Grace, mercy and peace to you from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Intro]

Divisions. Our world is full of divisions. Them versus us. Us versus them. Good versus evil. Republicans versus Democrats. Hawkeyes versus Cornhuskers.

We hear about divisions all the time by politicians: Rich, middle-class, poor. The 99 percent, the 1 percent.

It seems that the world always wants to put everyone into a particular group: White-Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Middle-Eastern and on and on and on.

At the same time, as man divides the world, man is also acting as if it is unifying the world with phrases like "wrong side of history."

This phrase means to give up and join whatever cause, because those saying it believe that the other side is going to lose eventually.

But, when it comes to those redeemed by Jesus Christ, there should never be a divide.

The Apostle Paul, through Inspiration, wrote to the people of Galatia – and us today – that ***"for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith"*** (Galatians 3:26).

So, what does Paul mean by that?

Well, he goes on explaining just that.

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:27-28).

Whoa. What's Paul saying?

Is Paul eliminating ethnicities, vocations and genders?

Certainly not – but there is a significant minority that believes he is.

[Out of Context]

Many people cite Galatians 3:28 as Biblical backing in support of the following:

- eliminating a nation's borders,
- backing the support for socialism,
- supporting the elimination of gender roles and gender change

People who identify as Christian and non-Christian alike use this text as Biblical proof for what they desire.

They typically cite that it's Galatians 3:28 that basically says that gender doesn't even matter. They say that it is here where Paul eliminates gender altogether. They say that there is no biological difference between male and female.

Some here today may have those same feelings.

As Genesis 1:27 states: ***"God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."***

[The Law]

Instead of reading it in context, they take it radically out of context.

This is in relation to the Law. The Law served as our guide until Christ came and abolished the ceremonial law. The Law continues to serve as our curb, mirror and guide in moral law.

"Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith." (Galatians 3:23-24).

The distinctions of Jew and Greek, slave and free, and male and female were the product of the covenant of circumcision.

You see, circumcision reinforced the boundary between Jew and Greek, the distinction between men and women, and the freedom to observe the Law fully. Paul is saying that the era of such divisions is over!

[In Context]

Paul is not eliminating what makes a Jew different from a Greek. He is not eliminating the differences between a slave and a free person. He is not eliminating the male and female genders. He is not giving permission to transgender.

When taken in context, Paul is writing that everyone who has been baptized in Christ are all one in Christ Jesus. Through baptism, you have "put on Christ" – you are now clothed, or covered, by Christ's righteousness. You are clean.

When you were baptized – with the water and the Word – Christ declared you to be righteous. You are perfect. You are justified by not your works, but by what Jesus Christ has done for you by His death and resurrection.

You were clothed with the righteousness of Christ. When a person is renewed by baptism and has put on Christ, so there is neither Jew nor Greek, Hawkeye nor Cornhusker, Little Hawk nor Trojan.

For, as long as you repent and follow Jesus, it doesn't matter who you are.

The privileges of being a Christian are not ranked by any measure. It doesn't matter what you look like. It doesn't matter how much money you make. It doesn't matter if you are male or female. No Christian believer is second class.

This is all in the realm of being a Christian – a follower of Jesus Christ.

You see, through yours and my baptism in Christ, there is no difference between anyone for ALL are ONE in Christ! Through Christ alone, we are all united.

[Believe in the Promise]

Paul writes: ***"And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise"*** (Galatians 3:29).

Everyone who believes in Christ becomes Abraham's seed and heirs of God's promise.

[One in Christ Jesus]

Now, you have likely heard or seen the phrase: "E pluribus unum." It is found on the Great Seal of the United States and on much of our money.

The phrase, "E pluribus unum" means "out of many, one."

In the same way, at one time, we were all many – Jew, Greek, German, Dane, Norwegian, English – but now we are all one in Christ Jesus. Through His death upon the cross and His resurrection from the sealed tomb, we are justified through faith in Christ.

You see, although each Christian is different in how we look and talk, we are all unified in Christ.

We are all one in Christ because ***when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons!*** (Galatians 4:4-5)

Through faith in Christ alone: We are justified! We are clean! We are righteous! Amen.

Now, let us make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Amen.