

## Doctrine of Hamartiology:

Sin, Inheritance, and Imputation:

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Consider the following passage:

Psalm 51:1-4

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
According to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
And cleanse me from my sin!

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you, you only, have I sinned,

And done that which is evil in your sight, so that you are justified  
in your sentence and blameless in your judgment.”

Why study Sin? Consider the following:

- Our view of sin directly impacts our view of God and our view of God directly impacts our view of sin.
- Our view of sin sheds light on our human condition: behavior, motives, relationships, and eternal destiny.
- Our view of sin impacts our view of and need for salvation.
- Our view of sin impacts our understanding of the church, spiritual life, spiritual warfare, and end times (restoration).

Why study Sin? Consider the following:

- Our view of sin impacts our understanding of biblical exegesis and theological methodology.
- Our view of sin sheds light on our human history.
- Our view of sin impacts the way we do ministry.
- Our view of sin sheds tremendous light upon Jesus Christ, His teachings, His Atonement, present ministry, future divine judgments, future reign, and eternal state.

Consider the following quote:

*“Can an individual or society live without a complete disregard for a moral & spiritual center and not suffer from the wounds of wickedness?”*

~ Ravi Zacharias.

What is your definition of Sin?

Please take a sheet of paper out and write out and comprehensively define what sin is.

I will collect it in approx. 2-3 minutes.

Consider Wayne Grudem's Definition:

"Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature" [*Systematic Theology*, 490].

Observations of this definition:

1. Sin is defined in relation to God and His moral law (Rom. 2:15 (conscience); Rom. 2:17-29 (written law)).
2. Sin includes our individual acts (1 John 3:4).
3. Sin includes our attitudes that are contrary to what God requires of us (Gal. 5:20; Matt. 5:22; Mark 12:30).
4. Sin is also defined in view of our very nature i.e., the internal character that is the essence of who we are as persons. As Paul states, "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8) or "we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind" (Eph. 2:3).

Consider Westminster Larger Catechism:

**"Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature."**

Consider Millard Erickson's Definition of Sin:

**"Sin is any lack of conformity, active or passive to the moral law of God. This may be a matter of act, of thought, or of inner disposition or state.' Sin is failure to live up to what God expects of us in act, thought, and being."**

~ *Systematic Theology*, 578.

A Comprehensive Definition of Sin should involve the following elements:

- Sin is transgressing the Law of God
- Sin is a failure to conform to the standard of God.
- Sin is a state within humanity.
- Sin is rebellion against God
- Sin is wrongful acts towards both God and Man.

~ *Moody Handbook of Theology* by P. Enns

Sin is a transgression of the law of God:

The Greek word *parabasis* means overstepping, transgression. God gave the Mosaic law to heighten man's understanding of His standard and the seriousness of transgressing that standard ( Rom. 4:15 ). Thereafter, when God said, "You shall not bear false witness," a lie was seen to be what it is: an overstepping or transgression of the law of God (cf. Rom. 2:23 ; 5:14 ; Gal. 3:19 ).

Sin is a failure to conform to the standard of God:

The Greek word *hamartia* means "miss the mark," "every departure from the way of righteousness." Thus, it means that all people have missed the mark of God's standard and continue to fall short of that standard ( Rom. 3:23 ). This involves both sins of commission as well as omission. Failure to do what is right is also sin ( Rom. 14:23 ).

### Sin is a state within man:

Sin is not only an act but also a principle that dwells in man. Paul refers to the struggle with the sin principle within ( Rom. 7:14 , 17–25 ); all people have this sin nature ( Gal. 3:22 ). Hebrews 3:13 refers to it “as the power that deceives men and leads them to destruction.” Jesus also refers to sin as a “condition or characteristic quality” (John 9:41; 15:24 ; 19:11)

### Sin is rebellion against God.

*Sin is rebellion against God.* Another Greek word for sin is *anomia* , which means “lawlessness” ( 1 John 3:4 ) and can be described as a “frame of mind.” It denotes lawless deeds ( Titus 2:14 ) and is a sign of the last days, meaning “without law or restraint” ( Matt. 24:12).

