THE QUESTION

Did the early church fathers teach penal substitution, or see Christ's death differently?

Asked by a THF member on May 6, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 13 numbered quotations · the 29 early Christian passages and 135 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/did-the-early-church-fathers-teach-penal-substitution-or-see-christs-death

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

These passages do not state penal substitution in its later, exact form. The early writers do say Christ bore our sins, suffered for us, and redeemed us with His blood. But they also speak strongly of His death defeating death and the devil, healing our corrupted nature, and reconciling us to God.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

IN THIS STUDY

1	Christ bore our sins and suffered for us	2
2	He was made a curse and ransomed us	2
3	Christ pleads for us and makes atonement	3
4	His flesh and blood reconcile us to God	3
5	His death overthrew sin, death and the tempter	4
6	Christ came to heal our corrupted nature	5
7	Healing brings life and incorruption	5
8	The Son freely gave Himself for us	6
	What these passages don't tell us	6
	The Sources: 29 early Christian passages and 135 Bible verses, with links	6

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

POINT 1 OF 8

Christ bore our sins and suffered for us

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Justin reads the prophecy of the suffering servant as being about Christ, who bears our sins and is afflicted for us. Irenaeus says the Saviour took up the burden of our sins. Origen adds that Christ died on behalf of mankind and took the stripes of His condemnation for their benefit.

1 “It is He who bears our sins, and is afflicted for us; yet we considered Him smitten, stricken, and afflicted.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *First Apology* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 5, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

2 “For the Saviour has taken up the burden of our sins.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Fragments from the Lost Writings of Irenæus* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 10, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

3 “For it was for the benefit of mankind that He should die on their account, and should suffer stripes because of His condemnation.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 54 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 18, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 8

He was made a curse and ransomed us

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian, arguing against paying bribes to escape persecution, reminds believers that Christ already ransomed them with His blood. He says God did not spare His Son, who was made a curse for us by hanging on the tree.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

4 “But how unworthy of God and of His ways is this: that you should ransom with money a man whom Christ has ransomed with His blood.”

later in the same passage

“For God did not spare His own Son for you, so that He might be made a curse for us, because cursed is he who hangs on a tree.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *De Fuga in Persecutione* 12 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 13, page 7** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 8

Christ pleads for us and makes atonement

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen gathers the titles Paraclete, propitiation and atonement to describe how Christ stands for us before the Father. He links this to the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, which he sees as a type of Christ.

5 “But none of the names we have mentioned expresses how He represents us before the Father, as He pleads for human nature and makes atonement for it: the Paraclete, the propitiation, and the atonement.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on John* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 17, page 8** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 8

His flesh and blood reconcile us to God

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus explains reconciliation as restoring what had become hostile through sin. Christ had to share our real flesh, so that by His own body and blood He could bring humanity back to the Father.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

6 “But now, through union with Himself, the Lord has reconciled humanity to God the Father, by reconciling us to Himself with the body of His own flesh and redeeming us with His own blood, as the apostle says to the Ephesians, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins;" and again to the same, he says, "You who were formerly far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ;" and again, "By abolishing in His flesh the hostilities, [even] the law of commandments contained in ordinances."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book V* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 8, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 8

His death overthrew sin, death and the tempter

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Gregory Thaumaturgus lists what Christ won in our flesh: sin condemned, the tempter overcome, and death thrown down from its rule. In his confession of faith he says Christ is not conquered by death but destroys it.

7 “It was also so that the overseer of sin, the tempter, might be overcome; that death might be thrown down from its rule; that corruption in the burial of the body might be done away with; that the firstfruits of the resurrection might be shown; that the principle of righteousness might begin its course in the world through faith; that the kingdom of heaven might be preached to men; and that fellowship might be established between God and men.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Gregory Thaumaturgus,** *Twelve Topics on the Faith* 1 (c. 240–270 AD) **Source 22, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

8 “He is not only unconquered by the power of death, but even destroys death.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Gregory Thaumaturgus,** *A Sectional Confession of Faith* 1 (c. 240–270 AD) **Source 23, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

POINT 6 OF 8

Christ came to heal our corrupted nature

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Justin teaches that after the fall corruption became part of human nature, so the Word took a body to destroy corruption from within. Ignatius calls Christ our Physician, who frees and heals souls sick with sin.

