



THINK
THEISM

Welcome!

Ratio Christi, meaning “reason for Christ” in Latin, serves to defend the Christian faith in honest dialogue with both our skeptical & believing friends.

Weekly Meetings: Thursday @ 7:30pm

RC-TAMU.org



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Thomistic Institute

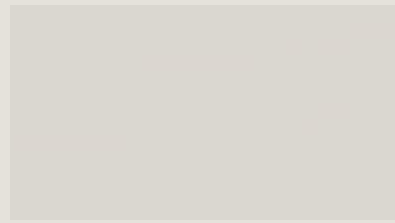
The Thomistic Institute exists to promote Catholic truth in our contemporary world by strengthening the intellectual formation of Christians at Texas A&M University, in the Church, and in the wider public square. The thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Universal Doctor of the Church, is our touchstone.

Reading Group Details in the Slack

thomisticinstitute.org/texas-am



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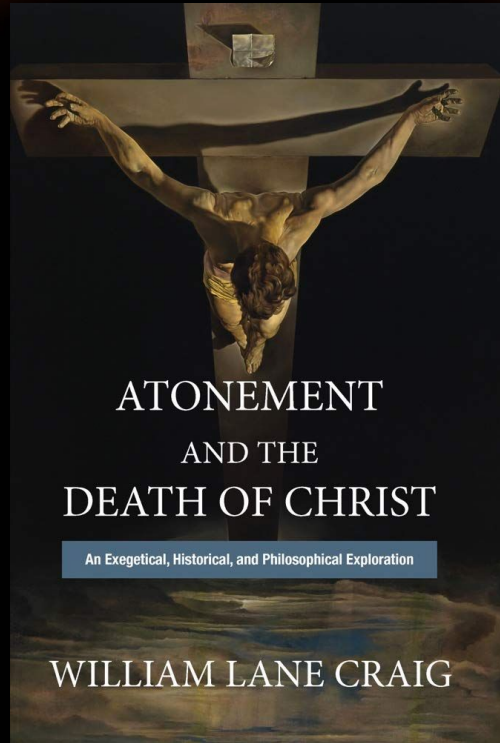
Think Theism lectures are supported by Ratio Christi @ Texas A&M, but the opinions represented herein do not necessarily reflect the beliefs or values of Ratio Christi. This content is presented to encourage discussion and critical thought about challenging questions.



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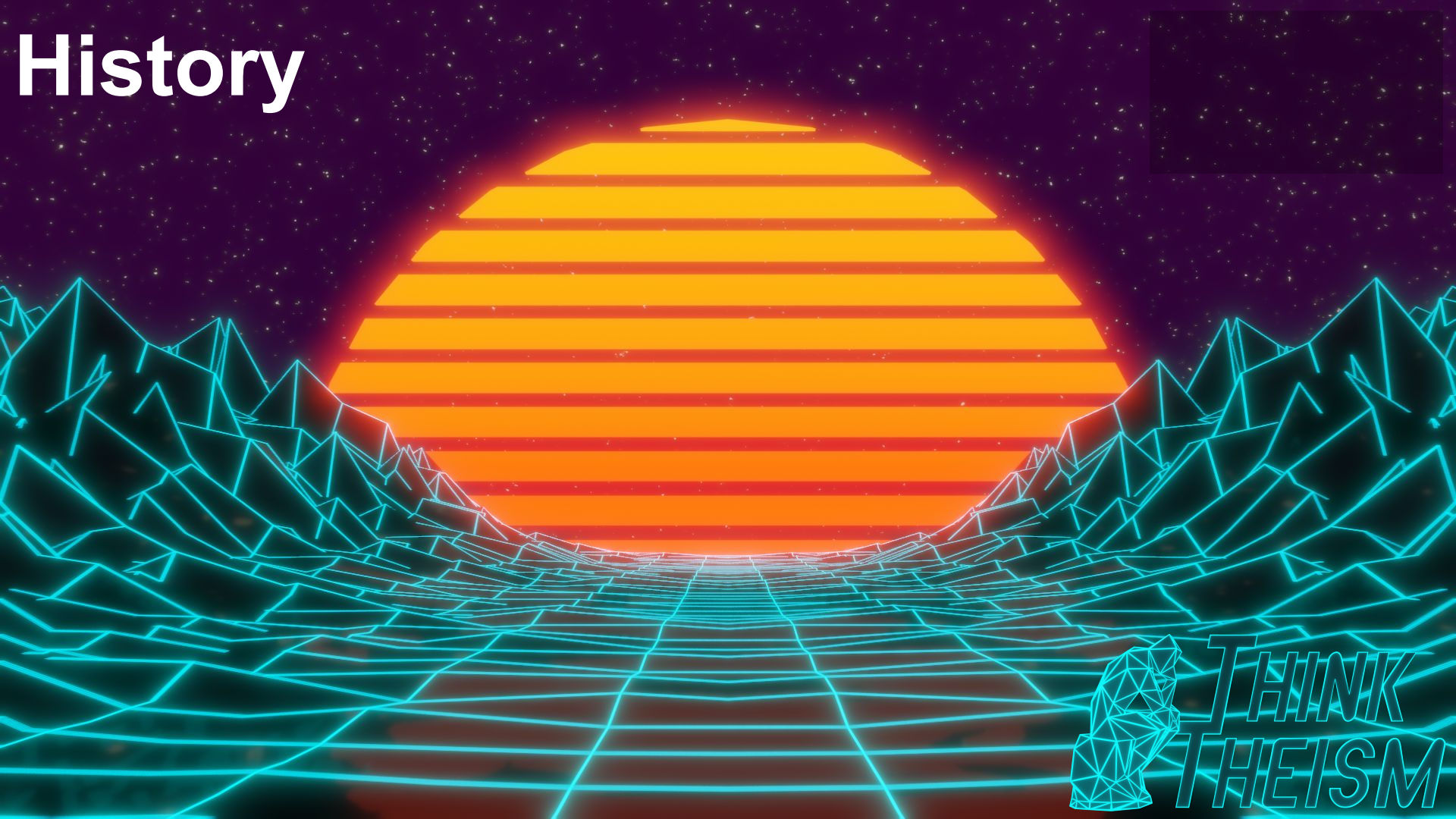
ATONEMENT
AND THE
DEATH OF CHRIST

