

never quite put the way we would want it for the order and well being of the total church. Other views are found in the fathers and the mediaeval church. But as the Nicene council had to deal directly with the Trinity issue (whether or not Christ was God) the Schoolmen--absorbed in the problem of reality--needed to deal with the concepts of the atonement in order to understand its application and availability.

B. Anselm on the Atonement

Of the writers of the period, Anselm had a grip of the atonement doctrine which has emerged as the orthodox opinion in most schools over the years. In terms of vital expression, he pioneered the technical ideas of the vicarious interpretation of the atonement in his work Cur Deus Homo ("Why the God Man"). Following the discussion of Orr (Progress of Christian Doctrine) we note that Anselm postulated:

Anselm on
the
Atonement:

The Vicarious
Expression

- (1) Sin is part of all and has condemned us.
- (2) What it has done is to besmirch the honor of God and so offend His person and glory.
- (3) What we owe is obedience...that is what we cannot pay.
- (4) Punishment is due the sinner (since he cannot pay) for that is what the justice of God promised and God cannot deny or be false to himself.
- (5) Man is totally impotent to survive the punishment or, if he could, to render himself honorable to God through it.
- (6) A redeemer is needed...he cannot be God himself for he owes nothing himself...he cannot be simply man for he cannot offer for any but himself and his offering is inadequate...The Redeemer must be the God/Man who with perfect righteousness will pay the penalty.
- (7) The penalty is not paid to the devil (he is not owed anything) it is paid as a satisfaction of God's righteous requirement...it is not mere obedience to the divine will.
- (8) Nor is it mere endurance of a penalty
- (9) Nor is it anything less than voluntary surrender to the will of God in behalf of righteousness and others.
- (10) In value it is beyond price...it is applicable to those appointed by God.

As Orr says, there is much value in Anselm's view and you may see a few things that seem weak. But it is an interesting expression designed to show how the incarnation led to and resulted in a work of salvation from the cross...for us men and our salvation.