

Preparation for Session 4

Read: Galatians 3:28 (Read the entire book, if possible, to gain context, but especially 3:15 – 4:7)

Consider the following questions:

1. What problem was Paul addressing in the book of Galatians? Why would he use such a statement as found in Galatians 3:28 to support his position?
2. Does Paul's plea for freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1) apply to the relations of men and women?
3. Some have suggested that Galatians 3:28 is the most "socially explosive" passage in the New Testament. Do you agree? Does Galatians 3:28 have implications for our society (not just the church)? Was Paul interested in social reform as well as spiritual reform?
4. How would you summarize Paul's basic message in Galatians 3:28 regarding women? Why has he included the passage in his letter to the Galatians?
5. Is subordination of women equivalent to the institution of slavery? If so, what does this say to the twenty-first century church? If not, why not?
6. Does being "in Christ" (Galatians 3:36) change the relationship between men and women? If so, how?
7. Is there a difference between the concepts "in Christ" and "in the church"? Compare Galatians 3:28 with Ephesians 5:22-32.
8. Read Mark 12: 18 – 27. Does this passage relate to Galatians 3:28? Do you believe there will be gender distinctions and roles in heaven?
9. Other than this passage, can you find further statements in Galatians which inform us about roles of women in the church or family?
10. Some have suggested that the interpretations of Galatians 3:28 can be divided into two approaches, the "all is changed in Christ" approaches and the "keep role and worth separate" approach. First consider Paul's basic message to us. From that basic message, can you give arguments for each approach from the book of Galatians? In what way does each approach inform us regarding the role of women in the church and the relationship between men and women?

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