

# Augustine Commentary Summary

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# Introduction

Augustine of Hippo has been called the greatest theologian of the Church, because he was so pivotal in the development of the Church. So it is good to get to know him through his writing. What we want to do here is look at how his writing compares with the Biblical truth in the word of God.

In **A Commentary on the Writings of Augustine of Hippo** we showed the Scriptures he refers to in his writing in the version that is closest to his quote. This may at times be the **Latin Vulgate**, which will be the **Douay Rheims** translation into English. It could also be the **Septuagint**, but in most cases I used the **King James Version**, and I added the **King James Version**, or the **New American Standard**, or the **English Standard Version**, if there is a difference in the translations. These versions are closer to the Greek and Hebrew originals.

My method was to show a block of his writing, and then comment on that block. This may have seemed tedious at times, but I have found that as I reread his writing, and break it up into thoughts, it was easier to understand him.

Augustine's writings can be difficult to understand at times. Our goal is not to understand him completely, but to understand his writing in the context of Biblical truth.

Here I am giving only a summary of the chapters in **A Commentary on the Writings of Augustine of Hippo**. A deeper understanding may be found in the full Commentary.

So why should we study Augustine? We study Augustine in order to see the misperceptions of the early Church. The early Church had already been through many persecutions in which many of the leaders had been martyred. Much of the Biblical truth in the Scriptures had been lost, and traditions had taken the place of sound teaching. A loyalty had been built up in order to keep the unity of the faith. But it was not a loyalty to sound teaching, but a loyalty to what amounted to tradition, and a loyalty to a perception of the teaching of some who had gone before.

Now in our day, we have the resources to formulate sound teaching from the Bible itself. But we still have this loyalty to the way we have always done things. If we are to grow up in Him in all things, we must be willing to let go of the misperceptions of the early Church, and of the misperceptions of the Church today, so that we can walk in the light, and in the Biblical truth, of the word of God.

## **Getting to Know Augustine**

Augustine of Hippo was a Christian theologian whose writings greatly influenced the progression of Christianity even up to the present time. He was born on November 13, 354 AD, and died on August 28, 430 AD. He was a Roman African. Among his most important works are *The City of God*, *On Christian Doctrine*, and *Confessions*.

In 374, he fell into the Manichæan heresy, and seduced several of his acquaintances into it. Then in 385 he moved to Milan. His errors were gradually removed through the teaching of Ambrose, who was bishop of Milan, and he became a Catechumen. In 386, he studies St. Paul, and is converted through a voice from heaven. He gives up his profession of rhetoric, writes against the Academics, and prepares for Baptism. Then in 387, he is baptized by Bishop Ambrose, with his son Adeodatus. Then the death of his mother, Monnica, in her fifty-sixth year, at Ostia, occurred after she saw the answer to her prayers for Augustine.

In 389, Augustine against his will is ordained Presbyter at Hippo by Valerius, its Bishop. Then in 396, because of the death of Bishop Valerius, Augustine is elected his successor.

## Dogmas of the Early Church

Now in the **Constitutions of the Holy Apostles**, we read of the process whereby a catechumen was finally released to be baptized. Baptism is when it was believed by the early Church that one was born again, or regenerated. This was an accepted dogma, or tenet of belief, in the Catholic Church, or the universal church in his time. The word “Catholic” at first meant of, relating to, or forming the church universal, and of, relating to, or forming the ancient undivided Christian church or a church claiming historical continuity from it. It did not mean Roman Catholic yet.

Some tenets of dogma, or belief, in Augustine’s time were the following:

- 1.) Regeneration by baptism
- 2.) Sacerdotal order or priesthood
- 3.) Apostolic succession
- 4.) Transubstantiation, that is, the body and blood of the Lord are present at the invocation of the priest in Communion
- 5.) The elevation of a bishop over a presbyter
- 6.) Purgatory, a place of punishment after death for the remission of sins after baptism
- 7.) Mortal and Venial sins
- 8.) A church hierarchy comprised of pontiff, bishop, presbyter, deacon, acolyte
- 9.) Mary was a perpetual virgin

Augustine was not responsible for initiating any of these dogmas. Now a dogma is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as the following:

- 1 a: something held as an established opinion *especially* : a definite authoritative tenet  
b: a code of such tenets : pedagogical *dogma*  
c: a point of view or tenet put forth as authoritative without adequate grounds
- 2 a: doctrine or body of doctrines concerning faith or morals formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed by a church (**Merriam Webster**)

This definition gives us a good understanding of how the world in Augustine’s time, and also the world today, views doctrine. It is something that is held unchangeable by a church. When a dogma, or doctrine, is based on tradition, it becomes a problem. A better definition for doctrine in the Biblical sense is that it is a Biblical truth. That is, a doctrine is something derived from, and has its basis solely in, the word of God. When a tradition does not agree with the Biblical truth in the word of God, it must be abandoned.

Though Augustine was not responsible for initiating any of the tenets of dogma mentioned above, he was definitely impacted by the dogmas of the Church in his time. This was the Church he had grown up in with his mother, Monica. We will look at these dogmas and others, as evidenced in Augustine’s writings, in order to have a clearer understanding of who he really was. But first, let us look at some of the heresies of Augustine’s time.

## The Rule of Faith

**Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, On the Creed, A Sermon to the Catechumens, paragraph 1-17, page 369-375, in paragraph 1** Augustine says, “Receive, my children, the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed). And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth, arm you with your Creed. The Creed no man writes so as it may be able to be read: but for rehearsal of it, lest haply forgetfulness obliterate what care hath delivered, let your memory be your record-roll; what ye are about to hear, that are ye to believe; and what ye shall have believed, that are about to give back with your tongue. For the Apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Romans 10:10)”

He refers to **Romans 10 (KJV):10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

By Creed he means what is commonly known today as the Apostles Creed. This became a ritual prayer to be said daily, “saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth”.

He continues, “For this is the Creed which ye are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. These words which ye have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes.”

The Creed was helpful in those days because the Scriptures were not available to everyone as they are today.

He then concludes, “For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when ye have been born by the church as your Mother.”

It must have been logical to have “the church as your Mother” if God is your father. But there is no reference to the church in this way in the Scriptures.

He will then go through the Creed line by line.

If we were to put the Creed together from the writing of Augustine, it might look something like this, with the paragraph number:

I believe in God the Father Almighty (2)  
Creator of heaven and earth (2)  
And in Jesus Christ His Only Son, our Lord (3)  
Born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary (6)  
Suffered under Pontius Pilate (7)  
Was crucified, dead, and buried (7)  
He was begotten before all times, before all worlds (8)  
He ascended into heaven (11)  
He sitteth at the right hand of the Father (11)  
Thence He shall come to judge the quick and dead (12)  
And in the Holy Ghost (13)  
The Holy Church (14)  
The Forgiveness of sins (15)  
The resurrection of the flesh (17)

We also read of the Creed in another book of St. Augustine in the following.

**Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, Treatise on Faith and the Creed, Introductory Notice, page 318**

The following text of the Apostles' Creed may be collected from this book of St. Augustin, and was current in North Africa towards the close of the fourth century:

I Believe in God the Father Almighty. Chs. 2 and 3.

(And) In Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-Begotten of the Father, or, His Only Son, Our Lord. Ch. 3.

Who Was Born Through the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary. Ch. 4 (§ 8.)

Who Under Pontius Pilate Was Crucified and Buried. Ch. 5 (§ 11.)

On the Third Day He Rose Again from the Dead. Ch. 5 (§ 12.)

He Ascended into Heaven. Ch. 6 (§ 13.)

He Sitteth at the Right Hand of the Father. Ch. 7 (§ 14.)

From Thence He Will Come and Judge the Living and the Dead. Ch. 8 (§ 15.)

(and I Believe) in the Holy Spirit. Ch. 9 (§ 16–19.)

I Believe the Holy Church (Catholic). Ch. 10 (§ 21.)

The Forgiveness of Sin. Ch. 10 (§ 23.)

The Resurrection of the Body. Ch. 10 (§ 23, 24.)

Augustine gives us his understanding of the purpose of the Creed in the next quote of his writing.

**A Treatise on Faith and the Creed.**

**Chapter 1.—Of the Origin and Object of the Composition.**

1. Inasmuch as it is a position, written and established on the most solid foundation of apostolic teaching, “that the just lives of faith;” (Hebrews 2:4, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38) and inasmuch also as this faith demands of us the duty at once of heart and tongue,—for an apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,” (Romans 10:10)—it becomes us to be mindful both of righteousness and of salvation. For, destined as we are to reign hereafter in everlasting righteousness, we certainly cannot secure our salvation from the present evil world, unless at the same time, while laboring for the salvation of our neighbors, we likewise with the mouth make our own profession of the faith which we carry in our heart. And it must be our aim, by pious and careful watchfulness, to provide against the possibility of the said faith sustaining any injury in us, on any side, through the fraudulent artifices [or, cunning fraud] of the heretics.

We have, however, the catholic faith in the Creed, known to the faithful and committed to memory, contained in a form of expression as concise as has been rendered admissible by the circumstances of the case; the purpose of which [compilation] was, that individuals who are but beginners and sucklings among those who have been born again in Christ, and who have not yet been strengthened by most diligent and spiritual handling and understanding of the divine



Scriptures, should be furnished with a summary, expressed in few words, of those matters of necessary belief which were subsequently to be explained to them in many words, as they made progress and rose to [the height of] divine doctrine, on the assured and steadfast basis of humility and charity. It is underneath these few words, therefore, which are thus set in order in the Creed, that most heretics have endeavored to conceal their poisons; whom divine mercy has withstood, and still withstands, by the instrumentality of spiritual men, who have been counted worthy not only to accept and believe the catholic faith as expounded in those terms, but also thoroughly to understand and apprehend it by the enlightenment imparted by the Lord. For it is written, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” (Isaiah 7:9, Septuagint) But the handling of the faith is of service for the protection of the Creed; not, however, to the intent that this should itself be given instead of the Creed, to be committed to memory and repeated by those who are receiving the grace of God, but that it may guard the matters which are retained in the Creed against the insidious assaults of the heretics, by means of catholic authority and a more entrenched defence.

## The Scriptures

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book I, Chapter 39, paragraph 43, page 534**, Augustine begins, as he asserts, “**And thus a man who is resting upon faith, hope and love, and who keeps a firm hold upon these, does not need the Scriptures except for the purpose of instructing others.**”

Before we comment on this statement, let us read further as he then says, “**Accordingly, many live without copies of the Scriptures, even in solitude, on the strength of these three graces.**”

In Augustine’s time, “**many live without copies of the Scriptures**”. Now this is hard for us in our day to understand, for the Scriptures are even available on the internet. And it is even shocking for someone to say that anyone “**does not need the Scriptures except for the purpose of instructing others.**”

Augustine then continues, “**Yet by means of these instruments (as they may be called), so great an edifice of faith and love has been built up in them, that, holding to what is perfect, they do not seek for what is only in part perfect—of course, I mean, so far as is possible in this life; for, in comparison with the future life, the life of no just and holy man is perfect here. Therefore the apostle says: “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity:” (1 Corinthians 13:13) because, when a man shall have reached the eternal world, while the other two graces will fail, love will remain greater and more assured.**”

He refers here to **1 Corinthians 13 (KJV):13** And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

The Scripture doesn’t say that “**the other two graces will fail**”, that is, faith and hope. It says, “And now abideth faith, hope, charity...”

Augustine did understand that the “perfect” related to a time in the future life, as he said that, “**the life of no just and holy man is perfect here**”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book II, Chapter 9, paragraph 14, page 534**, Augustine begins as he says, “**In all these books those**

who fear God and are of a meek and pious disposition seek the will of God. And in pursuing this search the first rule to be observed is, as I said, to know these books, if not yet with the understanding, still to read them so as to commit them to memory, or at least so as not to remain wholly ignorant of them.”

This is a good first rule. We must not be ignorant of the Scriptures. Augustine was a man who was in the Scriptures. There is no doubt that he studied the Scriptures, for he quotes them frequently in his many writings.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book II, Chapter 11, paragraph 16, page 534**, Augustine begins as he says, “The great remedy for ignorance of proper signs is knowledge of languages. And men who speak the Latin tongue, of whom are those I have undertaken to instruct, need two other languages for the knowledge of Scripture, Hebrew and Greek, that they may have recourse to the original texts if the endless diversity of the Latin translators throw them into doubt.”

Augustine spoke and wrote in Latin.

Philip Schaff, the noted historian, said, “But his knowledge of Greek literature was mostly derived from Latin translations. With the Greek language, as he himself frankly and modestly confesses, he had, in comparison with Jerome, but a superficial acquaintance. Hebrew he did not understand at all. Hence, with all his extraordinary familiarity with the Latin Bible, he made many mistakes in exposition. He was rather a thinker than a scholar, and depended mainly on his own resources, which were always abundant.”

**Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, PROLEGOMENA, Chapter 3, page 9.**

And Augustine says, “But the knowledge of these languages is necessary, not for the sake of a few words like these which it is very easy to mark and to ask about, but, as has been said, on account of the diversities among translators.”

Augustine saw a good reason to have “the knowledge of these languages”. It is to his credit, as he then concludes, “For the translations of the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be counted, but the Latin translators are out of all number. For in the early days of the faith every man who happened to get his hands upon a Greek manuscript, and who thought he had any knowledge, were it ever so little, of the two languages, ventured upon the work of translation.”

Knowledge of Greek and Hebrew allows us to get closer to the original meaning and intent of the Scriptures, since they are the languages which the original Scriptures were written in.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book II, Chapter 14, paragraph 21, page 542**, he says, “In this matter, too, the great number of the translators proves a very great assistance, if they are examined and discussed with a careful comparison of their texts. Only all positive error must be removed. For those who are anxious to know the Scriptures ought in the first place to use their skill in the correction of the texts, so that the uncorrected ones should give way to the corrected, at least when they are copies of the same translation.”

We certainly can agree with Augustine that “all positive error must be removed”, from the different translations.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book III, Chapter 1, paragraph 1, page 556**, he says, “The man who fears God seeks diligently in Holy

Scripture for a knowledge of His will. And when he has become meek through piety, so as to have no love of strife; when furnished also with a knowledge of languages, so as not to be stopped by unknown words and forms of speech, and with the knowledge of certain necessary objects, so as not to be ignorant of the force and nature of those which are used figuratively; and assisted, besides, by accuracy in the texts, which has been secured by skill and care in the matter of correction;—when thus prepared, let him proceed to the examination and solution of the ambiguities of Scripture.”

In the days in which we live, those who will be teachers of the word of God should have a basic knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. However, there are great resources available for even those who are completely ignorant of these languages.

But looking at the Greek and Hebrew can help us find a “**solution of the ambiguities of Scripture**”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book III, Chapters 2-3, paragraphs 2-6, page 556-558**, in **paragraph 2** he says, “But when proper words make Scripture ambiguous, we must see in the first place that there is nothing wrong in our punctuation or pronunciation. **Accordingly, if, when attention is given to the passage, it shall appear to be uncertain in what way it ought to be punctuated or pronounced, let the reader consult the rule of faith which he has gathered from the plainer passages of Scripture, and from the authority of the Church, and of which I treated at sufficient length when I was speaking in the first book about things. But if both readings, or all of them (if there are more than two), give a meaning in harmony with the faith, it remains to consult the context, both what goes before and what comes after, to see which interpretation, out of many that offer themselves, it pronounces for and permits to be dovetailed into itself.**”

We will discuss the “**rule of faith**” and “**the authority of the Church**” in the next chapters. Augustine looked to the “rule of faith” as a standard among the common people who did not have a copy of the Scriptures. But here we see that he was seeking to know the truth in the Scriptures. Consulting the context is always a good thing, as he also says, “**it remains to consult the context, both what goes before and what comes after, to see which interpretation, out of many that offer themselves, it pronounces for and permits to be dovetailed into itself.**”

In **paragraph 5** he says, “**Where, however, the ambiguity cannot be cleared up, either by the rule of faith or by the context, there is nothing to hinder us to point the sentence according to any method we choose of those that suggest themselves.**”

But we must at all times rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for this is why He has been sent to us as we read in **John 16 (KJV):13** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

In **paragraph 6**, he says, “And all the directions that I have given about ambiguous punctuations are to be observed likewise in the case of doubtful pronunciations. **For these too, unless the fault lies in the carelessness of the reader, are corrected either by the rule of faith, or by a reference to the preceding or succeeding context; or if neither of these methods is applied with success, they will remain doubtful, but so that the reader will not be in fault in whatever way he may pronounce them.**”

Augustine here explains his method, and his point is well taken. We must not take the Scripture out of context. And again he refers to the “**rule of faith**”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, Book III, Chapter 14, page 562-563**, he says, “But when men unacquainted with other modes of life than their own meet with the record of such actions, unless they are restrained by authority, they look upon them as sins, and do not consider that their own customs either in regard to marriage, or feasts, or dress, or the other necessities and adornments of human life, appear sinful to the people of other nations and other times. **And, distracted by this endless variety of customs, some who were half asleep (as I may say)—that is, who were neither sunk in the deep sleep of folly, nor were able to awake into the light of wisdom—have thought that there was no such thing as absolute right, but that every nation took its own custom for right; and that, since every nation has a different custom, and right must remain unchangeable, it becomes manifest that there is no such thing as right at all. Such men did not perceive, to take only one example, that the precept, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” (Matthew 7:12) cannot be altered by any diversity of national customs.”**

The truth is the truth. Up is up, and down is down, for everyone. Why not take the narrow way “which leadeth unto life”?

Well, we’ve always done it this way.

Well, you have a mind, and a heart. You can receive the truth, and allow your perceptions to be changed, as Augustine concludes, “And this precept, when it is referred to the love of God, destroys all vices when to the love of one’s neighbor, puts an end to all crimes. For no one is willing to defile his own dwelling; he ought not, therefore, to defile the dwelling of God, that is, himself. And no one wishes an injury to be done him by another; he himself, therefore, ought not to do injury to another.”

It’s not that hard. As Augustine has said, so we can agree.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapter 27, page 511**, he says, “**And since these things are so, the judgment of the book of Wisdom ought not to be repudiated, since for so long a course of years that book has deserved to be read in the Church of Christ from the station of the readers of the Church of Christ, and to be heard by all Christians, from bishops downwards, even to the lowest lay believers, penitents, and catechumens, with the veneration paid to divine authority.**

About the book of Wisdom, **Wikipedia** says:

The **Wisdom of Solomon** or **Book of Wisdom** is a Jewish work, written in Greek, and most likely composed in Alexandria, Egypt. Generally dated to the mid first century BC, the central theme of the work is "Wisdom" itself, appearing under two principal aspects. In its relation to man, Wisdom is the perfection of knowledge of the righteous as a gift from God showing itself in action. In direct relation to God, Wisdom is with God from all eternity. It is one of the seven Sapiential or wisdom books included within the Septuagint, along with Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs (Song of Solomon), Job, and Sirach, and is included in the canon of Deuterocanonical books by the Roman Catholic Church and the

*anagignoskomena* (Gr. ἀναγινωσκόμενα, meaning "those which are to be read") of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Most Protestants consider it part of the Apocrypha.

As to its composition, **Wikipedia** says:

The Wisdom of Solomon was written in Greek, in Alexandria (Egypt), in the late 1st century BC to early 1st century AD; the author's prime literary source was the Septuagint, in particular the Wisdom literature and the Book of Isaiah, and he was familiar with late Jewish works as the Book of Enoch and with Greek philosophical literature. It is uncertain whether the book has a single author or comes from a school of writers, but recent scholarship has favoured regarding it as a unified work. In either case its blend of Greek and Jewish features suggests a learned Hellenistic background, and despite the address to the "rulers of the world" the actual audience was probably members of the author's own community who were tempted to give up their Jewishness in the face of the temptations of Greek culture and the hostile conditions facing Jews in the Greek world.

Since this book was written while Israel was in a state of apostasy, this book should not be considered as part of the canon of the word of God.

Nevertheless, Augustine considered it so, and refers to it several times in his writing.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermons on New Testament Lessons, Sermon XXXIX, paragraph 4-5, page 390-391, in paragraph 4** he says, "Therefore, Brethren, I must tell you, and teach you according to my poor abilities, which the Lord giveth me for your benefit, and must convey to you what ye may hold as a rule in the interpretation of all Scripture. Everything that is said or done is to be understood either in its literal signification, or else it signifies something figuratively; or at least contains both of these at once, both its own literal interpretation, and a figurative signification also. Thus I have set forth three things, examples of them must now be given; and from whence, but from the Holy Scriptures? It is said in its literal acceptation, that the Lord suffered, that He rose again, and ascended into heaven; that we shall rise again at the end of the world, that we shall reign with Him for ever, if we do not despise Him. Take all this as spoken literally, and look not out for figures; as it is expressed, so it really is. And so also with divers actions. The Apostle went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, the Apostle actually did this, it actually took place, it was an action peculiar to himself. It is a fact which he tells you; a simple fact according to its literal meaning. "The stone which the builders refused, is become the Head of the corner," (Matthew 21:42, Psalm 118:22) is spoken in a figure. If we take "the stone" literally, what "stone did the builders refuse, which became the Head of the corner"? If we take "the stone" literally, of what corner is this "stone" become the Head? If we admit that it was figuratively expressed, and take it figuratively, the Cornerstone is Christ: the head of the corner, is the Head of the Church. Why is the Church the Corner? Because she has called the Jews from one side, and the Gentiles from another, and these two walls as it were coming from different quarters, and meeting together in one, she has bound together by the grace of her peace. For, "He is our peace, who hath made both one." (Ephesians 2:14)

He refers to **Matthew 21 (KJV):42** Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner:



this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

And in context to **Psalms 118 (KJV):22** The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. 23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.

He refers to **Ephesians 5 (KJV):23** For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

And to **Colossians 1 (KJV):18** And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

And to **Ephesians 2 (KJV):14** For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

And Peter explains this analogy in **1 Peter 2 (KJV):3** If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. 4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

And Peter quotes from **Isaiah 28 (KJV):16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Augustine's analogy of the corner being the place where Jew and Gentiles are joined together is good. But the corner stone is the pivotal stone upon which the entire building is aligned. And He is also a stone "for a foundation", and a "sure foundation". This was also pointed out by Paul in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):9** For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

We are "God's building". The foundation is Jesus Christ. Everything we build is upon Him.

The importance of rightly dividing the Scriptures cannot be overstated when we consider all of the tradition that has developed over the years in the Churches. Let us remember Jesus' words in **John 8 (KJV):31** Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm 106, paragraph 32, page 531-532**, Augustine begins as says, "So "He gave them unto compassions, in the sight of all that had taken them captive" (ver. 46)."

He refers to **Psalms 106 (Douay Rheims):46** And he gave them unto mercies, in the sight of all those that had made them captives.

And to **Psalms 106 (KJV):46** He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.

He continues, "That they might not be vessels of wrath, but vessels of mercy. (Romans

9:22-23)”

He refers to **Romans 9 (KJV):22** What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

He continues, “The compassions unto which He gave them are named in the plural for this reason, I imagine, because each one hath a gift of his own from God, one in one way, another in another. (1 Corinthians 7:7)”

He refers to **1 Corinthians 7 (KJV):7** For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

He continues, “Come then, whosoever readest this, and dost recognise the grace of God, by which we are redeemed unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, by reading in the apostolical writings, and by searching in the Prophets, and seest the Old Testament revealed in the New, the New veiled in the Old; remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, where, when He driveth him out of the hearts of the faithful, He saith, “Now is the prince of this world cast out.” (John 12:31) and again of the Apostle, when he saith, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” (Colossians 1:13)”

He refers to **John 12 (KJV):31** Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

And to **Colossians 1 (KJV):13** Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

And it is true that we see the “Old Testament revealed in the New, the New veiled in the Old”.

## Heresy

In Augustine’s time there were two major heresies that he was writing against, that is, Manichean teachings or Manichaeism, and the teachings of Pelagius. He himself was a former Manichean.

## Manichaeism

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Gift of Perseverance, Chapter 26, page 535**, he says, “But wherefore is “the case of infants not allowed,” as you write, “to be alleged as an example for their elders,” by men who do not hesitate to affirm against the Pelagians that there is original sin, which entered by one man into the world, and that from one all have gone into condemnation? This, the Manicheans, too, do not receive, who not only reject all the Scriptures of the Old Testament as of authority, but even receive those which belong to the New Testament in such a manner as that each man, by his own prerogative as it were, or rather by his own sacrilege, takes what he likes, and rejects what he does not like,—in opposition to whom I treated in my writings on Free Will, whence they think that they have a ground of objection against me.”

Augustine was a former Manichean. When he became a Christian, he repented, and gave

up Manichaeism, which started in 216 AD. **Wikipedia** says the following:

**Manichaeism** (in Modern Persian مان‌ی‌آیین *Āyin-e Māni*; Chinese: 摩尼教; pinyin: *Móní Jiào*) was a major religion founded by the Iranian prophet Mani (in Persian: مان‌ی, Syriac *Mānī*, Latin: *Manichaeus* or *Manes* from Koine Greek: Μάνης; c. 216–274) in the Sasanian Empire.

Manichaeism taught an elaborate dualistic cosmology describing the struggle between a good, spiritual world of light, and an evil, material world of darkness. Through an ongoing process that takes place in human history, light is gradually removed from the world of matter and returned to the world of light, whence it came. Its beliefs were based on local Mesopotamian religious movements and Gnosticism.

Manichaeism was quickly successful and spread far through the Aramaic-speaking regions. It thrived between the third and seventh centuries, and at its height was one of the most widespread religions in the world. Manichaean churches and Scriptures existed as far east as China and as far west as the Roman Empire. It was briefly the main rival to Christianity before the spread of Islam in the competition to replace classical paganism. Manichaeism survived longer in the east than in the west, and it appears to have finally faded away after the 14th century in south China, contemporary to the decline of the Church of the East in Ming China. While most of Manichaeism's original writings have been lost, numerous translations and fragmentary texts have survived. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manichaeism>

We need to remember that Augustine was opposed to Manichaeism mainly because their proponents “**not only reject all the Scriptures of the Old Testament as of authority, but even receive those which belong to the New Testament in such a manner as that each man, by his own prerogative as it were, or rather by his own sacrilege, takes what he likes, and rejects what he does not like**”.

Next we will look at Pelagianism.

## Pelagianism

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, On Nature and Grace, Chapter 10, page 124**, he says, “**But they say: “He is not condemned; because the statement that all sinned in Adam, was not made because of the sin which is derived from one’s birth, but because of imitation of him.”**

Augustine then argues, “If, therefore, Adam is said to be the author of all the sins which followed his own, because he was the first sinner of the human race, then how is it that Abel, rather than Christ, is not placed at the head of all the righteous, because he was the first righteous man? But I am not speaking of the case of an infant. I take the instance of a young man, or an old man, who has died in a region where he could not hear of the name of Christ. Well, could such a man have become righteous by nature and free will; or could he not? If they contend that he could, then see what it is to render the cross of Christ of none effect, (1 Corinthians 1:17) to contend that any man without it, can be justified by the law of nature and the power of his will.

He refers to **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):17** For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach



the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Augustine continues, “We may here also say, then is Christ dead in vain (Galatians 2:21) forasmuch as all might accomplish so much as this, even if He had never died; and if they should be unrighteous, they would be so because they wished to be, not because they were unable to be righteous.”

Augustine refers to **Galatians 2 (KJV):21** I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

And he concludes, as he then argues, “**But even though a man could not be justified at all without the grace of Christ, he would absolve him, if he dared, in accordance with his words, to the effect that, “if a man were of such a character, because he could not possibly have been of any other, he would be free from all blame.”**

That is, Pelagius “**would absolve him, if he dared...**” But Augustine agrees with the Scripture as we read in **Romans 5 (KJV):12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

It is because of sin that man needs a Savior.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book IV, Chapter 18-19, page 424-425**, he says, “**And if these things be so, let the Pelagians cease by their most insidious praises of these five things—that is, the praise of the creature, the praise of marriage, the praise of the law, the praise of free will, the praise of the saints—from feigning that they desire to pluck men, as it were, from the little snares of the Manicheans, in order that they may entangle them in their own nets—that is, that they may deny original sin; may begrudge to infants the aid of Christ the physician; may say that the grace of God is given according to our merits, and thus that grace is no more grace; and may say that the saints in this life had not sin, and thus make the prayer of none effect which He gave to the saints who had no sin, and by which all sin is pardoned to the saints that pray unto Him.**”

**Wikipedia** says the following about Pelagianism:

**Pelagianism**, also called the **Pelagian heresy**, is the Christian theological position that the original sin did not taint human nature and mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without special divine aid or assistance. This theological theory is named after the British monk Pelagius (354–420 or 440), although he denied, at least at some point in his life, many of the doctrines associated with his name. Pelagius taught human will, as created with its abilities by God, was sufficient to live a sinless life, although he believed God's grace assisted every good work. Pelagianism has come to be identified with the view (whether taught by Pelagius or not) human beings can earn salvation by their own efforts.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelagianism>

When Augustine says above in the last sentence, “**...and thus make the prayer of none effect which He gave to the saints who had no sin, and by which all sin is pardoned to the saints that pray unto Him**”, he is referring to the Lord’s Prayer, or Our Father as it is commonly known. So Augustine is arguing against Pelagius that, if we had no sin, why would the Lord say to pray, “Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come thy will be

done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors..." Matthew 6:9-12.

It is clear, according to Scripture, that the whole human race is under sin as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):9** What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

And in **Galatians 3 (KJV):22** But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

The Pelagians are in error.

## Arianism

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermons on New Testament Lessons, Sermon XL. [XC. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, Matt. xxii. 2, etc., about the marriage of the king's son; against the Donatists, on charity. Delivered at Carthage in the Restituta., paragraph 5-9, page 393-396**, he says, "But the Arian heresy makes answer, and says. What says it to me? "Mark what thou hast said"? What have I said? "That the Son of a man may be compared to the Son of God." Certainly he may be compared; but not as you suppose, in strictness of expression; but for a similitude. But tell me now what you would make of this. **"Do you not see," says he, "that the father who begets is greater in age, and the son who is begotten less? How then say ye? Tell me; how then say ye, that the Father and the Son, God and Christ, are equal; when ye see that when a man begets a son, the son is less, and the father greater?"** Thou wise one, in eternity thou art looking for times; where there are no times, thou art looking for differences of age! When the father is greater in age, and the son less, both are in time; the one groweth, for that the other groweth old. For by nature, the man, the father, did not beget one less, by nature, as I said, but by age. Wouldest thou know, how that by nature he did not beget one less? Wait, let him grow, and he will be equal to his father. For a little boy even by growing attains to his father's full size. Whereas you assert that the Son of God is in such wise born less, as never to grow, and by growing even to attain to His Father's size. Now then a man's son born of a man, is born in a better condition than the Son of God. How? Because the former grows, and attains to his father's size. But Christ, if it is as ye say, is in such wise born less, as that He must ever remain less, and no growth of years at least is to be looked for here. Thus then you say that there is a diversity in nature. But why say you so, but because you will not believe the Son to be of the Same Substance which the Father is? Finally, first acknowledge that He is of the Same Substance, and so call Him less. Consider the case of a man, he is a man. What is his substance? He is a man. What is he whom he begets? He is less, but he is a man. The age is unequal, the nature equal. Do you then say too, "What the Father is, That is the Son, but the Son is less"? Say so, make a step forward, say, "of the Same Substance, only less;" and you will get to His being equal. For it is not a little step you take, it is not a little approach you make to the truth, of acknowledging Him equal, if you shall acknowledge Him to be of the Same Substance, though less. **"But He is not of the Same Substance," this you say. So then in that you say this, here is gold and silver; what you say is as if a man were to beget a horse. For a man is of one substance, a horse of another. If then the Son is of another substance than the Father, the Father hath begotten a monster. For when a creature,**

that is a woman, gives birth to anything that is not a man, it is called a monster. But that it be not a monster, he that is born is that which he is that begat him, that is, a man and a man, a horse and a horse, a dove and a dove, a sparrow and a sparrow.

In summary **Wikipedia** says the following about **Arianism**:

**Arianism** is a nontrinitarian Christological doctrine which asserts the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who was begotten by God the Father at a point in time, a creature distinct from the Father and is therefore subordinate to him, but the Son is also God (i.e. God the Son). Arian teachings were first attributed to Arius (c. AD 256–336), a Christian presbyter in Alexandria of Egypt. The term "Arian" is derived from the name Arius; and like "Christian", it was not a self-chosen designation but bestowed by hostile opponents—and never accepted by those on whom it had been imposed. The nature of Arius's teaching and his supporters were opposed to the theological views held by Homoousian Christians, regarding the nature of the Trinity and the nature of Christ. The Arian concept of Christ is based on the belief that the Son of God did not always exist but was begotten within time by God the Father.

"Homoousian Christians" are those who believe that the Father and the Son of God are of the "same substance". Arius was clearly in error. He did not understand the Divinity of the Son of God, which Paul clearly states in **Philippians 2 (KJV):5** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Next, we will look at more of Augustine's thoughts about heretics.

## Sabellianism

**Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXIX. Chapter VII. 14–18, paragraph 7, page 185**, he says, "This sentence overthrows the Sabellian heresy. **The Sabellians have dared to affirm that the Son is the very same as He who is also the Father: that the names are two, but the reality one. If the names were two and reality one, it would not be said, "My doctrine is not mine."**

He refers in context to **John 7 (KJV):14** Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. 15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? 16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

He continues, "Anyhow, if Thy doctrine is not Thine, O Lord, whose is it, unless there be

another whose it is? The Sabellians understand not what Thou saidst; for they see not the trinity, but follow the error of their own heart. Let us worshippers of the trinity and unity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and one God, understand concerning Christ's doctrine, how it is not His. And He said that He spoke not from Himself for this reason, because Christ is the Son of the Father, and the Father is the Father of Christ; and the Son is from God the Father, God, but God the Father is God not from God the Son."

Augustine has said it correctly. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three persons in the one Godhead. The Sabellians are in error.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXXVI. Chapter VIII. 15–18, paragraphs 8-9, page 211-212**, in **paragraph 8** he says, "For there are certain heretics called Sabellians, who are also called Patripassians, who affirm that it was the Father Himself that had suffered. Do not thou so affirm, O Catholic; for if thou wilt be a Patripassian, thou wilt not be sane. Understand, then, that the incarnation of the Son is termed the sending of the Son; and do not believe that the Father was incarnate, but do not yet believe that He departed from the incarnate Son. The Son carried flesh, the Father was with the Son. If the Father was in heaven, the Son on earth, how was the Father with the Son? Because both Father and Son were everywhere: for God is not in such manner in heaven as not to be on earth. Hear him who would flee from the judgment of God, and found not a way to flee by: "Whither shall I go," saith he, "from Thy Spirit; and whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there." The question was about the earth; hear what follows: "If I descend unto hell, Thou art there." (Psalm 139:7-8) If, then, He is said to be present even in hell, what in the universe remains where He is not present? For the voice of God with the prophet is, "I fill heaven and earth." (Jeremiah 23:24) Hence He is everywhere, who is confined by no place. Turn not thou away from Him, and He is with thee. If thou wouldst come to Him, be not slow to love; for it is not with feet but with affections thou runnest. Thou comest while remaining in one place, if thou believest and lovest. Wherefore He is everywhere; and if everywhere, how not also with the Son? Is it so that He is not with the Son, while, if thou believest, He is even with thee?"

Augustine affirms the Scripture here. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three distinct persons in the Godhead. The Father did not suffer, but the Son suffered on the cross.

Augustine refers in context to **Psalm 139 (KJV):7** Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? **8** If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. **9** If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; **10** Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. **11** If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. **12** Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

And to **Jeremiah 23 (KJV):24** Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

In **paragraph 9** he says, "How, then, is His judgment true, but because the Son is true? For this He said: "And if I judge, my judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Just as if He had said, "My judgment is true," because I am the Son of God. How dost Thou prove that Thou art the Son of God? "Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." **Blush, Sabellian; thou hearest the Son, thou hearest the Father. Father**

is Father, Son is Son. He said not, I am the Father, and I the same am the Son; but He saith, “I am not alone.” Why art Thou not alone? Because the Father is with me. “I am, and the Father that sent me;” thou hearest, “I am, and He that sent me.” Lest thou lose sight of the person, **distinguish the persons**. Distinguish by understanding, do not separate by faithlessness; lest again, fleeing as it were Charybdis, thou rush upon Scylla. **For the whirlpool of the impiety of the Sabellians was swallowing thee, to say that the Father is the same who is Son: just now thou hast learned, “I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.”** Thou dost acknowledge that the Father is Father, and that the Son is Son; thou dost rightly acknowledge: but do not say the Father is greater, the Son is less; do not say, the Father is gold, the Son is silver. **There is one substance, one Godhead, one co-eternity, perfect equality, no unlikeness.** For if thou only believe that Christ is another, not the same person that the Father is, but yet imagine that in respect of His nature He is somewhat different from the Father, thou hast indeed escaped Charybdis, but thou hast been wrecked on the rocks of Scylla. Steer the middle course, avoid each of the two perilous sides. Father is Father, Son is Son. Thou sayest now, Father is Father, Son is Son: thou hast fortunately escaped the danger of the absorbing whirl; why wouldst thou go unto the other side to say, the Father is this, the Son that? **The Son is another person than the Father is, this thou sayest rightly; but that He is different in nature, thou sayest not rightly.** Certainly the Son is another person, because He is not the same who is Father and the Father is another person, because He is not the same who is Son: nevertheless, they are not different in nature, but the selfsame is both Father and Son. What means the self-same? God is one. Thou hast heard, “Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me:” hear how thou mayest believe Father and Son; hear the Son Himself, “I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30) He said not, I am the Father; or, I and the Father *is* one person; but when He says, “I and the Father are one,” hear both, both the *one, unum*, and the *are, sumus*, and thou shalt be delivered both from Charybdis and from Scylla. In these two words, in that He said *one*, He delivers thee from Arius; in that He said *are*, He delivers thee from Sabellius. If *one*, therefore not diverse; if *are*, therefore both Father and Son. For He would not say *are* of one person; but, on the other hand, He would not say *one* of diverse. Hence the reason why He says, “my judgment is true,” is, that thou mayest hear it briefly, because I am the Son of God. But I would have thee in such wise believe that I am the Son of God, that thou mayest understand that the Father is with me: I am not Son in such manner as to have left Him; I am not in such manner here that I should not be with Him; nor is He in such manner there as not to be with me: I have taken to me the form of a servant, yet have I not lost the form of God; therefore He saith, “I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.”

The Sabellian error was that they were saying that, **“the Father is the same who is Son”**. They also said that the Son **“is different in nature”**.

Philip Schaff says that Sabellianism “maintained the Divine unity and strict deity of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but denied the tri-personality except in the form of three modes of self-revelation.” **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 9, Prolegomena, The Life and Work of St. John Chrysostom, page 11.**

Augustine affirms the Scripture, as he refers to **John 10 (KJV):30** I and my Father are one.

The Godhead is composed of a trinity of three distinct persons, yet one God, with one nature. Augustine is clear, and in accordance with Scripture, in his understanding of the trinity.



## Apollinarianism

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLVII. Chapter X. 14–21, paragraph 9, page 263**, he says, “How, then, does the Lord lay down His life [soul]? Let us, brethren, inquire into this a little more carefully. The time is not so pressing as is usual on the Lord’s day: we have leisure, and theirs will be the profit who have assembled today also to wait on the Word of God. “I lay down my life,” He says. Who lays down? What lays He down? What is Christ? The Word and man. Not man as being flesh alone: but as man consists of flesh and soul, so, in Christ there is a complete humanity. For He would not have assumed the baser part, and left the better behind, seeing that the soul of man is certainly superior to the body. Since, then, there is entire manhood in Christ, what is Christ? The Word, I repeat, and man. What is the Word and man? The Word, soul, and flesh. Keep hold of that, for there has been no lack of heretics on this point also, expelled as they were some time ago from the Catholic truth, but still persisting, like thieves and robbers who enter not by the door, to lay their snares around the fold. **These heretics are termed Apollinarians, and have ventured to assert dogmatically that Christ is only the word and flesh, and contend that He did not assume a human soul.** And yet some of them could not deny that there was a soul in Christ. See their intolerable absurdity and madness. **They would have Him to possess an irrational soul, but deny Him a rational one. They allowed Him a mere animal, they deprived Him of a human, soul. But they took away Christ’s reason by losing their own.** Let it be otherwise with us, who have been nourished and established in the Catholic faith. **Accordingly, on this occasion I would remind your Charity, that, as in former lectures, we have given you sufficient instruction against the Sabellians and Arians,—the Sabellians, who say, The Father is the same as the Son—the Arians, who say, The Father is one being, the Son is another, as if the Father and Son were not of the same substance—and also, provided you remember as you ought, against the Photinian heretics, who have asserted that Christ was mere man, and destitute of Godhead: and against the Manicheans, who maintain that He was God only without any true humanity: we may, on this occasion, in speaking about the soul, give you some instruction also in opposition to the Apollinarians, who say that our Lord Jesus Christ had no human soul, that is, a rational intelligent soul,—that soul, I mean, by which, as men, we differ from the brutes.”**

The Apollinarians were disciples of Apollinaris, bishop of Alexandria, who held that the body which Christ assumed had only a sensitive, and not a rational soul, and that His divine nature supplied the place of the latter. His doctrines were condemned by the Council of Alexandria, A.D. 362, and he himself was deposed by the Council of Rome, A.D. 378.

Augustine was battling the following heresies:

- 1.) **“the Sabellians, who say, The Father is the same as the Son—and, “not only reject all the Scriptures of the Old Testament as of authority, but even receive those which belong to the New Testament in such a manner as that each man, by his own prerogative as it were, or rather by his own sacrilege, takes what he likes, and rejects what he does not like”**
- 2.) **the Arians, who say, The Father is one being, the Son is another, as if the Father and Son were not of the same substance—**
- 3.) **and also, provided you remember as you ought, against the Photinian heretics, who have asserted that Christ was mere man, and destitute of Godhead:**

- 4.) and against the Manicheans, who maintain that He was God only without any true humanity:
- 5.) “we may, on this occasion, in speaking about the soul, give you some instruction also in opposition to the Apollinarians, who say that our Lord Jesus Christ had no human soul, that is, a rational intelligent soul,—that soul, I mean, by which, as men, we differ from the brutes.”

## The Donatist Controversy

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, A Treatise Concerning the Correction of the Donatist, Book III, Chapter 9, paragraphs 35-42, page 646-648**, in **paragraph 35** he says, “As to the charge that they bring against us, that we covet and plunder their possessions, I would that they would become Catholics, and possess in peace and love with us, not only what they call theirs, but also what confessedly belongs to us. But they are so blinded with the desire of uttering calumnies, that they do not observe how inconsistent their statements are with one another. At any rate, they assert, and seem to make it a subject of most invidious complaint among themselves, that we constrain them to come in to our communion by the violent authority of the laws,—which we certainly should not do by any means, if we wished to gain possession of their property. What avaricious man ever wished for another to share his possessions? Who that was inflamed with the desire of empire, or elated by the pride of its possession, ever wished to have a partner? **Let them at any rate look on those very men who once belonged to them, but now are our brethren joined to us by the bond of fraternal affection, and see how they hold not only what they used to have, but also what was ours, which they did not have before; which yet, if we are living as poor in fellowship with poor, belongs to us and them alike; whilst, if we possess of our private means enough for our wants, it is no longer ours, inasmuch as we do not commit so infamous an act of usurpation as to claim for our own the property of the poor, for whom we are in some sense the trustees.**

Then in **paragraph 36** he continues and says, “Everything, therefore, that was held in the name of the churches of the party of Donatus, was ordered by the Christian emperors, in their pious laws, to pass to the Catholic Church, with the possession of the buildings themselves. Seeing, then, that there are with us poor members of those said churches who used to be maintained by these same paltry possessions, let them rather cease themselves to covet what belongs to others whilst they remain outside, and so let them enter within the bond of unity, that we may all alike administer, not only the property which they call their own, but also with it what is asserted to be ours. **For it is written "All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Corinthians 3:22-23) Under Him as our Head, let us all be one in His one body; and in all such matters as you speak of, let us follow the example which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: "They were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." (Acts 4:32) Let us love what we sing: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1) that so they may know, by their own experience, with what perfect truth their mother, the Catholic Church, calls out to them what the blessed apostle writes to the Corinthians: "I seek not yours, but you." (2 Corinthians 12:14)**

In paragraph 35 and 36 above, Augustine is encouraging the Donatists to surrender to the order of the Christian emperors, and become brethren in “**their mother, the Catholic Church**”. He states that all shall be shared equally.

We should note here also that the Church is never referred to as our “**mother**” in the Scriptures.

