

**Grace to You :: Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time**

## **Can Women Be Pastors?**

Scripture: Galatians 3

Code: BQ060512

**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (3:28)**

Paul focused on the existing, well-defined distinctions of his society that drew sharp lines and set up high walls of separation between people. The essence of those distinctions was the idea that some people—namely Jews, free men, and males in general—were better than, more valuable than, more significant than others. The gospel destroys all such proud thinking. The person who becomes one with Christ also becomes one with every other believer. There are no distinctions among those who belong to Christ. In spiritual matters, there is to be made no racial, social, or sexual discrimination—**neither Jew nor Greek, ... slave nor free man, ... male nor female.**

It is not, of course, that among Christians there is no such thing as a Jew Gentile, slave, free person, man, or woman. There are obvious racial, social, and sexual differences among people. Paul, however, was speaking of spiritual differences—differences in standing before the Lord, spiritual value, privilege, and worthiness. Consequently, prejudice based on race, social status, sex, or any other such superficial and temporary differences has no place in the fellowship of Christ's church. All believers, without exception, **are all one in Christ Jesus.** All spiritual blessings, resources, and promises are equally given to all who believe unto salvation (cf. Rom. 10:12).

It was only with great difficulty that Peter finally learned that there are no racial distinctions in Christ, "that God is not one to show partiality" among **Jew or Greek**, "but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him" (Acts 10:35). Among the five prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch was "Simeon, who was called Niger," which means black (Acts 13:1). Paul's beloved son in the faith was Timothy, whose father was Gentile and whose mother and grandmother were Jewish (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5).

Likewise there are no distinctions according to social or economic status. Paul told the Christian **slave** to be obedient to his master, "as to Christ," and he told the Christian master, a **free man**, to "give up threatening, knowing that" the Master of both "is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him" (Eph. 6:5, 9).

James warned, “My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, ‘You sit here in a good place,’ and you say to the poor man, ‘You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,’ have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives? ... If you show partiality, you are committing sin” (James 2:1–4, 9). The oneness of the Body of Christ focuses on common spiritual life and privilege, as Paul wrote to the Ephesians: “Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Eph. 4:3–7).

Nor are there spiritual distinctions according to sex. **There is neither male nor female.** In recognizing believing women as the full spiritual equals of believing men, Christianity elevated women to a status they had never known before in the ancient world. In matters of rule in the home and in the church God has established the headship of men. But in the dimension of spiritual possessions and privilege there is absolutely no difference.

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