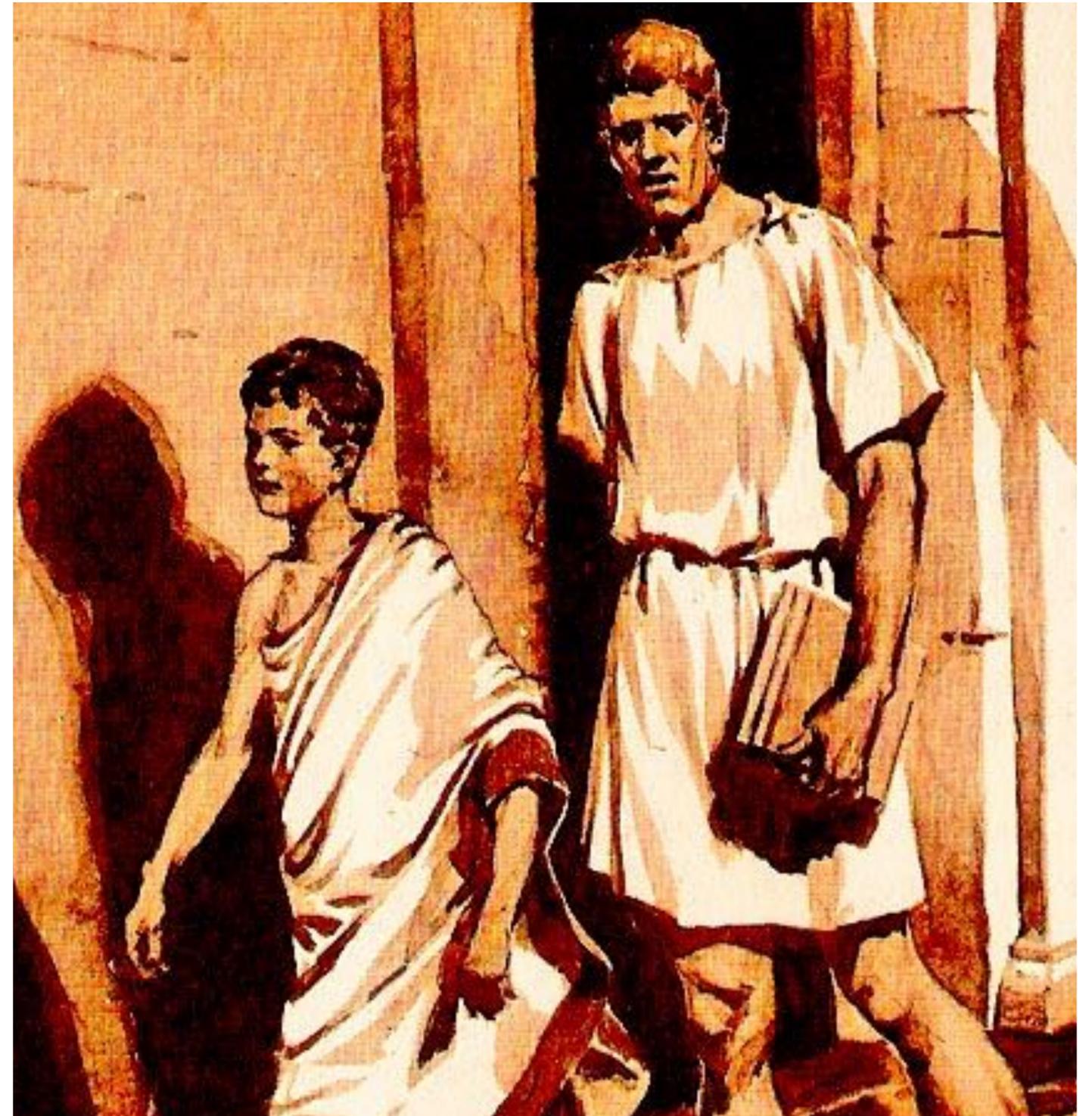


salvation by
faith to all who
believe in Jesus



3:19-26

“Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions *until the Seed* to whom the promise referred had come... 23 *Before the coming of this faith*, we were held in custody under the law, locked up *until the faith* that was to come would be revealed. 24 So the law was our guardian *until Christ came* that we might be justified by faith. 25 *Now that this faith has come*, we are no longer under a guardian. 26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith...”