An Exegetical, Historical, and Philosophical Exploration

WILLIAM LANE CRAIG

Atonement and the Death of Christ
William Lane Craig

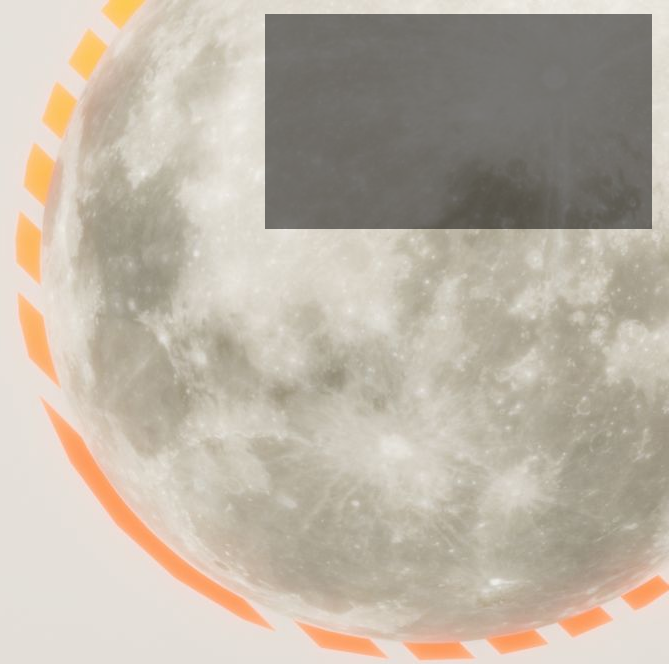
History



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What is Atonement?

- Middle English origins
 - “At-Onement with God”
- New Testament word *katallagē*
 - Reconciliation
- 2 Corinthians 5:19
 - God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.



Sacrifice

- Laying on of hands
 - Identified themselves with the animal who assumed their position.
- Driving into the desert
- Symbolic
- Not redemptive



Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our griefs

and carried our sorrows;

yet we esteemed him stricken,

smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;

he was crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

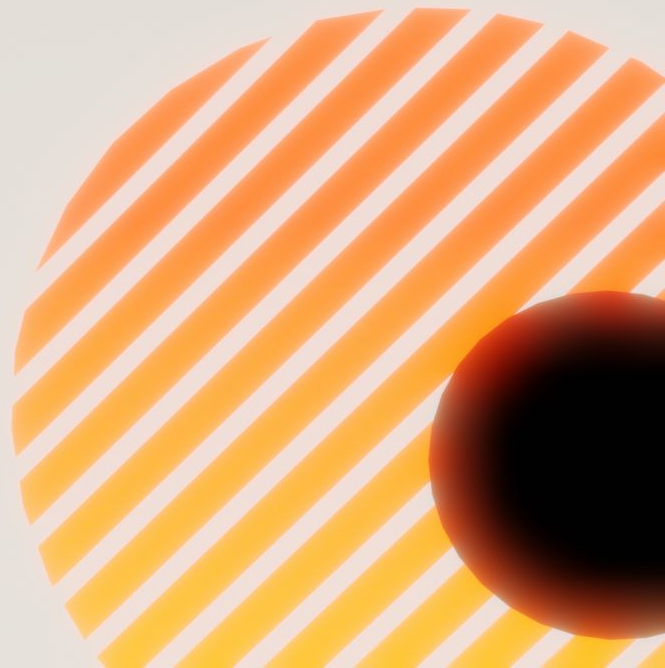
and with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray;

we have turned—every one—to his own way;

and the Lord has laid on him

the iniquity of us all.



Representation and Redemption

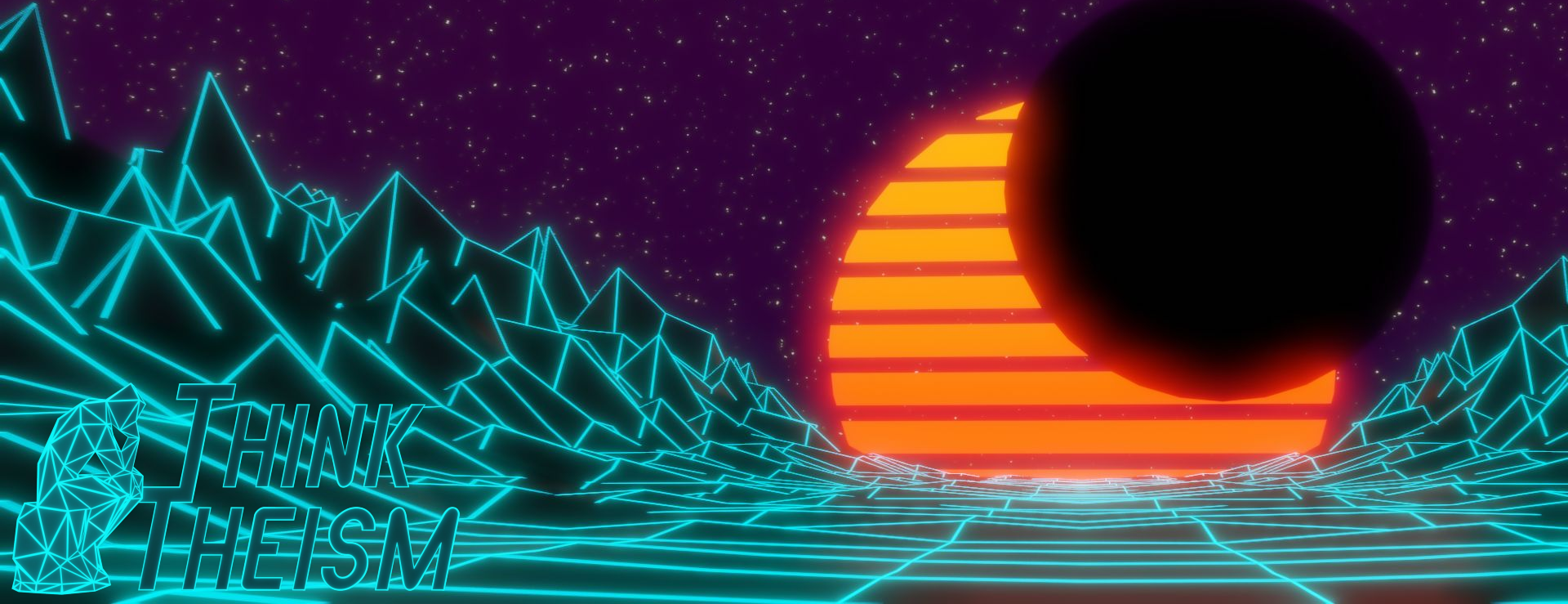
- Leviticus meets Isaiah
- We identified with the lamb of Christ who took our place on the cross and bore our iniquities.



