

**NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE: THE IMPLICATIONS OF GALATIANS 3:26-
29 FOR TODAY'S CHURCH**

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CHAPTER 1

THESIS PROPOSAL

1.1. Title of Thesis

Neither Male nor Female: The Implications of Galatians 3:26-29 for today's Church.

1.2. Background - Preliminary Literature Review

Johnson (1991:155) stated that the most important teachers in church history, such as, Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, Hippolytus, Gregory of Nyssa, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and John Chrysostom, each dealt with Galatians 3:26-29 in the context of salvation. Thus, the historic Christian orthodox understanding of this passage seemed best explained in terms of justification by faith in Christ, apart from works of the law.

However, it becomes apparent that Galatians 3:28 in the framework of Galatians 3:26-29, has not often been dealt with properly. Snodgrass (1991:161) argue that more often than not, Galatians 3:28 today has developed into a hermeneutical skeleton key where people may go through any door [text] of their choice. Hurley (1981:185) contends that much of the dispute has surfaced because of an abuse of this text. Thus, the doctrine of justification by faith seems to become a secondary subject, because the single verse of Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (NIV) in modern debate, suggests that "male and female" are now completely equal in every respect. In addition, the argument contends that, Paul abolished their church and family roles and functions in-lieu of this particular verse. The dispute of Galatians 3:28 therefore, attracted much attention in recent times, and we are often told by Christian scholars such as Jewett (1975:142), who view this verse as the great charter of Christian equality between "male and female" (the 'Magna Carta of Humanity'), and Snodgrass (1990:34), who speaks of verse 28 as the most socially explosive text in Scriptures. Furthermore, Catherine Booth, the Salvation Army co-founder, wrote:

“If this passage (*Galatians 3:28*) does not teach that in the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of Christ’s Kingdom, all differences of nation, caste, and sex are abolished, we should like to know what it does teach, and wherefore it was written” (1975:17).

Since then, Christian scholars have continued to disagree over what this text teaches and the extent of its application for today’s church. Frederick Bruce for example argues:

“It is not their distinctiveness (*“male and female”*), but their inequality of religious role, that is abolished ‘in Christ Jesus’ (1982:189-190).

The Apostle in his later letters, does set forth such restrictions, which may provide restrictions on female activities, which Bruce (*ibid*) seems to acknowledge, but maintains that they are to be understood in relation to Galatians 3:28. Schemm (2003) maintain that although this verse would appear to point towards an ethos of gender ontological equality for many Christians, others often cited it as a proof text for new social order. Yet, it becomes apparent that in most analyses on Galatians 3:28, little attention is given to a detailed study of the whole passage. Galatians 3:26-29 therefore ought to be interrogated, because without proper care and attention to the context, in the eye of the beholder this text may become a pretext, and may become a theological trump card or a kind of crux to undercut other clear Pauline passages that teach differences in responsibilities.

The actual meaning of this passage is critical for our times and we ought to discover how the Galatians’ understood the phrase “in Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ) there is “neither male nor female” (οὐ ἄρῶν, ἀρσεν θήλυς), and what the consequences and significance will be for today’s church. Hence, in light of the present confusion for many Christians, Galatians 3:26-29 must be investigated by attempting to set this verse in its historical and cultural context before proceeding to examine the Biblical exegetical intricacies involved.

I guess that Christ (Christos) is the nucleus of Galatians 3:26-29 and all obstruction to fellowship is removed, and that Scripture uses the phrase in Christ to enlighten us (believers) that we have

redemption (Romans 3:24). Thus, it seems obvious, the phrase “justified by faith in Christ”, implies we all (male and female; includes race and social status) have an equal standing before God and all have equal freedom in God’s kingdom. Hove (1999:46) claims that this union with Christ is expressed in a number of different ways: ‘in Christ Jesus’ (verse 26, 28); ‘baptised into Christ’ (verse 27), ‘clothed ... with Christ’ (verse 27) and ‘belong to Christ’ (verse 29).

Nevertheless, an in depth study and research of Galatians 3:28 in particular will help to see it in its narrower context. Verses 26, 27 and 29, provide the framework for the broader context of Paul’s entire Epistle to the Galatians.

1.3. Research Problem and Key Questions

The problem which this research attempts to address is: What are the implications of the phrase “neither male nor female” (ἄρσῆν, ἀρσῆν κα ἰθῆλυσ) with regards to Galatians 3:26-29 for today’s church?

The following secondary questions will assist in answering the research problem.

- 1.3.1.** What is the general scholarly agreement, regarding the author, date, destination and occasion in the Epistle to the Galatians?
- 1.3.2.** What are the major issues or concerns being addressed by the author, in the Epistle to the Galatians?
- 1.3.3.** What did Galatians 3:26-29 mean in to the original readers, that "in Christ" there is neither "male nor female"?
- 1.3.4.** What are the implications and significance of no distinction (“neither male nor female”) in Galatians 3:26-29 for today’s church?

1.4. Thesis Structure, influence impact

1.4.1. Background to the Problem, Aim and Objectives (Chapter 2)

This chapter will explain the motivation behind the selection of the periscope, namely, Galatians 3:26-29. This chapter will outline a brief literary review, giving rise to the research problem,

detailing the purpose and value of the thesis. Lastly, chapter two will sketch the methodology and it will conclude with a proposed thesis structure.

1.4.2. Research Methods (Chapter 3)

There must be sufficient detail in any exegetical study to clarify to the reader how the interpreter came to specific conclusions. Chapter three will involve research methods used primarily in biblical exegesis; interpretive tools used in the exegesis of Galatians 3:26-29.

1.4.3. The Book Context and Periscope Context of Galatians (Chapter 4)

The context is crucial to Biblical exegesis and may help answer key questions; e.g. the general scholarly agreement, and the author's primary concerns and the circumstances or background of this Epistle. Chapter four will involve looking at the author and background, including the historical and cultural context of Galatians, and identifying any aspect that will be relevant to its literal context and interpretation

1.4.4. The Meaning of Galatians 3:26-29 (Chapter 5)

Chapter five will be the heart of this study. This chapter will therefore involve a detailed inductive analysis of Galatians 3:26-29; thus, in order to discover its actual meaning and implications. This chapter therefore will explain what this passage actually meant to its original readers.

1.4.5. The Significance of Galatians 3:26-29 (Chapter 6)

Chapter six would explain the philosophical significance of "neither male nor female" in Galatians 3:26-29; what universal principles it teaches, how it harmonises with Scripture teachings, and what contribution it could make to Christian doctrines. Lastly, this chapter intent to identify the practical significance; how this passage may apply to the life and ministry of today's church.

1.4.6. Summary and Conclusion (Last Chapter)

This chapter will conclude a summary of this research outline, and whether this thesis has refuted or supported the hypothesis; the idea of Christ's presence in faith paradigm. That Galatians 3:26-29 seems to provide an unyielding defence of salvation by faith; all believers are justified the same way, by grace through faith, with the same consequences. Lastly, this chapter will propose for further research on this topic.

2.1. Research Methodology

Kevin Smith's & Noel Woodbridge's 2007 research model for Biblical Studies (study guide RES4121 Theological Research Methodology, page 41) will be utilized for this thesis. The Design and Methodology of this thesis consists of 5 steps, namely:

- Step 1 - The Introduction to the Thesis (the what, the why and the how).
- Step 2 - The Contextual Task.

Step 2 will consider the book context consisting of the general background, historical context, literary context and theological themes. This involves reviewing a variety of commentaries dealing with these contexts.

- Step 3 - Exegetical Analysis

The exegetical analysis (step 3) involves preliminary, verbal and literary analyses which will form the exegetical synthesis; describing what the author is attempting to communicate, and the meaning of Galatians 3:26-29. The analysis is done through carefully studying specific books dealing with textual criticism, grammatical difficulties and structure. The Literary analysis step includes the genre of the passage and its impact, the structure relationship between parts of the passage, and the rhetoric; examining the stylistic features which may have an impact the passage's meaning. The exegetical synthesis section should then begin to pull together the exegetical findings, and finally, the actual meaning of Galatians 3:26-29 of what the author tried to communicate to his readers should then become clear.

- Step 4 - Theological and practical significance of these passages

This step involves exploring the significance of Galatians 3:26-29 exegetical results at two levels, that is: (a) Theology (philosophical significance), expounding what this passage teaches us, about God, creation, as well as the relationship between God and creation (e.g. universal truths, harmonise etc), and (b) application (practical significance), identifying how this passage could apply to our situation today.

- Step 5 - Conclusion of the thesis

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND PROBLEM, AIM AND OBJECTIVES

2.1. Background

Humankind is divided according to their basic sexual identity (male and female) given at creation (Genesis 1:27); a distinction created by God which is generally regarded as an anthropological statement revoking the sexual dimorphism (Martyn 1998:376-377). Therefore, one can assume that if both men and women were created exactly the same sexually, without systematic differences, one would obviously be unnecessary. Nevertheless, after the fall, relationships between men and women resulted in conflicts (e.g. women's liberation and male chauvinism). Henceforth, differences between men and women in this world and the Lord's church are real and substantial.

In terms of the Mosaic law women in particular were excluded from the priesthood. As a result, Johnson (1991:151) asserts that Paul seemed to have the public prayers of the Jewish men in mind when writing Galatians 3:28, since they gave thanks to God for not being born a slave, a Gentile, or as a woman. Wallace (2004) states that the apostle declared these distinctions (neither male nor female) mentioned, invalid "in Christ" (verse 28), because salvation by faith alone is the explicit focal point. Accordingly, Hove (1999:46) describes a union with Christ that is expressed in a number of different ways: 'in Christ Jesus' (verse 26, 28); 'baptised into Christ' (verse 27), 'clothed ... with Christ' (verse 27) and 'belong to Christ' (verse 29).

However, even though notable teachers in church history dealt with this passage in the context of salvation (Johnson 1991:155), few scholars today interpreted the phrase "neither male nor female" as endorsing androgyny. The concern for many Christians though is that this verse is often quoted to authorize same-sex relationships (Howard 2010). Furthermore, Booth (1975:17) assumes that according to verse 28, all differences of nation, caste, and sex are abolished in the responsibilities, privileges and duties of Christ's Kingdom. Henceforth, Bruce (1982:189-190) believes that the inequality of religious roles of male and female is abolished in Christ, and Snodgrass (1990:34) consider Galatians 3:28 to be the most socially explosive statement in the

New Testament; as a succinct summary of the apostle's entire theology. Verse 28 is thus regarded as the Magna Carta of humanity, according to scholars as Jewett (1975:142).

Nonetheless, given a Christocentric paradigm, Galatians 3:28 appears to be the climax of Galatians 3:26-29, because this text appears to signify the implications of “neither male nor female” (οὐ ἄρρῆν, ἀρσῆν θῆλυς, *ou arrhēn arsēn kai thēlus*) are all one “in Christ Jesus” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦς, *en Christos Iēsous*). Yet, the primary message of Galatians 3:26-29 which appears to best explain the true gospel for all men and women (race and social status) in terms of justification by faith in Christ, though, has in-lieu of all the different arguments become a secondary matter or negated.

Thomas (2002:141-142) has recommended that a single Scripture passage has one meaning and the meaning of the text is fixed and unchanging. Thus, the intention of this mini-thesis is to make reality known by keeping Galatians 3:26-29 in context and true to the author's intended purpose for writing Galatians. Thus, due to the seemingly mystifications among many Christians regarding the meaning of the phrase “neither male nor female”, the rationale for selecting Galatians 3:26-29 is timely, given that this passage carries some profound significance for us today. Hence, verse 28 in particular reveals something about the implications of “neither male nor female” for today's church. The hypothesis of the basic message of soteriological truth (the nature of salvation) of this passage may hopefully be revealed with the outcome of this study, since Galatians 3:26-29 does appear to provide an unyielding defence of salvation by faith “in our Lord Christ Jesus”.

2.2. The Problem

The problem which this research attempts to address is: What are the implications then of the phrase “neither male nor female” (ἄρρῆν, ἀρσῆν καὶ θῆλυς) with regards to Galatians 3:26-29 for today's church?