Then in **paragraph 37** he says, “But if we consider what is said in the Book of Wisdom, “Therefore the righteous spoiled the ungodly;” (Wisdom 10:20) and also what is said in the Proverbs, “The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just;” (Proverbs 13:22) then we shall see that the question is not, who are in possession of the property of the heretics? But who are in the society of the just? **We know, indeed, that the Donatists arrogate to themselves such a store of justice, that they boast not only that they possess it, but that they also bestow it upon other men. For they say that anyone whom they have baptized is justified by them, after which there is nothing left for them but to say to the person who is baptized by them that he must needs believe on him who has administered the sacrament; for why should he not do so, when the apostle says, “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness?” (Romans 4:5) Let him believe, therefore, upon the man by whom he is baptized, if it be none else that justifies him, that his faith may be counted for righteousness. But I think that even they themselves would look with horror on themselves, if they ventured for a moment to entertain such thoughts as these. For there is none that is just and able to justify, save God alone. But the same might be said of them that the apostle says of the Jews, that “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” (Romans 10:3)”**

The Donatists are clearly in error here, saying “**to the person who is baptized by them that he must needs believe on him who has administered the sacrament**”, while misinterpreting Romans 4:5, as we read in context in **Romans 4 (KJV):5** But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

It is God who “imputeth righteousness”. That is, it is, as Augustine says, “**For there is none that is just and able to justify, save God alone**”. It is God who justifies as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):33** Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

The Donatists were “**ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness**”, and they were not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God, as Augustine concludes, referring to **Romans 10 (KJV):3** For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Then in **paragraph 38** he says, “**But far be it from us that any one of our number should call himself in such wise just, that he should either go about to establish his own righteousness, as though it were conferred upon him by himself, whereas it is said to him, “For what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (1 Corinthians 4:7) ...**”

He refers to **1 Corinthians 4 (KJV):7** For who maketh thee to differ from another? And



what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

He continues as he then says, “or venture to boast himself as being without sin in this world, as the Donatists themselves declared in our conference that they were members of a Church which has already neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, (Ephesians 5:27)”

He is referring in context to **Ephesians 5 (KJV):25** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

The Donatists were clearly in error here. The Church will not be without blemish until it is raptured at the second coming of Christ as in **1 Thessalonians 4 (KJV):16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

And in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Augustine is correct about the Donatists’ false assertion that they can justify themselves or someone else by baptism, for it is God who justifies **Romans 8 (KJV):33** Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

And certainly the Donatists were not without spot or wrinkle as they claimed. Nor were were the Donatists without sin as they claimed, for the apostle John himself taught as in **1 John 1 (KJV):8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Augustine then continues, as he asserts, “—not knowing that this is only fulfilled in those individuals who depart out of this body immediately after baptism, or after the forgiveness of sins, for which we make petition in our prayers;”

So he is saying that “immediately after baptism, or after the forgiveness of sins, for which we make petition in our prayers”, we are without sin, and have “neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing”.

However, when we die, our spirit will go to be with the Lord, and our bodies will sleep in the earth. So we will be without sin then. But sin dwells in our bodies as Paul says in **Romans 7 (KJV):22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

So on earth, we have the old Adamic sin nature in our members, our flesh. As we walk in the light of the word of God, and confess our sin, we walk in victory over this sin nature, and maintain our fellowship with the Lord.

Augustine concludes, “but that for the Church, as a whole, the time will not come when it shall be altogether without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, till the day when we shall hear the words, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin." (1 Corinthians 15:55-56)”

He refers in context to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):50** Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

This is referring to the resurrection. Then we shall be raised incorruptible, and without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

So the Donatists were in error about their assertion that “they were members of a Church which has already neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing”. But Augustine’s assertion that “this is only fulfilled in those individuals who depart out of this body immediately after baptism, or after the forgiveness of sins, for which we make petition in our prayers” reflects the belief of the Church in his time that you were regenerated, or born again, at baptism. Augustine and the Catholic Church did not fully understand the Biblical truth about regeneration and justification in the word of God.

Then in **paragraph 39** he says, “But in this life, when the corruptible body presseth down the soul, (Wisdom 9:15) if their Church is already of such a character as they maintain, they would not utter unto God the prayer which our Lord has taught us to employ: "Forgive us our debts." (Matthew 6:12)”

He refers to **Wisdom 9 (Septuagint):15** For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.

And to **Matthew 6 (KJV):12** And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

He then continues, “For since all sins have been remitted in baptism, why does the Church make this petition, if already, even in this life, it has neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing?”

Augustine makes a good point. If all sin has been done away, and we have reached perfection in this life, we have no need of the Lord’s prayer in Matthew 6:9-13.

He then continues, “They would also have a fight to despise the warning of the Apostle John, when he cries out in his epistle, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:8-9)”

He refers to **1 John 1 (KJV):8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

He then explains, “On account of this hope, the universal Church utters the petition, "Forgive us our debts," that when He sees that we are not vainglorious, but ready to confess our sins, He may cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and that so the Lord Jesus Christ may show to Himself in that day a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, which now He cleanses with the washing of water in the word.”

He again refers in context to **Ephesians 5 (KJV):25** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So we are cleansed by the washing of water by the word. The word of God is like water to our souls, and it makes us grow as we read in **Isaiah 55 (KJV):10** For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Paul was an apostle, and planted churches, but Apollos watered what Paul had planted as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):6** I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

Apollos was a teacher as we read in **Acts 18 (KJV):24** And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: 28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

After we are regenerated, or born again, we are progressively sanctified, or transformed, in our souls by the renewing of our mind as we have read before in **Romans 12 (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

This transformation by the renewing of our minds comes about by the word of God as Jesus reveals in **John 17 (KJV):17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

And Jesus spoke as in **John 15 (KJV):3** Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

And we read in **Psalms 119 (KJV):9** Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

The Church that Jesus is building is in the process of a progressive sanctification as we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they

lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The Lord has given the ministries in verse 11 above for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. This is so that we will all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and no longer be children but may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

Augustine then continues, “because, on the one hand, there is nothing that remains behind in baptism to hinder the forgiveness of every bygone sin (so long, that is, as baptism is not received to no effect without the Church, but is either administered within the Church, or, at least, if it has been already administered without, the recipient does not remain outside with it); and, on the other hand, whatever pollution of sin, of whatsoever kind, is contracted through the weakness of human nature by those who live here after baptism, is cleansed away in virtue of the same laver’s efficacy. For neither is it of any avail for one who has not been baptized to say, “Forgive us our debts.”

Augustine considered baptism outside the universal Church as valid, “so long, that is, as baptism is not received to no effect without the Church”, and as long as “the recipient does not remain outside with it”, that is, outside of the Catholic Church. Augustine here makes our salvation dependent on our joining, and being a part of the universal Church, that is, the Catholic Church in his time.

He then says that any sins after baptism, are “cleansed away in virtue of the same laver’s efficacy”, that is, the laver of the universal, or Catholic Church. However, it is the blood of Jesus, and only the blood of Jesus, that cleanses us from sin as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

The word of God is the light we need that reveals sin in our lives. As we walk in the light of it, and confess our sins, we agree with the Lord, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.

And also, if we are not rightly baptized, according to Augustine, our salvation will be of no effect. If you are not baptized in the Catholic Church, or you are baptized outside of it, you must at some time join it for “whatever pollution of sin, of whatsoever kind, is contracted through the weakness of human nature by those who live here after baptism, is cleansed away in virtue of the same laver’s efficacy.”

Baptism is absolutely necessary according to Augustine, as he concludes, “For neither is it of any avail for one who has not been baptized to say, “Forgive us our debts.”

However, baptism is only a token that shows to the world that one has believed. It does not regenerate us, or save us. We will discuss baptism in depth in **Regeneration by Baptism**, coming up shortly.

Then in **paragraph 40** he says, “Accordingly, He so now cleanses His Church by the washing of water in the word, that He may hereafter show it to Himself as not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,—altogether beautiful, that is to say, and in absolute perfection, when death shall be “swallowed up in victory.” (1 Corinthians 15:54)”

He refers to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):54** So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

This will be at the resurrection of the just, when we shall be glorified, as we read in **Philippians 3 (KJV):21** Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

He then continues, “Now, therefore, in so far as the life is flourishing within us that proceeds from our being born of God, living by faith, so far we are righteous; but in so far as we drag along with us the traces of our mortal nature as derived from Adam, so far we cannot be free from sin.” For there is truth both in the statement that “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin,” (1 John 3:9) and also in the former statement, that “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)”

He refers in context to **1 John 3 (KJV):9** Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

And to **1 John 1 (KJV):8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Augustine understood that we have a “mortal nature as derived from Adam”. This is why we must put off and put on as Paul commands in **Colossians 3 (KJV):8** But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Our inner man is the “new man” Paul refers to in verse 10. The old man is the old Adamic sin nature in our flesh, by which we are mortal. The new man is our spirit which is born of the Spirit of God, as Jesus reveals in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

But our flesh is still mortal, having a sin nature, or “law of sin” in our members. This is why we delight in the law of God in our inner man, our spirit, but we still have a “law of sin” in our flesh as we read in **Romans 7 (KJV):22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Augustine then continues, “The Lord Jesus, therefore, is both righteous and able to justify; but we are justified freely by no other grace than His. (Romans 3:24)”

He refers in context to **Romans 3 (KJV):23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Augustine then asserts, “For there is nothing that justifieth save His body, which is the Church; and therefore, if the body of Christ bears off the spoils of the unrighteous, and the riches of the unrighteous are laid up in store as treasures for the body of Christ, the unrighteous ought not therefore to remain outside, but rather to enter within, that so they may be justified.”

First of all, the Church is His body, as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):22** And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

And He is the head of the Church. But it is His blood that justifies us as we read in **Romans 5 (KJV):9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Augustine's argument ignores this. He is making our justification, and our salvation, dependent on submission to the universal Church, that is, to man.

When we believed in Jesus Christ, we were baptized into the body of Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

And God set the members in a specific place in His body as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

And in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):27** Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

When we believed in Jesus Christ, we were baptized into Christ, and into His death as we read in **Romans 6 (KJV):3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

And when we believe in Jesus Christ, we are justified as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

The Church is not mentioned in this Scripture. We read also in **Romans 5 (KJV):1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

The words "being justified" are actually in the past tense in the Greek so that the verse should be translated as in **Romans 5 (NASB):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And the word "peace" in Romans 5:1 in the Greek is **εἰρήνη** (pronounced eirēnē). This word comes from the verb eiro which means "to bind together that which has been separated." **Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest, Volume 1, Romans in the Greek New Testament, Page 77.** In other words, in Romans 5:1, Paul is saying that we have been set at one with God, and are at peace with Him after He has justified us, that is, after He has declared us righteous.

Since this justification was by faith, it happened when we believed in Jesus Christ. This is exactly what we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

And again in **1 Corinthians 6 (NASB):11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

So God justifies us the moment we believe in Jesus Christ. It has nothing to do with



baptism, whether it was done within the universal Church or without. It is simply our faith in Jesus Christ that God looks for in order to justify us. This justification that happens when we believe in Jesus Christ gives us a standing of righteousness before God.

Since it has nothing to do with baptism, it has nothing to do with our membership in the Church. But we are made members of the Church when we believe as we read above in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

This baptism is a sovereign baptism done by the Spirit of the Lord, when we believe. It has nothing to do with water baptism. We are set in the body by the Lord as it pleased Him.

Then he continues in **paragraph 41** and says, "Whence also we may be sure that what is written concerning the day of judgment, "Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labors," (Wisdom 5:1) is not to be taken in such a sense as that the Canaanite shall stand before the face of Israel, though Israel made no account of the labors of the Canaanite; but only as that Naboth shall stand before the face of Ahab, since Ahab made no account of the labors of Naboth, since the Canaanite was unrighteous, while Naboth was a righteous man. In the same way the heathen shall not stand before the face of the Christian, who made no account of his labors, when the temples of the idols were plundered and destroyed; but the Christian shall stand before the face of the heathen, who made no account of his labors, when the bodies of the martyrs were laid low in death. In the same way, therefore, **the heretic shall not stand in the face of the Catholic, who made no account of his labors, when the laws of the Catholic emperors were put in force; but the Catholic shall stand in the face of the heretic**, who made no account of his labors when the madness of the ungodly Circumcelliones was allowed to have its way. For **the passage of Scripture** decides the question in itself, seeing that it does not say, Then shall men stand, but "Then shall the righteous stand;" and they shall stand "in great boldness" because they stand in the power of a good conscience."

He refers to **Wisdom 5 (KJV):1** Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours.

The book of Wisdom is an apocryphal book, and is not part of the canon. Evidently Augustine recognized it as Scripture for he refers to it as **"the passage of Scripture"** above.

Now Naboth owned a vineyard that Ahab wanted as we read in **1 Kings 21 (KJV):1** And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. 3 And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

So Ahab had Naboth stoned as we read in **1 Kings 21 (KJV):13** And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. 14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. 15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money:

for Naboth is not alive, but dead. 16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

Now we notice how he says, “the heretic shall not stand in the face of the Catholic, who made no account of his labors, when the laws of the Catholic emperors were put in force; but the Catholic shall stand in the face of the heretic”. Augustine assumed that all Catholic doctrine was good doctrine, and everything else was heresy.

Then in **paragraph 42** he continues and says, “But in this world no one is righteous by his own righteousness,—that is, as though it were wrought by himself and for himself; but as the apostle says, "According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." But then he goes on to add the following: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ." (Romans 12:3-5)”

The Donatists were asserting that they were righteous of themselves, and without sin, and that their church was “without spot or wrinkle”, a reference to Ephesians 5:27. But this Scripture refers to the Church when it shall be presented to Christ as a glorified body of believers at the rapture.

Augustine refers to **Romans 12 (KJV):3** For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

He then asserts, “And according to this doctrine, no one can be righteous so long as he is separated from the unity of this body. For in the same manner as if a limb be cut off from the body of a living man, it cannot any longer retain the spirit of life; so the man who is cut off from the body of Christ, who is righteous, can in no wise retain the spirit of righteousness, even if he retain the form of membership which he received when in the body. Let them therefore come into the framework of this body, and so possess their own labors, not through the lust of lordship, but through the godliness of using them aright.”

However, the body of Christ is a spiritual body. We are members of this body in virtue of the fact that we have been regenerated, that is, born again. It is the new birth that makes us members of Christ, after which we are then baptized into the body of Christ as we read again in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Augustine then concludes, “But we, as has been said before, cleanse our wills from the pollution of this concupiscence, even in the judgment of any enemy you please to name as judge, seeing that we use our utmost efforts in entreating the very men of whose labors we avail ourselves to enjoy with us, within the society of the Catholic Church, the fruits both of their labors and of our own.”

Augustine is abiding in the teaching of the Church in his time. The body of Christ to him was “the society of the Catholic Church”. In his time, the body of Christ was the Catholic Church. If you did not belong to that body, or left “the framework of this body”, you were as a limb “cut off from the body of a living man”, which “cannot any longer retain the spirit of life”. Being “cut off from the body of Christ, who is righteous”, you could “in no wise retain the spirit of righteousness”.



Augustine is referring to Romans 12:3-5 when he says, “**And according to this doctrine, no one can be righteous so long as he is separated from the unity of this body.**”

But he is taking the Scripture out of context. The Scripture, in context, includes verses 6 through 8, and reads as in **Romans 12 (KJV)**:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

The measure of faith is given to each member of the body of Christ according to the function of that office, or ministry, which the member is to perform. The body of Christ is a spiritual body made up of born again believers. It has nothing to do with whether the Church has been accepted by the Empire, or Kings or rulers. Augustine’s vision was of a Church united to the empire. To abide in the Church was to abide in the good graces of the empire. To leave the Church meant that you were no longer abiding in the good graces of the empire. This thinking clouded his vision when he read the New Testament.

When anyone accepts Christ, it is God who justifies them as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV)**:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

That is, He puts His righteousness down to their account. It is not the righteousness of the Church, or some other righteousness, but God’s very own righteousness as in **Romans 3 (KJV)**:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

We are not justified by anyone’s labors, or even our own. It is God who justifies, and He puts His very own righteousness down to our account.

Now Augustine is dealing with a variety of questions in his time. He is trying to clarify what the Scriptures teach, but he is hindered by the Church’s dogma in his time.

As we proceed to the next section, we will see that Augustine was adamantly in favor of infant baptism.

## Regeneration by Baptism

Regeneration by baptism is a dogma that was handed to Augustine by the Church of his time. It began very early on in the early Church and was a dogma in the time of Irenaeus who lived between 120 and 202 AD, approximately, and was a bishop in Lyons, France from 177 to 202 AD.

“His refutation of the Gnosis, written between 177 and 192, is the leading polemic work of the second century.” **History of the Christian Church, Philip P. Schaff , Volume 2, Chapter XII, page 511-512.**

His refutation of the Gnosis heresy is the five book series which Irenaeus wrote entitled, **Adversus Heresies (Against Heresies).**

“He was sent by the Gallican confessors to the Roman bishop Eleutherus (who ruled A.D. 177–190), as a mediator in the Montanistic disputes. After the martyrdom of Pothinus he was elected bishop of Lyons (177), and labored there with zeal and success, by tongue and pen, for the restoration of the heavily visited church, for the spread of Christianity in Gaul, and for the defence and development of its doctrines. He thus combined a vast missionary and literary activity. If we are to trust the account of Gregory of Tours, he converted almost the whole population of Lyons and sent notable missionaries to other parts of pagan France.” **History of the Christian Church, Philip P. Schaff , Volume II, Chapter XIII, Section 182, page 748-750.**

Irenaeus writes the following in **Book 1** of his series, **Adversus Heresies (Against Heresies)**:

#### **Ante-Nicene Fathers**

**Volume 1, Page 345, Irenaeus Against Heresies, Book 1: Chapter XXI.—The views of redemption entertained by these heretics.**

1. It happens that their tradition respecting redemption is invisible and incomprehensible, as being the mother of things which are incomprehensible and invisible; and on this account, since it is fluctuating, it is impossible simply and all at once to make known its nature, for every one of them hands it down just as his own inclination prompts. Thus there are as many schemes of “redemption” as there are teachers of these mystical opinions. And when we come to refute them, we shall show in its fitting-place, that this class of men have been instigated by Satan to a denial of that **baptism which is regeneration to God**, and thus to a renunciation of the whole [Christian] faith.

**Commentary:** The “**baptism which is regeneration to God**” is referring to the dogma of the Church in the time of Irenaeus.

This is further documented by Philip P. Schaff in the following:

“This ordinance [Baptism] was regarded in the ancient church as the sacrament of the new birth or regeneration, and as the solemn rite of initiation into the Christian Church, admitting to all her benefits and committing to all her obligations....Its effect consists in the forgiveness of sins and the communication of the Holy Spirit. Justin [Martyr] calls baptism “the water-bath for the forgiveness of sins and regeneration,” and “the bath of conversion and the knowledge of God.” It is often called also illumination, spiritual circumcision, anointing, sealing, gift of grace, symbol of redemption, death of sins, etc. Tertullian describes its effect thus: “When the soul comes to faith, and becomes transformed through regeneration by water and power from above, it discovers, after the veil of the old corruption is taken away, its whole light. It is received into the fellowship of the Holy Spirit; and the soul, which unites itself to the

Holy Spirit, is followed by the body.” He already leans towards the notion of a magical operation of the baptismal water. Yet the subjective condition of repentance and faith was universally required. Baptism was not only an act of God, but at the same time the most solemn surrender of man to God, a vow for life and death, to live henceforth only to Christ and his people. The keeping of this vow was the condition of continuance in the church; the breaking of it must be followed either by repentance or excommunication.” **History of the Christian Church, by Philip P. Schaff, Volume 2, page 253.**

Tertullian lived between 155 and 240 AD, approximately. Now Schaff also says, "From John 3:5 and Mark 16:16, Tertullian and other fathers argued the necessity of baptism to salvation.” **History of the Christian Church, by Philip P. Schaff, Volume 2, page 253-4.**

In addition, Schaff also says that the effect of baptism “was thought to extend only to sins committed before receiving it. Hence the frequent postponement of the sacrament [Procrastinatio baptismi], which Tertullian very earnestly recommends, though he censures it when accompanied with moral levity and presumption.” **History of the Christian Church, by Philip P. Schaff, Volume 2, page 254.**

Schaff speaks of the ancient church’s belief that baptism was the “sacrament of the new birth or regeneration.” There is no doubt that this belief started very early on in the Church, as we note that the writing of Justin Martyr (c. 100 – 165 A.D.) preceded Irenaeus slightly. We will look at a writing of Justin Martyr shortly.

Irenaeus also says the following:

#### **Ante-Nicene Fathers**

#### **Volume 1, Page 444-445, Irenaeus Against Heresies, Book 3: Chapter XVII**

2...For as a compacted lump of dough cannot be formed of dry wheat without fluid matter, nor can a loaf possess unity, so, in like manner, neither could we, being many, be made one in Christ Jesus without the water from heaven. And as dry earth does not bring forth unless it receive moisture, in like manner we also, being originally a dry tree, could never have brought forth fruit unto life without the voluntary rain from above. For our bodies have received unity among themselves by means of that laver which leads to incorruption; but our souls, by means of the Spirit.”

For a full discussion of the writing of Irenaeus in his series **Adversus Heresies (Against Heresies)**, see my book, **A Commentary on Against Heresies by Irenaeus**, at <http://theriskofchrist.com/mainbook/commentary.pdf>.

Now let us look at the writing of Justin Martyr, who lived from 114 AD to 165 AD, slightly before Irenaeus.

#### **Ante-Nicene Fathers**

#### **Volume 1, Page 183, The First Apology of Justin (born in 114 AD, martyred in 165 AD) Chapter LXI.—Christian baptism.**

Justin speaks of the custom of becoming a catechumen before baptism, as he says, “I will also relate the manner in which we dedicated ourselves to God when we had been made new

through Christ; lest, if we omit this, we seem to be unfair in the explanation we are making. As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them.”

This also began very early on in the history of the Church.

Then immediately following, Justin speaks of the custom of baptism, as he says, “Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, “Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (John 3:5)”

He refers to **John 3 (KJV):5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

This teaching of regeneration by baptism began very early on in the history of the Church. Justin continues as he then says, “Now, that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into their mothers’ wombs, is manifest to all. And how those who have sinned and repent shall escape their sins, is declared by Esaias the prophet, as I wrote above; he thus speaks: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from your souls; learn to do well; judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow: and come and let us reason together, saith the Lord. And though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white like wool; and though they be as crimson, I will make them white as snow. But if ye refuse and rebel, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” (Isaiah 1:16-20)”

He refers to **Isaiah 1 (KJV):16** Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; 17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. 18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

But washing began in the Old Testament as a reverence for the holiness of God as we read in **Exodus 19 (KJV):9** And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord. 10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, 11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

And then there were laws of cleanliness, beginning with the ordination of the priests in **Exodus 29 (KJV):1** And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, 2 And unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: of wheaten flour shalt thou make them. 3 And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams. 4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.

All the laws of cleanliness, as they honored the holiness of God, kept the people from disease, but they could not sanctify them of sin as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):6** Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

The “time of reformation” mentioned in verse 10 above came with Jesus dying on the cross for us, and entering into heaven for us as we continue to read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):11** But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

So all of the divers washings of the Old Testament laws did not save them. It was their faith that saved them, for without faith it is impossible to please Him as we read in **Hebrews 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

It is when we believe that we pass from death to life as Jesus reveals in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Water baptism is only a token that we have believed. It is a figure of the cleansing of our sins when we believe.

So water baptism does not save us, but is only symbolic of what has taken place when we believe in Jesus Christ.

Justin says further, “Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe; he who leads to the laver the person that is to be washed calling him by this name alone.”

And Justin concludes, “And this washing is called illumination, because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings. And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus, he who is illuminated is washed.”



So here we note in Justin's writing that there were certain terms relating to baptism that came to be in common usage such as "regenerated", "the washing with water", "remission of sins formerly committed", "the laver". In **Augustine of Hippo A Commentary** under the **Catechumens** heading, and then in the **Constitutions of the Holy Apostles**, previous to Justin, we read of "the laver of regeneration", "baptism of regeneration", and soon we shall read of "the sacred font of baptism".

Now Justin compares the new birth to the fleshly birth from our parents which was without our choice. And he then says "...there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again..." But have you ever noticed in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

When we are born again, we are born not of the will of man, but of God. We will discuss this more fully as we proceed to read further in the writings of Augustine. We now turn to the writings of Augustine, who inherited the thinking of the early Church about baptism.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Nature and Grace, Chapter 9, page 124**, he says, "See what he has said. I, however, affirm that an infant born in a place where it was not possible for him to be admitted to the baptism of Christ, and being overtaken by death, was placed in such circumstances, that is to say, died without the **bath of regeneration**, because it was not possible for him to be otherwise. He would therefore absolve him, and, in spite of the Lord's sentence, open to him the kingdom of heaven. The apostle, however, does not absolve him, when he says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; by which death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Romans 5:12) **Rightly, therefore, by virtue of that condemnation which runs throughout the mass, is he not admitted into the kingdom of heaven, although he was not only not a Christian, but was unable to become one.**"

There is good reason to believe that the Lord's mercy would intervene in the case of children, as he did in **Deuteronomy 1 (KJV):34** And the Lord heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, 35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers. 36 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord. 37 Also the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither. 38 But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. 39 Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

Just as the thief on the cross who was not baptized, but entered paradise with Jesus, so it may be with children who die before reaching the age of accountability.

But Augustine refers to **Romans 5 (KJV):12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

It is true that all stand condemned if they have not believed in Jesus Christ as we read in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

But the “**bath of regeneration**” occurs not at water baptism, but when we believe. That is when we pass from death to life. But it is most likely that God’s mercy will provide for salvation for children under the age of accountability. When we consider the fact that millions of abortions take place annually, and that our God is merciful, we can trust Him to make a way for these.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book I, Chapter 26, page 385**, he says, “They also say,” says he, “that baptism does not give complete remission of sins, nor take away crimes, but that it shaves them off, so that the roots of all sins are retained in the evil flesh.” Who but an unbeliever can affirm this against the Pelagians? **I say, therefore, that baptism gives remission of all sins, and takes away guilt, and does not shave them off; and “that the roots of all sins are” not “retained in the evil flesh, as if of shaved hair on the head, whence the sins may grow to be cut down again.”** For it was I that found out that similitude, too, for them to use for the purposes of their calumny, as if I thought and said this.”

Augustine is clear here, **“that baptism gives remission of all sins, and takes away guilt, and does not shave them off; and “that the roots of all sins are” not “retained in the evil flesh, as if of shaved hair on the head, whence the sins may grow to be cut down again.”**

When we believe, God justifies us because of our faith. We then have a standing as righteous ones in God’s sight. He has also provided an advocate for any sin after we have been born again. The blood of Jesus not only enables us to be born again, but it also is the means of forgiveness after we have been born again. There will only ever be one sacrifice for sins. Jesus has paid it all. But baptism is only our testimony to the world that we have had faith in Jesus.

We next read of a reference to regeneration by baptism in Augustine’s writings in the following where he discusses suicide.

## **The Issue of Suicide**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book I, Chapter 20, page 14-15**, he says, **“It is not without significance, that in no passage of the holy canonical books there can be found either divine precept or permission to take away our own life, whether for the sake of entering on the enjoyment of immortality, or of shunning, or ridding ourselves of anything whatever. Nay, the law, rightly interpreted, even prohibits suicide, where it says, “Thou shalt not kill.”** This is proved especially by the omission of the words “thy neighbor,” which are inserted when false witness is forbidden: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.” Nor yet should any one on this account suppose he has not broken this commandment if he has borne false witness only against himself. For the love of our neighbor is regulated by the love of ourselves, as it is written, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” If, then, he who makes false statements about himself is not less guilty of bearing false witness than if he had made them to the injury of his neighbor; although in the commandment prohibiting false witness only his neighbor is mentioned, and persons taking no pains to understand it might suppose that a man was allowed to be a false witness to his own hurt; how much greater reason have we to understand that a man may not

kill himself, since in the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” there is no limitation added nor any exception made in favor of any one, and least of all in favor of him on whom the command is laid! And so some attempt to extend this command even to beasts and cattle, as if it forbade us to take life from any creature. But if so, why not extend it also to the plants, and all that is rooted in and nourished by the earth? For though this class of creatures have no sensation, yet they also are said to live, and consequently they can die; and therefore, if violence be done them, can be killed. So, too, the apostle, when speaking of the seeds of such things as these, says, “That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die;” and in the Psalm it is said, “He killed their vines with hail.” Must we therefore reckon it a breaking of this commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” to pull a flower? Are we thus insanely to countenance the foolish error of the Manichæans? Putting aside, then, these ravings, if, when we say, Thou shalt not kill, we do not understand this of the plants, since they have no sensation, nor of the irrational animals that fly, swim, walk, or creep, since they are dissociated from us by their want of reason, and are therefore by the just appointment of the Creator subjected to us to kill or keep alive for our own uses; if so, then it remains that we understand that commandment simply of man. **The commandment is, “Thou shall not kill man;” therefore neither another nor yourself, for he who kills himself still kills nothing else than man.”**

Augustine refers to **Exodus 20:13** Thou shalt not kill.

And Augustine is correct. We are not to kill ourselves, for we are not our own, and we are to glorify God as in **1 Corinthians 6 (KJV):19** What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? **20** For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

And he rightly concludes, **“The commandment is, “Thou shall not kill man;” therefore neither another nor yourself, for he who kills himself still kills nothing else than man.”**

Let us continue to read his thoughts on suicide.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God**

**Book I, Chapter 25, page 17**, he says, “But, we are told, there is ground to fear that, when the body is subjected to the enemy’s lust, the insidious pleasure of sense may entice the soul to consent to the sin, and steps must be taken to prevent so disastrous a result. And is not suicide the proper mode of preventing not only the enemy’s sin, but the sin of the Christian so allured? Now, in the first place, the soul which is led by God and His wisdom, rather than by bodily concupiscence, will certainly never consent to the desire aroused in its own flesh by another’s lust. **And, at all events, if it be true, as the truth plainly declares, that suicide is a detestable and damnable wickedness, who is such a fool as to say, Let us sin now, that we may obviate a possible future sin; let us now commit murder, lest we perhaps afterwards should commit adultery? If we are so controlled by iniquity that innocence is out of the question, and we can at best but make a choice of sins, is not a future and uncertain adultery preferable to a present and certain murder? Is it not better to commit a wickedness which penitence may heal, than a crime which leaves no place for healing contrition?** I say this for the sake of those men or women who fear they may be enticed into consenting to their violator’s lust, and think they should lay violent hands on themselves, and so prevent, not another’s sin, but their own. But far be it from



the mind of a Christian confiding in God, and resting in the hope of His aid; far be it, I say, from such a mind to yield a shameful consent to pleasures of the flesh, howsoever presented. And if that lustful disobedience, which still dwells in our mortal members, follows its own law irrespective of our will, surely its motions in the body of one who rebels against them are as blameless as its motions in the body of one who sleeps.”

Augustine argues against the sin of suicide, saying it is murder. He argues, “Is it not better to commit a wickedness which penitence may heal, than a crime which leaves no place for healing contrition?”

In Augustine’s time, suicide was a “detestable and damnable wickedness” from which there was no forgiveness. In other words, if one commits suicide, they commit a mortal sin and are going to Hell.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book I, Chapter 27, page 18**, he says, “There remains one reason for suicide which I mentioned before, and which is thought a sound one,—namely, to prevent one’s falling into sin either through the blandishments of pleasure or the violence of pain. If this reason were a good one, then we should be impelled to exhort men at once to destroy themselves, as soon as they have been washed in the laver of regeneration, and have received the forgiveness of all sin. Then is the time to escape all future sin, when all past sin is blotted out. And if this escape be lawfully secured by suicide, why not then specially? Why does any baptized person hold his hand from taking his own life? Why does any person who is freed from the hazards of this life again expose himself to them, when he has power so easily to rid himself of them all, and when it is written, “He who loveth danger shall fall into it?” (Sirach 3:27)”

Augustine then argues, “Why does he love, or at least face, so many serious dangers, by remaining in this life from which he may legitimately depart? But is any one so blinded and twisted in his moral nature, and so far astray from the truth, as to think that, though a man ought to make away with himself for fear of being led into sin by the oppression of one man, his master, he ought yet to live, and so expose himself to the hourly temptations of this world, both to all those evils which the oppression of one master involves, and to numberless other miseries in which this life inevitably implicates us? What reason, then, is there for our consuming time in those exhortations by which we seek to animate the baptized, either to virginal chastity, or vidual continence, or matrimonial fidelity, when we have so much more simple and compendious a method of deliverance from sin, by persuading those who are fresh from baptism to put an end to their lives, and so pass to their Lord pure and well-conditioned? If any one thinks that such persuasion should be attempted, I say not he is foolish, but mad.”

Augustine then reasons, “With what face, then, can he say to any man, “Kill yourself, lest to your small sins you add a heinous sin, while you live under an unchaste master, whose conduct is that of a barbarian?” How can he say this, if he cannot without wickedness say, “Kill yourself, now that you are washed from all your sins, lest you fall again into similar or even aggravated sins, while you live in a world which has such power to allure by its unclean pleasures, to torment by its horrible cruelties, to overcome by its errors and terrors?” It is wicked to say this; it is therefore wicked to kill oneself.”

And it is true that killing yourself is a sin, and a wicked way to end it all.

Augustine is arguing against suicide, as he concludes from his argument, “For if there could be any just cause of suicide, this were so. And since not even this is so, there is none.”

Now we can commend Augustine for ruling against suicide for any reason, but the Church in his time believed that you could lose your salvation if, after baptism, you committed a mortal sin. And suicide was considered a mortal sin. This belief started very early on in the Church's dogma, as we read in the following writing of Irenaeus, in reference to 1 Corinthians, Chapter 15:

#### **Ante-Nicene Fathers**

#### **Volume 1, Book 5: Chapter IX, paragraphs 1-4 of his writing, *Adversus Heresies (Against Heresies)*, page 534-535**

1. Among the other [truths] proclaimed by the apostle, there is also this one, "That flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50) This is [the passage] which is adduced by all the heretics in support of their folly, with an attempt to annoy us, and to point out that the handiwork of God is not saved. **They do not take this fact into consideration, that there are three things out of which, as I have shown, the complete man is composed — flesh, soul, and spirit. One of these does indeed preserve and fashion [the man]—this is the spirit; while as to another it is united and formed—that is the flesh; then [comes] that which is between these two—that is the soul, which sometimes indeed, when it follows the spirit, is raised up by it, but sometimes it sympathizes with the flesh, and falls into carnal lusts. Those then, as many as they be, who have not that which saves and forms [us] into life [eternal], shall be, and shall be called, [mere] flesh and blood; for these are they who have not the Spirit of God in themselves. Wherefore men of this stamp are spoken of by the Lord as "dead;" for, says He, "Let the dead bury their dead," (Luke 9:60) because they have not the Spirit which quickens man.**

Irenaeus refers to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):50** Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

And to **Luke 9 (KJV):60** Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

Irenaeus here explains the thinking of the Church in his time which carried forward into the time of Augustine. That is, that **"the complete man is composed —flesh, soul, and spirit".** The spirit **"does indeed preserve and fashion [the man] that is the flesh,"**

Irenaeus then explains his perception of these three parts as he says, **"One of these does indeed preserve and fashion [the man]—this is the spirit; while as to another it is united and formed—that is the flesh; then [comes] that which is between these two—that is the soul, which sometimes indeed, when it follows the spirit, is raised up by it, but sometimes it sympathizes with the flesh, and falls into carnal lusts."**

So by "spirit" here we understand Irenaeus to mean Holy Spirit, as he then says, **"Those then, as many as they be, who have not that which saves and forms [us] into life [eternal], shall be, and shall be called, [mere] flesh and blood; for these are they who have not the Spirit of God in themselves."**

We continue to read in his next paragraph.

2. **On the other hand, as many as fear God and trust in His Son's advent, and who through faith do establish the Spirit of God in their hearts,—such men as these shall be properly called both "pure," and "spiritual," and "those living to God," because they possess the Spirit of the**

Father, who purifies man, and raises him up to the life of God. For as the Lord has testified that “the flesh is weak,” so [does He also say] that “the spirit is willing.” (Matthew 26:41)...

Irenaeus is saying that those “who through faith do establish the Spirit of God in their hearts,—such men as these shall be properly called both “pure,” and “spiritual,” and “those living to God,” because they possess the Spirit of the Father, who purifies man, and raises him up to the life of God”.

That is, they have been born again. He then refers to **Matthew 26 (KJV):41** Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

By the “spirit” that “indeed is willing” in this verse, by the context of his writing, we must understand him to mean, the Holy Spirit.

We continue to read in his next paragraph.

3. The flesh, therefore, when destitute of the Spirit of God, is dead, not having life, and cannot possess the kingdom of God: [it is as] irrational blood, like water poured out upon the ground. And therefore he says, “As is the earthy, such are they that are earthy.” (referring to 1 Corinthians 15:48) But where the Spirit of the Father is, there is a living man; [there is] the rational blood preserved by God for the avenging [of those that shed it]; [there is] the flesh possessed by the Spirit, forgetful indeed of what belongs to it, and adopting the quality of the Spirit, being made conformable to the Word of God. And on this account he (the apostle) declares, “As we have borne the image of him who is of the earth, we shall also bear the image of Him who is from heaven.” (referring to 1 Corinthians 15:49) What, therefore, is the earthly? That which was fashioned. And what is the heavenly? The Spirit. As therefore he says, when we were destitute of the celestial Spirit, we walked in former times in the oldness of the flesh, not obeying God; so now let us, receiving the Spirit, walk in newness of life, obeying God. Inasmuch, therefore, as without the Spirit of God we cannot be saved, the apostle exhorts us through faith and chaste conversation to preserve the Spirit of God, lest, having become non-participators of the Divine Spirit, we lose the kingdom of heaven; and he exclaims, that flesh in itself, and blood, cannot possess the kingdom of God.

Irenaeus refers to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):48** As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Paul here refers to the resurrection when we shall be glorified.

Irenaeus believed the apostle to be saying that we must “through faith and chaste conversation to preserve the Spirit of God, lest, having become non-participators of the Divine Spirit, we lose the kingdom of heaven”.

In this state, we would be “[mere] flesh and blood”, and those “who have not the Spirit of God in themselves”, as we read in paragraph 1 above.

And Irenaeus concludes in the following paragraph:

4...In order that we may not lose life by losing that Spirit which possesses us, the apostle, exhorting us to the communion of the Spirit, has said, according to reason, in those words already quoted, “That flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” (referring to 1 Corinthians 15:50) Just as if he were to say, “Do not err; for unless the Word of God dwell with, and the Spirit of the Father be in you, and if ye shall live frivolously and carelessly as if ye

were this only, viz., mere flesh and blood, ye cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

He refers to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):50** Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

The thinking of Irenaeus is that since man before faith in Christ is dead spiritually, he possesses only flesh and blood. He seems to say in paragraph 2 that, when any have faith in Christ, “and who through faith do establish the Spirit of God in their hearts,” the Holy Spirit enters the one who believes and gives him or her spiritual life, “because they possess the Spirit of the Father, who purifies man, and raises him up to the life of God”. But in paragraph 4 we read that, if the one who initially has faith does not maintain “communion of the Spirit,” but walks “frivolously and carelessly” as if he “were this only, viz., mere flesh and blood,” he could “lose life by losing that Spirit which possesses” him or her. His main point is that it is the presence of the Spirit of God that raises us from the dead. Therefore in paragraph 1 he says that “as many as they be, who have not that which saves and forms [us] into life [eternal],” that is the Holy Spirit, they “shall be, and shall be called, [mere] flesh and blood; for these are they who have not the Spirit of God in themselves.”

Irenaeus clearly misinterprets 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, for this chapter is about the resurrection, and what kind of body we will have at the resurrection. Irenaeus believed that man was composed of flesh, soul, and spirit, that is, the Spirit of God when he is born again by baptism. He did not understand that man also has a spirit, which is born of the Spirit of God when he believes in Jesus Christ, as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

A full discussion of this can be found in **A Commentary on Against Heresies by Irenaeus, Chapter 7: Inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven**. You can access this at <http://theriskofchrist.com/mainbook/commentary.pdf>.

So Augustine thought that suicide would cause one to “lose life by losing that Spirit which possesses” him or her. That is, he thought suicide to be a mortal sin, which would cause one to lose their salvation. We will discuss this further in this volume as we progress through the writings of Augustine. Now in the next section of Augustine’s writing, we read of his view of unbaptized persons who die confessing Christ.

## The Unbaptized Who Confess Christ

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XIII, Chapters 7-9, page 248-249**, in **Chapter 7** he says, “For whatever unbaptized persons die confessing Christ, this confession is of the same efficacy for the remission of sins as if they were washed in the sacred font of baptism. For He who said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,” (John 3:5) made also an exception in their favor, in that other sentence where He no less absolutely said, “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven;” (Matthew 10:32) and in another place, “Whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.” (Matthew 16:25)”

He refers to **John 3 (KJV):5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

And to **Matthew 10 (KJV):32** Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

And to **Matthew 16 (KJV):25** For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

We could add that the Scripture also says that whosoever believes will not perish in **John 3 (KJV):16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

And the one who hears and believes has passed from death to life as in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Augustine agrees with the Scriptures here. He continues as he then says, “**And this explains the verse, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” (Psalm 116:15)”**

He refers to **Psalm 116 (KJV):15** Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Augustine continues as he then asserts, “**For what is more precious than a death by which a man’s sins are all forgiven, and his merits increased an hundredfold?”**

But our sins are not forgiven by death, but by our faith in Jesus Christ. The Church did not understand this in Augustine’s time.

Augustine then continues, as he argues, “**For those who have been baptized when they could no longer escape death, and have departed this life with all their sins blotted out have not equal merit with those who did not defer death, though it was in their power to do so, but preferred to end their life by confessing Christ, rather than by denying Him to secure an opportunity of baptism.”**

We are saved by grace, and not by works as we read again in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

And we who have been saved by grace will all then be rewarded according to our works done in the body, whether good or bad.

Augustine here speaks of those who defer baptism until they are dying in order to insure their salvation, because of the danger of committing a mortal sin after baptism. This was a common practice in the time of Augustine. But he says that these “**have not equal merit with those who did not defer death, though it was in their power to do so, but preferred to end their life by confessing Christ, rather than by denying Him to secure an opportunity of baptism.”**

In other words, the reward of the unbaptized who confessed Christ and had no time “**to secure an opportunity of baptism**” would exceed those who deferred baptism until they were about to die, because those who had no time “**to secure an opportunity of baptism**” would probably have been martyrs.

Augustine continues, and says, “And even had they denied Him under pressure of the fear of death, this too would have been forgiven them in that baptism, in which was remitted even the enormous wickedness of those who had slain Christ. **But how abundant in these men must have been the grace of the Spirit, who breathes where He listeth, seeing that they so dearly loved Christ as to be unable to deny Him even in so sore an emergency, and with so sure a hope of pardon!** Precious, therefore, is the death of the saints, to whom the grace of Christ has been



applied with such gracious effects, that they do not hesitate to meet death themselves, if so be they might meet Him. And precious is it, also, because it has proved that what was originally ordained for the punishment of the sinner, has been used for the production of a richer harvest of righteousness. But not on this account should we look upon death as a good thing, for it is diverted to such useful purposes, not by any virtue of its own, but by the divine interference. **Death was originally proposed as an object of dread, that sin might not be committed; now it must be undergone that sin may not be committed, or, if committed, be remitted, and the award of righteousness bestowed on him whose victory has earned it.**”

But the **“righteousness of God”** is put down to our account the moment we have truly believed in Jesus Christ. It is not earned by us at baptism or by martyrdom, though we will be rewarded for the good works we do after we have believed.

Then in **Chapter 8** he says, **“For if we look at the matter a little more carefully, we shall see that even when a man dies faithfully and laudably for the truth’s sake, it is still death he is avoiding. For he submits to some part of death, for the very purpose of avoiding the whole, and the second and eternal death over and above. (Revelation 2:11, 20:6, 20:14, 21:8) He submits to the separation of soul and body, lest the soul be separated both from God and from the body, and so the whole first death be completed, and the second death receive him everlastingly.**

Wherefore death is indeed, as I said, good to none while it is being actually suffered, and while it is subduing the dying to its power; but it is meritoriously endured for the sake of retaining or winning what *is* good. And regarding what happens after death, it is no absurdity to say that death is good to the good, and evil to the evil. For the disembodied spirits of the just are at rest; but those of the wicked suffer punishment till their bodies rise again,—those of the just to life everlasting, and of the others to death eternal, which is called the second death. (Revelation 2:11, 20:6, 20:14, 21:8)”

He mentions the second death here. He understood that death was the separation of the soul, or the spirit, from the body, for he considered the soul to be composed of spirit.

And the Scripture says in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):8** We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

At death we go to be present with the Lord, and we will come with Him to be resurrected when He comes again, as we read in **Jude 1 (KJV):14** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Augustine also understood that the wicked suffer eternal death, that is, the second death revealed in **Revelation 2 (KJV):11** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

And in **Revelation 20 (KJV):6** Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

And in **Revelation 20 (KJV):14** And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And in **Revelation 21 (KJV):8** But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.



When one dies “faithfully and laudably for the truth’s sake”, he avoids the second death, as Augustine has said. But we are still saved by our faith in Jesus Christ, and not by martyrdom. Let us make sure that we have such faith.

Then in **Chapter 9**, Augustine’s polemic is evident here again, as he begins and argues, “The point of time in which the souls of the good and evil are separated from the body, are we to say it is after death, or in death rather? If it is after death, then it is not death which is good or evil, since death is done with and past, but it is the life which the soul has now entered on.”

