

PHILEMON

"Imputed righteousness"

"If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* ought, **put that on mine account;**" (Philemon 1:18)

Date	Trips	Books & Authors
32		The cross
37		Matthew (Matthew)
42		James (James)
45-48	1 ST Trip	
50		Galatians (Paul)
50-53	2 ND Trip	1&2 Thessalonians (Paul)
50-60		John (John) 1,2,3 John (John)
54-58	3 RD Trip	1 & 2 Corinthians (Paul) Romans (Paul)
58		Mark (Mark)
59-60		Luke (Luke)
60-61		1&2 Peter (Peter)
61-63	Prison #1	Ephesians (Paul) Philippians (Paul) Colossians (Paul) Philemon (Paul)
63		Acts (Luke)
64-66		Titus (Paul) 1 Timothy (Paul) Jude (Jude)
66-68	Prison #2	2 Timothy (Paul) Hebrews (Paul)
80-90		Revelation (John)

"This is one of the most important and profound books of the Bible!"

But you might say "**Philemon**? It has only one chapter with 25 verses. How can it be that important?

What about the first book of **Genesis** where we have God showing his glory in his creation of six days?

What about David's one hundred and fifty **Psalms** where we discover the magnificence and character of God himself?

What about the book of **Matthew** where we have the detailed account of Christ as "*...a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:*" (Acts 2:22)?

What about the book of **Romans** where God reveals his righteousness in Jesus Christ?"

Now dear Reader, all this is true. Indeed we are reminded that "**All scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Tim 3:16)"

Matthew	Jesus the Son of man
Mark	Jesus the Son of man
Luke	Jesus the Son of man
John	Jesus is God
Acts	Early church & Paul's trips
ROMANS (Paul)	God's righteousness
1 Corinthians (Paul)	Carnal church disorder
2 Corinthians (Paul)	Paul's ministry
Galatians (Paul)	Bewitched by Judaizers
Ephesians (Paul)	Unity with one church
Philippians (Paul)	Vain glory & servanthood
Colossians (Paul)	The Gnostic Heresy
1 Thessalonians (Paul)	Persecution & rapture
2 Thessalonians (Paul)	Rapture & disorderly walking
1 Timothy (Paul)	Church care, pastoral advice
2 Timothy (Paul)	Church care, pastoral advice
Titus (Paul)	Church care, pastoral advice
Philemon (Paul)	Imputed righteousness
Hebrews (Paul)	Messiah to Saviour
James	Temptations & patience
1 Peter	Persecuted believers & hope
2 Peter	Knowledge & false teachers
1 John	Fellowship & antichrists
2 John	Many antichrists
3 John	Rebellion against authority
Jude	God's wrath on ungodly men
Revelation	Future events

We are aware that Paul **begins his writings to Christians** with the Book of **Romans** and **ends** with the book of **Philemon**. The former, Romans, is an explanation of how a man may get right with God.

And you know the outline – the first three chapters show that all men are sinners and chapters four and five tell us how a man can rightly stand justified before God.

But what does the word '**justified**' mean? The following may help. Do you believe the following?

"Dear God I now stand before you justified (JUST – AS – IF – I'D) never sinned. Jesus Christ has paid for all my sins – past, present and future. My slate has been wiped clean with you and it is by Christ's blood, that I can do this. His blood is the only payment that you will receive. Dear God, I am now right with you. I now have right standing with you. I do not have my own righteousness but I have your righteousness. I have utterly failed to keep any of your laws but Christ himself has kept them on my behalf. He has paid my sin debt to you that I couldn't ever pay. Now his goodness, obedience and righteousness has been put into my heavenly bank account 'JUST AS IF I'D' paid the debt myself."

Yes dear Reader, this is why we can be called sons of God. It is because that God became a man and Christ, God himself, shed God's own blood for our salvation.

"... *the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts 20:28* "

Now it is very fitting that God would have Paul's last book to Christians in the new testament, with a magnificent and tremendous practical explanation of God's own righteousness.