The following subordinate questions will assist in answering the research problem.

- 2.2.2. What is the general scholarly agreement, regarding the author, date, destination and occasion in the Epistle to the Galatians?
- 2.2.3. What are the major issues or concerns being addressed by the author, in the Epistle to the Galatians?
- 2.2.4. What did Galatians 3:28 mean in to the original readers, especially that "in Christ" there is "neither male nor female"?
- 2.2.5. What are the implications and significance of no distinction ("neither male nor female") in Galatians 3:26-29 for today's church?

2.3. Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to do a comparative in-depth study of the phrase "neither male nor female" (ἄρῶν, ἀρσὴν καὶ ἰθῆλυσ) in Christ in this passage.

The objectives are as follow:

- Explain (descriptively and interpretively) the author, date, destination, occasion and message of writing the Epistle to the Galatians
- Explore and evaluate the various scholarly views of the theological and contextual meaning of the phrase "neither male nor female" in Galatians 3:28. Thus, to do a detailed inductive analysis of Galatians 3:26-29, in order to discover this passage's actual meaning and implications.
- Determine the philosophical significance of "neither male nor female" in Galatians 3:26-29, and identify the practical significance of how this passage may be applied to the life and ministry of today's church.
- Discover whether or not this mini-thesis has refuted or supported the hypothesis, the idea of soteriological truth (the nature of salvation).

2.4. Design

This study is approached by engaging in a Biblical literary research, by employing a literary analysis of the phrase "neither male nor female" in Christ in terms of Galatians 3:26-29'

contextual meaning and implications using for the most part commentaries and dictionaries. I shall also use specialist academic articles and recent books written on the Epistle to the Galatians; especially salvation in Christ and gender related topics regards to Galatians 3:26-29. The broad design therefore is to collect and organize data related to the research problem and then interpret the data in order to resolve the research problem.

2.5. Methodology

Chapter 2 will focus on the book context of Galatians 3:26-29 and will deal with all facets related to the general background (author, date and audience), historical (occasion and purpose) and literary contexts (structure and argument) of the Epistle to the Galatians and pericope in which this passage are located. Chapter 3 will focus on determining the theological and contextual meaning and implications of Galatians 3:26-29; especially the phrase “neither male nor female” in Christ (verse 28). Hence, chapter 3 will cover a detailed, inductive analysis of this passage. Chapter 4 will explore the significance of the exegetical findings of Galatians 3:26-29 at two levels, that is, theology and application. This section will therefore explain the significance of “neither male nor female” in Christ and will focus on what universal principles this passage teaches and how it harmonises with other Scripture teachings. Chapter 4 will also focus on what contribution Galatians 3:26-29 could make to Christian doctrines, and how this passage could apply to the life and ministry of today’s church. Lastly, Chapter 5 will revisit the hypothesis and close with a research summary.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

There must be sufficient detail in any exegetical study to clarify to the reader how the interpreter came to specific conclusions. Research methods used primarily in biblical exegesis is simply interpretive tools used in the exegesis of Galatians 3:26-29.

3.1. The Context: The Setting of the Passage

Knowing the context of a particular piece of literature is essential, because it identifies the plan and purpose of a given biblical passage; ignoring the context of Galatians 3:26-29 will create difficulties in the process of interpretation. Furthermore, knowing the context will help one to understand the correct message to the original audience (e.g. churches in Galatia) and its application for us today. The context therefore involves all facets relevant to the historical and literary contexts of the Epistle to the Galatians in which Galatians 3:26-29 for this research is to be found. This exegetical study should cover the immediate context of this passage, as well as the book context. The book context of the Epistle to the Galatians will cover the general background (authorship, date and audience), the historical context, the literary context and the theological themes (Smith 2008:172-173).

3.1.1 The Immediate Context

A text without a context is merely a pretext. Therefore, the immediate context of a passage in the Scripture is essential for the pericope, since it compels the interpreter to analyse the author's overall flow of thought. The context should include verses immediately before and after Galatians 3:26-29, the paragraph and the book in which this passage occurs. It is more likely to understand what the author was seeking to communicate to his original readers, when the interpreter analyzes what precedes and what follows a passage (Michelsen 1972:104-113). Kaiser (1981:83-85) explains that the text does not stand alone; the study of the context of a paragraph can be the discovery point of how the various book sections interact with one

another. The most basic and simple principle thus is, the author's context must control interpretation (McQuilkin 1992:163), since the message was given to a specific audience (e.g. Galatians), for a specific purpose, at a specific time.

3.1.2. The Book Context

Arp (2000:46) defines a book as a literary unit in which all the thoughts of the author are joined together, a connection that gives meaning to the entire book. An interpreter stands to be more erroneous if he or she only studies a small passage of a book. Most books were generally written and preserved as whole documents. A flow of thought is a chain of related ideas strung together to convey a specific meaning. Thus, the intended meaning of the author is expressed in the essence of the entire book. The book context is thus essential to understand in order to attempt to identify the overall purpose of a biblical book. For example, if the one wants to understand Paul's gospel, one should turn to the entire book of Galatians in order to get a sense for the authentic nature of the gospel of Christ.

3.1.2.1. General Background and Historical Context

A question for historical context: Where does the interpreter find the text in history? Thus, before studying a particular biblical passage, the interpreter must be familiar with the general background of the book in which it occurs. This includes pertinent facts about the author, date and recipients (e.g. the Galatia churches to which Paul wrote) of the book of the Bible. Hence, the date of the Epistle to the Galatians greatly depends on the destination of the letter, and the historical context is related primarily to the purpose and the timing of Galatians. Furthermore, the historical setting is also essential to understand the Epistle's message (Smith 2008:172). Stiles (2008) assert that the historical context of a biblical message in many texts is intrinsically associated to the meaning of that biblical message.

The objective of the historical research is to reconstruct; the relationship between the author and the audience, or the people involved. Hence, the situation of the author will especially help explain why he wrote Galatians 3:26-29, and knowing the recipients in the text of Galatians

could help explain why the author penned this written information to them. Knowing when Galatians was written may enable the interpreter to include in the analysis historical information from other sources for that period. Thus, it is essential to understand the historical context of the Epistle to the Galatians; to know why Paul wrote this letter, his knowledge about the circumstances of his readers, any political circumstances that could have had an influence, and the religious parties that may be involved in the meaning of the text etc. (Fee and Stuart 2003:59).

3.1.2.2. The Literary Context

A question for literary context: Where is Galatians 3:26-29 positioned in the larger letter of which it is a part? Thus, the literary context involves structure and argument of Galatians (i.e. the flow of thought). How one understands the overall argument and structure of the book (Galatians) will have an immense impact on how one will understand the passage's meaning (Smith 2008:172). The biblical authors generally communicate their messages in decipherable steps. Hence, in order to understand these steps, one must consider the structure and flow of the larger context of Galatians. Changes in the text may present hints to the structure of the author's thoughts. The framework or outline of the book (Galatians) is beneficial in discerning the overall plan of the book for the meaning of the verses, passages, as well as sections (Lewis 2006:2-4). Kaiser (1981:77-78) asserts that the overall intention of the book must be established by the contents and the transitions from paragraph to paragraph as well as section to section. Tracing the structure argument in the epistle to the Galatians will be the most essential step in the exegetical process (Schreiner 1990:98). The immediate context of the author is the final guide for the meaning of a concept or term (Arp 2000:45).

3.1.2.3. Theological Themes

A survey of the foremost themes and motifs of the Epistle to the Galatians would also be essential, this section will analyse what the entire letter teaches regarding themes of the focal point of the passage selected (Smith 2008:173).

3.2. Communication of the Passage

This section will consist of an exegetical thesis of a thorough analysis of Galatians 3:26-29 (Smith 2008:174).

3.2.1. Preliminary analysis

The preliminary exegetical work involves textual criticism (reconstructing the original text by weighing various readings), analysing textual variants and translating Galatians 3:26-29 (Smith 2008:173).

3.2.2. Contextual analysis

Contextual analysis will entail determining the primary historical occasion the writer was addressing as well as to analyse any cultural or historical allusions in Galatians 3:26-29. Finally, it also involves examining the literary context of this passage, which incorporates viewing the passage within the context of its immediately related passages, the book context of the Epistle to the Galatians and the canonical context (Smith 2008:174).

3.2.3. Verbal analysis

Verbal analysis entails exploring the writer's language; by focusing on the author's words and identifying and deciphering figures of speech to uncover what the individual meant to say. Verbal analysis will therefore involve studying Galatians 3:26-29 actual words, that is, the *lexical analysis* (meaning) and *grammatical analysis* (relationships) (Smith *ibid*). The specific meaning that a word has in a specific situation is evidently specified by the grammatical constructions in which the word appears. Thus, lexical study is necessary for conducting word studies on key words, in order to know the meaning of Galatians 3:26-29 as the writer intended it to mean for the original audience (Kaiser 1981:105).

3.2.4. Literary Analysis

This step, the exegete analyses the literary features of Galatians 3:26-29 to determine the impact on the meaning of the passage (Smith 2008:175). Literary analysis includes:

- Identifying the specific and general *genre* of the passage and the impacts it has upon the interpretation of the text
- Examining the affiliation between sections of Galatians 3:26-29; such as semantic *structure* sentence or diagrams analyses
- Analysing the text's stylistic features which may have an influence on its meaning.

3.2.5. Exegetical synthesis

This section finally moves toward synthesis, drawing together the interpreter's exegetical findings of the various parts already identified. Hence, to comprehend how the various parts function, in order to convey a message. This section thus should identify what the author attempted to communicate to his recipients through Galatians 3:26-29 by pulling together the various aspects of the interpreter's analysis, such as (Bratcher 2006):

- Discovering all major issues or concerns being dealt with in Galatians 3:26-29
- The impact or effect of the combination of literary devices, genre and structure on the meaning of Galatians 3:26-29
- The affiliation between the concerns and the motifs of Galatians 3:26-29
- The affiliation of these concerns and motifs to the Galatians' historical setting

3.3. Application: The Significance of Galatians 3:26-29

Application will come after Galatians 3:26-29 is accurately and properly interpreted, for the exegete should know first the author's intended meaning of this passage and then apply it to today's audience (Zuck 1984:279). Exegesis is not finalized until it connects the Scripture text from the past with the present, endorsing the ancient biblical message to communicate to today's modern context (Smith 2008:177). The significance of Galatians 3:26-29 thus will

concentrate on the pivotal idea in the exposition of this particular passage. The aim of exegesis is to understand the author's intended meaning of the particular passage and then to apply it to the present audience, to apply in the life and ministry of today's church. This should be a cautiously thought out judgment of the theological value (implications, importance etc.) of the passage's message as an authoritative part of Scriptures, for the community of faith (Bratcher 2006).

Henceforth, this section will involve exploring the significance of the mentioned passage's exegetical results at two levels, that is: (a) theology (philosophical significance), expounding what this passage teaches us, about God, creation, as well as the relationship between God and creation (e.g. universal truths and how it harmonise with the whole teaching of Scripture), and (b) application (practical significance), identifying how this passage could apply to our situation today (Smith 2008:176).

CHAPTER 4

BOOK CONTEXT OF GALATIANS 3:26-29

This chapter focuses on the book context of Galatians 3:26-29 and will deal with all facets related to the general background (author, date and audience), historical (occasion and purpose) and literary contexts (structure and argument) of the Epistle to the Galatians.

4.1. General Background

The general background of the Epistle to the Galatians deals with the key aspects of authorship, date and audience.

4.1.1. Authorship

Whether Paul was the author is questioned by a minority within the Dutch liberal criticism (Boice 1976:421). Schnelle (1998:93) on the contrary states that the Pauline authorship of Galatians is uncontested. Brown (2009:1) says this is as a result of the extensive autobiographical information given in the letter. Thus, the unanimous view of the early church was that Galatians is truly Pauline, and even though modern critics object to the authorship of several books in the New Testament, they too admit that this letter is truly Pauline (Copeland 2009:3). Wallace (1999) asserts that the Epistle to the Galatians is undoubtedly the most reliable of all of the apostle's letters and possibly of all the New Testament books. Tenney (1989:44) explains that Paul's name (couplet with his title as apostle) is not an arbitrary inclusion mentioned in the salutation of this letter (1:1), for it appears again in the body of Galatians (5:2). The authorship of the letter thus need not be subject to uncertainty, since both the internal and the external evidence are very strong.

