

# 50 Scriptures Inclusionism Can't Explain<sup>1</sup>

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We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. (Heb 2:1)

Being careless with God's word can cause people to drift away. This is why I am opposed to the doctrine of inclusion for it distorts and twists scripture and, as a result, some have drifted away.

Inclusionism teaches that Jesus died not as *one* of us but as *all* of us and that humanity was included in his resurrection and ascension. Since "all are in Christ," everyone is now reconciled, justified, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Spirit whether they believe it or not.

As I have explained elsewhere, inclusion is not the gospel of grace and it was not preached by the early church fathers. Inclusionism is a manmade philosophy that can damage your faith and one of the ways it does this is by contradicting scripture. By my rough count there are several hundred scriptures that refute inclusionism. Here are fifty:

**Genesis 7:13** "On that very day Noah and his sons, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark." Noah's Ark represents Christ. If inclusionism is true, then humanity would've boarded the ark and been saved. Instead, the only people who entered were those who believed what Noah preached.

**Matthew 7:23** "Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me.'" Inclusionism: "All have been united with the Lord. All are part of God's family, so how can Christ claim he doesn't know us?"

**Luke 7:50** "Jesus said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'" Inclusionism: "That must be a mistake. It's the faith of Jesus that saves us. Anyway, the woman was only *sort of* saved." See next point.

**Luke 8:12** "Believe and be saved." Inclusionism: "You are saved whether you believe it or not but you're not really because there are actually three kinds of salvation." This is one of greatest (and most confusing) perversions of scripture. Jesus and the apostles say "believe and be saved" (Mark 16:16, 8:12, Acts 16:31, Romans 10:9), but inclusionism reverses the order: "You are saved. Believe it."

**Luke 11:13** "... how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Jesus said the Father is eager to give the Holy Spirit to all who ask but inclusionism says "A loving Father gives his children what they need before they ask. You don't have to ask for the Holy Spirit. You already have him. Everyone does."

**John 3:18** "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already..." Jesus said "God condemns no one (John 3:17), but unbelievers condemn themselves." Inclusionism disagrees. "No they don't. Since all are in Christ, there's no condemnation for anyone."

**John 5:24** "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes... has crossed over from death to life." Inclusionism: "Since humanity was co-resurrected with Christ, all have crossed over to life whether they believe it or not." Jesus said the unbeliever remains under condemnation and death (serious words!), but inclusionism says that's just an illusion (not so serious really).

**John 5:40** "Come to me to have life." The gospel that Jesus and the apostles preached came with sweet invitations (Matthew 11:28, 19:14, 6:37, 44, 65, 7:37; Acts 3:19, 20:21, 26:20). Inclusionism, in contrast, tells the unbeliever, "You are already in a relationship with Christ, you just don't know it." Jesus woos us with love, but inclusionism preaches involuntary union.

**John 6:37** "Those who come to me I never cast away". Inclusionism: "There is no coming to Christ. You're already in!"

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Escape to Reality (12 December 2014): <http://wp.me/pNzdT-2nL>. The online article contains links to sources and supplementary materials.

