

## One in Christ 3.26-29

- vs. 26 - sums it up
- vs. 27 - explains vs. 26
- vs. 28 - comments on the implications
- vs. 29 - provides the conclusion

**vs. 26**, you are **all** sons of God

A single Abrahamic family that is the Messiah's people. This is what family looks like.

**2:20**, I live by faith in the Son of God

**Exodus 4:22** And you will say to Pharaoh: This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son.

**Psalm 2:7** I will declare the Lord's decree. He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father.

**Mark 1:11** And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased."

**Romans 8:29** For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Paul speaks of the whole Jesus believing community as being sons of God in Messiah Jesus.

Sons is the correct translation (children) in this case would not communicate the fullness of what Paul intends to communicate.

Male child -> the one who would have the privileges to inherit his father's estate.

- Paul is cutting through the patriarchy and male dominant culture.
- Son ≠ Manliness
- The world of the first century was patriarchal. Men were superior to women, sons to daughters.
- Sonship describes the intimacy God's people have with him.
- In Christ **all** experience freedom and are filled with the Spirit.

**vs. 27**, Baptized into Christ / Clothed with Christ

Baptism was and is a public identification (Jesus people) at a social cost!

Baptism puts the story of salvation on display.

Dying with Christ - going under the water - casting off sin

Rising with Christ - coming out of the water - putting on the new life

This is the moment we call God Father (Abba).

**Question:** Is the Spirit prompting you to move forward in baptism?

WE (women and men) are in this together. We co-labor with one another to contend for the gospel.

**vs. 28**, You are all one in Christ Jesus.

Remember what the Spirit has done (3:2-5).

**Joel 2:28-29** After this I will pour out my Spirit on all humanity; then your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions. **29** I will even pour out my Spirit on the male and female slaves in those days.

Peter too has seen the work of the Holy Spirit. He also quotes Joel 2 in Acts 2.

We have been clothed with Christ.

**Key:** Unity not uniformity - Paul is not trying to eliminate ethnic difference. He celebrates diversity, and within that diversity he celebrates unity. Different gifts same body (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-30).

**Isaiah 2:4** He will settle disputes among the nations and provide arbitration for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plows and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not take up the sword against nation, and they will never again train for war.

**Zechariah 2:11** “Many nations will join themselves to the Lord on that day and become my people. I will dwell among you, and you will know that the Lord of Armies has sent me to you.

**1 Corinthians 15:22** For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

**Ephesians 4:22-24** to take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, **23** to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self, the one created according to God’s likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

Now Paul moves to places in *society* where unity is not found.  
Jew / Greek, Slave / Free, Male / Female

If the question is, How do I go to heaven (get converted)?  
Then the answer is the unbiased nature of salvation.

But if the question is, Does Abraham have one family or two?  
Then the answer takes into consideration society.

Paul understands the attitudes of his culture, region, religious practice.  
Blessed be God that he did not make me a Gentile.  
Blessed be God that he did not make me ignorant (slave).  
Blessed be God that he did not make me a woman.

(Paul is not going to ignore such demeaning classification of humans).

Cultural Mandate - a cultural or national conversion is not necessary to become a Christian. (This is the most obvious to understand)

Humans treated in light of God’s love in Jesus not in light of their culture.

Social Mandate - slave / free

Slavery was widespread in the ancient world.

One could be purchased, enter because of indebtedness, captured in war, or by birth.

- On one level, Paul is not taking on the institution of slavery. (Rome would have immediately destroyed any trace of the church).
- On another level he stating very clearly the irrelevancy of the institution in Christ.

The idea of owning another human is not what Jesus people engage in.

**Philemon 16** no longer as a slave, but more than a slave—as a dearly loved brother. He is especially so to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

The groundwork has been set for the eventual abolition of slavery throughout the whole world.

- Racial disparity continues
- Progress is still needed.
- The church stands on the side of justice.

Gen Z -> justice is a primary issue.

Race and economics should not / must not be a dividing wall for the one family of God (the church).

Ethnic hatred ≠ Unity in Christ

Sexual Mandate - male / female.

Notice: male **and** female

Paul is intentionally referring to **Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female.

Paul is not removing distinction. He is highlighting dignity and mutuality that is shared in the garden.

Full heirs (book end) -> The implications of Paul's statement go beyond salvation. He is opposing the inferiority of women working itself out in religious communities.

Here is a list of the eighteen women in Paul's letters, plus Lydia who is mentioned in Acts:

Lydia (Acts 16:13-15, 40)	Julia (Rom. 16:15)
Junia (Rom. 16:7)	Mary (Rom. 16:6)
Phoebe (Rom. 16:1-2)	
Priscilla (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19; Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 26)	
Persis (Rom. 16:12)	Rufus' mother (Rom. 16:13)
Nereus' sister (Rom. 16:15)	Tryphena (Rom. 16:12)
Tryphosa (Rom. 16:12)	Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11)
Syntyche (Phil. 4:2-3)	Euodia (Php. 4:2-3)
Nympha (Col. 4:15)	Lois (2 Tim. 1:5)
Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5)	Claudia (2 Tim. 4:21)
Apphia (Phlm. 1:2)	

As with slavery, so with women, Paul provides a foundation for the church and society to grab hold of regarding collaborative partnership (mutuality).

Correcting the curse of sin which is restored through the work of Jesus.

**Genesis 3:16-19** He said to the woman: I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children with painful effort. Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you. **17** And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat from it': The ground is cursed because of you. You will eat from it by means of painful labor all the days of your life. **18** It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. **19** You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust."

"If the highest blessing given to the church is the Spirit, and the most important work of the church is proclaiming Jesus to a lost and dying world, then we must take that women in the early church - quite contrary to the trend of the OT - fully participated in power and mission with the men. Let's not miss this crucial point: though Jews, males, and masters dominate the skyline of the Bible's narrative, Joel's prophecy and Peter's citing of it show equal place in God's agenda being give to the Gentiles, slaves, and females." ~ Terran Williams

**vs. 29**, You are Abraham's seed. You are all one (a single family), all heirs. According to the promise you will inherit the world.

Paul is revolutionary in how he is speaking concerning the nature of relationships within the church.

The whole view of Paul as he speaks to the Galatians is that the gospel removes hierarchical systems of worth and privilege.

(cultural, social, male / female relationships)

The church is different.

Out in the world the power struggle is intense and it is real.

But... in the oneness of the church a new way to interact, relate, and work together filled with the Spirit is blossoming.

“God’s initial design was that Adam and Eve both were custodians of the word of God, that both would rule the earth as a king and queen, and that both would work the garden-temple as priests. For all eternity, redeemed men and women will labour side by side in the final realization of the first creation as co-prophets, co-rulers, and co-priests. If that is where it’s all going for the church of Jesus, why would we settle for anything less now?” ~ Terran Williams

**Question:** How has the gospel changed you in the three mandates of verse 28? How do you engage and prioritize the family of God (your church)? Are there any other identities you cling to which compete with the gospel for your allegiance?

If you don’t agree, are you willing to pray, process, and learn?