

Galatians 3:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Analysis

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Paul's powerful declaration: 'ye are all' (pantes gar, πάντες γάρ)—'for all of you'—emphasizes universality and equality. The phrase 'children of God' (huioi theou, υἱοὶ Θεοῦ)—better translated 'sons of God'—indicates full adult sonship with inheritance rights, not mere childhood (tekna, τέκνα). In the ancient world, 'sons' had legal status and inheritance rights; huioi (υἱοί) implies mature, privileged relationship with God as Father.

The means: 'by faith in Christ Jesus' (dia tēs pisteōs en Christō Iēsou, διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). The preposition dia (διά) with genitive indicates means or agency: faith is the instrument of sonship. The phrase 'in Christ Jesus' locates faith's object and sphere: union with Christ is the ground of sonship. Apart from Christ, no one is God's son in this redemptive sense; in Christ, all believers equally enjoy sonship.

This verse demolishes the Judaizers' claims. They taught that Gentiles must become Jews (via circumcision) to fully belong to God's family; Paul insists faith in Christ alone makes one a son of God—Jew and Gentile, male and female, slave and free (v. 28). Sonship is not ethnic or earned; it's by grace through faith in Christ. The 'all' (pantes, πάντες) is emphatic: every believer, without distinction or discrimination, is equally a son of God with full inheritance rights.

Historical Context

In Roman law, **adoptio** (adoption) granted full sonship rights to those not born into the family. An adopted son became a legal heir with all privileges. Jewish proselyte conversion similarly granted Gentiles access to Israel's covenant, but required circumcision and Law-observance. Paul's gospel is more radical: faith in Christ immediately grants full sonship to all believers—no circumcision, no Law-keeping, no probationary period. Galatians 4:5-7 and Romans 8:14-17 develop this: believers are adopted sons, crying 'Abba, Father,' co-heirs with Christ.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What is the significance of being called 'sons of God' (not just 'children') through faith in Christ? What rights and privileges does this sonship include?
2. How does 'by faith in Christ Jesus' as the sole means of sonship exclude any role for circumcision, Law-keeping, or ethnic identity?
3. In what ways should your identity as a 'son of God' with full inheritance rights transform your confidence, obedience, and worship?

Interlinear Text

Πάντες	γὰρ	νἱοὶ	θεοῦ	έστε	διὰ	τῆς	πίστεως	ἐν
all	For	the children	of God	ye are	by	G3588	faith	in
G3956	G1063	G5207	G2316	G2075	G1223		G4102	G1722
Χριστῷ	Ἰησοῦ·							
Christ	Jesus							
G5547	G2424							

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 1:5 (References Jesus): Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

2 Corinthians 6:18 (Parallel theme): And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Philippians 2:15 (References God): That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Revelation 21:7 (References God): He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Ephesians 5:1 (References God): Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

John 20:17 (References Jesus): Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.