To Augustine and the Church in his time, the soul was composed of spirit, so the words were interchangeable. So at one time it is the souls that are separated from the body, and in another time, it is the spirits of the dying that are separated from the body, which is at death of course.

But he does admit, “And thus it is difficult to explain how we speak of those who are not yet dead, but are agonized in their last and mortal extremity, as being in the article of death. Yet what else can we call them than dying persons?”

But all who are alive in Christ will go to be with the Lord after the death of our bodies.

## The Resurrection of the Body

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XXII, Chapter 4, page 481**, he says, “For if we were only souls, that is, spirits without any body, and if we dwelt in heaven and had no knowledge of earthly animals, and were told that we should be bound to earthly bodies by some wonderful bond of union, and should animate them, should we not much more vigorously refuse to believe this, and maintain that nature would not permit an incorporeal substance to be held by a corporeal bond? And yet the earth is full of living spirits, to which terrestrial bodies are bound, and with which they are in a wonderful way implicated. If, then, the same God who has created such beings wills this also, what is to hinder the earthly body from being raised to a heavenly body, since a spirit, which is more excellent than all bodies, and consequently than even a heavenly body, has been tied to an earthly body?”

Note that Augustine says, “For if we were only souls, that is, spirits without any body...”

Augustine thought that the soul was composed of spirit, so that they referred to the same thing.

But he argues successfully about the resurrection of the body as he says, “For if we were only souls, that is, spirits without any body, and if we dwelt in heaven and had no knowledge of earthly animals, and were told that we should be bound to earthly bodies by some wonderful bond of union, and should animate them, should we not much more vigorously refuse to believe this, and maintain that nature would not permit an incorporeal substance to be held by a corporeal bond?”

And we would have to answer, yes.

Yet he answers, “And yet the earth is full of living spirits, to which terrestrial bodies are bound, and with which they are in a wonderful way implicated. If, then, the same God

who has created such beings wills this also, what is to hinder the earthly body from being raised to a heavenly body, since a spirit, which is more excellent than all bodies, and consequently than even a heavenly body, has been tied to an earthly body?"

Augustine believed in the resurrection of the body.

## The Nature of God and of Man

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, On Continence, Paragraph 18, page 386**, he says, "All we therefore, who believe in the Living and True God, Whose Nature, being in the highest sense good and incapable of change, neither doth any evil, nor suffers any evil, from Whom is every good, even that which admits of decrease, and Who admits not at all of decrease in His own Good, Which is Himself, when we hear the Apostle saying, "Walk in the Spirit, and perform ye not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: For these are opposed one to another, that ye do not what ye would." (Galatians 5:16-17)"

He refers to **Galatians 5 (KJV):16** This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

He continues as he says, "Far be it from us to believe, what the madness of the Manichees believes, that there are here shown two natures or principles contrary one to another at strife, the one nature of good, the other of evil."

He then argues against the Manichees, and says, "Altogether these two are both good; both the Spirit is a good, and the flesh a good: and man, who is composed of both, one ruling, the other obeying, is assuredly a good, but a good capable of change, which yet could not be made save by a Good incapable of change, by Whom was created every good, whether small or great; but how small soever, yet made by What is Great; and how great soever, yet no way to be compared with the greatness of the Maker. **But in this nature of man, that is good, and well formed and ordered by One That is Good, there is now war, since there is not yet health. Let the sickness be healed, there is peace. But that sickness fault hath deserved, not nature hath had. And this fault indeed through the laver of regeneration the grace of God hath already remitted unto the faithful; but under the hands of the same Physician nature as yet striveth with its sickness.**"

We get the impression here that Augustine is saying that the flesh is good, but has a "sickness".

He then continues, "But in such a conflict victory will be entire soundness; and that, soundness not for a time, but for ever: wherein not only this sickness is to come to an end, but also none to arise after it. Wherefore the just man addresseth his soul and saith, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His returns: Who becometh propitious to all thy iniquities, Who healeth all thy sicknesses." (Psalm 103:2-3)"

He refers to **Psalm 103 (KJV):2** Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

He then continues, and explains, "He becometh propitious to our iniquities, when He pardons sins: He heals sicknesses when He restrains evil desires. He becometh propitious unto

iniquities by the grant of forgiveness: He heals sicknesses, by the grant of continence. The one was done in Baptism to persons confessing; the other is done in the strife to persons contending; wherein through His help we are to overcome our disease.”

So he is saying that our iniquities are forgiven at Baptism, and our disease of evil desires is healed as we contend “wherein through His help we are to overcome our disease.”

He continues, and explains further, “Even now the one is done, when we are heard, saying, “Forgive us our debts;” (Matthew 6:12-13) but the other, when we are heard, saying, “Lead us not into temptation. For every one is tempted,” saith the Apostle James, “being drawn away and enticed by his own lust.” (James 1:14)”

He refers to **Matthew 6 (KJV):**12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

And in context to **James 1 (KJV):**13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

So even now, according to Augustine, when we pray, “Forgive us our debts”, our iniquities are forgiven, and our disease of evil desires is healed as “we are heard, saying, “Lead us not into temptation.”

He then asserts, “And against this fault there is sought the help of medicine from Him, Who can heal all such sicknesses, not by the removal of a nature that is alien from us, but in the renewal of our own nature.”

Augustine does not understand here that our flesh has a nature to sin, inherited from Adam. This is revealed in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):**1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

This nature to sin is in our flesh. Paul explains this in **Romans 7 (KJV):**14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Where does sin dwell in me? Paul explains as we continue in **Romans 7 (KJV):**18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

The law of sin is in my members, that is, in my flesh. Paul then continues, **Romans 7 (KJV):**24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

With the flesh we serve the law of sin, which is in our members. But after we have been born again, God has given us victory over our flesh, so that obeying its lusts is not something we have to do. We now have a choice as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):**11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

But, again, Augustine thought that God “can heal all such sicknesses, not by the removal of a nature that is alien from us, but in the renewal of our own nature.”

Augustine did not understand that we still have a nature to sin in our flesh that we inherited from Adam, nor did the Church in his time. When Adam sinned, his flesh became mortal, and the “law of sin” was then present in his flesh.

Augustine continues as he then says, “Whence also the above mentioned Apostle saith not, “Every one is tempted” by lust, but added, “by his own:” that he who hears this may understand, how he ought to cry, “I said, Lord, have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.” (Psalm 41:4) For it would not have needed healing, had it not corrupted itself by sinning, so that its own flesh should lust against it, that is, itself should be opposed to itself, on that side, wherein in the flesh it was made sick.”

In Augustine’s thinking, the flesh is made sick by sinning, and is healed as we contend against it as we cry out, as in **Psalm 41 (KJV):**4 I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

So our own fleshly nature is renewed in this way, according to Augustine.

However, the Scriptures teach that we are delivered from this body of death in **Romans 7 (KJV):**24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

It is through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now Paul then explains in **Romans 8 (KJV):**1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Where is this “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” that “hath made me free from the law of sin and death”? Jesus said whatever is born of the Spirit of God is spirit in **John 3 (KJV):**6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Being born of the Spirit of God, we have His life in our spirits. Not only so, but we also have a new divine nature in our spirit as a result of being born of the Spirit of God as Peter reveals in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):**4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

This is why we delight in the law of God after the inward man as Paul revealed in **Romans 7 (KJV):22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

The inward man is our spirit. And the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit in **Romans 8 (KJV):16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Our soul is different from our spirit as we read in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In our spirit we have consciousness of God. In our soul we have consciousness of this world. It is in our soul, which is composed of our mind, will, emotions, the center of which is our heart, and our conscience, where we must be sanctified. This happens as we present ourselves as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Our minds are renewed as we read, hear, and study the word of God. As we walk in the light of the word of God, we are transformed or changed. Our souls are being cleansed of old ways of thinking, and of hurt feelings. Our conscience is being given right standards to judge by.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, On Continence, Paragraph 22, page 388**, he says, "I say not, therefore, with what error, but with what utter madness, do the Manichees attribute our flesh to some, I know not what, fabled "race of darkness," which they will have hath had its own nature without any beginning ever evil: whereas the true teacher exhorts men to love their own wives by the pattern of their own flesh, and exhorts them unto this very thing by the pattern also of Christ and the Church."

Augustine does not deny original sin, but he will not have it that the flesh has a sinful nature. He was once a Manichee, and when he became a Christian, he renounced the error of the Manichees. However, in his zeal to defend the faith, he has exceeded what is written in the word of God. That man was created good, there can be no doubt for we read in **Genesis 1 (KJV):26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.



And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. But when man sinned, he became dead in trespasses in sins as we read in **Ephesians 2 (NASB)**:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

And man was by nature a child of “wrath”. Man died spiritually, and man dies physically as we read in **1 Corinthian 15 (KJV)**:22 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

And in our bodies is the “law of sin”, as we read in **Romans 7 (KJV)**:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Augustine then argues, “Lastly, we must call to mind the whole place itself of the Epistle of the Apostle, relating greatly unto the matter in hand. “Husbands,” saith he, “love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, **cleansing it by the laver of the water in the word**: that He might set forth unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it may be holy and unspotted. So,” saith he, “husbands also ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies. Whoso loveth his own wife, loveth himself.” (Ephesians 5:25-28) Then he added, what we have already made mention of, “For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it, and cherisheth it; as also Christ the Church.” (Ephesians 5:29)”

He refers to **Ephesians 5 (KJV)**:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Augustine misquotes verse 26, as he says, “**cleansing it by the laver of the water in the word**”. This may seem trivial, but when we add words to Scripture we obscure the meaning of the original text. When this becomes a habit, we can go down rabbit trails in our doctrine.

Augustine then argues, “What saith the madness of most impure impiety in answer to these things? What say ye in answer to these things, ye Manichees; ye who wish to bring in upon us, as if out of the Epistles of the Apostles, two natures without beginning, one of good, the other of evil: and will not listen to the Epistles of the Apostles, that they may correct you from that sacrilegious perverseness? As ye read, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit,” (Galatians 5:17) and, “There dwelleth not in my flesh any good;” (Romans 7:18) so read ye, “No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church.” (Ephesians 5:29) As ye read, “I see another law in my members, opposed to the law of my mind;” (Romans 7:23) so read ye, “As Christ loved the Church, so also ought men to love their own wives, as their own bodies.” Be not ye crafty in the former witnesses of Holy Scripture, and deaf in this latter, and ye shall be correct in both. For, if ye receive the latter as right is, ye will endeavor to understand the former also as truth is.”



It is true that no one ever hated his own flesh. And it is likewise true that we nourish and cherish it. And so Paul in Ephesians is explaining how men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. But let us read in context what Paul wrote before in **Ephesians 5 (KJV):22** Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word...

Paul is noting an analogy between Christ and the Church, and husbands and wives. And in verse 23 above he says that "Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body". Why does the body need to be saved? The answer is because the body of Christ is composed of its members, which are the believers. And these members have sinful flesh. And although our redemption is accomplished in part in our spirits when we are born again, it will be completed with the redemption of our body as Paul reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):22** For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

It is not that the Manichees are correct, but that, in Augustine's zeal to defend the Church, he does not have a correct understanding of the fallen Adamic nature in our flesh according to the word of God.

According to the Scripture, man has a fallen nature because of Adam's sin. When Adam sinned, he brought death on the human race as we read again in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):21** For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

And death is not only physical but spiritual as we read before in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):1** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

So before we accepted Christ, we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God had mercy on us as we continue in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Now Jesus explains to Nicodemus where this new birth took place in **John 3 (KJV):4** Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou

hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

This new birth of the Spirit takes place in our spirit, as He says in verse 6, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Being born of the Holy Spirit we have a new nature, which Peter reveals in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):3** According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

When we were born again, we became partakers of the divine nature, having been born of the Spirit of God. This did not change our flesh. Our bodies are still doomed to die. This proves we still have the old Adamic sin nature in our flesh. Paul explains in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):49** And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Our bodies are yet to be redeemed as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):23** And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

So our bodies will be redeemed at the resurrection, but we are now the sons of God as the apostle John reveals in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

When He shall appear we shall be like him. This will take place at the resurrection.

Augustine continues to argue against the Manichees as he then says, “As ye read, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit,” (Galatians 5:17) and, “There dwelleth not in my flesh any good;” (Romans 7:18) so read ye, “No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church.” (Ephesians 5:29)

It is not that we hate our bodies. But Paul explains that there is another law in my members, as Augustine continues, and says, “As ye read, “I see another law in my members, opposed to the law of my mind;” (Romans 7:23) so read ye, “As Christ loved the Church, so also ought men to love their own wives, as their own bodies.”

We love our bodies and nourish and cherish them, but we also must understand that we are not what we shall be. Our bodies are doomed to die, being descendants of Adam. And Augustine does not quote the Scripture in context as we now read in **Romans 7 (KJV):17** Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Paul specifically says that in his flesh dwelleth no good thing. We continue in **Romans 7 (KJV):20** Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Paul then calls it a “law in my members”. In other words, this is the way it works in my members. Paul then says it is “the body of this death” as we continue in **Romans 7 (KJV):24** O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

So this is not a sickness, but a nature in our flesh to sin.

We love ourselves, but we must understand that our bodies have not been redeemed yet. Knowing this, we put off the lusts of our flesh as we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):22** That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Augustine then concludes, “Be not ye crafty in the former witnesses of Holy Scripture, and deaf in this latter, and ye shall be correct in both. For, if ye receive the latter as right is, ye will endeavor to understand the former also as truth is.”

The Manichees were clearly in error, coming from an Iranian false prophet, Mani. “Manichaeism taught an elaborate dualistic cosmology describing the struggle between a good, spiritual world of light, and an evil, material world of darkness. Through an ongoing process that takes place in human history, light is gradually removed from the world of matter and returned to the world of light, whence it came. Its beliefs were based on local Mesopotamian religious movements and Gnosticism.”

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manichaeism>

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 2, Chapter 11, page 48-49**, he says, as he quotes the Pelagians, “In vain, then, do some of them argue: “If a sinner begets a sinner, so that the guilt of original sin must be done away in his infant son by his receiving baptism, in like manner ought a righteous man to beget a righteous son.”

Augustine continues as he then argues, “**Just as if a man beget children in the flesh by reason of his righteousness, and not because he is moved thereto by the concupiscence which is in his members, and the law of sin is applied by the law of his mind to the purpose of procreation.**”

To Augustine, the sole purpose of sex in marriage was for the purpose of procreation. Any sex without this in mind was thought to be sinful, but a venial sin and not a damnable one. But even though he allowed sex in marriage for the purpose of procreation, he still thought that it was the concupiscence which is in his members, and which he defines as strong sexual desire, or lust, that brought about the begetting of children.

So he then says, “**His begetting children, therefore, shows that he still retains the old nature among the children of this world; it does not arise from the fact of his promotion to newness of life among the children of God.**”

It is interesting that he here affirms that “**the old nature among the children of this world**”

is retained. But as we saw in the previous section, he believed this to be purged with Baptism.

He then continues, “For “the children of this world beget and are begotten.” (Luke 20:34) Hence also what is born of them is like them; for “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” (John 3:6)”

He refers to **Luke 20 (KJV):34** And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

And to **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

And Augustine then continues, “Only the children of God, however, are righteous; but in so far as they are the children of God, they do not carnally beget, because it is of the Spirit, and not of the flesh, that they are themselves begotten.”

Augustine is saying that the children of God do not carnally beget spiritual children, “because it is of the Spirit, and not of the flesh, that they are themselves begotten”.

He continues as he then asserts, “But as many of them as become parents, beget children from the circumstance that they have not yet put off the entire remains of their old nature in exchange for the perfect renovation which awaits them.”

So Augustine allowed sex in marriage for the procreation of children, but he still thought that even this procreation was “from the circumstance that they have not yet put off the entire remains of their old nature in exchange for the perfect renovation which awaits them,” which would be at the resurrection.

Augustine repented of his former promiscuous lifestyle, but it is apparent that this impacted his understanding of marriage.

He continues as he then says, “It follows, therefore, that every son who is born in this old and infirm condition of his father’s nature, must needs himself partake of the same old and infirm condition.”

And he is correct. Everyone born since Adam and Eve will “partake of the same old and infirm condition”.

He then explains, “In order, then, that he may be begotten again, he must also himself be renewed by the Spirit through the remission of sin; and if this change does not take place in him, his righteous father will be of no use to him. For it is by the Spirit that he is righteous, but it is not by the Spirit that he begat his son. On the other hand, if this change does accrue to him, he will not be damaged by an unrighteous father: for it is by the grace of the Spirit that he has passed into the hope of the eternal newness; whereas it is owing to his carnal mind that his father has wholly remained in the old nature.”

We can agree with Augustine here.

## The Sign of Baptism

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, On Baptism, Against the Donatists, Book IV, Chapter 24, in paragraph 32**, he said that, “**we can form a true conjecture of the value of the sacrament of baptism in the case of infants**”.

The gist of Augustine’s thinking on baptism is that he thought baptism, just like circumcision, was a sacrament. Merriam-Webster says that the word “sacrament” is “a

Christian rite (such as baptism or the Eucharist) that is believed to have been ordained by Christ and that is held to be a means of divine grace or to be a sign or symbol of a spiritual reality”.

Augustine makes a parallel between baptism and circumcision. And so circumcision is a sacrament also. As proof of this, he mentions the “case of Moses’ son” in **Exodus 4 (KJV):24** And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. 25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. 26 So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

He does this to show the “manifest present peril, that he should be circumcised”, and “when this was done, the danger of death was removed”. And so the “sacrament” of “circumcision” is of the utmost importance. And so Augustine says, “Yet the apostle says of Abraham himself, that “he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith,” having already believed in his heart, so that “it was counted unto him for righteousness.” (Romans 4:11) Why, therefore, was it commanded him that he should circumcise every male child in order on the eighth day, (Genesis 17:9-14) though it could not yet believe with the heart, that it should be counted unto it for righteousness, because the sacrament in itself was of great avail?”

Augustine makes it sound as if “the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith”, is necessary for righteousness to be counted to us. So he is saying that believing in one’s heart counts, but if one is not sealed by circumcision, there is a “danger of death”. And so now, in order for you to have the “seal of the righteousness of the faith”, you have to be baptized in order to have that counted for righteousness. But Augustine misinterpreted **Romans 4 (KJV):11** And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

Augustine acknowledged that Abraham was justified before he was circumcised, but he seemed to believe that righteousness was not counted to Abraham until he was circumcised. But Romans 4:11 clearly states that Abraham had the righteousness of faith “yet being uncircumcised”. And so we read in **Genesis 15 (KJV):6** And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

And this was before he was circumcised, as we read in **Genesis 17 (KJV):9** And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

Augustine is relying on “invariable custom”, which “is rightly held to have been handed down by apostolical authority”, that is “held by the whole Church”. In Augustine’s thinking, this invariable custom had been held for almost 400 years, and so it was inviolate.

He did not see that baptism was only a token to show that one had believed, and was born again, and had joined the fellowship of believers.

He used terms such as “the sacrament of regeneration”. And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Book III, Chapter 40, paragraph 46, page 615-616**, he mentions “the sacrament of the holy laver”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, On Baptism, Against the Donatists, Book VI, Chapter 29, paragraphs 55-56, page 492-493**, he mentions, “being washed by the sacred and divine laver”.

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, On Baptism, Against the Donatists, Book VI, Chapter 33-34, paragraphs 63-66, page 494-495**, in paragraph 65, he mentions “the one life giving baptism which is in the Catholic Church”.

The emphasis on ritual in the Church is evident at this time. The Church did not understand that it is faith that the Lord gives, which, when it is received, He gives birth to the spirit of the one who has received this faith, and He justifies them, and puts His righteousness down to their account. The ritual of baptism is only a sign that this has happened in the one who has believed.

## Infant Baptism

The Church in Augustine’s time baptized infants because they believed that the faith of others would avail for those who were not yet accountable for knowing good and evil.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, in Chapter 38, page 29-30**, he says, “And that this takes place in the case of infants, through the sacrament of baptism, is not doubted by mother Church, which uses for them the heart and mouth of a mother, that they may be imbued with the sacred mysteries, seeing that they cannot as yet with their own heart “believe unto righteousness,” nor with their own mouth make “confession unto salvation.” (Romans 10:10)”

And Augustine concludes, “There is not indeed a man among the faithful, who would hesitate to call such infants *believers* merely from the circumstance that such a designation is derived from the act of believing; for although incapable of such an act themselves, yet others are sponsors for them in the sacraments.”

We can pray for our children, and we can teach them the ways of the Lord, but we cannot be “sponsors for them”, or have faith for them. Before the age of accountability, they are in God’s hands, as we know from **Deuteronomy 1 (KJV):39** Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, in Chapter 40, page 30-31**, he says, “Now, who can be unaware that, in the case of infants, being baptized is to believe, and not being baptized is not to believe?”

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, in Chapter 24, page 23-24**, he argues, “Now, inasmuch as infants are not held bound by any sins of their own actual life, it is the guilt of original sin which is healed in them by the grace of Him who saves them by the laver of regeneration.”

Infants are bound by “original sin” because all die in Adam, as in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):21** For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But the “laver of regeneration” doesn’t save anyone. It is God who gives faith to believe,



and birth by His Spirit. Because of Deuteronomy 1:39 we can be confident that God's mercy abounds to infants.

The instance at the house of Cornelius in Acts, chapter 10, proves that people are born again when they believe, for they received the Holy Spirit just as the apostles. You don't receive the Holy Spirit unless you have been born again. It is easier to believe that God is merciful than to believe in baptismal regeneration.

## The Wedding Garment

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermons on New Testament Lessons, Sermon XL. [XC. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, Matt. xxii. 2, etc., about the marriage of the king's son; against the Donatists, on charity. Delivered at Carthage in the Restituta., in paragraphs 5-9, page 393-396**, Augustine begins in **paragraph 5**, as he says, "What is it then? I would not that ye all who approach the Lord's Table which is in this life, should be with the many who are to be shut out, but with the few who are to be reserved. And how shall ye be able to attain to this? Take "the wedding garment."

He is referring to the "wedding garment" Jesus spoke of in Matthew 22:1-14.

He also said in this paragraph that, "Without Baptism it is true no one attaineth to God; but not every one that hath Baptism attaineth to Him."

Augustine believed that one is regenerated by Baptism. He seems to be contradicting himself here. If one is born from above at baptism, and passes from death to life, as in John 5:24, can they then lose eternal life? The answer according to Scripture is definitely no. When we pass from death to life, God justifies us, and puts His righteousness down to our account. We are not condemned, as we read in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

In **paragraph 6**, Augustine asserts, "What is that "wedding garment" then? This is the wedding garment: "Now the end of the commandment," says the Apostle, "is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." (1 Timothy 1:5)"

Without charity we are nothing, not even His children, he asserts.

In **paragraph 7**, he concludes, "Thus against the one who slayeth, is the One who maketh alive. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22) Now as whosoever is born of the first, dieth; so whosoever believeth in Christ is made alive. Provided, that is, that he have "the wedding garment," and be invited as one who is to remain, and not to be cast out."

Augustine makes it a slippery slope to be saved. But the Scriptures do not support his assertion that "whosoever believeth in Christ is made alive. Provided, that is, that he have "the wedding garment".

But the "wedding garment" Jesus spoke of in Matthew 22:1-14 is not eternal life, but it is the righteousness of God, which is like a garment that God clothes us with when we believe in Jesus Christ, and He justifies us. It has nothing to do with charity, or love. Love is a fruit of the Spirit that grows in us after we have been born again of the Spirit of God.

## The Spiritual Regeneration in John, Chapter 3

In **On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, Chapters 59-62, page 38-40**, in **Chapter 59**, Augustine quotes John 3:1-21 faithfully.

In **Chapter 60**, he refers to spiritual regeneration, but he skips over John 3:1-12, and instead focuses on John 3:13, and refers to it as something heavenly, as he says, “**Thus, He says, shall come the spiritual birth,—men, from being earthly, shall become heavenly; and this they can only obtain by being made members of me;**”

And with this statement, he intimates that one has to be connected to the body of Christ, the Church, to become heavenly. He uses John 3:13 to try to explain that it is a heavenly birth, as in **John 3 (ESV):13** No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

In **Chapter 61**, while Augustine correctly sees the correspondence between the uplifted serpent, and the death of Christ on the cross, he does not understand that it was the faith of those who looked up to the serpent upon the pole that brought about their healing. In the same way, it is the faith of those who look to Jesus Christ that saves them.

In **Chapter 62**, he asserts that the “**virtue of the sacrament and the answer of their sponsors**” in baptism saves infants. But “sacraments” are not mentioned in the Scriptures. And one can only have faith for himself or herself.

Then in **On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, Chapter 70, page 43**, he says, “**Our full adoption, then, as children, is to happen at the redemption of our body.**” He understood that our bodies would be changed at the resurrection. But he then says, “**But inasmuch as we are not yet actually saved, we are also not yet fully renewed, nor yet also fully sons of God, but children of the world.**”

When we believe in Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord, we are born again. We pass from death to life. We are now the sons and daughters of God as the apostle John reveals in **1 John 3 (KJV):1** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. **2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

But let us take heed to Paul’s warning in **2 Corinthians 13 (KJV):5** Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

If we have truly believed, Jesus Christ is in us, and we are in Him.

Then in **On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book II, Chapters 9-10, page 47-48**, in **Chapter 9**, Augustine says that we are saved by the “**laver of regeneration**”, and this takes place “**by hope**”. But a better translation of Titus 3:5 is the “washing of regeneration”.

Augustine often relied on the **Latin Vulgate** in his writings. The Catholic Church was greatly influenced by the traditions of those who had gone before, and they began to substitute words into the Biblical text that corresponded to their traditions of interpretation, such as laver for washing.

Although it is true that we are not what we shall be, Augustine doesn't seem to completely understand that we are now fully sons of God by the new birth in our spirits.

Then in **Tractate XII. Chapter III. 6–21, paragraph 5, page 82**, he says, “if one is born to the everlasting inheritance of God as his Father, be he born of the bowels of the Church.” Because of his belief that the ritual of baptism was the “laver of regeneration”, he concluded that one is “born of the bowels of the Church”, since the Church administered baptism, whereby “we are born by the word and sacrament”, according to Augustine.

But as we read in John 1:12, being born again is a sovereign working of God in the one whom He has chosen, for it is of His will that we are born again and not ours, as we read again in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

## The Adamic Sin Nature

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book II, in Chapter 37, page 59**, again, Augustine has said that the “it” that “is obtained by those who obey God” is the “primeval righteousness”, which is obtained “as a great acquisition”, by those who “do not obey the desires of this evil concupiscence, but crucify in themselves the flesh with its affections and lusts”. This is done “in order that they may be Jesus Christ's, who on His cross symbolized this, and who gave them power through His grace to become the sons of God.”

Augustine makes it a process whereby we obtain the “primeval righteousness”, and “may be Jesus Christ's” if we “do not obey the desires of this evil concupiscence, but crucify” in ourselves “the flesh with its affections and lusts”, so that we may receive “power through His grace to become the sons of God.” But the Scriptures are clear that when we believe, we are born again, and we are now the sons of God, as we read in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

In his mind, it is as if those who receive Jesus Christ are always becoming sons of God. That is, in his thinking it is a process that does not complete until one takes his or her final breath. In **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book II, Chapter 44, page 62-63**, he believed “that a full and perfect remission of sins takes place only in baptism, that the character of the actual man does not at once undergo a total change, but that the first fruits of the Spirit in such as walk worthily change the old carnal nature into one of like character by a process of renewal, which increases day by day, until the entire old nature is so renovated that the very weakness of the natural body attains to the strength and incorruptibility of the spiritual body”.

Again, the “old carnal nature” in our flesh is not renovated, but it is overcome by the life of the Spirit of God in our spirits when we are born again. The believer undergoes a progressive sanctification in their character, which relates to their soul, as they walk with the Lord in the light of His word. The “old carnal nature” in our flesh will be done away with at the resurrection, when we are changed to be glorified like Christ, as we read in **Philippians 3**

**(KJV):20** For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: **21** Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Remission of sins is made when we are born again. We then have a standing of righteousness, and only need to confess our sins to be cleansed. The law of sin does remain “in our old carnal nature, as if overcome and destroyed, if it does not, by consenting to unlawful objects, somehow revive, and recover its own reign and dominion,” as he says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book II, Chapter 45, page 62-63.**

However, this will only happen if we do not yield to the inner spirit which has been born again of the Spirit of God. But it is not so that we then lose the grace of God, and somehow become unborn again in our spirits, and need to be born again, again.

In his answer to Coelestius, a follower of Pelagius, Augustine also says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Man's Perfection in Righteousness, Chapter II, page 160**, “Our answer to this is, that sin can be avoided, if our corrupted nature be healed by God's grace, through our Lord Jesus Christ. For, in so far as it is not sound, in so far does it either through blindness fail to see, or through weakness fail to accomplish, that which it ought to do; “for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh,” (Galatians 5:17) so that a man does not do the things which he would.”

Augustine sort of mixes up the soul and the flesh. He really thinks of the law of sin to be in the soul, rather than in our flesh, as he again responds to Coelestius, “The answer to this is, that sin is not natural; but nature (especially in that corrupt state from which we have become by nature “children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:2)) has too little determination of will to avoid sin, unless assisted and healed by God's grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Augustine believed that man's nature was good, as created by God, but the lust of concupiscence had corrupted man's state, and needed to be healed. He believed this to be a gradual healing as he says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Man's Perfection in Righteousness, Chapter VI, page 163**, “We answer, that man's nature is both good, and is also able to be free from evil. Therefore do we earnestly pray, “Deliver us from evil.” (Matthew 6:13) This deliverance, indeed, is not fully wrought, so long as the soul is oppressed by the body, which is hastening to corruption. (Wisdom 9:15) This process, however, is being effected by grace through faith, so that it may be said by and by, “O death, where is thy struggle? Where is thy sting, O death? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law;” (1 Corinthians 15:55-56) because the law by prohibiting sin only increases the desire for it, unless the Holy Ghost spreads abroad that love, which shall then be full and perfect, when we shall see face to face.”

It is true that complete deliverance from the sinful nature in our flesh will be accomplished at the resurrection. But Augustine does not seem to acknowledge that our salvation has already been secured when we are born again by faith in Jesus Christ. He then makes it a requirement to add merit in order to be worthy, as he says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Man's Perfection in Righteousness, Chapter VIII, page 164**, “It is after this life, indeed, that the reward of perfection is bestowed, but only upon those by whom in their present life has been acquired the merit of such a

recompense. For no one, after going hence, shall arrive at fullness of righteousness, unless, whilst here, he shall have run his course by hungering and thirsting after it. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” (Matthew 5:6)”

But we saw that in the sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus was describing the qualities of those who have their candles lit, and have salt as we read in **Matthew 5 (KJV):13** Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

We are not saved by our “merit”, that is, by our works, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):8** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

And he says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Man’s Perfection in Righteousness, Chapter XVII, page 173**, “For the meaning of the prayer, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant,” is this: “Judge me not according to Thyself,” who art without sin; “for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” This without doubt is understood as spoken of the present life, whilst the predicate “shall not be justified” has reference to that perfect state of righteousness which belongs not to this life.”

But again, we “were justified” when we believed, as in **1 Corinthians 6 (NASB):11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

We were justified when we had faith and believed, as we read again in **Romans 5 (NASB):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

And, when we were justified, the righteousness of God was put down to our account as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

It is by grace through faith that we are saved, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God. And after this, we are then “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”.

The Adamic sin nature remains in our flesh until we are changed at the resurrection. But we have the victory over it as we yield to the Holy Spirit and the new divine nature in our spirit.



# The Fall

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XIII**, in **Chapters 1-4, page 245**, in **Chapter 1** Augustine understands that “the fall of the first man” is responsible for “the origin and propagation of human death.”

In **Chapter 2**, he then explains that, “the human soul is truly affirmed to be immortal, yet it also has a certain death of its own”, that is “when God forsakes it”. He then explains, “Therefore the death of both—that is, of the whole man—occurs when the soul, forsaken by God, forsakes the body.” He then concludes, “And this death of the whole man is followed by that which, on the authority of the divine oracles, we call the second death. This the Saviour referred to when He said, “Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28)”

The word, “destroy”, means “to render useless”. It’s not that the soul and body cease to exist in hell, but that they are ruined in torment. Augustine understood this. What he did not understand is that there is a division between soul and spirit, and that man is composed of body, soul, and spirit.

So before Christ, our spirit is dead in trespasses and sins. We have no relationship with God. Our souls are also in a sense dead to God, since they have no awareness of Him. But when we are born again, our spirit is made alive to God, and our souls are renewed day by day in a progressive sanctification.

Now Augustine understood that the sin of our parents, Adam and Eve, is passed down to all who are born of them, as he said in **Chapter 3**, “Wherefore we must say that the first men were indeed so created, that if they had not sinned, they would not have experienced any kind of death; but that, having become sinners, they were so punished with death, that whatsoever sprang from their stock should also be punished with the same death. For nothing else could be born of them than that which they themselves had been.” And he says correctly, “what man was made, not when created, but when he sinned and was punished, this he propagated, so far as the origin of sin and death are concerned.” And he adds, “human nature was in his person vitiated and altered to such an extent, that he suffered in his members the warring of disobedient lust, and became subject to the necessity of dying.”

Now Augustine believed that it was by the ritual of baptism, or as he says, “the sacrament of regeneration”, that is, “the laver of regeneration”, that men and women are born again.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XIII, Chapter 13, page 251**, he says that because “our first parents had transgressed the commandment, divine grace forsook them, and they were confounded at their own wickedness; and therefore they took fig-leaves (which were possibly the first that came to hand in their troubled state of mind), and covered their shame; for though their members remained the same, they had shame now where they had none before.” And now “began the flesh to lust against the Spirit, (Galatians 5:17) in which strife we are born, deriving from the first transgression a seed of death, and bearing in our members, and in our vitiated nature, the contest or even victory of the flesh.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, Chapter 2-4, page 15-16**, he says in **Chapter 2**



that it is the “**death of the soul which takes place in sin**”, and “It is the unbelievers who have died this death, to whom the Lord pointed when He said, “Let the dead bury their dead.” (Matthew 8:22, Luke 9:60)” It is true that all unbelievers are dead in trespasses and sins. This is why we need a Savior.

Now we showed that man was tested in the Garden of Eden because sin was already in the universe. Satan had sinned, and judgment came upon the first earth. So man gets a second chance because sin was already in the world, while no sin existed before Satan sinned.

Augustine says correctly, “Therefore, if Adam had not sinned, he would not have been divested of his body, but would have been clothed upon with immortality and incorruption, that “mortality might have been swallowed up of life;” that is, that he might have passed from the natural body into the spiritual body.”

And in **Chapter 3**, he shows that old age and death are the result of Adam’s sin, and that “this very flesh of ours, which we now possess, is not therefore invulnerable”, but “mortal”.

And in **Chapter 4**, he affirms what “**The apostle says to the Romans: “But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. If therefore the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”** (Romans 8:10-11) I think that so clear and open a sentence as this only requires to be read, and not expounded. The body, says he, is dead, not because of earthly frailty, as being made of the dust of the ground, but because of sin; what more do we want? And he is most careful in his words: he does not say “is mortal,” but “dead.”

And so under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, in Chapter 7-16, page 17-18**, he says in **Chapter 7**, “For they are bound to remember that, although their body still bears that desert of sin, which is irrevocably bound to the condition of death, **yet their spirit has already begun to live because of the righteousness of faith, although it had actually become extinct by the death, as it were, of unbelief.** No small gift, therefore, he says, must you suppose to have been conferred upon you, by the circumstance that Christ is in you; inasmuch as in the body, which is dead because of sin, your spirit is even now alive because of righteousness; so that therefore you should not despair of the life even of your body.” “For if the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Romans 8:11)

And in **Chapter 11**, he explains, “Again, in the clause which follows, “In which all have sinned,” how cautiously, rightly, and unambiguously is the statement expressed! For if you understand that sin to be meant which by one man entered into the world, “In which [sin] all have sinned,” it is surely clear enough, that the sins which are peculiar to every man, which they themselves commit and which belong simply to them, mean one thing; and that the one sin, in and by which all have sinned, means another thing; since all were that one man.”

He is referring again to **Romans 5 (KJV):12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

And to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):22** For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Adam was the federal head of the human race. He alone, without sin, possessed the freedom to obey God or not to obey God. And now we, being his descendants, have a sin nature

in our flesh as a result. So by Adam, sin entered into the world, and we, who were unbelievers in Jesus Christ, were by nature children of wrath, even as other unbelievers, because in Adam all die. And so we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):3** Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But now as believers, we are not condemned as we read in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And in **Chapter 15**, Augustine also says, “**But observe more attentively what he says, that “through the offence of one, many are dead”**, referring to (Romans 5:16).

We have to conclude with Augustine that the one offence gave to the whole human race original sin. He has argued well here.

And in **Chapter 16**, he says, “**And from this we gather that we have derived from Adam, in whom we all have sinned, not all our actual sins, but only original sin; whereas from Christ, in whom we are all justified, we obtain the remission not merely of that original sin, but of the rest of our sins also, which we have added.**”

And so we read in **Romans 5 (NIV):1** Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

## Original Sin

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Original Sin, Book II, Chapter 19, page 243-244**, he is speaking of Pelagius, and he says, “**The real objection against them is, that they refuse to confess that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has been transmitted to them and requires to be purged by regeneration;**”

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism, Book 1, Chapter 20, page 22**, he explains, “**because, whilst by the generation of the flesh only that sin is contracted which is original; yet by the regeneration of the Spirit there is effected the remission not of original sin only, but also of the sins of man’s own voluntary and actual commission.**”

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Original Sin, Chapter 37, page 250**, he adds, “**we are quickened together in Christ, in whom we are circumcised with the circumcision not made with the hand, (Colossians 2:11,13) but such as was prefigured by the old manual circumcision, that the body of sin might be done away (Romans 6:6) which was born with us from Adam.**” The propagation of a condemned origin condemns us, unless we are cleansed by the likeness of sinful flesh, in which He was sent without sin, who nevertheless concerning sin condemned sin, having been made sin for us. (Romans 8:3, Galatians 3:13)”

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Original Sin, Chapter 45-48, page 253-255**, in **Chapter 45** he says, “**So, likewise, his first**

birth holds a man in that bondage from which nothing but his second birth delivers him.”

And in **Chapter 46**, he adds, “Owing, indeed, to God’s justice, who punishes, this fatal flaw has so far prevailed, that men are born with the fault of original sin; but yet its influence has not extended so far as to stop the birth of men.”

He also says, “For so excellent is a man in comparison with a beast, that man’s vice is beast’s nature; still man’s nature is never on this account changed into beast’s nature. God, therefore, condemns man because of the fault wherewithal his nature is disgraced, and not because of his nature, which is not destroyed in consequence of its fault.”

And he then explains, “Heaven forbid that we should think beasts are obnoxious to the sentence of condemnation! It is only proper that they should be free from our misery, inasmuch as they cannot partake of our blessedness. What, then, is there surprising or unjust in man’s being subjected to an impure spirit—not on account of nature, but on account of that impurity of his which he has contracted in the stain of his birth, and which proceeds, not from the divine work, but from the will of man;—since also the impure spirit itself is a good thing considered as spirit, but evil in that it is impure?”

God created good things, and spirit is a creation of God, so it is good, “but evil in that it is impure”. Before Christ, we are spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...

It is not just something “contracted in the stain of his birth”, but a sinful nature in our flesh, where sin dwells as we read in **Romans 7 (KJV):23** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

There is a law of sin in our members, that is, a nature to sin. Augustine then says, “For the one is of God, and is His work, while the other emanates from man’s own will.”

Our spirit is dead in trespasses and sins before Christ. It is still the work of God, but must be born again to be pure. The impurity is not just “from man’s own will”, but is a nature in his flesh which has affected his will, and put it into bondage to sin. And the spirit of man, when he is born again, is able to overcome the flesh, as Paul reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

This law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is a new divine nature in our spirit that has been born of the Spirit of God.

Augustine rightly divides the word of God, as he refers to **Romans 5 (KJV):19** For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

And yet, Augustine cannot bring himself to call it a sin nature in our flesh, or even “the law of sin in our members”. Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Marriage and Concupiscence, Book I, in Chapter 57, page 307-308**, he calls it “not really nature, but corruption”, and “not a bodily substance or nature, but disorder”. It is simply as “very often, indeed, if not always, the ailing character of parents is in a certain way implanted, and reappears in the bodies of their children.”

The Scripture is clear that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh, even after we are saved, as we read in **Romans 7 (KJV):18** For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,)

dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

But in **Chapter 58**, he also says, “Wherefore, although even in persons whose natural birth is followed by regeneration through grace, there exists this carnal concupiscence which contends against the law of the mind, yet, seeing that it is remitted in the remission of sins, it is no longer accounted to them as sin, nor is it in any degree hurtful, unless consent is yielded to its motions for unlawful deeds.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book IV, Chapter 21, page 425-426**, he then continues, “Let us, then, see what Cyprian thought concerning original sin, which entered by one man into the world.”

Augustine points to Cyprian, who said, “We had been limited and shut up into a narrow space by the commandment of innocence; nor would the infirmity and weakness of human frailty have any resource unless the divine mercy coming once more in aid should open some way of securing salvation by pointing out works of justice and mercy, so that by almsgiving we may wash away whatever foulness we subsequently contract.””

But “almsgiving” does not “wash away whatever foulness we subsequently contract”. Our salvation is secure by what Jesus has done for us. For “whatever foulness we subsequently contract”, that is, sins we commit after we have been born again, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only propitiation for our sins.

But Augustine continues, “By this testimony this witness refutes two falsehoods of theirs,—the one, wherein they say that the human race draws no sin from Adam which needs cure and healing through Christ; the other, in which they say that the saints have no sin after baptism.”

## Man’s Nature

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLII. Chapter VIII. 37–47, paragraphs 15-16, page 239-240**, in **paragraph 15** he says, ““He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.” Here, again, it is not of their nature as men, but of their depravity, that you are to think. In this way they are of God, and yet not of God. By nature they are of God, in depravity they are not of God.”

He then says, “How were they of Him? Because He it was that created the man of whom they were born. How were they of Him? Because He is the Architect of nature,—Himself the Creator of flesh and spirit. How, then, were they not of Him? Because they had made themselves depraved. They were no longer of Him, because, imitating the devil, they had become the children of the devil.”

When man sinned, he became a child of the devil, and his body became mortal, and sin as a law, that is, a nature, is now in his members. And we read in **Ephesians 2 (NASB):1** And you were dead in your offenses and sins, **2** in which you previously walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working

in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all previously lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the rest.

And in **paragraph 16** he says, “When the Lord then said, “He that is of God heareth the words of God: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.” He did not distinguish the value of different natures, or find, beyond their own soul and body, any nature in men which had not been vitiated by sin;”

The word “vitiating” means “to make faulty or defective”. (**Merriam Webster**)

The Scripture is clear. The whole human race is mortal, and has a sin nature inherited from Adam. Augustine acknowledged this as original sin, but he did not understand that it was also a nature in our flesh. He would call it an infirmity, a defect, an impurity, and in other writings a disease. But this law of sin is a nature that is still in the flesh of believers who have been born again. But because of the new divine nature in our spirits, we do not have to yield to this sin nature in our bodies, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death in our members.

When we were in the flesh we could not please God as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):8** So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Before Christ we did not have a choice. We were totally in the flesh. Now we have a choice. Let us mortify the deeds of the body, and really live.



## Salvation

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, On Baptism, Against the Donatists, Book VI, Chapter 17, paragraphs 28-29, page 487-488**, Augustine believed that “all who are baptized with the baptism that is consecrated in the words of the gospel have the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the sacrament alone; but that in heart and in life neither do those have them who live an abandoned and accursed life within.” He did not advocate rebaptism as long as they who had been “consecrated in the words of the gospel have the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XIX, Chapter 4, page 401-403**, he also says, “life eternal is the supreme good, death eternal the supreme evil, and that to obtain the one and escape the other we must live rightly. And thus it is written, “The just lives by faith,” (Habakkuk 2:4)”

But it is not a matter of living rightly. Once we have been born of the Spirit of God, we have eternal life. We are not condemned, and we have a standing of righteousness because God has justified us. If after we have been born again, we believe not, He abides faithful as we read in **2 Timothy 2 (KJV):13** If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

But if we don’t live rightly after we have been born again, we will still be saved, yet as by fire. God will judge us so that we should not be condemned with the world.

Augustine did not feel safe, as he says, “For the soul is so much the less subjected to God as it is less occupied with the thought of God; and the flesh is so much the less subjected to the spirit as it lusts more vehemently against the spirit. So long, therefore, as we are beset by this weakness, this plague, this disease, how shall we dare to say that we are safe?”

But he recognized that we are saved by hope, as he says that the “Apostle Paul, speaking not of men without prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, but of those whose lives were regulated by true piety, and whose virtues were therefore true, says, “For we are saved by hope: now hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” (Romans 8:24-25) As, therefore, we are saved, so we are made happy by hope.”

But “we ought patiently to endure”, he says.

Now Augustine thought that our flesh had “this weakness, this plague, this disease” whereby “the flesh is so much the less subjected to the spirit as it lusts more vehemently against the spirit”. He did not fully understand that the flesh, being mortal, and being a descendent of Adam, has a sin nature, or “law of sin” in its members.

