

## ANSELM ON FREEDOM AND GRACE

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Anselm of Canterbury devoted much attention to creaturely freedom and its relation to God's grace.<sup>1</sup> In answering the question, "why is there evil if God made creation as good?" Anselm developed a sophisticated incompatibilist account of freedom. According to incompatibilist accounts, an agent is free with respect to a choice only if causes outside of the agent do not determine that she will make that choice. By viewing rational creatures, human and angels, as free agents, Anselm recognized that such agents could not be guaranteed to always choose rightly. As a result, he argued that the good of freedom of choice accounts for how evil could come into the world without making God blameworthy.<sup>2</sup> But he worried that his account of freedom conflicted with what the Bible says about God's grace in the restoration of fallen human creatures: "the Bible speaks at times as if that grace alone seems to avail for salvation and free choice not at all, but at other times as though our salvation entirely depends on free choice."<sup>3</sup> In addressing the question of how God's grace harmonizes with human freedom, Anselm argued that both human freedom and the grace of God have an essential role to play in the change from an agent being unjust to being just.

The central question of this paper concerns whether Anselm provided compatible answers to both questions: (1) why is there evil if God made creation as good; and (2) how, if at all, does God's grace harmonize with human freedom? I will argue that Anselm's answer to the first question makes it difficult to see

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<sup>1</sup>On notation in this paper: *DV* = *On Truth (De Veritate)*; *DL* = *On the Freedom of Choice (De Libertate Arbitrii)*; *DCD* = *On the Fall of the Devil (De Casu Diaboli)*; *DC* = *De Concordia*; *CDH* = *Cur Deus Homo*. All translations from *DV*, *DL*, and *DCD* are taken from Anselm (2002). All other translations are from Anselm (1998). All citations of Anselm's texts will begin with the work, followed by the chapter number. If the work contains separate books with subchapters, the book number will precede the chapter separated by a period.

<sup>2</sup>Two clarifications. First, I will not address whether the value of freedom outweighs the disvalue of evils that result from the use of freedom, since to my knowledge Anselm does not register this as a problem. Second, I am not concerned with natural evils (e.g., earthquakes that cause the loss of life) because Anselm regards the first instance of evil to be the fall of the devil. Since natural evils may be explained, however implausibly, by demonic activity, my focus will be on the adequacy of explaining the possibility of moral evils.

<sup>3</sup>DC 3.3.

how he can answer the second question plausibly. In particular, I will argue that his incompatibilist account of freedom gives rise to the problem of harmonizing human freedom and God's grace, and that there is no satisfactory way for him to resolve the problem of harmonization unless he is willing to make concessions to an unfavorable theological position known as "Pelagianism."

What follows in §1 is a discussion of Anselm's account of creaturely freedom insofar as it relates to the question of why there is evil.<sup>4</sup> I will first characterize Anselm's account of freedom and then show how it explains the possibility of evil entering the world. Building on the results of the first section, §2 develops the problem of harmonization. After characterizing how exactly his account of freedom appears incompatible with God's grace, I will examine the attempts by Anselm and contemporary philosophers to harmonize incompatibilist freedom with God's grace. I will argue that Anselm has no satisfactory way to resolve the problem of harmonization consistent with his theological tradition. In §3, I will show that the problem of harmonization dovetails a scholastic debate over whether God could have made a creaturely agent with the ability to sin in the first instant of its existence. Sections 2 and 3 together provide two arguments for the claim that given Anselm's theological context, he must either reject incompatibilism or accept Pelagianism in some respect. Since many contemporary philosophers of religion fall broadly within Anselm's theological tradition and explain the presence of evil through a form of freedom akin to Anselm's, these results will be relevant for the contemporary scene.

## 1. ON THE POSSIBILITY OF EVIL

### 1.1. Preliminaries on Freedom of Choice

Anselm reports that the most commonly accepted definition of 'freedom of choice' during his time is "the ability to sin or not to sin."<sup>5</sup> He rejects this definition at least for the reason that neither God nor a subset of angels can sin, but it would be impious to deny freedom to them. Anselm requires that the definition capture what is essential to all situations in which agents are said to be free. To this end, he defines 'freedom of choice' as "the power to preserve rectitude of will for the sake of rectitude itself."<sup>6</sup> This section, §1.1, clarifies the meaning of each of the parts of this definition, so that in §1.2 we can see how Anselm's appeal to freedom explains the presence of evil.

The power (*potestas*) to preserve rectitude of will, Anselm tells us, is always present in human nature.<sup>7</sup> He explains *potestas* by an analogy and by distinguishing three senses of 'will'.<sup>8</sup> Beginning with the latter, one sense of 'will'

<sup>4</sup>For more comprehensive treatments on Anselm's account of freedom, see Hopkins (1972), Kane (1981), Williams and Visser (2001), Davies and Leftow (2004) and Rogers (2008).

<sup>5</sup>*DL* 1.

<sup>6</sup>*DL* 3.

<sup>7</sup>*DL* 4.

<sup>8</sup>The analogy appears in *DL* 3–4 and the discussion of the different senses of 'will' appears in *DC* 3.11.

refers to the “tool of the will’s action, another [sense] as the affectivity of the tool, and yet another as the using of the tool.” These correspond, respectively, to the faculty that wills, the dispositions that incline the will-instrument (faculty) by which one chooses, and the volition or choosing on the part of the agent. Concerning the faculty, Anselm provides the following analogy. One retains the power to perceive a mountain even if no mountain is within range of sight, for if a mountain were within range then one would see it. If one could not see it due to a dearth of light, one would only lack the opportunity to see it. The power of sight is not destroyed by the lack of the object or the appropriate medium for seeing. So, to complete the analogy, the power to preserve rectitude of will remains part of the agent even if one is not able to use one’s power. The power to will in particular ways is present not just in virtue of having a faculty; it is also necessary to have dispositions that incline the will to make particular choices (volitions).<sup>9</sup> Without these dispositions, the will cannot move itself. These dispositions will be examined in §1.2.

The reason Anselm speaks about the power of preserving (*servandi*; also translated as “keeping”) rectitude of will is that one must have rectitude of will in order to effectively will rectitude (*rectitudo*) for its own sake.<sup>10</sup> When one lacks rectitude of will, rectitude of will cannot be preserved. But when this condition is preserved for its own sake, Anselm calls this ‘justice’.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, an agent is just when she preserves rectitude of will for its own sake. Being just, then, requires having rectitude of will. So if an agent *has* rectitude of will, which is being preserved for its own sake (that is, if an agent has justice), one should expect Anselm to say that an agent is just. This is precisely what he says: I have said that justice is in every case uprightness (*rectitudinem*) of will maintained for its own sake. Whence it follows that everyone who has this uprightness has justice and is just, since everyone who has justice is just. (*DC* 3.4)

not-having-justice is equivalent to being unjust, and both are blameworthy. . . (*DCD* 16)

More succinctly: having justice entails being just and *vice versa*. Thus, a person can preserve rectitude of will only to the extent that the person is just. If one does not preserve rectitude of will for its own sake, even though one has the faculty to do so, one fails to have rectitude of will. Consequently, one will not effectively will in a way that is just and therefore fails to be just. Having clarified the sense of ‘power to preserve’, it is now appropriate to examine what Anselm means by ‘rectitude of will’.

‘Rectitude’, which Anselm takes to be convertible with ‘truth’ and ‘justice’, has a general and a restricted sense.<sup>12</sup> In the general sense, rectitude is what

<sup>9</sup>*DCD* 12 makes the case that the dispositions are necessary for willing.

<sup>10</sup>*DC* 3.12: “no one wills uprightness without possessing uprightness, and no one can will uprightness except by uprightness.”

<sup>11</sup>*DV* 12: “justice is rectitude of will preserved for its own sake.”

<sup>12</sup>In taking Anselm to distinguish between two senses of ‘rectitude’, I follow Sadler (2008, p. 94). The admission of different senses of justice comes in *DV* 12 when Anselm says that we

ought to be or what is right for something to be. In this sense, one can speak about how things are supposed to be even if agents are not the objects of reference, e.g., fire is supposed to be hot. The restricted sense of ‘rectitude’ is the one pertinent to Anselm’s definition. This sort of rectitude involves a *moral* sense of rightness, where the one who has rectitude (i.e., the just) is praiseworthy and the one without rectitude where there should be rectitude (i.e., the unjust) is condemnable.<sup>13</sup> When framed within an explicitly theological context, rectitude is “an uprightness which is present in people only when they, for their part, will what God wants them to will.”<sup>14</sup> In this sense, rectitude or justice is not one virtue among other virtues, but the satisfaction of God’s will through willing what is morally required. Preserving rectitude of will, then, is willing in a way that upholds what is morally required.

