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# Penal Substitution and Social Transformation

Stephen Walton

## 1. Penal Substitution under attack

### Introduction

Among the accusations frequently levelled against the doctrine of penal substitution by those who profess to be Evangelicals is that it provides no reason for people to be good, and in particular that it provides no basis for social and political transformation. To some extent, this reflects the fact that, since the Lausanne Congress in 1974, ‘social action’ of a moderately centre-left sort has become a form of orthodoxy amongst many Evangelicals, and any doctrine that would challenge the priority given to it has become a heresy. However, many of the questions asked are fair ones. The accusation is not made in the book that ignited the current controversy, Steve Chalke and Alan Mann’s *The Lost Message of Jesus*,<sup>1</sup> but elsewhere Chalke writes—

Has Christ’s death on the Cross got any relevance or meaning beyond the individual eternal destiny of his followers? What does it mean, if anything, for the wider affairs of our communities; the UK’s foreign policy; the war on terrorism; trade justice; people trafficking; the hopes, ambitions and fears of countless millions of people? Can it offer us any direction as we think about the global challenges humanity faces at the beginning of the twenty-first century? What was the cosmic reason for Jesus death? And what are the implications today for us as individuals, as the Church and society as a whole?<sup>2</sup>

These are fair questions; and the accusation is made more explicit by his supporters, and by those who might be termed fellow-travellers. Thus Stuart Murray Williams claims that ‘Penal substitution seems to offer little comfort or hope to victims of oppression and injustice’,<sup>3</sup> and Joel Green has been reported as asserting that penal substitution is ‘individualistic, mechanistic, and undermines calls for Christians to live holy lives’, and that it ‘cuts the nerve to social action’.<sup>4</sup> Together with Mark Baker, Green writes—

Proponents of this theory often leave little room for the importance of ethical comportment...this particular way of portraying the significance of Jesus’ death has had little voice in how we relate to one another in and

outside of the church or in larger, social-ethical issues. That a central tenet of our faith might have nothing to say about racial reconciliation, for example, or issues of wealth and poverty, or our relationship to the cosmos, is itself a startling reality.<sup>5</sup>

The Mennonite scholar J. Denny Weaver who, unlike Chalke and Green, would presumably not describe himself as ‘Evangelical’, writes of ‘satisfaction images’ of the atonement—

These solutions picture the relationship between God and humankind in terms of a legal construct. The point about ethics is that these atonement images that assume a legal framework say nothing about ethics. Satisfaction atonement in its several forms features an essential separation of salvation and ethics. The atonement image changes the sinner’s legal status before God but says nothing about a transformed life. As we will see in the following chapters on black theology, some theologians even argue that atonement formulas devoid of ethics actually contribute to sinful living since they provide a means to maintain a proper legal status before God without speaking about transformed life under the rule of God.<sup>6</sup>

Both Chalke and Weaver propose to replace penal substitution by a *Christus Victor* theory, whereby the cross overcame the powers of evil.<sup>7</sup> The cross and resurrection together are then seen as providing both a basis and an incentive for personal, social, and political action and transformation; in particular the practice of ‘inclusivity’ and of gandhian non-violent resistance to injustice.<sup>8</sup>

One response to these criticisms would be that the critics have failed to justify their demands: it is not clear why penal substitution should have to give a basis for ethical values and behaviour, given that such a basis is amply provided in the ethical teachings of Scripture. Penal substitution deals with what happens when one fails to abide by those teachings. In this paper however, I will argue that the criticisms are mistaken in another way. I will try to show that without the penal, substitutionary, propitiatory death of Christ for our sins, significant personal, social, and political transformation is impossible. This essay does not try to show how penal substitution might provide a basis for actual ethical values. It does seek to show that penal substitution enables personal, social, and political transformation.

