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Philosophy, theology, and religion

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Anselm the Ontological Argument

Anselm begins his argument by refereeing to Psalms as ‘fool’. This fool mentions that “there is no God in his heart (Plantinga)”. This was actually ignoring the existence of God. Anselm thinks that this fool listens to him when he speaks, even in the lowest of his voice, and sometime this fool listens to him when he hasn’t spoken anything. Anselm puts forward this claim when he was forced to think that the idea of conceivable being existed. He accepts this notion because he has been told many times that God exists. In order to witness the presence of God, Anselm believes in what Psalm has to offer. He interprets the arguments present in Psalm as right and thinks that if any being exists in our thoughts, then it will definitely have a presence. He conceptualizes that presence of God above in the sky shows that he must exist in reality.

Anselm declares that the presence of anything in mind is just one aspect, making that thing understand is another. He proves his point by giving an example of how anything can exist in the mind and in reality at the same time. He puts forward the example of a painter. He writes that before a painter starts creating a picture, he has an image of that in his mind. Once the sketch is completed, the thing then exists both in one’s mind and in the real world. After presenting this example, Anselm defines God. He follows this same premise that God is like the image of a painter. According to him, what we create about him in our mind and thoughts, he is exactly like that. For him, there is nothing bigger than an image of God which one conceives in his mind. To assert his point he argues, “For if that greatest thing is conceived in the mind of humans, therefore it can exist in the mind as well (Plantinga)”.

I think Anselm’s ontological answer about the existence of greatest conceivable being is adequate. He has presented sound arguments to prove his point of view. In doing so, he has rightfully followed the premise set in the start. His argument is that since the definition of God is not questionable, therefore many fools can interpret it as a concept. I have also testified the concept about God presented by Anselm. I have done this by ensuring the validity and soundness of his premises. In the following lines, I have created a more deliberated form of the argument presented by Anselm. It says:

* God is what after which nothing exists,
* A Human being can be conceived, whereas God cannot,
* God necessarily exists in reality.

According to the arguments of writing philosophy, if the premise of an argument is true, its conclusion would also be right. So there exists no reason that one should deny the findings of Anselm.

There are many other reasons to argue that the premise of Anselm is true. For example, the acceptance of Anselm’s definition of God. This definition is both sound and ontologically true. This is the reason anyone can consider his beliefs to be workable. These arguments of him and if one does not follow the premises of him, he will definitely remain a fool. Another reason, to justify Anselm’s argument is postulating the existence of God, which is logically possible by all definitions of Ontological reasoning. Finally, Anselm’s conceptualization that ‘to exist in reality and in one’s understanding is greater than to exist alone’ proves that he was right to make people believe in his notion of God. Therefore, I believe that Anselm's definition of God is not a controversial one.

Works Cited:

Plantinga, Alvin. “The Ontological Argument.” *Garden City*, 1965.