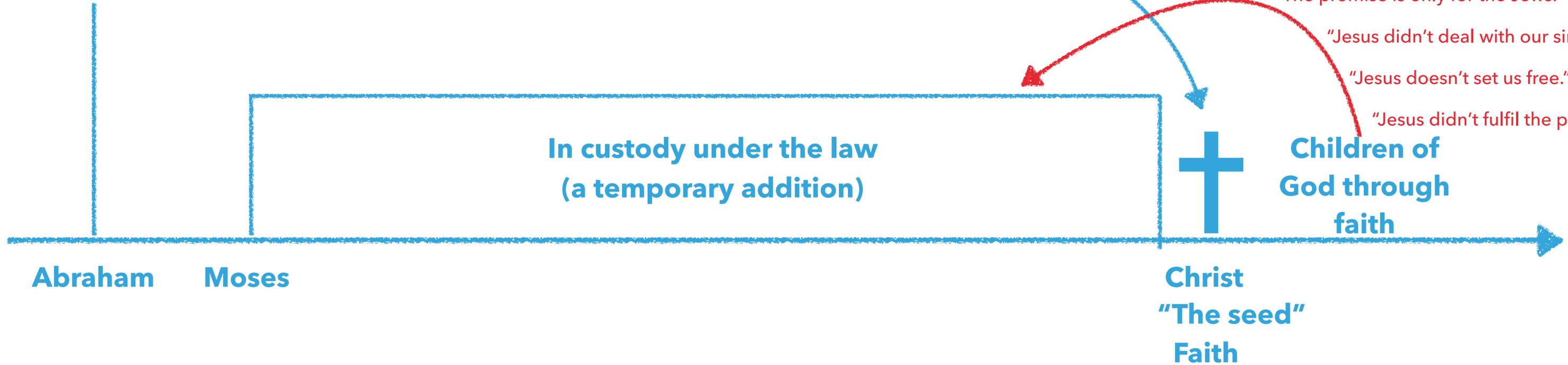


EXAMPLE 1: A COVENANT/WILL (3:15-29)

3:19-26

Salvation has always been by faith like with Abraham, never by the law..

The promise:
Justification
by faith
Gen 12:3, 15:6)



KEY VERSE AND CLIMAX (5:1-4)

*"It is for **freedom** that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ² Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, **Christ will be of no value to you at all.** ³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by the law have been **alienated from Christ**; you have **fallen away from grace.**"*

"If you let yourself be circumcised, you have to keep the whole law."