When one preserves rectitude of will, the will wills “what it ought to and because it ought to.”<sup>15</sup> This brings us to the prepositional expression, ‘for the sake of rectitude itself’. Since we are concerned with the restricted sense of rectitude of will that makes a person just and thereby praiseworthy, Anselm is clear that a person is praiseworthy only if she wills something for the *right* reason. Accordingly, only beings with a rational nature—God, angels, and humans—are capable of being just. By contrast, when a horse grazes, it does what it ought but it is “not aware of rectitude.” Although the horse has rectitude in the general sense, it cannot have rectitude in the restricted sense at least because it cannot act for the sake of rectitude itself. But even rational agents may will in a way consistent with rectitude in the general sense without having rectitude in the restricted sense. A person may will to give money to the poor, but she is not praiseworthy if the donation is willed “for the sake of an empty reputation.” So freedom of choice is concerned with the power to preserve rectitude of will on the basis of a certain kind of reason, *viz.* for the sake of rectitude itself, and willing what is fitting for this reason makes the person praiseworthy.

Summarizing, freedom of choice is the power to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake. When one has rectitude of will, one is able to preserve it for its own sake. If it is preserved for its own sake, one is just in the sense of satisfying what is morally demanded by God and is thus praiseworthy. But if one lacks rectitude of will, one cannot effectively will rectitude for its own sake. Since it is not being preserved, one does not have justice and is thereby unjust.

do not call something ‘just’ “on the basis of that *sort* of justice” (my emphasis). It does not make sense for Anselm to write about different sorts of justice if there were only one. For a contrasting view of the meaning of ‘rectitude’, see Rogers (2008, p. 63).

<sup>13</sup>It is possible to lack rectitude of will without being unjust when there is no obligation to be a particular way: e.g., wearing a watch on the right wrist rather than on the left. In the remainder of the paper, I restrict failing to be just and failing to have rectitude of will to situations where there is the obligation to be just in some respect.

<sup>14</sup>*DC* 1.6.

<sup>15</sup>All discussion in this paragraph is taken from *DV* 12.

### 1.2. How Freedom Explains the Possibility of Evil

We have been examining Anselm's definition of freedom in order to understand his answer to the first of our two opening questions: how can there be evil or injustice if God created the world as good? From the given definition, it is not clear how the appeal to freedom is illuminating. After all, Anselm denies that the ability to sin is part of the definition.

In order to see how the appeal to freedom explains the existence of injustice, we must distinguish between a *definition* of 'freedom' and an account of the conditions under which a subject is free.<sup>16</sup> As mentioned earlier, the former specifies what is true of all free agents—God, angels, and humans—insofar as they are free. But the conditions under which God is free differ from the conditions under which creatures—angels and humans—are free. For instance, God has freedom of himself whereas creatures receive freedom as a gift from God. So an account of creaturely freedom of choice will specify what must be the case for creatures to have the power to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake. By giving an account of the conditions under which creatures are free, the relevance of freedom to explaining the presence of injustice will become apparent.

Perhaps the most perspicuous clue to how an account of creaturely freedom explains the presence of injustice is found in Anselm's claim, "All human merit, whether good or evil, come from the two dispositions termed 'wills'."<sup>17</sup> He identifies these two wills in the following passage:

So [God] created them happy with no deprivation. For this reason his rational human creatures received all at once the *will to be happy*, happiness itself, and the *will to be just* (the uprightness which is the very state of justice) and freedom of will as well, without which they could not preserve that state. (*DC* 3.13, italics added)

Anselm distinguishes four things: freedom of will (discussed in §1.1), the two wills, and happiness itself. The two wills are dispositions (*affectuum*) that incline the will-instrument to will according to the ends of being happy and of being just. These dispositions are characterized generally enough to allow specific willings, e.g. desires for something to be the case or volitions to bring about some end, to be, respectively, species of them or manifestations of their influence.<sup>18</sup> The dispositions make possible an agent's effectively willing some action for the reasons of justice and of happiness. For example, donating money to the poor may be the content of what is willed, and the agent may will this for the reasons

<sup>16</sup>This distinction follows Kane (1973).

<sup>17</sup>*DC* 3.12.

<sup>18</sup>There is a scholarly dispute over whether a "Kantian" or "Frankfurtian" interpretation of the two dispositions best explains their role within Anselm's moral psychology. On the Kantian interpretation, the dispositions are first-order desires aimed at alternative objects, i.e. at happiness and justice, but happiness and justice need not always be aimed at exclusively of each other. On the Frankfurtian interpretation, the disposition for justice is a second-order desire and the disposition for happiness is a first-order desire both capable of being aimed at a single object. As far as I can tell, nothing I say in this paper commits me to either interpretation nor affects my arguments in following sections. For more on this dispute, see Tyvoll (2006), Rogers (2008, pp. 66–67), and Williams (2009).

that caring for the poor is the right thing to do and it is advantageous to will this. Finally, happiness itself is distinguished from the will to be happy because one can will something in order to be happy but the thing willed does not in fact bring about happiness.<sup>19</sup>

According to Anselm, every rational and non-rational creature with a will has the disposition to be happy.<sup>20</sup> Anytime a creature wills something, such as willing to eat a piece of cake, the disposition for happiness is effective in willing toward an end believed to bring about happiness. But rational creatures were created with an additional disposition, the will for justice. When an upright creaturely agent wills something justly, both dispositions work together to bring about that willing. Whereas one's willing is restricted by what one believes will bring about happiness, one's willing is not so restricted by the disposition for justice; the disposition for justice is not always effective in moving rational creatures to will. When one wills and the disposition for justice is ineffective, one wills some action in order to be happy but does so in a morally criticizable way. For instance, if I believe that eating your piece of cake will make me happy, the disposition for happiness inclines me to will that action. But the disposition for justice together with my knowledge that I should first obtain permission inclines me to refrain from willing that action. Given this conflict about what to do, I could will unjustly.

So even though 'freedom' is *defined* as the "power to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake," an *account* of creaturely freedom allows for creaturely agents to will unjustly when circumstances present a possible conflict between their two dispositions. This raises two questions: why did not God create rational agents with only one disposition, such as the disposition for justice; and if both dispositions are necessary, why not make creatures such that the two dispositions could not conflict?

In *De Casu Diaboli*, Anselm argues that both dispositions must be in a created agent if the agent is to will justly.<sup>21</sup> He presents two thought-experiments of an angel created with only one disposition, one thought-experiment corresponding to each disposition. If God created an angel only with the disposition for happiness, the angel would not be able to will anything other than what it believes contributes to its happiness. Consequently, the angel could not will for the right reason and so could not be just. But more importantly, it could not be just because it would will its own advantage "out of necessity" and the willing would be the "work and gift of God." The same reasoning applies in the case of the angel created with only the disposition for justice, except that this angel could will for the right reason but still out of necessity. Therefore two dispositions are

<sup>19</sup>Concerning the point that the disposition for happiness and happiness itself can come apart, see Kane (1981, pp. 92–93).

<sup>20</sup>*DCD* 12.