### Penal Substitution and Justification by Faith

Penal substitution and the doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone are inextricably linked in Reformation theology; the former provides the basis for the latter.<sup>9</sup> Green and Baker see the link very clearly—

It is not surprising, then, that this particular way of construing the significance of the cross also supports our treasured individualistic soteriology...our understanding of salvation has been dominated historically by the doctrine of justification by faith. Irrespective of the celebrated history and significance of the doctrine of 'justification by faith', not least in the Protestant tradition, for many contemporary Christians, this doctrine has an individualistic orientation and bias that is not only comforting, but is instinctive, natural. Justification by faith, as traditionally understood, refers to a legal transaction: the manifestly guilty person stands before the divine judge for sentencing and hears the verdict, 'Not guilty!' Penal substitutionary atonement provides a workable foundation for this soteriology, making this atonement theory all the more palatable or inviting'. 'If Jesus has deflected onto himself the anger of God, if on this basis we have been made the objects of a legal (penal) transaction whereby we are declared 'not guilty', what basis for moral behaviour remains? Apart from allowing my name to moved to the correct side of God's legal ledger, what significance has the cross of Christ for faith and life, according to this view?'.<sup>10</sup>

Likewise, one of Weaver's criticisms of 'satisfaction images' is that the recipient of salvation is 'passive'. On the other hand, despite his assertion that 'we do not save', Weaver's words seem to imply that, on his view, Christians become saviours themselves—

By giving their lives in faithfulness to the Lamb, they demonstrate faith in the victory of the Lamb, and thereby participate in *and extend* that victory<sup>11</sup> (emphasis added).

Jesus depicted in narrative Christus Victor is no passive victim. He is an active participant in confronting evil. Salvation happens when or because Jesus carried out his mission to make the reign of God visible. His saving life shows how the reign of God confronts evil, and is thus our model for confronting injustice. While we do not save, we participate in salvation *and in Jesus' saving work* when we join the reign of God and *live the way Jesus lived*<sup>12</sup> (emphasis added).

For Chalke likewise, the chief value of the cross (combined with the resurrection) is declarative: it authenticates Jesus' message and it shows how much God loves us.<sup>13</sup> But it is not clear that the cross actually does anything for us, or why it was necessary.<sup>14</sup> Chalke's summary of the 'gospel' for children (which very deliberately excludes any mention of sin) instead suggests that we save ourselves by responding to God's invitation.<sup>15</sup>

Behind the attack on penal substitution then is a fundamental objection to the idea that salvation is by grace alone. None of the writers quoted see salvation as entirely a gift, in the reception of which the sinful recipient is passive; in Luther's terms a 'passive righteousness' imputed to the sinner when he has done absolutely nothing to warrant it.<sup>16</sup> As we have seen, Weaver criticizes 'satisfaction images' because they make salvation purely a matter of a legal relationship, and say nothing about ethics or a transformed life. For critics of penal substitution and justification by faith, such a righteousness provides no basis or incentive for living a good life, and in particular for participating in social and political transformation. Instead it appears to support the sinful status quo by offering a salvation that is purely forensic. The attack on penal substitution is thus an attack on justification conceived of as a purely forensic act, that does not intrinsically involve, and is not based on, any transformation of the believer.

## 2. The Biblical Background – Romans 6

These objections are reminiscent of the attacks made on Jesus because he ate with 'sinners' without requiring them to be transformed first. Such 'inclusiveness' is a major theme of Chalke's, but he misses one implication: justification by faith alone originates with Jesus.<sup>17</sup> These criticisms are also similar to those Paul deals with in Romans 6:1-19. Having expounded justification as a free gift, grounded in Christ's propitiatory death, and received by faith,<sup>18</sup> Paul goes as far as to say that the more sin increased, the more grace increased (Rom. 5:20-21). The obvious objection is that, not only does this give no disincentive to sin, it actually provides an incentive to it – the more one sins, the more grace one will receive! Paul himself raises this in 6:1 and 6:15: 'What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?... What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace?'<sup>19</sup> Thus an opponent might attempt to refute Paul by a reduction *ad absurdum*.<sup>20</sup>

His response (vv. 2, 15) is *me genoito* – ‘certainly not!’. He then shows how gratuitous justification, and thus penal substitution lead to a transformed life. The rest of this essay will show how Romans 6 provides a basis for personal and social transformation.

### Why Social Evils Exist

First we must ask why social and political evils exist. The biblical answer is that they are an expression of wrong desires. James sees desire (*epithumia*) as the mother of sin—

each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death (James 1:14-15).

