

Colossians 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Analysis

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Paul celebrates the new humanity's radical inclusiveness. Traditional divisions—ethnic ("Greek nor Jew"), religious ("circumcision nor uncircumcision"), cultural ("Barbarian, Scythian"), social ("bond nor free")—dissolve in Christ. Scythians were considered ultimate barbarians, yet even they find equal place in Christ's body.

"But Christ is all, and in all" (alla panta kai en pasin Christos, ἀλλὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν Χριστός) means Christ is everything that matters and dwells in every believer. Union with Christ creates deeper unity than any human similarity; difference from Christ creates deeper division than any human affinity. This demolishes human hierarchies and prejudices, establishing revolutionary community where Christ's presence, not human status, determines membership and value.

Historical Context

Ancient society was rigidly stratified: Greeks despised barbarians, Jews separated from Gentiles, free dominated slaves, men ruled over women. Social mobility was nearly impossible. The Christian community's radical equality—all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28)—was socially revolutionary, attracting marginalized people while

threatening established order. This explains both Christianity's appeal and the opposition it generated from defenders of traditional hierarchies.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What human distinctions—race, class, education, politics—still affect how you value fellow believers?
2. How does your church community demonstrate that Christ is 'all, and in all,' transcending worldly divisions?
3. What would change if you truly saw other believers through their union with Christ rather than external characteristics?

Interlinear Text

ὅπου	οὐκ	ἐν	Ἕλλην	καὶ	Ἰουδαῖος	περιτομή	καὶ
Where	neither	there is	Greek	and	Jew	circumcision	and
G3699	G3756	G1762	G1672	G2532	G2453	G4061	G2532

ἀκροβυστία	βάρβαρος	Σκύθης	δοῦλος	ἐλεύθερος	ἀλλὰ	τὰ
uncircumcision	Barbarian	Scythian	bond	nor free	but	G3588
G203	G915	G4658	G1401	G1658	G235	

πᾶσιν	καὶ	ἐν	πᾶσιν	Χριστός
all	and	in	all	Christ
G3956	G2532	G1722	G3956	G5547

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 12:13 (Parallel theme): For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Romans 10:12 (Parallel theme): For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Ephesians 3:6 (References Christ): That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Ephesians 1:23 (Parallel theme): Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Romans 3:29 (Parallel theme): Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

John 17:23 (Parallel theme): I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Galatians 5:6 (References Christ): For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Isaiah 52:10 (Parallel theme): The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Isaiah 49:6 (Parallel theme): And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Acts 15:17 (Parallel theme): That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.