<sup>21</sup>*DCD* 13–14.

necessary if the angel wills justly.<sup>22</sup>

The preceding reasoning also provides an answer to why God could not make a just agent with two dispositions that could not conflict.<sup>23</sup> A creaturely agent would not be just, Anselm believes, if “he received that willing in such a way that he would not be able to will otherwise.”<sup>24</sup> This statement falls within the context of the thought-experiment where an angel is given only the disposition for justice. By “being able to will otherwise,” Anselm has in mind a morally significant option, an unjust willing. If the angel has only the disposition for justice, to will otherwise is not to will some other just thing, but an unjust thing. So if a creaturely agent received two dispositions such that they could not conflict, he could will only what is fitting. But he would will something fitting out of necessity if he wills at all, and thus his willing would fail to be just. This yields a version of the principle of alternate possibilities: *if a creaturely agent is just, the agent must be able to be unjust.*<sup>25</sup>

One can see why Anselm accepts this principle through the notion of attribution. Anselm takes there to be a relevant difference between created agents—bracketing those creatures in heaven who cannot sin now—and God, given that only the former requires the ability to will unjustly. Anselm writes, God possesses to a perfect degree what he possesses independently, he most of all is worthy to be praised for the good things which he possesses and keeps in his possession, doing this not out of any inevitable necessity, but as I have said earlier, out of an unchangeability which is his peculiar property and lasts for ever. (*CDH* 2.10)

Since God has his properties and abilities from no other source, it is not necessary that God be able to choose among morally significant options. A rational creature, by contrast, possesses neither its will nor the movement of its will independently.<sup>26</sup> The creature depends upon God as an external source because it receives its will from God and God has a causal role in moving the creature’s will towards justice. But for the creaturely agent’s willing to be “from itself” and for justice to be attributable to her, her willing must not be necessitated by God’s

<sup>22</sup>Anselm’s thought-experiment corresponding to the disposition for justice is a counterpossible: it is not coherent to suppose that an angel really could have only the disposition for justice. Later, we will see that having this disposition is equivalent to having justice itself. So if an angel had only this disposition, the angel would be just. But Anselm argues that the will of an angel with only this disposition would be necessitated and therefore would not be just. Since being simultaneously just and not just is impossible, we should not take Anselm to be describing what he believes is a real possibility.

<sup>23</sup>The claim that “God could not make creaturely agents with dispositions that could not conflict” should not be confused with “there could not be creaturely agents with dispositions that could not conflict *now*.” Anselm accepts that a subset of angels (i.e., those who did not sin in the first instant of their existence) and glorified human saints cannot sin *now*. But he accepts that they could have sinned at a previous time. Interestingly, he denies that their ability to sin in the past is relevant to their being praiseworthy when they cannot now sin, cf. *CDH* 2.10.

<sup>24</sup>*DCD* 14.

<sup>25</sup>This principle applies only to a subset of creaturely agents; cf. note 23.

<sup>26</sup>*DCD* 20.

causal activity.<sup>27</sup> That is, if a creaturely agent's willing is just, there cannot be causal source outside of the agent sufficient to bring about her willing. Thus G. Stanley Kane writes of Anselm's view,

Self-determination in a creature (as opposed to self-determination in God) is possible only if there are alternatives from which he can choose. . . . If the creature performs a right act because he is compelled by some necessitating force to do so, then *he* cannot take the credit for it and *he* is not just for having done it.<sup>28</sup>

Being able to choose between at least two options, then, is required for the *willing* to be attributable to the agent. But since the *justice* of the willing is also attributable to the agent, the agent must have been able to will a morally significant alternative.

Summarizing, Anselm's account of creaturely freedom explains how injustice is possible. Angels and humans were created with two dispositions that could come into conflict, thus allowing for them to will unjustly. Although the definition of 'freedom of choice' does not include the ability to sin, the account of creaturely freedom developed here requires that if a creaturely agent is just, the agent must be able to be unjust. Whichever way a creaturely agent wills must be non-necessitated. Only if these conditions hold can just willings and justice itself be attributable to the creaturely agent.

## 2. ON HARMONIZING FREEDOM WITH GRACE

### 2.1. *The Problem of Harmonization*

§1 examined Anselm's answer to the first question, how could evil come about if God created the world as good? §2 brings the preceding discussion to bear on the second question, how does human freedom harmonize with divine grace, if it does at all? The immediate concern in §2.1 is first to identify what Anselm takes to be the role of divine grace in restoring unjust agents to being just. This follows with determining the role of human freedom in restoring unjust agents. As a result, the problem of harmonization is stated explicitly.

Rectitude of will was described earlier as a condition of the will that enables one to preserve rectitude. That condition can now be identified more carefully. Whether one wills justly depends upon whether one has the disposition for justice. This is because the disposition for justice enables one to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake. According to Anselm, it is in virtue of having this disposition that a subject is just: "the will to be just is actually justice itself."<sup>29</sup> The surrounding context clearly shows that Anselm is not thinking of the will to be just as volition or as the will-instrument.<sup>30</sup> But without getting into textual

<sup>27</sup>DLA 5 provides further discussion.

<sup>28</sup>Kane (1973, p. 302).

<sup>29</sup>DC 3.13. This need not conflict with the idea that an agent is just in virtue of its freedom, since whether one keeps this disposition depends upon the use of freedom.

<sup>30</sup>"From these two affections, which we also call wills, derives all human merit, good or bad. [...] These two wills [...] differ in that the one that is for willing advantage is not itself the thing that it wills, whereas the one that is for willing rectitude is rectitude," DC 3.12; "God

analysis, one can see that it must be the disposition by the following reasoning. Given the supposition that justice applies to the will, justice applies to the will as either the will-instrument, the dispositional state aimed at justice, or to volitions.<sup>31</sup> The will to be just cannot be the will-instrument since one retains the will-instrument even when one is unjust; and it cannot be the will as volition because we recognize that a person does not cease to be just when asleep, when no willing occurs unless dreaming. Therefore, the will to be just is the disposition for justice.

It follows that when one fails to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake because of sinning and thereby becomes unjust, one loses the disposition for justice. To explain, one has rectitude (i.e., has justice) when one has the disposition for justice. And we saw that everyone who has justice *is* just. Since Anselm connects statements like this with having eternal life (cf. *DC* 3.4) and says that not-having-justice implies being blameworthy (cf. §1.1), when one ceases to be praiseworthy on account of sinning, one loses the disposition for justice—i.e., one loses justice itself.

In order for rectitude of will to be preserved and for the agent to become praiseworthy again, the agent must acquire the disposition for justice. But because this disposition makes possible an agent's effectively willing some action for the right reason, if an agent lacks this disposition, the agent is unjust and not able to effectively use her power to will rectitude for its own sake. So, Anselm writes, the unjust agent is "a slave to sin because of the impossibility of recovering rectitude through its own power."<sup>32</sup> It is for this reason that the grace of God is required in order to restore an agent who was once just but is now unjust. Anselm's account of the psychology of rational creatures provides us with a model that clearly identifies what it means for God to extend grace to someone: it is to restore the disposition for justice and thereby make the agent just and praiseworthy.

Anselm, however, denies that the restoration of (adult) humans is by grace alone:

When Sacred Scripture says something in favour of grace it does not at all exclude free choice, and in turn when it speaks in favour of free choice it does not dismiss grace, as though either grace alone or free choice alone is sufficient for salvation. . . . Assuredly (with the exception of what I said about the salvation of infants) the divine sayings are to be recognized as saying that neither grace alone nor free choice alone effects a person's salvation. (*DC* 3.5)

Why should salvation depend on free choice? One's salvation involves acquiring the disposition for justice, since having the disposition for justice entails being just and *vice versa*. But we saw in §1.2 that one cannot be just if being in

has ordered these two wills or affections so that the will which is an instrument might use the one which is justice," *DC* 3.13.

<sup>31</sup>Anselm affirms this supposition: "justice is not rectitude of knowledge or rectitude of action, but rectitude of will," *DV* 12.

<sup>32</sup>*DLA* 10.

that state is necessitated by an outside source. Assume for *reductio* that God's grace were sufficient to cause the unjust agent to have the disposition for justice and that in fact God causes the unjust agent to have this disposition. It follows that the agent's having the disposition for justice is necessitated; so the agent is not just. But having the disposition for justice entails being just. Contradiction! Therefore, one cannot become just unless one's free choice is involved in acquiring justice.<sup>33</sup> Hence, salvation depends on human free choice.<sup>34</sup>

The problem of harmonization can now be stated. In order for an unjust agent to become just and praiseworthy, both the grace of God and human freedom are necessary in bringing about that change. However, if an unjust agent is not able to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake, then supposing that an unjust agent is restored at some moment, it appears that the restoration at that moment is due to the grace of God alone. In that case the agent's becoming just is necessitated by something outside of her. But on Anselm's view such an agent would not be just or praiseworthy. The problem of harmonization, then, is the difficulty of giving an account of how an agent can change from being unjust and condemnable to being just and praiseworthy in a way that preserves a role for the grace of God and human freedom. A satisfactory account must recognize that the unjust agent's acquisition of the disposition for justice cannot be necessitated and she must have the ability to be unjust; otherwise, justice and praise will not be aptly attributable to her. The remainder of §2 will examine whether Anselm can resolve the problem of harmonization.