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions (*hedone*) are at war within you? You desire (*epithumeite*) and do not have... (James 4:1-2).

For Paul, sin works through the desires of the body (Rom. 6:12), producing ‘all kinds of covetousness’ (*epithumian*, Rom. 7:8). Non-believers live in ‘the passions of our flesh’ (*epithumias tes sarkos*, Eph. 2:3), and the old self is corrupt through ‘deceitful desires’ (*epithumias tes apates*). Peter warns his readers against their former ‘passions’ (*epithumias*, 1 Pet. 1:14, 2:11, 4:2-3). John sees the world that is opposed to God as characterised by ‘desires’ (*epithumia*, 1 John 2:16-17).

It is these disordered desires for wealth, luxury, peace, security, freedom and so on that lead to social and political evils such as poverty, injustice, and ecological damage. It is not necessarily wrong to desire some of these things; but the desire for them becomes out of control, and we look for their ultimate satisfaction in the creation, not the creator. One implication is that a political solution such as remitting international debts, good and right as this is, will not make poverty history. For this to happen, the majority of those who live in Europe and North America will have to accept lower incomes and a reduced standard of living: and this requires a major change in their desires. Until then, there is a danger that political campaigns such as Jubilee 2000 and Live8, good and right as they are, are a sop to peoples’ consciences, that prevent them from facing their own responsibility for the situation.

The Bible describes this situation as ‘slavery’ – slavery to ‘sin’ and to ‘various passions and desires’ (Rom. 6:17-20, Titus 3:3). Systematic theology calls it ‘total depravity’, a concept usually rejected by critics of penal substitution, but which is the only adequate explanation for the social evils they are rightly concerned about. It is taught by Jesus in John 8:34 and Mark 7:15-23. As Paul Zahl writes ‘For Jesus the inward is not good. It is an abscess’.<sup>21</sup> Again Paul’s doctrine of total depravity, the inability of the will to choose the good, originates with Jesus.<sup>22</sup>

This aspect of Jesus’ message remains lost in *The Lost Message of Jesus*. Chalke sees human beings as basically good, so that when Jesus refused to retaliate during the crucifixion ‘he was calling on something in human nature, something that cause his enemies hatred of him to decrease and their respect for him to increase’.<sup>23</sup> If this was what Jesus was doing (Chalke quotes no Scriptures in support), he was an utter failure: Caiaphas’ opinion of Jesus was no higher after Calvary than before. Jesus may have ‘soaked up all the forces of hate, rejection, pain and alienation all around him’<sup>24</sup> but, given that 2,000 years later people still hate and kill each other, it is hard to see what the point was.

### The Cause of Corruption

Although we are slaves, the Bible does not present us as the innocent victims of forces beyond our control. Instead it depicts our servitude as a punishment for disobeying God; in Genesis 3 the frustration of our desires is part of the curse. Moreover, the curse is not simply a natural result of disobeying God; God notes the possibility that Adam might eat from the tree of life, and live for ever (Gen. 3:22). Instead it is deliberately imposed by God as a direct, penal sanction. Thus any attempt to rescue us from slavery must deal with the fact that we are under punishment.

The link between sin and slavery to disordered desire is explicit in Romans 1:18-32. As a punishment for the fundamental sin of idolatry, God has in his wrath handed humanity over to hostile powers- to the ‘lusts of their hearts’ (epithumias, 1:24), to ‘dishonourable passions’ (*pathe*, 1:26), and to a ‘debased mind’, 1:28). Again, this is not a natural result of sin: God has handed people over in a deliberate act. Furthermore, despite their slavery, people are still regarded as culpable for what they do (1:28-2:2). Thus slavery to disordered

desires is a penal servitude. The punishment for sin is sin. Sin is like a prison warden who only has power over someone because they are guilty and under the sentence of the law. We need transformation because of our forensic situation before God: we are guilty and deserve punishment. We must not oppose the forensic and transformative aspects of salvation; we must hold to both, for as we shall see, the latter is dependent on the former.