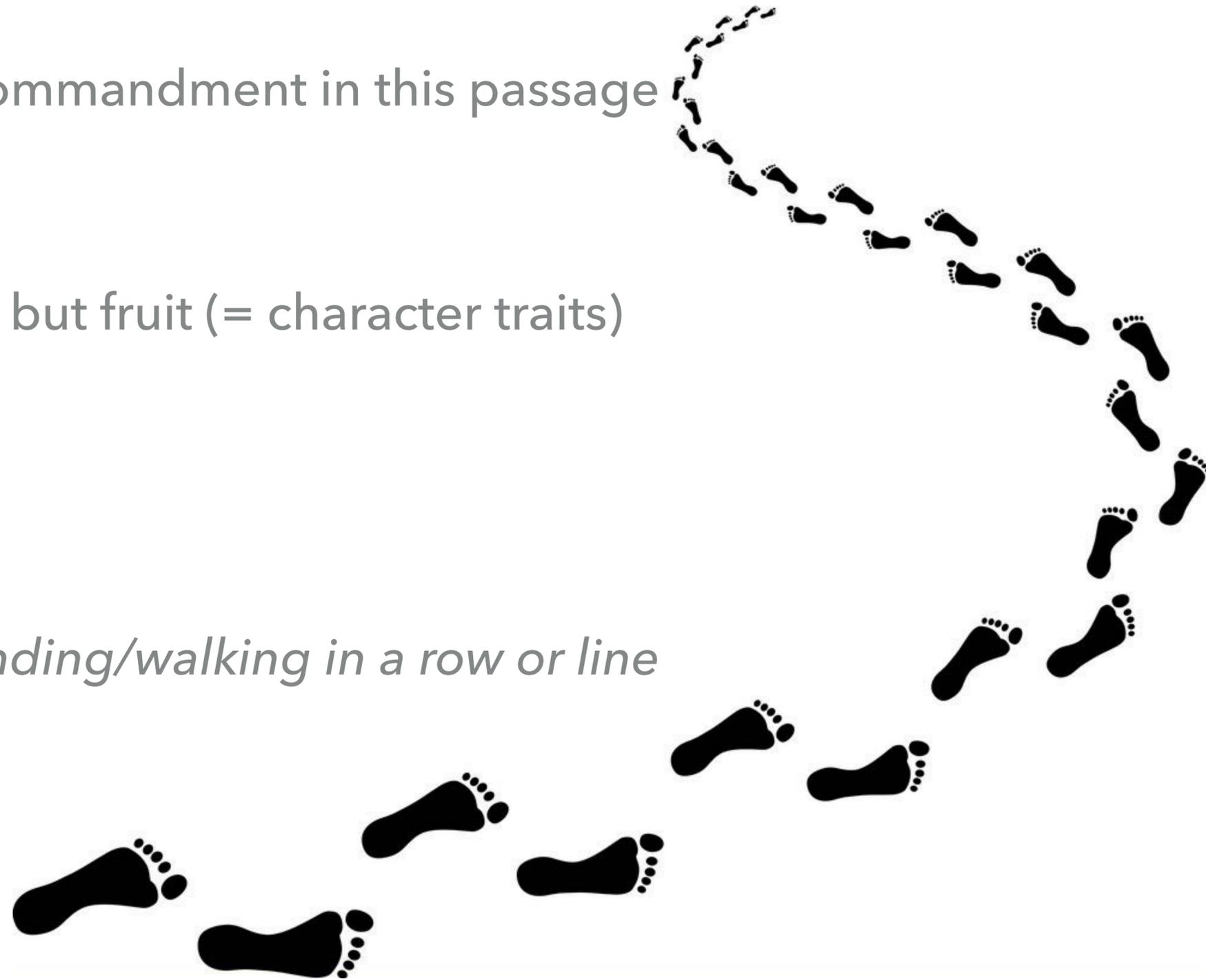
You fall **in God's grace** if you have faith. You fall **away from grace** if you trust in your works.

5:16-25

"So I say, *walk by the Spirit*, and you will not gratify the desires of *the flesh*.¹⁷ For *the flesh* desires what is contrary to *the Spirit*, and *the Spirit* what is contrary to *the flesh*. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.¹⁸ But if you are *led by the Spirit*, you are not under the law.¹⁹ *The acts of the flesh* are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions²¹ 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.²² But *the fruit of the Spirit* is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified *the flesh* with its passions and desires.²⁵ Since we *live by the Spirit*, let us *keep in step with the Spirit.*"

THE WORKS OF THE FLESH VS. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (5:16-25)

- ▶ *1. Walk by the Spirit* (v. 16) → the only commandment in this passage
- ▶ *2. Be led by the Spirit* (v. 18)
- ▶ v. 22: The Spirit does not produce works, but fruit (= character traits)
 - ▶ The works come as a **result** of the fruit
- ▶ *3. Keep in step with/follow the Spirit*
 - ▶ “keep in step”: of soldiers who are standing/walking in a row or line



“WALK IN THE SPIRIT” ETC...

BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT IS:

- ▶ Letting Jesus “be formed in us” (4:19), to become more like him by following his example and his teaching with the help of *his* own Spirit who God has sent into our hearts (4:6)
- ▶ Having “crucified” the flesh with its passions and desires because we belong to him (5:24), after having him “portrayed as crucified before your very eyes” (3:1), so we stop the sin on a “motivational level” rather than on a “behavioural level”.
- ▶ Still receiving instruction. Paul wrote letters because it was necessary even though they had the Spirit.

JESUS.

SO WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

- A good person?
- Someone who believes God exists?
- Someone who reads the Bible?
- Someone who goes to church?
- Someone who talks about Jesus?

- Someone who trusts that what Jesus did on the cross is enough for salvation.*

SO WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

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- Someone who goes to church?
- Someone who talks about Jesus?

- Someone who trusts that what Jesus did on the cross is enough for salvation.*

The Christian faith is ***so simple!*** You're saved by faith, then you walk by the Spirit. God does it all. You can ***never*** repay him for this great gift. The only right response is just to be grateful and happy and love him.