

Galatians 3:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Analysis

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. This is one of the most revolutionary verses in Scripture, obliterating all human distinctions in Christ. 'There is neither' (ouk eni, οὐκ ἔνι)—an emphatic negation repeated three times—abolishes ethnic ('Jew nor Greek' / Ioudaios oude Hellēn, Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἑλλῆν), social ('bond nor free' / doulos oude eleutheros, δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἑλεύθερος), and gender ('male nor female' / arsen kai thēly, ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ) divisions. These categories represented the fundamental societal hierarchies of the ancient world.

The reason: 'for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' (pantes gar hymēis heis este en Christō Iēsou, πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἀστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). The emphatic 'all of you' (pantes hymēis, πάντες ὑμεῖς) stresses collective unity. The word 'one' (heis, εἷς)—masculine singular—indicates organic unity: believers are not merely unified but constitute one entity in Christ. The phrase 'in Christ Jesus' locates this unity: it exists only in union with Christ, not in natural humanity.

This verse demolishes the Judaizers' insistence on ethnic privilege (Jew over Gentile), which required circumcision to join God's people. In Christ, ethnic identity is irrelevant to salvation and standing before God. Social status (slave/free) and gender (male/female) are similarly irrelevant. All believers—regardless of ethnicity, social class, or gender—enjoy equal sonship, equal access to God, equal

inheritance. This doesn't erase functional distinctions (Ephesians 5:22-6:9), but eradicates soteriological and spiritual hierarchy.

Historical Context

First-century Jewish culture maintained strict distinctions: Jews thanked God daily they were not Gentiles, slaves, or women (reflected in rabbinic prayers). Greek society stratified along ethnic and class lines. Roman law distinguished citizens, freedmen, and slaves with differing rights. Paul's declaration that these distinctions are abolished 'in Christ' was socially revolutionary. This verse grounds Christian egalitarianism: in Christ, all believers are equally sons of God (v. 26), equally heirs of Abraham (v. 29), equally justified by faith (v. 24), regardless of ethnicity, social status, or gender.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does verse 28's abolition of ethnic, social, and gender distinctions 'in Christ' undermine the Judaizers' insistence on circumcision for Gentile believers?
2. What does it mean practically that 'ye are all one in Christ'? How should this unity shape relationships within the church?
3. In what ways does contemporary Christianity fail to live out the radical equality of verse 28? How can you promote this gospel-unity in your church and life?

Interlinear Text

οὐκ	ἔνι	Ἰουδαῖος	οὐδὲ	Ἐλλην	οὐκ	ἔνι	δοῦλος
neither	There is	Jew	nor	Greek	neither	There is	bond
G3756	G1762	G2453	G3761	G1672	G3756	G1762	G1401
οὐδὲ	ἐλεύθερος	οὐκ	ἔνι	ἄρσεν	καὶ	θῆλυ·	πάντες
nor	free	neither	There is	male	nor	female	all
G3761	G1658	G3756	G1762	G730	G2532	G2338	G3956
γὰρ	ὑμεῖς	εἷς	ἐστε	ἐν	Χριστῷ	Ἰησοῦ	
for	ye	one	are	in	Christ	Jesus	
G1063	G5210	G1520	G2075	G1722	G5547	G2424	

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 3:11 (References Christ): Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

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

John 10:16 (Parallel theme): And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Ephesians 4:4 (Parallel theme): There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

Romans 1:16 (References Christ): For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 9:24 (Parallel theme): Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

1 Corinthians 7:19 (Parallel theme): Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

John 11:52 (Parallel theme): And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

John 17:11 (Parallel theme): And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

1 Corinthians 7:14 (Parallel theme): For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

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