### 3. Romans 6 and Freedom from Sin<sup>25</sup>

#### *No longer slaves to sin*

In Romans 6, Paul turns deals with the transformative aspects of salvation. His thesis is that the power of sin over believers has been broken, so that it no longer determines their attitudes and behaviour. They are no longer ruled by sin, but have been set free from it, (6:14, 17-18). Because of this, Paul encourages his readers not to allow sin to reign over them, so that they obey their bodies 'passions' (epithumias, 6:12), the perverted desires, that, as we have seen, lead to social and political evils. Instead they are able to obey God-to present themselves to God, and their bodies to God as 'instruments for righteousness' (6:13). Paul has thus answered the taunting question in 6:1: the grace that abounds towards sinners is the grace that transforms them and leads them away from sin. To deliberately carry on sinning is a refusal of this grace. The gracious free gift of God is eternal life (6:23), the life of obedience and devotion to God already lived by Jesus, (6:9-10) which is the birthright of the believer. In the present believers may begin to live the transformed life which one day will be theirs in all its fullness.

#### **Union with Christ**

Paul begins in Romans 6:2 by saying that believers have 'died to sin', that is they have decisively and permanently broken with it. In v3-4, he tells us that this death took place at baptism (from one perspective at least). His reason for introducing baptism is not entirely clear. I think it is because baptism was an act of public identification with Christ, in which the recipient openly put his past behind him. From baptism onwards, the Christian was a public follower of Christ; it might mean a breach with their family. Paul thus uses baptism to show that the faith that justifies involves a transformation in the believers loyalties and allegiances. Thus the attitude expressed in the questions in verses 1 and 15 is unthinkable for the believer. The believer is baptised 'into' Christ (6:3). This means that baptism as an act of public identification with Christ



unites the believer to Christ; elsewhere in Paul this is the function of faith, demonstrating the close link between faith and baptism. More specifically, baptism unites believers with Christ's death, (6:3,5). Thus Paul can say that believers have been buried with, crucified with, and died with Christ.

Union with Christ was vitally important for Calvin, who saw two blessings flowing from it: the forensic blessing of justification, and the transformative blessing of regeneration. For Calvin, justification by faith alone could never be something 'abstract' and impersonal; it could not happen outside of a deeply personal relationship with Christ.<sup>26</sup> Commenting on Romans 6:5, he says that 'our ingrafting signifies not only our conformity to the example of Christ, but also the secret union by which we grow together with Him, in such a way that He revives us by His Spirit, and transfers His power to us'.<sup>27</sup>

Although Calvin saw justification as purely forensic, he did not see salvation as purely forensic, because he did not reduce salvation to justification. Thus, although he taught penal substitution, he did not see the effects of the cross as purely forensic—

The second effect of Christ's death upon us is this: by our participation in it, his death mortifies our earthly members so that they may no longer perform their functions; and it kills the old man in us that he may not flourish and bear fruit....Therefore, in Christ's death and burial a twofold blessing is set forth for us to enjoy: liberation from the death to which we have been bound, and mortification of our flesh.<sup>28</sup>

This shows that much criticism of the Reformation tradition on penal substitution is criticism of a caricature. Weaver accuses it of leading to a purely forensic concept of salvation that says nothing about ethics or a transformed life.<sup>29</sup> This accusation is utterly untrue and a result of reading statements about the cross out of context. However, it is true that the Reformers do not always show how the two effects of Christ's death are linked, and how the forensic and transformative aspects of salvation are related. This deficiency takes us back to Romans 6, to examine the link made by Paul.

#### 4. Romans 6:7 – the basis of transformation

Romans 6:7 reads 'For one who has died has been set free from sin' (ESV). Most English translations use a variation on 'set free' to translate the perfect

passive of *dikaio*, which everywhere else in Paul is translated ‘justify’.<sup>30</sup> This is because Protestant commentators have traditionally seen a shift from justification in chapters 1–5 to ‘sanctification’ in chapters 6–8. I argue here that this translation is misleading, that the Vulgate and Tyndale were on the right lines in translating *dedikaiotai* as *ustificatus est*, ‘is justified’, and that the best translation is ‘has been justified from sin’. This interpretation is supported by Robert Haldane, John Murray, John Piper, John Stott, and Peter Jensen.<sup>31</sup> Thomas Schreiner argues for it in *Paul – Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ*, although in his Romans commentary he accepted the views of Käsemann that righteousness is both forensic and transformative, and claimed that *dedikaiotai* here was ‘not merely forensic’ and that 6:7 suggested that righteousness was ‘more than forensic for Paul’.<sup>32</sup>

