

DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGE
DOCTRINE OF SALVATION
PART 2-TERMINOLOGY
IMPUTATION/SUBSTITUTION

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Introduction

We have been looking at the terminology of Salvation and have thus far looked at *REPENTANCE*, *FAITH*, *CONVERSION*, and *REGENERATION*!

Today I want us to look at the terms “*IMPUTATION*”, “*IMPURED*”, and “*IMPUTE*” as well as the terms “*SUBSTITUTION*” and “*SUBSTITUTE*.”

I. *IMPUTATION, IMPURED, AND IMPUTE.*

(2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:5-8)

With regard to our salvation, “*imputation*” speaks of the fact that the sinner's sin has been *imputed* or we might say “*set down to the account of*” Jesus Christ and that the righteousness of God has been *imputed* or “*set down to the account of*” the sinner.

A. The Definition Of Impute Or Imputation:

To *impute* is *the act of one person adding something good or bad to the account of another person.*

“To put on someone’s account; to reckon; to lay to one’s charge.” (Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity, Edited by David W. Cloud, 1997, Way of Life Literature.)

“Is used to designate any action or word or thing as reckoned to a person. Thus in doctrinal language (1) the sin of Adam is imputed to all his descendants, i.e., it is reckoned as theirs, and they are dealt with therefore as guilty; (2) the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them that believe in him, or so attributed to them as to be considered their own; and (3) our sins are imputed to Christ, i.e., he assumed our “law-place,” undertook to answer the demands of justice for our sins. In all these cases the nature of imputation is the same (Rom 5:12-19). (Easton’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.)

B. Kinds Of Imputation:

In the Bible there are three main theological *imputations*:

- 1. The *imputation* of Adam’s sin upon the human race. (*Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22*)**

This first *imputation* might seem to be totally unjust to some. They ask, “Why should Adam’s sin be *imputed* to me when it happened in a remote part of this world thousands of years before I was even born?”

This argument is moot when we consider the nature of our sin. The fact is that we are not only **sinners by nature** (i.e. by our being “*in Adam*”) but we find that we indeed are also **sinners by choice** (i.e. we choose to sin.)

If we have a problem with Adam’s sin nature being passed to us, the problem is with Adam, not God!

- 2. The *imputation* of the human race’s sin upon Christ. “On the cross, God treated Jesus as if he lived your life so he could treat you as if you had lived his. That's *imputation*; that's *substitution*.” (John F. McArthur quoted in *Encyclopedia of Jesus' Life and Time*.)**

Isaiah 53:5– “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:11– “. . .by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.”

Hebrews 2:9– “. . .that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man.”

**DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGE
DOCTRINE OF SALVATION
PART 2-TERMINOLOGY
IMPUTATION/SUBSTITUTION**

1 Peter 2:24—“Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed”

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

The first **imputation** was an unwilling one (for no human would voluntarily accept Adam’s guilt), but the second **imputation** was effected upon a totally willing volunteer.

John 10:11—“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”

John 10:18—“No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.”

3. **The imputation of God’s righteousness upon the believing sinner. (Philippians 3:7-9)**
This **imputation**, like the second, must be voluntary. God does not force the righteousness of Christ upon anyone.

C. Biblical Examples Of Imputation.

1. **Abraham. (James 2:23; Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3)**
James 2:23 “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.”

Genesis 15:6 “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

**DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGE
DOCTRINE OF SALVATION
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2. **David. (Romans 4:6-8; Psalms 32:1-2)**
Romans 4:6-8 “6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”
3. **Onesimus. (Philemon 1:17-18)**
Philemon 1:17-18 “17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. 18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;”
4. **Stephen. (Acts 7:59-60)**
Acts 7:59-60 “59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”
5. **Paul. (2 Timothy 4:16)**
2 Timothy 4:16 “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.”

II. SUBSTITUTION AND SUBSTITUTE.

The Scriptural concept behind these words speaks of the fact that Christ died as a **substitute** in the place of the sinner.
1 Peter 3:18—“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:”

A. Temporary Substitution Under The Old Testament Sacrificial System.

In Old Testament times, prior to Calvary, “the sheep died for the shepherd.”

**DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGE
DOCTRINE OF SALVATION
PART 2-TERMINOLOGY
IMPUTATION/SUBSTITUTION**

*Genesis 3:21—“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”
(See Genesis 22:10-13; Exodus 12:3-7, 12-13)*

The sacrifices under the Law were only a temporary covering for sin and had to be repeated. These were only a picture of the one true Sacrifice that was to come. *(Hebrews 9:6-14; 10:1-14)*

B. Permanent Substitution Through The Sacrifice Of Christ On The Cross Of Calvary.

In New Testament times, after Calvary, the Shepherd died for the sheep.

John 10:11—“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

Thus, Christ became on the cross what He was not—namely, sin—that we might become what we were not—namely, righteous. *(Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:21)*

The Son of God became the Son of man that sons of men might become the sons of God.

See Isaiah 53:4-12.