

In II Corinthians 5:19 Paul says that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them." And in II Corinthians 5:21 Paul says that God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." God did not make Christ sinful in nature or deed, but charged our sin against His Son, in order that He might credit His righteousness to us. This is imputation.

The classic passage on the imputation of Adam's guilt is Romans 5:12-19. In the NASB the passage reads as follows:

(12) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned --

(13) for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not Imputed when there is no law.

(14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

(15) But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to many.

(16) And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.

(17) For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

(18) So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

(19) For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

Let us look carefully at this passage, verse by verse, making comments as we go. We will use a very literal translation (made by the professor).

12 -- "Therefore even as by one man sin entered the world, and because of sin, death; and in this way death passed over to all men, in that all sinned -- "

"One man" appears to refer to Adam.

Sin and death entered space-time history at Adam's original transgression of God's commandment.

"Death" could refer to physical death or spiritual death or both.

All men sinned; this bears some relationship to death having passed over to all men.