I believe that the evidence against the traditional reading and for the Haldane-Jensen reading is very strong. The fact that every other use of *dikaio* in Paul is translated ‘justify’ creates a very strong presumption in favour of translating it ‘justify’ here as well. In v. 18 Paul uses *eleutheroo* when he speaks of having been set free from slavery. If he had wished to speak clearly about being set free in v. 7, then surely he could have used *eleutheroo*; there seems to be no reason to use *dikaio* in v. 7. The lexical evidence is against ‘set free’ as part of the semantic range of *dikaio*. Liddell & Scott do not list it as a possible meaning, and Louw-Nida list no other examples.<sup>33</sup> BAGD (1957) gives Psalm 72[73]:13 as an example of *dikaio* meaning ‘make free or pure’, and then lists Acts 13:38-39, LXX, Sirach 26:29, and Testament of Simeon 6:1<sup>34</sup> as places where *dikaio* followed by *apo* and a genitive noun (*hamartias* in the first two references) could mean ‘set free, made pure from’. However, all these examples are very dubious; in each case a forensic interpretation makes equally good or better sense. Hence the NRSV of Sirach has ‘innocent’, and English translations of Simeon have ‘exonerated’, ‘acquitted’, or ‘clear from’ sin. In the Psalm 73, the idea is self-purification, in the sense of refraining from sin, and in the LXX making the heart ‘righteous’. In Acts 13:38-39 justification is linked to forgiveness, and there is no reason at all to translate it as ‘set free’. Therefore, to translate *dedikaiotai* in Romans 6:7 as ‘having been set free’ is completely arbitrary. The only possible reason for it would be if ‘having been justified’ made no sense in context, and ‘having been set free’ made very good sense.<sup>35</sup> However, the forensic interpretation makes very good sense in context, and enables us to see how being freed from the penalty of sin also releases us from the power of sin.

### Romans 6:7 in context

The *gar* in 6:7 shows that this verse gives the basis of verse 6. In verse 6 Paul says that our ‘old self’ has been crucified with Christ, with the result that believers are no longer enslaved to sin. Thus on the traditional reading of verse 7, it merely restates verse 6 in rather confusing terms, as Schreiner admits in *Romans*.<sup>36</sup> However, if the Haldane–Jensen interpretation is correct, verse 7 grounds verse 6: the believer who has been crucified with Christ has been freed from the power of sin because a person who has died (with Christ) has been justified from sin, that is, freed from its penalty, and ‘the forensic work of Christ is the basis of God’s transforming work’, as Schreiner writes in *Paul*.<sup>37</sup> Thus we can see the idea of dying with Christ as a way of talking about penal substitution. In one sense, the believer died when Christ died. On the cross, the old self received the penalty it deserved. Because Christ is the believer’s representative and substitute, his death counts as her death. The believer who is united to Christ by faith is counted as dead by God: that is, she is counted as already having received the punishment for her sins. Thus, having been freed from the penalty of sin, she may be justified- declared righteous.

This reading is confirmed by 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. Here Paul speaks of Christ dying as a substitute for all (*huper panton*, v. 15 ),<sup>38</sup> resulting in righteousness for the believer (v. 21). But first v. 14 he writes that ‘one has died for all, therefore all have died’. The result of Christ’s substitutionary death is that its beneficiaries are considered to have died, resulting in a transformed life (v. 15). Here dying with Christ is surely seen in forensic terms, and Christ’s death on behalf of all is spoken of as the death of all.

In Romans 6, Paul pursues the logic of union with Christ. If believers have died with Christ, it is reasonable to expect that they will be raised with him too; indeed this was the goal of their death with him (v. 4-5). Christ now lives ‘for’ God (v. 10), and believers must consider themselves as already having begun this life. Thus the assurance of salvation that comes from free justification encourages the believer to live a life that is not selfish, but centred on someone else, God. Therefore, Paul encourages his readers to live as those freed from sin (6:18-23).

