

One in Christ Jesus

Key Verse: *“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.”*
—Galatians 3:28

Selected Scripture:
Galatians 3:24-29

Covenant arrangement should have realized: “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”—Gal. 3:24,25

Today’s Key Verse is Paul’s declaration that all distinctions formerly existing under the Mosaic Law were now eliminated, since Jesus had died as the ransom price “for all.” (I Tim. 2:5,6) As a result, all who had “ears to hear” could come into Christ. (Mark 4:9) The Christian’s standing in God’s sight was now as a New Creature. “Old things are passed away; behold all things have become new.” (II Cor. 5:17) The Gospel was free to all, and an individual’s position in God’s sight would be as a member of Christ: “If you belong to Christ, then you are indeed true descendants of Abraham, and are heirs in fulfilment of the promise.”—

Gal. 3:29, *Weymouth New Testament*

The Jews were not to think that the favor granted to their nation in the past would provide preferential positions in the Christian brotherhood. Likewise, the Gentiles were not to think that because the Jews, as a nation, had been cut off from previous favor under the Law Covenant, they would be disfavored as individuals in the eyes of the Lord. Both were to know that God would henceforth ignore their natural differences of ethnicity and reward each, whether Jew or Gentile, according to his or her faithfulness as a member of the one “body of Christ.”—I Cor. 12:12,13

The practice of having bond-servants was a regulated institution in Israel and was still practiced in Paul’s day. He does not say that a servant who becomes a member of the body of Christ is free to disregard the wishes of his master. Rather, he says the Lord is able to bless the bond-servant as though he was a “freeman” in Christ. (I Cor. 7:21,22) In some respects, the servant position would be more favorable to the attainment of the humility of character necessary to obtain a share in the heavenly kingdom than the position of a master. Regardless, however, the bond-servant was to know that the Lord did not take notice of his earthly position as respects his heavenly hope.

While Jewish women often enjoyed more liberty than those of other ancient cultures, Israel’s patriarchal laws limited them primarily to the domestic sphere, responsible for nurturing and home life. The priesthood excluded them, and with a few notable exceptions, they had limited Temple access. Paul now proclaims these patriarchal laws no longer apply to “children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”—Gal. 3:26

We rejoice to have the privilege of sharing the Gospel with all. Let us be faithful to Jesus’ great commission to proclaim the “gospel of the kingdom” as a witness in all the world.—Matt. 24:14