4.1.2. Date and Audience

Almost all scholars concur that the date of Galatians seems to be one of the most difficult problems in the Pauline studies, and Scripture does not specifically state the time and place when this letter was written. However, Guthrie (1990:472) explains that the date of the Epistle to the Galatians greatly depends on the destination of the letter. Thus, what is essential for the interpretation of this Epistle is the internal evidence from Galatians concerning the original audience, because the “apostle Paul” (1:1) was writing this letter to the “churches in Galatia” (1:2). Moreover, Brown (2009:2) agrees that the location of the Galatia churches does affect the date of the Epistle to the Galatians; however, his major concern is whether the apostle wrote the letter before or after the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15).

Knight (2005:22) points out that the churches of Galatia could signify two different perspectives: That is, the north central Asia Minor region which was the ethnic Galatians’ home, or the Roman province of Galatia which includes the southern cities such as Iconium, Derbe and Lystra; this region spreads from the northern ethnic Galatia down throughout central Asia Minor, according to him. Carson (2006:1) states that bible commentators assumed that Paul's epistle was written to Christians living in Northern Galatia until the eighteenth century, but the Roman Empire included a region in South Central Asia Minor during Paul’s day as part of the province of Galatia. He further says that this region included the cities of Iconium, Lystra, Psidian, Derbe and Antioch, which the apostle visited through his first missionary journey, but the Roman Empire however readjusted the Galatia boundaries by the second century A.D. to exclude this region.

Nevertheless, scholars in favour of the South Galatia hypothesis usually date the letter either before or after the Jerusalem Council described in Acts 15, around 48, 49 or 56 A. D. (Herrick 1997:3). On the other hand, scholars who hold on to a North Galatia hypothesis date Galatians on or around the period of the Ephesian ministry of Paul, 56 A.D. (Bruce 1972:251). Conner and Malmin (1975:9) assume that Galatians was most probably written between 48 and 58 A.D. from Antioch; either at the end of the apostle’s first or second missionary. Carson, Morris and Moo (1992:294) on the other hand explain that Galatians, in light of the conversation at the Jerusalem Council was apparently written just prior to the meeting, since Paul would have used

the Council's decision as a main argument for his defence in his letter. This could therefore mean that the apostle most probably wrote the Epistle in Antioch (cf. Acts 14:26-28).

Herrick 1997:20 asserts that the South region probably included the churches of Iconium (Phrygia), Antioch (Pisidia), Derbe, Lystra and vicinity, and that the date of the letter could possibly be sometime after Paul's first missionary (Acts 13, 14), before the Jerusalem Council. The Bible seems to give no indication of any church establishments in North Galatia, but Scriptures do give an indication (Acts 13:1-14:28) of the establishment of churches (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe) in South Galatia. Furthermore, Paul's original readers were seemingly acquainted with Barnabas (2:1, 9, 13), because Barnabas accompanied Paul only on the first missionary journey into the southern cities. Thus, most scholars today accept the Southern Galatia hypothesis, and Bruce (1969:266) therefore concludes that the most possible place to put Galatians appears to be on the eve of the Jerusalem meeting explained in Act 15:6. Therefore, the original recipients of Paul's letter could probably have been citizens of such cities as Lystra, Iconium and Derbe in Southern Galatia where Paul had established churches on his first missionary journey, somewhere between 48 and 56 A.D.

4.2 Historical Context: Occasion and Purpose

The apostle Paul wrote mainly to stop the tide of Jewish Christians heresy which is evident throughout the epistle (Hale 1996:727). Paul, along with Barnabas, as revealed in Acts 13:51 - 14:23, travelled to the region of Galatia on the continent of Asia Minor to witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They preached to God fearing Gentiles and Jews in the Southern part of the province of Galatia. The churches throughout this province were predominately Gentile. However, after Paul and Barnabas left the area, some Jewish Christians apparently came into the area and taught that those who supported the Christian salvation must also submit to Jewish law (Carson Douglas and Moo 1992:456). Historically, most traditional scholars believed that Paul's opponents were Judaizers, and even though a number of alternative views have arisen in the last seventy years, Russell (1990:350) has concluded that the traditional viewpoint is without any doubt the correct one.

Constable (2010:2) asserts that Paul's critics seem to have been Jews, professed to be Christians and who acknowledged Christ, who probably came from Jerusalem and obviously had a broad influence (cf. Acts 15) and one man appeared as being their spokesperson (3:1; 5:7, 10). Nevertheless, the situation in Galatia appears to be very similar to the situation recorded in Acts 15:1, Copeland (2009:4) thus explains from Scripture that these men taught that unless Gentile Christians are circumcised according to the law of Moses, they can't be saved (cf. Acts 15:1). Paul recognized those who were trying to be justified by the law had been cut off from Christ; they had fallen away from grace (Galatians 5:4).

Copeland (2009:4) further explains that these enemies of the true gospel of Christ tried to encourage their argument by undermining the authority of Paul as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Thus, the fact that Paul's opponents attacked both his authority as an apostle, plus his integrity as a preacher and follower of Christ, made it necessary for him to verify that he was truly an apostle, "sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father" (1:1) NIV. The greatest need as it appears from this epistle was for Paul's readers to comprehend the true nature of the gospel, and since the gospel had been confirmed by Paul himself (cf. Gal. 1:8), it was also essential for the Galatians to know who he was (Thomas 2004:12).

Paul thus wrote the impassioned remonstrance contained in this epistle as a protest against corruption of the gospel of Christ; he responded by clearly establishing his apostolic authority and thereby substantiating the gospel of justification by faith in Christ (Copeland 2009:4). Since the bedrock of the epistle to the Galatians is soteriology (Garlington 2008:5), the purpose for Paul writing this epistle thus was a matter of heresy versus truth (Thomas 2004:10). Henceforth, the rationale is to restore the churches in Galatia to a healthy, God-glorifying faith (Andrews 1996:27); that is, to honour Jesus Christ and to lead men on the path of salvation (Hale 1996:730). Paul wanted to expose and reprove those as heretics who attempt to mix the works of men with the work of Christ, and to establish God's elect in the gospel of God's grace and glory in Christ; on this occasion Paul stood boldly and singularly for justification by faith in Christ alone, because Christ is all things when it comes to personal salvation (Fortner 2007:48).

4.3 Literary contexts

4.3.1 Structure and Argument

The structure of the epistle to the Galatians seems quite simple according to Barrett (1985:3). He states that the letter begins with an introduction (Galatians: 1:1-10), and has six chapters that can be further categorised into three distinct sections, history, theology and ethics. Chapters 1-2 deal with history, because Paul first concerns himself with the disturbed situation in the Galatia churches to set the records of the past straight; since he believed there could be no hope of securing the future until that is done. Thereafter, in chapters 3-4 the apostle then shifts to theology, after dealing with the past. He then sets forth the appropriate awareness upon which the future must rest. Lastly, in chapters 5-6 Paul ends his letter with ethics. The apostle's theology of freedom thus leads unswervingly to an ethic of obligation (ibid).

According to both Wallace (1999:9-10) and Thomas (2004:xix), the overall structure of the epistle to the Galatians is as follows: Chapters 1-2 begin with the introduction (Galatians 1:1-10), explaining the reason for the letter (Paul's denunciation) and also deal with the personal defence of the apostleship of Paul (Galatians 1:11-2:21). Paul's defence of justification by faith (Galatians 3:1-4:31) is dealt with in chapters 3-4. The apostle deals with practical defence of Christian liberty (Galatians 5:1-6:10) in chapters 5-6; and he ends the letter with a conclusion (Galatians 6:11-18). Hale (1996:728) has also structured the epistle as follows: Chapters 1-2 also begin with the introduction (Galatians 1:1-10) and likewise deal with the personal defence of the apostleship of Paul (Galatians 1:11-2:21). Paul's defence of the gospel which includes justification by faith (Galatians 3:1-4:31) is dealt with in chapters 3-4. In chapters 5-6, Paul calls the Galatians to Godly living (Galatians 5:1-6:18) and the epistle ends with a conclusion (Galatians 6:11-18).

Constable (2010:3) structured Galatians as follows: stating that Paul begins this letter with a salutation and denunciation (Gal. 1:1-10) followed by a personal defence of his gospel (Galatians 1:11-2:21). The apostle then explains theological affirmation of salvation by faith (Galatians 3:1-4:31), which includes: (a) the vindication of the doctrine such as, the experiential argument

(applying the principle stated in Galatians 2:15-21), Scriptural argument (appealing to Scripture to defend salvation by faith alone) and logical argument (the continuation of faith after the giving of the law in Galatians 3:15-18), and (b), the clarification of the doctrine, such as, the domestic illustration, historical illustration and biblical illustration. Furthermore, Paul deals with the practical application to Christian living (Galatians 5:1-6:10), explaining the balance in the Christian life (Gal. 5:16-26) and the responsibilities of the Christian life. Paul ends the letter with a conclusion (Galatians 6:11-18).

Matera's (1992:12-13) structure of Galatians is as follows: Chapters 1-2 begin with greetings and a rebuke (Galatians 1:1-5), a statement of astonishment (Galatians 1:6-11) and end with the truth of the gospel (Galatians 1:11-2:21). Furthermore, chapters 3-5 are about the children of the promise (Galatians 3:1-5:12), and chapters 5-6 are about living by the spirit (5:13-6:10) and ends with a conclusion (Galatians 6:11-18). Pounds (2006) explains the structure of the epistle as follows: Chapters 1-2 begin with the introduction (Galatians 1:1-10) explaining Paul's authority, his gospel and his problem, and deals with justification by faith defended by Paul (Galatians 1:11-2:21); which includes Paul's authority attained, approved and acknowledged. In chapters 3-4 Paul deals with the justification by faith defined (Galatians 3:1-4:31). Chapters 5-6 deal with justification by faith applied (Galatians 5:1-6:10) and also ends with a conclusion (Galatians 6:11-18).

The structure of Galatians seems symmetrical and logical, and every Bible scholar mentioned above, applies almost similar structures, though they use minor differences in labelling some sections of the selected passage. This cautiously written polemic approaches the dilemma from three directions: the gospel of grace defended (chapters 1-2), the gospel of grace explained (chapters 3-4), and the gospel of grace applied (chapters 5-6) (Keathley, 2004).

4.3.2 Themes and Motives

The essential truth of justification by faith rather than the works of law were disguised by Judaizers. Galatians was therefore written as a protest against corruption of Christ's gospel (Tenney 1982:269). Tenney (1989:26) states that the central theme of the letter to the Galatians

is Christian liberty. The apostle thus seeks to explain in his letter that believers in Christ are to be saved by faith in what the Lord has done for them instead of their own diligence in preserving the precepts of the law revealed.

Johnson (1991:150) explains that Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is probably his first letter, which focuses on two major themes: Justification of the believer in Christ apart from legal works, and the Holy Spirit ministering as the indwelling energizer of the spiritual life in Jesus Christ. According to Kugler and Hartin (2009:457), Paul's central message is that Christ was the fulfilment of the Torah and that believers were set free from its obedience. The concern for Paul is the role of Christ in salvation; justification comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not through performing works of the law. Furthermore, the equality of all in Christ, comes through union with Christ (Galatians 3:28); a theological unity that Paul conveyed through the images of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31), and the wild olive branches grafted onto the vine of Israel (Romans 11:17-24).