In Romans 1 we saw that slavery to sin is a punishment for sin. Therefore, if a believer is freed from the penalty of sin, he is freed from its power, and is able to lead a transformed life. Thus Paul has answered the objection in Romans

6:1. far from encouraging sin, God's completely free grace transforms the believer's life so that she can live for God. Through justification through grace alone, by faith alone, believers are freed from the power of sin; and the basis is the death of Christ, their penal substitute. Hence Paul declares in Romans 6:14 that sin will not rule over believers because they are not under the Law (that is, free from its penalty), but under grace. As Murray comments: 'This judicial aspect from which deliverance from the power of sin is to be viewed needs to be appreciated. It shows that the forensic is present not only in justification but also in that which lies at the basis of sanctification'.<sup>39</sup>

### Other passages

This understanding of Romans 6 is reflected elsewhere in Paul. In Romans 7:25, after depicting the slavery to sin, especially covetous desire, produced by the law, he thanks God for the deliverance brought by Christ, and says 'There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus'. The 'therefore' (*ara*) shows that it is freedom from judicial condemnation that brings deliverance from slavery to sin. In 8:3-4 it is the condemnation of sin at Christ's death that leads to a transformed life in the Spirit. In Galatians 2:17-21, Paul states that he is free from the law's condemnation because Christ has died for him, or, to put it another way, he has been crucified with Christ. The result is that he lives 'to' God; his life is so radically other-centred that he can say that he no longer lives, but Christ lives in him. This answers the charge that justification by faith apart from the law makes Christ a promoter of sin.

Colossians 2:15 depicts Christ's death as *Christus Victor*, the defeat of the powers of evil. However, as has frequently been noted, Paul expresses the achievement of the cross in forensic terms. The background is surely that the evil powers only hold sway over someone who is unforgiven; *Christus Victor* is based on penal substitution leading to forgiveness.<sup>40</sup> Finally in Titus 2:11-14, we find that freedom from sinful passions does not come as we might expect from Law, or spiritual discipline, or fear of punishment, or from a need to contribute to our own salvation. It is grace that teaches us to renounce them, grace given in Christ's purificatory death. Given the background of the Old Testament sacrifices, I would suggest that this doesn't itself speak of transformation, but of sinners being cleansed, forgiven and made acceptable to God. This grace leads Christians to be confident of their salvation, confident of the future, and thus to lead godly lives.

## 5. The Transforming Cross

Critics of penal substitution clearly wish to see Christians living transformed lives of love and service, a desire with which those of us who believe in penal substitution enthusiastically agree. My fear is that the critics have sawn away the branch they are sitting on. Calvin believed that no-one can lead a life of obedience to God unless they believe that God is propitious towards them;<sup>41</sup> for they will secretly resent God, and as a result their good works will spring from fear, not love, and will not glorify God. However, I can see nothing in the critics that will calm the conscience of those who are confronted by a holy God, except vague assurance that God's primary attribute is love. I fear that this will lead to a generation of Christians who are wracked by guilt because they haven't done more to save the world, and I fear that their social action will be motivated by duty, not love.

However, if someone truly understands penal substitution, if he is confident that he is justified by faith alone, and will spend eternity with God, then he is free to say 'no' to the disordered desires that characterise the *homo incurvatus in se*, the one who is coiled around his own emptiness, and cannot see the needs of others. He can do this because he is confident that the curse of frustration has already been lifted, and that all his desires will be more than satisfied when Christ returns, a prospect that holds no fear for him.

## Conclusion

Penal substitution is not one of a smorgasbord of atonement theories from which one may choose the one which one finds the most emotionally satisfying. Penal substitution is the basis of *Christus Victor*, and the basis of a transformed life. Without it, the whole of the Bible's teaching on Christ and his work will fall apart. The social and political evils which critics of penal substitution are rightly concerned with are caused by our slavery to disordered desires. This slavery is a punishment for our rejection of God; and the only way for us to be freed from it is through Christ's propitiatory death in which he took the punishment we deserve in our place, and made it possible for God to justify us. Without penal substitution, we are still enslaved to our sinful desires, and unless our desires can be transformed, there is no hope of political and social transformation.