### Sin is wrongful acts towards God and man:

*Sin is wrongful acts toward God and man.* Romans 1:18 refers to “ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.” Ungodliness refers to man’s failure to obey God and keep the commandments related to Him ( Exod. 20:1–11 ); unrighteousness is seen in man’s failure to live righteously toward his fellow man ( Exod. 20:12–17 ).

### A Definition of Sin:

**Therefore**, sin is transgressing the Law of God; a failure to conform the standard of God; a state within humanity; rebellion against God; wrongful acts towards both God and Man.

### What is “Original Sin”, “Inherited Sin”, or “Inherited Corruption”?

- Original sin may be defined as the sinful state and condition in which every person is born. It is so designated because:
  1. It is derived from the original root of the human race (Adam),
  2. It is present in the life of every individual from the time of his birth, and
  3. It is the inward root of all the actual sins that defile the life of man.

*Original sin refers to the corruption of our whole nature.*

### Result of Original Sin is Total Depravity:

#### *Consider Charles C. Ryrie’s Definition:*

*“Total depravity does not mean that everyone is as thoroughly depraved in his actions as he could possibly be, nor that everyone will indulge in every form of sin, nor that a person cannot appreciate and even do acts of goodness; but it does mean that the corruption of sin extends to all men and to all parts of all men so that there is nothing within the natural man that can give him merit in God’s sight “ [Survey of Bible Doctrine, 111].*

## Result of Original Sin is Total Depravity:

Humanity has an innate sin nature. Like Ryrie states, "The sin nature is the capacity to do all those things (good or bad) that can in no way commend us to God [Idem]." In fact, every aspect of the human person is involved:

- a. intellect (2 Cor. 4:4);
- b. conscience (1 Tim. 4:2);
- c. will (Rom. 1:28);
- d. heart (Eph. 4:18);
- e. and the total being (Rom. 1:18–3:20).

## How did Original Sin Impact the Image of God in Man:

Two views among Calvinists on how sin impacts the image of God in man:

1. Dutch Tradition: Image of God in Man is erased: Ephesians 2:1;
2. Princetonian Tradition: Image of God in Man is totally effaced (but not erased):
  - a. Adam & Eve saw God and fled;
  - b. Natural man clearly perceives; He is without excuse (Rom. 1);
  - c. Cornelius' prayer went up to God as memorial (Acts 10); Subsequent conversion (Acts 11).

## What is Imputation:

**Definition:** The word *imputation* comes from the Latin word *imputare*, meaning "to reckon," "to charge to one's account."

Imputation is interrelated to the problem of *how* sin is charged to every person.

The biblical basis for imputation is Romans 5:12. This passage explains that sin entered the world through Adam. The interpretation of that verse determines one's view of imputation.

## What is Imputation:

Lewis S. Chafer writes, "The theological meaning of the word impute is "to attribute or reckon over something to a person."

He later rights that the "scope of the doctrine of imputation controversy centers upon the one most theological context in the Bible-Romans 5:12-21. The context is, in the main, an elucidation of the primary declaration set forth in verse 12. If therefore follows that any interpretation of verse 12 which is not harmoniously unfolded in verses 13 to 21 is proved by so much to be wrong. The worthy student of theology will spend much time on this portion of the Scriptures. It will not do to accept merely the findings of the best of men, but painstaking exegetical effort must be bestowed." *Systematic Theology*, 2: 296-7.

## What is Imputation:

Stearns, in his *Present Day Theology* (p. 321), suggests:

"If you wish to know whether a man is a theologian, turn to his Greek Testament, and if it opens of its own accord to the fifth chapter of Romans, and you find the page worn and brown, you may safely set him down as a devotee of the sacred science" (cited by W.H. Griffith Thomas in *Principles of Theology*, pg. 163).

## Four Views of Imputation:

Historically, there have been four major views of how sin is imputed to the human race:

1. Pelagian View;
2. Arminian View;
3. Federal View;
4. Augustinian or Seminal View.

## Pelagianism:



Pelagius (c. 354- c. 420/440) was a brilliant thinker, ascetic (denied worldly pleasures) reformer and powerful speaker. He denied original sin from Adam and was declared a heretic by the Roman Catholic Church. Well educated in both Greek and Latin, he spent much of his time focusing on practical asceticism.