MacArthur (2010:2) contends that the central theme of the epistle to the Galatians is justification by faith, which according to him is the heart of the gospel, because Paul defends this doctrine in its theological (chapters 3-4) and practical (chapters 5-6) implications. Furthermore, other main theological themes which are remarkably similar to Romans, are as follows (ibid): the incapability of the law to justify (Galatians 2:16); the deadness of the believer to the law (Galatians 2:19); the crucifixion of the believer with Christ (Galatians 2:20); Abraham's justification by faith (Galatians 3:6); believers are spiritual children of Abraham (Galatians 3:7) and for that reason blessed (Galatians 3:9); the law does not bring salvation but the wrath of God (3:10); the righteous will live by faith (Galatians 3:11); universal sin (Galatians 3:22); those who believe are spiritually baptized into Christ Galatians (Galatians 3:27); those who believe are adopted as spiritual children of God (Galatians 4:5-7); our love (*agapaō*) from the Holy Spirit who dwells within us for other fulfils the law (Galatians 5:14); the significance of living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16); the struggle of the flesh against the Spirit (Galatians 5:17), and the significance of believers bearing each others' burdens (Galatians 6:2).

The book of Galatians thus obviously addresses problems raised by the oppressive theology of certain Judaizers who had caused some of the Galatia believers to trade their freedom in Christ for bondage to the law. The apostle therefore wrote this influential letter as a protest against corruption of Christ's gospel and to do away with the false gospel of works and to demonstrate the supremacy of justification by grace through faith. The main theme of Galatians is that the law is no longer in effect, and salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ, not in keeping the law. The consequence of justification by grace through faith in Christ is spiritual freedom; hence, the apostle espoused the certainty that salvation could be accomplished by faith alone, without having to comply with the demands of the Jewish law.

CHAPTER 5

MEANING OF GALATIANS 3:26-29

This section deals with a detailed analysis of Galatians 3:26-29, which involves a literary analysis and an exegetical synthesis, in order to examine the literary features of this passage and to pull together the exegetical findings.

5.1. Preliminary Analysis

5.1.1. Boundaries

Betz (1979:185) has noticed that Paul shifted from first person plural in verse 25 to second person plural in verse 26. Hove (1999:46) affirms on this basis that the Apostle Paul changes from "we" (Galatians 23-25) to the second person pronoun "you" (Galatians 3:26-29), indicating a shift of awareness from Israel to believers who are made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Schreiner (2010:253) explains that by considering the nature of the law in relation to God's promises regarding Paul's argument in 3:1-25, the Apostle now moves to confirm that the law as pedagogue is now passed because all believers are now sons and daughters of God in Christ through faith. Thus, the main thought of Galatians 3:26-29 is that all believers, including Gentiles are Abraham's promised sons by virtue of being in Christ, who Himself is Abraham's one true offspring of Galatians 3:16 (ibid: 254).

Wright (1996:192) said that two topics are found in Galatians 3:26-28 which is side by side, that is justification by faith and union (participation) with Christ. Hove (1999:41) has suggested that the content of Galatians 3:26-29 confirms that this passage is framed by two essential sections, that is, "you are all sons of God" (verse 26a), and "you are Abraham's seed" (verse 29). Balge (1981:1) suggest that Galatians 3:26-28 practically provides a climactic answer to the questions which troubled the Galatians congregations. He thus summarizes the issue with "justification" or "freedom from the law," but explains that it was also conveyed in other ways; quoting from

Galatians 2:15-16, he says, the answer from Paul to these issues is "by faith" and "not by works."

Fee (2000:59) argued that often many claim that Galatians 3:26-29 is a soteriological text; meaning that all people coming to Christ on the basis of equal ground of faith. Although he does not despise these claims, he explains that it would be theologically disastrous to divorce ecclesiology from soteriology in this passage. He therefore claims that this passage is ecclesiological by the fact that it is also soteriological. Snodgrass (1986:180-181) thus appeals to Galatians 2:11-14 contending that the phrase "male and female" in Galatians 3:28 has social implications which leads to women ministry as they did in the New Testament, thus, indicating that this passage signifies ecclesiastical equality.

However, Knight (1985:32) thus argued that Christian service is every believer's responsibility, but the office of elder is not everyone's responsibility. Everyone therefore does not have the sovereign gift of the Spirit for Christian teaching (cf. Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:6, 11, 29; 1 Peter 4:10-11). Furthermore, Schreiner (2001:187) also contends, this is not to deny that Galatians 3:26-29 will have some social implications, but we must read the rest of what Paul wrote in order to explain accurately what these social implications are; hence he contends that verse 28 cannot be used to silence other clear Scriptural text which actually deals specifically with gender relationships in the church. Balge's (1981:3) contention thus makes sense, explaining that the apostle was not setting forth ethical demands or visioning an ideal state, he however stated a reality. He further says that verse 28 obviously is dependent upon and relates to the statements that precede it. Thus, verse 28 restates the truths of both verses 26 and 27 as verse 27 had restated the truth of verse 26. Therefore, it is apparent that justification by faith, through baptism in Christ Jesus affects a marvellous and new status before God.

Both Johnson (2005) and Copeland (2001:13-14) also agrees and who also seems to be convincing, argue that Paul's argument in Galatians 3:26-29 was to prove that all believers, both male and female, are justified by faith in Christ. Through faith in Christ all believers from all races, both male and female, have become sons of God; both male and female believers had put on Christ for being baptized into Christ (verse 26-27). Hence, being in Christ, believers

become one in Him; meaning all racial, social, and sexual distinctions are isolated (verse 28) as it relates to salvation. Also, being in Christ Jesus make believers Abraham's seed and thereby heirs according to the promise made by God (verse 29). Schemm (2003:28) thus maintain that Galatians 3:26-29 is a soteriological text, because according to this passage, it is very obvious that all believers have an equal standing before God. Thus, the whole passage rather seems to speak about Paul's defence of justification by faith; about the nature of salvation and our spiritual standing before God. That is, that salvation is totally of God without regard to race, status or sex of those saved and that we (both male and female) are all equally blessed.

5.1.2. Translation and Structure

5.1.2.1. Greek Word Studies (Robertson, 1930)

Transl. Words	Transliterated Word	Definition
for	<i>gar</i>	for, because
all	<i>pas</i>	all , each, every, the whole, collectively
sons	<i>huios</i>	sons, descendants, offspring, children (KJV)
God	<i>theos</i>	God (God the Father)
through	<i>dia</i>	through, by way of, by means of, by (KJV)
faith	<i>pistis</i>	Faith, trust, belief in, confidence
in	<i>en</i>	in, with, by
Christ	<i>Christos</i>	Anointed, the Son of God, the Messiah
Jesus	<i>Iesous</i>	Joshua = Jehovah is salvation, the Lord
were baptized	<i>baptizo</i>	to immerse, to dip, to submerge in water, have been baptized (KJV)
into	<i>eis</i>	unto, into, in
have clothed	<i>enduo</i>	put on something, dress, arrayed, clothe, clothe with, clothe oneself with, have put on (KJV)
there is	<i>eni</i>	there is, there exists
neither	<i>ou</i>	Neither, no, not, none
Jew	<i>Ioudaios</i>	Jewish, belonging to the Jewish race

Transl. Words	Transliterated Word	Definition
Greek	<i>Hellen</i>	Greek, a Gentile, pagan, foreigner, non-Jew
there is	<i>eni</i>	There is, there exists
neither	<i>ou</i>	no, not, none, neither
slave	<i>doulos</i>	slave, a bond slave, bondman, bond (KJV)
nor	<i>oude</i>	Nor, neither, not even
free man	<i>eleutheros</i>	freeborn, not a slave, not bound, free (KJV)
there is	<i>eni</i>	There exists, there is
neither	<i>ou</i>	Neither, no, not, none
male	<i>arsen</i>	Man, a male
and	<i>kai</i>	and, moreover, also
female	<i>thelus</i>	a female, woman
are	<i>este</i>	to be," denotes what exists
one	<i>heis</i>	one, single, one and the same
if	<i>ei</i>	Whether, if, perchance.
belong to Christ	<i>Christos</i>	be Christ's (KJV)
then	<i>ara</i>	accordingly, then, therefore
Abraham's	<i>Abraam</i>	Abraham= father of a multitude, the son of Terah and founder of the Jewish nation.
offspring	<i>sperma</i>	the seed, of human or animal semen (sperm), offspring or descendants, seed (KJV)
heirs	<i>kleronomos</i>	An heir, one receiving an allotted portion. In the sense of one receiving what God has promised
according	<i>kata</i>	After, according to, in agreement with, corresponding to, in accordance with, as a result of, on the basis of
to promise	<i>epaggelia</i>	Declaration, promise, an announcement, message, assurance, a promise given

5.1.2.2. Bible Translations

It is helpful to see what Bible versions have done to solve the problem of how to translate 3:26-29. The New International Version (NIV), King James Version (KJV) and American Standard Version (ASV), Greek New Testament regards to Galatians 3:26-27, translates and differs (e.g. key words) as follows (Smith 2007: 26-28):

Bible	Verse	Translation
NIV	26	<u>So</u> in Christ Jesus you are all “ children of God ” “ <i>through faith</i> ”
KJV	26	“ For ” ye are all the “ children of God ” <i>by faith</i> in Christ Jesus.
ASV	26	“ For ” ye are all <u>sons of God</u> , “ <i>through faith</i> ”, in Christ Jesus.
Greek	26	Πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ·
NIV	27	For <u>all of you</u> who were baptized into Christ have <u>clothed yourselves with Christ</u>
KJV	27	For “ <i>as many of you</i> ” as have been baptized into Christ “ <i>have put on Christ</i> ”
ASV	27	For “ <i>as many of you</i> ” as were baptized into Christ “ <i>did put on Christ</i> ”
Greek	27	ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε.
NIV	28	“ There is neither ” Jew nor Gentile, <u>neither</u> slave nor free, nor is there male “ and ” female, for you are all “ one ” in Christ Jesus
KJV	28	“ There is neither ” Jew nor Greek, “ there is neither ” bond nor free, “ there is neither ” male <u>nor</u> female: for ye are all “ one ” in Christ Jesus
ASV	28	<u>There can be neither</u> Jew nor Greek, <u>there can be neither</u> bond nor free, <u>there can be no</u> male “ and ” female; for ye all are <u>one man</u> in Christ Jesus
Greek	28	οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.
NIV	29	If <u>you belong to Christ</u> , then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise
KJV	29	“ And ” if ye be Christ’s , then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise
Bible	Verse	Translation
ASV	29	“ <u>And</u> ” if ye are Christ’s , then are ye Abraham’s seed, heirs according to

Greek	29	promise <i>εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἄρα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ σπέρμα ἐστέ κατ' ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι.</i>
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5.1.2.3. Grammatical Function and Structure

A block diagram in understanding what is being conveyed by the passage. This will allow one to grasp the natural outline of the text as it falls out of the grammar and each line is given its grammatical function. Thus, the first two verses may be compared in the following block diagram (McLaughlin 1999:11):

Verse	Subject	Way to Resultant Condition	Resultant Condition
26	"All"	"Through faith" (NIV)	"Ye are all sons of God (ASV)
Greek	<i>Πάντες</i>	<i>τῇ πίστει</i>	<i>υἱοὶ (sons) Θεοῦ (God) ἐστε (is; are)</i>
27	"As many"	"Who were baptized into Christ"	"You have <u>clothed yourselves with Christ</u> ,"
Greek	(KJV) <i>ὅσοι</i>	<i>εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε</i>	<i>Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε</i>

The significance of verses 26 and 27 comes out most obviously when these verses are evaluated in their literary context, taking notice of the rhetorical force of their constituent components. The postpositive ("for") presents verse 27 as an explanatory phrase paralleling verse 26. As can be observed through this parallelism in verses 26 and 27, to be clothed with Christ is to share in the benefits of His son-ship through union with Him. Baptism into Christ (*εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε*) symbolizes coming to faith ("*τῇ πίστει*"). What Paul stated in verse 26, the Apostle reiterated here: "all" (*Πάντες*) those who have come to faith in Christ have been united to Him.