## 2.2. Pelagian Solutions

There is one way to answer the problem of harmonization, but it has consequences that Anselm would eschew. Suppose one rejected Anselm's claim that

<sup>33</sup>In *DC* 3.3, Anselm writes, "a creature possesses the uprightness which I have called uprightness of the will only by the grace of God." It might be thought that this passage casts doubt upon my claim that free choice is involved in acquiring justice, since God is the only causal source for receiving the disposition. Thanks to Stan Tyvoll for raising this issue.

In response, note that Anselm continues in the same paragraph: "grace alone can save someone when free choice can do nothing, *as happens in the case of infants, whereas in the case of those who have the use of reason*, grace always aids one's innate free choice by giving it uprightness which it may preserve by free choice, because without grace it achieves nothing toward salvation," (italics added). So Anselm need not be interpreted as denying that an adult's free choice is involved in acquiring the disposition for justice. But even if God is the only causal source for receiving the disposition, Anselm still does not need to deny the role of freedom. Consider this analogy. Regardless of how many publications and outstanding teacher evaluations one receives, one may still be denied tenure. The only source of one's receiving tenure is the gracious will of the tenure committee. But one's use of freedom can still be involved in receiving tenure. For instance, one can refrain from the sin of criticizing the work of colleagues in print. So it does not follow from the fact that God is the only causal source of receiving uprightness that one's free choice is not involved in acquiring justice. One may still need to freely refrain from sin.

<sup>34</sup>It is a consequence of this that if one does not freely do something while awake to enable God to give the disposition for justice, one cannot acquire the disposition for justice while asleep unless one is dreaming. For in the sleep state, one is not conscious and able to will unless one is dreaming. Cf. *DC* 3.11.

having the disposition for justice entails being just. An unjust person could then have the disposition for justice and the ability to do something that would contribute to her restoration. On such an account, one becomes just (restored) not by acquiring the disposition for justice, but by willing (choosing) in a way that keeps God's moral demands, such as by responding in the act of faith.

I will note two problematic consequences of this solution from standpoint of Anselm's Christian theology. To begin, it becomes unclear why one would ever lose the disposition for justice on account of sinning. Anselm's view explains why one would lose it, namely, because having that disposition is having justice itself. But the solution under consideration denies that claim in its aim to preserve the disposition for justice when an agent is unjust. One way to preserve it is to regard it as a natural (i.e., essential) part of human nature, implying that it could not be lost. That would be a form of Pelagianism in the garb of Anselm's moral psychology.<sup>35</sup> According to Pelagius, "human nature ensures a permanent capability for sinlessness, and from this both will and act can follow."<sup>36</sup>

The first problematic consequence of Pelagianism is rejecting, *inter alia*, the doctrine of original sin. According to one part of the doctrine, at least under Augustine's formulation, human beings received an "inherited concupiscence" after the fall of Adam; that is, they received a desire for sin which placed them in a state of moral poverty.<sup>37</sup> Not all medieval philosophers formulated the doctrine through Augustine's notion of concupiscence, Anselm and John Duns Scotus being two examples.<sup>38</sup> But differences of detail aside, the important point is that the doctrine in its various formulations implies that one lacks the ability to will justly; and of course, lacking the ability to will justly does not imply lacking the ability to will what is fitting, as Anselm's example of giving money to the poor illustrates.

The doctrine of original sin implies that God's grace is necessary for restoration. Pelagius did not deny a role for grace, but he understood grace to be God's act of creating human nature with its capabilities, including the capability to will rightly, and providing moral examples like the Mosaic Law and Christ's sacrifice. But the sense in which God's grace is given is not one that restores the agent from being unjust to being just; it only makes restoration possible. This yields a second unpalatable consequence of Pelagianism: the agent must do something good on her own and thereby merit salvation. This is possible according to Pelagianism (described through Anselm's moral psychology) because the

<sup>35</sup>Although I cannot delve into a historical discussion of Pelagianism, Pelagianism has had its share of notable critics, particularly Augustine. Later Pelagians such as Caelestius and Julian were sharply criticized by numerous church councils, e.g., at the third ecumenical Council of Ephesus in 431 and the non-ecumenical Council of Orange in 529, which was ratified in 531. For more on the Pelagian controversy, see Schaff (2002, pp. 783–815), TeSelle (1999), and Leyser (1999).

<sup>36</sup>TeSelle (1999, p. 635).

<sup>37</sup>Burnell (1999), Rigby (1999).

<sup>38</sup>Cross (1999, pp. 96–100).

disposition for justice cannot be lost. For anyone trying to solve the problem of harmonization within the confines of orthodox Christian theology, as Anselm is, these consequences are unacceptable.

It might be thought that Pelagianism is *not* a consequence of rejecting Anselm's claim that having the disposition for justice entails being just. In a recent article, C. P. Ragland proposes a solution to the problem that attempts to avoid Pelagianism while retaining an incompatibilist form of freedom like that outlined in §1.<sup>39</sup> Although Ragland is not concerned with Anselm in his article, his proposal can be adapted into our discussion quite easily. He follows John Wesley by distinguishing between prevenient grace and convincing grace. Out of God's complete goodness, God gives prevenient grace to everyone, which is necessary but not sufficient for faith; and this grace is in no way merited by the deeds of fallen agents. According to Ragland, "This grace gives [fallen human agents] the ability—absent from fallen human nature by itself—to trust Christ. Whether people choose to *exercise* this ability to having saving faith is a matter of libertarian freedom in the fullest sense—a matter of deliberate choice." Prevenient grace gives them the ability to trust Christ since God's prevenient grace involves "implanting in them the nonnecessitating inclination to accept God's offer of convincing grace." So in our context, the role of prevenient grace is to restore the disposition for justice. The role of convincing grace is to reconcile the human agent with God in response to the human agent's free choice. The moment of receiving convincing grace is the moment when the human agent becomes just.

Several things separate Ragland's proposal from traditional Pelagianism. Ragland does not accept Pelagius's view that God gave human nature the essential ability to will justly. Unlike Pelagianism, one can lose the disposition for justice, and it is "prevenient grace" that restores the broken will of the human agent. In addition, Ragland introduces a kind of grace, "convincing grace," that saves human agents, whereas Pelagius's form of grace only makes salvation possible, contingent upon the free choice of the human agent.

Despite these differences, Ragland's proposal still suffers from at least one of the problems attributed to Pelagianism.<sup>40</sup> Consider Pelagius's denial that human kind inherited a fallen nature; that is, the denial that human nature lost the disposition for justice. It is nevertheless the case on Ragland's view that God provides prevenient grace to *everyone*. Since this comes in the form of restoring the disposition for justice, it follows that God restores human agents back to the same prelapsarian state of Adam. If prevenient grace is given immediately after Adam's sin, and to all mortal humans, it may be more apt to say that God's prevenient grace preserves the disposition for justice because postlapsarian human

<sup>39</sup>Ragland (2006). All citations of Ragland follow pp. 360–362.

<sup>40</sup>Corresponding to the problem of whether one can perform some good to cause one's salvation, see Timpe (2007, 285–86, 296 n.14). Timpe rejects Ragland's proposal since he believes that it implies one can be a cause of one's own salvation through performing a good apart from grace. Whether this is so on Ragland's view depends upon which grace is in view. I ignore this complication by raising a different objection.

nature is *eo ipso* insufficient to keep it. In any case, although the human nature could have been damaged, God's prevenient grace ensures that it is not actually damaged.<sup>41</sup> Whereas Pelagius's view of grace makes a morally impoverished human nature impossible, Ragland's view of grace only makes it an unactualized possibility, a modally weaker version of Pelagianism in this respect.

Suppose that Ragland were to restrict the role of prevenient grace to God giving *only* the ability place faith in Christ. Prevenient grace would not provide the ability to will justly in various other ways, which might be restored only after convincing grace is received. But if this were the reply Ragland would make to preserve speaking about broken wills and original sin, it would be *ad hoc*. If the goodness of God requires that prevenient grace be given in at least this restricted sense, as Ragland suggests, then why does not the goodness of God also require the giving of a non-necessitating inclination to will rightly in general? Giving this further inclination would in no way violate freedom of choice; it would enhance it. People could still will unjustly just as Adam could prior to the Eden-incident and just as they can do after receiving convincing grace; but they could all the more preserve rectitude of will for its own sake and avoid causing further evils. Thus it seems to me that if the goodness of God is invoked as evidence for prevenient grace in the restricted sense, it is equally evidence for the restoration of the disposition for justice. At least one aspect of Pelagianism, then, is an unintended consequence of Ragland's solution.

