

REJECTING CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM, RECLAIMING TRUE FAITH, AND REFOUNDING DEMOCRACY

**LESSON 6: “Our Community Is Not The Bible” – Galatians 3:28**

*“There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free;  
there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”*

**AT ISSUE:** “Both [slaveholders and abolitionists alike]... recognized the implications of this verse – that subjugating another human being is irreconcilable with the idea that all peoples are equal in the eyes of God. The slaveholders wanted to keep the enslaved from believing that they were fully human, and therefore eligible for reconciliation in Christ.” Furthermore, “Galatians 3:28 calls Christians to seek unity in the here and now.” (Wallis, 182) **Do you agree?**

**BACKGROUND:** “...pro-slavery advocates tried to rationalize their hypocrisy by adopting the view that Paul intended for the enslaved to take heart in their spiritual equality while accepting the social order of which slavery was a part. But ‘abolitionists viewed this passage not only as a proclamation of spiritual equality but also the seeds of social and racial equality.’ Sadly, you don’t hear much about Galatians 3:28 from the white Christian nationalists.” (Wallis, 182) **READ GALATIANS 3:28 AGAIN.**

- **Look at it this way...** “Race, class, and gender shape oppression all over the world, and the Apostle Paul upends and transforms them for the new social relationships and community that Christ came to bring.” (Wallis, 183)

**Pointed Questions to guide our study:**

1. *Complementarianism* is “the idea that women ought to have roles that complement men rather than holding the positions of authority supposedly intended for men.” (Wallis, 183)
  - a. How do Paul’s words to the Galatians, here, challenge this notion?
  - b. Do we see *complementarianism* in **Our Church**? If so, where/how?
2. Some scholars believe Galatians 3:28 “was *one of the first creeds* of the early church.” What do you think would be the response if **we** said publicly, “that we are a community that breaks down and overcomes all society’s divisions, and if you don’t want to be a part of that radical new unified community you should go somewhere else?” (Wallis, 185)
3. Is **Our Church** guilty of functioning “more like clubs, fraternities, or tribes than real communities [who] appear more interested in keeping people out than bringing them in”? How? (Wallis, 190-191)
4. How does Galatians 3:28 confront “our sinful tendencies to dominate on the basis of class, sex, and race”? (Wallis, 199)

**CHALLENGE:** “Will we seek the unity and diversity of the kingdom of God? Or will we reinforce social barriers of race, religion, gender, and tribalism?” (Wallis, 206)