

The Problem and Solution

Anselm see the problem and solution to the predicament of humankind as follows according to R. W. Southern.¹

1 The Problem

- i Man was created by God for eternal blessedness.
- ii This blessedness requires the perfect and voluntary submission of Man's will to God. (Freedom is to love the limitations appropriate to one's being.)
- iii But the whole human race has refused to make this submission (and thus lost its freedom).
- iv No member of the human race can restore the lost blessedness, because even perfect obedience cannot now make up for lack obedience in the past.

2 The Necessity of a Solution

- i God's purpose in the creation of Man and the universe has been frustrated.
- ii But it is impossible that the purpose of an omnipotent Being should be frustrated.
- iii Therefore a means of redemption must exist.

3 The Solution

- i To restore the lost harmony and blessedness, an offering of obedience must be made, equal to or greater than all that has been lacking in the past.
- ii Only Man, as the offender, *ought* to make this offering; but no man can do this, because he already owes to God all and more than all he has to offer.
- iii Only God *can* make an offering which transcends the whole unpaid debt of past offenses; but God ought not to make it, because the debt is Man's.
- iv Since only Man ought to, and only God can, make this offering, it must be made by one who is both Man and God.
- v Therefore a God-Man is necessary for the Redemption of the whole Creation.

¹R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 206.