We have been exploring the consequences of an answer to the problem of harmonization, which involves rejecting Anselm's claim that having the disposition for justice entails being just. The upshot is that rejecting this claim requires jettisoning other claims that Anselm believes to be part of an important theological inheritance. So given that we are concerned with whether Anselm can provide compatible answers to this paper's two opening questions, we will assume that a solution to the problem must fit within the confines of Anselm's theological context. Thus, we will assume that having the disposition for justice entails being just. The remainder of §2 will examine attempts to resolve the problem of harmonization without embracing Pelagianism.

### 2.3. *The Ability To Do Otherwise Solution*

Katherin Rogers argues that Anselm has a successful answer to the problem of harmonization.<sup>42</sup> She recognizes that "all the causal power to produce a new good, in this case the *affectio* for justice in a fallen soul, belongs to God." She also admits, "God's restoring justice to the fallen creature entails that it now desires to keep rightness of will for its own sake." But given that having the disposition for justice entails being just and it is God who restores the disposition, it appears

<sup>41</sup>At least, it is not any less damaged than Pelagius would admit. Pelagius recognized that sin can have bad effects upon the will through habit, whereas later Pelagians went further by denying any effects of sin upon the will. See Schaff (2002, 804 n.1).

<sup>42</sup>Rogers (2008, 140-41; cf. 78). Unless otherwise noted, all quotes in §2.3 come from Rogers's 2008 work in the pages noted here.

that God's act of restoring the fallen agent necessitates her being just, which is supposed to be impossible. So what is the role of human freedom in making justice attributable to the agent?

Rogers appeals to Anselm's *De Casu Diaboli*, where he says that an angel was "able to give himself justice, since he was able to take it away from himself and also able not to take it away."<sup>43</sup> More generally, an agent can be said to cause or do something when she could fail to cause or do it, but does not. Thus Rogers writes,

In morally significant choice, as in the choice to keep or abandon the justice restored by grace, it is indeed up to the creature that one desire wins out over the other. . . . It is up to human free will to keep the justice which grace has restored to it. . . . Anselm's claim is that God gives fallen humanity the grace that is necessary for salvation, and we can choose, on our own, to keep it or throw it away. . . . The best the fallen human being imbued with grace can say for himself is that perhaps he is managing to refrain from being so stupid and so wicked as to throw away the entirely unmerited divine gift of grace.

Since the agent has the ability to be unjust but does not will unjustly, justice can aptly be attributed to her.

It is tempting to interpret Rogers's claim that the agent has the ability to keep justice or throw it away as an ability the agent has *after* God causes her to have the disposition for justice. But at least three reasons can be given to reject this interpretation. (1) In an earlier discussion of "Frankfurt cases," Rogers argues that an angel is free to will otherwise up to and *including* the very moment of choice.<sup>44</sup> So in our discussion, this suggests that the restored agent has the ability to will unjustly at *the very same moment* God wills that she have the disposition for justice. (2) If an agent does not have the ability to be unjust at the very same moment God gives the disposition, then the agent's having the disposition would be necessitated. This would generate the same *reductio* argument presented in §2.1 for why the agent's salvation depends on free choice. (3) If an agent were not able to be unjust at the moment God gives the disposition, it follows by the principle of alternate possibilities above that the agent would not be just until the following moment. But then Rogers would have to deny that having the disposition for justice entails being just, and we saw in §2.2 that this denial leads to Pelagianism. So Rogers and Anselm are committed to saying that the agent is able to will unjustly at the moment of restoration.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup>*DCD* 18.

<sup>44</sup>Rogers (2008, pp. 78–81).

<sup>45</sup>Three readers of earlier versions of this paper each suggested that we must speak about two instants concerning the process of an unjust agent becoming just. God provides the disposition for justice at the first instant, and the agent can preserve or reject that disposition only at the second instant. According to this view, one can obtain a sort of justice when the disposition is restored, but it is not a justice connected with being praiseworthy since only God is causally responsible for acquiring the disposition. However, a choice can be made in the second instant, so that the kind of justice connected with being praiseworthy arises if rectitude is preserved then. Thanks to Joseph Dowd, Katherin Rogers, and Stan Tyvoll for convincing me to discuss this view. My response is two-fold.

Having the ability to be unjust at the moment of restoration introduces a problem: in what sense does an agent have the ability to will unjustly given that God's causing her to have the disposition for justice entails that she is just at that moment? Although neither Rogers nor Anselm specify what sense of 'ability' is relevant at that moment, we can distinguish between at least two senses of 'having the ability to will otherwise', 'could have willed otherwise', and similar locutions.<sup>46</sup> I will argue that neither sense is adequate for Anselm's purposes.

The first sense involves having a *general ability*. A general ability is a power one has even if the power is not exercised or used at some particular time. Anselm's analogy of being able to see a mountain even when there is no nearby mountain to be seen is an illustration of having such a power. Depending on the general ability in question, general abilities may be lost or acquired. The power to play the guitar might be lost if one loses two fingers in an accident.<sup>47</sup> The power to preserve rectitude of will for its own sake, by contrast, cannot be lost because it is an essential part of human nature. Turning to the general ability to will unjustly: one retains this ability at the moment of restoration. If God does not will to restore the agent at some moment, then the agent can will unjustly on her own. When God wills to restore the agent, this general ability is not destroyed on account of the ability not being exercised at that moment.

However this cannot be the relevant sense in which an agent is able to will unjustly. Suppose that God creates a deterministic world in which no event contravenes his moral will. Creaturely agents could still have the general ability to will unjustly, though the circumstances are not such that this ability would

*Textual Objection:* The introduction of a kind of justice connected with the disposition but not with praiseworthiness is not explicitly found in Anselm's work. The present account, it seems to me, is indirectly motivated by an unnecessary interpretation of certain passages (c.f. note 33) together with trying to resolve the tension raised by the problem of harmonization. Moreover, the present view is explicitly denied by Anselm: see note 57 and the surrounding context in *DV* 12 where he connects having rectitude, i.e., justice, with being praiseworthy. Since the receiving, having, and willing of justice take place simultaneously and having justice is connected with being praiseworthy, it appears that the two-instant view is not Anselm's.

*Philosophical Objection:* If one could have the disposition for justice without being praiseworthy, it is puzzling why one would ever lose the disposition on account of being condemnable through sinning. On my sketch of Anselm's view, ones having or lacking the disposition for justice is tied to the sort of moral appraisal one receives. Sinning and becoming condemnable removes the disposition just as much as having the disposition makes one praiseworthy. The two-instant view denies this connection between having the disposition and one's moral appraisal. So as far as I can see, it lacks an explanation for why one loses the disposition when being condemnable. Thus, claiming that one would lose the disposition through sinning seems *ad hoc* on the two-instant view in a way that it does not on my interpretation.

<sup>46</sup>Of course, there are more senses of 'ability' than the two I will distinguish. I have chosen the two most plausible senses of 'ability' relevant to the moment of restoration. My discussion has benefited from and follows, to a large extent, Campbell (2005), which goes into further detail about the senses of 'ability' in the contemporary free will literature.

<sup>47</sup>Campbell (2005, p. 399): "At an early age, the jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt was a virtuoso. When he was 18 he lost the general ability to play the guitar due to injuries suffered in a fire. Later he relearned to play the guitar using only eight fingers, for two of his fingers were paralyzed in the accident."

ever be exercised. The cost of taking this interpretation of ‘ability’ at the moment of restoration, then, undercuts Anselm’s argument for how freedom explains the possibility of evil. For according to this interpretation of ‘ability’, agents are able to be unjust in worlds that would never include a single evil (setting aside natural evils). But then why did not God create a world like that? If the appeal to freedom explains the possibility of evil, another sense of ‘ability’ must be relevant.