Walden explained (2010:24) rationally that translating could help simplify this passage by attending more vigilantly to the context and wording where possible, in the interest of an "equal" philosophy of translation in structure and meaning. The words *οὐκ ἔνι* ("there is neither") arise before each of the couplets in verse 28 (e.g. KJV), this emphasis on rhetorical

should rather be preserved, instead of translating this verse only one time and then listing the couplets (e.g. NIV). Nevertheless, in order to see the natural outline of Galatians 3:26-29 as it falls out of the grammar and what is being conveyed, the translation of the whole passage is presented in the following block diagram, an idea from Schreiner's (2010:254-255) graphical layout:

Verse	Grammatical function	Means/Resultant Condition
26a	Basis/assertion	“For” (γὰρ) you are all sons of God (of 3:23-25)
26b	Sphere	“in Christ Jesus” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ)
26c	Means	<u>“through faith”</u> (τῇ πίστει)
27	Basis of 26a-c	<u>“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ”</u>
28a	inference from verse 27	“There is neither Jew nor (οὐδέ) Greek”
28b	series	“There is neither slave nor (οὐδέ) free”
28c	Series	“There is neither is there male nor (καὶ) female”
28d	Basis of 28a-c	“For” (γὰρ) you are all one (εἷς) in <u>Christ Jesus</u> ”
29a	Condition	“If (εἰ) <u>you belong to Christ</u> (δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ), then you are <u>Abraham’s seed</u> ” (ἄρα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ σπέρμα)
29b	Parallel	“and heirs according to the promise”

The structure thus of Galatians 3:26-29 explains what the grammatical structure of the whole text communicates. It therefore helps to interpret and summarize the meaning of the various clauses within the pericope. Thus, Paul's explanatory use of “so” (NIV) or “for” (KJV), in verse 26 obviously serves as the ground for Galatians 3:23-25. Verse 27 again aids as the ground for verse 26. Verse 28 describes what both verses 26 and 27 signifies, that there is no

distinguishing between people “in Christ”; includes everybody (race, status and gender). Verse 28d grounds the first part of verse 28 and repeats verse 26.

Hove (1999:46) explains that this union with Christ is expressed in a number of different ways: ‘in Christ Jesus’ (verse 26, 28); ‘baptised into Christ’ (verse 27), ‘clothed ... with Christ’ (verse 27) and ‘belong to Christ’ (verse 29). Thus, our current pericope signifies that a believer gets “unto” Christ (*εἰς Χριστόν*, verse 24 and 27), who can be “in” Christ (*ἐν Χριστῷ*, verses 26 and 28) and a believer who also “belongs to” Christ (*δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ*, verse 29) continues to be an area of interest. Verse 28 present examples of eradicating some constraints. Thus, a person does not have to be Jew, master, or a male, since Greeks, servants, and females are also entitled. The latter is noteworthy due to the value some ascribed to circumcision (Walden 2010:24).

Lastly, verse 29 obviously performs as the climax to the pericope, those who are in Christ are the true offspring of Abraham and are part of Abraham’s family and as such are his heirs to His promises, because Christ is Abraham's seed; hence, we are therefore partakers of the promise (3:29). Schreiner (2010:254) thus affirms that the central thought of verses 26 to 29 is that we believers are by virtue of our union with Christ Jesus, therefore the offspring of Abraham. Einwechter (2010) perceived that God made His covenant with Abraham, due to the principle of male representation established by God in Genesis. The significant thus is, the covenant was not only with Abraham but with his seed, and this covenant included the household of Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 17:7-10). However, Copeland (2006:26) thus said that normal birth is a reality for worldly people and is irrelevant to God for the objectives of salvation. Thus, being Christ's hinges around faith; since, Paul said, only in Christ we are Abraham's seed. The heirs of Abraham concerning the seed promise are not those who seek salvation through keeping Moses’ law and who claim to be so because of their lineage through Isaac or Ishmael. Henceforth, the sons of Abraham is those having the same kind of faith as Abraham; that is, believing God as he did (Galatians 3:6), eager to walk in the steps of the faith" which he had (cf. Romans 4:11-12) and who have an obedient faith like Abraham did (cf. Hebrews 11:8-10). In addition, no matter what racial makeup, believers in Christ become Abraham's spiritual descendents because Jesus says, "Abraham's children... do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39).

Believing Christians therefore regard Abraham as their spiritual father through Christ (Galatians 3:29).

5.2. Exegetical Synthesis

5.2.1. Those Who Have Placed Their Faith in Christ

One becomes aware of the first word in all the major translations with exception of the NIV, the conjunction “for”. The conjunction “for” connects this verse to the preceding verses, specifically Galatians 3:24-25. Thus, Johnson (2005) argues the word “for” justifies a new status, because all believers are sons, freemen of God, through faith (τῇ πίστει) which has brought them into unity with Christ. Balge (1981:1) agrees saying that the explanatory “for” (γὰρ) relates the verse 25, which concluded an argument of the purpose, function and nature of the Mosaic law (3:16-25). Furthermore, the word “sons” for sons of God seem to be a better translation than children, which all the good foremost translations translate, with the exception of the KJV. Russ (2009) clearly explains that “sons” may be a better translation because sons signify “somebody of full age”, grown sons, someone who have come to age. Hence, the word “sons” portrays the idea of a patriarchal society as represented in the biblical hierarchy established by God between man and woman in society (Einwechter 2010). However, the words child, children or offspring has no human age limitation attributed to it, and in addition, Kangas (2002:111) states that even though “sons” are God’s children, the word “sons” designate a more progressive stage of growth in the divine life than children do, because “children” refers to the initial phase of sonship.

Jesus motioned that peacemakers shall be called sons (υἱός) of God (Matthew 5:9), because they reveal they are in the image and likeness of God; therefore this beatitude does not apply to worldly people (Ritenbaugh 1999). The phrases between believers as “sons (υἱοὶ) of God (Θεοῦ)” and “children (τέκνον) of God” can be noticed in Romans 8:14-21. *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” ...“And if children (τέκνον), then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ”* (KJV). These verses emphasise the fact of the believer’s spiritual birth in Romans 8:16-17. Notes taken from Nelson (1982), explains that the generic term “son of God”

([?][?][?][?][?][?]) denoted a legal term in first century Rome at the time, inclusive of gender (sex), and status; the term therefore referred to all Christians having been adopted into God's family and who now enjoy the benefits of this assimilation. Both "sons" and "children" describe those who are literal descendents, showing the character of a predecessor who is not essentially an ancestor biologically (Ritenbaugh, 1999). For example, conduct and attitudes can show who one's true spiritual father is; Jesus tells the Jews that their father is the devil, because of their desires (John 8:38, 41, 44). However, Betz (185-186) thus explains that the title "sons of God" was usually reserved for Jews but is also applied to Gentiles; hence, this seems to imply that Paul designed his argument to rebut the Judaizers by insisting that Abraham's inheritors are those who obtain this status by faith alone. Abraham himself was a Babylonian from Mesopotamia (gentile) before God's covenant with him.

Nevertheless, Hove (1999:57-58) and Schemm (2003:26) asserts that all believers have the same status before God, because to be adopted by God (identified as sons of God) is certainly a blessing from Him; the base of their new status (relationship) therefore, is because of faith in Christ Jesus. McLaughlin (1999:6) states that perhaps the most noteworthy declaration in this verse, both for Paul's case and for modern believers, is that believers are sons of God "through faith, in Christ Jesus"; meaning "sons of God in Christ Jesus". He further states that Paul used the phrase "through faith" (*τῇ πίστει*) consistently to refer to the way by which something was to be achieved. In this argument, just as justification, he emphasized that in order to become sons of God, one must have faith in Christ Jesus apart from works of the law (relates to Galatians 3:9-11). Scriptures teach that there is no salvation (soteriology) in any other way than "through faith" in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Thus, faith in Jesus Christ is essential to be saved and justified (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Longenecker (1990:159) said that being 'in Christ' (*ἐν Χριστῷ*) is the essence of our Christian experience and proclamation. Lincoln (1990:114) asserts that the phrase "in Christ" needs to be appreciated in context, which could refer to union with Christ or an agency or instrument, signifying "through the activity of God in Christ". Greene (1992:44-58) describes on the Apostle's discernment concerning God's intend of salvation as well as Christ's role in it. Christ

was a complex and stratified agent of the deity for Paul, and it was Christ's deity that was the purpose of his inspiration; contained in His deity is His death and resurrection for every sinner, thus including salvation. Emphasis is thus placed on the meaning of the deity of Christ, which is that of redeemer.

Robertson (1934:587) has credibly mentioned that the numerous use of "in" (έν) with Christ (Χριστός) or Christ Jesus (Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) in the New Testament could be compared with what Jesus Himself said "in Me"; as John often refers to His expression of "in Me". Another example: the intimate union between God and Jesus Christ is reflected, such as can exist in no other occurrence (John 10:38; 14:10, 11, 20). Hence, John metaphorically mirrors a union formed between Christ Jesus and believers, as between the branches and the true vine; characterised by dependence, friendship and love (John 15:2-7). Thus, Paul's line of reasoning in verses 26 is that before coming to faith (verse 26), man is under the authority of the law, but having come to faith in Christ Jesus, man is released from the law and comes into his full sonship through his newfound union with Christ. For us to be in Christ is a soteriological, ecclesiological and eschatological truth, signifying that God's covenantal promises are ours. We are therefore positionally sanctified and there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1), because of our union with Christ as believers (Schreiner 2010:316).

5.2.2. The Real Meaning of Baptism

Just as "ὅσος" believers are sons of God (verse 26), so "all" ("*as many of you*") have put on Christ. Balge (1981:2) points out that the word "for" (γάρ) at the beginning of the sentence is explanatory, because the word explains the truth of the preceding statement and restates it in such a manner to deepen the impression by emphasising the purpose result and blessing of baptism. Johnson (2005) also agrees, that the word "for" affirms that the believers have put on Christ (Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 12:13), through baptism; a unifying incorporation into Him. Schreiner (2008:729) confirms that the ground of the mentioned affirmation "γάρ" is that all believers were clothed with Christ when they were baptised in Him. Furthermore, he (ibid: 310) observes that believers are therefore Christ's members, joined by Him by virtue of their

conversion (1 Corinthians 6:17), believers are His limbs, so to speak (1 Corinthians 6:15); thus, their bodies are no longer their own (1 Corinthians 6:19).

The proposition “into” (εἰς) indicates a change of relationship, and identification is often mentioned as a necessary meaning of Christian baptism (Renn 2000:95) and by baptizing a person into the name would indicate that the baptized person became the property of, or is closely bound to the one into whose name the person was baptized (Vine, 2000). However, Karlson (2006:8-9) says that water baptism surely implying the putting on of the garments of the righteousness of Christ, among other things. Nevertheless, he warns that it initiates a theological obstacle by mentioning explicitly “water” in Galatians 3:27. Dunn (1993:203) makes clear that this metaphor is an extract from the ritual act of baptism but not the same; hence, one may presume that the ritual act and the metaphor were commonly experienced as one. Nevertheless, Jesus said a man must be born of water and of the Spirit... (John 3:5). Thus, baptism into Christ (Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27) put us in a loving relationship with the triune God, so that we can enjoy spiritual blessings, such as redemption, the forgiveness of our sins, no condemnation, be a new creation, our salvation and eternal life (cf. Ephesians 1:3, 7; Romans 8:2; 2 Corinthians 5:15; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 John 5:11).

Paul uses some imagery here with the term "Χριστόν ἐνεδύσασθε". Thus, the metaphor, to "put on Christ," possibly implies converts removing their old clothes and putting on new ones as part of the physical baptism act (Bruce 1982:186). Schemm (2003:26) affirms that this verse addresses water submerging or baptism of the Spirit into Christ's body (Romans 6:3; 1Corinthians 12:13). He also observes from other writings of Paul, that the metaphor to put off the old way and put on the new is often employed (Ephesians 6:11-14; Colossians 3:10). Mirza and Tsang (1999) on the other hand explain that the ancient Romans had a coming-of-age ceremony called "*toga virilise*". When a boy reaching the age of manhood (woman excluded), he discarded the "*toga pretext*" (crimson-bordered toga) of a child and is donned with a pure white toga of a man. Thus, the young man no longer had a guardian (cf. Galatians 3:24) to oversee him, but was now a recognized adult, responsible for his own actions and welfare. While the final words in this verse, "have clothed yourselves with Christ," in all probability

represent a metaphor derivative from the Hebrew tradition (cf. Isaiah 61:10; 64:6; Zechariah 3:3-4), perhaps related with the taking one's clothes off before baptism and then putting them on again after that (Bruce 1982:186). Garlington (2007:117) convincingly noticed that the change of clothes in the Old Testament stands for the experience of God's salvation (Job 29:14; Psalm 132:16; Isaiah 52:1; 61:10). Furthermore, Luther (1953:341) has explained that baptism is the means of regeneration as well as "putting on Christ, which is, of justification.