9 "Therefore, it was necessary that the Word should inhabit a body to free us from the death that comes with natural corruption."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *Other Fragments from the Lost Writings of Justin* (c. 130–165 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 6, page 7 Read it in the library ›

10 "Being incorporeal, He was in the body; being impassible, He was in a passible body; being immortal, He was in a mortal body; being life, He became subject to corruption, so that He might free our souls from death and corruption, heal them, and restore them to health when they were diseased with ungodliness and wicked lusts."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (c. 98–117 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 2, page 7 Read it in the library ›

POINT 7 OF 8

Healing brings life and incorruption

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus ties Christ's healing work to salvation itself. The one who heals also gives life, and that life leads to incorruption, so the healing Christ brings reaches all the way to the resurrection.

11 "For life is brought about through healing, and incorruption through life. Therefore, He who gives healing also grants life; and He who gives life also encompasses His creation with incorruption."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book V* (c. 175–202 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 7, page 7 Read it in the library ›

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

POINT 8 OF 8

The Son freely gave Himself for us

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen stresses that Christ was not only handed over by the Father but gave Himself to death. He also says Christ took the form of a servant to set free those enslaved in sin.

12 "But the Son also gave Himself to death for us, so that He was delivered up not only by the Father, but also by Himself."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on Matthew* 13 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 20, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

13 "And though He was the Son of God, He took on Himself the form of a servant for the sake of the freedom of those who were enslaved in sin."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Commentary on John* 1 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 19, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don't tell us

- None of these passages says that the Father poured out His wrath on Christ in our place.
- The writers use several pictures side by side and do not rank one above the others.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 29 early Christian passages and 135 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–29, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 30–108, in Bible order), then 56 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *29 passages from 14 writers*

Mathetes, *c. 80–200 AD · source 1*

1 *Epistle to Diognetus* (1885 English; on point 1) “what other thing was capable of covering our sins than His righteousness… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 2–3*

2 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (1885 English) **Quote 10, page 5** “life, He became subject to corruption, that He might free our souls from death and corruption, and heal them, and might restore them to health, when they were diseased with… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *Epistles of Ignatius* (on point 6) “when He became incarnate, healed every kind of disease and infirmity… [continues online] **read ›**

Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · sources 4–6*

4 *Dialogue with Trypho* (on point 1) “bears our sins and is distressed for us… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *First Apology* **Quote 1, page 2** “is He who bears our sins, and is afflicted for us… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *Other Fragments from the Lost Writings of Justin* (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 5** “then becoming inherent in nature, it was necessary that He who wished to save should be one who destroyed the efficient cause of corruption… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 7–10*

7 *Against Heresies: Book V* **Quote 11, page 5** “life is brought about through healing, and incorruption through life… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Against Heresies: Book V* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 4** “that thing is reconciled which had formerly been in enmity… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 7) “after that, that what was mortal should be conquered and swallowed up by immortality, and the corruptible by incorruptibility, and that man should be made after the image and likeness… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *Fragments from the Lost Writings of Irenæus* **Quote 2, page 2** “the Saviour has taken up the burden of our sins… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 11–12*

11 *Instructor* 2.8 (1885 English; on point 5) “having destroyed the devil, deservedly said in triumph, O Death, where is your sting… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Instructor* 1.8 (1885 English) “God does not inflict punishment from wrath, but for the ends of justice… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 13–14*

13 *De Fuga in Persecutione* 12 (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** “the Lord indeed ransomed him from the angelic powers which rule the world — from the spirits of wickedness, from the darkness of this life, from eternal judgment, from everlasting death… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Against Marcion* 20 (1885 English; on point 5) “with the last enemy death did He fight, and through the trophy of the cross He triumphed… [continues online] **read ›**

Hippolytus, *c. 200–236 AD · sources 15–16*

15 *Against the Heresy of Noetus* 1 (1885 English; on point 5) “Him. He is crowned victor against the devil… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Exegetical Fragments* 1 (1885 English) “angels also are called evil, not because they are so in their nature, or by their own will, but because they have this office, and are appointed to produce pains… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 17–20*