**Questions?
Thoughts?
Comments?**



Development



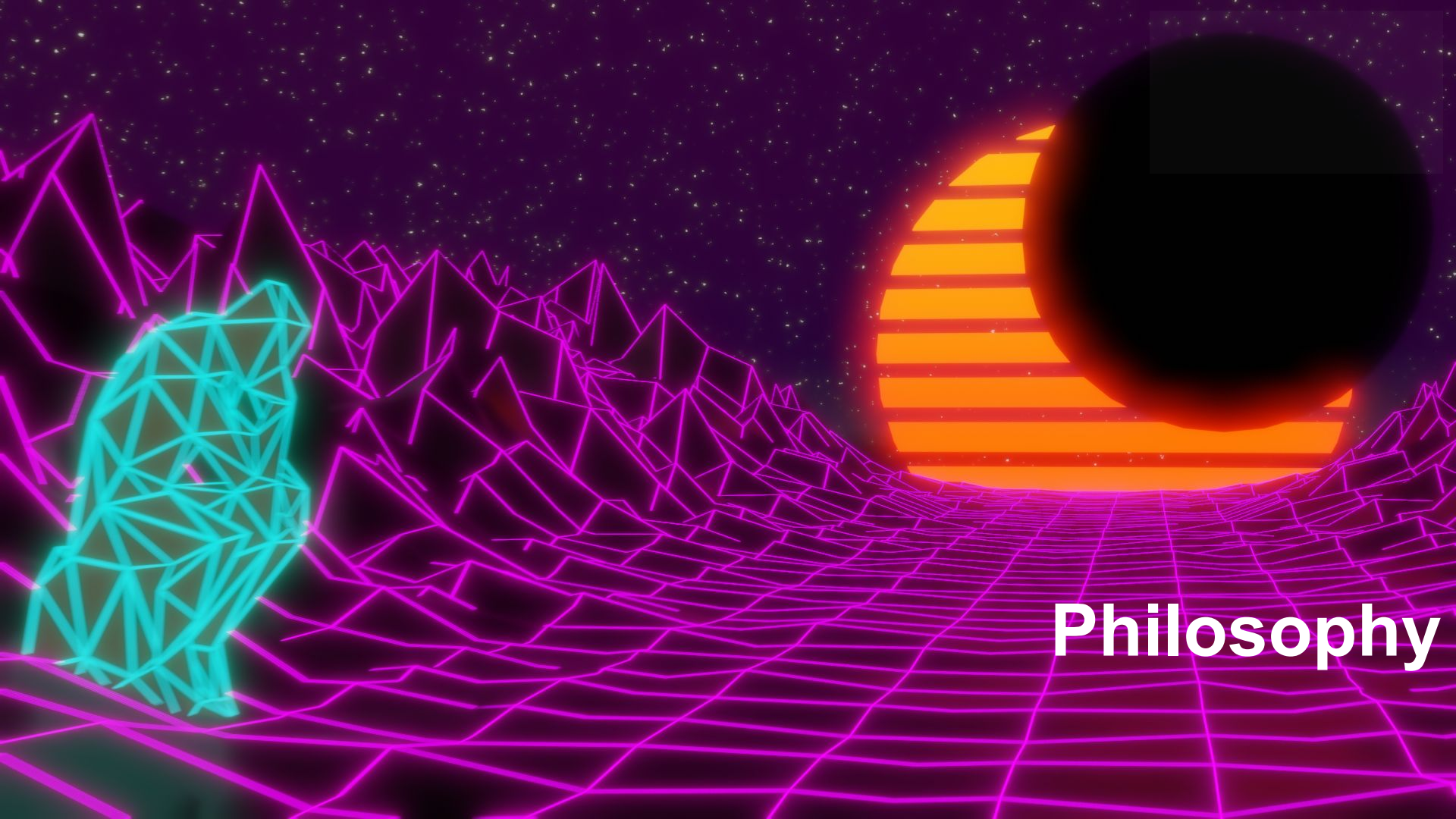
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Early Theologies

- *Christus Victor* Theory
 - Christ's righteous life and subsequent death was a payment to Satan for the price of humans. Then busts out of Hell. In this, Jesus conquers all powers of evil, death and Satan.
 - 1 Corinthians 15: 24-26
- Moral Influence Theory
 - Jesus's righteousness and death on the cross didn't actually do thing, it just inspires us to love Christ more, making us more righteous and freeing us from sin.
- Atonement is like a gem-- it is not a singular idea of doctrine
 - Not just God sacrificed Himself to Himself because He was mad at man.
 - Atonement has a meaning apart from penal substitution. Just because one aspect of doctrine is objected to, not all of atonement falls apart.