But under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine Sermon XCIII. [CXLIII. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, John xvi. 7, “I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away,” etc., Paragraph 3, page 537**, Augustine testifies, “Because even the Flesh of Christ he knew not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, who, not by touching in curiosity, but in believing assured, acknowledgeth the power of His Resurrection; not saying in his heart, “Who hath ascended into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down; or, Who hath descended into the deep? that is, to bring back Christ from the dead.” “But,” saith he, “the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, that Jesus is the Lord; and if thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the



heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Romans 10:6-10)”

And he then affirms, “These, Brethren, are the words of the Apostle, pouring them forth with the holy inebriation of the Holy Ghost Himself.”

Again, there is no clearer message of salvation than this Scripture in Romans. The Lord is all about relationship. If we shall confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in our heart that God has raised him from the dead, we will be saved.

## Predestination

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapter 31, page 512-513**, he says, “**For we have learned that the Lord of glory Himself was predestinated in so far as the man was made the Son of God.**” He then refers to Romans 1:1-4, as he summarizes, “**Therefore Jesus was predestinated, so that He who was to be the Son of David according to the flesh should yet be in power the Son of God, according to the Spirit of sanctification, because He was born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary.**”

While Augustine follows the **Latin Vulgate** which mistranslates the word “declared” to be “predestinated” in Romans 1:4, the predestination of the Son of God is implied in other Scriptures as in **Acts 2 (KJV):23** Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

He then affirms, “**As, therefore, that one man was predestinated to be our Head, so we being many are predestinated to be His members. Here let human merits which have perished through Adam keep silence, and let that grace of God reign which reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord, the only Son of God, the one Lord.**”

And he says, that just as “**God certainly foreknew that He would do these things**”, so therefore, “**that same predestination of the saints which most especially shone forth in the Saint of saints**”, speaking of Christ, took place. So just as He was predestinated, so also we have been predestinated.

Augustine then explains as he says, “**For we have learned that the Lord of glory Himself was predestinated in so far as the man was made the Son of God.**”

Augustine then says, “Such a transporting of human nature was predestinated, so great, so lofty, and so sublime that there was no exalting it more highly,—just as on our behalf that divinity had no possibility of more humbly putting itself off, than by the assumption of man’s nature with the weakness of the flesh, even to the death of the cross.”

This was God’s plan, as he says, “**because He made us to believe in Christ, who made for us a Christ on whom we believe. He makes in men the beginning and the completion of the faith in Jesus who made the man Jesus the beginner and finisher of faith; (Hebrews 12:2) for thus, as you know, He is called in the epistle which is addressed to the Hebrews.**”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapter 34, page 514-516**, Augustine says, “**Let us, then, understand the calling whereby they become elected,—not those who are elected because they have believed, but who are elected that they may believe. For the Lord Himself also**

sufficiently explains this calling when He says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” (John 15:16)”, and as “the apostle says, “As He hath chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world”? (Ephesians 1:4)”

And he is clear, as he concludes, “By choosing them, therefore; He makes them rich in faith, as He makes them heirs of the kingdom; because He is rightly said to choose that in them, in order to make which in them He chose them. I ask, who can hear the Lord saying, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,” and can dare to say that men believe in order to be elected, when they are rather elected to believe; lest against the judgment of truth they be found to have first chosen Christ to whom Christ says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you”? (John 15:16)”

Here we see the true greatness of Augustine. And what is the greatness that we see, but that he rightly divides the word of truth in regards to our predestination. Now he was definitely influenced by the dogmas of the Church in his time. But here he defines our predestination without flaw according to the word of God.

And he adds, “Therefore God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinating us to the adoption of children, not because we were going to be of ourselves holy and immaculate, but He chose and predestinated us that we might be so.” And so we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapter 27, page 511**, in his defense of our predestination, Augustine says that God’s grace is “given freely to whom it is given, because it is neither of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy”, as he refers to Romans 9:16.

## Faith, God’s Gift

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapters 39-43, page 517-519**, in **Chapter 39** he says, “for His gift is also the beginning of faith”. And he says, “God, therefore, worketh in the hearts of men with that calling according to His purpose, of which we have spoken a great deal, that they should not hear the gospel in vain, but when they heard it, should be converted and believe, receiving it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God.”

And in **Chapter 40**, he affirms, “Moreover, we are admonished that the beginning of men’s faith is God’s gift”, about which he adds in **Chapter 41**, “This gift of heavenly grace had descended to that seller of purple (Acts 16:14) for whom, as Scripture says in the Acts of the Apostles, “The Lord opened her heart, and she gave heed unto the things which were said by Paul;” for she was so called that she might believe.

And in **Chapter 42** he says, “Let them hear, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)” In **Chapter 43** he concludes, “Wherefore I determined, as far as I

could, to set forth that this very beginning also is God's gift." And so we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):**8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

## Justification by Faith

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LXVIII, paragraph 37, page 298**, he says, "By which punctuation, doubtless to be preferred by the agreement of many copies, and those deserving of credit, there seemeth to me to be implied faith which precedeth works: because without the merits of good works through faith the ungodly is justified, just as the Apostle said, "To one believing in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness:" (Romans 4:5) in order that afterwards faith itself through love may begin to work."

And he says, "For, "I judge," saith the Apostle, "that a man is justified through faith without the works of the Law. Is He God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles?" (Romans 3:28)"

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CXI, paragraph 3, page 545**, he says, "For a man worketh not righteousness save he be justified: but by "believing on Him that justifieth the ungodly," (Romans 4:5) he beginneth with faith; that good may not by preceding show what he hath deserved, but by following what he hath received...."

That is, we don't do righteous things unless He has first justified us.

## Perseverance

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Gift of Perseverance, Chapter 15, page 531**, Augustine says, speaking of the Church, "It prays that believers may persevere; therefore God gives perseverance to the end. God foreknew that He would do this. This is the very predestination of the saints, "whom He has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and unspotted before Him in love; predestinating them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He hath shown them favour in His beloved Son, in whom they have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace... Against a trumpet of truth so clear as this, what man of sober and watchful faith can receive any human arguments?"

To Augustine, if one did not persevere, they were not predestinated. If they were predestinated, they would have persevered, and continued with them.

Then under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Gift of Perseverance, Chapter 41, page 542**, he adds, "But if grace precedes faith because it precedes will, certainly it precedes all obedience; it also precedes love, by which alone God is truly and pleasantly obeyed. And all these things grace works in him to whom it is given, and in whom it precedes all these things. [XVII.] Among these benefits there remains perseverance

unto the end, which is daily asked for in vain from the Lord, if the Lord by His grace does not effect it in him whose prayers He hears. See now how foreign it is from the truth to deny that perseverance even to the end of this life is the gift of God; since He Himself puts an end to this life when He wills, and if He puts an end before a fall that is threatening, He makes the man to persevere even unto the end.”

We who have believed “are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”, as in 1 Peter 1:5. And so, “Among these benefits there remains perseverance unto the end”. Those who are predestined by God will persevere unto the end.

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Gift of Perseverance, Chapter 47, page 544-548**, he says, “These gifts, therefore, of God, which are given to the elect who are called according to God’s purpose, among which gifts is both the beginning of belief and perseverance in the faith to the termination of this life, as I have proved by such a concurrent testimony of reasons and authorities,—these gifts of God, I say, if there is no such predestination as I am maintaining, are not foreknown by God. But they are foreknown. This, therefore, is the predestination which I maintain. [XVIII.] Consequently sometimes the same predestination is signified also under the name of foreknowledge; as says the apostle, “God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.” (Romans 11:2)”

And he adds, “Therefore, in the election, and in this remnant which were made so by the election of grace, he wished to be understood the people which God did not reject, because He foreknew them. This is that election by which He elected those, whom He willed, in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without spot in His sight, in love, predestinating them unto the adoption of sons.”

And in **Chapter 48**, he concludes, “Yet, in whatever manner the word of God is spoken to man, beyond a doubt for man to hear it in such a way as to obey it, is God’s gift.”

And Augustine is in agreement with the Scriptures about predestination, as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

But Augustine will have more to say about perseverance when we get to the chapter on **Grace**.

## The Sacraments

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate LIII. Chapter XII. 37–43, paragraph 10, page 294**, he says, “For the mere syllables of Christ’s name, and the Christian sacraments, are of no profit, where faith in Christ is itself resisted. For faith in Christ is to believe in Him that justifieth the ungodly; (Romans 4:5) to believe in the Mediator, without whose interposition we cannot be reconciled unto God; to

believe in the Saviour, who came to seek and to save that which was lost; (Luke 19:10) to believe in Him who said, “Without me ye can do nothing.”” (John 15:5)

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate CXX. Chapter XIX. 31–42, and XX. 1-9, paragraph 2, page 432-433**, he says, “A suggestive word was made use of by the evangelist, in not saying pierced, or wounded His side, or anything else, but “opened;” that thereby, in a sense, the gate of life might be thrown open, from whence have flowed forth the sacraments of the Church, without which there is no entrance to the life which is the true life. That blood was shed for the remission of sins; that water it is that makes up the healthgiving cup, and supplies at once the laver of baptism and water for drinking.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LXXIV, paragraph 1, page 342-343**, he says, “The Sacraments are not the same, for some Sacraments there are giving Salvation, others promising a Saviour. The Sacraments of the New Testament give Salvation, the Sacraments of the Old Testament did promise a Saviour. When therefore thou hast now the things promised, why dost thou seek the things promising, having now the Saviour?...God through the New Testament hath taken out of the hands of His sons those things which are like the playthings of boys, in order that He might give something more useful to them growing up, on that account must He be supposed not to have given those former things Himself. He gave both Himself. But the Law itself through Moses was given, Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ: (John 1:17) Grace because there is fulfilled through love that which by the letter was being enjoined, Truth because there is being rendered that which was promised.”

We see his emphasis on ritual here. But ritual does not save us. Faith saves us, which is God’s gift, as he himself maintained.

The sacraments were a means of obtaining grace in the early Church. The grace received at baptism could be lost, as we will read in the chapter **Grace**, under **Losing Grace**, and it could also be regained.

## Wood, Hay, Stubble

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LXXXI, paragraph 20, page 394-395**, Augustine then concludes, “For let no one on this foundation building adulteries, blasphemies, sacrileges, idolatries, perjuries, think he shall be “saved through fire,” as though they were the “wood, hay, stubble:” but he that buildeth the love of earthly things on the foundation of the kingdom of Heaven, that is upon Christ, his love of temporal things shall be burned, and himself shall be saved through the right foundation.”

So Augustine is saying that deadly or mortal sins, which in his mind are such as “adulteries, blasphemies, sacrileges, idolatries, perjuries” and the like, will not allow one to be saved by fire. But the apostle John says that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin in **1 John 1 (KJV):7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

The remedy for sin, big or small, is confession as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness.

Augustine upheld the tradition of the Catholic Church in his time. But the discipline of the Lord includes weakness, sickness, and sleep, that is, physical death. And when the Lord chastens, it is so “that we should not be condemned with the world”, as in 1 Corinthians 11:32. If one has truly believed in Jesus Christ, and confessed Him as Lord, he has been born again. He now has eternal life in his spirit. There may be much in his soul, that is, his mind, will, heart, emotions, and conscience, that needs cleansing. If he or she yields to this progressive sanctification, which the Lord does in the life of the believer, they will be rewarded for doing the works that God has ordained for them. If he or she does not yield to this progressive sanctification, they will not be rewarded for their works because their works will only be wood, hay, or stubble. These will be burned up in the fire, which tests their works. They will still be saved, yet as by the fire of their bad choices in this life.

## Already Sons of God

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CXXIII, paragraph 5, page 597**, he says, “Yet since we hope for those things which are to come, and sigh for future happiness, and since it hath not yet appeared what we shall be, although we are already “sons of God;” (1 John 3:2) for “our life is hidden with Christ in God:” (Colossians 3:3) “we are utterly despised,” by those who seek or enjoy happiness in this world.”

And because of our regeneration, our justification, and our adoption, we are “already “sons of God””.



## The Resurrection

Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine Sermon

**LXXVII. [CXXVII. Ben.]** On the words of the Gospel, John v. 25, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God; and they that hear shall live,” etc.; and on the words of the apostle, “things which eye saw not,” etc., 1 Cor. ii. 9 , Paragraph 7, page 488-489, Augustine says, “Such dead as these are in such wise raised by the Word of God, as to live in faith. They who were dead in unbelief, are aroused by the Word. Of this hour said the Lord, “The hour shall come, and now is.” For with His Own Word did He raise them that were dead in unbelief; of whom the Apostle says, “Arise thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Ephesians 5:14) This is the resurrection of hearts, this is the resurrection of the inner man, this is the resurrection of the soul.”

Augustine spoke of the spiritual resurrection when one is born again of the Spirit of God, as Jesus taught in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Now Jesus is speaking of the resurrection in our spirit where we are born again, as Jesus reveals in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

We now have an awareness of the spiritual realm that we never had before. Our spirit is now made new, and has a new nature, as we read in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):3** According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Our soul, that is our mind, will, conscience, and heart which is the center of our feelings, must be renewed as we walk in the light of His word.

We continue to read in **paragraph 8**, as Augustine then says, “But this is not the only resurrection, there remains a resurrection of the body also.”

And he concludes, “Seeing then that the Lord hath impressed upon us this resurrection of souls, unto which we ought all to hasten, and to labour that we may live therein, and living persevere even unto the end, it remained for Him to impress upon us the resurrection of bodies also, which is to be at the end of the world. Now hear how He hath impressed this too.”

Augustine placed this resurrection at the “end of the world”, and since he considered himself and the Church in his time to be living in the thousand year reign of Christ, the “end of the world” to him was the final judgment that we read of in **Revelation 20 (KJV):11** And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And

death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

But the White Throne Judgment is a judgment that is “according to their works” in verse 12. This judgment is after the thousand year reign of Christ. Augustine misunderstood the two resurrections mentioned in Revelation 20. The first resurrection is of the righteous dead, and is a bodily resurrection, as we read in **Revelation 20 (KJV):4** And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

This is the resurrection of the just, which Jesus referred to in **Luke 14 (KJV):14** And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

The “rest of the dead” in verse 5 above are the unrighteous dead who will be raised bodily at the White Throne Judgment after the thousand year reign of Christ.

## Augustine’s Two Resurrections

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XIX. Chapter V. 19–30, paragraph 8, page 124-126**, of the spiritual resurrection, Augustine is correct, as he says, “Hence a resurrection does take place now, and men pass from a death to a life; from the death of infidelity to the life of faith; from the death of falsehood to the life of truth; from the death of iniquity to the life of righteousness. There is, therefore, that which is a resurrection of the dead.”

But in **paragraph 10** he adds, “**now are we risen to eternal life, if we perseveringly continue in the same faith**”. He implies that we will keep eternal life if we obey, that is, “**perseveringly continue in the same faith**”.

And he says, that Jesus ascended, “promising a resurrection to the flesh, promising a resurrection to the mind—to the mind before the flesh, to the flesh after the mind.”

Augustine’s two resurrections are a resurrection to the mind, and a resurrection to the flesh. The resurrection to the mind is a resurrection to the soul in his thinking. He did not understand the difference between soul and spirit, but he thought that the soul was composed of spirit. Soul and spirit are used interchangeably at times, as in **Genesis 35 (KJV):18** And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. 19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

And in **Luke 8 (KJV):53** And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. 54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. 55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

But there is a difference between soul and spirit, as we read in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the

thoughts and intents of the heart.

## Judgment Seat of Christ

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXII. Chapter V. 24–30, paragraphs 5-7, page 146-147**, in **paragraph 5** about judgment, Augustine says, “The Lord our God then reveals it, and by His Scriptures puts us in mind how it may be understood when judgment is spoken of. I exhort you, therefore, to give attention. Sometimes judgment means punishment, sometimes it means discrimination. According to that mode of speech in which judgment means discrimination, “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that” a man “may there receive what things he has done in the body, whether it be good or ill.””

And he says, “For this same is a discrimination, to distribute good things to the good, evil things to the evil.”

And he says, “Therefore there is a judgment into which God, that is, the Son of God, will in the end send the devil and his angels, and all the unbelieving and ungodly with him. To this judgment, he who, now believing, passes from death unto life, shall not come.”

In **paragraph 6**, Augustine also rightly asks and answers, “So, then, even in this life there are dead, and there are living; all live in a sense. Who are dead? They who have not believed. Who are living? They who have believed.”

The Judgment Seat of Christ, which we must all appear before, refers to the righteous only. It is a judgment of discrimination, and not of condemnation. All believers will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive for the works they have done in their body, whether good or bad. If we have done good, we will receive a reward. If we have done bad, we will not receive any rewards but we will still be saved.

## Great Tribulation

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LXXVIII, paragraph 11, page 371**, he says, “but in the Judgment it will be manifest like as in a terror by night; for then there will be a great tribulation of the world like as it were fire, and it shall shine for the just and shall burn for the unjust.”

Augustine believed in the great tribulation, though his understanding of the timing of this event is very limited. The Great Tribulation will last seven years, and is the last week of years of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 in which God will deal with Israel. It is also called Jacob’s trouble in Jeremiah 30:4-7, out of which all Israel shall be saved.

## The Last Judgment

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm XXV, paragraph 8, page 62**, he says, “The Lord is gracious, since even sinners and the

ungodly He so pitied, as to forgive all that is past; but the Lord is upright too, who after the mercy of vocation and pardon, which is of grace without merit, will require merits meet for the last judgment. “Wherefore He will establish a law for them that fail in the way.” For He hath first bestowed mercy to bring them into the way.”

Augustine believed that all sin was forgiven at baptism, “which is of grace without merit”. But after baptism, he believed that the Lord “will require merits meet for the last judgment”.

When Augustine says above, “but the Lord is upright too, who after the mercy of vocation and pardon, which is of grace without merit, will require merits meet for the last judgment”, he is mixing up law with grace. The Lord forgives all that is past, present, and future for the one who believes, and He puts His righteousness down to our account when He justifies us. There will be a judgment of the righteous for rewards, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but this judgment is not for salvation.

Augustine’s thinking about the two resurrections hindered his understanding of the judgments. He did understand that there is a spiritual resurrection that takes place in the one who believes in Jesus Christ. He believed this resurrection happened at baptism. He also believed in the resurrection of our bodies, which he believed would be at the last judgment.

Augustine mixed up the judgment seat of Christ, and the judgment of the nations, with the last judgment, that is, the White Throne judgment. Believers in Jesus Christ will all be judged at the judgment seat of Christ, which Paul mentions in **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

In the judgment of the nations, the Son of man shall come in his glory, and before Him will be gathered all nations on earth. This will a judgment to decide which nations shall go into the kingdom, just before the thousand year reign of Christ. It is a judgment based on how the nations treated Christ’s brethren during the tribulation period. Jesus spoke to those on His right hand, the sheep nations, who were to inherit the kingdom, as in **Matthew 25 (KJV):34** Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Those on His left, the goat nations, were to depart into everlasting fire as we read in **Matthew 25 (KJV):41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

The first resurrection occurs before the thousand year reign of Christ as we read in **Revelation 20 (KJV):4** And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

This is the resurrection of the righteous. The last judgment, or final judgment, will be the White Throne Judgment, which is only for the wicked, or unrighteous dead who will be judged according to their works.

The last judgment, that is, the White Throne Judgment, is after the thousand year reign of Christ, as we read in **Revelation 20 (KJV)**: 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Augustine did not understand the timing of the judgments, and lumped them all into one final judgment.

## Miracles in Augustine's Time

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, Confessions, Book IX, Chapter VII, paragraph 16, page 134-135**, Augustine mentions the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius, the martyrs whom Ambrose “dug up and with due honour transferred to the Ambrosian Basilica”. Afterwards, “not only they who were troubled with unclean spirits (the devils confessing themselves) were healed, but a certain man also, who had been blind many years, a well known citizen of that city”, after touching “with his handkerchief the bier of Thy saints,” and “put it to his eyes, they were forthwith opened”.

So the belief was that the healings and deliverances occurred because the bodies of the martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, were “dug up and with due honour transferred to the Ambrosian Basilica”. This profoundly affected Augustine.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XXII, Chapters 7-9, page 484-491**, in **Chapter 7** Augustine believed that “the world embraced the faith it had furiously persecuted.” This is understandable because of the persecutions of the Roman Empire on the Christian Church before his time. The Christian Church was then embraced by the emperor Constantine in 313 A.D., and by the succession of Roman emperors up until the time of Augustine and beyond.

In **Chapter 8**, Augustine testifies that, “The miracles were published that they might produce faith, and the faith which they produced brought them into greater prominence. For they are read in congregations that they may be believed, and yet they would not be so read unless they were believed. For even now miracles are wrought in the name of Christ, whether by His sacraments or by the prayers or relics of His saints; but they are not so brilliant and conspicuous as to cause them to be published with such glory as accompanied the former miracles.”

So it is Augustine's testimony that miracles were wrought even in his time. Augustine then records healings, in answer to prayer, of a “perfectly firm cicatrix”, of “a very devout woman” who “had cancer in one of her breasts” that at the time “physicians say, is incurable.” And he records of “A gouty doctor” who “was relieved in the very act of baptism, not only of the extraordinary pain he was tortured with, but also of the disease itself, so that, though he lived a long time afterwards, he never suffered from gout;”

He also records that, “An old comedian of Curubis was cured at baptism not only of paralysis, but also of hernia, and, being delivered from both afflictions, came up out of the font of regeneration as if he had had nothing wrong with his body.”

Spirits were banished by offering “the sacrifice of the body of Christ”, and prayer. And, “holy earth brought from Jerusalem, where Christ, having been buried, rose again the third day”, was brought to a spot that was “made a place of prayer where Christians might assemble for the worship of God”. Then, “a young countryman who was paralytic”, who was brought “to that holy place”, and after praying, “forthwith went away on his own feet perfectly cured”.

But how reliable was it that the earth was really where Christ had been buried? This is a reliance on tradition. And even if it was earth from where Christ had been buried, it is faith in Him alone that heals, and He is our healer as we read in **Exodus 15 (KJV):26** And said, If thou



wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

And Augustine says, “When the bishop Projectus was bringing the relics of the most glorious martyr Stephen to the waters of Tibilis, a great concourse of people came to meet him at the shrine. There a blind woman entreated that she might be led to the bishop who was carrying the relics. He gave her the flowers he was carrying. She took them, applied them to her eyes, and forthwith saw.”

Augustine also testifies, “Even now, therefore, many miracles are wrought, the same God who wrought those we read of still performing them, by whom He will and as He will; but they are not as well known, nor are they beaten into the memory, like gravel, by frequent reading, so that they cannot fall out of mind”.

Augustine records that a young man “had been taken possession of by a devil”, and, “As he lay at the monument, near death, or even quite like a dead person, the lady of the manor, with her maids and religious attendants, entered the place for evening prayer and praise, as her custom was, and they began to sing hymns”. When the devil was leaving the man, one of his eyes popped out, “But his sister’s husband, who had brought him there, said, “God, who has banished the devil, is able to restore his eye at the prayers of His saints.” Therewith he replaced the eye that was fallen out and hanging, and bound it in its place with his handkerchief as well as he could, and advised him not to loose the bandage for seven days. When he did so, he found it quite healthy. Others also were cured there, but of them it were tedious to speak.”

So this healing actually came about by the prayer and praise and singing of hymns of the “lady of the manor, with her maids and religious attendants”, and finally by the faith of “his sister’s husband, who had brought him there”.

Again there is no basis in Scripture for the establishment of monuments of holy things for the purpose of healing or deliverance. This exceeds what is written in the Scriptures. Note also that there was an altar at this monument as Augustine records that the possessed man “with frightful screaming seized the altar”, and was delivered. Altars were for sacrifice in the Old Testament. But in the early Church, the ritual of the Lord’s Supper, or Communion, had developed with the belief that it was a sacrifice.

There is no more need for an altar to offer sacrifice. To do so now is to deny the efficacy of the one sacrifice for sins forever which Jesus has made for us.

But this was a tradition that has remained in the Roman Catholic Church to this day. While there is no doubt that there was “the faith of Christ” in those praying, we see that the understanding of Biblical truth in the Church was slipping.

Then in **Chapter 9**, Augustine reasons, “To what do these miracles witness, but to this faith which preaches Christ risen in the flesh, and ascended with the same into heaven? For the martyrs themselves were martyrs, that is to say, witnesses of this faith, drawing upon themselves by their testimony the hatred of the world, and conquering the world not by resisting it, but by dying. For this faith they died, and can now ask these benefits from the Lord in whose name they were slain.”

Nowhere in the Scriptures is it said that the martyrs are praying and asking for benefits for us in heaven. This is a tradition that began to develop very early on in the Church.

Jesus did say that the one who believes in Him would do His works as we read in **John 14 (KJV)**:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

It's not that we will do greater miracles than Jesus did, but works of a greater extent, reaching the whole world for Christ, that all who believe might be saved.

But we must surrender to His will, and do the works that He has ordained for us to do. Without Him we can do nothing, as we read in **John 15 (KJV)**:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

## Spiritual Gifts

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, Confessions, Book XIII, Chapter XVIII, paragraphs 22-24, Chapter XIX, page 197-198, in paragraph 22** he says “Thus, O Lord, thus, I beseech Thee, let there arise, as Thou makest, as Thou givest joy and ability,—let “truth spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven,” (Psalm 85:11) and let there be “lights in the firmament.” (Genesis 1:14) Let us clothe the naked, and despise not those of our own flesh. (Isaiah 58:7) The which fruits having sprung forth from the earth, behold, because it is good; (Genesis 1:12) and let our temporary light burst forth; (Isaiah 58:8) and let us, from this inferior fruit of action, possessing the delights of contemplation and of the Word of Life above, let us appear as lights in the world, (Philippians 2:15) clinging to the firmament of Thy Scripture.”

And he concludes as he says, “clinging to the firmament of Thy Scripture”. So in his analogy he relates the Scripture to the firmament, which he says we are to cling to.

Now he continues as he says, “**For therein**”, speaking of the firmament of Scripture, “**Thou makest it plain unto us, that we may distinguish between things intelligible and things of sense, as if between the day and the night; or between souls, given, some to things intellectual, others to things of sense**”. He is referring to the gifts of the Spirit here, as we shall see in the next paragraph.

He continues, “**so that now not Thou only in the secret of Thy judgment, as before the firmament was made, dividest between the light and the darkness, but Thy spiritual children also, placed and ranked in the same firmament (Thy grace being manifest throughout the world), may give light upon the earth, and divide between the day and night, and be for signs of times; because “old things have passed away,” and “behold all things are become new;” (2 Corinthians 5:17) and “because our salvation is nearer than when we believed;”**”

Then in **paragraph 23** Augustine now begins by saying, “**For, indeed, to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, as if the greater light, on account of those who are delighted with the light of manifest truth, as in the beginning of the day**”. So wisdom is the greater light, or the sun, as it were, in the firmament, in his analogy. He then says, “**but to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, as if the lesser light;**” Thus, knowledge is as the moon, the lesser light in the firmament.

He then continues, “**to another faith; to another the gift of healing; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues. And all these as stars. For all these worketh the one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man his own as He willeth; and making stars appear manifestly, to profit withal.**”

So in his analogy, the word of wisdom is the sun, the word of knowledge is the moon, and all the gifts are as stars.

Curiously, Augustine did not refer directly to verse 7 above, as in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):7** But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

And nothing is said about spiritual gifts being lights in the Scriptures. He seems to think of the manifestations of the Spirit as lights in the midst of the firmament of the word of God. And wisdom is the greater or brightest light, that is, the sun, as it were, and the word of knowledge is the moon.

He then says, “But the word of knowledge, wherein are contained all sacraments, which are varied in their periods like the moon, and the other conceptions of gifts, which are successively reckoned up as stars, inasmuch as they come short of that splendour of wisdom in which the aforementioned day rejoices, are only for the beginning of the night.”

The word “sacrament” is not found in the Bible. So with his statement, “the word of knowledge, wherein are contained all sacraments, which are varied in their periods like the moon”, he seems to think of these gifts as a “sign of invisible grace”. But in doing so, he distances himself from what the gifts of the Spirit actually are. That is, he does not seem to understand that the gifts of the Spirit are not rituals that are performed at set periods of time, like the sacraments. The gifts of the Spirit actually have nothing to do with rituals, such as Baptism in Water or the Eucharist. The gifts of the Spirit are actually divine enablements given to believers as He wills, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. We shall explain shortly.

Augustine believed that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was given at baptism. The evidence that one had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit was the love of God expressed in the body of Christ, which was the Catholic Church in his time. The word of wisdom and the word of knowledge, as gifts of the Spirit, were present in the Church according to Augustine, but his understanding of what these gifts are was not a Scriptural understanding.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, On Care to be Had for the Dead, Paragraph 20, Spiritual Gifts Mentioned, page 549**, he says, “For it is not to be thought that no man knows these things: (not indeed he who thinks he knows, and knows not,) for there be gifts of God, Who bestows on these some one, on those some other, according to the Apostle who says, that “to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal; to one indeed,” saith he, “is given by the Spirit discourse of wisdom; to another discourse of science according to the same Spirit; while to another faith in the same Spirit; to another the gift of healings in one Spirit; to one workings of miracles; to one prophecy; to one discerning of spirits; to one kinds of tongues; to one interpretation of discourses. But all these worketh one and the same spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” (1 Corinthians 12:7-11) Of all these spiritual gifts, which the Apostle hath rehearsed, to whomsoever is given discerning of spirits, the same knoweth these things as they are meet to be known.”

Augustine mentions the gifts as the “discourse of wisdom”, and the “discourse of science”. He did not understand that these gifts are given in the need of the moment, and they are not just the wisdom and knowledge of God in general. The “word of knowledge” is a fact hidden from the human mind but revealed by the Holy Spirit. The “word of wisdom” is about the future.

God wanted to convince Saul that He had sent Jesus, so he appeared in a vision to a disciple named Ananias, as in **Acts 9 (KJV):10** And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

The Lord gave a word of knowledge to Ananias, and told him where Saul was, that is, on “the street which is called Straight” at “the house of Judas”. And the Lord also gave Saul a

word of wisdom “in a vision” that “a man named Ananias” would come in, and put “his hand on him, that he might receive his sight”. There is no way Ananias or Saul could have had this knowledge apart from it having been revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Last, under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XVI. Chapter IV. 43–54, paragraph 3, page 108**, he says, “I am speaking to God’s people; so many of us have believed, what signs have we seen? It is thus, therefore, that what occurred at that time betokened what is now going on. The Jews were, or rather are, like the Galileans; we, like those Samaritans. **We have heard the gospel, have given it our consent, have believed on Christ through the gospel; we have seen no signs, none do we demand.**”

The gifts of the Spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 were not being manifest in the time of Augustine.

## The Unction of the Holy Spirit

It was Augustine’s confession that the gift of speaking in tongues was not operational in the Catholic Church in his time. And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, First Epistle of John, Homily VI. 1 John III. 19–4. 3, paragraph 10, page 497-498**, he says, “**If then the witness of the presence of the Holy Ghost be not now given through these miracles, by what is it given, by what does one get to know that he has received the Holy Ghost?**”

Augustine was not aware of anyone in the Church speaking in tongues at the time of his writing. He assumes that this was just a token to show that the Gospel was to be preached to all languages.

He then says, “**Let him question his own heart. If he love his brother the Spirit of God dwelleth in him.**” It is evident that spiritual gifts, the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, were not operational in the Church in the time of Augustine.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit is not just to fill us with God’s love as Augustine suggests. The Holy Spirit is also given to equip us with spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit is also given to guide us into all truth, to comfort us, to teach us, and to lead us. He convinces us of the truth. From milk to solid food, the Scriptures are the truth that the Holy Spirit convinces us of.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, First Epistle of John, Homily III. 1 John II. 18–27, paragraphs 12-13, page 480-481, in paragraph 12**, Augustine did quote 1 John 2:27, as he says, ““These things have I written unto you concerning them which seduce you; that ye may know that ye have an unction, and the unction which we have received from Him may abide in you.””

But he quotes from the Latin version where he says “may abide in you”. This makes the reader or listener feel like he could lose the anointing. But we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):27** But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

If we have been born again, the Holy Spirit will not leave us. The anointing will abide in us. As we abide in Him we will be aware of His presence.

But in **paragraph 13**, Augustine did say, “Do not suppose that any man learns ought



from man. We can admonish by the sound of our voice; if there be not One within that shall teach, vain is the noise we make. Aye, brethren, have ye a mind to know it? Have ye not all heard this present discourse? And yet how many will go from this place untaught! I, for my part, have spoken to all; but they to whom that Unction within speaketh not, they whom the Holy Ghost within teacheth not, those go back untaught. The teachings of the master from without are a sort of aids and admonitions. He that teacheth the hearts, hath His chair in heaven. Therefore saith He also Himself in the Gospel: “Call no man your master upon earth; One is your Master, even Christ.” (Matthew 23:8-9)”

In the thinking of the early Church, one could lose the Holy Spirit if they were not in communion with the Catholic Church. This would make the reader or listener very dependent on the “master from without”, that is, a teacher, like Augustine.

Augustine knew that the Holy Spirit was our guide to find the truth, as we read in **John 16 (KJV):13** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

And Augustine knew that teachers were merely “aids”, or helpers “from without”. It is the “Unction within” that we must pay attention to, because “One is your Master, even Christ.”

# The Lord's Supper, Communion, Or the Eucharist

Justin Martyr who lived from 100 to 165 A.D., under **Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, Dialog with Trypho, Chapter XLI, page 215**, concludes, “[So] He then speaks of those Gentiles, namely us, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, i.e., the bread of the Eucharist, and also the cup of the Eucharist, affirming both that we glorify His name, and that you profane [it].”

Justin Martyr is using Malachi 1:10-12 as a foundation to support his belief that the Eucharist was a sacrifice to be offered by the Gentiles. But this is based on a mistranslation by the Septuagint of verse 11, as in **Malachi 1 (Septuagint):11** For from the rising of the sun even to the going down thereof my name has been glorified among the Gentiles; and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord Almighty.

But it should read as in **Malachi 1 (KJV):11** For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.

But Augustine inherited this from the Church in his time. So under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book X, Chapter 5, page 182-184**, he says, “A sacrifice, therefore, is the visible sacrament or sacred sign of an invisible sacrifice.”

And in **Chapter 6** he says, “Accordingly, when the apostle had exhorted us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, our reasonable service”, he meant that, “This is the sacrifice of Christians: we, being many, are one body in Christ. And this also is the sacrifice which the Church continually celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, known to the faithful, in which she teaches that she herself is offered in the offering she makes to God.”

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXVI. Chapter VI. 41–59, paragraph 15, page 172-173**, he adds, “And thus He would have this meat and drink to be understood as meaning the fellowship of His own body and members, which is the holy Church in his predestinated, and called, and justified, and glorified saints and believers.”

And under **SERMON 227: PREACHED ON THE HOLY DAY OF EASTER TO THE INFANTES, ON THE SACRAMENTS** <http://david.heitzman.net/sermons227-229a.html> **Date:414-415**, he says, “That's how he explained the sacrament of the Lord's table; one loaf, one body, is what we all are, many though we be.”

And he explains, “The consecration of the sacrifice of God” relates to “That bread which you can see on the altar, sanctified by the word of God,” which “is the body of Christ”, and “That cup, or rather what the cup contains, sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ”.

And under **Sermon 272** [https://earlychurchtexts.com/public/augustine\\_sermon\\_272\\_eucharist.htm](https://earlychurchtexts.com/public/augustine_sermon_272_eucharist.htm), he concludes, “For what you see is simply bread and a cup - this is the information your eyes report. But your faith demands far subtler insight: the bread is Christ's body, the cup is Christ's blood.”

The apostle Paul testifies in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):23** For I have received of the Lord

that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

When we eat the bread and drink the cup, we show the Lord's death until He comes again. It is a remembrance of what He has done for us. And it must be done with reverence, and in respect of the price He paid for us, as we continue in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV)**: 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

## Adore His Footstool

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm 99, paragraphs 8-9, page 485-486**, he says, “In hesitation I turn unto Christ, since I am herein seeking Himself: and I discover how the earth may be worshipped without impiety, how His footstool may be worshipped without impiety. For He took upon Him earth from earth; because flesh is from earth, and He received flesh from the flesh of Mary. And because He walked here in very flesh, and gave that very flesh to us to eat for our salvation; and no one eateth that flesh, unless he hath first worshipped: we have found out in what sense such a footstool of our Lord's may be worshipped, and not only that we sin not in worshipping it, but that we sin in not worshipping.”

The Scripture says that all the angels shall worship Him as we read in **Hebrews 1 (KJV)**: 6 And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

And in **Deuteronomy 32 (Septuagint)**: 43 Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons, and he will render vengeance, and recompense justice to his enemies, and will reward them that hate him; and the Lord shall purge the land of his people.

The disciples worshipped Jesus as He ascended into heaven as we read in **Luke 24 (KJV)**: 50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: 53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

The wise men came to worship Him, as we read in **Matthew 2 (KJV)**: 1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men

from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

Augustine refers to **Psalm 98 (Douay Rheims):5** Exalt ye the Lord our God, and adore his footstool, for it is holy.

But we read as in **Psalm 99 (Septuagint):5** Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.

And in **Psalm 99 (KJV):5** Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.

Augustine misunderstood Psalm 99:5, which is 98:5 in the Latin Vulgate. We worship at His footstool, but we don't "adore his footstool". He is holy. Augustine saw a similarity of the footstool with the earth, which to him was symbolic of the flesh of Christ. But we don't worship His flesh. We worship who He is, the Son of God. He is God blessed forever as we read in **Romans 9 (KJV):5** Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

## Angels

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XI, Chapter 9, page 209-210**, Augustine says, “Here the angels are most expressly and by divine authority said to have been made by God, for of them among the other heavenly things it is said, “He commanded, and they were created.” Who, then, will be bold enough to suggest that the angels were made after the six days’ creation? If anyone is so foolish, his folly is disposed of by a Scripture of like authority, where God says, “When the stars were made, the angels praised me with a loud voice.””

He most likely is referring to the Lord’s response to Job in **Job 38 (KJV):4** Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The “morning stars” refer to angels, as does the sons of God, in verse 7.

And Augustine concludes, “There is no question, then, that if the angels are included in the works of God during these six days, they are that light which was called “Day,” and whose unity Scripture signalizes by calling that day not the “first day,” but “one day.” For the second day, the third, and the rest are not other days; but the same “one” day is repeated to complete the number six or seven, so that there should be knowledge both of God’s works and of His rest.”

There is no question that God made the angels, for He made all things as we read in **Proverbs 16 (KJV):4** The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

And in **John 1 (KJV):3** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And in **Revelation 4 (KJV):11** Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

But in Job 38:4-7 we read that the angels were present when God “laid the foundations of the earth”. This means that the angels were created before the earth was created.

That Lucifer was on the earth before he sinned is evident from **Isaiah 14 (KJV):12** How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

It was his sin that made God judge the earth so that it became formless and void, though He did not create it that way, as we read in **Isaiah 45 (KJV):18** For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else.

The words “not in vain” in Hebrew are **לֹא-תִהְיֶה** (pronounced low-tow-hoo). “Low” means not, and “tow-hoo” means “from an unused root meaning to lie waste; a desolation (of surface), i.e. desert; figuratively, a worthless thing; adverbially, in vain:—confusion, empty place,

without form, nothing, (thing of) nought, vain, vanity, waste, wilderness.” **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G8414.**

Instead, it became formless and void as we read in **Genesis 1 (KJV):1** In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. **2** And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

The word in Hebrew translated “without form” is **תהו** (pronounce tow-hoo), the exact same Hebrew word in Isaiah 45:18.

This explains where the demons came from, because Lucifer’s throne necessitates a Pre-Adamic race. And this is supported by **Ezekiel 28 (KJV):15** Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. **16** By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. **17** Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

However, Augustine seems inclined to believe that the angels were created on day one of the six days in Genesis 1.

Then under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XI, Chapter 15, page 213**, he says, “**And from this passage, “The devil sinneth from the beginning,” it is not to be supposed that he sinned from the beginning of his created existence, but from the beginning of his sin, when by his pride he had once commenced to sin. There is a passage, too, in the Book of Job, of which the devil is the subject: “This is the beginning of the creation of God, which He made to be a sport to His angels,” (Job 40:14 LXX) which agrees with the psalm, where it is said, “There is that dragon which Thou hast made to be a sport therein.” (Psalm 104:26) But these passages are not to lead us to suppose that the devil was originally created to be the sport of the angels, but that he was doomed to this punishment after his sin. His beginning, then, is the handiwork of God; for there is no nature, even among the least, and lowest, and last of the beasts, which was not the work of Him from whom has proceeded all measure, all form, all order, without which nothing can be planned or conceived. How much more, then, is this angelic nature, which surpasses in dignity all else that He has made, the handiwork of the Most High!”**

All things are “**the handiwork of the Most High!**” The devil sinned from the beginning, but not “**from the beginning of his created existence, but from the beginning of his sin**”, just as Augustine has said above. And it was for him that Hell, or “everlasting fire” was created, as we read in **Matthew 25 (KJV):41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:



# The Trinity

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XI, Chapter 24, page 218-219**, he says, “We believe, we maintain, we faithfully preach, that the Father begat the Word, that is, Wisdom, by which all things were made, the only begotten Son, one as the Father is one, eternal as the Father is eternal, and, equally with the Father, supremely good; and that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit alike of Father and of Son, and is Himself consubstantial and co-eternal with both; and that this whole is a Trinity by reason of the individuality of the persons, and one God by reason of the indivisible divine substance, as also one Almighty by reason of the indivisible omnipotence; yet so that, when we inquire regarding each singly, it is said that each is God and Almighty; and, when we speak of all together, it is said that there are not three Gods, nor three Almighties, but one God Almighty; so great is the indivisible unity of these Three, which requires that it be so stated.”

We see that Augustine agrees with the Scripture. He refers to **John 1 (KJV):1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** The same was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And of the Son’s equality with the Father, we read in **Philippians 2 (KJV):5** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **7** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: **8** And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. **9** Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: **10** That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; **11** And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Now that the Holy Spirit is God, we have Peter’s words in **Acts 5 (KJV):1** But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, **2** And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet. **3** But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? **4** Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. **5** And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost in verse 3. He lied not to men but to God in verse 4. He lied to a person.

Now the easiest way to see the trinity is in **John 14 (KJV):8** Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. **9** Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? **10** Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that

dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

The Father and the Spirit cannot be seen, but they can be seen working through the Son. The Father decides, the Son executes, the Holy Spirit brings to completion. And so it is as Augustine has said, that “this whole is a Trinity by reason of the individuality of the persons, and one God by reason of the indivisible divine substance, as also one Almighty by reason of the indivisible omnipotence; yet so that, when we inquire regarding each singly, it is said that each is God and Almighty; and, when we speak of all together, it is said that there are not three Gods, nor three Almighties, but one God Almighty”.

# The Soul

Augustine acknowledged that the soul was created immortal, as he says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XIII, Chapter 24, page 259-260**, “That body, indeed, which shall be made spiritual and immortal by the quickening Spirit shall not be able to die at all; as the soul has been created immortal, and therefore, although by sin it may be said to die, and does lose a certain life of its own, namely, the Spirit of God, by whom it was enabled to live wisely and blessedly, yet it does not cease living a kind of life, though a miserable, because it is immortal by creation.”

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, On Faith and The Creed, paragraph 23, page 331-332**, he says, “And inasmuch as there are three things of which man consists,—namely, spirit, soul, and body,—which again are spoken of as two, because frequently the soul is named along with the spirit;”

And he says, “This spirit is also called the mind, regarding which an apostle speaks thus: “With the mind I serve the law of God.” (Romans 7:25)” But he did not understand that man is not just body and soul, but that actually man is body, soul, and spirit. He did not understand the division between our soul and our spirit. He thought that mind was spirit. But the mind is a faculty of our soul, as is also our heart, our will, our emotions, and our conscience. Our spirit is where we have consciousness of God and spiritual things. Our soul is where we have consciousness of this world. Knowing the difference between soul and spirit helps us understand the new birth that Jesus spoke of.

Augustine’s thinking of the soul made it possible for him to believe that one could lose their salvation. If our spirit is just mind, it is changeable. We can change our minds. So in Augustine’s thinking, we could lose our salvation if we have not faith.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Soul and Its Origin, Book IV, Chapter 19, page 362-364**, he says, “On what principle, then, is the soul a body, when its nature is different from that of a body; and not a spirit, although its nature and a spirit’s is one and the same?”

But the Scriptures teach that there is a division between soul and spirit, as we read in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate IX. Chapter II. 1–11, paragraph 8, page 65-66**, he says, “And just as thy body, if it be without spirit, namely thy soul, is dead; so likewise thy soul, if it be without the Holy Spirit, that is, without charity, will be reckoned dead.”

Augustine is saying that the soul is the same as spirit.

But when we are born again, our spirit is born of the Spirit of God, as Jesus taught in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

And when we receive Him, we are born “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”, as in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were

born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

This is not a gradual thing, but an event in our lives when we have believed in Jesus Christ, and confessed Him as Lord. When believe on Him, we pass from death to life, as Jesus taught in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Being born of God, we can no longer die. We now have eternal life.