Paul has two books that reveal the righteousness of God and they like two book ends on a shelf, as they have all the other books between them. It looks like this –

ROMANS, 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thess, 2 Thess, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, **PHILEMON**. (Of course we add Hebrews, but that is not addressed to a church).

Coincidence? No! **Romans is about God's righteousness** and **Philemon is about God's righteousness**. Romans could be described as a 'theological' account on how to get right with God, but God wants to make sure that we know what this means. So Paul gives a very **practical** and **every day example** on how to get right with God in the book of **Philemon**.

This is the true story of Paul, Philemon and Onesimus.

Although Paul never visited Colossae, Philemon was Christian convert of his and so they were the best of friends. He seemed to be reasonably well off and conducted church services in his house.

Now Onesimus, a slave of Philemon's, stole money off him and ran away as far as he could to Rome, no doubt hoping to get lost in the big city of one and a half million people. Somehow while he was there, his path crossed with Paul's. Paul gets him saved and sends him back to Philemon with a letter.

Paul's letter is the epitome of **tact, courtesy, generosity** and **delicate wording** appealing to Philemon to accept Onesimus back as he would receive Paul (v17). Paul's object was to intercede on Onesimus' behalf to have Philemon forgive the runaway slave and receive him back as a Christian brother.

This little epistle of Philemon, only 25 verses, provides a wonderful and delightful illustration of how one man (Paul) can make another man (the slave Onesimus) to be acceptable to another man (Philemon) even though he stole money off Philemon and ran away. Now in verses 17 and 18 of this epistle, Paul writes to Philemon *If thou count me (Paul) therefore a partner, receive him (Onesimus) as myself. If he hath wronged thee (Philemon), or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; (Phil v17-18)*

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THE APPLICATION? (Simply change the characters:)

God = Philemon; Jesus Christ = Paul; An unsaved sinner = Onesimus

Dear Reader, if you are a Christian, this is a superb illustration of what Jesus Christ did, and does, for you. Jesus Christ says to God the Father - "If You (God), regard Me (Jesus Christ) as a partner, accept him (your name) as You would Me. If he (your name) has wronged You in any way (and you have), and owes You anything (and you do), charge that to my account."

That is how wonderful it is! Paul paid Onesimus' money debt he owed to Philemon. Onesimus is given the backing of Paul and as such 'takes on' the good name of Paul

Similarly, your sin debt owing to God has been paid for by Christ himself. Christ has given you his sinless record and put this into your account. A transfer has occurred - your sins given the Christ and his sinlessness given to you. Your slate has been wiped clean now and forever more. Nothing more to pay.

Your sins have been put on Christ's account, he has paid for them, and his good name "**I am a Christ -ian**" has been placed over your account. Indeed, not only has Christ paying for your sins wiped out my sin debt, but his good works have been substituted into your account.

I have been **justified** (JUST - AS -IF - I'D) with God. JUST - AS -IF - I'D never sinned.

This right standing (righteousness) that you now have with God is called **imputed righteousness**.

It is something you didn't earn or work for. Someone else did it for you.

You have been redeemed, justified and sanctified.

Our right standing with God the Father is brought about upon our believing what Jesus Christ has done for us. And we are reminded that our believing is not a work. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9*

Just as we were born sinners because of someone outside of us (Adam), we now become forgiven sinners because of someone outside of us (Christ). We were brought into condemnation by one man Adam. We are brought into salvation by one man Jesus Christ.

Do not ever forget that our acceptance to God depends entirely upon what Christ has done **for us**. By believing in what Christ has done for us, we now have **imputed righteousness** with God the Father. This is the only righteousness he will accept. It is a right standing with God that I now have that I didn't earn or work for. It was given to me by someone else.

We like Onesimus rebelled from God's service by breaking his laws. Jesus Christ finds us and pays our sin debt and then intercedes for us with God the Father. This is done in order that we may be received into his favour and family again and that past offences may be forgiven - AND WE ARE SURE THAT THE FATHER HEARETH HIM ALWAYS. Just as Paul prevailed with Philemon to forgive and receive Onesimus, God's word absolutely assures of Christ's intercession to God the Father on our behalf.

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