

GOD'S LOVE AND GRACE IN CHRIST JESUS
MAKES US ALL ONE, REGARDLESS OF . . . "

INTRODUCTION

A. Galatians 3:26-29 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (29) And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

B. When I first became a member of the church, my circle was very big, for it included all who, like myself, had believed and had been baptized. I was happy in the thought that my brethren were many. But, having a keen and observant mind, I soon learned that many of my brethren were erring. I could not tolerate any people within my circle but those who, like myself, were right on all points of doctrine and practice. (Being Right) Too, some made mistakes and sinned. What could I do? I had to do something! I drew my circle again, placing myself and a few as righteous as I within and others without. I soon observed that some within my circle were self-righteous, unforgiving, jealous and proud. So, in righteous indignation, my circle I drew again, leaving the Publicans and sinners outside, excluding the Pharisees (Labeling) in all their pride, with myself and the righteous and humble within. I heard ugly rumors (Jumping to Conclusions) about some brethren. I saw then that some of them were worldly-minded; their thoughts were constantly on things of a worldly nature. (Mind Reading) They drank coffee, when, like me, they should drink tea. (Should Statements) So, duty bound to save my reputation, my circle I drew again, leaving these reputable, spiritually-minded within. I soon realized in time that only my family and myself remained in the circle. I had a good family. (Polarized Thinking) But to my surprise, my family finally disagreed with me. I was always right. (Overgeneralization) A man must be steadfast (Should Statements) – I have never been a factious man! (Overgeneralization) So in strong determination, I drew my circle again, leaving me quite alone.

I. Jew nor Greek - Mental Differences - Culture / Language /
Education / Personality / Opinions

A. Culture - Grecian widows in Jerusalem - Acts 6:1-7 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. (2) Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. (3) Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. (4) But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. (5) And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: (6) Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. (7) And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

B. Language - Tongues on Pentecost - Acts 2:6-11 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. (7) And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? (8) And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? (9) Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, (10) Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, (11) Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Speech Problems - Exodus 4:10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

C. Education - Peter and John uneducated - Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

D. Personality - Paul and Barnabas disagreed - Acts 15:36-40 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of

the Lord, and see how they do. (37) And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. (38) But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. (39) And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; (40) And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

E. Opinions - Romans 14:2-6 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. (3) Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. (4) Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. (5) One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. (6) He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

F. Self-Esteem - Numbers 13:33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

II. Bond nor free - Social Differences - Social Status / Occupation / Married, single, divorced, widowed / Wealth, income / History / Background

A. Popularity or Social Status - Luke 6:25-26 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. (26) Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Luke 11:43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

Revelation 18:2-20 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (3) For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of

her delicacies. (4) And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. (5) For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. (6) Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. (7) How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. (8) Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. (9) And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, (10) Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. (11) And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: (12) The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, (13) And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. (14) And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. (15) The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, (16) And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! (17) For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, (18) And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! (19) And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. (20) Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles

and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

B. Occupation - Zacchaeus - Luke 19:2-10 And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. (3) And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. (4) And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. (5) And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. (6) And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. (7) And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. (8) And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. (9) And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. (10) For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

and Levi/Matthew- Luke 5:27-30 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. (28) And he left all, rose up, and followed him. (29) And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. (30) But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

C. Married or Unmarried - 1 Corinthians 7:17-28 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches. (18) Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. (19) Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. (20) Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. (21) Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. (22) For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. (23) Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. (24) Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. (25) Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one

that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. (26) I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be. (27) Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. (28) But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

D. Economic - Treating wealthy better than poor - James 2:1-9 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. (2) For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; (3) And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: (4) Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? (5) Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (6) But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? (7) Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? (8) If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: (9) But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted of the law as transgressors.

E. Ancestral History - God doesn't have Grandchildren - Ezekiel 18:4-20 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. (5) But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, (6) And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, (7) And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; (8) He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, (9) Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. (10) If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that

doeth the like to any one of these things, (11) And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife, (12) Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination, (13) Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. (14) Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like, (15) That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, (16) Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment, (17) That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. (18) As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity. (19) Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. (20) The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

F. Background - Consider Paul himself - 1 Timothy 1:12-16
And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; (13) Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. (14) And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (15) This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (16) Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Ezekiel 18:21-28 But if the wicked will turn from all

his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (22) All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. (23) Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? (24) But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. (25) Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? (26) When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. (27) Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. (28) Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

III. Male nor Female - Biological Differences - Age / Skin Color / Nationality / Sex

A. Age - Jesus Loves the Little Children song - Does Jesus only love little children of all colors or adults too? - Matthew 11:28
Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

B. Skin Color - Miriam and Aaron with Moses and Ethiopian wife - Numbers 12:1-10
And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. (2) And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. (3) (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) (4) And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the

congregation. And they three came out. (5) And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. (6) And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. (7) My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. (8) With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? (9) And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. (10) And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

C. Nationality - Jonah and Ninevah - Jonah 3:10 - 4:2 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not. (4:1) But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. (2) And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Jonah 4:10-11 Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: (11) And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

D. Sex - The women were unafraid to stand near the cross, but most of the apostles fled - John 19:25-27 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. (26) When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! (27) Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

CONCLUSION

A.

B. The Cold Within

Six humans trapped by happenstance
in black and bitter cold

Each possessed a stick of wood,
Or so the story's told.

Their dying fire in need of logs,
the first woman held hers back
For on the faces around the fire
She noticed one was black.

The next man looking 'cross the way
Saw one not of his church

And couldn't bring himself to give
The fire his stick of birch.

The third one sat in tattered clothes
He gave his coat a hitch,

Why should his log be put to use
To warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought
Of the wealth he had in store,

And how to keep what he had earned
From the lazy, shiftless poor.

The black man's face bespoke revenge
As the fire passed from his sight, For all he saw in his stick of wood

Was a chance to spite the white.

And the last man of this forlorn group
Did naught except for gain,

Giving only to those who gave
Was how he played the game.

The logs held tight in death's stilled hands
Was proof of human sin,

They didn't die from the cold without,
They died from the cold within.