

# You Are All One in Christ

The Gospel Antidote to  
Racism, Sexism, and Classism  
Galatians 3:23-29

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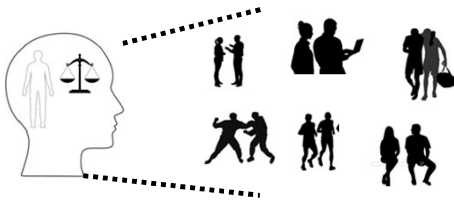
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## Introduction: Key Concepts

- Stereotype: a generalized and oversimplified **image or idea** of a particular type of person (shaped by various factors)
- Prejudice: preconceived **opinion** that is born from stereotype
- Discrimination: unjust **treatment** born from prejudice



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## Introduction: Three common forms

- Racism: s/p/d on the basis of racial (or ethnic) group
- Classism: s/p/d on the basis of class (economic, vocational, etc.)
- Sexism: s/p/d on the basis of sex



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- These *orientations* can be conscious or unconscious
- This leads to an *undignified* and “*de-storying*” of individual persons created in the image of God which is, at bottom, unjust bearing false witness
- At the same time we must recognized that there is often a collective story (or stories) among groups
  - But even then, within various “groups” there are varying experiences and individual characteristics
- We are being offered various solutions, from vitriolic and hate-filled desire to destroy to love-filled desires to see change
- Only a worldview built on God’s Word is sufficient to address at the very bottom the issues that are at hand

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- Introduction:** The issue Paul is indirectly addressing
- Paul’s statement in 3:28 is shaped by a recognition that there are groups of people who generally have a more difficult time in the world (as seen in history repeatedly)
  - In each case there is a distinction between categories of people: those often in a place of power, influence, and common blessing in distinction to those without
  - Early Jewish prayer: “Thank God that I am not a gentile, a woman, or a slave.” (this language echoes Greek prayers preserved first by Plato)
    - Most positive perspective: genuine gratitude in recognition of the difficulty of being in those other groups
    - The sinful perversion: a despising attitude toward those groups
  - The reality that, given such differences, the fallen human heart responds with an “us and them” mentality frequently resulting in degrees of both unintentional and intentional inequity (implicit or explicit)

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- Racial Unity**
- There is neither Jew nor Greek**
- Racism from a Jewish mindset (tainted by sin)
  - This is problem of fallen humanity throughout history
  - This is one of the biggest surprises of the New Covenant
  - This included God’s removing of the law code (middle wall of partition), traditions established for 1,000s of years, to bring in the Gentiles
  - Unity does not mean uniformity nor obliteration of distinctions

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### Class Unity

**...neither slave nor free**

- Examples in the New Testament
- Why doesn't the New Testament outright abolish anything that looks like slavery?
  - Concerning plausibility structures, not as an excuse, but for comprehension
  - Nevertheless, despite the misuse of the Bible to justify chattel slavery and human kidnapping of Africans, the NT actually plants the seeds for its abolishment
- Special attention and treatment of the poor (of the servant class) throughout the New Testament, not something completely new
- Unity does not mean uniformity nor obliteration of distinctions

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### Gender Unity

**...no male and female**

- Next to the racial component, this is a close second to a radical change between the Old and New Covenants
- There is in the New Covenant to crucial recovery of the creation order of equality within the covenant
  - The reception of the initiatory sign of baptism by both in Acts in contrast to circumcision of only men in the OT
  - Brothers and Sisters as siblings in the New Covenant
- Unity does not mean uniformity nor obliteration of distinctions
- Preference for terminology: not "opposite" sex (as if fundamentally different), but "other" sex (ontology of humanness)

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### Conclusions

- The Gospel antidote is treating others with dignity, equality, and privilege in the New Covenant of all groups (our story in Christ's Story)
  - This also deals with a stereotyping and unjust prejudice going both ways in all groups
- Illustration: garden/weeding/cultivation
  - Given our remaining sin and tendencies, it isn't enough to let things grow naturally, but have to uproot weeds
  - This means intentionally "raising up" the status, ministry, and participation of those who tend to be marginalized
- It isn't enough to not express these prejudices, but to identify, speak, and make a place
- In the church, alongside the world
  - Knowing our story as a nation
  - Listening and caring widely

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