

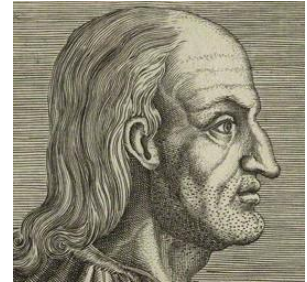
Class Three: Redemption Cross as Rescue

1. What is our problem? We are overwhelmed by sin
2. What did Christ do on the cross? Christ redeems us from the burden of sin
3. How did that address our problem? We are no longer subject to sinⁱ

A: Satisfaction Theory

Anselm (Italian Archbishop of Canterbury, 1033-1109)ⁱⁱ

- Restated atonement through the feudal system of his day where vassals who had done wrong owed a debt of honor to their lords
- When we sin, we dishonor God
- God is a God of justice and cannot ignore the injustices we commit
- God is our Lord and Creator, but we have nothing that we can offer God that God did not first give us → we cannot satisfy our debt of honor to God
- “This debt was so great that, while none but man must solve the debt, none but God was able to do it; so that he who does it must be both God and man”
Anselmⁱⁱⁱ
- Christ paid the debt with his life having the “rank” to satisfy his own honor and the shared humanity to speak with and for all of us
- The gift of Jesus’ life is more than enough to pay for our sins – he uses the surplus to grant us eternal life and fellowship with God^{iv}



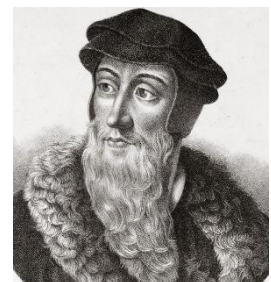
"For our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." -2 Cor 5:21

v

B: Forensic Theory or Penal Model

John Calvin (French, Reformer, 1509-1564)

- God is the judge of humanity who finds us guilty for our sin; we have sinned so much that the punishment must be death^{vi}
- Jesus takes the punishment that is rightfully ours so that we can be acquitted and reconciled to God^{vii}



- But, Jesus = God = Judge, so our judge is also our defense attorney; Christ fulfills the terms of the Law so that we can be exempt from punishment under the Law^{viii}

ix

C: Ransom Theory/Redemption/Financial

Origen (Greek scholar and theologian, ~184-253)

- We are slaves to sin like those in a slave market or prison camp.^x
- We are trapped and unable to free ourselves^{xi}
- Redemption in the Old Testament^{xii}
 - You could sell yourself into slavery in times of trouble (e.g. debts) and family members could buy you back or redeem you



“I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit...You have taken up my cause, O Lord, you have redeemed my life.” (Lam 3:55, 58)

- If you had no relatives, you called on the Lord to redeem you
 - If you sinned against another, you could redeem yourself by making restitution, but there was no such redemption for murder (Num 5:7-8)
- The ransom paid to free us from sin is Christ’s own life for all of ours (either as a price or as a replacement for us)^{xiii}

D: Discussion of Substitutionary Atonement & Questions

- Dominant theory for most Protestants and Catholics
- Emphasizes the enormity of our sin and God’s wrath
- Holds in tension God’s justice and honor with God’s love and mercy
- How do we understand the wrath of God? Does God still get angry now?
- Does a just God demand innocent blood as the price for anything?
- Does humanity deserve to be punished for sin? Does God require/desire punishment for us? Can justice be achieved without punishment?
- Is God restrained by a rigid sense of law, justice, or honor (and therefore not free) in this model?
- Is this theory more powerful because law and punishment, debt and redemption are still part of our lives?
- In this model, God is changed (honor/justice is satisfied). What does that mean for our lives? How do we respond?

ⁱ William C. Placher. *Jesus the Savior: The Meaning of Jesus Christ for Christian Faith* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Education Media Production Services Unit, 2009), 114.

ⁱⁱ William C. Placher. "How does Jesus Save?," *Christian Century* 126, no. 11 (June 2, 2009),

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2009-06/how-does-jesus-save>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Anselm as quoted in Placher, "How does Jesus Save?."

^{iv} Leanne Van Dyk. "How does Jesus Make a Difference?" in *Essentials of Christian theology*, ed. William Placher (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 213.

^v "John Calvin" by Henri-Louis Convert, 19th century. See

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Calvin_022.jpg

^{vi} Shirley Caperton Guthrie. *Christian Doctrine* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 255.

^{vii} *Ibid*, 256, 259.

^{viii} *Ibid*.

^{ix} "Origen" from "Les Vrais Protrait et Vies des Hommes Illustres" by Andre Thevet, 1584 .

^x Serene Jones. "What's Wrong with Us?" in *Essentials of Christian theology*, ed. William Placher (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 146.

^{xi} *Ibid*.

^{xii} Placher. *Jesus the Savior*, 142-143.

^{xiii} Guthrie, 252.