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## ENDNOTES

1. Steve Chalke and Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003). Although this book was co-authored, at the subsequent EA symposium Alan Mann distanced himself from some aspects of it, and accepted that some of its statements may have been wrong (as reported in Matthew Mason “Conference on the cross – the EA symposium,” *Evangelicals Now*, September, 2005, and Mike Ovey “Symposium on Penal Substitution,” *Crossway* No.98, Autumn, 2005). Therefore the rest of the present essay will refer to *The Lost Message of Jesus* as the work of Chalke alone.
2. Steve Chalke, *Redeeming the Cross*, p. 2.  
[www.oasistrust.org/temp/RedeemingspthespCross.pdf](http://www.oasistrust.org/temp/RedeemingspthespCross.pdf)
3. Stuart Murray Williams, *Penal Substitution and the Myth of Redemptive Violence*  
[www.eauk.org/contentmanager/content/acute/acute.cfm](http://www.eauk.org/contentmanager/content/acute/acute.cfm)
4. Quoted in Matthew Mason “Conference on the cross – the EA symposium,” and Mike Ovey “Symposium on Penal Substitution”. Papers from this symposium are available at [www.eauk.org/contentmanager/content/acute/acute.cfm](http://www.eauk.org/contentmanager/content/acute/acute.cfm).; Green’s has not yet been made available.
5. Joel Green and Mark Baker *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000), p. 31. See also pp. 213-14.
6. J. Denny Weaver *The Non-Violent Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), p. 79. See also p. 90, esp. fn. 19. By ‘satisfaction images’ Weaver means those models of the atonement that see Christ’s death as in some way a satisfaction made to God. His target is Anselm. Weaver explicitly includes penal substitution as a version of such models (pp. 16-17), but does not interact with it, or any of its defenders at length. See my review of *The Non-Violent Atonement*, *Churchman* 2004, 118/4, pp.378-80.
7. Weaver, *The Non-Violent Atonement* pp. 220-21. Chalke, *Redeeming the Cross* p. 4. Rather oddly, Chalke refers to C. S. Lewis’ *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* as ‘a great starting point for anyone wanting to gain a better understanding of the Christus Victor model’ – despite the fact that Aslan clearly dies in the place of the traitor, Edmund, taking the punishment that Edmund deserves, according to the Law of his Father, the ‘Emperor Over the Sea’. Nor is Aslan under any compulsion; he goes to the Stone Table willingly and lovingly to uphold his Father’s Law. See note 38.
8. Weaver, *The Non-Violent Atonement*, pp. 78-9, 212, 222. Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, pp. 179, 187. For Chalke, Jesus on the cross identifies with the powerless, the oppressed, and social outcasts, and a commitment to social justice is

clearly at the centre of his view of discipleship. The resurrection then shows that God is on their side, and that there is hope for them; it vindicates Jesus' message of social inclusion, and demonstrates the lengths that God will go to prove that he loves us. For Chalke, non-violence and the inclusion of the excluded are the heart of Jesus' message, see *The Lost Message of Jesus*, pp. 82, 115-37.