17 *Commentary on John* 1 **Quote 5, page 3** "before the Father, as He pleads for human nature and makes atonement for it: the Paraclete, the propitiation, and the atonement. He has the name Paraclete in the Epistle of… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Against Celsus* 54 **Quote 3, page 2** "man bears our sins, and suffers pain on our behalf… [continues online] **read ›**

19 *Commentary on John* 1 **Quote 13, page 6** "then, He takes away sin until every enemy shall be destroyed, and death last of all, in order that the whole world may be free from sin, therefore John points… [continues online] **read ›**

20 *Commentary on Matthew* 13 (1885 English) **Quote 12, page 6** "through death He brought to nought him that has the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime… [continues online] **read ›**

Gregory Thaumaturgus, *c. 240–270 AD · sources 21–23*

21 *On All the Saints* 1 (1885 English; on point 5) "since the second Adam has brought up the first Adam out of the deeps of Hades, as Jonah was delivered out of the whale, and has set forth him who… [continues online] **read ›**

22 *Twelve Topics on the Faith* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** "16:33 And this He said, not as holding before us any contest proper only to a God, but as showing our own flesh in its capacity to overcome suffering… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *A Sectional Confession of Faith* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** "God, having been incarnated in the flesh of man, retains also His proper energy pure, possessing a mind unsubjected by the natural and fleshly affections, and holding the flesh and… [continues online] **read ›**

Novatian, *c. 240–258 AD · source 24*

24 *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 25 (1885 English) "that, while from these considerations it is gathered that nothing but the human nature in Christ was put to death, it appears that the Word in Him was not drawn… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 25*

25 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 1) "concerning our Saviour it is said in Isaiah, He bears our sins, and is afflicted for us… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · source 26*

26 *Three Fragments on the Cross and Passion* 1 (1885 English; on point 7) "was vanquished entirely; the flesh being crucified to draw forth its immortality… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · source 27*

27 *Divine Institutes* 18 (on point 1) "He bore the sins of many, and was delivered up… [continues online] **read ›**

Alexander of Alexandria, *c. 313–328 AD · sources 28–29*

28 *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* 1 "who absolves from sin was bound. He was mocked who once framed the world… [continues online] **read ›**

29 *Epistles on the Arian Heresy* 1 (1885 English; on point 5) "time our Lord trampled upon death, dissolved the enmity, bound the strong man, and raised the trophy of the cross, His body being lifted up upon it, that the body… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *79 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

30 **Exodus 21:25** burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise. **read ›**

31 **Leviticus 4:26** And he shall offer up all its fat on the altar, like the fat of the peace offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin, and it shall be forgiven him. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

32 **Leviticus 4:31** He shall take away all its fat, just as fat is taken away from the peace offering, and the priest shall offer it up on the altar for a pleasing aroma to the Lord. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. **read ›**

33 **Leviticus 5:6** And for what he has trespassed against the Lord, for the sin which he has sinned, he shall bring a female from the sheep, a lamb, or a female goat from the goats, as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin which he has sinned, and the sin shall be forgiven him. **read ›**

34 **Leviticus 5:13** And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin which he has sinned in any one of these things, and it shall be forgiven him. What is left shall belong to the priest, like the sacrifice of fine flour.'" **read ›**

35 **Leviticus 7:37** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

36 **Leviticus 14:20** The priest shall offer up the whole burnt offering and the sacrifice on the altar before the Lord; and the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be cleansed. **read ›**

37 **Leviticus 14:21** But if he is poor and cannot afford it, he shall take one lamb for his trespass, as a portion set apart, to make atonement for him, and a tenth of fine flour kneaded with oil for a sacrifice, and one cup of oil, **read ›**

38 **Leviticus 14:31** the one for a sin offering and the other for a whole burnt offering, with the sacrifice; and the priest shall make atonement for the one being cleansed before the Lord. **read ›**

39 **Numbers 7:28** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

40 **Numbers 7:34** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

41 **Numbers 7:40** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

42 **Numbers 7:46** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

43 **Numbers 7:52** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

44 **Numbers 7:58** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

45 **Numbers 7:64** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **read ›**

46 **Numbers 15:25** And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, because it is unintentional; and they have brought their gift, a burnt offering to the Lord, for their sin before the Lord, for their unintentional sins. **read ›**

