

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female,
for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
(Galatians 3:28 NIV)

The Apostle Paul makes a truly astounding claim in Galatians 3:28. In the midst of a very divided world he claims that there are no distinctions between those who claim Christ as savior.

Paul's world was divided, and the divisions of his time are clearly noted in this verse. Jews thought they were the only ones who could be saved. Gentiles of course took exception to this. But Paul says that distinction doesn't matter to Christians.

There were slaves and free people in Paul's time. Slaves were looked down upon and often mistreated while free people considered themselves privileged. Paul, again, says that distinction doesn't matter to Christians.

Paul's world was a world in which women had few rights. Women were considered inferior to men in that time. Paul tells his divided world that doesn't matter to people who bear the title of Christian.

The initial reaction to Paul's comments were hostile. Paul suffered greatly at the hands of the powerful people he said were no longer powerful. The Jews, the free, and the men were in positions of power in Paul's world and as he made these remarkable claims about equality he was attacked and imprisoned many times.

Our world is very divided also. Perhaps we have moved past many of our ethnic and racial biases. Perhaps we don't see people in terms of free and slave although many people in our world today are slaves to many different things. And women today have more rights perhaps than at any time in history.

Our divisions today are different, but we are still divided. How might Paul write Galatians 3:28 today? Perhaps “There is neither protestant or catholic, neither rich nor poor, nor is there conservative or liberal, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

We all have a duty to remove the divisions amongst our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is not an easy thing to do. We often think we are right and others are wrong, but shouldn't we be able to respect one another and treat each other with dignity? Remember Jesus said "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. (Matthew 7:1 NIV)

Beginning July 29th, you will have five opportunities to easily fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ from across our area. Reclaim Ministries is once again holding a summer concert series. This year it is called Unity in Christ. I encourage each of you to attend one or all of these concerts in an effort to be, as Paul said, “one in Christ Jesus.”

Have a great month and remember that Jesus said we will be known as his disciples if we love one another.

Pastor Tim