## Pelagianism:

• St. Augustine, shocked that Pelagius and Celestius were not judged to be heretics, called the Council of Carthage in 418 and clearly stated nine beliefs of the Church that Pelagianism denied:

1. Denied that death came from sin, not man's physical nature.
2. Denied that Infants must be baptized to be cleansed from original sin.
3. Denied that justifying grace covers past sins and helps avoid future sins.
4. Denied that the grace of Christ imparts strength and will to act out God's commandments.

## Pelagianism:

5. Denied that good works can come without God's grace.
6. Denied that we confess we are sinners because it is true.
7. Denied that saints should ask for forgiveness for their own sins.
8. Denied that the saints also confess to be sinners because they are.
9. Denied that children dying *without* baptism are excluded from both the Kingdom of heaven and eternal life.

The last canon is no longer widely accepted, for example current Roman Catholic Church doctrine states that children who die without baptism are *entrusted to the mercy of God* (thus leaving unbaptized infants' salvation still in question). Of course the issue of infant salvation is debated among Protestants as well.

## Pelagianism:

Pelagius taught that God created every soul directly (he despised the traducian theory), and that every soul therefore was innocent and unstained.

No created soul had any direct relation to the sin of Adam; the only significance of Adam's sin upon humanity was the bad example.

## Pelagianism:

Pelagius, therefore, did not view Romans 5:12 as affecting all humanity; it did not.

No sin of Adam was imputed to the human race; only those acts of sin that people themselves committed were imputed to them.

Moreover, man did not die because he sinned but because of the law of nature. Adam would have died even if he had not sinned. Pelagius and his doctrines were condemned at the Council of Carthage in A.D. 418.

## Summary of Pelagian View:

1. View of Romans 5:12 is that people incur death when they sin after Adam's example.
2. Original Sin affected Adam alone.
3. No one affected by Adam's sin
4. Belief prevalent among Unitarians

## Arminian View:

Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609) was a Dutch theologian. The Arminian view is the representative in the Methodist church, Wesleyans, Pentecostals, and others. In thought similar to Pelagianism, Arminius taught that man was not considered guilty because of Adam's sin. When people would voluntarily and purposefully choose to sin even though they had power to live righteously—then, and only then, would God impute sin to them and count them guilty.



## Arminian View:

Although man does not possess original righteousness because of Adam's sin, Augustus Strong writes:

“God bestows upon each individual from the first dawn of consciousness a special influence of the Holy Spirit, which is sufficient to counteract the effect of the inherited depravity and to make obedience possible, provided the human will cooperates, which it still has power to do” [Systematic Theology, 601].

## Arminian View:

Thus Arminius recognized an effect from Adam's sin but not in the sense of total depravity; through divine enablement man could still make righteous choices.

Romans 5:12 is not understood as all humanity suffering the effect of Adam's sin and death; but rather because of the individual agreement with Adam's act is sin imputed to the individual.

## Summary of Arminian View:

1. View of Romans 5:12 is that all people consent to Adam's sin—then sin is imputed. Adam sinned and partially affected humanity.
2. Depravity is not total; people received corrupt nature from Adam but not guilt or culpability.
3. Methodists, Wesleyans, and various Pentecostals Holiness groups have *historically* embraced this view.

## Federal View:

The federal view was originally propounded by Cocceius (1603–1669) and became a standard of belief in Reformed theology. It was taught by men like Charles Hodge; J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.; and Louis Berkhof. This view is called the federal view because Adam is seen as the federal head or representative of the entire human race.



## Federal View:

God entered into a covenant of works with Adam whereby He promised to bless Adam and thereby the entire human race with eternal life if Adam obeyed. Disobedience would bring suffering to the entire human race. As a result of Adam's sin, since he was the representative of the human race, his sin plunged the entire human race into suffering and death.

Through the one sin of Adam, sin and death are imputed to all humanity because all humanity was represented in Adam.

## Federal View:

Charles Hodge defines the view: "in virtue of the union, federal and natural, between Adam and his posterity, his sin, although not their act, is so imputed to them that it is the judicial ground of the penalty threatened against him coming also upon them [Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 2: 192-93]."