The second sense of ‘ability’, the *all-in* sense, is more amenable to incompatibilism about freedom and determinism. Let  $\Psi$  represent the complete set of truths about the past together with the laws of nature that hold relative to a time when a choice is made. If an agent’s willing  $A$  at  $t$ , the time of choice, is inconsistent with everything entailed by  $\Psi$ , then  $S$  is not able in the all-in sense to will  $A$  at  $t$ . So if the laws of nature and the past together entail the falsity of  $S$  *does not will justly at the moment of restoration*, then  $S$  is not able to will unjustly at that moment.

The all-in sense of ‘ability’ does not help Anselm or Rogers resolve the problem of harmonization. We are considering whether an agent is able—in the all-in sense—to be unjust at the very same moment she wills justly. Even if the past with the laws were not inconsistent with either  $S$  *wills justly at  $t$*  or  $S$  *does not will justly at  $t$* , there is something true at  $t$  that seems inconsistent with one of these propositions. The true proposition that  $S$  *wills justly at  $t$*  is inconsistent with  $S$  *does not will justly at  $t$* . But of course the right characterization of all-in abilities should exclude the fact of which choice is made when determining whether or not an agent is able to will otherwise. Nevertheless, there is another fact true at  $t$  which is inconsistent with  $S$  *does not will justly at  $t$* : it is the fact that *God causes  $S$  to have the disposition for justice at  $t$* . Since that fact entails that  $S$  *is just at  $t$* , it follows that  $S$  *is not able in the all-in sense to be unjust at  $t$* . Were the fact that God causes the fallen agent to have the disposition for justice excluded from the set that determines whether an agent is able to be unjust at  $t$ , the agent would indeed be able to be unjust at  $t$ . However, she would then lack the ability to be just at  $t$ , and so would not be restored.

It appears that there is no relevant sense in which an agent is able to be unjust at the moment of restoration compatible with our discussion in §1. So if God restores an agent to justice, the principle of alternate possibilities, i.e., *an agent is just only if the agent is able to be unjust*, is violated and thus false. But since Anselm is committed to this principle, it follows that one cannot change from being unjust to being just. This would be a devastating result because his theology claims that God the Son became incarnate and died in order to make unjust agents just. The only alternative to adopting Pelagianism in some respect, on the one hand, or adopting compatibilism about God’s causal activity and human freedom and responsibility, on the other hand, is to find something that an agent can freely do as a precondition for God causing the disposition for justice in her. If there is something an agent can freely do prior to or during the moment of restoration which would enable God to bring about this disposition

in her, then it is true that the agent has the all-in ability to do otherwise. So the ability to do otherwise solution would only be incomplete as it stands. The next section examines a solution that, if successful, would complete the present solution.

#### 2.4. *The Quiescence Solution*

In the contemporary literature, G. Stanley Kane first suggested the quiescence solution in addressing problem of harmonization for Anselm; unfortunately, it received no further attention until its articulation by Eleonore Stump when writing on Augustine and Aquinas twenty years later.<sup>48</sup> Although there is an important difference between Kane and Stump's versions, both take the central idea behind the quiescence solution to be that there is an alternative to accepting grace and rejecting grace: it is being quiescent. For one to be quiescent means that one refrains from rejecting grace (i.e. refrains from sinning) by "not doing anything at all."<sup>49</sup> That is, one refrains from making a sinful first-order volition without also making a just first-order volition. On Anselm's view, quiescence is a state in which one's will-instrument is not being used for justice or for injustice.<sup>50</sup>

Stump explores different ways in which one's will can become quiescent, but only one way is relevant to acquiring a justifying faith (i.e. becoming restored). On Stump's version of the quiescence solution, following her interpretation of Aquinas, the intellect becomes divided against itself so that a subject's will moves from a state of rejection to a state of inactivity. To see how this works, consider someone with a phobia of needles who is going to a doctor for a shot.<sup>51</sup> The phobic's intellect represents the injection as harmful to her and so her will is opposed to receiving it. But the doctor may exhort her to accept the injection for reasons beneficial to her. Though the reasons given do not necessitate that she accept the injection, the reasons may be weighty enough for her to be unsure whether she should accept it or reject it. If the reasons are weighty enough (and it is contingent whether they are weighty enough), Stump writes, "the intellect becomes locked in indecision, unable to resolve the conflict within itself into one single, integrated judgment. In the face of this blockage in the intellect, the phobic's will becomes quiescent."<sup>52</sup> When the intellect is divided, the phobic forms a higher-order desire for a will that wills to assent to receiving the shot; this is not forming a first-order volition to receive the shot. So since this higher-order desire conflicts with the desire to reject the shot, the will neither accepts it

<sup>48</sup>Kane (1981, pp. 159–179); ?; Stump (2003, pp. 389–404); Tyvoll (2004); Ragland (2006); and Timpe (2007).

<sup>49</sup>Kane (1981, p. 166); cf. Stump (2003, p. 394).

<sup>50</sup>It is not clear whether Anselm can accept the quiescence solution. Rogers (2008, pp. 137–139) argues that Anselm cannot accept it since it conflicts with his other commitments. Although I find Rogers's arguments plausible, I believe that Anselm needs this solution in order to make room for having the ability to do otherwise in the all-in sense.

<sup>51</sup>This example is given in Stump (2001, p. 140) and Stump (2003, pp. 398–399).

<sup>52</sup>Stump (2003, p. 399).

nor rejects it. Thus Stump claims, “it is appropriate to describe the change of the will to quiescence as the expelling or driving out of the preceding rejection.”<sup>53</sup>

A crucial feature of Stump’s version is that the higher-order desire is not itself an act of will. Furthermore, the change from a state of rejection to a state of quiescence does not involve a decision on the part of the agent. As a result, Stump argues that the change from a state of rejecting God’s grace to becoming quiescent with regard to grace does not involve the agent willing some good: Consequently, without risk of falling into Pelagianism, we can suppose that it is up to the human willer, and to her alone, whether her will refuses grace or is quiescent with regard to grace. As I have been at pains to show, this is not to say that the human willer at issue looks at the options of refusing grace or becoming quiescent with regard to grace and forms a decision about which of the options should characterize her will. Rather, it is to claim just that control over whether her will acts or fails to act is vested ultimately in her.<sup>54</sup>

When the agent enters a state of quiescence on her own by ceasing to reject God’s grace, God can simultaneously cooperate with her by bringing about a will of faith in her at that moment.

How can God simultaneously cooperate by giving the will of faith, which implies the acceptance of grace at that time, while it also being true that the agent becomes quiescent (i.e. not yet accepting of grace)? The problem is removed by making a distinction between *natural priority* and *temporal priority*. Scotus argued that it is possible for causes and effects to coincide at an instant, but the causes are in a sense prior to their effects:

No cause produces its effect if it is not prior (to it) by nature. It (need not) be prior in time. Even if (it is the case that) the cause were not prior in time before it is causing (its effect) it would still (have to be) prior by nature (to its effect) (which it is causing).<sup>55</sup>

Applying Scotus’s distinction to the quiescence solution, the agent’s becoming quiescent is naturally, but not temporally, prior to God giving faith.<sup>56</sup> So if change at an instant is possible, there is no contradiction in the quiescence solution.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Stump (2003, 402).

<sup>55</sup>*Opus Oxoniense* II d5 q2 n6. The source and translation are from Sylwanowicz (1996, p. 90).

<sup>56</sup>On this view, the contribution by the human agent is naturally prior to the action of the divine agent. The alternative of making the act of the divine agent naturally prior to the contribution by the human agent is irrelevant. After all, we are considering the quiescence solution in order to find a way for the agent to do something as a precondition for God giving the disposition for justice.

<sup>57</sup>Anselm seems to have anticipated Scotus’s distinction in *DV* 12: “Indeed, just as the receiving of this rectitude is prior in nature to having or willing it (since neither having nor willing it is the cause of receiving it, but receiving it is the cause of willing and having it) and yet receiving it is temporally simultaneous with having and willing it (since we simultaneously begin to receive it, to have it, and to will it, and no sooner do we receive it than we have it and will it), so also having or willing it, although prior in nature to preserving it, is nonetheless temporally simultaneous with preserving it.”

At first glance, Stump's solution appears attractive for resolving the problem of harmonization in Anselm. It is contingent whether the fallen agent becomes quiescent, and whether she becomes quiescent ultimately depends on her. Since her becoming quiescent is a precondition for God's acting to restore her, she can have at the moment of restoration an ability to be unjust in the all-in sense. She has veto power over whether God restores her by the fact that she can continue to sin rather than be quiescent. Whether she becomes just by God's grace or remains in a state of rejection is not necessitated by anything outside (or inside) of her.