47 **Numbers 28:30** for a sin offering, to make atonement for you, besides the continual whole burnt offering; and **read ›**

48 **Numbers 29:11** and one male goat of the goats for a sin offering, to make atonement for you; besides the sin offering of atonement and the continual whole burnt offering, its sacrifice and its drink offering, according to the rule, for a pleasing aroma, a burnt offering to the Lord. **read ›**

49 **2 Chronicles 29:24** And the priests slaughtered them and made atonement with their blood at the altar, and made atonement for all Israel; for the king said, "The whole burnt offering and the sin offerings are for all Israel." **read ›**

50 **Psalms 51:19** Then you will be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with offering and whole burnt offerings; then they will offer calves upon your altar. (Septuagint Psalm 50:21 (Psalm 51:19 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

51 **Psalms 76:10** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

52 **Proverbs 21:3** To do just things and to speak truth is more pleasing to God than the blood of sacrifices. **read ›**

53 **Song of Solomon 5:8** I have charged you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and by the strengths of the field: if you find my kinsman, what will you tell him? That I am wounded with love. **read ›**

54 **Isaiah 1:29** For they shall be ashamed of their idols, which they themselves wanted, and they were put to shame over the gardens which they desired. **read ›**

55 **Isaiah 7:3** And the Lord said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Jashub who is left, at the pool of the upper road of the fuller's field. **read ›**

56 **Isaiah 8:21** And a hard famine shall come upon you, and it shall be that when you are hungry you shall be grieved, and you shall speak evil of the ruler and of the ways of your fathers; and they shall look up to heaven above, **read ›**

57 **Isaiah 13:13** For the heaven will be enraged, and the earth will be shaken from its foundations, because of the wrath of the anger of the Lord of hosts, in the day when his wrath comes upon it. **read ›**

58 **Isaiah 17:12** Woe to the multitude of many nations! Like the surging sea, so you will be troubled; and the back of many nations will roar like water. **read ›**

59 **Isaiah 53:5** But he was wounded because of our sins, and was made weak because of our iniquities; the discipline of our peace was upon him; by his bruise we were healed. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

60 **Isaiah 53:11** And the Lord wills to take away from the toil of his soul, to show him light and to form him with understanding, to justify a righteous one who serves many well; and he himself shall bear their sins. **read ›**

61 **Jeremiah 4:6** Take up your goods and flee to Zion; hurry, do not stand still, for I am bringing evils from the north, and great destruction. **read ›**

62 **Jeremiah 50:21** says the Lord. Go up against her bitterly, and against those who dwell in her; take vengeance, O sword, and destroy, says the Lord, and do according to all that I command you. (Septuagint Jeremiah 27:21 (Jeremiah 50:21 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

63 **Ezekiel 14:1** And men from among the elders of the people of Israel came to me and sat before me. **read ›**

64 **Ezekiel 25:6** For thus says the Lord: Because you clapped your hand and stamped with your foot, and rejoiced from your soul over the land of Israel, **read ›**

65 **Ezekiel 36:18** And I poured out my wrath on them, **read ›**

66 **Ezekiel 36:25** and I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be cleansed from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols, and I will cleanse you. **read ›**

67 **Hosea 13:14** I will deliver them from the hand of Hades, and I will redeem them from death. Where is your penalty, O death? Where is your sting, O Hades? Comfort is hidden from my eyes. **read ›**

68 **Wisdom of Solomon 2:24** But through the envy of the devil death entered the world, and those who belong to his side experience it. **read ›**

69 **Wisdom of Solomon 6:19** and incorruption brings one near to God; **read ›**

70 **Wisdom of Solomon 11:9** For when they were tested, though they were disciplined in mercy, they learned how the ungodly were tormented when judged in anger. **read ›**

71 **Wisdom of Solomon 18:22** He overcame the multitude, not by bodily strength, nor by force of arms, but by a word he subdued the one who punished, recalling the oaths and covenants given to the fathers. **read ›**

72 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:8** What is man, and what is his use? What is his good, and what is his evil? **read ›**

73 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:24** Remember the wrath in the days of the end, and the time of vengeance when he turns away his face. **read ›**

74 **Wisdom of Sirach 27:30** Wrath and anger, these too are abominations, and a sinful man will hold fast to them. **read ›**

