



Cur Deus Homo: with Dr. Junius Johnson

Lesson 2: Book II

Outline:

In Book II, Anselm argues how Christ is able to offer satisfaction on our behalf and strengthens the claim that humans were created for blessedness by God's original divine purpose.

- Objection raised: God saves out of necessity and therefore no gratitude is due to God for salvation.
 - Example: Is a police officer who saves a life based on duty and not desire owed thanks?
- Anselm holds that a necessity one willingly assumes does not render the action less worthy of gratitude.
 - A necessity one freely assumes should not be called a necessity but grace.
 - Example: A gift promised today for tomorrow places the giver freely under obligation and renders the promise gracious.
- Chapter 6 summarizes that only God can make satisfaction for an infinite debt because only God has anything of infinite value.
- Yet, humans ought to make this satisfaction because it is our debt. Therefore, only a God-man can make satisfaction.
 - This is not a substitutionary offering because we have something that is properly owed to God and needs to be given back.
- If a God-man is required, where will Christ get his human nature from? Only 2 options:
 - Either Christ is a descendant of Adam or not.
 - If he's not of Adam's family, then he has no share in Adam's debt.
 - If he is, where does his sinless nature come from?
 - Christ's virgin birth circumvents original sin.
 - Anselm holds to 4 views of how God creates humans
 - Man + Woman (us)
 - Neither man nor woman (Adam)
 - Man alone (Eve)
 - Woman alone (Christ)
- Chapters 9-10 Anselm deals with human nature by asking:
 - Which divine person of the trinity is most suited for the Incarnation?
 - Does Jesus die under obligation?
 - Human nature is naturally immortal.
 - Death attaches to human nature as a penalty for sin.
 - The sinless nature of Christ means he cannot be killed, he can only choose to die.



- Christ has something to offer God (a sinless life) that he does not owe (namely, a death).
- Is Christ truly incapable of sin?
 - Anselm ties capability to the will to prove that although Christ had the power to make sinful choices, he lacked the will to do them which made him incapable of sin.
 - Christ's inability to sin is not a product of necessity but of freewill.
 - Anselm therefore concludes God's independent and necessarily righteous nature is naturally praiseworthy.
- In chapters 12 & 13, Anselm demonstrates the human nature of Christ in that:
 - He willingly takes on the discomforts of fallen human nature.
 - At conception, Christ's human nature was joined to the divine person and is never without wisdom.
 - Dr. Johnson offers insight in the distinction of the two minds of Christ which is not addressed in Anselm's argument.
 - He also points out the from the text how Anselm approaches Mary's sinlessness apart from the doctrine of Immaculate Conception and offers it as a point of class discussion.
- Chapter 18 demonstrates how satisfaction through Christ alone is possible.
 - Christ offered to God that which he did not owe, namely a death following original and actual sin.
 - Christ choosing to die is merit beyond what is owed.
 - The one with the power to give his death against finite sins is infinitely valuable.
 - Therefore, such a death satisfies for infinitely many offenses against God.
- Chapter 19 concludes with Christ's great sacrifice is deserving of reward.
 - As God, Christ has no need of reward.
 - Instead, he asks of the Father that his reward be given to his family.
 - Our sin is remitted as a reward to Christ.
 - Anselm is careful to conclude that God does not forgive sin based on the absence of satisfaction. Instead, it is Christ's satisfaction which secures redemption and points to God's generosity.