Despite these virtues, Anselm should reject Stump's solution. One reason is that the fallen agent is too passive in changing from a state of rejection to a state of quiescence.<sup>58</sup> Even though the change from a state of rejection to a state of quiescence is contingent, Stump represents the change as one not involving a choice. Since no choice is involved, the change is not the result of the activity of an agent on the basis of a reason, which Anselm requires for praiseworthiness. It is true that the agent's intellect acquires conflicting reasons for contrary acts, but the agent's will need not be involved in the acquisition of these reasons. Reasons may be acquired by being dragged to the doctor and forced to listen or by a missionary who places his foot in the doorway to continue preaching. Nor is the agent's will involved in forming the higher-order desire for a will to accept the injection or to receive God's grace; it forms merely as a result of the division in the intellect. So although it is true that an agent would not have become quiescent if she did not refrain from sinning, the way in which she refrains is not, by Anselm's lights, the kind of control adequate to make justice and praise attributable to her.

Kane's version of quiescence avoids Stump's problem. He writes, It [i.e., the role of the human will in one's restoration] is an exercise of choice between moral alternatives, because under the circumstances in question one is not forced to choose something that is unjust and one is not forced to refrain from choosing something unjust; one may do either as one chooses.<sup>59</sup>

When one chooses to refrain from willing unjustly, God can then restore the unjust agent by giving the disposition for justice. But Kane's version suffers from the problem that Stump explicitly tries to avoid.

If a choice is made to change from a state of rejecting God's grace to not actively rejecting it (i.e. by not doing anything at all), it appears that the agent does something good. But this looks like the second Pelagian error noted in §2.2, where a fallen agent performs some good in order to initiate the reception of God's favor. Kane attempts to avoid Pelagianism when he writes, It [i.e. the role of the human will] is essentially a negative role, because it involves not doing something that one could do [i.e. sinning]... It [i.e. this quiescence solution] makes it legitimate to attribute everything in the production of just volitions to God,

<sup>58</sup>This sort of objection appears in Ragland (2006, pp. 356–359) and Rogers (2008, p. 139 n.7).

<sup>59</sup>Kane (1981, p. 165).

for everything positive, i.e. everything that involves a doing rather than a refraining from doing, is done by God.<sup>60</sup>

This response is puzzling. It may make sense to describe refraining from sinning as having a “negative” role, since the agent does not perform any first-order volition in that state. But is not the choice to enter the quiescent state something “positive”? Unfortunately, Kane relies too heavily on the distinctions between *doing* and *refraining*, and *positive* and *negative*, without providing much help in understanding what exactly these notions mean with respect to the agent’s choice. Rather than speculate about his terms, there is a deeper problem that bypasses this difficulty and shows there is nothing an agent can freely do to enable God to make justice attributable to her.

Whether justice and praise are aptly attributable to an agent depends on whether the agent wills something for the right reason (cf. §1.1). So whether justice and praise are aptly attributable to the agent at the moment God restores the disposition for justice depends on the fallen agent’s reason for choosing to enter the quiescent state. There are three options here: the reason is just, unjust, or neutral with respect to justice. None of these reasons are adequate for making justice and praise attributable to the agent at the moment of restoration, as I will now argue.

The reason to refrain from sinning cannot be for a just or an unjust reason. The reason to refrain from sinning cannot be for a just reason because the agent lacks the disposition for justice. The disposition for justice makes possible an agent’s willing or choosing for the sake of justice itself. But the agent’s choosing to enter a state of quiescence is supposed to make possible the agent’s recovering the disposition for justice. Thus this explanation for how the agent recovers justice is circular. Refraining from sin cannot be for an unjust reason because the agent would add new sin while attempting to cease sinning. So the reason the agent chooses to be quiescent must be for a reason that is neither just nor unjust.

Choosing to be quiescent for a morally neutral reason, however, is not the kind of reason sufficient to enable God to change the fallen agent’s will, such that the fallen agent can be restored to justice and be praiseworthy. Suppose that one chooses to be inactive rather than steal a neighbor’s pears for the reason that stealing pears is not interesting enough. Of course, by ‘not interesting enough’ I do not mean ‘not sinful enough’. One can choose to not will an action, where there is no obligation to will that action, for the reason that the act does not strike one as interesting without committing a further wrong, e.g., refraining from counting from 1000 to 0. Likewise one commits no wrong in not stealing pears due to a lack of interest. The problem is that if one refrains from sinning for this reason, it is not clear how God’s changing the will of an agent is any less a form of encroached manipulation than if God acts when one enters a state of inactivity because of simple inattention about a sinful act. In order for

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

God's causing the disposition for justice to not be a form of manipulation, the agent would have to know, or at least believe, that entering a state of inactivity enables God to cause the disposition to exist in her. However if this knowledge figures in as a reason for entering the state of inactivity, the agent chooses to refrain from sinning because it will bring about something just. And choosing for this reason, we saw, is not available to the unjust agent. Therefore, given that incompatibilism about human freedom and moral responsibility rejects the notion that God can make agents just through manipulating their wills, choosing to refrain from sinning for a morally neutral reason is not adequate to enable God to cause the disposition for justice in her.

It appears that there is no reason for which an agent can choose to be quiescent sufficient to enable God to cause the disposition for justice in her without violating her free agency. So no quiescence solution is available to give the human will an adequate role in receiving the disposition for justice. Thus neither Kane nor Stump's solutions to the problem of harmonization are adequate to complete the ability to do otherwise solution.

### 2.5. Concluding the Problem of Harmonization

The problem of harmonization is the difficulty of giving an account of how an agent can change from being unjust and condemnable to being just and praiseworthy in a way that preserves a role for the grace of God and human freedom. I have argued that since there is no reason for which an agent can choose to be a particular way sufficient to enable God to change her from being unjust to being just consistent with incompatibilism, it appears that there is no way for Anselm to reconcile human freedom and God's grace.<sup>61</sup> So Anselm was not successful in providing compatible answers to our two opening questions: why is there evil, and how does human freedom harmonize with God's grace?

Where does this leave Anselm and those within his theological tradition who appeal to a similar account of incompatibilist freedom to explain the presence of evil? Notice that the problem of harmonization results from the apparent truth of the following four theses:

- (1) Pelagianism is false with respect to (i) there is no original sin; and (ii) one becomes just by willing some good;
- (2) One cannot become just if being in that state is necessitated by something outside the agent; *Corollary*: One is just only if one is able to be unjust;
- (3) There is nothing a human agent can freely do to enable God to change her will to being just;
- (4) God's grace is necessary to change, and in fact changes, one from being unjust into being just.

Anselm already accepts (1), (2), and (4). But I have argued that (3) is true by canvassing the best available non-Pelagian solutions to the problem of harmonization and finding that none are adequate. The conjunction of (3) and (4)

<sup>61</sup>Cross (2005) presents six accounts—some of which resemble those already discussed here—in which God gives a person grace but the grace is resistible. All six accounts, however, suffer from one or more of the difficulties identified with the accounts I have considered.

implies the falsity of (2). For if God's grace is necessary to change an unjust agent into a just agent (i.e. (4)) and it is not true that human freedom can contribute to one's salvation (i.e. (3)), then if one is restored at any time, God's grace is sufficient for one's restoration. So (2) is false. One might try to find some non-Pelagian way of showing (3) is false; but given the arguments above, I believe this route is not very promising.

Rejecting (4) would be the least attractive option for Anselm since it requires rejecting so many other doctrines central to the Christian worldview. That leaves open rejecting (1) or (2). If (1) is rejected by accepting Pelagianism in some respect, then one could show (3) is false. But whereas nearly everyone in Anselm's theological tradition rejects Pelagianism (i.e. accepts (1)), not everyone rejects (2).<sup>62</sup> This is because rejecting (1) comes with costs considered too great for the tradition to accept. So Anselm and incompatibilists within his theological tradition should become Pelagians and accept the costs of that view, or they should reject (2) by denying incompatibilism about God's causal activity and human freedom and responsibility.