5.2.3. Those Who Can Come to Christ in Faith

Scholer (1998:19-22) views verse 28 as practically the fundamental Pauline theological basis for the inclusion of women and men as equal and mutual partners in all of the ministries of the church. Fee (1987:185) thus declares that verse 28 represents the new order among the people of God in the new creation "in Christ", and per se negates the significance of roles and structures in relation to "*there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female*" (NIV). Jewett (1975:142) argues that this verse is 'The Magna Carta of Humanity'; Groothuis (1996:25) therefore declares this verse as the most significant text that sustains biblical equality. Walden (2010:24) on the other hand differs in opinion and argues that if one wants to know about gender responsibilities and roles, then one should examine other epistles that have a context on such a topic. However, he claims should someone desire to be acquainted with people that are eligible to be in Christ Jesus, then Galatians 3:28 are relevant to such a discussion. Nevertheless, verse 28 observably is dependent upon and relates to the message that precedes it. This verse reaffirms the truths of both verses 26 and 27, since verse 27 had reaffirmed the truth of verse 26 (Balge 1981:3). Degner (2001:1) observes that the arrangement of this negative particle "there is neither" (*οὐκ ἔστι*) presents emphasis at the beginning of this verse. "There is never, there is not", making the statement very clear, because for the Judaizers it was of great concern whether one was a Jew or a Gentile; however, the apostle says it certainly does not matter.

Degner (2001:1-2) points out that the noun "*Ἰουδαῖος*" refers to that special race (Jews), chosen by God ever since He made the covenant with Abraham. The other noun "*Ἕλληνα*" refers to Greek Gentiles, non-Jews, in general and is placed in line with "*Ἰουδαῖος*". The word "*οὐδέ*" ties

this phrase making the two nouns parallel. Hence, they are on exactly the same boat. The word “ἐλεύθερος” refers to a free man, used here in contrast to a “δοῦλος”; a person (slave or servant) bound to a master. Most slaves certainly had the desire to be free men. Both Wallace (2004) and Johnson (2005) remind us that slaves were not outside the covenant, but they were usually considered as inferior in society. Thus, the second antithesis focuses more on societal status both within Israel and without. Hence, the Apostle contend that slaves come exactly on the same basis to Christ as free men do, since they too inherit the promises equally, for being “the Lord’s freedman” (1 Corinthians 7:22). Hence, we note that Paul affirms and condones slavery in Christ (See Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 4:1). Slavery was a reality of life. Thus, Deffinbaugh (2004) explains that the believing slave should live by faith, energized by the Holy Spirit, his conduct works within him to the glory of God. Likewise, he should submit both inwardly and outwardly to his early master, and he should look to his Heavenly Father for his reward. Slavery thus was divinely ordained, since it presented a context in which righteousness is evidently readily, both on the part of the master and of his slave (ibid); the same principle thus could apply to today’s employer and employee.

Wallace (1996:294) argues the gender of a series of adjectives in verse 28 is a neglected grammatical feature, because, with the exemption of the noun “Ἑλλήν”, the entries in the couplets, as well as the word “one,” are all adjectives. Both couplets are masculine, excluding “male” and “female,” which is both neuters; they are without nouns, therefore “independent”. Degner (2001:2) asserts that the neuter adjective “ἐνὶ ἄρσεν”, well translated as male is used as a substantive in contrast to the neuter “θηλυ” of the three ending adjectives, which are well translated as female. The Greek word “ἐνὶ ἄρσεν” thus puts a strong emphasis on the sex of an individual as male instead of female. We therefore notice that Galatians 3:28 is made up of three negated couplets as well as an explanatory clause. Two of these couplets are positioned within the recipe that there is no “there is neither” X “οὐδε” Y (X nor Y), but the third couplet contains a slight change: ‘there is neither male “καὶ” female. A different a combination is apparently used here to connect two contrasting nouns. Degner (2001:1) says the reason for this is not totally clear, but male (ἐνὶ ἄρσεν) occurs almost always with female (θηλυ), coupled by (καὶ).

Paul's use of neither "Jew nor Greek" is a common theme, thus, Pierce, Groothuis and Fee (2004:173) have raised some good questions to be considered, why is there a second and third couplet in the line of reasoning that otherwise has to do only with Jews and Gentiles? And notably, why the slight change in the third couplet, given that in related verses (1 Cor. 12:13; Colossians. 3:10-11) elsewhere the coupled "male and female" is not included? The pursuit of such an exegetical question should provide some insight into the scope and nature of the 'newness' described as presented in the new creation. Hove (1999:67-78) thus argued that the variation in conjunction for the third pair has been an intentional reference to Genesis, where God created man "male and female" prior to the fall, and it was very good (Genesis 1:27, 31). Fung (1988:176) convincingly affirms that the last couplet (male/female), unlike the other two couplets, has its source in creation, as a result that the parallelism between the male/female couplet and other couplets might not be unduly pressed.

France (1995:78) states that Paul expressed in verse 28 an end-point of the historical trajectory; that is from a male-dictated society in the Old Testament, later Judaism and through the revolutionary implications. However, Wallach (2004), who seems more convincing, argues that Galatians is possibly Paul's first epistle; therefore, if one observes a trajectory in Paul, concerning his concern of women, it must reach its culmination rather in the pastorals. Nevertheless, Johnson (2005) argues that Paul chose these three antitheses with an outlook of the fundamental distinctions in the ancient world, having in mind the morning prayer of Jewish men, in which they thanked God for not been born a Gentile, a woman or a slave.

Therefore, both Bruce (1982:187) and Snodgrass (1986:169-170) assert that those classes were not only restricted in certain spiritual concessions to Jewish males; similar formulas actually existed also among the Gentiles. Although there may be some disputes over why these specific couplets were chosen, the context of Galatians 3:29-4:7 makes a strong connection with the thought of inheritance; since only Jewish free males inherited land left by their fathers under the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 21:15-17; Galatians 4:1-7); nonetheless, salvation, the promise to Abraham, does not have these restrictions (Cottrell 1994:272-283). Thus, Schemm explains that through faith in Christ Jesus anybody may now become a rightful heir (Galatians

3:26). However, Paul has spent all his time tackling the subject of circumcision (Galatians 2:3-9, 6:12-13). Garlington (2007:118) wisely argues that the free circumcised male under the Mosaic administration was the only full Israelite. Therefore, the phrase “nor is there male and female” takes on special implications in particular, since women could not be circumcised. The three pairs of antitheses in this verse therefore are rooted in the covenant of circumcision (Genesis 17:9-14).

Nonetheless, Degner (2001:3) notes that Paul first explains the things that are not important in verse 28, and he then explains what believers are; that is, they are “one” (εἷς) in Christ Jesus. Watson (2000:46) argues that Paul is not dealing with equality and hierarchy when he said “all” of you are “one” in Christ Jesus, since the phrases “all” and “one” refers to unity in Jesus Christ. Walden (2010:24) asserts that the word “one” was not the important concept; rather, “belonging to” and “being in” Christ with the emphasis of verses preceding and to follow. However, Hove (1999:108) provides several convincing Biblical examples of the use of ‘one’ to denote unity. For example, Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:8 that the “one” who plants and the “one” who waters have “one” purpose and they will each be rewarded according to their own labour”. Both of these persons have a different role and will each receive a different reward, but Paul uses the expression “you are one” to show that they both share one thing in common; signifying that both have one common purpose. Furthermore, examples of “you/we/they are one,” in the New Testament where a plurality of individuals are called one, are: husband and wife (Matthew 19:6; Mark 10:8); Father and Son (John 10:30; 17:11, 21, 22; 23); the planter and the one that waters (1 Corinthians 3:8); and different believers with different gifts (Romans 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:17). Thus, in each case the groups of people in these pairs have different tasks (ibid: 119).

Nevertheless, Köstenberger (1994:285-301) argues that Galatians 3:28b is tied with Galatians 3:16, explaining that Paul points to Abraham's many offspring's in Genesis 12:7, to “one” (εἷς) which is Christ. “*For you are all one in Christ Jesus,*” is therefore referring to the divine promise that was made to Abraham, whereby all believers are heirs indiscriminately. Verse 29 draws this exact conclusion: “If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to

the promise (NIV). Garrett (1994:16) asserts that neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, and no male and female (He claims that Paul deals with everyone here) could inherit the “promise”. However, all of these become one man in Christ Jesus; He is the only one who inherited the promise. However, the good news is that everybody who is in Christ Jesus is evidently Abraham's seed, because Jesus is Abraham's seed; hence, so we are therefore partakers of the promise. Degner (2001:3) note that the beautiful name Jesus (*Ἰησοῦ*) reminds us of His saving work, and Christ (*Χριστῷ*) reminds us that He is the Messiah, the Anointed One.

5.2.4. The True Seed of Abraham

Garlington (2007:119) argues that to the Judaizers the characteristics of the “σπέρμα” (seed) of Abraham was of greatest significance; since seed was synonymous for the objects of God’s endorsement. Thus, he explains, no one could rightfully claim descent from the patriarch who was not observant with regard to the Torah, especially those who were not circumcised. Verse 29 forms a victorious conclusion to Paul’s line of reasoning, because all believers are God’s sons (children); baptized by the Holy Spirit into spiritual union with the Son, the seed of Abraham. Those who still maintain to be justified by the works of the law are rejected. The believer’s heirship is established in faith apart from the works of the law (Johnson, 2005). Consequently, believers have been told that they could not be part in the blessing of Abraham without sharing in Abraham’s seed by means of circumcision. However, they were restored confidence of their part in that inheritance that was already assured (Dunn 1993:208).

Garrett (1994:16) reasons that an important notion is the identity of the Holy Spirit to the fulfilment of the promise (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4; Acts 2:32-34 and Ephesians 1:13-14) in order for us to comprehend the full dimensions of Paul's argument. He therefore provides a brief overview:

- The Spirit, was received by the Galatian believers through faith, as a sign of salvation (Ephesians 1:13-14); not through the law (Galatians 3:2-5). This was in keeping with the experience of Abraham, who believed God and it (faith) was reckoned to him as

righteousness (Galatians 3:6). Likewise, Abraham "believed God (faith), and it was credited to him as righteousness (Galatians 3:7).

- Everyone who believes (having the same faith as Abraham), whether Jews or Gentiles, are sons of Abraham and blessed with him. (Galatians 3:7).
- Believers are redeemed by Christ, so that Abraham's blessing could be experienced by all, thus everyone could receive, by faith, the promised Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:8-15).
- Jesus is the only Being who inherited the promise. Thus, because Christ is Abraham's seed, all who are therefore in Christ, are Abraham's seed and thus, are participating in the promise.

5.3. Exegetical Findings of Galatians 3:26-29

Paul in his epistle to the Galatians attempts to provide the means of their unity (3:26), therefore also provides the expression of their unity (3:27) and the benefits of their unity (3:28-29). Paul changes from "we" to "you", indication of a shift of attention from Israel (3:25) to believers who were made up of both Jews and Gentiles. The Apostle had showed that the Jews were kept under law until the coming of Christ, and as a result maintained as a separate people to whom justification by faith might be preached. However, when the Jews were justified through Christ, they are no more to be under the law, and their distinct character as Jews also came to an end. Now, the means of Christian unity is through Jesus Christ, with the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, "anyone" thus who accepts God's gift of grace by faith are his sons (children, offspring or descendants).

Paul expressed that one way believer's unity with Christ is when they put their faith in Christ as their Lord and Saviour; baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. Paul used some metaphors here by the term "have clothed" (e.g. referring to ancient Roman ceremony or from Hebrew tradition). Thus, both men and woman who put their faith in Christ are now also metaphorically clothed with Christ. Nevertheless, Paul rather refers to the spiritual union that takes place when a believer puts his or her trust in Jesus Christ, since water baptism is an outward proclamation of that union that has already taken place.