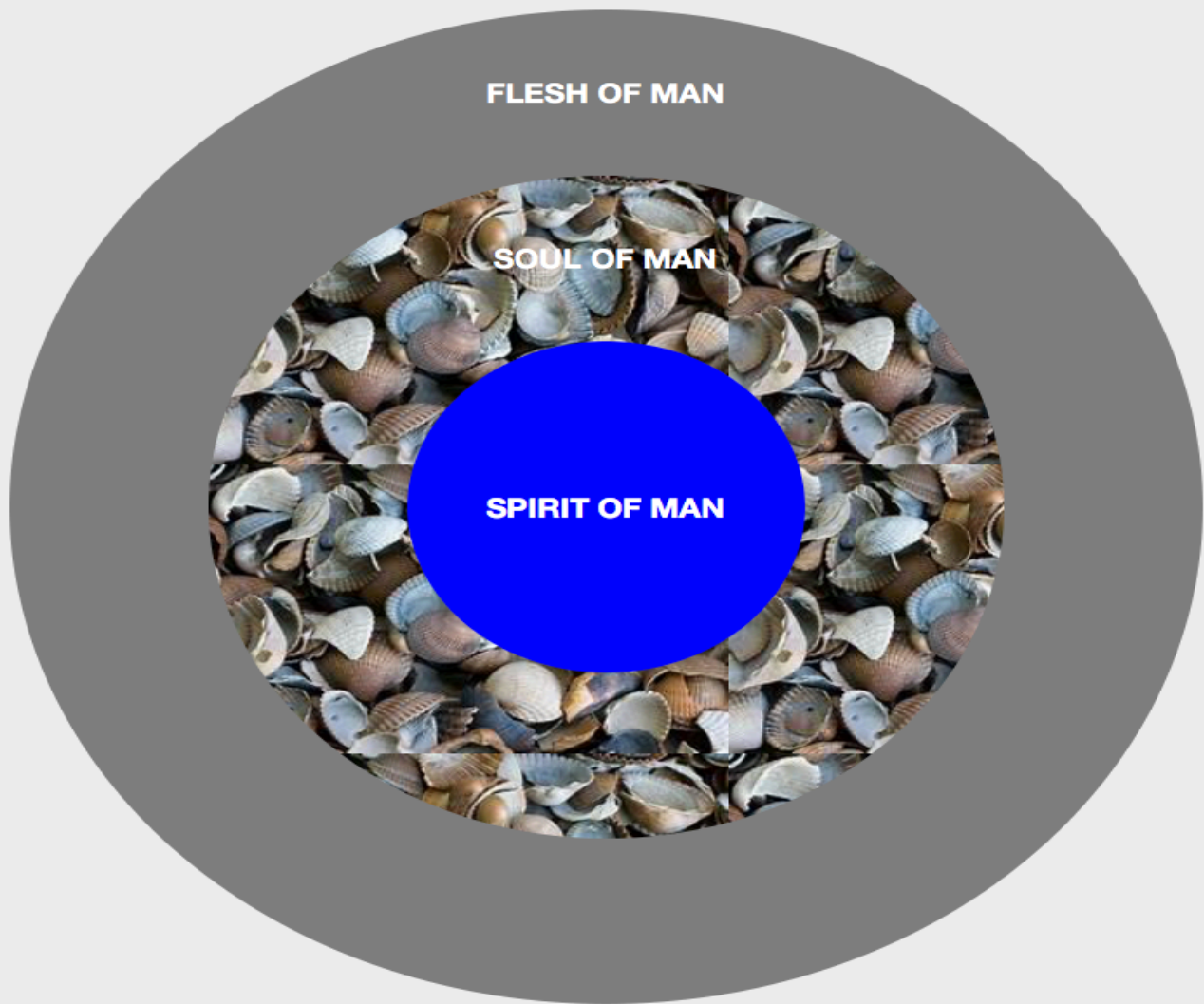
We pass from condemnation to righteousness, as in **John 3 (KJV):18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

We then have everlasting life in our spirit as in **John 3 (KJV):36** He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Now the triunity of man is pictured below. The spirit of man is where we are born again of the Spirit of God. It is here that we have consciousness of God and things spiritual. Our soul is where we have consciousness of this world. Our soul has all of the baggage of our past, our old ways of thinking, our hurt feelings, and our conscience that has been defiled. Our soul is where we must be renewed. The faculties of spirit are faith, hope, and prayer. The faculties of our soul are thoughts, feelings, and our will, heart, and conscience. The faculties of the flesh are sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste.

Our soul will go through a progressive sanctification as we walk in the light of the word of God, and grow in grace and knowledge. But in our spirit we have become partakers of the divine nature, as we read in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

# The Regenerated Man



## The Mind

Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXXII. Chapter VII. 37–39, paragraphs 1-5, page 193-194, in paragraph 2 he says, “For although they who live ill may surrender their minds to the body, yet they do wish to live, and to live is the property of the mind only; and they who rule, manifest themselves more than those things that are ruled. Now it is minds that rule, bodies are ruled. Every man rejoices in pleasure, and receives pleasure by the body: but separate the mind from it, and nothing remains in the body to rejoice; and if there is joy of the body, it is the mind that rejoices.”

But the mind is where our thoughts are present. It is in our feelings, or affections, and the heart, which is the center of our feelings, that we feel pleasure, and joy. Augustine was a thinker.

Then in paragraph 5 he says, “For every man has in himself a spirit of his own, of which I spoke when I was commending to you the consideration of the mind. **For every man’s mind is his own spirit: of which the Apostle Paul says, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of the man which is in himself?” And then he added, “So also the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:11)”**

But the mind is not our spirit. The mind is a part of our soul. Our spirit is the spiritual part of us where we have connection with God. Before Christ, our spirit is dead in trespasses and sins. When we are born again, our spirit is made alive to God by the Holy Spirit. We are then able to discern spiritual things.

Our mind is in our soul, as we read in **Psalms 139 (KJV):14** I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

But the spirit has mind as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):27** And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

But the faculties of the spirit have to do with the spiritual realm, as it is “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” as we read in 1 Corinthians 2:13, whereas the faculties of the soul relate to this world, the natural, as in **1 Corinthians 2 (KJV):12** Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.



# Marriage

Augustine clearly believed that marriage was only valid for the propagation of children. His only experience with women was in illicit relationships out of wedlock. Before he was saved, he had a son, Adeodatus, out of wedlock. In addition, the Catholic Church in his time, made it a rule for clergy to be celibate.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Original Sin, Chapters 38, page 250-252**, he says, “But they argue thus, saying: “Is not, then, marriage an evil, and the man that is produced by marriage not God’s work?” As if the good of the married life were that disease of concupiscence with which they who know not God love their wives—a course which the apostle forbids; (1 Thessalonians 4:5) and not rather that conjugal chastity, by which carnal lust is reduced to the good purposes of the appointed procreation of children.

And in **Chapter 39**, he says, “Marriage, therefore, is a good in all the things which are proper to the married state. And these are three: it is the ordained means of procreation, it is the guarantee of chastity, it is the bond of union.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Original Sin, Chapter 43, page 252-253**, he says, “In the case, therefore, of regenerate parents, if they continue in the same state of grace, it will undoubtedly work no injurious consequence, by reason of the remission of sins which has been bestowed upon them, unless they make a perverse use of it,—not alone all kinds of lawless corruptions, but even in the marriage state itself, whenever husband and wife toil at procreation, not from the desire of natural propagation of their species, but are mere slaves to the gratification of their lust out of very wantonness.”

We know “lust” is sin. But natural desire, or desire according to nature, is not sin. Augustine will not allow husband and wife to come together except “from the desire of natural propagation of their species”. So according to Augustine, it is not natural to simply be intimate with your spouse. Intimacy is only allowable when there is “the desire of natural propagation of their species”.

And he says, “As for the permission which the apostle gives to husbands and wives, “not to defraud one another, except with consent for a time, that they may have leisure for prayer,” (1 Corinthians 7:5) he concedes it by way of indulgent allowance, and not as a command; but this very form of the concession evidently implies some degree of fault.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Marriage and Concupiscence, Book I, Chapters 12-17, page 268-270**, in **Chapter 12**, he even goes to far as to say, “But God forbid that the nuptial bond should be regarded as broken between those who have by mutual consent agreed to observe a perpetual abstinence from the use of carnal concupiscence. Nay, it will be only a firmer one, whereby they have exchanged pledges together, which will have to be kept by an especial endearment and concord,—not by the voluptuous links of bodies, but by the voluntary affections of souls.”

And he justifies this, as he continues, “For it was not deceitfully that the angel said to Joseph: “Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife.” (Matthew 1:20) She is called his wife because of her first troth of betrothal, although he had had no carnal knowledge of her, nor was destined to have. The designation of wife was neither destroyed nor made untrue, where there

never had been, nor was meant to be, any carnal connection.”

But Joseph did “know” his wife after Jesus was born, as we read in **Matthew 1 (KJV):24** Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.

And in **Chapter 13**, he says, “Nevertheless conjugal intercourse is not in itself sin, when it is had with the intention of producing children; because the mind’s goodwill leads the ensuing bodily pleasure, instead of following its lead; and the human choice is not distracted by the yoke of sin pressing upon it, inasmuch as the blow of the sin is rightly brought back to the purposes of procreation.”

And in **Chapter 17**, he says, “It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only, which involves venial sin.”

But let us remember **Hebrews 13 (KJV):4** Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Augustine wanted to maintain the unity of the Church, and so he defended the thinking of the Catholic Church in his time. He fought hard against heresy. In his defense of original sin, he fought hard against Pelagius and his followers who denied it. But in doing so, he confused the attributes of the soul with the attributes of the spirit. This didn’t help his perception of man’s nature. He thought of “the law of sin” mentioned by Paul in Romans, chapter 8, as a “disease” which could be gradually overcome. However to him, in marriage, the lust of concupiscence was always present, and, in his mind, it could only be completely overcome by abstinence.

Augustine knew the verse in Hebrews 13:4, that says that marriage is honorable in all, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. But he understood the opening of Adam’s and Eve’s eyes to the knowledge of good and evil as a lack of control of their members. When they had to cover themselves with aprons of fig leaves in Genesis 3:7, this meant that they felt shame for their lack of control of their members. This became the basis of his thinking that the intimacy in marriage was permanently marred by the lust of concupiscence.

This thinking led him to believe that intimacy in marriage was only for the propagation of children. He then interprets Paul, in 1 Corinthians, chapter 7, to be giving his permission for any intimacy in marriage that was not for the propagation of children to be done as a venial sin. That is, it was not a damnable sin if one wanted to just have pleasure with their spouse, but it was a venial or permissible sin.

Augustine reflects the thinking of the Catholic Church in his time. Today, we must walk in the light of the word of God, which says that marriage is honorable in all. There is no such command in the Scripture that intimacy in marriage is only for the propagation of children. We are to love our spouse with God’s love, an unconditional love, and be thankful that God did not want us to be alone. And so we read in **Proverbs 18 (KJV):22** Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.

# Christ

There is no doubt that Augustine believed that Jesus Christ is God. Augustine was definitely a believer.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XVII, Chapter 9, page 349**, he says, “His seed also will I set for ever and ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.” (Psalm 89:19-29) Which words, when rightly understood, are all understood to be about the Lord Jesus Christ, under the name of David, on account of the form of a servant, which the same Mediator assumed (Philippians 2:7) from the virgin of the seed of David. (Matthew 1:1,18, Luke 1:27)”

And he here acknowledged, “For of Christ Himself, who is the head of the Church”.

## Jesus Is God

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate VIII. Chapter II. 1–4, paragraphs 1, page 57-58**, he says, “Yet the same God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, doeth by His word all these things; and it is He who created that governs also. The former miracles He did by His Word, God with Himself; the latter miracles He did by the same Word incarnate, and for us made man. As we wonder at the things which were done by the man Jesus, so let us wonder at the things which were done by Jesus God. By Jesus God were made heaven, and earth, and the sea, all the garniture of heaven, the abounding riches of the earth, and the fruitfulness of the sea;—all these things which lie within the reach of our eyes were made by Jesus God.”

In **paragraph 2**, he says, “Yet this soul, as I have said, of admirable nature and substance, is a thing invisible, intellectual; this soul also was made by God Jesus, for He is the Word of God. “All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.”

In **paragraph 3**, he says, “When we see, therefore, such deeds wrought by Jesus God, why should we wonder at water being turned into wine by the man Jesus? For He was not made man in such manner that He lost His being God. Man was added to Him, God not lost to Him.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate VIII. Chapter II. 1–4, paragraph 9, page 61**, he says, “Our Lord Jesus Christ was both God and man. According as He was God, He had not a mother; according as He was man, He had. She was the mother, then, of His flesh, of His humanity, of the weakness which for our sakes He took upon Him.”

And in the same paragraph, he says, “Hear Him also declared the Lord of David; let David himself declare this: “The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand.” (Psalm 110:1) And this passage Jesus Himself brought forward to the Jews, and refuted them from it. (Matthew 22:45) How then was He both David’s son and David’s Lord? David’s son according to the flesh, David’s Lord according to His divinity; so also Mary’s son after the flesh, and Mary’s Lord after His majesty.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XVII. Chapter IV. 1–18, paragraph 15, page 116**, he says, “For the Lord Jesus is, of course,

God. For He is the Word of God, and you have heard that “in the beginning was the Word;” and not any word whatsoever, but “the Word was God, and all things were made by Him.””

He refers to **John 1 (KJV):1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And so we read in **Romans 9 (KJV):5** Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

## Of Whom Adam Is a Figure

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate IX. Chapter II. 1–11, paragraph 10, page 66**, he says, “Adam sleeps, that Eve may be formed; Christ dies, that the Church may be formed. When Adam sleeps, Eve is formed from his side; when Christ is dead, the spear pierces His side, that the mysteries may flow forth whereby the Church is formed. Is it not evident to every man that in those things then done, things to come were foreshadowed, since the apostle says that Adam himself was the figure of Him that was to come? “Who is,” saith he, “the figure of Him that was to come.” (Romans 5:14)”

He refers to **Romans 5 (KJV):14** Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

He believed that Adam was a figure of Jesus Christ. We can agree with Augustine in his analogy of Adam as a figure of Christ. This is also referred to in **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):22** For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But the figure represented by Adam is better described when we continue to read the Scripture in Romans 5:16-21. In summary, in verse 15 there is the offence of one, Adam, but the free gift is to many by Jesus Christ. In verse 16, one sinned to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. In verse 17, by one offence death reigned, but by the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness they which receive reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. In verse 18, Judgment came upon all men to condemnation, but by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. In verse 19, by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, but by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. In verse 20, the law entered, that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. And in verse 21, sin reigned unto death, but grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Prophecy

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXXV. Chapter VIII. 13, 14, paragraph 7, page 206-207**, he says, “For it is from prophecy

that we convince gainsaying pagans.” And he says, “Let the book of Isaiah be produced by the Jews, and let us see if it is not there we read, “He was led as a sheep to be slaughtered, and as a lamb before his shearer was dumb, so He opened not His mouth. In humility His judgment was taken away; by His bruises we are healed: all we as sheep went astray, and He was delivered up for our sins.” (Isaiah 53:5-8)”

And he says, “Behold one lamp. Let another be produced, let the psalm be opened, and thence, too, let the foretold suffering of Christ be quoted: “They pierced my hands and my feet, they counted all my bones: but they considered me and gazed upon me, they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast the lot,” referring to Psalm 22:16-28.

He believed that the prophecies in the Old Testament pointed to Christ, and he quotes correctly from Isaiah, chapter 53, and from Psalm 22.

## The Prince of the Apostles

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate LXXXIX. Chapter XV. 22, 23, paragraph 1, page 357-358**, he says, “His advent has become as much fraught with destruction to unbelievers, as it is with salvation to those that believe; for He, the Head and Prince of the apostles, has Himself, as it were, become what they declared of themselves, “to some, indeed, the savour of life unto life; and to some the savor of death unto death.” (2 Corinthians 2:16)”

Augustine acknowledged Jesus as “the Head and Prince of the apostles”, and this agrees with Scripture as we read in **Hebrews 3 (KJV):1** Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

He is also a Prince as we read in **Acts 5 (KJV):31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

## The Head of the Church

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm XVIII, paragraph 51, page 54**, he says, “What things soever are spoken in this Psalm which cannot apply to the Lord Himself personally, that is to the Head of the Church, must be referred to the Church. For whole Christ speaks here, in whom are all His members.”

He refers to **Psalm 18 (Septuagint):50** God magnifies the deliverances of his king; and deals mercifully with David his anointed, and his seed, for ever.

This is a Psalm of David, as we read in context in **Psalm 18 (KJV):46** The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted. 47 It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me. 48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. 49 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name. 50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

Augustine believed that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CIV, paragraph 4, page 510**, he says, “What is the foundation of the Church, but that of which the Apostle saith, “Other foundation can no man lay but that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.” (1 Corinthians 3:11) And therefore, grounded on such a foundation, what hath she deserved to hear? “It shall not be bowed forever and ever.” “He founded the earth on its firmness.” That is, He hath founded the Church upon Christ the foundation.”

He also believed Jesus Christ to be the foundation of the Church.

## One of Us

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CXXXIX, paragraph 51, page 54**, he says, “Our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh in the Prophets, sometimes in His own Name, sometimes in ours, because He maketh Himself one with us; as it is said, “they twain shall be one flesh.” Wherefore also the Lord saith in the Gospel, speaking of marriage, “therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh.” One flesh, because of our mortality He took flesh; not one divinity, for He is the Creator, we the creature. Whatsoever then our Lord speaketh in the person of the Flesh He took upon Him, belongeth both to that Head which hath already ascended into heaven, and to those members which still toil in their earthly wandering. Let us hear then our Lord Jesus Christ speaking in prophecy. For the Psalms were sung long before the Lord was born of Mary, yet not before He was Lord: for from everlasting He was the Creator of all things, but in time He was born of His creature. Let us believe that Godhead, and, so far as we can, understand Him to be equal to the Father. But that Godhead equal to the Father was made partaker of our mortal nature, not of His own store, but of ours; that we too might be made partakers of His Divine Nature, not of our store, but of His.”

He believed that Jesus Christ is God, but became one of us to save us. And this is according to **Hebrews 2 (KJV):14** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

And it is according to **Philippians 2:6-11**, and **2 Peter 1:3-4**.



## Ages

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate IX. Chapter II. 1–11, paragraph 6, page 65**, concerning the ages, Augustine says, “And we know that the law extends from the time of which we have record, that is, from the beginning of the world: “In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)”

And then he adds, “Thence down to the time in which we are now living are six ages, this being the sixth, as you have often heard and know. The first age is reckoned from Adam to Noah; the second, from Noah to Abraham; and, as Matthew the evangelist duly follows and distinguishes, the third, from Abraham to David; the fourth, from David to the carrying away into Babylon; the fifth, from the carrying away into Babylon to John the Baptist; (Matthew 1:17) the sixth, from John the Baptist to the end of the world.”

But an age in scripture, and in geology, is from one cataclysmic or climatic change to another, in the earth’s surface or condition.

So the first age, the Creative Age, began when God created the heavens and the earth, as in **Genesis 1 (KJV):1** In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

This age ended with the fall of Lucifer. Because of his sin, the earth became formless and void, as we read in **Genesis 1 (KJV):2** And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

In **A Commentary on the Writings of Augustine of Hippo**, we quoted Dr. Albert Grimes, who said, “The next age began with the reconditioning of this ruined earth, as described in Genesis 1:3-25. Now this second age came to an end with another violent change. The earth was flooded with water, mentioned in Genesis 7:19.”

This is known as The Antediluvian Age, or the age before the flood.

Dr. Grimes continues, and says, “The next age began after the flood of Genesis 7:19. This age will continue until the Revelation of Christ, as he comes down to this earth again to set up his kingdom. Matthew 24:29,30. The earth will undergo a change which will end the age. Earthquakes and climatic conditions will change the earth.”

This age is known as The Present Age.

Dr. Grimes continues, “The next age will begin with the thousand years reign of Christ on the earth. Revelation 20:1-6. And that age will end with the destruction of the earth’s surface with fire described in 2 Peter 3:10-13.”

This is known as The Kingdom Age.

Dr. Grimes continues, “The next age will begin with the new heaven and earth of Revelation 21:1. This doubtless refers to the fullness of time referred to in Ephesians 1:10. This age will never end, but go on eternally.” **Book 15: God’s Divine Plan of the Ages, page 6**

<http://www.theriskofchrist.com/grimes/book15.pdf>

This is known as The Eternal Ages.

Now Augustine’s ages don’t really line up with the Scripture. But there are divisions of time called dispensations, which fit better to his thinking. Dispensations are divisions of the ages.

Dr. Grimes says, “The word “Dispensation” means the management, oversight, administration of other’s property, the office of a manager, overseer, stewardship. So it speaks

of an administration by God of a certain period of human history. It's a period of time in which man is tested as to his obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God. The dispensations do not relate to salvation. Faith in Christ in every age is the only way into the experience of salvation. We could say that a dispensation is a shorter period of time, dividing some of the ages which relate to man's time. There are seven such Dispensations." **Book 15: God's Divine Plan of the Ages, page 10.**

In the Antediluvian Age, there are two dispensations. The first was the Dispensation of Innocence, which was when Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, and before they sinned. The second is the Dispensation of Conscience, which was after they had sinned, and were driven out of the Garden of Eden. Then the Present Age consists of four dispensations. The first is the Dispensation of Human Government, which began after the flood. The Dispensation of Promise begins with the calling of Abraham. The Dispensation of Law began with Moses when God gave him the law. The Dispensation of Grace began at the cross, and will last until the rapture of the Church just before the tribulation period begins, which is a parenthetical period before the Kingdom Age, which is also a dispensation.

## **The Kingdom Age**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Ten Homilies, The Epistle of St. John, Homily I. 1 John I. 1–II. 11, paragraph 13, page 467–468**, he says, "What so blind as these who hate their brethren? For that ye may know that they are blind, they have stumbled at a Mountain. I say the same things often, that they may not slip out of your memory. The Stone which was "cut out of the Mountain without hands," is it not Christ, who came of the kingdom of the Jews, without the work of man? (Daniel 2:34-35)"

And he continues, and says, "Has not that Stone broken in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, that is, all the dominations of idols and demons? Has not that Stone grown, and become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth?"

And he adds, "Do we in this way point out the Church, my brethren? Is it not open? Is it not manifest? Has it not possessed all nations? Is not that fulfilled which so many years before was promised to Abraham, that in his seed should all nations be blessed? (Genesis 22:18)"

And he continues, "It was promised to one believer, and the world is filled with thousands of believers. Behold here the mountain filling the whole face of the earth! Behold the city of which it is said, "A city set upon a mountain cannot be hid!" (Matthew 5:14)"

Augustine thought that he was living in the Kingdom Age where the Church was reigning with Christ, because Rome was ruling the world in his time, and Rome had embraced the Church. But during the Kingdom Age, Christ will rule the nations with a rod of iron as we read in **Revelation 2 (KJV):27** And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

## **The Church Now Reigning with Christ a Thousand Years**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XX,**

**Chapter 17, page 436-437**, he says, “But by God’s final judgment, which shall be administered by His Son Jesus Christ, there shall by God’s grace be manifested a glory so pervading and so new, that no vestige of what is old shall remain; for even our bodies shall pass from their old corruption and mortality to new incorruption and immortality.”

He then explains, “For to refer this promise to the present time, in which the saints are reigning with their King a thousand years, seems to me excessively barefaced, when it is most distinctly said, “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, but there shall be no more pain.”

Augustine believed that the Church was “reigning with their King a thousand years”, because the Roman Empire had nominally embraced Christianity in his time. He did not understand the divisions of time that are in the Scriptures. But he did understand that in the future, there will be a time when God shall wipe away every tear, and there shall be no more death, as we read in **Revelation 21 (KJV):4** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Augustine also believed that there would be one final judgment in which all would be resurrected, the righteous and the unrighteous. He did not understand the “first resurrection” mentioned in Revelation 20:4-6. He thought that this was referring to the spiritual resurrection we receive when we are born again. But the “first resurrection” is only for the righteous, and includes those who “were beheaded for the witness of Jesus”, as we read in **Revelation 20 (KJV):4** And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

This is a physical resurrection and not a spiritual resurrection. The “rest of the dead” will be resurrected and judged at the White Throne Judgment mentioned in Revelation 20:11-15.

# The Book of Revelation

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XVII, Chapter 52, page 393**, he says, “I do not think, indeed, that what some have thought or may think is rashly said or believed, that until the time of Antichrist the Church of Christ is not to suffer any persecutions besides those she has already suffered,—that is, *ten*,—and that the eleventh and last shall be inflicted by Antichrist. **They reckon as the first that made by Nero, the second by Domitian, the third by Trajan, the fourth by Antoninus, the fifth by Severus, the sixth by Maximin, the seventh by Decius, the eighth by Valerian, the ninth by Aurelian, the tenth by Diocletian and Maximian.**”

And Augustine concludes, “**When I think of these and the like things, it does not seem to me that the number of persecutions with which the Church is to be tried can be definitely stated. But, on the other hand, it is no less rash to affirm that there will be some persecutions by kings besides that last one, about which no Christian is in doubt. Therefore we leave this undecided, supporting or refuting neither side of this question, but only restraining men from the audacious presumption of affirming either of them.**”

History tells us that ten great persecutions occurred under the reigns of the following Roman emperors with approximate dates of their reigns in parentheses:

1. Nero (54-68 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 64 to 66 A.D.)
2. Domitian (81-96 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 95 to 96 A.D.)
3. Trajan (98-117 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 100 to 115 A.D.)
4. Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (161-180 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 168 to 177 A.D.)
5. Septimius Severus (193-211 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 203 to 210 A.D.)
6. Maximinus (235-238 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 235 to 237 A.D.)
7. Decius (249-251 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 250 to 251 A.D.)
8. Valerian (253-260 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 257 to 260 A.D.)
9. Aurelian (270-275 A.D.) (persecuted Church from 275 to 275 A.D.)
10. Diocletian (284-305 A.D.) (persecution of the Church lasted from 303 to 313 A.D.)

We read of the “tribulation ten days” in verse 10 in **Revelation 2 (KJV):8** And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Now when we consider the messages to the seven churches in Revelation 2:1 to 3:22, we see that they represent seven periods in Church history. The seven periods are as follows:

1. Ephesus A.D. 70 to A.D. 170
2. Smyrna A.D. 170 to A.D. 312
3. Pergamos A.D. 312 to A.D. 606
4. Thyatira A.D. 606 to A.D. 1520

5. Sardis A.D. 1520 to A.D. 1750
6. Philadelphia A.D. 1750 to the rapture
7. Laodicea A.D. 1750 through the tribulation

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XX, Chapter 6-9, page 425-431**, in **Chapter 6** he says, “As, then, there are two regenerations, of which I have already made mention,—the one according to faith, and which takes place in the present life by means of baptism; the other according to the flesh, and which shall be accomplished in its incorruption and immortality by means of the great and final judgment,—so are there also two resurrections,—the one the first and spiritual resurrection, which has place in this life, and preserves us from coming into the second death; the other the second, which does not occur now, but in the end of the world, and which is of the body, not of the soul, and which by the last judgment shall dismiss some into the second death, others into that life which has no death.”

Augustine believed in one final judgment for all, in which some would be resurrected to life, and the rest to the resurrection of damnation. To him, this was the second resurrection, and the first was the spiritual resurrection when one is born again. He did not understand that the “first resurrection” in Revelation 20:4-6 refers to a physical resurrection, as we read in **Revelation 20 (KJV):4** And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

There is a spiritual resurrection when we are born again, as Jesus taught in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

And in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Then in **Chapter 7**, Augustine says, “The evangelist John has spoken of these two resurrections in the book which is called the Apocalypse, but in such a way that some Christians do not understand the first of the two, and so construe the passage into ridiculous fancies. For the Apostle John says in the foresaid book, “And I saw an angel come down from heaven. . . . Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:1-6) Those who, on the strength of this passage, have suspected that the first resurrection is future and bodily, have been moved, among other things, specially by the number of a thousand years, as if it were a fit thing that the saints should thus enjoy a kind of Sabbath-rest during that period, a holy leisure after the labors of the six thousand years since man was created, and was on account of his great sin dismissed from the blessedness of

paradise into the woes of this mortal life, so that thus, as it is written, “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,” (2 Peter 3:8) there should follow on the completion of six thousand years, as of six days, a kind of seventh-day Sabbath in the succeeding thousand years; and that it is for this purpose the saints rise, viz., to celebrate this Sabbath. And this opinion would not be objectionable, if it were believed that the joys of the saints in that Sabbath shall be spiritual, and consequent on the presence of God; for I myself, too, once held this opinion. (Sermon 259)”

Augustine says he “once held” the opinion that there would be a future thousand year reign with Christ. He then explains why he no longer holds this opinion, as he continues, “But, as they assert that those who then rise again shall enjoy the leisure of immoderate carnal banquets, furnished with an amount of meat and drink such as not only to shock the feeling of the temperate, but even to surpass the measure of credulity itself, such assertions can be believed only by the carnal. They who do believe them are called by the spiritual Chiliasts, which we may literally reproduce by the name Millenarians. It were a tedious process to refute these opinions point by point: we prefer proceeding to show how that passage of Scripture should be understood. [Augustin, who had formerly himself entertained chiliastic hopes, revolutionized the prevailing ante-Nicene view of the Apocalyptic millennium by understanding it of the present reign of Christ in the Church. See Schaff, **Church History**, vol. ii. 619.—P.S.]”

Then referring to Revelation 20:1-2, he says, “The devil, then, is bound and shut up in the abyss that he may not seduce the nations from which the Church is gathered, and which he formerly seduced before the Church existed. For it is not said “that he should not seduce any man,” but “that he should not seduce the nations”—meaning, no doubt, those among which the Church exists—“till the thousand years should be fulfilled,”—i.e., either what remains of the sixth day which consists of a thousand years, or all the years which are to elapse till the end of the world.”

Then in **Chapter 8**, he says, “Now the devil was thus bound not only when the Church began to be more and more widely extended among the nations beyond Judea, but is now and shall be bound till the end of the world, when he is to be loosed.”

Then, referring to Revelation 20:7-10 when the devil shall be loosed after the thousand years, he says, “But when the short time comes he shall be loosed. For he shall rage with the whole force of himself and his angels for three years and six months; and those with whom he makes war shall have power to withstand all his violence and stratagems.”

Then in **Chapter 9**, he says, “But while the devil is bound, the saints reign with Christ during the same thousand years, understood in the same way, that is, of the time of His first coming. For, leaving out of account that kingdom concerning which He shall say in the end, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you,” (Matthew 25:34) the Church could not now be called His kingdom or the kingdom of heaven unless His saints were even now reigning with Him, though in another and far different way; for to His saints He says, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” (Matthew 28:20)”

And he says, “Therefore the Church even now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints reign with Him, though otherwise than as they shall reign hereafter; and yet, though the tares grow in the Church along with the wheat, they do not reign with Him. For they reign with Him who do what the apostle says, “If ye be risen with



Christ, mind the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Seek those things which are above, not the things which are on the earth.” (Colossians 3:1-2) Of such persons he also says that their conversation is in heaven. (Philippians 3:20) In fine, they reign with Him who are so in His kingdom that they themselves are His kingdom.”

In regards to Revelation 20:4-6, he says, “For, after saying that the devil is bound a thousand years and is afterwards loosed for a short season, it goes on to give a sketch of what the Church does or of what is done in the Church in those days, in the words, “And I saw seats and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given.” It is not to be supposed that this refers to the last judgment, but to the seats of the rulers and to the rulers themselves by whom the Church is now governed. And no better interpretation of judgment being given can be produced than that which we have in the words, “What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 18:18) Whence the apostle says, “What have I to do with judging them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?” (1 Corinthians 5:12) “And the souls,” says John, “of those who were slain for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God,”—understanding what he afterwards says, “reigned with Christ a thousand years,” (Revelation 20:4)—that is, the souls of the martyrs not yet restored to their bodies. For the souls of the pious dead are not separated from the Church, which even now is the kingdom of Christ; otherwise there would be no remembrance made of them at the altar of God in the partaking of the body of Christ, nor would it do any good in danger to run to His baptism, that we might not pass from this life without it; nor to reconciliation, if by penitence or a bad conscience any one may be severed from His body. For why are these things practiced, if not because the faithful, even though dead, are His members? Therefore, while these thousand years run on, their souls reign with Him, though not as yet in conjunction with their bodies. And therefore in another part of this same book we read, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth and now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works do follow them.” (Revelation 14:13) The Church, then, begins its reign with Christ now in the living and in the dead.”

And he says, “They, then, who are free from these pollutions, whether they still live in this mortal flesh, or are dead, reign with Christ even now, through this whole interval which is indicated by the thousand years, in a fashion suited to this time.”

And referring again to Revelation 20:4-6, he says, “For whosoever has not lived until the thousand years be finished, *i.e.*, during this whole time in which the first resurrection is going on,—whosoever has not heard the voice of the Son of God, and passed from death to life,—that man shall certainly in the second resurrection, the resurrection of the flesh, pass with his flesh into the second death. For he goes to say, “This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection,” or who experiences it. Now he experiences it who not only revives from the death of sin, but continues in this renewed life. “In these the second death hath no power.”

And then under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God Book XX, Chapters 11-15, page 432-435, in Chapter 11** he says, “And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed from his prison, and shall go out to seduce the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and shall draw them to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.” This then, is his purpose in seducing them, to draw them to this battle. For even before this he was wont to use as many and various seductions as he could

continue. And the words “he shall go out” mean, he shall burst forth from lurking hatred into open persecution. For this persecution, occurring while the final judgment is imminent, shall be the last which shall be endured by the holy Church throughout the world, the whole city of Christ being assailed by the whole city of the devil, as each exists on earth.”

And he says, “The meaning of these names we find to be, Gog, “a roof,” Magog, “from a roof,”—a house, as it were, and he who comes out of the house. They are therefore the nations in which we found that the devil was shut up as in an abyss, and the devil himself coming out from them and going forth, so that they are the roof, he from the roof. Or if we refer both words to the nations, not one to them and one to the devil, then they are both the roof, because in them the old enemy is at present shut up, and as it were roofed in; and they shall be from the roof when they break forth from concealed to open hatred. The words, “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city,” do not mean that they have come, or shall come, to one place, as if the camp of the saints and the beloved city should be in some one place; for this camp is nothing else than the Church of Christ extending over the whole world. And consequently wherever the Church shall be,—and it shall be in all nations, as is signified by “the breadth of the earth,”—there also shall be the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and there it shall be encompassed by the savage persecution of all its enemies; for they too shall exist along with it in all nations,—that is, it shall be straitened, and hard pressed, and shut up in the straits of tribulation, but shall not desert its military duty, which is signified by the word “camp.””

But the Church is not mentioned in the book of Revelation, after **Revelation 3 (KJV):22** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The Church is in fact pictured in heaven represented by the 24 elders as we read in **Revelation 5 (KJV):8** And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

This is a picture of the resurrected saints who have been redeemed “out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation”, in verse 9.

Then in **Chapter 13**, he says, “This last persecution by Antichrist shall last for three years and six months, as we have already said, and as is affirmed both in the book of Revelation and by Daniel the prophet. Though this time is brief, yet not without reason is it questioned whether it is comprehended in the thousand years in which the devil is bound and the saints reign with Christ, or whether this little season should be added over and above to these years. For if we say that they are included in the thousand years, then the saints reign with Christ during a more protracted period than the devil is bound. For they shall reign with their King and Conqueror mightily even in that crowning persecution when the devil shall now be unbound and shall rage against them with all his might. How then does Scripture define both the binding of the devil and the reign of the saints by the same thousand years, if the binding of the devil ceases three years and six months before this reign of the saints with Christ? On the other hand, if we say that the brief space of this persecution is not to be reckoned as a part of the thousand years, but rather as an additional period, we shall indeed be able to interpret the words, “The

priests of God and of Christ shall reign with Him a thousand years; and when the thousand years shall be finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison;” for thus they signify that the reign of the saints and the bondage of the devil shall cease simultaneously, so that the time of the persecution we speak of should be contemporaneous neither with the reign of the saints nor with the imprisonment of Satan, but should be reckoned over and above as a superadded portion of time.”

Augustine did not understand the Biblical timeline in Daniel 9:24-27. This timeline gives us a complete outline of what will happen up until the time of the tribulation period of seven years. Augustine offers many possible scenarios in the book of Revelation, which are not helpful. He assumes that all Biblical prophecy in the Old Testament ultimately refers to the Church, which has replaced Israel in his thinking. He believed that the Church was in the thousand year reign of Christ, apparently because the ruler of the world, Rome, had nominally accepted Christianity. This thinking caused him to completely misinterpret the book of Revelation. He thought that the Antichrist was to come after the thousand year reign of Christ in an additional three and one half year period. When the Biblical timeline in Daniel 9:24-27 is understood, the book of Revelation falls very neatly into place. A more Biblical explanation is given in **A Commentary on the Writings of Augustine of Hippo**. A complete explanation of future events may be found in **Book 10 Future Events**, and in **Book 11**, and in **Book 12** at <http://www.theriskofchrist.com/library.html>

Now under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XX, Chapter 25, page 445-446**, he mentions “**purgatorial punishments**”, as he says, “**From these words it more evidently appears that some shall in the last judgment suffer some kind of purgatorial punishments; for what else can be understood by the word, “Who shall abide the day of His entrance, or who shall be able to look upon Him? For He enters as a molder’s fire, and as the herb of fullers: and He shall sit fusing and purifying as if over gold and silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and pour them out like gold and silver?”**” Similarly Isaiah says, “**The Lord shall wash the filthiness of the sons and daughters of Zion, and shall cleanse away the blood from their midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.**” (Isaiah 4:4)”

And he adds, “**But this question of purgatorial punishments we must defer to another time, to give it a more adequate treatment. By the sons of Levi and Judah and Jerusalem we ought to understand the Church herself, gathered not from the Hebrews only, but from other nations as well; nor such a Church as she now is, when “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,” (1 John 1:8) but as she shall then be, purged by the last judgment as a threshing floor by a winnowing wind, and those of her members who need it being cleansed by fire, so that there remains absolutely not one who offers sacrifice for his sins. For all who make such offerings are assuredly in their sins, for the remission of which they make offerings, that having made to God an acceptable offering, they may then be absolved.**”

As for his “**question of purgatorial punishments**”, in **A Commentary on the Writings of Augustine of Hippo**, under **Dogmas of the Early Church**, under the heading, **Purgatory**, you will read under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God Book XXI, Chapter 13, page 463-464**, that he said, “**But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment. But of those who suffer temporary punishments after death, all are not doomed to those everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment; for to some, as we have**

already said, what is not remitted in this world is remitted in the next, that is, they are not punished with the eternal punishment of the world to come.”

So the Catholic or universal church in Augustine’s time believed in purgatory, that is, “temporary punishments after death”. But purgatory has no foundation in the Scriptures, not even a mention.

The teaching about purgatory comes from a misinterpretation of **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV)**:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The fire will “try every man’s work of what sort it is”. Rewards will be given for works of gold, silver, or precious stones. We must remember that the Lord chastens every child He loves, as we read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV)**:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

The word “scourgeth” in the Greek is **μαστιγῶω** (pronounced mas-tig-o'-o); from G3148; to flog (literally or figuratively):—scourge.

We suffer in this life for our bad choices. If we do not make good choices in this life, we will receive no rewards when we appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, but we will still be saved.

## Suffering in Hell

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XXI, Chapter 3, page 453**, he says, “For we cannot call it reasoning to make pain a presumption of death, while, in fact, it is rather a sign of life. For though it be a question whether that which suffers can continue to live for ever, yet it is certain that everything which suffers pain does live, and that pain can exist only in a living subject. It is necessary, therefore, that he who is pained be living, not necessary that pain kill him; for every pain does not kill even those mortal bodies of ours which are destined to die. And that any pain kills them is caused by the circumstance that the soul is so connected with the body that it succumbs to great pain and withdraws; for the structure of our members and vital parts is so infirm that it cannot bear up against that violence which causes great or extreme agony. But in the life to come this connection of soul and body is of such a kind, that as it is dissolved by no lapse of time, so neither is it burst asunder by any pain. And so, although it be true that in this world there is no flesh which can suffer pain and yet cannot die, yet in the world to come there shall be flesh such as now there is not, as there will also be death such as now there is not. For death will not be abolished, but will be eternal, since the soul will neither be able to enjoy God and live, nor to die and escape the pains of the body. The first death drives the soul from the body against her

will: the second death holds the soul in the body against her will. The two have this in common, that the soul suffers against her will what her own body inflicts.”

And he adds, “The soul, then, is pained with the body in that part where something occurs to hurt it; and it is pained alone, though it be in the body, when some invisible cause distresses it, while the body is safe and sound. Even when not associated with the body it is pained; for certainly that rich man was suffering in hell when he cried, “I am tormented in this flame.” (Luke 16:24)”

And he concludes, “And why then is it incredible that these fires can cause pain but not death to those bodies we speak of, just as the bodies themselves cause pain, but not therefore death, to the souls? Pain is therefore no necessary presumption of death.”

And we read in **Matthew 10 (KJV):28** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

And we read in **Mark 9 (KJV):43** And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: 48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

In context, we must understand that when Jesus said, “rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell”, He was not speaking of annihilation. The body and soul will be destroyed in the sense that they will be rendered useless, and still able to experience the torment of pain. Augustine evidently understood this.



## Israel Replaced by the Church

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm XLV, paragraph 15, page 150**, he says, “Now the throne of the Jewish Kingdom was a temporal one; belonging to those who were under the Law, not to those who were under “grace.” He came to “redeem those who were under the Law,” and to place them under “Grace.” His “Throne is for ever and ever.” Why? For that first throne of the Kingdom was but a temporal one: whence then have we a “throne for ever and ever”? Because it is God’s throne. O divine Attribute of Eternity! For God could not have a temporal throne. “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—a sceptre of direction is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom.””

He refers again to **Psalm 45 (KJV):6** Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

So in Augustine’s thinking, God’s plan for Israel is over. Israel has been replaced by the Church.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm XLV, paragraphs 27-30, page 154-155**, in **paragraph 28** he says, ““With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought and shall be led into the Temple of the King” (ver. 15).”

He refers to **Psalm 44 (Douay Rheims):16** They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be brought into the temple of the king.

But we read in **Psalm 45 (KJV):15** With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.

He continues, as he interprets, “The “Temple of the King” is the Church itself: it is the Church itself that enters into “the Temple of the King.” Whereof is that Temple constructed? Of the men who enter the Temple? Who but God’s “faithful” ones are its “living stones”? (1 Peter 2:4)”

He refers to **1 Peter 2 (KJV):4** To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Augustine makes an allegory of this Psalm, with the Church as the temple.

Then in **paragraph 29**, he says, “Observe how widely diffused is the “Temple of the King,” that “the virgins that are not led to the Temple of the King,” may know that they have nothing to do with that marriage. “Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth.” **This is the Universal Church: her children have been made “princes over all the earth:” her children have been appointed instead of the “fathers.” Let those who are cut off own the truth of this, let them come to the One Body: let them be led into the Temple of the King. God hath established His Temple everywhere: hath laid everywhere “the foundations of the Prophets and Apostles.” (Ephesians 2:20) The Church has brought “forth sons,” has made them “instead of her fathers” to be “princes over all the earth.”**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CXIV, paragraph 3, page 550-551**, he says, **“The Christian people then is rather Israel, and the same is preferably the house of Jacob; for Israel and Jacob are the same. But that multitude of Jews, which was deservedly reprobated for its perfidy, for the pleasures of the flesh sold their**



birthright, so that they belonged not to Jacob, but rather to Esau. For ye know that it was said with this hidden meaning, “That the elder shall serve the younger.” (Genesis 25:33,23)”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CXXIX, paragraph 8, page 612**, he says, “Let them be confounded and turned backward, as many as have evil will at Sion” (ver. 5). They who hate Sion, hate the Church: Sion is the Church.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CXXXII, paragraph 14, page 620**, he says, “For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for Himself” (ver. 13). Sion is the Church Herself; She is also that Jerusalem unto whose peace we are running, who is in pilgrimage not in the Angels, but in us, who in her better part waiteth for the part that will return; whence letters have come unto us, which are every day read. This city is that very Sion, whom the Lord hath chosen.”

In Augustine’s thinking, the Church had replaced Israel who had become apostate. Now all of the Psalms referred to the Church in his thinking, as he says, “Sion is the Church Herself”. And so he concludes, “That the elder shall serve the younger”, the “elder” being Israel and the “younger” being the Church.

But the prophet Isaiah prophesied in **Isaiah 11 (KJV):1** And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. 6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

This is speaking of the changes in the earth that will occur during the thousand year reign of Christ, when “with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked”, speaking of the reign of Christ.

Isaiah continues in **Isaiah 11 (KJV):10** And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. 11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The Lord promised in verse 11 that “it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall

set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people”, and in verse 12, “from the four corners of the earth”.