**Questions?
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Philosophy

Penal Substitution



Jesus' sacrifice on the cross takes place of the punishment we ought to suffer for our sins.

Cultural Context

- Is this an actual train of thought in Israel's culture?
- Moses
 - Ex. 32:30-34



Core Counter Argument

- Can you punish an innocent person for another's sins?
 - (1) God is perfectly just.
 - (2) If God is perfectly just, He cannot punish an innocent person.
 - (3) Therefore, God cannot punish an innocent person.
 - (4) Christ was an innocent person.
 - (5) Therefore, God cannot punish Christ.
 - (6) If God cannot punish Christ, penal substitution is false.
- We see innocent individuals punished all the time.



**Questions?
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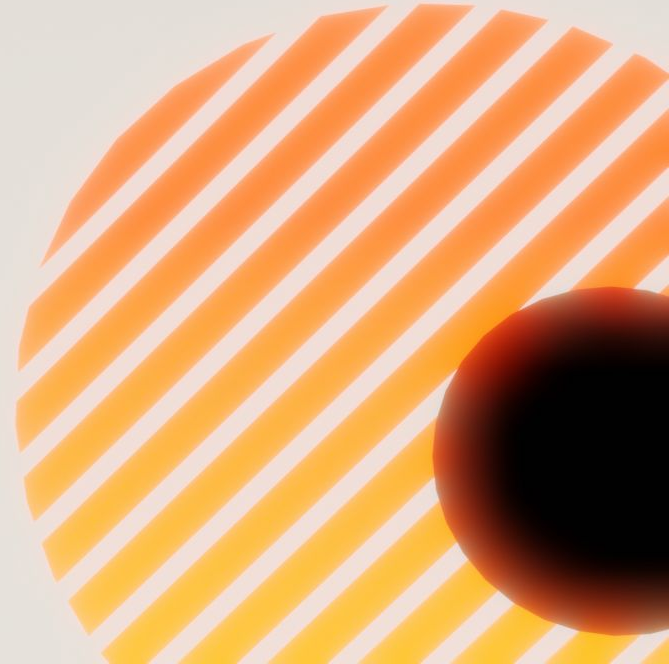
Punishment v. Penalty

Punishment

- Impose hardship
- Intentionality
- Must be imposed in response to wrongful act
- Imposed as message to others

Penalty

- Removes the necessity of guilt



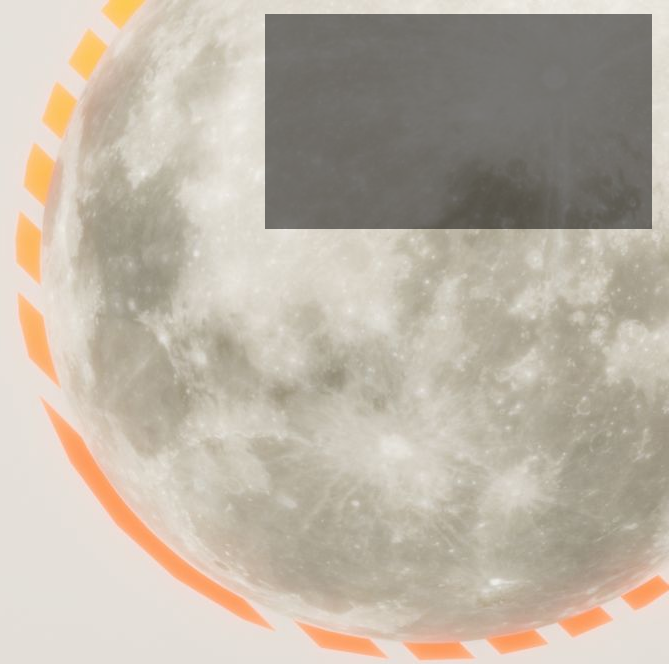
Imputation

- Galatians 3:13
 - “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’”
- Vicarious Liability
 - Employer being held liable for the action of his employees, even if he wasn't involved in the crime.
 - Not a failure on the part of the employer, but the employer is held liable due to his relationship with the employee.
 - Liability replicated, not transferred.
 - Thus, the employer is guilty and liable to punishment.



