

Applications From Galatians 3:28

1. Stop Measuring Your Worth Against Other People

Someone will always:

Earn more.

Know more.

Own more.

Accomplish more.

Look better.

Preach better.

Teach better.

Sing better.

Cook better.

And somebody somewhere apparently knows how to fold a fitted sheet.

Don't build your identity on comparison.

Your worth is settled in Christ.

2. Stop Looking Down on People Jesus Died For

Before you dismiss someone because of their:

Background,

Race,

Education,

Income,

Politics,
Past,
Appearance,
or social status,
remember:

Jesus may call that person “brother” or “sister.”

Be careful treating someone as beneath you whom Jesus calls His own.

3. Deliberately Build Relationships Across Boundaries

Don't only associate with people who:

Look like you.

Vote like you.

Earn like you.

Think like you.

Live like you.

Try sitting beside somebody different.

Invite somebody different to lunch.

Listen to somebody whose story is unlike yours.

The gospel should expand our table.

4. Refuse to Let Politics Become Greater Than Christ

You can hold strong political convictions.

You probably should.

But when Christians speak about another believer with more contempt than love because of politics, something has become disordered.

Ask:

“Has my political identity become stronger than my Christian identity?”

Jesus did not die to make us Republicans.

Jesus did not die to make us Democrats.

Jesus died to make us His.

5. Treat Every Believer as a Full Member of God's Family

There are no second-class Christians.

No spiritual aristocracy.

No Christian caste system.

If someone belongs to Christ, they belong to the family.

6. Don't Confuse Preference With Principle

There are biblical convictions.

And then there are preferences.

The trouble begins when we baptize our preferences and call them commandments.

“My kind of music.”

“My kind of church.”

“My way of doing things.”

“My generation.”

“My traditions.”

Some preferences are wonderful.

But they are terrible gods.

7. Learn to Say, “I May Be Wrong”

This may be one of the most spiritually mature sentences in the English language:

“I may be wrong.”

Try saying it sometime.

Your spouse may faint.

Your children may call an ambulance.

Your church may nominate you for sainthood.

Humility protects unity.

8. Refuse to Reduce People to One Label

Nobody is merely:

“The divorced person.”

“The rich guy.”

“The poor family.”

“The immigrant.”

“The Republican.”

“The Democrat.”

“The addict.”

“The widow.”

“The teenager.”

The Christian's deepest identity is not a category.

It is a relationship with Christ.

9. Remember That You Needed Grace Too

Nothing destroys arrogance faster than remembering how you got into the family.

You weren't recruited because God looked down from heaven and said:

“There's somebody I definitely need.”

God did not save us because we were impressive.

He saved us because He is gracious.

Grace received should become grace extended.

A Working Exercise in Biblical Priorities

Not every belief is equally important.

Some truths are **nonnegotiable** because they stand at the heart of the Christian faith. Other issues are important but allow room for disagreement among faithful Christians. Still others are simply preferences that we sometimes treat as though they came down from Mount Sinai.

Mark each item:

E = Essential to the Christian faith

S = Secondary but important

P = Personal preference

The goal is to distinguish between **biblical essentials, secondary convictions, and personal preferences.**

_____ Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead.

_____ The worship service should end exactly in one hour.

_____ Whether spiritual gifts such as tongues continue today.

_____ Humanity is sinful and in need of redemption.

_____ The pastor should wear a suit and tie.

_____ Jesus is the only way of salvation.

_____ Christians must belong to the same political party.

_____ Whether the millennium is premillennial, postmillennial, or amillennial.

_____ The sanctuary should contain stained glass.

_____ God exists eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

_____ Sunday School must begin at 9:45.

_____ Whether baptism should be administered by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling.

_____ Christ died for our sins.

_____ Christians should seek justice, mercy, and righteousness in public life.

- _____ Coffee in church is acceptable.
- _____ The exact timing of Christ's return.
- _____ The Bible is the authoritative Word of God.
- _____ The choir should wear robes.
- _____ Whether women may serve in particular church leadership roles.
- _____ Salvation is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.
- _____ Every faithful Christian must vote for the same candidate.
- _____ The person sitting in “my pew” should immediately relocate.
- _____ Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.
- _____ God created human beings male and female.
- _____ Whether communion should use one cup, many cups, juice, or wine.
- _____ The thermostat should be set at exactly _____ degrees.
- _____ There is one true God.
- _____ A Christian's political identity should never become more important than his or her identity in Christ.
- _____ Whether Christians should observe certain traditional holy days.
- _____ The offering must occur before the sermon.
- _____ Jesus Christ will return.
- _____ Whether baptism is for believers only or also for infants.
- _____ The pastor must never wear jeans.
- _____ Sexual behavior, like every area of life, is subject to the lordship of Jesus Christ.
- _____ There will be a final judgment.
- _____ Which Bible translation should be used.