9. Along with the active obedience of Christ to God's will, imputed to the believer. The Classical Protestant tradition has, (in my opinion, rightly), seen this as part of the basis for justification (i.e. as the believer's "righteousness"), along with Christ's propitiatory death.
10. Green & Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*, pp. 25, 31.
11. Weaver, *The Non-Violent Atonement*, pp. 78-79.
12. Weaver, *The Non-Violent Atonement*, p. 212.
13. Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, pp. 181, 183.
14. See Stephen E. Witmer "The Lost Message of The Lost Message of Jesus", *Themelios* Vol. 31, Issue 1, October 2005, pp. 66-7.
15. Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, p. 173.
16. See Bernard Lose, *Martin Luther's Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), pp. 260-261; Martin Luther "Two Kinds of Righteousness (1519)" in Timothy F. Lull (ed.,) *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1987).
17. See Paul F. M. Zahl, *The First Christian* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 76-7, 103-106.
18. Here I assume a traditional Reformed/Lutheran reading of the New Testament, and especially of Paul. I find the exegesis of the "New Perspective on Paul" unconvincing. For critiques of this see D.A Carson, P.T O'Brien, M.A Seifrid Eds. *Justification and Variegated Nomism* (2 Volumes, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck/Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004); Simon Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Guy Prentiss Waters, *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul* (Philadelphia: P&R Publishing, 2004); Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).
19. All biblical quotations are from the English Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.
20. One very telling criticism of the New Perspective is that, if its reconstruction of Paul's thought is correct, it is hard to see why anyone would ever have asked this!
21. Zahl, *The First Christian*, p. 99.
22. Zahl, *The First Christian* pp. 94-103. See also Roger Nicole, "The Doctrines of Grace in the Teachings of Jesus" in *Our Sovereign Saviour* (Fearn, Rosshire:

- Christian Focus, 2002), pp. 77-80.
23. Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, p. 179.
  24. Chalke, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, p. 179; see also p. 67. Compare N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), p. 565.
  25. Regarding the following section, see Garry Williams, "Justice, Law, & Guilt." Paper given to EA symposium on penal substitution, 2005, pp. 10-11, on the ACUTE website.
  26. See John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* Book III, 3.1 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press), III.3.1-2, 9, pp. 592-3, 600-602.
  27. John Calvin, *Romans and Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1995) pp. 123-4.
  28. Calvin Institutes II.16.7, Volume 1, p. 512.
  29. Weaver, *The Non-Violent Atonement* pp. 78-9, 90,
  30. E.g. ASV, Darby, ESV, Geneva Bible, KJV, Living Bible, NASB, NKJ, NIV, NRSV, RSV. The New Jerusalem Bible reads "no longer has to answer for sin", which seems to reflect the Vulgate, and comes close to what I suggest here. The REB reads "because death cancels out the claims of sin" which seems ambiguous.
  31. Robert Haldane, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Banner of Truth, 1960), pp. 248-50. John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), p. 222. John Stott, *The Message of Romans*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Leicester: IVP, 1994), p. 177. John Piper, *Counted Righteous in Christ* (Leicester: IVP, 2002), pp.75-79. Peter Jensen, "Reality in Ministry and in Church," audiotapes of the Senior Ministers Conference 2000, available from the Proclamation Trust. Also Peter Bolt, *The Cross from a Distance* (Leicester: IVP, 2005). p. 73, n. 63.
  32. Thomas Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Leicester: Apollos, 2001), p. 207; *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), p. 319. The traditional translation of Romans 6:7 was one plank of the argument that righteousness is an technical apocalyptic term, which is both forensic and transformative. Against this see Schreiner, *Paul*, pp. 205-208.
  33. Liddell & Scott and Louw-Nida were both consulted on Bibleworks 5.
  34. I am grateful to Rohintan Mody for his help regarding The Testament of Simeon.
  35. So Schreiner Romans, p. 319.
  36. *Ibid.*, p. 318.
  37. Schreiner, *Paul*, p. 207.
  38. See Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), pp. 383-9 for the argument that huper is substitutionary.



39. Murray, *ibid.*, p. 222.
40. See John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Leicester: IVP, 1991), p. 233-5. Stott asks, “Is not the payment of our debts the way by which Christ has overthrown the powers?”. See also William’s “Justice, Law, and Guilt,” p. 13: “Deny penal substitution and you ham-string Christus Victor”; and Daniel Strange, “The Many-splendoured Cross: Atonement, Controversy, and Victory,” *Foundations* 54, Autumn 2005, pp. 15-17. Again, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is an illustration of this, not Chalke’s view of the cross. The Witch only has power over Edmund whilst Edmund’s treachery goes unpunished; and her power is given her by the law of the Emperor-Over-Sea. As the beaver says to her ‘that’s how you came to imagine yourself a queen. You were the Emperor’s hangman’. C. S. Lewis departs from the biblical view in that he sees the Witch/Satan as having legal rights over the sinner; Edmund is her ‘lawful prey’.
41. *Institutes* III.3.2, Vol. 1, p. 594.