Divine Justice

- Christ is legally liable to punishment in God's eyes.
- Representational
 - Not just substitutional
 - He voluntarily was our representative on the cross
 - When He was punished, we were punished representationally
- Satisfies God's need for complete justice

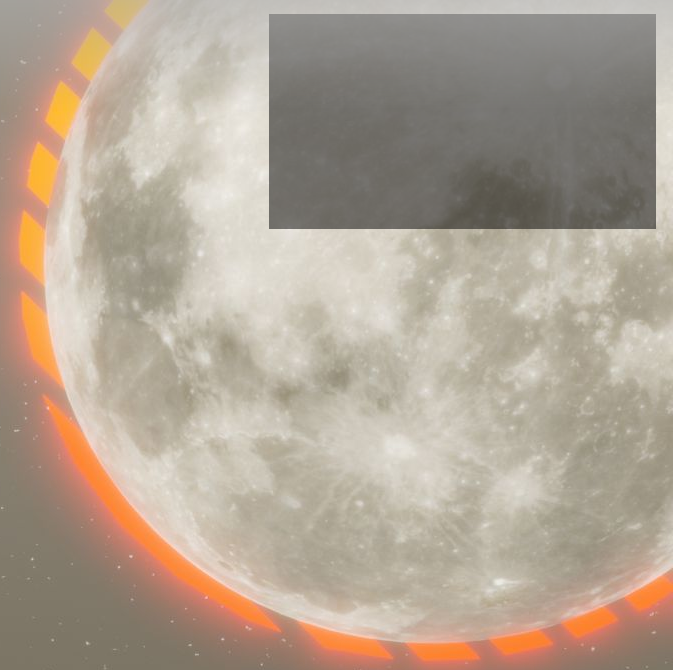


Our Standing

- Formerly condemned criminals.
 - Not debtors
- Redemption
 - Comes via divine justice, not solely power.
 - God is Judge and Ruler of the world.
- Divine Pardon
 - The righteousness of Jesus is imputed to us.
 - No longer just innocent but righteous before God.
 - Remedial justice often happens once the term of punishment has been served.
 - Restores to civil rights, not evading punishment.
 - We are restored to rights as children of God.
 - Pardons can be *refused*

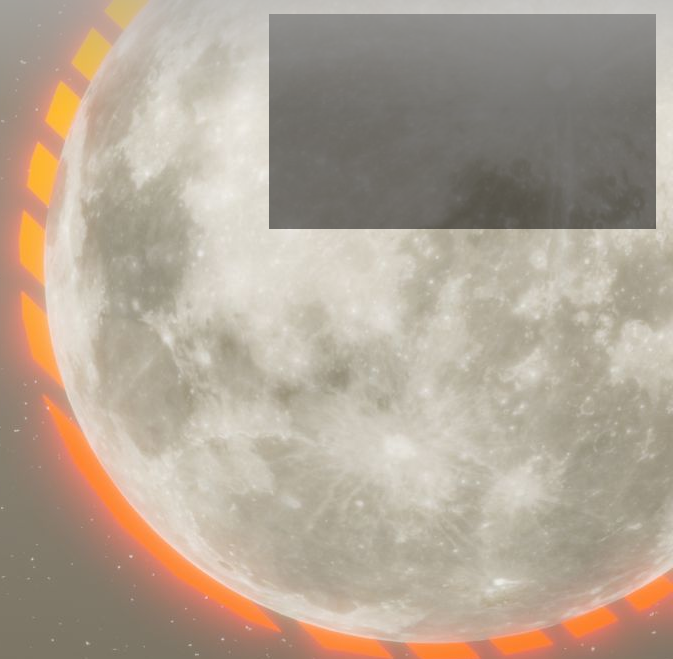
Final Takeaways

- The death and resurrection of Jesus are core elements of atonement
- Atonement is bigger than just the “God sacrificed Himself” narrative
- The author’s of the New Testament ransacked the Old Testament to show that all of Scripture pointed to the atonement
- The main objection to penal substitution is incoherent because it is unjust for an all-loving God to punish an innocent person for the sins of another



Final Takeaways

- This objection makes multiple unwarranted assumptions such as the legal innocence of Christ, and the idea that a Divine Pardon is impossible
- Penal substitution allows God to be both merciful and just.
- Penal substitution is theologically coherent and showcases the Divine Justice and Divine Mercy of God.



**Questions?
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