75 **Wisdom of Sirach 28:5** He, being flesh, keeps up wrath; who will make atonement for his sins? **read ›**

76 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

77 **Wisdom of Sirach 32:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

78 **Wisdom of Sirach 38:7** With them he healed, and took away his pain. **read ›**

79 **2 Maccabees 6:15** lest he should take vengeance on us afterward, when our sins have reached their height. **read ›**

80 **2 Maccabees 7:32** For we are suffering because of our own sins. **read ›**

81 **2 Maccabees 7:36** For our brothers, after enduring a brief pain, have now fallen under God’s covenant of everlasting life; but you, by the judgment of God, will receive just penalties for your arrogance. **read ›**

82 **2 Maccabees 7:38** and that through me and my brothers the wrath of the Almighty, which has justly fallen on our whole race, may come to an end.” **read ›**

83 **3 Maccabees 5:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

84 **3 Maccabees 6:29** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

85 **3 Maccabees 6:31** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

86 **4 Maccabees 1:29** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

87 **4 Maccabees 6:28** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

88 **4 Maccabees 7:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

89 **4 Maccabees 8:21** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

90 **4 Maccabees 13:13** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

91 **4 Maccabees 17:12** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

92 **4 Maccabees 17:22** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

93 **1 Enoch 63:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

94 **1 Enoch 69:11** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

95 **1 Enoch 84:4** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

96 **Romans 2:5** But because of your hardness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation and righteous judgment of God, **read ›**

97 **Romans 3:25** whom God set forth as a mercy seat, through faith, in his blood, to demonstrate his righteousness because of the passing over of sins previously committed, **read ›**

98 **Romans 5:9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we will be saved from God's wrath through him. **read ›**

99 **Romans 6:9** knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over him! **read ›**

100 **Romans 8:21** that the creation itself also will be delivered from the slavery of decay into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. **read ›**

101 **1 Corinthians 15:53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. **read ›**

102 **1 Corinthians 15:55** Where is your sting, O death? Where is your victory, O Hades? **read ›**

103 **2 Corinthians 5:21** For he made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **read ›**

104 **Colossians 1:20** and through him to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross—through him, whether things on earth or things in the heavens. **read ›**

105 **Colossians 2:15** Having stripped the principalities and powers, he made a public display of them, triumphing over them through the cross. **read ›**

106 **Hebrews 2:14** Since then the children have shared in flesh and blood, he also himself in the same way partook of the same, that through death he might bring to nothing him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **read ›**

107 **1 Peter 2:24** who himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that, having died to sins, we might live to righteousness; by his bruise you were healed. **read ›**

108 **1 Peter 3:18** Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *56 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Exodus 3:2

Psalms 24:8 · 33:15

Isaiah 45:7 · 52:13

Jeremiah 11:19

Nahum 1:4

Matthew 5:3 · 5:48 · 6:25 · 10:28 · 16:21 · 17:22 · 22:21 · 22:29 · 26:59 · 27:29

Mark 4:39 · 14:21

Luke 6:46 · 7:25 · 8:28 · 8:30 · 8:43 · 8:48 · 20:38 · 22:44

John 1:2 · 1:29 · 13:27 · 16:33 · 19:2

Acts 4:34 · 8:20 · 17:30 · 24:26

Romans 3:5 · 3:21 · 5:6 · 5:12 · 5:18 · 8:3 · 8:32

1 Corinthians 2:7 · 9:9 · 10:4

2 Corinthians 4:18

Galatians 3:13 · 4:4

Ephesians 1:7 · 2:2 · 2:13 · 2:15

Titus 3:4

1 John 2:1 · 4:10

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Did the early church fathers teach penal substitution, or see Christ's death differently?” on May 6, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

How it was made. Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.

How to cite this study. The Historic Faith, “Did the early church fathers teach penal substitution, or see Christ's death differently?” Early Church Questions, published November 9, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/did-the-early-church-fathers-teach-penal-substitution-or-see-christs-death. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 5.”

© 2026 The Historic Faith. Selection, arrangement and editing by THF; machine-compiled text and public-domain quotations are not claimed. For personal study; please don’t republish.

THEHISTORICFAITH.COM

THE END OF THIS STUDY