Covenant of works: God entered into a covenant with Adam as the federal head (representative) of the human race in which God promised to bless Adam with eternal life if he would obey; if he disobeyed God, Adam would be judged with death.

## Summary of Federal View:

### Summary of Federal View:

1. View of Romans 5:12 is that sin was imputed to humanity because of Adam's sin.
2. Adam alone sinned but human race affected depravity is total;
3. Sin and guilt are imputed to everyone.
4. Presbyterians, esp, those holding to Covenant Theology, and other Calvinistic evangelicals impacted by the writings of Charles Hodge.

## Augustinian or Seminal View of Sin:

This view is named after Augustine ( a.d. 354–430) and has been more recently held by Calvin, Luther, Shedd, and Strong. This view teaches that the statement "all sinned" in Romans 5:12 suggests that all humanity was a participant in Adam's sin.



## Augustinian or Seminal View of Sin:

Just as Levi (although not yet born) paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham in that Levi was "seminally present" in Abraham ( Heb. 7:9–10 ), in a similar way, all humanity was "seminally present" in Adam when Adam sinned and therefore all humanity participated in the sin.

Therefore, the sin of Adam and the resultant death is charged to all humanity because all humanity is guilty. God holds all humanity guilty because all humanity *is* guilty.

## Augustinian or Seminal View of Sin:

The Augustinian view is that the sinfulness of humanity is transmitted rather than imputed, i.e., "charged."

Remember the word "impute" means to "attribute something to a person that usually is derived from another."

## Summary of Seminal View:

1. View of Romans 5:12: Sin is imputed to humanity because of Adam's sin.
2. Humanity sinned in Adam; Depravity is total;
3. Sin and guilt are imputed.
4. Reformers; Calvinistic evangelicals.

## Pelagius vs. Augustine Compared:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Adam would have died whether sinned or not.                            | 1. Sin brought death into the world                    |
| 2. Adam's sin injured only himself.                                       | 2. All humanity fell in Adam.                          |
| 3. Children are born in which the state in which Adam was before his fall | 3. Children are born guilty and depraved.              |
| 4. The law and the gospel both lead to the kingdom of heaven.             | 4. No one can enter the kingdom except through Christ. |

## Pelagius vs. Augustine Compared:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 5. Even before the coming of the Lord there were men without sin.  | 5. There is none righteous.   |
| 6. Neither by the death and sin of Adam does the whole race die, nor by the resurrection of Christ does the whole race rise. | 6. Just as all men died in Adam, all men can be raised to life in Christ. |
| 7. Grace is gracious, but not necessary.   | 7. Grace is absolutely necessary.   |

## Summary of Views:

1. Pelagianism: Man is essentially good and capable of doing what is necessary for salvation.
2. Augustinianism: Man is dead in sin; salvation is totally by the grace of God, which is given only to the elect.
3. Arminianism: Though impacted from Adam's sin, through divine enablement (typically preventive grace) man could still make righteous choices.
4. Semi-pelagianism: The grace of God and the will of man work together in salvation, which man must take the initiative (John Cassian)
5. Semi-Augustinianism: The grace of God comes to all, enabling a person to choose and perform what is necessary for salvation (Caesarius of Arles).

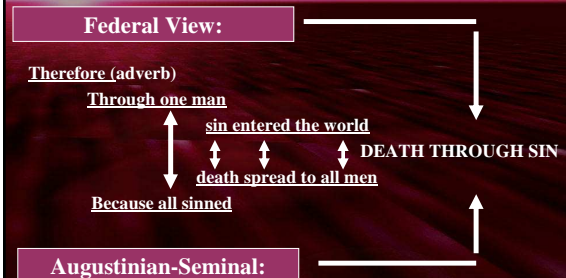
## What is Imputation? Consider Roman 5:12-21

1. **We have received inherited guilt: Thus, we are counted guilty [judicial guilt] Because of Adam's sin.**
2. **Paul is not talking about actual sins people commit.**
3. **Rom. 5:12-21 is a comparison between Adam and Christ.**
  - a. Through Adam's sin [Gk. Houtos, "thus, in this way" i.e., Adam sin] "all men sinned." All men sinned is an aorist indicative verb implying that it is a completed past action. So, Paul is saying that when Adam sinned, God considered it true that all men sinned in Adam.