The benefits of Christian unity are “through faith in Jesus Christ”; meaning, all who believe become one in Christ. In a sense, there are now no racial boundaries, nor social boundaries, nor gender boundaries for the believer “in Christ”. The context of this verse concerns their relationship with Christ and how they should view one another. Their racial, social or gender identities, or Christian responsibilities at home or in church does not cease to exist (3:28); it simply means that having become one with God, believers belong to each other in such a way that the distinctions that formerly divided them lose their significance. Therefore, God no longer sees human distinctions. However, verse 28 does not call for an absolute abolition of these distinctions, but concerns entrance into the Christian community; full membership in the new people hinges solely on “faith in Christ”. The antithesis of male and female in this passage particularly stands out; in response to the agitators’ insistence on the distinctions inherent in the covenant of circumcision. Paul simply denies that these distinctions have any relevance for determining entry into the Christian community. Believers, both male and female, therefore, attain to a unity that was impossible under previous covenant relationships.

The benefits of Christian unity “through faith in Jesus Christ” also make the believer a part of that seed and an heir of the promise to Abraham (3:29). Although the Judaizers did not deny faith in Christ as the only means to salvation per se but insisted they on adhering to the Mosaic law to maintain one’s status to Christ. Thus, they believed that one became related to Abraham by conforming to the Mosaic law, believing that God’s spiritual blessings were given to his physical descendants (Abraham’s seed) and to those who kept the law. Their mistake was in defining how one becomes related to Abraham and how one becomes an heir to God’s promises. A person was spiritually speaking a minor under the law, under a guardian, under a tutor, under a pedagogue. The pedagogue, the law was used to point them to Christ, to show their need of a Saviour, but now that faith has come, they are no longer under that tutor, that pedagogue, for they you are adult sons with full rights as sons. Thus, Paul clearly told the Galatians in verse 29 that people become related to Abraham through faith in God’s grace.

Thus, both male and female of all races, slave or free, justified by faith in Christ, are now sons of God. Regarding salvation, there is no difference between Jew and Greek, or slave and free, or

male and female, we are all equal. As for our calling, there is a difference; hence, from Scriptures it is clear; the reality for both male and female is that God created us different, as Jesus reminds us: "From the beginning the Creator made them male and female..." (Matthew 19:4). Nevertheless, all believers in Christ should be considered as equals; all believers, Jewish and Gentile, male and female, slave and free are all equals before God, Since God is not for the Jews only; He is also the God of other nations. Thus, every believer, from all nations, rich or poor (employer and employee) are in Christ Jesus, united to the Lord in eternal union through the baptism of the Holy Spirit; hence, they all are able to clothe themselves with Christ and are one in Him.

CHAPTER 6

SIGNIFICANCE OF GALATIANS 3:26-29

6.1. The Philosophical Significance of Galatians 3:26-29

The philosophical significance of Galatians 3:26-29 will expound on what contribution this passage makes to Christian doctrines and how it harmonises with the whole teaching of the Scriptures. In addition, the philosophical significance of this passage will give further details about what this passage teaches about God, about creation, and the relationship between God and creation.

6.1.1. Salvation and Justification by Faith

Schemm (2003:3) said that many commentators agree that Paul developed a theological argument for salvation by grace and not works in Galatians chapters 3 and 4. Herrick (2004) explained that the word “soteriology” in systematic theology refers to the doctrine of salvation study and comes from Greek terms, “*soter*” that means “deliverer” or “saviour”. Deffinbaugh (2004) rightfully said faith that *is* place in the wrong object cannot save. Therefore, the objective basis for our salvation is Jesus Christ’s work on the cross (cf. Romans 10:9); His shed of blood is the heart of the gospel. Thus, we must now move on from the object of our faith to the obtaining of salvation through faith. Besides, Paul says in Ephesians 2:8 “*for it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...*” (NIV)¹. Hence, two primary words are noted in this verse, that is, “grace” and “faith”. Hale (1999:766) explains that grace is a free gift of salvation in Christ Jesus; faith on the other hand is receiving that gift. Therefore, salvation is absolutely a gift of God. So, the Father sent His Son to be the Saviour of the World, thus we must receive Christ Jesus (John 1:12), and we must only believe in Him (Acts 16:13). So, when we turn in faith to Christ Jesus and receive his finished work on our behalf, we act by the faith supplied by God’s grace.

¹ All Scripture quotations in this chapter is taken from the New International Version (NIV)

Moreover, Paul also said “...since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). In addition, the doctrine of justification again is an essential doctrine in the area of salvation, since justification has to do with salvation regards our standing before God. Since man had sinned, man is in need to have his or her sins dealt with and removed; meaning, we all are in need of God’s forgiveness, by the riches of His grace as revealed in Christ’s death. Accordingly, justification is the positive side of salvation, whereas forgiveness is the negative side. Enns (1997:326) correctly points to justification as God’s forensic act, where He declares a believing sinner righteous, based on Christ’s blood. Justification thus is essential for every man and women, since it removes and pardons all our sins, and it ends the separation between God and us (cf. Romans 4:6-7; 5:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:19). Furthermore, justification also has to do with the bestowal of righteousness upon those who believe and a title to all the blessings promised to the just. Hence, to justify is to declare a person righteous who has faith in Christ Jesus. Nevertheless, Galatians 3:26-29 clearly drives this point home since we become sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Thus, Paul’s doctrinal defence of justification by faith (chapters 3-4) is noted as follows in the Epistle to the Galatians: first, the vindication of the doctrine of justification by faith, by the Galatians’ experience (3:1-5), by Abraham’s example (3:6-9), by the effect of the Law (3:10-12), Christ’s work (3:13-14), the permanence of faith (3:15-18), the purpose of the law (3:19-25) and the present position of their believers (3:26-29), and then lastly, the illustration of the doctrine of justification by faith in chapter 4 (Cambel 1983:588).

Grudem (1994:724) correctly explains that justification means that God declares us to be just, since He imputes the righteousness of Christ to us; therefore God declares us free from the penalty to pay for our sins, which includes past, present and future sins. The Apostle clearly teaches in Romans 8:1 that “*there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*”. Thus, from Scripture it is clear that faith precedes justification (Romans 5:1) as well as to adoption (Galatians 3:26; Romans 8:15). Stewart’s (1999:14) concern makes sense, since he explains that it will be inappropriate to assume of God adopting children, whom has not been reckoned as righteous in Christ by God; adoption thus must be seen as following justification in the order of salvation. In justification, we are accepted as righteous; by going a step further in

adoption, God stacks grace upon grace, making us His sons and daughters (His children). Justification brings the believer into the number of the righteous; adoption on the other hand ushers the believer into God's family (ibid).

Furthermore, although Paul dogmatically said that justification is by faith alone... not by works, we must take into account that he also enlightened us that we were created "in Christ" to do good works (Ephesians 2:10); Therefore, if a person claims to be a believer in Christ, but there is no evidence of good works in that person's life, then that person does not have genuine faith in Christ. Consequently, genuine faith in Christ will produce a changed life and good works (cf. James 2:14-26). Nonetheless, thanks to justification, we are perfectly free from any charge of guilt (Romans 8:33) and the forensic realities that flows out of justification is: we are adopted as sons of God (Galatians 3:26; Romans 8:15), we are united with Christ so that we become one with Him (Galatians 3:28; Corinthians 6:17), and we are henceforth "in Christ" (Galatians 3:27). Furthermore, Paul jogs our memories in Titus 1:4 of that which is common to all believers, a common "faith" in the Lord Jesus Christ, such a faith that binds us together as a spiritual family, despite our nationality, status or gender; naturally meaning a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is evident from this verse that the Apostle and Titus had a father and son relationship, due to their common faith. Thus, men and women who put their trust in Christ stand to one another as brothers and sisters in the Lord. Hence, a common faith imparts the basis for communion and harmony (Keathley, 2004).

6.1.2. Christology in Galatians 3:26-29

Galatians 3:26-29 is polemical in design, and the content of this passage is soteriological and theological, as well as Christological. Therefore, faith in Christ Jesus is Christological, since Paul clearly portrays Christ as the object of faith. Consequently, one may simply conclude that faith centres on Christology, because for Paul, faith cannot exist without Christ. Hence, the significance is that this passage is clearly filled with explicit references to Christ Jesus; e.g. "in Christ Jesus", "into Christ", "put on Christ", "one in Christ" and "are Christ's". Therefore, from the Bible translations in the preceding chapter, it is very clear that Christ Jesus is the "Son of God"; He is the Messiah. Degner (2001:3) thus correctly reminded us that the name of Jesus

mentioned in Paul's letters, especially in this passage, reminds us of His "saving work", and Christ reminds us that He is "the Messiah", the "Anointed One". John (4:42) said that "...we know that this man really is the Savior of the world".

Martyn (1997:124-25) correctly points out that Christology is the central point of Paul's argument with his circumcision Jewish opponents; since Jesus was viewed by them as the conclusion of Moses' ministry. Thus, instead of viewing the law in light of Christ, they perceived the Christ of God in light of His law; hence, perceiving the Messiah as the Messiah of the law, which in their Christology, signifies Christ as inferior to the law. Garlington (2007:83) rightfully agrees and explains that Paul's argument on faith is unique because he is Christologically focused. He further notes that the only legitimate faith with the arrival of the Messiah, Christ Jesus, is that which acquires its repose in Him. Paul clearly teaches in Romans 10:4, "*Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes*".

Scriptural understanding of Christ Jesus is vital for our salvation. Many sects claim to believe in Christ but they do not believe in the real Jesus presented in Scriptures. Christology thus is the most essential area of theology. Other subjects of theology will be errant for us without an understanding of who Jesus really is and what He has accomplished. The Bible clearly teaches that "the Word was God" (John 1:1) and "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14) indicating that Jesus is God in the flesh. Thomas called Jesus, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28) and Jesus never corrected him. Paul describes Jesus as, "...our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13) and Peter also say "...our God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:1).

6.1.3. Creation of man, as Male and Female

The slight variation 'there is neither "male καί female"' is significant in Galatians 3:28, since male and female could involve both Jew and Gentile, as well as slave and free. Furthermore, the change in conjunction for the third pair is obviously a conscious reference to Genesis 1:27 and 5:2; the male and female in Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:22-23) will once again be "Man" as God created him, that is, a relationship of divine unity. Hence, some indicators from Scripture signal the special significance regards to the creation of "singular" man or Adam who is "plural male

and female". As noted in Genesis 1:26, God uses plural references regarding Himself; e.g. "let us" make man in "our image", after "our likeness". Likewise, the word "create" is also used three times in Genesis 1:27. This is unique, since it exemplifies inherent truths about God, and it places man in a higher priority and authority in the creation plan of God (Asian 2005:298). The image must be seen in man's threefold relationship, towards God, towards others and towards nature (Roukema 1986:95).

Nevertheless, Starch (1994:101) rightfully said that the primary idea relates to equality in salvation, another idea relates to husband and wife relationship as created by God. Thus, as noted from Scripture, God brought about a deep sleep upon the man, and He took one of his ribs and made a woman who is to help him. Man then said that she is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh and then called her woman, since she was taken out of man. (Genesis 2:22-24). The clear implication from Genesis is clearly noteworthy: The woman as appropriate helper for Adam (Genesis 2:18), joined to him as one flesh (Genesis 2:24), to carry out together what God had formerly called the man to do (Genesis 1:26-31); accordingly, together the work of fulfilling the purposes of God might be progressed. Therefore, it is essential that men and women who are both in the image of God work together in a united manner to accomplish what God gave them to do.

Subsequently, men and women, by faith are sons of God (Galatians 3:26), both fully enter into the promise of Christ and all that entails (3:29). Peter therefore endorsed the same notion when he told believing husbands to show their believing wives honour as fellow heirs with them of the grace of life in Christ (1 Peter 3:7).

6.2. The Practical Significance of Galatians 3:26-29

The practical significance of Galatians 3:26-29 will identify how the passage applies to today's situation, especially in the life of Christian men and women and their life and ministry of the church.

