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The Art of Prayer

22. Until Christ Be Formed in You

Rha chapter built on Galatians 4:19. Paul first travailed in prayer for the Galatians to be born again; now he travails again that they grow up spiritually instead of slipping back under the law. The point: salvation is a birth, and new Christians are babies who need ongoing care and prayer to mature.

Key takeaways

- Spiritual growth mirrors physical growth: no one is born a full-grown Christian. New believers start as babies and must grow up.
- Churches are responsible for the babies born at their altars — teaching them, praying for them, and carrying them while they learn to walk, not abandoning or condemning them when they stumble.
- Mature believers should hold young Christians up in prayer, correcting gently rather than harshly, the way you'd steady a child learning to walk.
- Not all intercession requires the deep travail Paul felt for the tightly-bound Galatians; learn to listen to the Spirit and pray as He directs.

Passages worth keeping

> *"Yes, and the church is to blame for it. The church is responsible for it."*

The Spirit's word that reframes a new convert's backsliding as a failure of the church to nurture and pray for a spiritual baby.

How it connects

The chapter ties spiritual maturity to sustained intercession — being born again is a starting line, and the church's job of praying new believers into maturity is itself a form of spiritual parenting.

Scripture referenced

- **Galatians 4:19** -- Paul travailing again until Christ is formed in believers — the chapter's foundation
- **1 Peter 2:2** -- New believers as babes desiring the milk of the word, that they may grow
- **Colossians 4:12-13** -- Epaphras laboring/agonizing in prayer that believers stand mature and complete