

## 1: St. Augustine - Christian Classics Ethereal Library - Christian Classics Ethereal Library

*Augustine's adaptation of classical thought to Christian teaching created a theological system of great power and lasting influence. His numerous written works, the most important of which are Confessions (c. ) and The City of God (c. ), shaped the practice of biblical exegesis and helped lay the foundation for much of medieval.*

Early Years Augustine is the first ecclesiastical author the whole course of whose development can be clearly traced, as well as the first in whose case we are able to determine the exact period covered by his career, to the very day. To his mother Monnica so the manuscripts write her name, not Monica; b. But though she was evidently an honorable, loving, self-sacrificing, and able woman, she was not always the ideal of a Christian mother that tradition has made her appear. Her religion in earlier life has traces of formality and worldliness about it; her ambition for her son seems at first to have had little moral earnestness and she regretted his Manicheanism more than she did his early sensuality. It seems to have been through Ambrose and Augustine that she attained the mature personal piety with which she left the world. Of Augustine as a boy his parents were intensely proud. He received his first education at Thagaste, learning, to read and write, as well as the rudiments of Greek and Latin literature, from teachers who followed the old traditional pagan methods. He seems to have had no systematic instruction in the Christian faith at this period, and though enrolled among the catechumens, apparently was near baptism only when an illness and his own boyish desire made it temporarily probable. To speak, as Mommsen does, of "frantic dissipation" is to attach too much weight to his own penitent expressions of self-reproach. Looking back as a bishop, he naturally regarded his whole life up to the "conversion" which led to his baptism as a period of wandering from the right way; but not long after this conversion, he judged differently, and found, from one point of view, the turning point of his career in his taking up philosophy -in his nineteenth year. This view of his early life, which may be traced also in the Confessiones, is probably nearer the truth than the popular conception of a youth sunk in all kinds of immorality. When he began the study of rhetoric at Carthage, it is true that in company with comrades whose ideas of pleasure were probably much more gross than his he drank of the cup of sensual pleasure. But his ambition prevented him from allowing his dissipations to interfere with his studies. His son Adeodatus was born in the summer of , and it was probably the mother of this child whose charms enthralled him soon after his arrival at Carthage about the end of . But he remained faithful to her until about , and the grief which he felt at parting from her shows what the relation had been. In the view of the civilization of that period, such a monogamous union was distinguished from a formal marriage only by certain legal restrictions, in addition to the informality of its beginning and the possibility of a voluntary dissolution. Even the Church was slow to condemn such unions absolutely, and Monnica seems to have received the child and his mother publicly at Thagaste. In any case Augustine was known to Carthage not as a roysterer but as a quiet honorable student. He was, however, internally dissatisfied with his life. The Hortensius of Cicero, now lost with the exception of a few fragments, made a deep impression on him. To know the truth was henceforth his deepest wish. About the time when the contrast between his ideals and his actual life became intolerable, he learned to conceive of Christianity as the one religion which could lead him to the attainment of his ideal. But his pride of intellect held him back from embracing it earnestly; the Scriptures could not bear comparison with Cicero; he sought for wisdom, not for humble submission to authority. Manichean and Neoplatonist Period In this frame of mind he was ready to be affected by the so-called "Manichean propaganda" which was then actively carried on in Africa, without apparently being much hindered by the imperial edict against assemblies of the sect. Two things especially attracted him to the Manicheans: The former fitted in with the impression which the Bible had made on Augustine himself; the latter corresponded closely to his mood at the time. The prayer which he tells us he had in his heart then, "Lord, give me chastity and temperance, but not now," may be taken as the formula which represents the attitude of many of the Manichean auditors. Among these Augustine was classed during his nineteenth year; but he went no further, though he held firmly to Manicheanism for nine years, during which he endeavored to convert all his friends, scorned the sacraments of the Church, and held frequent disputations with catholic believers. She comforted herself also by the word of a certain bishop