The first time that they went into captivity had its beginning in approximately 721 B.C. when Assyria took the northern ten tribes of Israel into captivity, as we read of in **2 Kings 17 (KJV)**: 1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. 2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him. 3 Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. 4 And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. 5 Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. 6 In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. 7 For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, 8 And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

Then in 606 B.C. when the Babylonians invaded Judah, some Jews were taken to Babylon, and in 586 B.C. King Nebuchadnezzar burned the Temple, and destroyed Jerusalem, and the two tribes, Benjamin and Judah, were deported to Babylon.

The first time they were then recovered was after the seventy years of captivity in Babylon, which Jeremiah prophesied of in **Jeremiah 25 (KJV)**: 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

This first recovery was begun in 538 B.C. when King Cyrus of Persia allowed Jews to return to their land. Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest started to rebuild the temple in 536 B.C..

The second time is mentioned in **Isaiah 11 (KJV)**: 10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. 11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The second time will be at the second coming of Jesus Christ, at the time of Jacob's trouble in **Jeremiah 30 (KJV)**: 3 For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. 4 And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. 5 For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. 6 Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in

travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. 8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: 9 But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.

And we read in **Jeremiahs 31 (KJV):**35 Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: 36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

And so we read in **Isaiah 66 (KJV):**7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. 9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. 10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: 11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. 12 For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. 13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

## The Church

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, On Christian Doctrine, A.D. 397, Book III, Chapter 34, paragraphs 48-49, page 569-571**, in **paragraph 48** he says, “**And thus the spiritual Israel is made up, not of one nation, but of all the nations which were promised to the fathers in their seed, that is, in Christ.**”

Yes, the spiritual Israel is made up of all the nations. All who have been born again are part of the spiritual Israel. But the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 36 is speaking of the time when Israel will be restored as a nation of believers.

He continues in **paragraph 49**, “**This spiritual Israel, therefore, is distinguished from the carnal Israel which is of one nation, by newness of grace, not by nobility of descent, in feeling, not in race; but the prophet, in his depth of meaning, while speaking of the carnal Israel, passes on, without indicating the transition, to speak of the spiritual, and although now speaking of the latter, seems to be still speaking of the former; not that he grudges us the clear apprehension of Scripture, as if we were enemies, but that he deals with us as a physician, giving us a wholesome exercise for our spirit.**”

Augustine does not understand that although he is speaking of carnal Israel in his time, the prophet Ezekiel is prophesying of a time when carnal Israel will again be spiritual in the future as a nation of believers.”

And he then asserts, “**And therefore we ought to take this saying, “And I will bring you into your own land,” and what he says shortly afterwards, as if repeating himself, “And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers,” not literally, as if they referred to Israel after the flesh, but spiritually, as referring to the spiritual Israel. For the Church, without spot or wrinkle, gathered out of all nations, and destined to reign for ever with Christ, is itself the land of the blessed, the land of the living;**”

But we read in **Isaiah 66 (KJV):7** Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. 9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. 10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, A.D. 418 On Original Sin, Book II, Chapter 8, page 239**, he says, “**The venerable Pope Zosimus, keeping in view this deprecatory preamble, dealt with the man, puffed up as he was with the blasts of false doctrine, so as that he should condemn all the objectionable points which had been alleged against him by the deacon Paulinus, and that he should yield his assent to the rescript of the Apostolic See which had been issued by his predecessor of sacred memory. The accused man, however, refused to condemn the objections raised by the deacon, yet he did not dare to hold out against the letter of the blessed Pope Innocent; indeed, he went so far as to “promise that he would condemn all the points which the Apostolic See condemned.**”

Augustine refers here to the bishop of Rome as the Pope. So he refers to **Pope Zosimus**

and to **Pope Innocent** here. The Apostolic See was a reference to any church which could show that they were planted by an apostle. When Augustine refers to the Apostolic See, he refers to the bishop of Rome.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, A.D. 418 On Original Sin, Book II, Chapters 18-19, page 243**, in **paragraph 18** he says, “**This being the case, you of course feel that episcopal councils, and the Apostolic See, and the whole Roman Church, and the Roman Empire itself, which by God’s gracious favour has become Christian, has been most righteously moved against the authors of this wicked error, until they repent and escape from the snares of the devil.**”

In **paragraph 19** he says, “**But I would have you carefully observe the way in which Pelagius endeavoured by deception to overreach even the judgment of the bishop of the Apostolic See on this very question of the baptism of infants. He sent a letter to Rome to Pope Innocent of blessed memory; and when it found him not in the flesh, it was handed to the holy Pope Zosimus, and by him directed to us.**”

We notice that “**the judgment of the bishop of the Apostolic See**” refers to “**Pope Innocent of blessed memory**”, and then to “**the holy Pope Zosimus**”, and then “**and by him directed to us**”, that is, to the bishop of Hippo, Augustine.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, Letters of St. Augustine, A.D. 418, LETTER CXCI, page 554-555**, he says, “**To My Venerable Lord and Pious Brother and Co-Presbyter Sixtus**, Worthy of Being Received in the Love of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.”

In **paragraph 1** he says, “**Since the arrival of the letter which, in my absence, your Grace forwarded by our holy brother the presbyter Firmus**, and which I read on my return to Hippo, but not until after the bearer had departed, the present is my first opportunity of sending to you any reply, and it is with great pleasure that I entrust it to our very dearly beloved son, **the acolyte Albinus.**”

And he says, “**For the bearer of this letter has just gone, meanwhile, from me to visit my venerable brother and co-bishop Alypius**, who will write a reply for himself to **your Holiness**, and he has carried with him your letter, which I had already perused.”

There were presbyters, co-presbyters, acolytes, and co-bishops in the time of Augustine.

In **paragraph 5**, he says, “**Moreover, they accuse the Roman clergy**, writing, “**That, driven by the fear of a command, they have not blushed to be guilty of the crime of prevarication; so that, contrary to their previous judgment, wherein by their proceedings they had assented to the Catholic dogma, they subsequently pronounced that the nature of men is evil.**”

And he says, “**and that afterwards, by the same priesthood**, Cœlestius and Pelagius were condemned by repeated authority, was the proof of a severity, for a little while intermitted, at length of necessity to be carried out, not a denial of a previously known truth or a new acknowledgment of truth.”

In the time of Augustine, the “**Roman clergy**” was “**the same priesthood**” just mentioned above. And when he refers to “**the Catholic See**”, he is referring to “**the Roman Church**”.

And under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, A.D. 426 or 427, On Rebuke and Grace, Chapter 46, page 490-491**, he says, “**Yet the necessity of**

the **pastoral office** requires, in order that the terrible contagion may not creep through the many, that the diseased sheep should be separated from the sound ones; perchance, by that very separation, to be healed by Him to whom nothing is impossible.”

Augustine considered those in authority in the Church as holding the “**pastoral office**”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon XLIII. [XCIII. Ben.]** On the words of the Gospel, Matt. xxv. 1, “**then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins.**”, paragraph 2, page 402, he says, “**So then let us understand, dearly Beloved, that this parable relates to us all, that is, to the whole Church together, not to the Clergy only of whom we spoke yesterday; nor to the laity only; but generally to all.**” In Augustine’s time, there was already “**Clergy**” and “**laity**”.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon LXVI. [CXVI. Ben.]** On the words of the Gospel, Luke xxiv. 36, “**He himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, peace be unto you,**” etc., paragraph 5, page 457-458, he said, “**He showed himself then to the disciples. What is “Himself”? The Head of His Church. The Church was foreseen by Him as in thee to be throughout the world, by the disciples it was not yet seen. He showed the Head, He promised the Body.**”

And in **paragraph 6** he says, “**Let the members be added on, the building added on to the foundation. “For no other foundation can any man lay,” says the Apostle, “than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.” (1 Corinthians 3:11)**”

Augustine acknowledged Jesus Christ as the “**Head of His Church**”. Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Church, and He is the Christ, the Son of God, and He is the rock upon which the Church is being built. And as the Head of the body, He is directing all of the building.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon LXXXV. [CXXXV. Ben.]** On the words of the Gospel, John ix. 4 and 31, “**We must work the works of him that sent me,**” etc. Against the Arians. And of that which the man who was born blind and received his sight said, “**We know that God heareth not sinners.**”, paragraph 7, page 514, he says, “Of a truth, Brethren, for that God hath so willed, I am His priest; I am a sinner; with you do I beat the breast, with you I ask for pardon, with you I hope that God will be merciful.

Note that Augustine was a priest.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon LXXXVII. [CXXXVII. Ben.]** The tenth chapter of the Gospel of John. Of the shepherd, and the hireling, and the thief., paragraph 7, page 519-520, he says, “**But the grace and mercy of the Lord is present, and allows them not to do so; for He hath hedged round all His declarations with His truth, and in such wise balanced them; that if any one would wish to cut off anything from them, or to introduce anything by a bad reading or interpretation, any right hearted man may join to the Scripture what has been cut off from the Scripture, and read what went above or below, and he will find the sense which the other wished to interpret wrongly. What then, think ye, do they say of whom it is said, “Do what they say”? That it is (and in truth it is so) addressed to laymen. For what does the layman who wishes to live well say to himself, when he takes notice of a wicked cleric? “The Lord said, ‘What they say, do; what they do, do not.’ Let me walk in the way of the Lord, not follow this man’s conversation. Let me hear from him not his words, but God’s. I will follow God, let him follow his own lust.**”

Augustine did acknowledge any right “**hearted man**” in regards to the interpretation of the



Scriptures.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate CXXI. Chapter XX. 10–29, paragraph 4, page 438**, he says, “**And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.**” By breathing on them He signified that the Holy Spirit was the Spirit, not of the Father alone, but likewise His own. “Whose soever sins,” He continues, “ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever ye retain, they are retained.” The Church’s love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, discharges the sins of all who are partakers with itself, but retains the sins of those who have no participation therein. Therefore it is, that after saying “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” He straightway added this regarding the remission and retention of sins.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, First Epistle of John, Homily III. 1 John II. 18–27, paragraph 1, page 476**, he says, “Consequently if he will, he grows or makes increase: if he will, he decreases. What is it to grow? To go onward by proficiency. What is it to decrease? To go backward by deficiency. Whoso knows that he is born, let him hear that he is an infant; let him eagerly cling to the breasts of his mother, and he grows apace. Now his mother is the Church; and her breasts are the two Testaments of the Divine Scriptures. Hence let him suck the milk of all the things that as signs of spiritual truths were done in time for our eternal salvation, that being nourished and strengthened, he may attain to the eating of solid meat, which is, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Our milk is Christ in His humility; our meat, the selfsame Christ equal with the Father. With milk He nourisheth thee, that He may feed thee with bread: for with the heart spiritually to touch Christ is to know that He is equal with the Father.”

Making the Church our “mother” created a dependency on man which is not in agreement with the Scriptures. We abide in Him as we pay attention to the anointing which we “have received of Him, as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):27** But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

## No Forgiveness Outside the Church

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine Sermon XVII. [LXVII. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, Matthew 11:25, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding,” etc., paragraph 28, page 328-331**, he says, “And thus sins, because they are not forgiven out of the Church, must be forgiven by that Spirit, by whom the Church is gathered together into one. In fact, if any one out of the Church repent him of his sins, and for this so great sin whereby he is an alien from the Church of God, has an heart impenitent, what doth that other repentance profit him? Seeing by this alone he speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, whereby he is alienated from the Church, which hath received this gift, that in her remission of sins should be given in the Holy Ghost?”

And he says, “Whence the Apostle says, “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3)”

He refers to **Ephesians 4 (KJV):3** Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the

bond of peace.

The Presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life is not dependent on our fellowship with any Church denomination. The presence of the Holy Spirit enters a believer's life the moment he truly believes in Jesus Christ. It is not faith in man that keeps the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It is our individual faith in Jesus that makes us a believer, and a part of the body of Christ. And so we read in **Colossians 2 (KJV):6** As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

## The Apostle Peter

Under **Volume 1, Letters of Augustine, A.D. 400, Letter LIII, Chapter I, paragraph 1, page 298**, he says, "Having then such promises, if an angel from heaven were to say to thee, "Let go the Christianity of the whole earth, and cling to the faction of Donatus, the episcopal succession of which is set forth in a letter of their bishop in your town," he ought to be accursed in your estimation; because he would be endeavouring to cut you off from the whole Church, and thrust you into a small party, and make you forfeit your interest in the promises of God."

In his time, Augustine considered the Catholic Church to be "the Christianity of the whole earth".

In **paragraph 2** he says, "For if the lineal succession of bishops is to be taken into account, with how much more certainty and benefit to the Church do we reckon back till we reach Peter himself, to whom, as bearing in a figure the whole Church, the Lord said: "Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" (Matthew 16:18)"

He refers to **Matthew 16 (KJV):18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Augustine does not explain what he means by saying, "...Peter himself, to whom, as bearing in a figure the whole Church...". This statement does give Peter an inordinate amount of authority which the Scripture does not support, as Augustine will himself explain shortly.

He continues, "The successor of Peter was Linus, and his successors in unbroken continuity were these:—Clement, Anacletus, Evaristus, Alexander, Sixtus, Telesphorus, Iginus, Anicetus, Pius, Soter, Eleutherius, Victor, Zephyrinus, Calixtus, Urbanus, Pontianus, Antherus, Fabianus, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephanus, Xystus, Dionysius, Felix, Eutychianus, Gaius, Marcellinus, Marcellus, Eusebius, Miltiades, Sylvester, Marcus, Julius, Liberius, Damasus, and Siricius, whose successor is the present Bishop Anastasius. In this order of succession no Donatist bishop is found. But, reversing the natural course of things, the Donatists sent to Rome from Africa an ordained bishop, who, putting himself at the head of a few Africans in the great metropolis, gave some notoriety to the name of "mountain men," or Cutzupits, by which they were known."

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Tractate VII. Chapter I. 34–51, paragraph 14, page 53**, he says, "Is it a great matter that He changed his name, and converted it from Simon to Peter? Peter is from *petra*, a rock, but the *petra* [rock]; is the Church; in the name of Peter, then, was the Church figured."

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermons on New-**

**Testament Lessons, Sermon XXVI, paragraphs 1-9, page 340-342**, he says in **paragraph 1**, “The Gospel which has just been read touching the Lord Christ, who walked on the waters of the sea; (Matthew 14:25) and the Apostle Peter, who as he was walking, tottered through fear, and sinking in distrust, rose again by confession, gives us to understand that the sea is the present world, and the Apostle Peter the type of the One Church.”

Augustine then explains his allegory of “the Apostle Peter the type of the One Church”, as he says, “For Peter in the order of Apostles first, and in the love of Christ most forward, answers oftentimes alone for all the rest.”

Though Peter is in many dialogs in the Gospels, we read of who is the chief apostle in **Hebrews 3 (KJV):1** Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Augustine then explains, “Again, when the Lord Jesus Christ asked, whom men said that He was, and when the disciples gave the various opinions of men, and the Lord asked again and said, “But whom say ye that I am?” Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” One for many gave the answer, Unity in many. Then said the Lord to Him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 16:17) Then He added, “and I say unto thee.” As if He had said, “Because thou hast said unto Me, ‘Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God;’ I also say unto thee, ‘Thou art Peter.’” For before he was called Simon. Now this name of Peter was given him by the Lord, and that in a figure, that he should signify the Church. For seeing that Christ is the rock (Petra), Peter is the Christian people. For the rock (Petra) is the original name. Therefore Peter is so called from the rock; not the rock from Peter; as Christ is not called Christ from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ. “Therefore,” he saith, “Thou art Peter; and upon this Rock” which thou hast confessed, upon this Rock which thou hast acknowledged, saying, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, will I build My Church;” that is upon Myself, the Son of the living God, “will I build My Church.” I will build thee upon Myself, not Myself upon thee.”

Augustine understood Matthew 16:17-18 correctly.

The word for Peter in the Greek is Πέτρος (pronounced pe'-tros), “apparently a primary word; a (piece of) rock (larger than G3037); as a name, Petrus, an apostle:—Peter, rock. Compare G2786” **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G4074.**

The word “rock” in Matthew 16:18 in the Greek is πέτρα (pronounced pe'-trā), “feminine of the same as G4074; a (mass of) rock (literally or figuratively):—rock.” **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G4073.**

So Peter is a “piece of rock”, but Jesus is a “mass of rock”. And so we read again in **Matthew 16 (KJB):18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The word for “rock” in this verse in Greek is πέτρα (pronounced pe'-trā).

The same Greek word is used in **1 Corinthians 10 (KJV):4** And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

And Augustine continues in **paragraph 3**, and says, “This same Peter therefore who had been by the Rock pronounced “blessed,” bearing the figure of the Church, holding the chief place in the Apostleship, a very little while after that he had heard that he was “blessed,” a very

little while after that he had heard that he was “Peter,” a very little while after that he had heard that he was to be “built upon the Rock,” displeased the Lord when He had heard of His future Passion, for He had foretold His disciples that it was soon to be.”

In **paragraph 5** Augustine says, “Therefore well said Paul by a wholesome despising of himself, and commending of Him; “Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:13) So then, ye are not in me, but together with me; not under me, but under Him.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, Book II, Chapter XXV, Paragraph 87, page 63**, he says, “**And if Christ is the rock, as many Scripture testimonies proclaim (1 Corinthians 10:4) that man builds in Christ who does what he hears from Him.**”

He refers to **1 Corinthians 10 (KJV):4** And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Augustine is clear here, who the rock is, as he says, “**Christ is the rock, as many Scripture testimonies proclaim**”. And the Greek word for rock in 1 Corinthians 10:4 is πέτρα (pronounced pe'-trā).

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, The Harmony of the Gospels, Book IV, Chapter 10, Paragraph 20, page 235**, he says, “**Finally, He here commits His sheep to the care of Peter, who loves Him, and thrice confesses that love, and then He states that He wills this very John so to tarry until He comes. (John 21:23)**”

The Lord did not commit His sheep only to Peter, but to all who would be shepherds of the flock. The Lord asked Peter if he loved Him three times so that Peter would feel His forgiveness for having denied Him three times. Feeding the sheep is the responsibility of all who would be shepherds of the Lord’s flock. The Lord is not creating a hierarchy of service here. That is the invention of man.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon LXXXV. [CXXXV. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, John ix. 4 and 31, “We must work the works of him that sent me,” etc. Against the Arians. And of that which the man who was born blind and received his sight said, “We know that God heareth not sinners.”, paragraph 3, page 518**, he says, “When our Lord then was speaking on this occasion, He said, that He is “the Shepherd,” He said also that He is “the Door.” You find them both in that place, both “I am the Door” and “I am the Shepherd.” (John 10:7, 11) In the Head He is the Door, the Shepherd in the Body. **For He saith to Peter, in whom singly He formeth the Church;** “Peter, lovest thou Me?” He answered, “Lord, I do love Thee.” “Feed My sheep.”

When he says, “**For He saith to Peter, in whom singly He formeth the Church**”, there is no support for this statement in the Scripture. It only further supported the Papal system that was developing in the Catholic Church.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon XCVII. [CXLVII. Ben.] On the same words of the Gospel of John. 21:15, “Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?” etc., paragraphs 1-3, page 544-545**, he says in **paragraph 1**, “Ye remember that the Apostle Peter, the first of all the Apostles, was disturbed at the Lord’s Passion. Of his own self disturbed, but by Christ renewed. For he was first a bold presumer, and became afterwards a timid denier.”

But Jesus is the chief shepherd as Peter affirms in **1 Peter 5 (KJV):4** And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate L. Chapter XI. 55–57; XII, paragraphs 12-14, page 282-283**, he says, “For if in Peter’s case there were no sacramental symbol of the Church, the Lord would not have said to him, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.” (Matthew 16:19) If this was said only to Peter, it gives no ground of action to the Church. But if such is the case also in the Church, that what is bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven,—for when the Church excommunicates, the excommunicated person is bound in heaven; when one is reconciled by the Church, the person so reconciled is loosed in heaven:—if such, then, is the case in the Church, Peter, in receiving the keys, represented the holy Church.”

Augustine understood that Peter was not the rock upon which the Church would be built. Rather he thought that Peter signified the Christian people. In his mind, Peter was first in the ranking of the Apostles, “bearing the figure of the Church, holding the chief place in the Apostleship”.

The power of binding and loosing was also given to all the disciples, as we read in **Matthew 18 (KJV):1** At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And in **Matthew 18 (KJV):18** Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate CXXIV. Chapter XXI. 19–25, paragraph 5, page 449-451**, Augustine’s thinking is clearly revealed, when he summarizes, and says, “**So does the Church act in blessed hope through this troublous life; and this Church symbolized in its generality, was personified in the Apostle Peter, on account of the primacy of his apostleship. For, as regards his proper personality, he was by nature one man, by grace one Christian, by still more abounding grace one, and yet also, the first apostle; but when it was said to him, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven,” he represented the universal Church, which in this world is shaken by divers temptations, that come upon it like torrents of rain, floods and tempests, and falleth not, because it is founded upon a rock (*petra*), from which Peter received his name. For *petra* (rock) is not derived from Peter, but Peter from *petra*; just as Christ is not called so from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ. For on this very account the Lord said, “On this rock will I build my Church,” because Peter had said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16-19) On this rock, therefore, He said, which thou hast confessed, I will build my Church. For the Rock (*Petra*) was Christ; (1 Corinthians 10:4) and on this foundation was Peter himself also built. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus, (1 Corinthians 3:11) The Church, therefore, which is founded in Christ received from Him the keys of the kingdom of heaven in the person of Peter, that is to say, the power of binding and loosing sins. For what the Church is essentially in Christ, such representatively is Peter in the rock (*petra*); and in this representation Christ is to be understood as the Rock, Peter as the Church. This Church, accordingly, which Peter represented, so long as**



it lives amidst evil, by loving and following Christ is delivered from evil. But its following is the closer in those who contend even unto death for the truth. But to the universality [of the Church] is it said, “Follow me,” even as it was for the same universality that Christ suffered: of whom this same Peter saith, “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His footsteps.” (1 Peter 2:21)”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm XLV, paragraphs 21-22, page 152**, in paragraph 21 he says, “**Show me at Rome a temple of Romulus held in so great honour as I can show you the Monument of Peter. (Memoriam Petri (The first basilica of St. Peter, on the Vatican, is attributed to Constantine))** In Peter, who is honoured but He who died for us? For we are followers of Christ, not followers of Peter. And even if we were born from the brother of Him that is dead, yet are we named after the name of Him who is dead. (Deuteronomy 25:6)”

He refers to **Deuteronomy 25 (KJV):6** And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

And Jesus is our Brother as we read in **Hebrews 2 (KJV):16** For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Again, Augustine concluded above, “**In Peter, who is honoured but He who died for us? For we are followers of Christ, not followers of Peter. And even if we were born from the brother of Him that is dead, yet are we named after the name of Him who is dead.**”

But we are not “**born from the brother of Him that is dead**”, that is, Peter who represents the Church, but we are born of God.

And Jesus is the head of the body, the church, as we read in **Colossians 1 (KJV):18** And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

And His body is the church, as we read in **Colossians 1 (KJV):24** Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

And in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):22** And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

## The Laity

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate LI. Chapter XII. 12–26, paragraph 13, page 286-287**, Augustine says, “Accordingly, brethren, when you hear the Lord saying, “Where I am, there shall also my servant be,” do not think merely of good bishops and clergymen. But be yourselves also in your own way serving Christ, by good lives, by giving alms, by preaching His name and doctrine as you can; and every father of a family also, be acknowledging in this name the affection he owes as a parent to his family.”



Just as eyes, hands, head, and feet, have a definite function to perform in the body, so the members in Christ's body all have a function to perform. Now there is a definite order of ministry in the body of Christ as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV)**: 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Every member in the body of Christ has a ministry gift. In the Catholic Church in Augustine's day, there was a clergy and a laity. But here we see that Augustine is encouraging even the laity to be servants of Christ.

We are all different, as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV)**:4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

## Binding and Loosing

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm CII, paragraph 20, page 500**, Augustine said, "This taketh place in the heart of the penitent: when thou hearest a man is sorry for his sins, he hath already come again to life; when thou hearest him by confessing lay bare his conscience, he is already drawn forth from the tomb, but he is not as yet loosed. When is he loosed, and by whom is he loosed? "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth," He saith, "shall be loosed in Heaven." (Matthew 16:19) Forgiveness of sins may justly be granted by the Church: but the dead man himself cannot be aroused except by the Lord crying within him; for God doth this within him. We speak to your ears: how do we know what may be going on in your hearts? But what is going on within, is not our doing, but His."

But forgiveness of sins is not granted by the Church. Forgiveness of sins is granted by the Lord when we confess our sins. The Church, that is, any believer, may tell the one who has confessed Jesus as Lord, and believed in His resurrection, that their sins have been remitted. We are only vessels of good news. But God is the one who forgives.

There is a hierarchy in the Church as Paul reveals in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV)**:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Not all are apostles. But we all have a ministry in His body. It depends on how He has gifted us as we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV)**:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of

the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Let us do our part, and fulfill our ministry. For in our “measure”, we will make “increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love”.

## The Law

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon LXXV. [CXXV. Ben.] Again in John v. 2, etc., on the five porches, where lay a great multitude of impotent folk, and of the pool of Siloa., Paragraph 2, page 475-476**, he says, “For this Moses the minister of the Law wrote five books. In relation therefore to the number of the books which he wrote, the five porches figured the Law. But because the Law was not given to heal the infirm, but to discover and to manifest them; for so saith the Apostle, “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law; But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; (Galatians 3:21-22)”

Augustine has explained the purpose of the law according to the Scriptures. The law cannot give us life, and he refers to **Galatians 3 (KJV):21** Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

His analogy of the five porches and the law in John 5:1-9 is of some value. The five porches could not heal, or deliver from bondage. But in a sense, they directed the sick one to the sheep market which was a pool where healing could occur.

And he says, “The Law therefore was useful to discover sins, because that man being made more abundantly guilty by the transgression of the Law, might, having tamed his pride, implore the help of Him That pitieth. Attend to the Apostle; “The Law entered that sin might abound; but where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded.” (Romans 5:20)”

The law only makes us aware of our need. The law shows us that we have sin, and that we are without a remedy of ourselves before God. Augustine is clear that His grace reigns through righteousness, as he refers in context to **Romans 5 (KJV):20** Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

We have only to receive His righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ, that is, by believing in Him, as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

When we believe in Christ Jesus, God justifies us, and puts His righteousness down to our account.

# Grace

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings  
On Nature and Grace, Chapter 4, page 122, he says, ““For all have sinned”—whether in Adam or in themselves—“and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)””**

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings  
On the Proceedings of Pelagius, Chapter 21 (VIII- IX), page 192, he says, “It is not nature, therefore, which, sold as it is under sin and wounded by the offence, longs for a Redeemer and Saviour; nor is it the knowledge of the law—through which comes the discovery, not the expulsion, of sin—which delivers us from the body of this death; but it is the Lord’s good grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 7:25)”**

And in Chapter 21 [IX.]—The Same Continued., he says, “Therefore it is not from the liberty of the human will, nor from the precepts of the law, that there comes deliverance from the body of this death; for both of these he had already,—the one in his nature, the other in his learning; but all he wanted was the help of the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Paul’s will was indeed free when he accepted Christ as his savior. But the sin nature of his flesh still warred against his mind by which he then wanted to do the will of God. It was his realization that he had the life of the Spirit of God in his spirit, and a new divine nature as a result of this life of the Spirit in him, that set him free from having to perform the works of the flesh, as he reveals in **Romans 8 (KJV):1** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. **2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings  
On the Proceedings of Pelagius, Chapters 22-23, page 192-193, he notes the errors of Pelagius:**

1. “Adam was created mortal, and would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned;
2. that Adam’s sin injured only himself and not the human race;
3. that the law no less than the gospel leads us to the kingdom;
4. that there were sinless men previous to the coming of Christ;
5. that newborn infants are in the same condition as Adam was before the fall; that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die through Adam’s death or transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ.”

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings  
On the Proceedings of Pelagius, Chapters 32-36, page 197-199, in Chapter 32 he says, “And in very deed, if all gifts could be in each member, it would be evident that the similitude, which is used to illustrate this subject, of the several members of our body is inapplicable; for some things are common to the members in general, such as life and health, whilst other things are peculiar to the separate members, since the ear has no perception of colours, nor the eye of voices. Hence it is written: “If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? (1 Corinthians 12:17) Now this of course is not**

said as if it were impossible for God to impart to the ear the sense of seeing, or to the eye the function of hearing. However, what He does in Christ's body, which is the Church, and what the apostle meant by diversity of graces as if through the different members, there might be gifts proper even to every one separately, is clearly known."

And this is what the Scripture teaches, as we read in Romans 12:6 that members have "gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us". We are "members in particular" as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):27** Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

The **New American Standard Bible** reads as in **1 Corinthians 12 (NASB):27** Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

God has gifted each member according to their individuality.

Then in **Chapter 33** he says, "As, therefore, he does not say, that God gives to whom He will, but that "God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all these graces," I could not help being suspicious, when I read such words. For the very name of grace, and the thing that is meant by it, is taken away, if it is not bestowed gratuitously, but he only receives it who is worthy of it. Will anybody say that I do the apostle wrong, because I do not admit him to have been worthy of grace? Nay, I should indeed rather do him wrong, and bring on myself a punishment, if I refused to believe what he himself says. Well, now, has he not pointedly so defined grace as to show that it is so called because it is bestowed gratuitously? These are his own very words: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." (Romans 11:6) In accordance with this, he says again: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Romans 4:4) Whosoever, therefore, is worthy, to him it is due; and if it is thus due to him, it ceases to be grace; for grace is given, but a debt is paid. Grace, therefore, is given to those who are unworthy, that a debt may be paid to them when they become worthy. He, however, who has bestowed on the unworthy the gifts which they possessed not before, does Himself take care that they shall have whatever things He means to recompense to them when they become worthy."

Augustine upholds the Scripture, and sound doctrine here.

Then in **Chapter 34** he says, "The very reason, indeed, why he so often declares that righteousness is imputed to us, not out of our works, but our faith, whereas faith rather works through love, is that no man should think that he arrives at faith itself through the merit of his works; for it is faith which is the beginning whence good works first proceed; since (as has already been stated) whatsoever comes not from faith is sin."

And he adds, "And indeed nothing else than this is pressed upon us in the apostle's teaching, when he says: "For I declare, through the grace that is given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Romans 12:3) Whence, too, arises the well known challenge: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Corinthians 4:7) in as much as we have received even that which is the spring from which everything we have of good in our actions takes its beginning."

In **Chapter 35** he says, "Their own crown is recompensed to their merits; but thy merits are the gifts of God!"

We walk in the good works, which God hath before ordained, and then He rewards us for them, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus

unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

In **Chapter 36** he says, ““But by the grace of God, I am what I am.” Is there, then, no other way in which grace is commended, than because it is conferred on an unworthy recipient? “And His grace,” he adds, “which was bestowed on me was not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:10) He says this as a lesson to others also, to show the freedom of the will, when he says: “We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.” (2 Corinthians 6:1) Whence however does he derive his proof, that “His grace bestowed on himself was not in vain,” except from the fact which he goes on to mention: “But I laboured more abundantly than they all?” (1 Corinthians 15:10) So it seems he did not labour in order to receive grace, but he received grace in order that he might labour. And thus, when unworthy, he gratuitously received grace, whereby he might become worthy to receive the due reward. Not that he ventured to claim even his labour for himself; for, after saying: “I laboured more abundantly than they all,” he at once subjoined: “Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (1 Corinthians 15:10) O mighty teacher, confessor, and preacher of grace! What meaneth this: “I laboured more, yet not I?” Where the will exalted itself ever so little, there piety was instantly on the watch, and humility trembled, because weakness recognized itself.”

And we can say “Amen”, in agreement with Augustine here.

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings**

**On the Grace of Christ, Chapter 34, page 229-230**, he says, “But if it is contended that faith is so bestowed as to be a recompense for merit, not a free gift, what then becomes of another saying of the apostle: “Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake”? (Philippians 1:29) Each is by the apostle’s testimony made a gift,—both that he believes in Christ, and that each suffers for His sake. These men however, attribute faith to free will in such a way as to make it appear that grace is rendered to faith not as a gratuitous gift, but as a debt—thus ceasing to be grace any longer, because that is not grace which is not gratuitous.”

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings**

**On Original Sin, Chapters 29-31, page 247-248**, he says, “Now on what principle does he make this statement, if it be not because even they were saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not the law of Moses, from which comes not the cure, but only the knowledge of sin? (Romans 3:20) Now, however, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. (Romans 3:21) If, therefore, it is now manifested, it even then existed, but it was hidden. This concealment was symbolized by the veil of the temple. When Christ was dying, this veil was rent asunder, (Matthew 27:51) to signify the full revelation of Him. Even of old, therefore there existed amongst the people of God this grace of the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; but like the rain in the fleece which God sets apart for His inheritance, (Psalm 68:9) not of debt, but of His own will, it was latently present, but is now patently visible amongst all nations as its “floor,” the fleece being dry,—in other words, the Jewish people having become reprobate. (Judges 6:36-40)”

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings**

**Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book I, Chapters 6-7, page 379**, in paragraph 7 he says, “But this will, which is free in evil things because it takes pleasure in evil, is not free in good things, for the reason that it has not been made free. Nor can a man will any good thing unless he is aided by Him who cannot will evil,—that is, by the grace of God through Jesus



Christ our Lord. For “everything which is not of faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23) And thus the good will which withdraws itself from sin is faithful, because the just lives by faith. (Habakkuk 2:4) And it pertains to faith to believe on Christ. And no man can believe on Christ—that is, come to Him—unless it be given to him. (Romans 1:17) No man, therefore, can have a righteous will, unless, with no foregoing merits, he has received the true, that is, the gratuitous grace from above.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book I, Chapters 36-40, page 388-390, in Chapter 36** he says, “For a man is not good if he is unwilling, but by the grace of God he is even assisted to the point of being willing; because it is not vainly written, “For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure,” (Philippians 2:13) and, “The will is prepared by God.” (Proverbs 8:35)”

In **Chapter 37** he says, “For who is “drawn,” if he was already willing? And yet no man comes unless he is willing. Therefore he is drawn in wondrous ways to will, by Him who knows how to work within the very hearts of men. Not that men who are unwilling should believe, which cannot be, but that they should be made willing from being unwilling.”

The Lord even opens hearts to believe as we read in **Acts 16 (KJV):14** And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

In **Chapter 38** he says, “Did the men of God who wrote these things—nay, did the Spirit of God Himself, under whose guidance such things were written by them—assail the free will of man? Away with the notion! But He has commended both the most righteous judgment and the most merciful aid of the Omnipotent in all cases. For it is enough for man to know that there is no unrighteousness with God. But how He dispenses those benefits, making some deservedly vessels of wrath, others graciously vessels of mercy,—who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? If, then, we attain to the honour of grace, let us not be ungrateful by attributing to ourselves what we have received. “For what have we which we have not received?” (1 Corinthians 4:7)”

And in **Chapter 39** he says, “Of whatever virtue you may declare that the ancient righteous men were possessed, nothing saved them but the belief in the Mediator who shed His blood for the remission of their sins. For their own word is, “I believed, and therefore I spoke.” (Psalm 116:10) Whence the Apostle Paul also says, “And we having the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.” (2 Corinthians 4:13)”

Augustine has defended the faith against the heresy of the Pelagians.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Grace and Free Will, Chapters 19-21, page 451-452, in Chapter 19** he says, “And hence there arises no small question, which must be solved by the Lord’s gift. If eternal life is rendered to good works, as the Scripture most openly declares: “Then He shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matthew 16:27) how can eternal life be a matter of grace, seeing that grace is not rendered to works, but is given gratuitously, as the apostle himself tells us: “To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt;” (Romans 4:4) and again:

“There is a remnant saved according to the election of grace;” with these words immediately subjoined: “And if of grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace”? (Romans 11:5-6) How, then, is eternal life by grace, when it is received from works? Does the apostle perchance not say that eternal life is a grace? Nay, he has so called it, with a clearness which none can possibly gainsay. It requires no acute intellect, but only an attentive reader, to discover this. For after saying, “The wages of sin is death,” he at once added, “The grace of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)”

But eternal life is not grace, but is given to us by God’s grace. When we believe in Jesus Christ, our spirit is born of the Holy Spirit. We now have eternal life and a new divine nature in our spirit. Augustine and the early Church did not understand the new birth.

In **Chapter 20** he says, “It follows, then, dearly beloved, beyond all doubt, that as your good life is nothing else than God’s grace, so also the eternal life which is the recompense of a good life is the grace of God; moreover it is given gratuitously, even as that is given gratuitously to which it is given. But that to which it is given is solely and simply grace; this therefore is also that which is given to it, because it is its reward;—grace is for grace, as if remuneration for righteousness; in order that it may be true, because it is true, that God “shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matthew 16:27, Psalm 62:12, Revelation 22:12)”

Augustine says here that, “the eternal life which is the recompense of a good life is the grace of God”.

And he says under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume VI, Augustine Sermon XXI. [LXXI. Ben.]** On the words of the Gospel, Matthew 12:32, “Whosoever shall speak a word against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.” Or, “on the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.”, paragraphs 5, and 19-23, page 324-326, in paragraph 19, “First then in order to our receiving eternal life which shall be given at the last, there comes to us a gift from God’s goodness from the beginning of our faith, to wit, the remission of sins.”

In his thinking, eternal life will be given at the final judgment. But Jesus taught as in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Eternal life is the recompense of faith alone, which is given by God’s grace. Eternal life is what we receive when we believe, as we read also in **1 John 5 (KJV):13** These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

After we have been born again, we then can perform the good works that God has ordained for us to do, but these good works still do not merit eternal life.

Good works are only the evidence of a saving faith as James reveals in **James 2 (KJV):20** But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works,

when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Even if we build wood, hay, and stubble, we will still be saved if we have a genuine faith, yet as by fire. But who would want to take that chance? Let's all build gold, silver, and precious stones.

Augustine was not clear about the difference between the judgment seat of Christ, the judgment of the nations at the throne of His glory, and the White Throne judgment. He thought that there would be one final judgment. We as believers are rewarded eternal life when we believe. If we yield to the Lord afterwards, and He uses us to do the works He has ordained for us to do, we will then be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ, in addition to the eternal life we received when we believed.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Grace and Free Will, Chapters 27-28, page 455**, he says, **"The spirit of grace, therefore, causes us to have faith, in order that through faith we may, on praying for it, obtain the ability to do what we are commanded. On this account the apostle himself constantly puts faith before the law; since we are not able to do what the law commands unless we obtain the strength to do it by the prayer of faith."**

And James mentions the **"prayer of faith"** in **James 5 (KJV):15** And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Rebuke and Grace, Chapter 3, page 472-473**, he says, **"For the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord must be apprehended,—as that by which alone men are delivered from evil, and without which they do absolutely no good thing, whether in thought, or will and affection, or in action; not only in order that they may know, by the manifestation of that grace, what should be done, but moreover in order that, by its enabling, they may do with love what they know."**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapters 13-14, page 504-505**, he says in **Chapter 13**, **"It is true that that grace is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is grace? This grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart. When, therefore, the Father is heard within, and teaches, so that a man comes to the Son, He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh, as in the declaration of the prophet He has promised. Because He thus makes them children and vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory."**

He refers in context to **Ezekiel 36 (KJV):26** A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

In verse 27 the Lord also puts a new spirit within us when we are born again of the Spirit of God. So it is not a matter of just **"grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift"**. There is also a new birth in our spirits as a result of God's grace. Our spirit was dead in trespasses and sins. When we believed in Jesus, our spirit was made alive to God and given eternal life, and a new divine nature.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the**

**Gift of Perseverance, Chapter 28, page 536**, he says, “It is therefore settled that God’s grace is not given according to the deserts of the recipients, but according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise and glory of His own grace; so that he who glorieth may by no means glory in himself, but in the Lord, who gives to those men to whom He will, because He is merciful, what if, however, He does not give, He is righteous: and He does not give to whom He will not, that He may make known the riches of His glory to the vessels of mercy. (Romans 9:23) For by giving to some what they do not deserve, He has certainly willed that His grace should be gratuitous, and thus genuine grace; by not giving to all, He has shown what all deserve. Good in His goodness to some, righteous in the punishment of others; both good in respect of all, because it is good when that which is due is rendered, and righteous in respect of all, since that which is not due is given without wrong to any one.”

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon XX. [LXX. Ben.] Again on the words of the Gospel, Matt. xi. 28, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” etc., paragraph 3, page 318**, he says, “Wherefore it has been so arranged by the dispensation of the Divine goodness, that to “the inner man who is renewed from day to day,” (2 Corinthians 4:16) placed no longer under the Law but under Grace, and freed from the burdens of numberless observances which were indeed a heavy yoke, but meetly imposed on a stubborn neck, every grievous trouble which that prince who is cast forth could inflict from without on the outward man, should through the easiness of a simple faith, and a good hope, and a holy charity, become light through the joy within.”

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon L. [C. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, Luke ix. 57, etc., where the case of the three persons is treated of, of whom one said, “I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest,” and was disallowed: another did not dare to offer himself, and was aroused; the third wished to delay, and was blamed., paragraph 4, page 421**, he says, “For if thou dost build on thine own work; then is a reward rendered unto thee, not grace freely bestowed. But if it be grace, it is gratuitously given. I ask thee then, O sinner, “Dost thou believe in Christ?” Thou sayest, “I do believe.” “What dost thou believe? That all thy sins may be forgiven thee freely through Him?” Then hast thou what thou hast believed. O grace gratuitously given! And thou, righteous man, what dost thou believe, that thou canst not keep thy righteousness without God? That thou art righteous then, impute it wholly to His mercy; but that thou art a sinner, ascribe it to thine own iniquity. Be thou thine own accuser, and He will be thy gracious Deliverer. For every crime, wickedness, or sin comes of our own negligence, and all virtue and holiness come of God’s gracious goodness. “Let us turn to the Lord.””

We can agree with Augustine here. Grace is grace, not work.

Augustine acknowledged that we are destined to die, and we can only be delivered by the grace of Jesus Christ. He quotes “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (1 Corinthians 4:7) frequently. He acknowledges that we may receive a crown, but it is “recompensed to our merits”, and our “merits are the gifts of God!” It is a gift to believe “in Christ, and that each suffers for His sake”. He also quotes frequently “what the Lord Himself says: “No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me shall draw him.” (John 6:44)”

Man is assisted “by the grace of God” even “to the point of being willing” he says. The

“belief in the Mediator who shed His blood for the remission of their sins” is what saved the saints in the Old Testament, and in the New.

According to Augustine, “The grace of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”, as it reads in **Romans 6 (Douay Rheims):23**. He says that “This grace” is “hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift”, and he argues, “but because faith itself is grace, life eternal also is grace for grace”.

But eternal life is not grace, but eternal life.

He also says that, “God’s grace is not given according to the deserts of the recipients, but according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise and glory of His own grace”. And he says, “For if thou dost build on thine own work; then is a reward rendered unto thee, not grace freely bestowed. But if it be grace, it is gratuitously given”.

## Losing Grace

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Rebuke and Grace, Chapter 9, page 474-475**, Augustine did believe one could lose grace, as he says, “If, however, being already regenerate and justified, he relapses of his own will into an evil life, assuredly he cannot say, “I have not received,” because of his own free choice to evil he has lost the grace of God, that he had received. And if, stung with compunction by rebuke, he wholesomely bewails, and returns to similar good works, or even better, certainly here most manifestly appears the advantage of rebuke. But yet for rebuke by the agency of man to avail, whether it be of love or not, depends only upon God.”

Augustine asserts here that the grace of God may be lost because of one’s “own free choice to evil”. But he intimates that he may be restored “if, stung with compunction by rebuke, he wholesomely bewails, and returns to similar good works, or even better...”

However, he did not correctly understand the Biblical truth about regeneration. When we understand that truth, as I have shown in the course of this chapter, we understand that one cannot lose the grace of God.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Rebuke and Grace, Chapter 41, page 488-489**, he says, “Nevertheless, since even that life eternal itself, which, it is certain, is given as due to good works, is called by so great an apostle the grace of God, although grace is not rendered to works, but is given freely, it must be confessed without any doubt, that eternal life is called grace for the reason that it is rendered to those merits which grace has conferred upon man. Because that saying is rightly understood which in the gospel is read, “grace for grace,” (John 1:16)—that is, for those merits which grace has conferred.”

Augustine seems to equivocate here. He says that “eternal life is called grace for the reason that it is rendered to those merits which grace has conferred upon man”. So in other words, good works, in his thinking, are those ordained by God by His grace to merit eternal life.

So you are given grace to do good works, which then merit eternal life. But his thinking is based on a mistranslation of Romans 6:23 in the **Latin Vulgate**, which caused him to believe that eternal life is called grace. And so we read in **Romans 6 (Douay Rheims):23** For the wages of sin is death. But the grace of God, life everlasting in Christ Jesus our Lord.



But a more correct translation is as in **Romans 6 (KV):23** For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And he said that “**eternal life is called grace**”, but eternal life is not called grace but is given by grace. The word “gift” in the Greek is **χάρισμα** (pronounced khar'-is-mah); from G5483; a (divine) gratuity, i.e. deliverance (from danger or passion); (specially), a (spiritual) endowment, i.e. (subjectively) religious qualification, or (objectively) miraculous faculty:—(free) gift.

