

SCRIPTURES MISUSED TO SUPPORT TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY

Romans 5:18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.

In this passage Paul is using “all” in a form of parallelism but with different meanings. It seems that in “life for all men” he either meant “all” to refer to Gentiles being included as well as Jews (not men in a universal sense) or that “all” is used interchangeably with “many,” similar to usage in other Scriptures. (Luke 6:26, Acts 22:15). So “justification and life for all men” in context means that God is expanding beyond the Jews in his offer of salvation through Christ’s sacrifice.

II Corinthians 5:18,19 This is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

Paul refers to God “reconciling the world to himself” in Christ but in this context “world” means those from every people group, not only Jews. (as in Revelation 7:9 ... from every nation, from all tribes and peoples...)

I John 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Once again, the world refers to Gentiles as well as Jews. Gill’s Commentary says, “Nothing is more common in Jewish writings than to call the Gentiles “the world”; and “the whole world”; and “the nations of the world.” So the offer of pardon from sin is also offered to those outside of the Jewish race, extending to all who would believe and receive this gift.

Colossians 1:19, 20 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Reconciling all things in this context seems to indicate a future submission of every created thing to God’s lordship and will, not universal salvation for mankind. John Macarthur says, “This text does not teach that, as a result, all will believe; rather it teaches that all will ultimately submit (cf. Phil 2:9-11).

John 17:20-23 ²⁰“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²²The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

Although this prayer could sound as if Jesus is desiring the oneness of believers so that they can be joined into the unity of the Godhead, the more clear interpretation is that Trinitarian unity should serve as a *model* for his followers. Through the Holy Spirit believers are united to God in a special way but not as a “fourth partner” of the Trinity. Even union between believers will obviously never be identical to the union between the members of the Trinity. Albert Barnes asserts, “This does not affirm that the union between Christians should be in all respects like that between the Father and the Son, but only in the points in which they are capable of being compared. It is not the union of nature which is referred to, but the union of plan, of counsel, of purpose seeking the same objects...”

