

“All Things”

There are many scriptures that contain the words *“all things.”* It is a common mistake, especially in biblical interpretation, to apply these words in a way that the writer never intended. These terms are always used to refer to “all” or “every” part or person within their particular contexts. The only time they should be understood in an unlimited sense is when the context allows it. Let’s examine two frequently misinterpreted passages so that we can *“rightly divide the word of truth”* (2 Timothy 2:15).

Every once in a while someone mentions that they are contemplating trying something really difficult, but are not sure that they should. Then some well-meaning brother or sister will tell him to “go for it” for Paul said, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”* (Philippians 4:13). Paul was not saying that the Lord will give me the strength to play phenomenal basketball. This is a silly illustration, but I have heard applications of it that are that silly. The *“all things”* of the context was Paul’s ability to live in Christ in ever circumstance (vss. 11-12). Another passage that is regularly misinterpreted is Romans 8:28: *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”* This is normally used to say that everything bad that happens to someone really turns out for good, but this is a ridiculous assertion. Paul’s *“all things”* relate to God’s plan of salvation, and these will always work out for the good of those who obey Christ.

The Bible is God’s inspired word, and it needs to be interpreted correctly. Misinterpreting these passages lead to very serious mistakes in God’s plan of redemption.

Adapted From Edward Bragwell, Sr.