### 3. ON THE PROBLEM OF JUST CREATION

If the arguments of §2 are sound, then it is possible to provide a quick second argument for the claim that one must either reject incompatibilism about creaturely freedom and responsibility and God's causal activity, or accept Pelagianism in some respect. What creates the difficulty in the previous section is that there is nothing a creaturely agent can freely do as a precondition for God giving the disposition for justice and making her just. So given that God causes her to be just at some time, God acts as a sufficient cause. But that is inconsistent with incompatibilism. This difficulty also arises in the case of God creating an agent and asking about the agent's moral status in the first instant of her existence. Such a case was discussed in the Patristic and High Middle Ages and only recently revived.<sup>63</sup>

The problem begins with the admission that creaturely agents, whether humans or angels, were created as just in the first instant of their existence prior to the fall of Adam. This admission cuts across the divide between compatibilists and incompatibilists, and in those for whom it is less clear whether freedom and moral responsibility are compatible with necessitation. Here are three prominent examples:

But if it [i.e. a will] was created, was it created at the same time as they were, or did they first exist without it? If it was created with them, then there is no doubt that it was created by Him Who created them. And, as soon as they were created, they clung to Him Who created them with the love He created in them. . . . If, however, the good angels first existed without a good will, and then produced it in themselves without

<sup>62</sup>Augustine is one possible example; cf. Rogers (2008, pp. 30–54). Also, see van Asselt et al. (2010).

<sup>63</sup>The recent literature that resembles the scholastic debate is found in Campbell (2007, 2008), Brueckner (2008), Bailey (2012).

God's agency, they thereby made themselves better than He made them. God forbid! ... Hence, we must believe that the holy angels were never without a good will: that is, the love of God. But the angels who, though created good, have nonetheless become evil, became so by their own will... (*Augustine*)<sup>64</sup>

The will as a tool was created good in respect to its being. It was also created just, and able to preserve its received righteousness. However, it became evil by its free choice... (*Anselm*)<sup>65</sup>

Therefore, as all were created in grace, all merited in their first instant. But some of them at once placed an impediment to their beatitude, thereby destroying their preceding merit; and consequently they were deprived of the beatitude which they had merited. (*Aquinas*)<sup>66</sup>

Pelagius, by contrast, denied that rational creatures were created as just. Augustine quotes Pelagius as follows: Everything good, and everything evil, on account of which we are either laudable or blameworthy, is not born with us but done by us: for we are born not fully developed, but with a capacity for either conduct; and we are procreated as without virtue, so also without vice; and previous to the action of our own proper will, that alone is in man which God has formed.<sup>67</sup>

If the non-Pelagian account of creation is that one is created as just, how can justice be attributable to a creaturely agent at the first instant of its existence? I will follow the medievals by limiting my discussion to the creation of angels and asking about the attribution of justice to them in the first instant of their existence.

From our discussion of Anselm's account of freedom in §1 and the attempts to resolve the problem of harmonization in §2, we should expect an incompatibilist about freedom and moral responsibility and God's causal activity to say that justice is attributable in the first instant of an angel's existence only if:

(1) The angel is able in the all-in sense to be unjust in the first instant but is not unjust; or

(2) The angel is in some sense the source of its being just in the first instant because it could do something that ultimately contributes to its being just in the first instant.

If neither (1) nor (2) is true of an angel at the first instant of its existence, and non-Pelagianism about creation is correct, then it follows that one must reject incompatibilism. For if neither (1) nor (2) is true, God's creating the angel as just through giving the disposition for justice in the first instant is necessitated by a source outside of the angel.

Beginning with (1): can an angel be unjust in the first instant of its existence?

<sup>64</sup>Augustine, *City of God*, Bk. 12, Chap. 9.

<sup>65</sup>*DC* 3.13.

<sup>66</sup>*ST* Ia q.63 a.5 re.4

<sup>67</sup>Augustine, *On the Grace of Christ*, and *On Original Sin*, Book 2, Chap. 14, in Schaff (2007, p. 241).

As Aquinas recognizes, opinions vary here.<sup>68</sup> Aquinas and later Thomists argued that an angel cannot sin in the first instant, but the angel still had a *rectitudo* that was meritorious. Aquinas's argument relies on the premise that an angel's beginning to act at the first instant depends upon the nature of the entity from which the angel drew its existence. God, who cannot cause sin, created the angel. Therefore, the angel cannot sin in the first instant. Scotus, by contrast, denies Aquinas's first premise by offering an account of the will as an instantaneous self-moving process.<sup>69</sup> For Scotus, one has the power to will  $\sim A$  even while willing  $A$ . But Scotus, however, is plausibly interpreted as compatibilist who regards the power to will  $A$  and the co-present power to will  $\sim A$  as consistent with being necessitated by an outside source.<sup>70</sup> If one has the power to sin at the first instant, this power would only count as a general ability. So if God's will is sufficient for bringing about the state of the world at its first instant, which includes giving the disposition for justice, it appears that an angel cannot be unjust in the all-in sense at the first instant.

What about (2): is there something an angel can do at the first instant, which is naturally prior to, but simultaneous with, God's giving the disposition for justice? The only option I can see is that the angel refrains from sinning in the first instant. But now we encounter the same problem raised against Kane's quiescence solution. If the angel chooses to refrain from sinning, such that God can then give the disposition for justice, justice is attributable only if the angel refrains for the right reason. But no reason is available. If the angel refrains for an unjust reason, the angel is not just at the first instant, which is contrary to the admission by Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas. The angel cannot refrain for a just reason since the refraining occurs naturally prior to receiving the disposition for justice. Finally, if the angel refrains from sinning for a morally neutral reason, it appears as if God's making the angel with the disposition for justice is a form of manipulation, except that in this case it is creating rather than reshaping the will of an agent. Therefore, the angel cannot contribute to making its will just in the first instant.<sup>71</sup> Hence, given that the angel is just in the first instant, God is a sufficient cause for its being just in that instant.

Of course, I am not in a position to claim that compatibilism is true by the above reflections, for I have not argued that Pelagius is wrong with respect to his view about creation. So I present my conclusion as a disjunction: either one should accept Pelagianism with respect to creation or accept the compatibility of God's causal activity with human freedom and moral responsibility.

<sup>68</sup>Aquinas discusses this question at *ST* Ia Q63 Art. 5.

<sup>69</sup>For more on Thomistic arguments and Scotus's idea of the will, see Sylwanowicz (1996, chapter 4).

<sup>70</sup>See Sylwanowicz (1996, chapter 7).

<sup>71</sup>For a striking comparison, see Anselm's thought experiment of God creating an angel piece-by-piece in *DCD* 12.

### CONCLUSION

I have argued that Anselm's appeal to an incompatibilist account of freedom in order to explain the presence of evil raises two problems: the problem of harmonization and the problem of just creation. Both problems involve cases where an agent becomes just at some time but is unable to be unjust at that time and in the sense needed for incompatibilism to be true. In addition, these are cases in which there is nothing the agent can do to make justice aptly attributable to her in virtue of her free choice; so given that God acts to make the agent just, God acts as a sufficient cause. This result is inconsistent with incompatibilist accounts of freedom, like Anselm's, that require the agent to be appropriately the source of her willings in the sense incompatible with necessitation. So to the extent that Anselm succeeds in explaining the why there is evil by appealing to freedom of choice, he does not succeed in showing how human freedom is compatible with God's grace in making just creaturely agents. Anselm can resolve the problems of harmonization and just creation by giving concessions to the Pelagian. I have not argued that he should not make such concessions; I only noted that his theological tradition rejects Pelagianism. One might reject that tradition.

If the foregoing arguments are correct, significant consequences follow for contemporary philosophers of religion who fall within Anselm's theological tradition. Some of the most influential Christian philosophers of religion appeal to incompatibilist accounts of freedom in order to explain the presence of evil in the world.<sup>72</sup> For such philosophers, I believe they face a choice similar to Anselm. They can retain incompatibilism but also endorse Pelagianism in some respects in order to solve the problems of harmonization and just creation. Alternatively, they can endorse compatibilism about God's causal activity and human freedom and responsibility, but find another way to explain the presence of evil. In either case, they must make a significant change.

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<sup>72</sup>From the Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Catholic traditions, respectively, see Plantinga (1974), Swinburne (2004), van Inwagen (2006). Though these philosophers do not believe that the appeal to freedom resolves all puzzles raised by the extent and different kinds of evil, they believe that it does some important work in explaining why there is moral evil.

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