

Anselm – a reasonable man

I Anselm – life and times

What do we know about Anselm? List some “facts” about him (when, where, how he lived, etc..)

Did you see anything that you were especially drawn to in Anselm? Anything that “put you off”?

Anselm lives to serve his monks – he lives to serve his church – he lives to know his God and to understand his God so that he can show his monks, his church and his world the reasonableness of the God of the Biblical revelation.

His journey involves The Monologion; but he is unhappy with that and prays and wrestles and strives with the devil as he seeks a better way to prove God; eventually coming (in prayer) to see the Proslogion.

II Anselm – the project of reason

What has changed from Augustine, Athanasius to Anselm?

- A.
- B.
- C.

What can we say about the use of philosophy and reason today? Does it matter what philosophers believe and teach? Should Christians combat these philosophies taught in our Universities?

Faith and reason are best friends – Anselm and Aquinas are the “heroes” of this view. They would be stunned at what has happened in Christianity today; the conflict between reason and faith; science and God; Universities and secularism, etc.

III Anselm – The Proslogion

- A. attitude as he approaches (1 – last paragraph – p.887)
- B. God is “something than which nothing greater can be thought” (2)

- C. must not exist only in the mind (or it would not be greatest, obviously) 2
- D. cannot be thought not to exist (3)

The same argument is then used to show some of his attributes. C S Lewis used a similar argument – the “argument from desire” – if there is thirst in you then there must be...if hunger there must be... if longing for love...if need for beauty..if necessity for justice....if longing for intimacy...

What do you think of what became known as Anselm’s Ontological Argument for the existence of God? Note the use of reason; not Scripture.

III Anselm – Cur Deus Homo – Why God became a human being

What did you make of this book? It is considered his masterpiece. Tell me how you felt reading it? Could a book like this have been written today? Why or why not? Do you see what Anselm wants to do? (p. 265,middle, 266 top) What is the “dialectical method”? ((p. 282 - -A) Who is Boso?

Book 1:

- A. Divine person needed to redeem mankind (270 - 5)
- B. Unreasonable to believe that God would become man (274 -8)
- C. The problem of sin (282- A, 11)..sin brings misery, sin needs forgiveness
- D. sin needs restitution if God is just and is God (p.284 -12)
- E. what humans have take away from God by sinning (p. 286 -13)

Then comes the long problem of the angels – did anyone follow this argument and profit by it? Why would Anselm, at this point, bring in the angels?

- F. recompense for sin an absolute necessity (300 -19; 302-A)
- G. the measure of recompense needed (303 – 20) note p.305 – top
- H. how heavy the weight of sin is (305 -21) see also 308- 23
- I. if humans cannot repay are they still guilty (309- 24)
- J. thus humans are doomed (312- “you asked for logic”
- K. the necessary consequence (313-25)

Thus ends Book One – he reminds me very much of Jonathan Edwards :“The Justice of God in the Condemnation of Sinners” uses this very same argument and leaves people in this same position. Can this be used today in preaching?

Book two:

- A. humans created righteous (315- 1-3)
- B. God's two alternatives (317- 4)
- C. God's grace or was it necessity (318- 5)
- D. the God- Man introduced (319-6) – note the logic
- E. the possibility of a God-man (Chalcedonian Creed) 320-7
- F. God- Man's birth (323)
- G. the Word the only suitable One to become flesh (324-9)
- H. God-man and death (325-331)
- I. His death outweighs the number and magnitude of all sins (333-14)

Anselm and Boso sum up the argument and the reason for the argument before they get to their final conclusions (p. 336) This is apologetics at its best!

- J. greatness of the reconciliation (337)
- K. Christ's life (this God-man) is the recompense for sin (348-18)
- L. Christ's death different from all others (349)
- M. God was owed – not the devil (354 –top)
- N. the devil cannot be reconciled (354-21)
- O. logic (and the God-man) corroborate the Scriptures (355-22)

So, why can't God forgive out of mercy alone?

So, why is Christus Victor (Jesus ransoming us from the devil and winning the victory over the devil) not enough to explain the atonement?

So, why didn't God create a new sinless being to redeem us?

Why not forgive all of us by an act of the divine will?

How could it be possible for God to humiliate himself by becoming human?