probably of Thagaste that "the child of so many tears could not be lost. The next period was a time of diligent study, and produced about the end of the treatise, long since lost, *De pulchro et apto*. Meanwhile the hold of Manicheanism on him was loosening. Its feeble cosmology and metaphysics had long since failed to satisfy him, and the astrological superstitions springing from the credulity of its disciples offended his reason. The members of the sect, unwilling to lose him, had great hopes from a meeting with their leader Faustus of Mileve; but when he came to Carthage in the autumn of , he too proved disappointing, and Augustine ceased to be at heart a Manichean. He was not yet, however, prepared to put anything in the place of the doctrine he had held, and remained in outward communion with his former associates while he pursued his search for truth. Soon after his Manichean convictions had broken down, he left Carthage for Rome, partly, it would seem, to escape the preponderating influence of his mother on a mind which craved perfect freedom of investigation. Here he was brought more than ever, by obligations of friendship and gratitude, into close association with Manicheans, of whom there were many in Rome, not merely *auditores* but *perfecti* or fully initiated members. This did not last long, however, for the prefect Symmachus sent him to Milan, certainly before the beginning of , in answer to a request for a professor of rhetoric. He listened to the preaching of Ambrose and by it was made acquainted with the allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures and the weakness of the Manichean Biblical criticism, but he was not yet ready to accept catholic Christianity. His mind was still under the influence of the skeptical philosophy of the later Academy. This was the least satisfactory stage in his mental development, though his external circumstances were increasingly favorable. As a catechumen of the Church, he listened regularly to the sermons of Ambrose. Morally his life was perhaps at its lowest point. On his betrothal, he had put away the mother of his son; but neither the grief which he felt at this parting nor regard for his future wife, who was as yet too young for marriage, prevented him from taking a new concubine for the two intervening years. Sensuality, however, began to pall upon him, little as he cared to struggle against it. His idealism was by no means dead; he told Romanian, who came to Milan at this time on business, that he wished he could live altogether in accordance with the dictates of philosophy; and a plan was even made for the foundation of a community retired from the world, which should live entirely for the pursuit of truth. With this project his intention of marriage and his ambition interfered, and Augustine was further off than ever from peace of mind. In his thirty-first year he was strongly attracted to Neoplatonism by the logic of his development. The idealistic character of this philosophy awoke unbounded enthusiasm, and he was attracted to it also by its exposition of pure intellectual being and of the origin of evil. These doctrines brought him closer to the Church, though he did not yet grasp the full significance of its central doctrine of the personality of Jesus Christ. In his earlier writings he names this acquaintance with the Neoplatonic teaching and its relation to Christianity as the turning-point of his life. The truth, as it may be established by a careful comparison of his earlier and later writings, is that his idealism had been distinctly strengthened by Neoplatonism, which had at the same time revealed his own will, and not a *natura altera* in him, as the subject of his baser desires. This made the conflict between ideal and actual in his life more unbearable than ever. Yet his sensual desires were still so strong that it seemed impossible for him to break away from them. Conversion and Ordination Help came in a curious way. A countryman of his, Pontitianus, visited him and told him things which he had never heard about the monastic life and the wonderful conquests over self which had been won under its inspiration. When Pontitianus had gone, with a few vehement words to Alypius, he went hastily with him into the garden to fight out this new problem. Then followed the scene so often described. Overcome by his conflicting emotions he left Alypius and threw himself down under a fig-tree in tears. When he came to the words, " Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness," it seemed to him that a decisive message had been sent to his own soul, and his resolve was taken. Alypius found a word for himself a few lines further, " Him that is weak in the faith receive ye;" and together they went into the house to bring the good news to Monnica. This was at the end of the summer of Augustine, intent on breaking wholly with his old life, gave up his position, and wrote to Ambrose to ask for baptism. The months which intervened between that summer and the Easter of the following year, at which, according to the early custom, he intended to receive the sacrament, were spent in delightful calm at a country-house, put at his disposal by one of his friends, at Cassisiacum Casciago, 47 m. Here Monnica,

