

The Righteousness of Christ?

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forgiveness of sins (v. 7)! The blood of Christ *forgives* us of our sins. The false doctrine asserts that the life of Christ **covers over** our sins! While Romans 4:7 **does** use the word “*cover*,” it is obvious from the context that this is *synonymous* with “*forgiven*.” So God covers our sins by forgiving them through the blood of Jesus.

The problem with this false doctrine is that it requires nothing further of the believer. In his mind, his salvation is **automatic, unconditional and absolutely secured** by the perfect life of Jesus substituted for his own sinful, imperfect life. How dangerous a doctrine is that?!

Some have even used the illustration of a newborn lamb whose mother died. The farmer who owns the lamb tries to get another ewe to adopt the orphaned lamb, but it will not. So the owner takes the mother lamb’s own baby, kills it, skins it and places that skin over the orphaned lamb, and the mother accepts it as her own! You can see the analogy. But it is nothing more than the figment of someone’s imagination!

The entire chapter of **Romans 6** defeats this doctrine. We are forgiven of our past sins through baptism (**vv. 3-4**), and we are now to become “*slaves of righteousness*” (**v. 19**) just as had formerly used our bodies as “*slaves of uncleanness*.” We have **obeyed** from the heart (**v. 17**) that doctrine delivered to us. Thus we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, contacted in His death (**vv. 3-4**). Don’t be led astray by the false notion opposed here.

Keep in mind that the New Testament teaches the doctrine of “imputed righteousness” – but it is the forgiveness of sins by the blood of Jesus Christ. **1 Corinthians 1:30** says Jesus “*became for us wisdom from God – and righteousness and sanctification and redemption*” – but how? By dying on the cross in our place. By shedding His blood for the remission of sins. By forgiving us of our sins by His priestly offering. See also **2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9**. True, we do not have our “*own righteousness*,” but we have the “*righteousness which is from God by faith*.” This is the faith that tells us to “*put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness*” (**Ephesians 4:24**). Ours is not a **feigned** righteousness (with sin hidden underneath Christ), but one that is “*filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God*” (**Philippians 1:11**).

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