And this Greek word is derived from **χαρίζομαι** (pronounced khar-id'-zom-ahee); middle voice from G5485; to grant as a favor, i.e. gratuitously, in kindness, pardon or rescue:—deliver, (frankly) forgive, (freely) give, grant.

And this Greek word is derived from **χάρις** (pronounced khar'-ece); from G5463; graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act (abstract or concrete; literal, figurative or spiritual; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude):—acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace(-ious), joy, liberality, pleasure, thank(-s, -worthy).

The Greek word **χάρις** (pronounced khar'-ece) is the normal Greek word for “grace”.

The Greek word **χάρισμα** (pronounced khar'-is-mah) is the normal Greek word for “free gift”.

This subtle mistranslation became the basis for thinking that eternal life, that is, grace, could be lost if one committed a “mortal” sin. But eternal life is not grace. Eternal life is given by God’s grace to the one who believes in Jesus Christ. Eternal life is not in the heart but in the spirit of the man or woman who is born from above, as Jesus taught in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Augustine’s thinking was definitely impacted by the Church in his time. Jerome completed the revision of the **Latin Vulgate** in A.D. 405.

Now at the website of **St. Mary of the Seven Dolors**, which is a **Catholic Church and Catholic School** in Osmond, Nebraska, Irin Mary gives a “**List of Mortal Sins Every Catholic Should Know**”.

Irin Mary says, “All sin is an offense against God and a rejection of his perfect love and justice. Yet, Jesus makes a distinction between two types of sins. We call the most serious and grave sins, mortal sins. Mortal sins destroy the grace of God in the heart of the sinner. By their very grave nature, a mortal sin cuts our relationship off from God and turns man away from his creator. St. Paul’s letter to the Hebrews tell us that “if we sin willfully after having the knowledge of the truth, there is now left no sacrifice for sins” (Hebrews 10:26). The second type of sin, venial sin, that of less grave matter, does not cut us off from Christ. However, venial sin does weaken grace in the soul and damages our relationship with God. A person who frequently indulges in venial sin is very likely to collapse into mortal sin if they persist in their evil ways.”

Irin Mary notes the following as mortal sins: Idolatry, Divination, magic and sorcery, Sacrilege, Atheism, Blasphemy, Perjury and False Oaths, The Third Commandment, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy”, Deliberate failure of the Sunday obligation, The Fourth Commandment, “Honor thy father and mother”, The Fifth Commandment, “You shall not kill”, Murder (intentional homicide, Abortion, Euthanasia, Suicide, Scandal, Drug abuse, Gluttony, Alcohol Abuse, Terrorism, Extreme Anger, Hatred, Extortion, The Sixth



Commandment, “You shall not commit adultery”, Adultery, Divorce, Fornication, Pornography, Prostitution, Rape, Homosexual acts, Incest, Masturbation, The Seventh Commandment—“You shall not steal”, Theft, Cheating, Defrauding a worker of his wages, Unfair wagers, Taking advantage of the poor, The Eighth Commandment—“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbors”, False witness and perjury, Adulation, Lying, The Ninth Commandment—“You shall not covet...your neighbor’s wife”, Lust, The Tenth Commandment—“You shall not covet...anything that is your neighbors”, Avarice, Envy, Voluntary doubt of faith, Incredulity, heresy, apostasy, schism, Despair in hope, Presumption, Indifference, Ingratitude, Lukewarmness, Acedia (spiritual sloth), Hatred of God.

And Irin Mary asks,

### **What is venial sin?**

As stated before, venial sin is a sin of lesser matter than grave sin. It can also be a sin of grave matter in which the sinner ***did not fully consent*** to the sin or ***did not have knowledge that his actions were sinful***. Venial sins will not destroy grace in the soul, and will not directly cause a person who dies in the state of venial sin to lose the promise of heaven. Yet, venial sin weakens a person’s will to avoid evil and thus may indirectly lead to mortal sin. Regardless, all sin is an offense against God and should be avoided.

### **All sins can be forgiven**

A person who repents of their sin, intends to live a new life of grace, and receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be forgiven of all their sins (mortal sins in particular must be confessed in the Sacrament). Our sins can be forgiven, because Jesus Christ paid for the price of human sin by dying on the cross for the redemption of humanity. Jesus Christ, true man and true God, was the perfect sacrifice for human sin and as a result saved those who are baptized, repent and believe in him.

Because a baptized Christian can still sin, Christ instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus gave the power to forgive sins in his name to the Church. He told his apostles, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained” (John 20:22–23). This means that the apostles and their successors, the priests and bishops of the Catholic Church, can forgive sins in Jesus’ name. It is vitally important that Catholics confess sins on a regular basis, especially if we are in the state of mortal sin. A person who dies in mortal sin cannot enter the kingdom of heaven and is doomed to eternal suffering in hell. Even when we have not committed mortal sin, we are still obliged to confess our sins at least once a year. Christ, in perfect love, laid down his life so that we may be forgiven of our sins. The sacrifice of the cross should not be neglected or taken for granted. Jesus died for the life of the world and is thus the light of the world. “He that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12)

Irin Mary lists the following Source :- [http://www.saintaquinas.com/mortal\\_sin.html](http://www.saintaquinas.com/mortal_sin.html)  
And the website is at:

<https://stmaryofthesevendolors.com/prayers-2/list-of-mortal-sins-every-catholic-should-know/#:~:text=The%20Church%20also%20tells%20us,be%20saved%20by%20one's%20own>

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that, “Mortal sins destroy the grace of God in the heart of the sinner.” If one commits a mortal sin as listed above, they lose the grace of God and are destined for Hell unless they confess their sin to a priest.

The basis of the Roman Catholic Church’s interpretation of mortal sin is what Augustine said above, that is, that **“eternal life is called grace”**. And it is also based on what he said under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Predestination of the Saints, Chapters 13-14, page 504-505, in Chapter 13, “It is true that that grace is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is grace? This grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart.”**

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that if one loses this grace, they lose eternal life. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that one can recover the grace lost by committing a mortal sin through confession to a priest. This is a denial of the birth in our spirits by the Holy Spirit which gives us eternal life and a new divine nature. Augustine did not understand the triune nature of man, that is, of body, soul, and spirit. The Roman Catholic Church has perpetuated this misunderstanding to this day.

We do not have to be born again, again, if we sin. We have only to confess our sins, as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. **8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

## Participation

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLVIII. Chapter X. 22–42, paragraph 10, page 269**, he says, **“For if we think well, we are in God; and if we live well, God is in us: believers, by participating in His grace, and being illuminated by Himself, are in Him, and He in us.”**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate LXXXII. Chapter XV. 8–10, paragraph 4, page 347-348**, he also said, **“But then, in this case also, is that love which the Father bears to the Son referable to the same grace as that wherewith we are loved of the Son: seeing that we on our part are sons, not by nature, but by grace; while the Only-begotten is so by nature and not by grace?”**

However, Jesus describes our entrance into the Kingdom of God as a birth in **John 3 (KJV):5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus says it is literally a birth from above, that is, of the Spirit of God. A birth imparts life, and this life, being eternal, has a divine nature, as Peter reveals in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4**

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LIII, paragraph 5, page 204**, he says, “I have given to men to do well; but of Me, He saith, not of themselves: for of themselves evil they are: sons of men they are, when they do evil; when well, My sons. **For this thing God doth, out of sons of men He maketh sons of God: because out of Son of God He hath made Son of Man. See what this participation is: there hath been promised to us a participation of Divinity: He lieth that hath promised, if He is not first made partaker of mortality. For the Son of God hath been made partaker of mortality, in order that mortal man may be made partaker of divinity. He that hath promised that His good is to be shared with thee, first with thee hath shared thy evil: He that to thee hath promised divinity, showeth in thee love. Therefore take away that men are sons of God, there remaineth that they are sons of men: “There is none that doeth good, is not so much as one.”**

And so we read in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):3** According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

But Augustine seems to only allow this to be a promise of God, as he says, “**See what this participation is: there hath been promised to us a participation of Divinity:**”, and “**He that to thee hath promised divinity, showeth in thee love.**” He did not understand what takes place in the believer when he or she is born again by faith in Jesus Christ.

## Perseverance

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Rebuke and Grace, Chapters 10-20, page 475-480, in Chapter 10** he says, “**To this, indeed, we are not able to deny, that perseverance in good, progressing even to the end, is also a great gift of God; and that it exists not save it come from Him of whom it is written, “Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.” (James 1:17)**”

And he says, “**And no one need doubt, but that whosoever prays from the Lord that he may persevere in good, confesses thereby that such perseverance is His gift.**”

Then in **Chapter 11** he says, “**If, then, these things be so, we still rebuke those, and reasonably rebuke them, who, although they were living well, have not persevered therein; because they have of their own will been changed from a good to an evil life, and on that account are worthy of rebuke; and if rebuke should be of no avail to them, and they should persevere in their ruined life until death, they are also worthy of divine condemnation for ever.**”

To Augustine, perseverance to the end was a requirement to be saved, and was given as “**a great gift of God**”. But Augustine did not understand the discipline of the Lord who is our good Father. If after we are born again of the Spirit of God, we persist in sin, God deals with us as sons and daughters whom He has justified, and put His righteousness down to our account. If we persist in sin, God will discipline us. His discipline is described in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):28** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

So when we “are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world”. God’s chastening may include, weakness, sickness, and even death, but our sonship is not changed.

## Free Will

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Spirit and the Letter, Chapters 51-52, page 105-106**, in **Chapter 52** he says, “Do we then by grace make void free will? God forbid! Nay, rather we establish free will. For even as the law by faith, so free will by grace, is not made void, but established. (Romans 3:31) For neither is the law fulfilled except by free will; but by the law is the knowledge of sin, by faith the acquisition of grace against sin, by grace the healing of the soul from the disease of sin, by the health of the soul freedom of will, by free will the love of righteousness, by love of righteousness the accomplishment of the law. Accordingly, as the law is not made void, but is established through faith, since faith procures grace whereby the law is fulfilled; so free will is not made void through grace, but is established, since grace cures the will whereby righteousness is freely loved. Now all the stages which I have here connected together in their successive links, have severally their proper voices in the sacred Scriptures. The law says: “Thou shall not covet.” (Exodus 20:17) Faith says: “Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.” (Psalm 41:4) Grace says: “Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” (John 5:14) Health says: “O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me.” (Psalm 30:2) Free will says: “I will freely sacrifice unto Thee.” (Psalm 54:6) Love of righteousness says: “Transgressors told me pleasant tales, but not according to Thy law, O Lord.” (Psalm 119:85) How is it then that miserable men dare to be proud, either of their free will, before they are freed, or of their own strength, if they have been freed? They do not observe that in the very mention of free will they pronounce the name of liberty. But “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (2 Corinthians 3:17) If, therefore, they are the slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will? For by what a man is overcome, to the same is he delivered as a slave. (2 Peter 2:19) But if they have been freed, why do they vaunt themselves as if it were by their own doing, and boast, as if they had not received? Or are they free in such sort that they do not choose to have Him for their Lord who says to them: “Without me ye can do nothing;” (John 15:5) and “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed?” (John 8:36)”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On Nature and Grace, Chapters 68-69, page 145**, in **Chapter 68** he says, “For we do not deny that human nature can be without sin; nor ought we by any means to refuse to it the ability to become perfect, since we admit its capacity for progress,—by God’s grace, however, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By His assistance we aver that it becomes holy and happy, by whom it was created in order to be so.”

Then in **Chapter 69** he says, “Why on such occasions did he choose only to defend

nature, and assert that man was so created as to have it in his power not to sin if he wished not to sin; and, from the fact that he was so created, definitely say that the power was owing to God's grace which enabled him to avoid sin, if he was unwilling to commit it; and yet refuse to say anything concerning the fact that even nature itself is either, because disordered, healed by God's grace through our Lord Jesus Christ or else assisted by it, because in itself it is so insufficient?"

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Rebuke and Grace, Chapter 2, page 472,** he says, "It is to be confessed, therefore, that we have free choice to do both evil and good; but in doing evil every one is free from righteousness and a servant of sin, while in doing good no one can be free, unless he have been made free by Him who said, "If the Son shall make you free, then you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36) Neither is it thus, that when any one has been made free from the dominion of sin, he no longer needs the help of his Deliverer; but rather thus, that hearing from Him, "Without me ye can do nothing," (John 15:5) he himself also says to Him, "Be thou my helper! Forsake me not." (Psalm 27:9) I rejoice that I have found in our brother Florus also this faith, which without doubt is the true and prophetic and apostolic and Catholic faith; whence those are the rather to be corrected—whom indeed I now think to have been corrected by the favour of God—who did not understand him."

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings On the Spirit and the Letter, Chapter 60, page 110-111,** he says, "The very will by which we believe is reckoned as a gift of God, because it arises out of the free will which we received at our creation. Let the objector, however, attentively observe that this will is to be ascribed to the divine gift, not merely because it arises from our free will, which was created naturally with us; but also because God acts upon us by the incentives of our perceptions, to will and to believe, either externally by evangelical exhortations, where even the commands of the law also do something, if they so far admonish a man of his infirmity that he betakes himself to the grace that justifies by believing; or internally, where no man has in his own control what shall enter into his thoughts, although it appertains to his own will to consent or to dissent. Since God, therefore, in such ways acts upon the reasonable soul in order that it may believe in Him (and certainly there is no ability whatever in free will to believe, unless there be persuasion or summons towards some one in whom to believe), it surely follows that it is God who both works in man the willing to believe, and in all things prevents us with His mercy. To yield our consent, indeed, to God's summons, or to withhold it, is (as I have said) the function of our own will.

And he adds, "Now, should any man be for constraining us to examine into this profound mystery, why this person is so persuaded as to yield, and that person is not, there are only two things occurring to me, which I should like to advance as my answer: "O the depth of the riches!" (Romans 11:33) and "Is there unrighteousness with God?" (Romans 9:14) If the man is displeased with such an answer, he must seek more learned disputants; but let him beware lest he find presumptuous ones."

**Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine Sermon LXXXI. [CXXXI. Ben.] On the words of the Gospel, John 6:53, "Except ye eat the flesh," etc., and on the words of the apostles. And the Psalms. Against the Pelagians.**



**Delivered at the Table of the Martyr St. Cyprian, the 9th of the Calends of October,—23 Sept., on the Lord's day., paragraph 6, page 502-503,** he says, **“True it is, when man was created he received great power of free will; but he lost it by sin.”**

And he said in the previous quote, **“it surely follows that it is God who both works in man the willing to believe”**. Augustine knew that, ultimately, it was God's free choice to save us by grace through faith, which is His gift, as he asked before under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Spirit and the Letter, Chapters 51-52, page 105-106, in Chapter 52, “If, therefore, they are the slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will?”**

## **The Greatest Gift**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon XCIV. [CXLIV. Ben.] On the same words of the Gospel, John 16:8, “He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”, paragraph 1, page 538,** he says, “Now this grace of God is a gift of God. But the greatest gift is the Holy Ghost Himself; and therefore is it called grace. For forasmuch “as all had sinned, and needed the glory of God; because by one man sin entered into the world, and death by his sin in whom all have sinned;” (Romans 3:23, 5:12) therefore is it grace because given gratuitously. And therefore is it given gratuitously, because it is not rendered as a reward after a strict scrutiny of deserts, but given as a gift after the pardon of sins.”

He, the Holy Spirit, is given as a gift, but the Holy Spirit is not grace, but He is given in God's grace. Thinking of the Holy Spirit as grace leaves it open for one to lose the Holy Spirit if we lose grace when we sin. If the Holy Spirit is grace, then He is something that we don't really have relationship with. Thinking of the Holy Spirit in this way makes a distance between God and the believer. God wants relationship with us. The Holy Spirit is a person. He is God, as we read in **Acts 5 (KJV):3** But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

And He is the “gift” that we read of also in **Acts 2 (KJV):38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

## **Foreknowledge**

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate LXXXVI. Chapter XV. 15, 16, paragraph 2, page 353,** he says, **“But how could He say, “Ye have not chosen me,” save only because His mercy anticipated us? Here surely is at fault the vain reasoning of those who defend the foreknowledge of God in opposition to His grace, and**



with this view declare that we were chosen before the foundation of the world, (Ephesians 1:4) because God foreknew that we should be good, but not that He Himself would make us good.”

Augustine understood that God foreknew those whom He had chosen, and it is these He would predestinate to be good.

And he adds, “So says not He, who declares, “Ye have not chosen me.” For had He chosen us on the ground that He foreknew that we should be good, then would He also have foreknown that we would not be the first to make choice of Him. For in no other way could we possibly be good: unless, forsooth, one could be called good who has never made good his choice. What was it then that He chose in those who were not good? For they were not chosen because of their goodness, inasmuch as they could not be good without being chosen. Otherwise grace is no more grace, if we maintain the priority of merit. Such, certainly, is the election of grace, whereof the apostle says: “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant saved according to the election of grace.” To which he adds: “And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” (Romans 11:5-6) Listen, thou ungrateful one, listen: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” Not that thou mayest say, I am chosen because I already believed. For if thou wert believing in Him, then hadst thou already chosen Him. But listen: “Ye have not chosen me.” Not that thou mayest say, Before I believed I was already doing good works, and therefore was I chosen. For what good work can be prior to faith, when the apostle says, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin”? (Romans 14:23) What, then, are we to say on hearing such words, “Ye have not chosen me,” but that we were evil, and were chosen in order that we might be good through the grace of Him who chose us? For it is not by grace, if merit preceded: but it is of grace: and therefore that grace did not find, but effected the merit.”

And so we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

And in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):4** According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

## Our Being Made One

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate CX. Chapter XVII. 21–23, paragraphs 1-2, page 408-409**, in **paragraph 1** he says, “The Father, therefore, is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, in such a way as to be one, because they are of one substance; but while we may indeed be in them, we cannot be one with them; for they and we are not of one substance, in as far as the Son is God along with the Father. But in as far as He is man, He is of the same substance as we are. But at present He wished rather to call attention to that other statement which He made use of in another place, “I and the Father are one,” (John 10:30) where He intimated that His own nature was the same with that of the Father. And accordingly, though the Father and Son, or even the Holy Spirit, are in us, we must not suppose

that they are of one nature with ourselves. And hence they are in us, or we are in them, in this sense, that they are one in their own nature, and we are one in ours. For they are in us, as God in His temple; but we are in them, as the creature in its Creator.”

He refers to **John 10 (KJV):30** I and my Father are one.

But Jesus spoke as in **John 17 (KJV):22** And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

Augustine did not understand that, by the new birth, those who believe in Jesus Christ are given a new nature, as we read in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):3** According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

He also did not understand that we have peace with God, as we read in **Romans 5 (NASB):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

The word for “peace” in the Greek is εἰρήνη (pronounced ā-rā'-nā) and means “probably from a primary verb εἰρω (pronounced eírō) (to join); peace (literally or figuratively); by implication, prosperity:—one, peace, quietness, rest, + set at one again.” **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G3724.**

We have been “set at one again” with God. That is, we have been joined in an intimacy with our creator that we never had before. Let us continue to read his next paragraph.

In **paragraph 2** he says, “I pray “that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, in me, and I in Thee;” I pray “that they also may be one in us;” I pray “that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” And, mark, He added the words “in us” in order that we may know that our being made one in that love of unchanging faithfulness is to be attributed to the grace of God, and not to ourselves: just as the apostle, after saying, “For ye were at one time darkness, but now are ye light,” that none might attribute the doing of this to themselves, added, “in the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:8)”

In his thinking about grace, Augustine was pivotal in the development of the thinking of the Church. His strength was in his belief that the grace of God is given gratuitously, that is, it is not preceded by our merits. And he was strong in his belief that the grace of God was given to those whom God had chosen beforehand, and that this grace would triumph in them.

But Augustine’s weakness was in that he did not understand the change in the nature of the believer when they are born again. He said, “eternal life is called grace for the reason that it is rendered to those merits which grace has conferred upon man”. And he said, “This grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart.”

To Augustine, when one believed in Jesus Christ, they were born again, and received eternal life, that is, grace in the human heart. He attributed everything to grace, which the believer theoretically could lose if they wandered. But ultimately he believed that it is God’s sovereign choice to give us grace to believe, to persevere, and to rise again to be forever with the Lord.

With the resources the Church has today, we are able to correct the errors in his thinking

about grace, and continue to press on to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, as we read in **Philippians 3 (KJV)**: 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

## Losing Salvation

Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon VI, On the Lord's Prayer in St. Matthew's Gospel Chapter VI, 9. Etc, to the Competentes, Paragraph 11, page 277-278, Augustine says, **““And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” (Matthew 6:12)”**.

He then says, **“They who are baptized, and forthwith depart out of this life, come up from the font without any debt; without any debt they leave the world. But they who are baptized and are still kept in this life, contract defilements by reason of their mortal frailty, by which though the ship be not sunk, yet have they need of recourse to the pump. For otherwise by little and little will that enter in by which the whole ship will be sunk. And to offer this prayer, is to have recourse to the pump.”**

Augustine thought of our salvation as a tank full of grace, which we could lose **“by little and little”**. In other words, if we don't forgive our debtors, our ship will sink, and we will lose our salvation.

Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon VII, Again, on Matthew 6. on the Lord's Prayer. To the Competentes, paragraph 11, page 283, according to Augustine, taking vengeance is a damnable sin, as he says, **“If thou hadst committed any sin as to other senses, and other lusts, hence mightest thou have had thy cure, in that thou mightest say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” But whoso instigateth thee to take vengeance, will lose for thee the power thou hadst to say, “As we also forgive our debtors.” When that power is lost, all sins will be retained; nothing at all is remitted.”**

Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XII. Chapter III. 6–21, paragraph 14, page 86, he speaks of being overwhelmed by sin, as he says, **“But he that walks in His love and mercy, even being free from those great and deadly sins, such crimes as murder, theft, adultery; still, because of those which seem to be minute sins, of tongue, or of thought, or of intemperance in things permitted, he doeth the truth in confession, and cometh to the light in good works: since many minute sins, if they be neglected, kill. Minute are the drops that swell the rivers; minute are the grains of sand; but if much sand is put together, the heap presses and crushes. Bilge-water neglected in the hold does the same thing as a rushing wave. Gradually it leaks in through the hold; and by long leaking in and no pumping out, it sinks the ship. Now what is this pumping out, but by good works, by sighing, fasting, giving, forgiving, so to effect that sins may not overwhelm us?”**

Did he never read **1 John 1 (KJV):9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

## Forsaking the Church

Under Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, First Epistle of John, Homily I. 1 John I. 1–II. 11, paragraph 12, page 466-467, it is a damnable sin to forsake the Church, as he says, **“But the Psalm saith, “The sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night: (Psalm 121:6) i.e., if thou hold fast charity, neither in Christ shalt thou have occasion**

of falling, nor in the Church; neither Christ shalt thou forsake, nor the Church. For he that forsakes the Church, how is he in Christ who is not in the members of Christ? How is he in Christ who is not in the body of Christ? Those therefore take scandal, or, occasion of falling, who forsake Christ or the Church.”

He sounds very logical, but not according to Scripture. We are all baptized into one body in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

And this is done when we believe in Jesus Christ. And the church is His body, as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):22** And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

His body is a spiritual body of believers. We are united by our faith in Him.

He will not deny us, as we read in **2 Timothy 2 (KJV):13** If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

And in **Hebrews 13 (KJV):5** Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

## The Unpardonable Sin

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume VI, Augustine, Sermon XXI. [LXXI. Ben.]** On the words of the Gospel, Matthew 12:32, “Whosoever shall speak a word against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.” Or, “on the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.”, paragraphs 5, 19-23, page 324-326, in **paragraph 5** he speaks of the unpardonable sin, as he says, “And hence, both Jews and whatsoever heretics there are who confess the Holy Ghost, but deny that He is in the Body of Christ, which is His One Only Church, none other than the One Catholic Church, are without doubt like the Pharisees who at that time although they confessed the existence of the Holy Ghost, yet denied that He was in Christ, whose works in casting out devils they attributed to the prince of devils.”

And in **paragraph 21**, he then adds, “For this blasphemy of the Spirit, for which there is no forgiveness (which I have understood to be not every kind of blasphemy, but a particular sort, and that as I have said or discovered, or even as I think clearly shown to be the case, the persevering hardness of an impenitent heart), cannot be taken hold of in any one, I repeat it, as long as he is still in this life.”

Only God knows who commits this sin. We read in **Matthew 12 (KJV):22** Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. 23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? 24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

And in **Matthew 12 (KJV):31** Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him,

neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

When a blind and dumb man both spoke and saw, the Pharisees thought Jesus did it by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Such a denial might be repented of. God only knows.

## A Lamp Extinguished

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XXIII. Chapter V. 19–40, paragraph 3, page 151**, he believed we are lamps, but also that we can be extinguished, as he says, “**For, indeed, all men are lamps, since they can be both lighted and extinguished. Moreover, when the lamps are wise, they shine and glow with the Spirit; yet also, if they did burn and are put out, they even stink. The servants of God remain good lamps by the oil of His mercy, not by their own strength. The free grace of God, truly, is the oil of the lamps.**”

Augustine is referring to the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. Five were wise and five were foolish. This parable is about being ready for the Lord’s coming. It is true that lamps can be extinguished when they are lit using earthly oil. But let us read again in **Proverbs 20 (KJV):27** The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

It is the spirit of man that is the candle of the Lord. It is not the soul or the flesh, for there is a difference between the soul and the spirit as we read in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The spirit of man is where we are born again of the Spirit, as Jesus reveals in **John 3 (KJV):5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Augustine and the Catholic Church in his time did not discern this difference. Augustine thought that the soul was made up of spirit. He thought there were only two parts to man’s being, the body and the soul, which was composed of spirit.

But our soul consists of our mind, will, heart, which is the center of our emotions, and our conscience. It is in our soul where we can still sin, but in our spirit that has been born again, we cannot sin because we as believers have been born of God, as we read in **1 John 3 (KJV):9** Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

It is in our soul area where we are progressively cleansed, as we walk in the light of the word of God. But in our spirit is the divine sinless nature of God, as Peter reveals in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Therefore the spirit of man, which has been born again by the Spirit of God, and has



eternal life, cannot be extinguished. Once a believer's spirit is lit as the "candle of the Lord", it cannot be extinguished. It is not an earthly candle, but the candle of the Lord. Now again, Augustine believed that, "The servants of God remain good lamps by the oil of His mercy, not by their own strength. The free grace of God, truly, is the oil of the lamps."

We can trust Him. He will not fail us.

## Deadly Sins

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate, XXVI. Chapter VI. 41–59, paragraph 11, page 171**, he spoke of "deadly" sins, as he says, "Though your sins are daily, at least let them not be deadly."

In our chapter, **Salvation**, under **Wood, Hay, Stubble**, and under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LXXXI, paragraph 20, page 394-395**, we read that Augustine concluded, "For let no one on this foundation building adulteries, blasphemies, sacrileges, idolatries, perjuries, think he shall be "saved through fire," as though they were the "wood, hay, stubble:" but he that buildeth the love of earthly things on the foundation of the kingdom of Heaven, that is upon Christ, his love of temporal things shall be burned, and himself shall be saved through the right foundation."

So Augustine is saying that deadly or mortal sins, which in his mind are such as "adulteries, blasphemies, sacrileges, idolatries, perjuries" and the like, will not allow one to be saved by fire.

## Heretics

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XXI, Chapter 25, page 472-473**, he speaks of heretics, as he says, "He then who is in the unity of Christ's body (that is to say, in the Christian membership), of which body the faithful have been wont to receive the sacrament at the altar, that man is truly said to eat the body and drink the blood of Christ. And consequently heretics and schismatics being separate from the unity of this body, are able to receive the same sacrament, but with no profit to themselves,—nay, rather to their own hurt, so that they are rather more severely judged than liberated after some time. For they are not in that bond of peace which is symbolized by that sacrament."

And then in the same chapter, of heretics he also says, "And therefore neither ought such persons as lead an abandoned and damnable life to be confident of salvation, though they persevere to the end in the communion of the Church Catholic, and comfort themselves with the words, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." By the iniquity of their life they abandon that very righteousness of life which Christ is to them, whether it be by fornication, or by perpetrating in their body the other uncleannesses which the apostle would not so much as mention, or by a dissolute luxury, or by doing any one of those things of which he says, "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Consequently, they who do such things shall not exist anywhere but in eternal punishment, since they cannot be in the kingdom of God. For, while they continue in such things to the very end of life, they cannot be said to

abide in Christ to the end; for to abide in Him is to abide in the faith of Christ.”

And so we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (NKJV):9** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

In verse 9, Paul speaks of the “unrighteous”. In verse 11 he is speaking to those who “were justified”, that is, the righteous. There will be no unrighteous person in the “kingdom of God”. Those who have faith in Jesus Christ have been justified, and are righteous. Because of Augustine’s conception of grace, one could lose grace and therefore lose their salvation. But when we understand what happens at regeneration and then justification, we find the rest of salvation, which Jesus promised us in **Matthew 11 (KJV):28** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

## Sin Is the Death of the Soul

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLIX. Chapter XI. 1–54, paragraphs 2-3, page 270-271**, in **paragraph 3**, regarding the soul, he says, “**Let each one give heed to his own soul: in sinning he dies: sin is the death of the soul.**”

About this death he adds, “A grievous kind of death it is, and is distinguished as a habit of wickedness. For it is one thing to fall into sin, another to form the habit of sinning. He who falls into sin, and straightway submits to correction, will be speedily restored to life; for he is not yet entangled in the habit, he is not yet laid in the tomb.”

Augustine did not understand the difference between soul and spirit. In our spirit is where we are born from above, by the Holy Spirit. This birth gives us eternal life, and a new divine nature. God then justifies us because of our faith. It is then the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin in our soul, and keeps us in fellowship with the Lord. As we walk in the light, we will grow in grace and knowledge. The Lord’s chastening may include sickness or physical death, but not spiritual death. Confession keeps us in communion with the Lord.

## Losing the Impression That Was Stamped

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XL. Chapter VIII. 28–32, paragraph 9, page 228**, regarding someone who wanders off, Augustine also said, “**We are God’s money: we have wandered away as coin from the treasury. The impression that was stamped upon us has been rubbed out by our wandering. He has come to refashion, for He it was that fashioned us at first; and He is Himself asking for His money, as Cæsar for his. Therefore He says, “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things**

that are God's:" (Matthew 22:21) to Cæsar his money, to God yourselves. And then shall the truth be reproduced in us."

When we have faith in Jesus Christ, we are made new creations, as we read in **2 Corinthians 5 (NKJV):**17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

The one who has been born from above has eternal life in their spirit. It cannot be "rubbed out by our wandering".

## Losing Righteousness

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLIII. Chapter VIII. 48–59, paragraph 7, page 241**, Augustine believed it was good to have a chaste fear of losing righteousness, as he says, "What then of the two fears? There is a servile fear, and there is a clean [chaste] fear: there is the fear of suffering punishment, there is another fear of losing righteousness. That fear of suffering punishment is slavish. What great thing is it to fear punishment? The vilest slave and the cruellest robber do so. It is no great thing to fear punishment, but great it is to love righteousness. Has he, then, who loves righteousness no fear? Certainly he has; not of incurring of punishment, but of losing righteousness."

We do not need to worry about "losing righteousness" because God is the one who has justified us, as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):**31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We must remember that it is "God that justifieth" in verse 33. He has put His very own righteousness down to our account, as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):**21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

## A Total Fall

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm XCIV, paragraphs 15-17, page 464-465**, in **paragraph 17** he speaks of a “total fall” as he says, “**See how God loveth confession. Thy foot hath slipt, and thou sayest not, my foot hath slipt; but thou sayest thou art firm, when thou art slipping. The moment thou beginnest to slip or waver, confess thou that slip, that thou mayest not bewail thy total fall; that He may help, so that thy soul be not in hell.**”

What he is really talking about here is committing a damnable, or mortal, sin, which would doom us to hell unless we “have penitently abandoned that evil, and have returned to this good to be reconciled to it”, as we read before under the chapter, **Losing Salvation** under **Heretics**, and under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, The City of God, Book XXI, Chapter 25, page 472-473**.

So to Augustine, repentance is an option. Included in the damnable sins of Galatians 5:19-21 was the sin of heresy. Heresy also puts someone out of the body of Christ, according to Augustine’s thinking.

But let us look at Paul’s discussion in **1 Corinthians 6 (KJV):15** Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Paul says that committing fornication is like being joined to a harlot, “For two, saith he, shall be one flesh”, in verse 16. And this is a sin. But Paul also told the Corinthians that the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them as we read in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):4** I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; 5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; 6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And Paul said that they were in Christ Jesus, as we read in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

And Paul said that they were not their own, but “bought with a price”, for their body and their spirit “are God's”, as Paul confirms in 1 Corinthians 6:20 above.

We need to understand what happens when we are born again. Jesus explains the new birth to Nicodemus in **John 3 (KJV):1** There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God

be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

By this we understand that there are two births, one of flesh, and one of the Spirit of God. With the fleshly birth, the one who was born had no say in his or her birth. So with the spiritual birth, the wind blows where it wishes, as we continue in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

And we read that it was not by the will of man in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And again we read **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

So being born of the Spirit, we now have eternal life in our spirit as John reveals in **1 John 5 (KJV):12** He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Being thus born of the Spirit of God, we have a new nature in our spirits as Peter reveals in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And so John says in **1 John 3 (KJV):9** Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Being born of God we delight to do the will of God in our inner man, as Paul reveals in **Romans 7 (KJV):22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Our spirit, which has been born again of the Spirit of God, has a new divine nature, and therefore delights to do the will of God. It cannot sin. But the one who has been born again still has a sinful nature in their flesh as we continue in **Romans 7 (KJV):23** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

So having been born again, the born one does not sin in the inner spirit, but in verse 23 above we read that the flesh still has sin in its members. Paul explains in **Romans 7 (KJV):17** Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not,

that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

In verse 18, we read that in my flesh “dwelleth no good thing”. But in my spirit I delight to do the will of God as we read again in **Romans 7 (KJV):22** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Now our soul is the part of us between the flesh and the spirit. That there is a difference between soul and spirit we know from **Hebrews 4 (KJV):12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The faculties of the spirit are faith, hope, prayer, and worship. The faculties of our soul are intellect, feelings or emotions, conscience, will, and heart which is the center of our emotions, or feelings. The faculties of our body are touch, taste, sight, hearing, and smelling.

It is in our soul where we must be renewed as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Our minds are renewed by the knowledge of God, which comes from the word of God. As we surrender to the word of God, we are transformed, and we grow spiritually in grace and knowledge.

Our soul is where we have all the baggage of our past, that is, our old ways of thinking, and feelings that have been hurt. So the one who has been born again can still sin when our soul yields to our flesh. But because of our standing in Christ, we have a way to deal with our sin in our soul. When God justified us, He put His righteousness down to our account as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

We are justified freely by His grace when we have faith and believe. This is now a past event in the life of the one who has faith as we read in **Romans 5 (NASB):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

And in **1 Corinthians 6 (NASB):11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

We now have a standing as righteous ones, and we stand in grace, as in Romans 5:2 above. This does not mean that we are perfect yet. There may be a lot to process in our soul area. All of the hurts of the past, the hurt feelings, the old ways of thinking, will have to be cleansed by the word of God. This cleansing happens by the word as we read in **John 15 (KJV):3** Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

And in **John 17 (KJV):17** Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.



We now have a standing and a state. Our standing is as justified ones. Our state is being transformed as in Romans 12:2. And when we see Him we will be like Him as we read in **1 John 3 (KJV)**:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

We are now the sons of God, and if we sin we have an advocate with the Father as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV)**:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Because of our faith we have a standing with God as righteous ones. We are not condemned as we read in **John 3 (KJV)**:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

God now deals with us as sons and daughters. If we are disobedient, He will discipline us as we read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV)**:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

But let us make sure that we are His sons and daughters as we read in **2 Corinthians 13 (KJV)**:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

We are reprobates if we have not been born again. Once we have been born again, we cannot be reprobates. If we sin, we are still members of the body of Christ. The body of Christ is a spiritual body, and we are added to it sovereignly by the Lord when we believe, and we are born again, as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (NKJV)**:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

And in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

Our membership in the body of Christ does not depend on our obedience after we have been born again. It also does not depend on our maintaining unity with any Church. And our salvation is not by works. We are saved by grace through faith, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Not only so, but we have been justified by faith as we read above in Romans 5:1-2. When we were justified, the righteousness of God was imputed to us, or put down to our account, as we read above in Romans 3:21-24.

In view of this, when Paul says that “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God”, we can understand that he is referring to the fact that such things shall not be done in the kingdom of God that we shall inherit. It is the unrighteous that will not inherit the kingdom of God as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (NASB):9** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Those who have been justified are the righteous, and they shall inherit the kingdom of God.

If I slip, that is, if I sin, I have an advocate with the Father as we read in **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus Christ is the only propitiation for sin in the whole world. If we fall, we shall not be utterly cast down as we read in **Psalms 37 (KJV):23** The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

The reason we cannot have a “total fall” after we have been born again is because God has justified us. That is, He has put His righteousness down to our account as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

But let us give diligence to make our calling and election sure as Peter encourages in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):1** Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of

the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## The New Covenant

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Spirit and the Letter, Chapter 41, page 100**, Augustine says, “As then the law of works, which was written on the tables of stone, and its reward, the land of promise, which the house of the carnal Israel after their liberation from Egypt received, belonged to the old testament, so the law of faith, written on the heart, and its reward, the beatific vision which the house of the spiritual Israel, when delivered from the present world, shall perceive, belong to the new testament.”

Augustine did not know that Israel will be restored at the end of the tribulation period. The New Covenant was a promise to Israel, but it began with the death of Jesus on the cross, as He taught in **Matthew 26 (KJV):26** And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

And this is mentioned in **Hebrews 8 (KJV):8** For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

And in **Hebrews 8 (KJV):13** In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

And in **Hebrews 12 (KJV):24** And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

The word “covenant” in Greek here in Hebrews 12:24 is the same Greek work translated “testament” in Matthew 26:28, and is **διαθήκη** (pronounced dē-ä-thā'-kā), “from G1303; properly, a disposition, i.e. (specially) a contract (especially a devisory will):—covenant, testament.” **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G1242.**

The Church has not replaced Israel. The days are still to come for Israel as we read in **Jeremiah 31 (KJV):31** Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The New Covenant, or Testament, has begun for us in the Church now. It will begin for Israel when they are saved at the end of the tribulation, as we read in **Zechariah 12 (KJV):9** And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

This will be at the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it, as we read in **Jeremiah 30 (KJV):**4 And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. 5 For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. 6 Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

Israel as a nation will be born again in one day, as we read in **Isaiah 66 (KJV):**7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. 8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

## Sanctification

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On Man's Perfection in Righteousness, Chapters XVII-XVIII, page 173**, in **Chapter XVIII** Augustine says, "Now it follows from the whole of this, that in so far as we are born of God we abide in Him who appeared to take away sins, that is, in Christ, and sin not,—which is simply that "the inward man is renewed day by day;" (2 Corinthians 4:16) **but in so far as we are born of that man "through whom sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men," (Romans 5:12) we are not without sin, because we are not as yet free from his infirmity, until, by that renewal which takes place from day to day (for it is in accordance with this that we were born of God), that infirmity shall be wholly repaired, wherein we were born from the first man, and in which we are not without sin."**

Augustine did not understand that it is in our spirit where we are born again. It is not a gradual or partial renewal day by day, for that is not a birth. He only saw the progressive sanctification that the believer goes through in the soul area, as a believer is "renewed day by day".

Then speaking of the resurrection, he says, **"Then there shall be no more sin, because no infirmity shall any longer remain within us or without us. "And every man that hath this hope towards Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure,"—purifieth himself, not indeed by himself alone, but by believing in Him, and calling on Him who sanctifieth His saints; which sanctification, when perfected at last (for it is at present only advancing and growing day by day), shall take away from us for ever all the remains of our infirmity."**

When we see Him we will be like Him, as in **1 John 3 (KJV):2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Sanctification in the Biblical sense has to do with separation from uncleanness, as we read in **2 Chronicles 29 (KJV):5** And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place.

Then it also has to do with being set apart to God. Dr. Albert Grimes says in **Lesson 8: The Doctrine of Sanctification**, "The Son of God, as He was set apart by the Father and sent into the world to do God's will, was sanctified in this sense, as stated in John 10:36, "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"

He also says, "In this same sense the first born of the children were sanctified unto the Lord, as Numbers 8:17 states, "For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself." <http://www.theriskofchrist.com/grimes/book01.pdf>

As the Father draws us to Jesus, it is the Spirit of God who begins to separate us out from the world, as we read in **2 Thessalonians 2 (KJV):13** But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

When we then believe, we are as the Corinthians in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):2** Unto the



church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

Being in Christ, we have an identification with Him as one who is sanctified, as we read in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

This separation to God, and oneness with Christ, happened when we believed, as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (NASB):11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

So in God's eyes we are clean when we believe in Jesus. But there is also a progressive sanctification that goes on in the life of the believer. And this is the will of God as we read in **1 Thessalonians 4 (KJV):3** For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

This renewing happens in our soul, that is, our mind, will, conscience, heart, and feelings. This relates to our state. But our standing does not change, because God has justified us.

We are to grow in grace and knowledge, as we read in **2 Peter 3 (KJV):18** But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

As we grow in grace and knowledge, we then know how to possess our vessel in "sanctification and honour", as in 1 Thessalonians 4:4 above. Our sanctification will increase as we become aware of what sin is in our lives, and confess it.

## Catholic

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Soul and Its Origin, Book III, Chapters 1-2, page 343-344**, Augustine is writing to Victor, and says in **Chapter 1**, “Now, since it was my bounden duty to love you before you had united with us, in order that you might become a Catholic; how much more ought I now to love you since your union with us, to prevent your becoming a new heretic, **and that you may become so firm a Catholic that no heretic may be able to withstand you!**”

In summary, the errors contained in the books of Vincentius Victor relate to the fact that he says that the soul comes from God, but was not made either out of nothing or out of any created thing. But Augustine wants him to “**become so firm a Catholic that no heretic may be able to withstand**” him.

The word “Catholic” was used to differentiate from others, which were deemed heretical. The Apostolic See of Rome was the residence of the Pope, the highest authority in the Catholic Church.

In **Chapter 2**, he says, “**I found that you had been a Donatist, or rather a Rogatist, but had lately come into communion with the Catholic Church. Now, while I was rejoicing, as one naturally does at the recovery of those whom he sees rescued from that system of error,—and in your case my joy was all the greater because I saw that your ability, which so much delighted me in your writings, had not remained behind with the enemies of truth.**”

Anyone outside the “**communion with the Catholic Church**” could be deemed to be “**the enemies of truth**”.

And he says, “**If, however, you are sincere in communicating with us, and do not merely pretend to be a Catholic, how is it that you still love a dead man to such a degree as to be willing even now to boast of the name of one in whose errors you no longer permit yourself to be held?**”

And he says, “**But of what avail is all this to you, my son? Be, I pray you, a true Catholic, not a feigned one, lest the Holy Spirit should flee from you, and that Vincentius be unable to profit you at all, into whom the most malignant spirit of error has transformed himself for the purpose of deceiving you;**”

Augustine was warning Victor about the errors of Vincentius. In his warning, one could conclude that if one was not a true Catholic, the Holy Spirit would flee from them. And if the Holy Spirit should flee from us, that would mean we would lose our salvation.

But to lose life by losing the Holy Spirit, once one has been born again, is not possible according to the Scriptures. The reason is because whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit as Jesus taught in **John 3 (KJV):6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

We do not give ourselves birth, as John reveals in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,

but of God.

When we believed in Jesus Christ, we were born of God, and having been born of God, we have the eternal life of the Spirit of God in our spirit. Christ is now our life as we read in **Colossians 3 (KJV):4** When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Augustine concludes, “for it is from that one that all these evil opinions have proceeded, notwithstanding the artful fraud which has persuaded you to the contrary. If this admonition shall only induce you to correct these errors with the humility of a God-fearing man and the peaceful submission of a Catholic, they will be regarded as the mistakes of an over zealous young man, who is eager rather to amend them than to persevere in them. But if he shall have by his influence prevailed on you to contend for these opinions with obstinate perseverance, which God forbid, it will in such a case be necessary to condemn them and their author as heretical, as is required by the pastoral and remedial nature of the Church’s charge, to check the dire contagion before it quietly spreads through the heedless masses, while wholesome correction is neglected, under the name but without the reality of love.”

He is right to correct the error of the Donatists, but “the peaceful submission of a Catholic” would not necessarily free Victor from all error. The Catholic Church in Augustine’s time had many traditions, which were not in agreement with the Scriptures. The possibility that one could lose their salvation after having been born again is only one such tradition. The Catholic Church hierarchy of Pope, Cardinals, and Bishops is another. What was needed back then was a right understanding of **2 Timothy 3 (KJV):16** All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Believers need to be taught to walk in the light of the word of God. This will bring them into submission to the Lord. It is not about belonging to a particular denomination, but abiding in Him, and walking in the light of His word of truth.

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Soul and Its Origin, Book III, Chapter 12, page 348**, he says, “If you wish to be a Catholic, refrain from believing, or saying, or teaching that “infants which are forestalled by death before they are baptized may yet attain to forgiveness of their original sins.”

