

## An examination of the allegedly egalitarian texts of the Bible

The desperation of some to recast Christian scripture as about equality and equal rights is bizarre. Why do they care what the scriptures say? Many don't but are just out to virtue signal or gain political sway.

### FROM SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY BY VINCENT CHEUNG THE "EQUALITY" VERSE

A popular objection to the biblical authority structure for the family comes from a misuse of Galatians 3:28, and argues that the verse speaks against all gender "inequality" or distinctions: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Since there is "neither...male nor female" in Christ, some people make the argument that there should be no role distinction or difference in authority within marriage.

However, this cannot be the meaning of the verse, because elsewhere Paul prescribes role distinctions and recognizes differences in authority between husbands and wives, masters and slaves, saying, "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord," and "Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ" (Ephesians 5:22, 6:5). Therefore, Galatians 3:28 does not abolish all gender distinctions, and it does not contradict or nullify those biblical passages that teach the male headship of the family. When the verse is read in its context, it becomes obvious that it refers only to the equality of every chosen individual in his access to justification by faith:

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:26-29)

The verse does not teach social or gender equality, but a spiritual equality among the chosen ones. All those whom God has chosen to receive salvation have equal access to justification by faith in Jesus Christ, whether they are men or women, Jew or non-Jews, masters or slaves. Gender, race, and status are irrelevant to a person's access to salvation, although only the chosen ones will obtain it (Romans 11:7). The verse carries no reference to gender equality in any other setting, and it has no relevance to role distinctions among men and women.

We have examined a number of biblical passages that affirm the husband's leadership in marriage, and there are many more that reinforce this authority structure. As Elizabeth Handford writes, "If you are intellectually honest, you have to admit that it is impossible to find a single loophole, a single exception, an 'if' or 'unless.' The Scriptures say, without qualification... that a woman ought to obey her husband."

Paul says that a wife must obey her husband, "so that no one will malign the word of God" (Titus 2:5).

A wife who disobeys her husband is ungodly and unspiritual. She does not care about God's honor, and brings shame to his kingdom.

The writings of Paul discourage marriage for Jesus is around the corner and is coming to set up a new world. In this view, Paul was not going to advance any political doctrine or political reform. Don't read politics into this there is no man or woman or Jew or Gentile in Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:11-15 makes it clear that men and women are not equal - men must make the decisions not women.

Ephesians 5:25 says that women must submit to their husbands in all things. The text says wives must totally submit to husbands but never says husbands are to totally submit to wives so it is odd how some can imagine the text is about gender equality.

Acts 10 speaking of a Jew and non-Jew states that that God treats all groups fairly and is no respecter of persons. The context is that a non-Jew was accepted by God as a follower of Christ indicating that it was not just to be open to Jews anymore. This seems to contradict the Bible God who up to then only cared about Hebrews and the Jewish people. It could mean that God is making a fresh start. Or it could mean that he was being fair all along for the only people who would respond to him before were Hebrews which was why no effort was made to evangelise other nations. That would be possible but far-fetched but it could be what the text means for it wouldn't be the first far-fetched Bible teaching. Or perhaps God has reasons for refusing to help other nations come to faith in him.

Acts 17:26 is interpreted in an egalitarian way in the book. The verse in the New King James Version (NKJV) reads:

And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us

Saying all people came from one man does not imply that all people are equal. In fact the verse speaks of boundaries suggesting that race should be seen as a division or boundary and that this is the will of God. The verse not only gives no reason to condemn racism but it seeks to paste a divine sanction on it. The context is how Paul found an altar to the unknown God among the pagans. So he is saying that God has created different races so that they might grope for him. To say that God wants people to grope in the dark for him is bizarre but that is what he said. It certainly implies that Christians are somehow superior to these gropers and know better.

There are no truly egalitarian texts in the Bible. his words.

Paul the first Christian writer tells us the whole early Church did not permit women to preach in Church. Whether the culture was misogynist or even feminist the rules held firm.

1 Corinthians 4:17, 'He will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.'

1 Corinthians 7:17, 'I give this sort of direction in all the churches.'

1 Corinthians 11:16, 'we have no other practice, nor do the churches of God'

1 Corinthians 14:33, 'As in all the churches of the saints'

1 Timothy 2:8-9, 'So I want the men to pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger or dispute. Likewise the women are to dress in suitable apparel, with modesty and self-control'

1 Timothy 3:14-15, 'I am writing these instructions to you in case I am delayed, to let you know how people ought to conduct themselves in the household of God'