6.2.1. Galatians 3:26

Scriptures clearly teaches throughout the New Testament that faith and faith alone is necessary for salvation. Therefore, salvation is not about doing something, it is about knowing someone; knowing Christ Jesus as “our Lord”... and the “power of His resurrection”... (cf. Philippians 3:8-11). Hence, our faith in Christ is about seeking and knowing the Lord Jesus Christ with all facets of our human character, it’s about loving Him with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. Nonetheless, many human beings today attempt to justify themselves “apart from faith”, such attempts are futile; be it education or knowledge, commitment to the law, good morals, good intentions and charity work, noble ideals, rituals, etc, none will justify. Scriptures are clear, salvation is by faith, alone, "not by works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9). Such attempts of self justification should be avoided.

The Bible warns men and women against the foolishness of seeking justification through means which cannot bring it about. We are not justified by what we do for God; we are justified by what God has done for us. The Lord Jesus Christ has accomplished the whole purpose of the Law. Thus, we must believe Him in order to be made right with God (cf. Romans 10:3-4). In addition, our “precious faith” with us in the righteousness of our God and the Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1) should keep us together and sets us apart from the rest of the world. Also, regarding our common “faith” (Titus 1:4), it is essential for new believers in Christ to have a sound spiritual paediatrics and follow up in order to take them from babies in Christ to fruitful and growing mature believers. This obviously would involve being a model to the new disciple.

Since both Christian men and women are “sons of God”, through faith in Christ, we are to be peacemakers between human beings and God (cf. Matthew 5:9). We should therefore make peace by loving our neighbour as ourselves, since love is the foremost weapon of a peacemaker. Jesus was evidently the greatest peacemaker; therefore, men and women ought to be ambassadors for Him. Likewise, we should not take our adoption for granted, but should rather show our appreciation daily for what we have received and also seek to put on Christ in the way we live. That simply means that we must walk away from sin and live for our Lord Jesus Christ. There are many people who do not know Jesus, those still in the world; men and woman who

are not God's children, in need of salvation. Therefore, this reality should encourage us to reach out to them in order to help enlarge God's family. This would involve getting the adoption process under way by sharing Christ with our earthly family, friends, acquaintances and even enemies; we should invite them to our local church to hear the gospel.

6.2.2. Galatians 3:27

We too today have full rights as sons and daughters as members of God's family, and we do not have to "earn" such rights through religious rituals as taught by the Judaizers, neither as today's legalist teach. Henceforth, the Holy Spirit is the seal of salvation for all men and women who believe (Ephesians 1:13-14), because Jesus promised His disciples that the Spirit would be sent from God (cf. John 14:26); that was, until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:29; Acts 1:4). Thus, if a person possesses the Holy Spirit, he or she belongs to Christ (Romans 8:9).

Walvoord (2008) contends that when someone believes in Christ Jesus as his Saviour, that person is then regenerated, or born again. Strauss (1997) explains that regeneration simply means a new birth, a new order, a new beginning; regeneration thus is the implantation of new life by the Holy Spirit. The Bible simply teaches of the new birth as a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and Paul thus points out that it is by hearing with faith that the Galatians received the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:2-3). Therefore, from Galatians 3:27 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, one may conclude that these passages speak about the baptism of the Spirit, whereby believers are "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13-14). Baptism in Galatians 3:27 thus is figurative of one's identification with Christ which is achieved by faith (John 1:12-13). The baptism by one Spirit puts us into Christ or makes us part of His body.

Hart (2004:108) reasons that we should not view Spirit baptism as a doctrine, but rather as a metaphor, which he refers to as: (1) the eschatological redemptive work of Jesus; (2) the initiation of a Christian; (3) the Christian life, as well as (4) empowerment for Christian ministry and mission. This led him to see significance in both the Pentecostal and Evangelical views. Nevertheless, from Galatians 3:27, one may conclude that Spirit baptism should result in a union with God, as

well as with fellow Christians; a new standing of being in Christ Jesus and in His body, and a union which is the consequence of this relationship. The relationship and position is a divine movement in renewal which remedies the believer's former position in Genesis as fallen in Adam, which he or she has been made a new creation. God's children thus must be in fellowship with God through the Holy Spirit as to attain the high value of moral experience which is required from those in Christ. Accordingly, baptism of the Spirit joins us to Christ's body; we are raised up with Him to newness of life (Romans 6:4). Baptism of the Spirit also actualizes our co-crucifixion with Christ. The Spirit baptism with all of its essential results is therefore an important aspect of the Holy Spirit's work in spiritual renewal.

Thus, as stated in the context of 1 Corinthians 12:13, both Christian men and women should exercise their spiritual gifts to keep that body functioning appropriately. Spirit baptism should evidently serve as the basis for keeping the unity of the church, as mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 4:5. Furthermore, Spirit baptism should be evident in our Christian life, because it institutes the basis for Christian separation from the power of indwelling sin and our Christian walk in newness of life (Romans 6:1-10); Likewise, since we are being associated with Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection (Colossians 2:12). Hence, we can see when electricity really works, that is, a light bulb shines when switched on. Likewise, we can also see whether or not the Holy Spirit is really living in a person's life. Therefore, we will see the difference when he or she has crucified the flesh with its passions and desires; meaning the fruit of the Spirit should be clearly visible in his or her life (Galatians 5:22-26).

Water baptism thus is the initial step of obedience in the new covenantal life of a disciple, which pictures God's spiritual baptism in salvation. In addition, water baptism pictures the death, burial and resurrection with Christ. Water baptism thus points to our salvation experience but should not be confused with the salvation experience of Galatians 3:27. Bradley (2009:10) explains that Christ Jesus is the reason of an exceptional experience akin to an initiative water rite, as revealed in being reborn of His Spirit. Thus, we should never baptize an unsaved person in water, we should only baptize saved believers in water, in obedience to Christ's command.

Hence, when a person believes in Christ with all his or her heart (Galatians 3:26), then he or she is a true believer and is marked in Christ, with a seal; the promised Holy Spirit.

6.2.3. Galatians 3:28

Men and women from all walks of life, who is in Christ, should never act superior to other Christians like the Judaizers did to the Gentiles, but we must see each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Furthermore, we should never be racist in the church, rather reach out to all races with the gospel. Christian husbands should respect their Christian wives as a Christian sister and joint heir of salvation. Rich and poor Christians should pray for each other and love one another in Christ. We should pray for other Bible believing gospel centered churches that are made up of men and women different than us. This text encourages humility towards other Christian no matter whom they are. Moreover, we are in this critical time in world history of “another gospel” coming right at the world and into the church with its deceptive new age teachings and plans that “we are all one” because God is “everything” and “in everyone”. Hence, Scriptures is very clear that we are not God (cf. Ezekiel 28:2; Hosea 11:9). Therefore, our only oneness (union or unity) is in the Lord Jesus Christ through faith; not in ourselves as “God” and “Christ.” Jesus frequently told His disciples to remain in him, to abide in him, for in that union they had life (see John chapters 14-17).

Moreover, concerning husband and wife, a husband may be stronger vessel than his wife physically, but spiritually they are equal. The Christian wife receives the same grace and salvation her Christian husband does, they are both heirs together. Hence, the significance of the union between a husband and wife stands as a sign, an image of something else; that is the union between our Lord Jesus Christ and the church.

Galatians 3:28 is a wonderful and true text, but this is not the only Scripture text on male and female. Pastors and Christian educators should energetically promote the appropriate understanding of Galatians 3:28, and strongly discourage the misuse of this text; by preventing that this text become a kind of crux, or theological trump card to promote selected and competing. Likewise, we must reject the homosexual viewpoint of people who claim the right

for same-sex relationships in our day because the Bible says “neither male καί female”. We must allow the Bible to speak with full authority, both on male and female equality.

As believers, we are positioned and clothed in the abundant justification and blessings of our Lord’s righteousness. Therefore, there isn’t any difference between us and other Christians before God. Since we all walked the weary pathway of sin and in alienation from God, we all stood condemned and in need of salvation and grace; therefore, in need of a Saviour. Thus, our salvation as Christian men and women in our country today is identical in value, spiritual result, and miraculous conversion to that of Christian men and women in other countries. Likewise, a Christian employee today is just as valued spiritually as his or her Christian employer; therefore, concerning all Christians believers from all walks of life, men are of no greater value, nor more likely to be saved, than women. It is very clear that salvation by grace is no respecter of human beings. This miracle of the character of God is poured out equally on us undeserving sinners. We are all equally undeserving and we are equally saved and justified. The glory of the Father is now made known in the Excellencies of His Son, Jesus Christ.

6.2.4. Galatians 3:29

Verse 29 tells us that our acceptance and spiritual inheritance based on the work has brought us great blessings. Christian men and women should never look down on themselves as second to their Jewish brothers and sisters, since we are joint heirs with fellow Jewish Christians. Just as a child looks forward to receiving his inheritance, we must praise God for ours. This should also encourage all of us to witness to others that don’t belong to Christ by faith. Hence, they are doomed to judgment since there is no inheritance without Christ. Also, many Jews don’t believe in Christ, thus, we should pray for them to come to Christ.

CONCLUSION

As noted from this study, God created “male and female” and named them man or Adam (the federal head) in some translations (Genesis 1:27; 5:2). The collective noun of “man” for “male and female” actually emphasizes the profound unity that should exist between the two (Genesis 5:1-2). The collective noun could also refer to all human beings, since both male and female represent the complete human race (every tribe and nation, and every social status).

Nevertheless, when Paul said in the last couplet...neither male *καί* female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus, he obviously also did it for a very specific reason. The implications are astonishing, since Adam, the first man, represents both male and female. In addition, both male and female are fallen creatures and in need of a Saviour. Therefore, “through faith”, both “male and female” are also represented by the last Adam; the second Man (Christ Jesus). Hence, the unity of the church exists out of true Christian believers, both male and female that our Lord and Saviour love; the church is the bride that Christ sacrificed His life to redeem. Thus, since there is neither male *καί* female, for they are all one in Christ Jesus, once again they (plural) will be “man” (singular) as God created him; that is, a relationship of divine unity in Christ Jesus. Henceforth, male or female can now become sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. Therefore, as noted from the study, the Lord Jesus Christ is the absolute nucleus of Galatians 3:26-29. That means that all obstruction to fellowship is removed, and that Scripture uses the phrase “in Christ” to enlighten both male and female that we have redemption (Romans 3:24). Thus, it seems obvious, the phrase “justified by faith in Christ”, implies we all have an equal standing before God and all have equal freedom in God’s kingdom.

Furthermore, Galatians 3:26-29 clearly reveals the hypothesis of the basic message of soteriological truth (the nature of salvation), because as noted from this study, this passage does provide an unyielding defence of salvation by faith “in our Lord Christ Jesus”. Justification again, an essential doctrine in the area of salvation thus has to do with salvation regarding our standing before God. Thus, Cambel (1983:588) correctly explained that Paul’s doctrinal defence of justification by faith is visible in the Epistle to the Galatians (Chapters 3-4). This involves the

vindication of the doctrine of justification by faith by the Galatians' experience (3:1-5), by Abraham's example (3:6-9), by the effect of the law (3:10-12), by means of Christ's work (3:13-14), the permanence of faith (3:15-18), the purpose of the law (3:19-25) and the present position of the believers (3:26-29). Lastly, the illustration of the doctrine of justification by faith is also visible in chapter 4. Nevertheless, three things happened when the Galatians converted in Christ: First, they became sons of God (Galatians 3:26-27). This aspect of joint-heirship is set in contrast to the Jews, who formerly viewed themselves as children under the discipline and training of the law. Second, they are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28); an organic unity that is set in contrast to how the Jewish men view themselves, as ordained by Christ Jesus to greater spiritual benefits than women slaves and Gentiles. Third, that they all became Abraham's seed, with regard to the spiritual blessings (Galatians 3:29); this is set in contrast to how the Jewish men viewed themselves as related to the Abrahamic Covenant blessings through circumcision rituals.

In conclusion, Galatians 3:28 is a magnificent text, and we should treat it as the apostle anticipates it to be; that is, for the glorious salvation by grace through faith and a polemic against justification by works.

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