## Roman 5:12-21

4. "All men sinned" means that God thought of all us having sinned when Adam disobeyed is further implied in Rom. 5:13-14:
  - a. Paul shows that from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, people did not have God's written laws. Though their sins were "not counted as breaking the law), they still died. The fact that they died is proof that God counted people guilty on the basis of Adam's sin.
5. The idea that God counted as guilty is further affirmed in Rom. 5:18-19. Read passage.
6. Paul in Rom. 5:12 attributes death to the original sin of Adam.

## Romans 5:12: Interesting Construction:





### Result of Sin is Physical, Spiritual, & Eternal Death:

Death as a result of Adam's sin stands out when God had forbidden Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:

- (1) "For in the day that you eat of it you shall die" (Gen. 2:17);
- (2) "The wages of sin is death" meaning death is a fitting return, a just recompense for what we have done (Rom. 6:23).
- (3) Paul attributes death to the original sin of Adam. "Yet while death entered into the world through Adam's sin, it spread to all because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

### Result of Sin is Physical, Spiritual, & Eternal Death:

1. **Physical Death** is the termination of human existence in the bodily or material state: Gen. 3:19; Heb. 9:27; Rom. 5:12.
  - a. "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19).
  - b. "It is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

### Result of Sin is Physical, Spiritual, & Eternal Death:

2. **Spiritual death:** Spiritual death is the separation of the person, in the entirety of his nature, from God. Sin brings humanity under God's judgment and condemnation:
  - a. Genesis 2:17;
  - b. Ephesians 2:1;
  - c. Romans 6:23.

### Result of Sin is Physical, Spiritual, & Eternal Death:

3. **Eternal Death:** Is Permanent, unending Separation from God; this death is qualitatively different from physical death because it is everlasting damnation (Matt. 25:41-46; Rev. 20; Rev 21:8). It also involves the future event known as the Great White Throne Judgment whereby all the unsaved will be gathered because of their willful rejection of God and will be sentenced to the "lake of fire."

### EXCEEDING PROOFS OF SIN:

Dr. Lewis S. Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary and author of *Systematic Theology*, offers three exceeding proofs of the sinfulness of personal sin:



### Three Exceeding Proofs of the Sinfulness of Personal Sin:

- **The Angelic proof:**

"One of the angelic hosts committed one sin, which sin in their own sphere men deem commendable, namely, wholly ambition, and, as a result of that sin, that angel fell and became the eternal enemy of God and drew after him a vast company of the heavenly hosts, some of whom are bound in chains of darkness, and for whom there is no ray of hope through all eternity."

## Three Exceeding Proofs of the Sinfulness of Personal Sin:

- **The Human Proof:**

“One individual, the first of the human creation, committed one sin and that sin being apparently so innocuous men are prone to ridicule the thought that God would notice it all; yet that one sin is, according to divine estimation, sufficiently evil to cause the degeneracy and depravity of the unfallen person who committed the sin, and to cause uncounted millions of his posterity to suffer in the flesh and die, and the vast majority of them to spend eternity in the realms of woe.”

## Three Exceeding Proofs of the Sinfulness of Personal Sin:

- **The Divine Proof:**

“The Son of God suffered to an infinite degree and died on the cross because of sin. There was no other way whereby redemption could be secured. However, had there never been but one sin committed in this world, the same depths of suffering and death by the Son of God would have been required as a righteous ground for divine forgiveness of that one sin and the justification of that sinner”

~ Lewis S. Chafer's *Systematic Theology*, 2: 252.

## How Should We Then Live?

1. Consider your desperate need for salvation;
2. Meditate on God's gracious provision for salvation;
3. Always be observant of your human frailty and surroundings.
4. Remember that sin can lead us to places we never thought we would go;
5. Recognize the four-fold divine provision against sin: Scriptures; Indwelling Ministry of the Holy Spirit; Community of believers; Intercessory Ministry of Christ.
6. Worship God for who He is and what He has done.
7. Share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
8. Take Delight that salvation is free to all who are willing to believe (John 3:16).
9. Take joy! God elected you unto salvation in spite of knowing everything about (Eph. 1:4-5; 1 Peter 1:1-2).