

# Anselmian Eternalism

- 1. **What** is Anselmian eternalism?
- 2. **How** does Anselmian eternalism work?
- 3. **Why** is Anselmian eternalism important?

1. **What** is Anselmian eternalism?

Anselmian eternalism is a theory of time; specifically, the theory of time that some key thinkers (e.g. Katherin Rogers) argue Anselm of Canterbury (1093-1109) believed in. Most human beings take the way time works for granted; however, there are numerous theories about how it works. Write a definition for "theory of time".

Theory of Time

Most theories of time can be grouped together into one of two categories. The first category is presentism (which includes the so-called commonsense theories) and the second category is eternalism. Make a note about the two categories (i.e. presentism and eternalism).

Categories of Theories of Time	
Presentism	Eternalism

2. **How** does Anselmian eternalism work?

Anselm of Canterbury argued that God is, "Something than which nothing greater can be thought." Katherin Rogers argues that, "If [God] is an actor in the temporal world, then He must be eternal as Anselm understands the term, where all of space-time is present to him." In other words, if a Christian accepts that God is eternal and capable of interacting with the universe, then he or she must also believe in eternalism. Explain how Anselm of Canterbury's definition of God supports belief in eternalism.

Anselmian Eternalism

Katherin Rogers uses two important analogies to explain how she believes Anselm of Canterbury understood time. The first analogy is between the relationship the centre of a circle has with the points of its circumference and the relationship God has with points in time. The second analogy is between a mountain climber surveying a landscape and God surveying time. Explain how the two analogies that Katherin Rogers uses to explain Anselmian eternalism work.

Analogies of Anselmian Eternalism	
Circle	Mountain Climber

3. **Why** is Anselmian eternalism important?

Anselmian eternalism is important, because it provides potential solutions to various philosophical conundrums created by presentism. One significant problem that eternalism appears to solve is the tension between belief in God's omniscience and belief in free will, which is challenging for those who subscribe to presentism; however, this is not the only problem eternalism addresses. Consider the various philosophical conundrums that eternalism appears to solve, and make a note about why they are important.

Why Anselmian Eternalism Is Important		
Eternalism resolves the conflict between omniscience and free will.	Eternalism requires a more powerful God than presentism.	Eternalism supports a more coherent reading of the Bible.