_____ Christians may disagree about the best political policies for addressing poverty, immigration, taxation, health care, and other public issues.

_____ The Lord's Prayer must use "trespasses."

_____ Those who belong to Christ have eternal life.

_____ Church music should be accompanied by an organ.

_____ Church music should be accompanied by drums.

_____ The precise age of the earth.

_____ Marriage and sexuality should be understood through the teaching of Scripture rather than merely through changing cultural opinion.

_____ The sanctuary must have pews.

_____ The sanctuary must have chairs.

_____ How often the Lord's Supper should be observed.

_____ A person must agree with me politically in order to be a faithful Christian.

_____ The pastor should preach 20 minutes.

_____ The pastor should preach until he is finished.

_____ The congregation should pray that "finished" comes quickly.

_____ Christians should treat people with dignity and love even when they disagree deeply about sexuality.

_____ A church must sing hymns.

_____ A church must sing contemporary songs.

_____ The Lord's Prayer must use whichever word your grandmother used.

_____ A Christian may strongly disagree with another Christian politically and still recognize that person as a brother or sister in Christ.

_____ A church must sing only songs written before 1950 because apparently God stopped inspiring musicians after that.

_____ A church must sing only songs written in the last ten years because apparently God did not inspire anyone before that.

_____ Every political opinion I hold is obviously the biblical position.

_____ Whether a church should have elders, deacons, pastors, or some combination.

_____ Christians should speak truth about sexual ethics without cruelty, ridicule, or contempt.

_____ Jesus would obviously vote exactly the way I vote.

_____ Coffee in church is acceptable only if it has a biblical name such as “Hebrews.”

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- 1. Can I clearly support this belief from Scripture?**
 - 2. Is this teaching central to the gospel itself?**
 - 3. Have faithful Christians throughout history generally agreed on this?**
 - 4. Can someone disagree with me on this issue and still genuinely follow Jesus?**
 - 5. Am I defending biblical truth—or simply defending what I am accustomed to?**
 - 6. Have I confused my tradition, political preference, or cultural assumptions with God's command?**
 - 7. Is this issue important enough to divide Christians who belong to Christ?**
 - 8. Am I equally willing to let Scripture challenge the beliefs of my political “side” as I am the beliefs of the other side?**
 - 9. Can I hold a biblical conviction about sexuality while still treating every person with dignity, compassion, and love?**
 - 10. Do I hold my convictions with humility, grace, and love?**
-

A HELPFUL PRINCIPLE

In essentials — unity.

In secondary matters — liberty.

In all things — charity.

“For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

— Galatians 3:28

Christian maturity means knowing **what we must never surrender, what we may faithfully disagree about, and what we probably ought to stop arguing about altogether.**

Sometimes the problem is not that Christians lack convictions.

Sometimes the problem is that we have promoted our **preferences, traditions, and political opinions to the rank of doctrine.**

And sometimes we do the opposite: we demote something Scripture actually teaches simply because the culture finds it uncomfortable.

Wisdom is knowing the difference.

Looking closely at the text (Galatians 3:26-29)

1. Read Galatians 3:26–29. How many times does Paul refer directly or indirectly to **Christ**?
2. What does verse 26 say makes someone a child of God?
3. According to verse 27, what does it mean to have “put on Christ”?
4. What three pairs of people does Paul mention in verse 28?
5. What kinds of divisions does each pair represent?
6. What explanation does Paul give at the end of verse 28 for why these distinctions no longer determine standing before God?
7. How does verse 29 connect Galatians 3:28 with God's promise to Abraham?

Thinking theologically

8. What is the difference between saying “**we are all equal**” and Paul's statement “**you are all one**”?
9. Does Galatians 3:28 eliminate differences between people, or does it eliminate the superiority attached to those differences? Explain from the text.
10. Why would “neither slave nor free” have sounded particularly radical in Paul's world?
11. Why is it significant that Paul does not say merely that we should **become one**, but that **we are one in Christ**?
12. How does justification by faith make spiritual pride logically impossible?
13. How does Galatians 3:28 connect with Galatians 2:16?
14. How does verse 28 prepare for Paul's statement in Galatians 6:15 that what matters is “a new creation”?

Personal application

15. Which human categories are you most tempted to use in judging someone's importance?
16. Who are the people you naturally find easiest to associate with?
17. Who are the Christians you might unconsciously avoid?
18. Have you ever felt spiritually inferior because of your background? How does Galatians 3:28 address that fear?
19. Have you ever felt spiritually superior because of your background, experience, knowledge, or position? How does this verse confront that attitude?
20. What would change in our church if we truly believed that every Christian possesses the same standing before God?