

**Lesson 17 The Age of
Christian Empire:
Augustine—The Man, The
Myth, the Heretic**

High Praise for Augustine

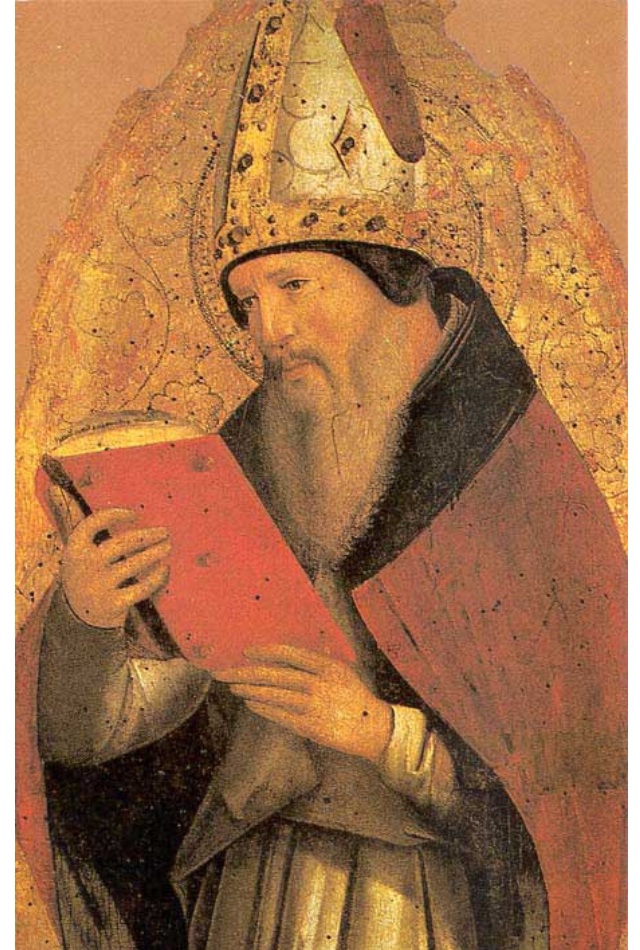
- The entry for Augustine in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, offers high praise for Augustine of Hippo (354-430), calling him the greatest of the Latin fathers. See notes.
- “For 1,000 years Augustine was the most influential teacher in Christendom, and his writings are still valued today by many Christians.” (Price and Collins, 68)
- “the worthy successor of Paul, and precursor of Luther and Calvin.” (Schaff, 1026)
- Paul Enns, author of *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, calls Augustine the greatest theologian between Paul and Luther. (Enns, 424)

High Praise for Augustine

- Bruce L Shelley, author of *Church History in Plain Language*, devotes an entire chapter in book to Augustine titled, “The Sage of the Ages.” (Shelley, 124)
- All of this proves the nearly universal place of reverence reserved for Augustine in church history or theology books.
- **Is all this praise and attention justified?**

Who Was Augustine?

- Born in 354 the son of a pagan Roman official and Christian mother.
- In youth he showed academic brilliance and was sent away to study until his father money ran out.
- Explored the Persian philosophy of Manichaeism.
- One the eve of Easter 387, Augustine and his son Adeodatus were baptized by Ambrose.



Who Was Augustine?

- In 391, Augustine returned to North Africa where he was elected as Bishop of Hippo four years later.
- Augustine remained Bishop of Hippo until his death in 430.



What Did Augustine Believe?

- The beliefs of Augustine can be gleaned from his extensive writings. Phillip Schaff surveys the works of Augustine at the end of *History of the Christian Church Volume III*
 - Ecumenical Church Councils
 - Holiness of Mary
 - Worship of the Saints
 - Power of Relics
 - Sacraments
 - Baptism/Unbaptized Babies
 - Millenium



What Did Augustine Believe?

- The following doctrines are clearly taught in Augustine's magnum opus *The City of God*:
 - The Apocrypha (Esdra, Tobit, Judith) and the *Septuagint* are inspired. (Book XIII, Chapter 23; Book XVI, Chapter 15, Book VIII, Chapter 36, Book XVIII, Chapters 42-43)
 - A man is saved from the second death by martyrdom. (Book XX, Chapter 13)
 - The restoration of Israel predicted in Hosea 6:2 was fulfilled in 33 AD. (Book XX, Chapter 9)
 - The resurrection of the saints who sit in judgment in Revelation 20 are Catholic priests and bishops now judging the heathen. (Book XX, Chapter 25, 29)
 - Unsprinkled babies go to Hell if they are not 'elect' babies. (Book XXII, Chapters 19, 25)

What Did Augustine Believe?

- According to the *Evangelical Dictionary of the Theology*, Augustine was completely Catholic on the following points of doctrine:
 - “He held with Cyprian that outside the church there is no salvation, and that bishops of the church hold authority by apostolic succession.”
 - “An he held a high doctrine of the sacraments, teaching that they “place the reality before us and actualized it.”
 - “He justified the use of coercion against heretics (i.e., Donatists) and schematics in the name of Catholic Christianity.”

What Did Augustine Believe?

- Lawrence M. Vance, author of *The Other Side of Calvinism*, painstakingly documents the heretical beliefs of Augustine in chapter two of his book:
 - Augustine was the one who gave the doctrine of purgatory its first definite form. (Vance, 21)
 - The first resurrection is the new birth for the believer.
 - The memorial of the Lord's Supper became that of a spiritual presence of Christ body and blood.
 - It was Augustine who first defined the so-called sacraments as a means of grace.
 - Sex was shameful and was sinful except for producing children.
 - Regarding the Millennium, Augustine was properly Amillennial, not accepting the literal thousand year reign of Christ, but teaching that the Millennium was the age between the First and Second Advents. (Vance, 22)

Comparisons	Pelagius	Augustine
<i>Effect of the Fall</i>	Only Adam affected	All humanity affected
<i>Original sin</i>	No	Yes
<i>Hereditary Sin</i>	No	Yes
<i>Humans at Birth</i>	Born neutral	Born with fallen nature
<i>Man's Will</i>	Free	Enslaved to sin
<i>Fact of Universal Sin</i>	Due to bad examples	Man is "not able not to sin."
<i>Turning to God in Salvation</i>	Is possible independent of God's grace	Only possible through God's grace (Enns, 425)

Augustine the First Calvinist

- Prominent Calvinists admit that their system is rooted in the teachings of Augustine:
 - Spurgeon—“Calvin got his Calvinism from Augustine.”
 - Boettner—“Augustine had taught the essentials of the system a thousand years before Calvin was born.”
 - Warfield—“The system of doctrine taught by Calvin is just the Augustinianism common to the whole body of the Reformers.” (all quoted in Vance, 17)
- “The main point of Augustine’s doctrine pickup on by Calvin and the other Reformers was his teaching on predestination. Augustine held to the five commonly accepted points of Calvinism, and Custance even insists that they were formulated implicitly by Augustine.” (Vance, 22)

Augustine the First Calvinist

Calvin's Tulip



- **T** = Total Depravity
- **U** = Unconditional Election
- **L** = Limited Atonement
- **I** = Irresistible Grace
- **P** = Perseverance of the Saints

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