Augustine did not understand that the teaching of baptismal regeneration according to the dogma of the Catholic Church is not Scriptural. No one can have faith for salvation for another. It is possible that the Lord, in His mercy, forgives infants who have not yet reached the age of accountability, as we read in **Deuteronomy 1 (KJV):39** Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

Just as the thief on the cross who was not baptized, but entered paradise with Jesus that same day, so it will be with children who die before reaching the age of accountability.

Augustine concludes, “As for Dinocrates, he was a child of seven years of age; and as children who are baptized so old as that can now recite the creed and answer for themselves in the usual examination, I know not why he may not be supposed after his baptism to have

been recalled by his unbelieving father to the sacrilege and profanity of heathen worship, and for this reason to have been condemned to the pains from which he was liberated at his sister's intercession. For in the account of him you have never read, either that he was never a Christian, or died a catechumen. But for the matter of that, the account itself that we have of him does not occur in that canon of Holy Scripture whence in all questions of this kind our proofs ought always to be drawn."

We can agree with Augustine that, "our proofs ought always to be drawn" from "that canon of Holy Scripture". And we must not exceed the Scripture in our proof.

Under **Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Soul and Its Origin, Book III, Chapters 15-17, page 349-350**, in **Chapter 15** he says, "If you wish to be a Catholic, I pray you, neither believe, nor say, nor teach that "there are some mansions outside the kingdom of God which the Lord said were in His Father's house." For He does not affirm, as you have adduced his testimony, "There are with my Father (apud Patrem meum) many mansions;" although, if He had even expressed Himself so, the mansions could hardly be supposed to have any other situation than in the house of His Father; but He plainly says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." (John 14:2)"

Then in summary in **Chapter 16**, Augustine seems to have allowed for a Limbo as he says, speaking of those who died and were not baptized, "and still, even in the abodes which are not situated in the kingdom of heaven, those may live happily, to whom, if they are even unbaptized, God has willed to assign such habitations. They are no doubt in the kingdom of God, although (as not having been baptized) they cannot possibly be in the kingdom of heaven."

In **Chapter 17** he says, "It is enough to find that no one can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be washed in the laver of regeneration. I suppose you perceive by this time how wide of the truth it is to separate from the kingdom of God any mansions that are placed in the house of God. And as to the idea which you have entertained that there will be found dwelling among the various mansions, which the Lord has told us abound in His Father's house, some who have not been born again of water and the Spirit, I advise you, if you will permit me, not to defer amending it, in order that you may hold the Catholic faith."

Augustine is correct in his rebuke of Vincentius Victor for holding that one who has not been born again may go to a mansion in the Kingdom of God, which is not in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the doctrine of regeneration held by the "Catholic faith" in his time had been corrupted, and was not according to Scripture. There is no "Limbo", or place outside the kingdom of heaven, where the unbaptized would go. Regeneration by baptism is not a Biblical truth.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, St. AUGUSTIN: Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, according to Matthew. Book I. Explanation of the first part of the sermon delivered by our Lord on the mount, as contained in the fifth chapter of Matthew. Chapter V., paragraph 14, page 8**, he says, "For he is not a follower of Christ who is not called a Christian according to the true faith and the catholic discipline."

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon VI, On the Lord's Prayer in St. Matthew's Gospel Chapter VI, 9. Etc, to the Competentes, Paragraph 14, page 279**, he says, "The first pair, Adam and Eve, were our parents; the one our father, the

other our mother; and therefore we are brethren. But let us leave the consideration of our first origin. God is our Father, the Church our Mother, and therefore are we brethren.”

And Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermon VII, Again, on Matt. vi. on the Lord’s Prayer. To the Competentes., Paragraph 2, page 280-281**, he says, “We had a father and mother on earth, that we might be born to labours and to death: but we have found other parents, God our Father, and the Church our Mother, by whom we are born unto life eternal. Let us then consider, beloved, whose children we have begun to be; and let us live so as becomes those who have such a Father. See, how that our Creator hath condescended to be our Father!”

In saying this, he is giving a place to the hierarchy of the Church, the Pope, the bishops, the cardinals, which they do not have. God has made a way for every individual in His body, the Church, to have relationship with Him. The Church is not our “Mother”.

We read in **1 John 2 (KJV):26** These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. 28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

Everyone in the body of Christ, that is, every believer, can hear from God by the anointing we have received from Him. As that anointing that we have received from Him teaches us, we shall abide in Him. Our trust and reliance must be on the Lord.

The Church is not our Mother. This exceeds what is written in the Scriptures. In Augustine’s mind, the Church is our Mother by baptismal regeneration. But we are saved by grace through faith the moment we believe in Jesus Christ, and confess Him as Lord.

Augustine is trying to establish a loyalty to the Catholic Church by the analogy of a father and mother, a family. In so doing, he is giving a place to the hierarchy of the Church, which is not Scriptural. Augustine assumes that, since it is by the Church that one is baptized, that it is through the Church that one is “born unto life eternal”, and therefore the Church is our Mother. But since it is not by baptism that we are born again, but by our faith in Jesus Christ the moment we believe, the Church is not in any way our mother. We are only baptized because we believe. Baptism is an outward sign to the world of what has already happened on the inside.

We pass from death to life when we hear and believe, as we read again in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLV. Chapter X. 1–10, paragraph 5, page 250-251**, he says, “Keep hold of this, that Christ’s sheepfold is the Catholic Church. Whoever would enter the sheepfold, let him enter by the door, let him preach the true Christ.”

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine On the Psalms, Psalm CXLIX, paragraph 2, page 677**, he says, “The Church” then “of the saints” is the Catholic Church. The Church of the saints is not the Church of heretics.”

Actually, the Church is all who have believed in Jesus Christ, and confessed Him as Lord. It is not because we belong to a particular denomination, but because of our faith in Jesus Christ that we are His children and in His body, the Church.

## The Pope

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLIX. Chapter XI. 1–54 , paragraph 27, page 278**, he says, ““And one of them, [named] Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied.” **We are here taught that the Spirit of prophecy used the agency even of wicked men to foretell what was future; which, however, the evangelist attributes to the divine sacramental fact that he was pontiff, which is to say, the high priest.”**

“A pontiff (from Latin *pontifex*) was, in Roman antiquity, a member of the most illustrious of the colleges of priests of the Roman religion, the College of Pontiffs. The term "pontiff" was later applied to any high or chief priest and, in Roman Catholic ecclesiastical usage, to a bishop and more particularly to the Bishop of Rome, the Pope or "Roman Pontiff".”  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontiff>

Augustine uses the word “pontiff” here to mean the same as **“the high priest”**. In doing so, he is making it to be an acceptable term for a bishop. The Bishop of Rome, the Pope, is now known as the “supreme Pontiff”. Since there is no valid priesthood in the Church, apart from the priesthood of all believers, and since the term “Pontiff” comes from Roman religion, this was a departure from Biblical truth. Augustine was unaware of the significance of this since it was already established in the Catholic Church in his time.

“The original notion of a vicar is as an "earthly representative of Christ", but it's also used in the sense of "person acting as parish priest in place of a real person." The title is now used in Catholicism to refer to the bishops, and more specifically, was historically used to refer to the Bishop of Rome (the pope).”  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicar\\_of\\_Christ#:~:text=The%20original%20notion%20of%20a,of%20Rome%20\(the%20pope\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicar_of_Christ#:~:text=The%20original%20notion%20of%20a,of%20Rome%20(the%20pope)).

The Pope has become Christ’s representative on earth. But we don’t pray to the Pope. We pray in Jesus’ name to the Father.



## Abraham's Bosom

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, Confessions, Book IX Chapter III., paragraphs 5-6, Page 130-131**, Augustine was not clear in his thinking about what Abraham's bosom may be, as he says, speaking of "Nebridius", that he was "not as yet initiated in any of the sacraments of Thy Church, but a most earnest inquirer after truth", whom the Lord did "release from the flesh; and now he lives in Abraham's bosom." Augustine then says, "Whatever that may be which is signified by that bosom, there lives my Nebridius, my sweet friend, Thy son, O Lord, adopted of a freedman; there he liveth."

Augustine did not understand that the righteous dead could not enter heaven until Jesus had died on the cross, and by His blood had entered heaven for us. It is by His blood that He has made a way. He is the way, as He says in **John 14 (KJV):6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

So when Jesus descended into the lower parts of the earth, He led captivity captive and ascended into heaven, as in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):8** Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

"Captivity" is were the saints in Abraham's bosom were kept because they could not enter heaven until Jesus had made a way by His blood. Now all the righteous go straight to heaven to be with the Lord when they pass from this life.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, On the Soul and Its Origin, Book IV, Chapter 24, page 364**, he says, "If you are not, then, in fun, and do not wish to make childish mistakes, you must understand by "Abraham's bosom" that remote and separate abode of rest and peace in which Abraham now is; and that what was said to Abraham (Luke 16:24) did not merely refer to him personally, but had reference to his appointment as the father of many nations, (Genesis 17:5) to whom he was presented for imitation as the first and principal example of faith; even as God willed Himself to be called "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," although He is the God of an innumerable company."

But in order to understand what Abraham's bosom is, we must read the Scripture in context as in **Luke 16 (KJV):19** There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Jesus is telling this parable. Before Jesus died on the cross, the righteous dead went to Abraham's bosom. The unrighteous dead went to hell. Sheol, in Hebrew or Hades in Greek, was the abode of all the dead before Jesus died on the cross, and it was divided into two parts, hell and Abraham's bosom. Jacob spoke of Sheol in **Genesis 37 (NASB):35** Then all his sons and all his daughters got up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said,

“Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son.” So his father wept for him.

So Jesus did not enter heaven right away, for he first descended into the lower parts of the earth, that is, into Sheol. He went to Abraham’s Bosom, or paradise, where he took with Him the thief on the cross who repented. Then he took “captivity captive”, and ascended with them to heaven. Now all the righteous go straight to heaven when they die.

## He Led Captivity Captive

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Sermons on New-Testament Lessons, Sermon LXXVIII, paragraphs 4-5, page 492**, he says in **paragraph 4**, “Of Him it is said, “He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, He gave gifts unto men.” (Psalm 68:18, Ephesians 4:8) What is, “He led captivity captive”? He conquered death. What is, “He led captivity captive”? The devil was the author of death, and the devil was himself by the Death of Christ led captive. “He ascended up on high.” What do we know higher than heaven? Visibly and before the eyes of His disciples He ascended into heaven. This we know, this we believe, this we confess.”

He refers to **Psalm 68 (KJV):18** Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

And to **Ephesians 4 (KJV):8** Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

And to **Acts 1 (KJV):9** And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Augustine completely missed the point of Ephesians 4:8. The captives Jesus was leading were the spirits of righteous men who had been kept in Abraham’s bosom, or the lower paradise. This is where the righteous dead went before Christ. These were waiting for the way into the holiest of all, that is, heaven, which was made possible by Christ, as it is revealed in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):8** The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

And in **Hebrews 10 (KJV):19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, as we read again in **John 14 (KJV):6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LXVIII, paragraphs 23-24, page 294**, in **paragraph 23** he says, “But what is, “Thou hast led captivity captive”? Is it because He hath conquered death, which was holding captive those over whom it reigned? Or hath he called men themselves captivity, who were being held captive under the devil? Which thing’s mystery even the title of that Psalm doth contain, to wit, “when the house was being builded after the captivity:” that is, the Church after the coming in of the Gentiles. Calling therefore those very men who were being held captive a captivity, as when

“the service” is spoken of there are understood those that serve also, that same captivity he saith by Christ hath been led captive. For why should not captivity be happy, if even for a good purpose men may be caught? Whence to Peter hath been said, “From henceforth thou shalt catch men.” (Luke 5:10) Led captive therefore they are because caught, and caught because subjugated, being sent under that gentle yoke, (Matthew 11:30) being delivered from sin whereof they were servants, and being made servants of righteousness (Romans 6:18) whereof they were children.”

As we explained under **Abraham’s Bosom**, before Jesus rose from the dead, Sheol was where the spirits of the righteous dead went after dying. It was located in the heart of the earth, for Jacob says he “shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning”. This place called Sheol was divided into two places. The righteous went to Abraham’s bosom, which we could also call Paradise because of Jesus’ words on the cross to the repentant thief, as we read in **Luke 23 (KJV):43** And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

The first day Jesus was in the tomb, He went to Abraham’s bosom, or paradise as he said to the thief on the cross.

The unrighteous dead went to Hell, the lower part of Sheol in Hebrew, or Hades in Greek. Abraham’s bosom was the upper part of Sheol. So when Jesus “descended first into the lower parts of the earth”, as in Ephesians 4:9, he descended into Abraham’s bosom in Sheol, and “led captivity captive”, and “ascended up on high”, as in Ephesians 4:8. Augustine and the Catholic Church in his time did not understand this in the Scriptures. The spirits of all the righteous dead are now in heaven with Jesus, and waiting for the resurrection of the just.

## The Purpose of the Law

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings, Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book I, Chapter 13, page 381**, Augustine begins as he quotes Pelagius, “He says, “They say that even the Apostle Paul, even all the apostles, were always polluted by immoderate lust.” What man, however profane he may be, would dare to say this? But doubtless this man thus misrepresents because they contend that what the apostle said, “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not,” (Romans 7:18) and other such things, he said not of himself, but that he introduced the person of somebody else, I know not who, who was suffering these things.”

There is no evidence in the Scriptures of Paul representing someone else in Romans, chapter 7. Paul was testifying of his own experience. Paul uses “I” statements all the way through the chapter. This is not to say that, “the Apostle Paul, even all the apostles, were always polluted by immoderate lust”. Paul will describe his victory because of Christ, as we shall see.

Augustine continues, and says, “Wherefore that passage in his epistle must be carefully considered and investigated, that their error may not lurk in any obscurity of his. Although, therefore, the apostle is here arguing broadly, and with great and lasting conflict maintaining grace against those who were boasting in the law, yet we do come upon a few matters which pertain to the matter in hand. On which subject he says: “Because by the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all them that believe. For there is no difference. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:20-24) And again: “Where is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No; but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law.” (Romans 3:27-28) And again: “For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but by the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Because the law worketh wrath, for where no law is, there is no transgression.” (Romans 4:13-15) And in another place: “Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound.” (Romans 5:20) In still another place: “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace.” (Romans 6:14) And again in another place: “Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law), that the law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth? For the woman which is under a husband is joined to her husband by the law so long as he liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is freed from the law of her husband.” (Romans 7:1-2) And a little after: “Therefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should belong to another, who has risen from the dead that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh the passions of sins which are by the law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, but now we are delivered from the law of death in which we were held, so that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” (Romans 7:4-6) With these and such like testimonies that teacher of

the Gentiles showed with sufficient evidence that the law could not take away sin, but rather increased it, and that grace takes it away; since the law knew how to command, to which command weakness gives way, while grace knows to assist, whereby love is infused. And lest any one, on account of these testimonies, should reproach the law, and contend that it is evil, the apostle, seeing what might occur to those who ill understand it, himself proposed to himself the same question. "What shall we say, then?" said he. "Is the law sin? Far from it. But I did not know sin except by the law." (Romans 7:7) He had already said before, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." It is not, therefore, the taking away, but the knowledge of sin."

Augustine's understanding of the place of the law is according to the Scriptures here.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings**

**Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, Book I, Chapters 16-21, page 382-383, in Chapter 16** he says, "Nor yet does he say lived, but revived. For it had lived formerly in Paradise, where it sufficiently appeared, admitted in opposition to the command given; but when it is inherited by children coming into the world, it lies concealed, as if it were dead, until its evil, resisting righteousness, is felt by its prohibition, when one thing is commanded and approved, another thing delights and rules: then, in some measure sin revives in the knowledge of the man that is born, although it had lived already for some time in the knowledge of the man as at first made."

He refers to Adam in Paradise here, after Adam and Eve sinned.

In **Chapter 17** he says, "But it is not so clear how what follows can be understood concerning Paul. "For we know," says he, "that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal." (Romans 7:14) He does not say, "I was," but, "I am." Was, then, the apostle, when he wrote this, carnal? Or does he say this with respect to his body? For he was still in the body of this death, not yet made what he speaks of elsewhere: "It is sown a natural body, it shall be raised a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:44) For then, of the whole of himself, that is, of both parts of which he consists, he shall be a spiritual man, when even the body shall be spiritual."

As he says "both parts", Augustine did not understand that man is composed of three parts as we read in **1 Thessalonians 5 (KJV):23** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He knew this verse, but thought that the soul was composed of spirit, and so, to him, there were only two parts to man. He did not understand the division between soul and spirit. But he does understand that in the resurrection, "the body shall be spiritual".

In **Chapter 19** he says, "Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Romans 7:19-20) This he repeated impressively, and as it were to stir up the most slothful from slumber: "I find then that the law," said he, "is for me wishing to do good, since evil is present with me." (Romans 7:21) The law, then, is for one who would do good, but evil is present from lust, though he does not consent to this who says, "It is no longer I that do it."

And in **Chapter 20** he says, "because even in the flesh there is not an alien nature, but our own".

Then in **Chapter 21** he says, "Then he adds the reason why he said all these things: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!" And thence he concludes: "Therefore I myself with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:24-25) To wit, with the

flesh, the law of sin, by lusting; but with the mind, the law of God, by not consenting to that lust. “For there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1) For he is not condemned who does not consent to the evil of the lust of the flesh. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made thee free from the law of sin and death,” so that, to wit, the lust of the flesh may not appropriate to itself thy consent. And what follows more and more demonstrates the same meaning. But moderation must be used.”

He refers to **Romans 7 (Douay Rheims):24** Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 The grace of God, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, I myself, with the mind serve the law of God: but with the flesh, the law of sin.

The **Douay Rheims** is a translation of the **Latin Vulgate**. The **Latin Vulgate** in verse 25 has the words gratia Dei per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum (grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord).

But in the **King James Version**, we read as in **Romans 7 (KJV):24** O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

In verse 25 in the Greek, we have the words:

ἐυχάριστῶ τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν

I thank God through Jesus Christ the Lord of us (our Lord)

It is what Jesus Christ has done for us that makes it possible to have a new nature in our spirit which has been born again of the Spirit of God. This new divine nature gives us power over the sin nature in our flesh, which we inherit from Adam.

He refers also to **Romans 8 (KJV):1** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

I do not have to yield to the flesh any longer because “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death”. I have a new nature in my spirit because of the Spirit of God who has given me birth in my spirit, and as a result, a new nature and eternal life in my spirit. This gives me the victory through Jesus Christ over the law of sin and death in my flesh. Now I do not have to yield to this law of sin, which is a nature to sin inherited from Adam that is in the members of my flesh.

Augustine understood that the law does not take away sin, but only gives us the knowledge of sin in our lives.

He understood that “**a man is justified by faith without the works of the law**”, as the Scripture says in Romans 3:27-28. And he understood that we are “**are not under law, but under grace**”, as in Romans 6:14, and that “**we are delivered from the law of death in which we were held, so that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter**”, as it says in Romans 7:4-6.

But Augustine seems to have confused the law of commandments with the “**law of sin**” which is the nature of our flesh, as he says, “**I find then that the law,**” said he, “**is for me wishing to do good, since evil is present with me.**” (Romans 7:21) The law, then, is for one who would do good, but evil is present from lust, though he does not consent to this who says, “**It is no longer I that do it.**” And he then says, “**because even in the flesh there is not an alien nature,**



but our own”””.

But the Scripture reads as in **Romans 7 (KJV)**: 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

The “law of sin” is “in my members”, that is, in my flesh. He then attributes the victory of the “body of this death” as due to “The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!” The Latin Vulgate version of Romans 7:24-25 confused him.

He didn’t realize that it is the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord that has provided a new nature in our spirits by being born again by the Holy Spirit. He didn’t acknowledge this change in our nature, but instead just calls it grace. Again, I do not have to yield to the flesh any longer because “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” in my flesh. “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is the new divine nature in our spirit as a result of being born from above by the Spirit of God.

The purpose of the law is only to show us our sin, and our need for Christ.

# Love

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 5, Anti-Pelagian Writings**

**On Grace and Free Will, Chapters 34-38, page 458-460, in Chapter 34** he says, “This charity, that is, this will glowing with intensest love, the apostle eulogizes with these words: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:35-39) And in another passage he says, “And yet I show unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” (1 Corinthians 12:31, 13:1-8) And a little afterwards he says, “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Follow after love.” (1 Corinthians 13:13, 14:1)”

In **Chapter 37**, Augustine says, “But forasmuch as these precepts are given in the law, both old and new (although in the new came the grace which was promised in the old, but the law without grace is the letter which killeth, but in grace the Spirit which giveth life), from what source is there in men the love of God and of one’s neighbour but from God Himself? For indeed, if it be not of God but of men, the Pelagians have gained the victory; but if it come from God, then we have vanquished the Pelagians. Let, then, the Apostle John sit in judgment between us; and let him say to us, “Beloved, let us love one another.” (1 John 4:7)”

He refers to **2 Corinthians 3 (KJV):6** Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

And to **1 John 4 (KJV):7** Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He continues, “Now, when they begin to extol themselves on these words of John, and to ask why this precept is addressed to us at all if we have not of our own selves to love one another, the same apostle proceeds at once, to their confusion, to add, “For love is of God.” (1 John 4:7) It is not of ourselves, therefore, but it is of God. Wherefore, then, is it said, “Let us love one another, for love is of God,” unless it be as a precept to our free will, admonishing it to seek the gift of God? Now, this would be indeed a thoroughly fruitless admonition if the will did not previously receive some donation of love, which might seek to be enlarged so as to fulfill whatever command was laid upon it.”

Indeed, for God first loved us as we read in **1 John 4 (KJV):19** We love him, because

he first loved us.

The love of God proves that we are born of God, as we read again in **1 John 4 (KJV):7** Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

And he says, ““When it is said, “Let us love one another,” it is law; when it is said, “For love is of God,” it is grace. For God’s “wisdom carries law and mercy upon her tongue.” (Proverbs 3:16)”

He refers in context to **Proverbs 3 (Septuagint):13** Blessed is the man who has found wisdom, and the mortal who knows prudence. 14 For it is better to traffic for her, than for treasures of gold and silver. 15 And she is more valuable than precious stones: no evil thing shall resist her: she is well known to all that approach her, and no precious thing is equal to her in value. 16 For length of existence and years of life are in her right hand; and in her left hand are wealth and glory: out of her mouth proceeds righteousness, and she carries law and mercy upon her tongue.

In **Chapter 38** he says, “Let no one, then, deceive you, my brethren, for we should not love God unless He first loved us. John again gives us the plainest proof of this when he says, “We love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19) Grace makes us lovers of the law; but the law itself, without grace, makes us nothing but breakers of the law. And nothing else than this is shown us by the words of our Lord when He says to His disciples, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” (John 15:16) For if we first loved Him, in order that by this merit He might love us, then we first chose Him that we might deserve to be chosen by Him. He, however, who is the Truth says otherwise, and flatly contradicts this vain conceit of men. “You have not chosen me,” He says. If, therefore, you have not chosen me, undoubtedly you have not loved me (for how could they choose one whom they did not love?). “But I,” says He, “have chosen you.” And then could they possibly help choosing Him afterwards, and preferring Him to all the blessings of this world? But it was because they had been chosen, that they chose Him; not because they chose Him that they were chosen. There could be no merit in men’s choice of Christ, if it were not that God’s grace was prevenient in His choosing them.”

He refers to **1 John 4 (KJV):19** We love him, because he first loved us.

And to **John 15 (KJV):16** Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Augustine says, “But it was because they had been chosen, that they chose Him; not because they chose Him that they were chosen. There could be no merit in men’s choice of Christ, if it were not that God’s grace was prevenient in His choosing them.”

Augustine has correctly said that the love we have for one another is the gift of God, for love is of God and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God. Love is a fruit of the Spirit. And by our love, all will know that we are His disciples as we read in **John 13 (KJV):35** By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

## Sin Unto Death

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 6, Augustine, Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Chapter XXII, paragraph 73, page 30-31**, he says, **"Hence I am of opinion that the sin of a brother is unto death, when any one, after coming to the knowledge of God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, makes an assault on the brotherhood, and is impelled by the fires of envy to oppose that grace itself by which he is reconciled to God. But the sin is not unto death, if any one has not withdrawn his love from a brother, but through some infirmity of disposition has failed to perform the incumbent duties of brotherhood."**

Augustine did not understand the "sin unto death" in the Scripture. He did understand that it could only be committed by someone in the "brotherhood", that is, in Christ.

In the first epistle to the Corinthians, we read of those who ate the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner. The Corinthians were temples of the Spirit of God, who dwelt in them as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):16** Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? **17** If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

If we continue in sin, we will come under the discipline of the Lord, which may include physical death as we read in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV):27** Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. **28** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. **29** For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. **30** For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. **31** For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. **32** But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

In verse 30 above, many were weak, and some were sickly, because of the discipline of the Lord. Some even slept, that is, they died because of the chastening of the Lord, in order that they "should not be condemned with the world".

John mentions the "sin unto death" in **1 John 5 (KJV):14** And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: **15** And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. **16** If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. **17** All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

According to Scripture, the "sin unto death" is the result of God's discipline on His children who do not judge themselves, that is, confess their sins and forsake them. It is not spiritual death but physical death. The one who commits this sin is still saved, but will go home to be with the Lord sooner.

## Confession of Sin

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, First Epistle of John, Homily I. 1 John I. 1–II. 11, paragraphs 7-8, page 464-46**, in **paragraph 7** he says, “And lest haply he should seem to have given impunity for sins, in that he said, “He is faithful and just to cleanse us from all iniquity;” and men henceforth should say to themselves, Let us sin, let us do securely what we will, Christ purgeth us, is faithful and just, purgeth us from all iniquity: He taketh from thee an evil security, and putteth in an useful fear.”

He refers to **1 John 1 (KJV):9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

He continues, “To thine own hurt thou wouldest be secure; thou must be solicitous. For “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,” provided thou always displease thyself, and be changing until thou be perfected. Accordingly, what follows? “My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not.” (1 John 2:1)”

He refers to **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

He continues, “But perchance sin overtakes us from our mortal life: what shall be done then? What? Shall there be now despair? Hear: “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiator for our sins.” (1 John 2:1-2)”

He refers in context to **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

He continues, “He then is the advocate; do thou thine endeavor not to sin: if from the infirmity of this life sin shall overtake thee, see to it straightway, straightway be displeased, straightway condemn it; and when thou hast condemned, thou shalt come assured unto the Judge. There hast thou the advocate: fear not to lose thy cause in thy confession. For if oftentimes in this life a man commits his cause to an eloquent tongue, and is not lost; thou committest thyself to the Word, and shalt thou be lost? Cry, “We have an advocate with the Father.”

We can agree with Augustine here. He is in accordance with the Scripture.

Then in **paragraph 8**, he says, “See John himself observing humility. Assuredly he was a righteous and a great man, who from the Lord’s bosom drank in the secrets of His mysteries; he, the man who by drinking from the Lord’s bosom indited of His Godhead, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God:””

The word “indited” means “The verb *indite*, rarely used today, means "compose" or "put down in writing," like when you find a quiet place to sit down with your notebook and pen and *indite* a journal entry or a first draft of a short story.”

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/indite#:~:text=To%20indite%20is%20to%20write,critics%20won't%20indict%20you>.

He refers to **John 1 (KJV):1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He means that John “indited” or affirmed with emphasis His deity.

He continues, “he, being such a man as this, saith not, Ye have an advocate with the

Father; but, "If any man sin, an advocate," saith he, "have we." He saith not, ye have; nor saith, ye have me; nor saith, ye have Christ Himself: but he puts Christ, not himself, and saith, also, "We have," not, ye have."

He refers in context to **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

He continues, "He chose rather to put himself in the number of sinners that he might have Christ for his advocate, than to put himself in Christ's stead as advocate, and to be found among the proud that shall be condemned. Brethren, Jesus Christ the righteous, even Him have we for our advocate with the Father; "He," even He, "is the propitiation for our sins." This whoso hath held fast, hath made no heresy; this whoso hath held fast, hath made no schism. For whence came schisms? When men say, "we" are righteous, when men say, "we" sanctify the unclean, "we" justify the ungodly; "we" ask, "we" obtain. But what saith John? "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But some man will say: then do the saints not ask for us? Then do bishops and rulers not ask for the people? Yea, but mark the Scriptures, and see that rulers also commend themselves to the prayers of the people. Thus the apostle saith to the congregation, "Praying withal for us also." (Colossians 4:3)"

He refers in context to **Colossians 4 (KJV):2** Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; 3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: 4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

He continues, "The apostle prayeth for the people, the people prayeth for the apostle. We pray for you, brethren: but do ye also pray for us. Let all the members pray one for another; let the Head intercede for all. Therefore it is no marvel that he here goes on and shuts the mouths of them that divide the Church of God. For he that has said, "We have Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins:" having an eye to those who would divide themselves, and would say, "Lo, here is Christ, lo, there;" (Matthew 24:23) and would show Him in a part who bought the whole and possesses the whole, he forthwith goes on to say, "Not our sins only, but also the sins of the whole world.""

He refers in context to **Matthew 24 (KJV):23** Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

And to **1 John 2 (KJV):2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

He continues, "What is this, brethren? Certainly "we have found it in the fields of the woods," (Psalm 132:6) we have found the Church in all nations."

He refers in context to **Psalms 132 (KJV):1** Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions: 2 How he swore unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob; 3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; 4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, 5 Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. 6 Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood. 7 We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool. 8 Arise, O Lord, into thy



rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.

He concludes, “Behold, Christ “is the propitiation for our sins; not ours only, but also the sins of the whole world.” Behold, thou hast the Church throughout the whole world; do not follow false justifiers who in truth are cutters off. Be thou in that mountain which hath filled the whole earth: because “Christ is the propitiation for our sins; not only ours, but also the sins of the whole world,” which He hath bought with His blood.”

He refers to **1 John 2 (KJV):1** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: **2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Let us remember also in **1 John 1 (KJV):6** If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: **7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LI, paragraph 11, page 19**, Augustine is very logical in his thinking, as he reasons from Psalm 51, “**“For, behold, truth Thou hast loved: uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom, Thou hast manifested to me”** (ver. 6). That is, Thou hast not left unpunished even the sins of those whom Thou dost pardon. **“Truth Thou hast loved:”** so mercy Thou hast granted first, as that Thou shouldest also preserve truth. Thou pardonest one confessing, pardonest, but only if he punisheth himself: so there are preserved mercy and truth: mercy because man is set free; truth, because sin is punished.”

Nothing is said in the Scriptures about the need to punish ourselves when we confess our sins. The Scripture simply says that if we confess our sins He is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us, as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But it is understood that we must also forsake them, as we read in **Proverbs 28 (KJV):13** He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

## Punishment for Sin

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 8, Augustine, On the Psalms, Psalm LIX, paragraph 12, page 239**, Augustine says, “All iniquity, be it little or great, punished must needs be, either by man himself repenting, or by God avenging. For even he that repenteth punisheth himself. Therefore, brethren, let us punish our own sins, if we seek the mercy of God. God cannot have mercy on all men working iniquity as if pandering to sins, or not rooting out sins. In a word, either thou punishest, or He punisheth....”

But the Scriptures teach us to confess and forsake our sins as in **Proverbs 28 (KJV):13** He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

When we confess, He is faithful to forgive, as we read in **1 John 1 (KJV):9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Paul says in **1 Corinthians 11 (KJV)**:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

The word “judge” in the Greek is **διακρίνω** (pronounced dē-ä-krē'-nō), from G1223 and G2919; to separate thoroughly, i.e. (literally and reflexively) to withdraw from, or (by implication) oppose; figuratively, to discriminate (by implication, decide), or (reflexively) hesitate:—contend, make (to) differ(-ence), discern, doubt, judge, be partial, stagger, waver.

The Scripture is not saying to chasten ourselves, but to judge ourselves. To judge ourselves, we must discern what is sin, and then confess it. The sooner we do this, the less chastening of the Lord we will have to endure.

And so we read in **Hebrews 12 (KJV)**:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

We must endure the chastening of the Lord. But we don't beat up on ourselves.

## Life Is the Same as Faith

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate XLV. Chapter X. 1–10, paragraph 15, page 255**, Augustine begins as he says, “But what is this, “He shall go in and out, and find pasture”? To enter indeed into the Church by Christ the door, is eminently good; but to go out of the Church, as this same John the evangelist saith in his epistle, “They went out from us, but they were not of us,” (1 John 2:19) is certainly otherwise than good.”

He refers to **1 John 2 (KJV):19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

But nothing about the Church is mentioned in this verse. John was talking about some who left their fellowship. Those John was speaking of “were not all of us”. That is, they were really unbelievers. In Augustine’s thinking, the Catholic Church was the true Church, and so anyone who went out from the Catholic Church “were not all of us”. Augustine did not realize that a lot of tradition had crept in to the doctrine of the Catholic Church in his time.

Augustine continues, “Such a going out could not then be commended by the good Shepherd, when He said, “And he shall go in and out, and find pasture.””

He refers to **John 10 (KJV):9** I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

He continues, “There is therefore not only some sort of entrance, but some outgoing also that is good, by the good door, which is Christ. But what is that praiseworthy and blessed outgoing? I might say, indeed, that we enter when we engage in some inward exercise of thought; and go out, when we take to some active work without: and since, as the apostle saith, Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith, (Ephesians 3:17) to enter by Christ is to give ourselves to thought in accordance with that faith; but to go out by Christ is, in accordance also with that same faith, to take to outside works, that is to say, in the presence of others.”

He refers in context to **Ephesians 3 (KJV):17** That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

He continues, “Hence, also, we read in a psalm, “Man goeth forth to his work;” (Psalm 104:23) and the Lord Himself saith, “Let your works shine before men.” (Matthew 5:16)”

He refers to **Psalm 104 (KJV):23** Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

And to **Matthew 5 (KJV):16** Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

He continues, “But I am better pleased that the Truth Himself, like a good Shepherd, and therefore a good Teacher, hath in a certain measure reminded us how we ought to understand His words, “He shall go in and out, and find pasture,” when He added in the sequel, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.””

He refers to **John 10 (KJV):10** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

He continues, “For He seems to me to have meant, That they may have life in coming in, and have it more abundantly at their departure. For no one can pass out by the door—that is, by Christ—to that eternal life which shall be open to the sight, unless by the same door—that is, by the same Christ—he has entered His church, which is His fold, to the temporal life, which is lived in faith.”

It is by Christ, who is the door, that we become part of the Church, which is His body. Augustine does not seem to understand that, when we have faith and believe in Jesus Christ, we are added to the Church by the Lord, as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):47** Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

We are added to the Church by the Lord the moment we believe. It is God who sets us in a particular place in His body as it pleases Him, as we read in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

When he says that we enter by Christ “to the temporal life, which is lived in faith”, I believe he is referring to the fact that our bodies are mortal.

Let us read further, as he continues, “Therefore, He saith, “I am come that they may have life,” that is, faith, which worketh by love; (Galatians 5:6) by which faith they enter the fold that they may live, for the just liveth by faith: (Romans 1:17)”

He refers to **Galatians 5 (KJV):6** For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

And to **Romans 1 (KJV):17** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

And also to **Habakkuk 2 (KJV):4** Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Augustine seems to equate faith with life here. So one might conclude that if you have faith, you have life, but if you don’t have faith, you lose life or die. He would still allow that you could get life back again if you repented. However, the life we receive is by faith, and it is eternal or everlasting life, as we read in **John 3 (KJV):15** That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

And this life is received when we have faith, that is, when we believe in Him, as we read in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Augustine and the early Church thought that eternal life was received at the resurrection and final judgment. Those who “persevered unto the end” would then receive eternal life.

He continues, ““and that they may have it more abundantly,” who, enduring unto the end, pass out by this same door, that is, by the faith of Christ; for as true believers they die, and will have life more abundantly when they come whither the Shepherd hath preceded them, where they shall die no more.”

However, Jesus made no restriction on when we would have life more abundantly. Augustine seems to imply that abundant life is experienced when we die and go to be with Christ. In fact, by living for the Lord now in this life, we really live.

He continues, “Although, therefore, there is no want of pasture even here in the fold,—for we may understand the words “and shall find pasture” as referring to both, that is, both to

their going in and their going out,—yet there only will they find the true pasture. where they shall be filled who hunger and thirst after righteousness, (Matthew 5:6)—such pasture as was found by him to whom it was said, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)”

He refers to **Matthew 5 (KJV):6** Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

And to **Luke 23 (KJV):43** And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

He concludes, “But how He Himself is the door, and Himself the Shepherd, so that He also may in a certain respect be understood as going in and out by Himself, and who is the porter, it would be too long to inquire today, and, according to the grace given us by Himself, to unfold in the way of dissertation.”

Let us read the parable in **John 10 (KJV):1** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. 6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

So the sheep hear His voice in verse 3, and they follow Him: for they know his voice in verse 4, and they follow Him alone for they know not the voice of strangers in verse 5.

It is interesting that the disciples did not at first understand this parable. Let us continue to read in **John 10 (KJV):7** Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

So Jesus explains that He is the door of the sheep, and that if anyone enters in by Him, he or she shall be saved, and they shall go in and out, and find pasture. No mention of the Church is made in this parable. Let us continue to read in **John 10 (KJV):10** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Jesus has come that the sheep might have life. He is speaking of eternal life that we receive when we are born again of the Spirit of God. Then He adds, that they might have it more abundantly. By this Jesus is speaking of the rest that He came to give us, which He spoke of in **Matthew 11 (KJV):28** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Sin is a weight on our lives. When we come to Jesus, he takes that weight away. This is the rest of salvation He came to give us. Then we can be His servants as we learn to take His yoke upon us. In doing this, we will find even more rest, for His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

We continue to read in **John 10 (KJV):11** I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth

them, and scattereth the sheep. 13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

The parable is actually very simple as Jesus explains it. But Augustine seems to want to complicate it by mentioning the Church as the flock, and implying that remaining in the flock is necessary to have life, which he equates to faith, as he says above, “Therefore, He saith, “I am come that they may have life,” that is, faith, which worketh by love; (Galatians 5:6)” And then he says, “For no one can pass out by the door—that is, by Christ—to that eternal life which shall be open to the sight, unless by the same door—that is, by the same Christ—he has entered His church, which is His fold, to the temporal life, which is lived in faith.” And by saying this, he implies that if one leaves the church, they do not have life.

The Scripture is clear. When we are born again by faith in Jesus Christ, it is by the faith that is given to us by God, as we read again in **Ephesians 2 (ESV):8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We are then born of God as we read again in **John 1 (ESV):12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Being born of God, we then have eternal life. This eternal life is in our spirit, which was born again by the Spirit of God. Jesus is the door to this eternal life. Once we have entered the door by faith, we have life. Jesus is then our Shepherd who will keep us in His hands as we read in **John 10 (KJV):27** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one.

Augustine equates life with faith as he says, “Therefore, He saith, “I am come that they may have life,” that is, faith, which worketh by love; (Galatians 5:6) by which faith they enter the fold that they may live, for the just liveth by faith: (Romans 1:17)”

So from what he has said, one may conclude that, if you don't have love, you don't have faith, and if you don't have faith you don't have life. But we don't enter the fold that we may live. Jesus came that we might have life. We have life by faith in Him. That is, we live because we have faith in Him, and faith in Him is given to us by God, who first loved us.

It seems that he is so focused on keeping the unity of the Catholic Church in his time that he oversteps the bounds of the Scripture. Life is not faith. The life that we receive by faith in Jesus Christ is spiritual, and eternal. It comes to us by a birth of the Holy Spirit in our spirits when we, by ourselves, believe in Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord.



# Heaven

Under **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 7, Augustine, Tractate LXVII. Chapter XIV. 1–3, paragraphs 2-3, page 321**, in **paragraph 2** he says, ““But why have we this that follows, “In my Father’s house are many mansions,” but that they were also in fear about themselves? And therein they might have heard the words, “Let not your heart be troubled.” For, was there any of them that could be free from fear, when Peter, the most confident and forward of them all, was told, “The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice”? Considering themselves, therefore, beginning with Peter, as destined to perish, they had cause to be troubled: but when they now hear, “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you,” they are revived from their trouble, made certain and confident that after all the perils of temptations they shall dwell with Christ in the presence of God.”

He refers to **John 14 (KJV):1** Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. **2** In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

The Father’s house is in the kingdom of heaven. And in the Father’s house, that is, in heaven, are many mansions, or places to live. And as Augustine says, “the many mansions point to the different grades of merit in that one eternal life.” And there will be a “diversity of brightness”, as each is rewarded according to his or her own labor, but there will be no “envying amid this diversity of brightness, since in all of them will be reigning the unity of love”, for God is love.

And in context to **John 13 (KJV):36** Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. **37** Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. **38** Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Augustine continues, “For, albeit one is stronger than another, one wiser than another, one more righteous than another, “in the Father’s house there are many mansions;” none of them shall remain outside that house, where every one, according to his deserts, is to receive a mansion. All alike have that penny, which the householder orders to be given to all that have wrought in the vineyard, making no distinction therein between those who have labored less and those who have labored more: (Matthew 20:9) by which penny, of course, is signified eternal life, whereto no one any longer lives to a different length than others, since in eternity life has no diversity in its measure.”

He refers in context first to **Matthew 20 (KJV):1** For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. **2** And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. **3** And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, **4** And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. **5** Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. **6** And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith

unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

The workers were then paid as we continue in **Matthew 20 (KJV):8** So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

The Lord is teaching us that we must have the right motives in our laboring for the kingdom of God. We are not to look for material gain when laboring for the kingdom of God. We must labor because of what Christ has done for us, and because of our love for God, and for others. With the right heart, rewards will be given including position and place in the Kingdom.

Augustine continues, “But the many mansions point to the different grades of merit in that one eternal life. For there is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory; and so also the resurrection of the dead. The saints, like the stars in the sky, obtain in the kingdom different mansions of diverse degrees of brightness; but on account of that one penny no one is cut off from the kingdom; and God will be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:41-42, 28) in such a way, that, as God is love, (1 John 4:8) love will bring it about that what is possessed by each will be common to all.”

Augustine rightly interprets the Scriptures here. He refers in context to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):40** There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

And to **1 Corinthians 15 (KJV):28** And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

And to **1 John 4 (KJV):8** He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

He continues, “For in this way every one really possesses it, when he loves to see in another what he has not himself. There will not, therefore, be any envying amid this diversity of brightness, since in all of them will be reigning the unity of love.”

Then in **paragraph 3** he says, “Every Christian heart, therefore, must utterly reject the idea of those who imagine that there are many mansions spoken of, because there will be some place outside the kingdom of heaven, which shall be the abode of those blessed innocents who

have departed this life without baptism, because without it they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Because of the belief of the early Church in regeneration by baptism, Augustine believed that unbaptized infants could not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. But God is rich in mercy. There is good reason to believe that the Lord’s mercy would intervene in the case of children, as he did in **Deuteronomy 1 (KJV):39** Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

Augustine continues, “Faith like this is not faith, inasmuch as it is not the true and Catholic faith. Are you not so foolish and blinded with carnal imaginations as to be worthy of reprobation, if you should thus separate the mansion, I say not of Peter and Paul, or any of the apostles, but even of any baptized infant from the kingdom of heaven; do you not think yourselves deserving of reprobation in thus putting a separation between these and the house of God the Father?”

He is correct here in his teaching that there is no Limbo, a place where there is no pain, where the unbaptized infants were thought to go. There is no such division in the house of God. However, this is not justification for “reprobation”. Our faith in Jesus Christ saves us. It may take a while for us to have good doctrine, but when we believe in Him we pass from death to life, and we grow in grace and knowledge.

He continues, “For the Lord’s words are not, In the whole world, or, In all creation, or, In everlasting life and blessedness, there are many mansions; but He says, “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” Is not that the house where we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? (2 Corinthians 5:1)”

He refers in context to **2 Corinthians 5 (KJV):1** For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **2** For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: **3** If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. **4** For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. **5** Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. **6** Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: **7** (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) **8** We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Paul is speaking here of the body we shall inherit at the resurrection. So the “earthly house of this tabernacle” in verse 1 refers to our physical body here on earth. At the resurrection we shall be “clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life”, as in verse 4.

He continues, “Is not that the house whereof we sing to the Lord, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they shall praise Thee for ever and ever”? (Psalm 84:4)”

He refers in context to **Psalms 84 (KJV):1** How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! **2** My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. **3** Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God. **4** Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

The house the Psalmist refers to is the tabernacle that Moses built, and which existed in

David's time, before Solomon built the temple.

We also read as in **Psalms 84 (KJV)**: 10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. 12 O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

This Psalm speaks of fellowship with the Lord that the righteous experience.

Augustine continues, "Will you then venture to separate from the kingdom of heaven the house, not of every baptized brother, but of God the Father Himself, to whom all we who are brethren say, "Our Father, who art in heaven," (Matthew 6:9) or divide it in such a way as to make some of its mansions inside, and some outside, the kingdom of heaven?"

He refers to **Matthew 6 (KJV)**:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

He concludes, "Far, far be it from those who desire to dwell in the kingdom of heaven, to be willing to dwell in such folly with you: far be it, I say, that since every house of sons that are reigning can be nowhere else but in the kingdom, any part of the royal house itself should be outside the kingdom."

And we have to agree with Augustine here in that he says that there is no place outside of the kingdom of heaven where the righteous will go, and there is no place but Hell where the unrighteous will go.

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