

**SALVATION IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**  
**Lent and Easter 2025**  
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**Welcome**

1. After Anselm
2. Reading John 3:9-18
3. Healing, service, love
4. Passover and new creation
5. Holy Spirit
6. And today?

**1. After Anselm**

- In the Liturgy
- Anselm of Canterbury
- Models of salvation/redemption
- Anselm again...
- What's the problem?
- Our quandary
- The quest for alternatives

**In the Liturgy**

- Roman Missal: Preface for Palm Sunday

For, though innocent,  
 he suffered willingly for sinners  
 and accepted unjust condemnation to save the guilty.  
 His Death has washed away our sins,  
 and his Resurrection has purchased our justification.

- Book of Common Prayer: Eucharistic Prayer 1 (p. 210)

...but in your love and mercy  
 you freed us from the slavery of sin  
 giving you only begotten Son to become man  
 and suffer death on the cross to redeem us;  
 he made there the one complete and all-sufficient sacrifice  
 for the sins of the whole world; etc.

**Models of Salvation**

- Classical model
- Satisfaction Model
- Moral Example Model

**The Classical Model**

- Irenaeus of Lyons (ad 177)
  - Against the Gnostics of his day
  - The goodness of God, the one creator
  - The goodness of creation
  - The nature of being human (body, soul and spirit)
  - The true humanity and true divinity of Jesus
  - The role of the Holy Spirit
  - God's disclosure is gradual, according to our capacities
  - Creation, patriarchs and prophets, Jesus
  - Throughout: the one Word (made flesh)
  - God is patient and progressive
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- The love of God
  - Revelation would have happened anyway
  - Adam's sin adds the dimension of salvation

- Jesus shows us how to be fully human
- Salvation is “paideia”
- Jesus recapitulates our human potential

### Satisfaction Model

- From the north of Italy (the Aosta Valley)
- 1033/4-1109
- Benedictine monk, philosopher and theologian
- Known for the ontological argument for the existence of God
- Known for the satisfaction theory of atonement
- **Cur Deus Homo?** (Why the God-Man?)

- Adam, a real person and “head”, sinned
- God was offended and required satisfaction
- No mere human could make up the offence
- The need for a God-Man (“Cur Deus Homo”)
- Jesus was punished for our sins
- God’s honour was restored
- God was then able to be merciful

- A very powerful theory
- Humans are fallen creatures
- Our experience of sin and guilt
- Why the human condition?
- Why the need for a redeemer?
- Baptism, Eucharist, Holy Orders?
- A “theory of everything”

It worked later for both Protestants and Catholics

### Penal Substitution

- The 16th century Reformers
- Anselm’s theory was correct in introducing the satisfaction aspect of Christ’s work and its necessity
- Insufficient – it was referenced to God’s honour rather than to his justice and holiness
- Insufficient: – more in terms of a commercial transaction than a penal substitution

- This Reformed view says simply that Christ died for man, in man’s place, taking his sins and bearing them for him.
- The bearing of man’s sins takes the punishment for them and sets the believer free from the penal demands of the law.
- The righteousness of the law and the holiness of God are satisfied by this substitution.
- In Catholicism, this further understanding is found in the Jansenist tradition and in a great deal of popular piety.

### Moral Example Model

- Also known as: the Moral-Example Theory (or Moral-Influence Theory)
- Christ died to influence mankind toward moral improvement
- This theory denies that Christ died to satisfy any principle of divine justice, but teaches instead that His death was designed to greatly impress mankind with a sense of God’s love, resulting in softening their hearts and leading them to repentance
- Thus, the Atonement is not directed towards God with the purpose of maintaining His justice, but towards man with the purpose of persuading him to right action
- Formulated by Peter Abelard (1079-1142) partially in reaction against Anselm’s Satisfaction theory, this view was held by the 16th century Socinians
- Later versions of it can be found later in F. D. E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Horace Bushnell (1802-1876)

	Structure	Sin	Salvation	Incarnation	God
Classical “from God to man”	God effects it No satisfaction All is grace	God’s triumph over sin, death and the devil, as hostile objective powers	The victory of the risen Christ over the hostile powers is continued in the work of the Holy Spirit	God-in-Christ reconciles the world to himself; Incarnation and atonement are one	God in conflict with Evil; yet, sovereign creator, whose costly love overcomes his wrath and effects reconciliation
Satisfaction “from man to God”	God effects it Legal satisfaction Christ as Man	Sin is indeed grave, but essentially moralistic and subjective	Satisfaction with the death; no place for the resurrection; separation from the life of Jesus	Christ, as human, makes atonement for human beings; the incarnation (Jesus as God and man) is not at the heart of it	Separation of God’s justice and his mercy; once the justice is “satisfied”, God’s mercy can be released.
Moral example “from man to man”	God is not the agent; It happens in us through conversion and amendment of life	Sin as infirmity; Very weak on the radical hostility of God to evil and sin	Christ is a perfect example, the “Ideal Human”; harmony and self-realisation	Emphasis on the human nature of Jesus as a pattern of behaviour; incarnation = the revelation of God and not that God redeems us in Christ.	Simple idea of God’s unchanging love, with no sense of hostility or struggle.

### Anselm again...

- What’s the problem?
- Our quandary
- The quest for alternatives

### What’s the problem?

- Depends on the historicity of Genesis 2-3
- Depends on a feudal idea of God
- Redemption (buying back) requires a price (punishment)
- Redemption is complete with the death of Jesus
- The resurrection has no place (the best miracle etc.)
- It has no connection with the life and ministry of Jesus
- The picture of God who cannot be merciful until he receives legal satisfaction is unappealing and unconvincing

- Together, these are devastating critiques
- They constitute a fatal blow

### **Our quandary**

- All this means we are in quandary
- How to speak of redemption/salvation today?
- Christ's death and resurrection are central to Christianity
- If we cannot speak resolutely and resonantly about the core events, the rest of our proclamation is undermined

### **The Quest for Alternatives**

- Taking seriously evil, sin and death
  - Joining up the incarnation, ministry, teaching and the events of salvation
  - Offering a consistent picture of God acting on our behalf
  - Uniting the death and the resurrection as "constitutive" of salvation
  - Rooted in Jesus' own understanding of his destiny
  - Rooted in the teaching of the New Testament
  - Not forgetting the "cost" to Jesus himself
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- Historical Jesus
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- Letters of Paul
  - Letter to the Hebrews
  - Gospel of John
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- This course: the **Gospel according to John**