



IMPUTATION

Imputation means to put something on a person's account or charge, to attribute or reckon something to an individual. Philemon 18 states it as "**Put that on my account.**"

Concerning sin and salvation there are three different imputations in the scriptures:

A. Of Adam's Sin to All Mankind

1. When Adam disobeyed God by eating from the tree of knowledge (Genesis 3:6), he not only brought death upon himself, but he also brought it upon all of his descendants. Adam, the first man, represents the whole human race.
2. Romans 5:12-21 plainly states that men die not because of their own sin, but because of *Adam's one sin* in Eden. Since Adam is the father of all mankind (all except Jesus Christ), God attributes his sin to all his offspring. This makes every person a sinner. God does this because all humanity was in Adam when he sinned; so, in effect, when Adam sinned, *WE sinned* (vs. 12). As further proof, verses 12-14 indicate that all the people who lived from Adam until Moses did not die because of their own personal sins. They died because of the sins of their father—Adam (see also Romans 4:15; 1 Corinthians 15:22).
3. God is showing us in Romans 5 that all born of Adam are sinners and die, but also that all born of Christ are *righteous and alive* (vs. 17-19). He is showing us how the head or representative of a family acts in behalf of his offspring. Since all are condemned by the actions of one man, *all CAN be saved* by the actions of another. All men are born of Adam, and all men can be "**born again**" into Christ.

B. Of the World's Sins to Jesus Christ

1. The primary reason Jesus Christ came into the world was to die for its sins and take them away (John 1:29; Galatians 1:4; 1 Timothy 1:15; Hebrews 1:3, 9:28, 10:4-14; 1 John 2:2; etc.). This was a voluntary act of love on His part; He did not have to give His life and redeem man but could have sent the whole world to Hell and been just in doing so (John 3:16, 10:18; Romans 5:8).

2. While Jesus was suffering on the cross, God laid all the sins of the world, past, present, and future on Him. His father treated Him as the lowest sinner, as one who had committed the most wicked crimes, though personally Christ was sinless and guilty of nothing (2 Corinthians 5:21). And since Adam was not his father, there was no inherited guilt in Him to compel His death, but *He died anyway*. Why? Because of sin, IMPUTED SIN. Since God charged sin to Him, and "**the wages of sin is death**," He had to die to pay for them (Romans 5:12, 6:23).

3. 2 Corinthians 5:19-21 leaves no doubt that God made Jesus to be sin in the world's place. He placed His wrath not on the guilty, but on His guiltless Son. The just suffered for the unjust so He could save all who would receive Him. Those who refuse Him must suffer for their sins themselves (John 3:18,36; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12; etc.).

C. Of the "Righteousness of God" to the Believer

1. This imputation was covered under the previous outline titled, *Justification*, where the believer is justified by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

2. Comparing this imputation with the last one shows us how real the doctrine of imputation is. Since every true Christian believes that Jesus died for his sins because God imputed them to Him, he should also believe that he has been justified with Christ's imputed righteousness. If imputation is real enough to cause a sinless man's death, the *imputation of righteousness must be just as real* (2 Corinthians 5:19-21)! God treated Christ as a sinner so He could treat the "sinner" as righteous (1 Peter 2:24).

Lessons

- ✓ Rejoice that God put our sin on Jesus' account
- ✓ Don't ever act like you have to earn God's favor
- ✓ Don't ever act like His work is your work
- ✓ Help clear up misunderstandings about the gospel.