- John 6:47** “He who believes has everlasting life.” Jesus and the apostles preached so that you might believe and have eternal life (John 5:24, 40, 1 John 5:12-13). “These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). In contrast, inclusionism claims, “Raised with Christ, you already have new life. You just don’t know it.”
- John 10:9** “I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.” Inclusionism: “You were saved *before* you entered. Entering sounds like a work. So does faith. Your entering and believing have little to do with it.”
- Act 10:44** “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.” Inclusionism: “Actually Cornelius and his household already had the Holy Spirit hiding inside them. He didn’t come down, he popped out.”
- Act 19:6** “When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.” Inclusionism: “Again, the Holy Spirit didn’t ‘come on them.’ One with the Lord, unbelievers are already joined to the Holy Spirit.”
- Romans 1:16** “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” Inclusionism: “No, the saving power of God is for all, including those who reject the gospel.”
- Romans 3:22** “This righteousness from God comes through faith of Jesus Christ to all who believe” (see also Romans 4:24, 10:4). In many places the Bible says, “The believer is righteous.” Inclusionism adds, “So is the unbeliever.”
- Romans 5:15,19** “...the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, *will overflow to the many!* ... through the obedience of the one man *the many will be made righteous.*” Inclusionism: “Not many, but *all* and not will be, but *have been*, as in all have been made righteous.” (What about when Paul refers to “all men” in v.18? See [this note](#).)
- Romans 5:17** “...how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.” The Bible: “Receive the gift of righteousness!” Inclusionism: “All are exhibited righteous on account of Jesus.”
- Romans 6:3** “Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” Inclusionism: “This is describing everyone since all were included or baptized into Christ’s death on the cross.” Yet the apostles found some who had *not* been baptized into Christ (see Act 10:48, 19:5). They were excluded.
- Romans 8:9** “You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his.” Inclusionism: “The second part of that verse is a fiction for all have the Holy Spirit in them.”
- Romans 10:10** “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Inclusionism: “The unbeliever is justified and saved too – they just don’t know it.”
- Romans 10:13** “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Inclusionism: “This is misleading for Jesus saved you before you called. But in truth it’s complicated because salvation means a whole lot of things.”
- Romans 16:7** “Greet Andronicus and Junias, my relatives who were in Christ before I was.” Inclusionism: “Paul was mistaken – everyone was in Christ at the cross.”
- 2 Corinthians 6:14-15** “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers ... What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?” Inclusionism: “Quite a lot actually, since they are both yoked in Christ.”
- Colossians 1:18** “And he is the head of the body, the church...” The Bible: “Jesus is the firstborn of (supreme above) creation (Colossians 1:15), the firstfruits of the resurrected dead (1 Corinthians 15:20), and the head of the family of God (Ephesians 3:15).” Inclusionism: “Paul was confused for Jesus is the federal head of *humanity*.”

**Ephesians 1:13** “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.” Inclusionism: “Wrong again. You were included *before* you heard and *before* you believed.”

**Ephesians 4:18** “They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.” Inclusionism: “God has established a relationship with everyone and all have been raised to resurrection life. Any separation is a figment of the unbeliever’s imagination.”

**2 Corinthians 5:20** “We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.” Inclusionism: “Unbelievers *are* reconciled to God. Indeed, they are married to Jesus.”

**1 Timothy 1:9** “We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinners...” (See also 1 Peter 4:18 and James 4:8.) Inclusionism: “Strong words! And irrelevant because there are no ungodly and no sinners. Just people living in a state of denial.”

**1 Timothy 5:24** “The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.” Inclusionism: “What sins?”

**Hebrew 4:2** “For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.” Inclusionism: “Hebrews was written for *Hebrews*, not us. It was written for people living under law so we can ignore this.”

**James 4:8** “Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Inclusionism: “James wrote for the twelve tribes, not you. He probably didn’t understand grace anyway, so we can take his epistle with a pinch of salt.”

**1 John 1:3** “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” The Bible: “Not everyone is connected to the Vine.” Inclusionism: “Everyone is connected. Unbelievers are non-participating members of the body of Christ.”

**1 John 3:15** “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.” Inclusionism: “Everyone has eternal life in them; they just don’t know it.”

Inclusion appeals to some because it comes wrapped in borrowed ribbons of grace. But don’t be fooled – the involuntary union of inclusionism is a hideous distortion of God’s love for humanity. Jesus died to set you free and that freedom includes the freedom to choose. Thankfully, inclusionism is easily recognized as a counterfeit for it doesn’t fit with scripture. Indeed, scripture refutes it again and again, as we have seen. (If you can think of other scriptures refuting inclusionism, let us know below.)

In contrast, the gospel of Jesus Christ is revealed on every page and in every book in the Bible. That gospel is the divine announcement that God loves every single one of us, holds nothing against us, and draws us to himself through his Son Jesus. The gospel is the stunning announcement that God loves you like a Father – unconditionally, deeply, wildly. Those who respond to his overtures of love will never be turned away.

To embrace inclusionism one must either ignore large chunks of the Bible or rewrite it. I suggest we hold to scripture and dismiss the counterfeit.



For more on inclusionism and how it differs from the gospel that Jesus revealed, check out:

[www.escapetoreality.org/resources/study-notes/](http://www.escapetoreality.org/resources/study-notes/)