Alypius, Adeodatus, and some of his pupils kept him company, and he still lectured on Vergil to them and held philosophic discussions. The whole party returned to Milan before Easter, and Augustine, with Alypius and Adeodatus, was baptized. Plans were then made for returning to Africa; but these were upset by the death of Monnica, which took place at Ostia as they were preparing to cross the sea, and has been described by her devoted son in one of the most tender and beautiful passages of the *Confessiones*. Augustine remained at least another year in Italy, apparently in Rome, living the same quiet life which he had led at Cassisiacum, studying and writing, in company with his countryman Evodius, later bishop of Uzalis. Here, where he had been most closely associated with the Manicheans, his literary warfare with them naturally began; and he was also writing on free will, though this book was only finished at Hippo in . In the autumn of , passing through Carthage, he returned to Thagaste, a far different man from the Augustine who had left it five years before. Alypius was still with him, and also Adeodatus, who died young, we do not know when or where. Here Augustine and his friends again took up a quiet, though not yet in any sense a monastic, life in common, and pursued their favorite studies. About the beginning of , having found a friend in Hippo to help in the foundation of what he calls a monastery, he sold his inheritance, and was ordained presbyter in response to a general demand, though not without misgivings on his own part. The years which he spent in the presbyterate are the last of his formative period. The very earliest works which fall within the time of his episcopate show us the fully developed theologian of whose special teaching we think when we speak of Augustinianism. There is little externally noteworthy in these four years. He took up active work not later than the Easter of , when we find him preaching to the candidates for baptism. The plans for a monastic community which had brought him to Hippo were now realized. In a garden given for the purpose by the bishop, Valerius, he founded his monastery, which seems to have been the first in Africa, and is of especial significance because it maintained a clerical school and thus made a connecting link between monastics and the secular clergy. Other details of this period are that he appealed to Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, to suppress the custom of holding banquets and entertainments in the churches, and by had succeeded, through his courageous eloquence, in abolishing it in Hippo; that in a public disputation took place between him and a Manichean presbyter of Hippo, Fortunatus; that his treatise *De fide et symbolis* was prepared to be read before the council held at Hippo October 8, ; and that after that he was in Carthage for a while, perhaps in connection with the synod held there in .

Later Years The intellectual interests of these four years are more easily determined, principally concerned as they are with the Manichean controversy, and producing the treatises *De utilitate credendi*, *De duabus animabus contra Manichaeos* first half of , and *Contra Adimantum* or . He has entered so far into St. However much we are here reminded of the later Augustine, it is clear that he still held the belief that the free will of man could decide his own destiny. His opinion on this point did not change till after he was a bishop. The more widely known Augustine became, the more Valerius, the bishop of Hippo, was afraid of losing him on the first vacancy of some neighboring see, and desired to fix him permanently in Hippo by making him coadjutor-bishop,-a desire in which the people ardently concurred. Augustine was strongly opposed to the project, though possibly neither he nor Valerius knew that it might be held to be a violation of the eighth canon of Niema, which forbade in its last clause "two bishops in one city"; and the primate of Numidia, Megalius of Calama, seems to have raised difficulties which sprang at least partly from a personal lack of confidence. But Valerius carried his plan through, and not long before Christmas, , Augustine was consecrated by Megalius. It is not known when Valerius died; but it makes little difference, since for the rest of his life he left the administration more and more in the hands of his assistant. Space forbids any attempt to trace events of his later life; and in what remains to be said, biographical interest must be largely our guide.

Anti-Manicheanism and Pelagian Writings His special and direct opposition to Manicheanism did not last a great while after his consecration. About he wrote a tractate *Contra epistolam [Manichaei] quam vocant fundamenti*; in the *De agone christiano*, written about the same time, and in the *Confessiones*, a little later, numerous anti-Manichean expressions occur. After this, however, he only attacked the Manicheans on some special occasion, as when, about , on the request of his "brethren," he wrote a detailed rejoinder to Faustus, a Manichean bishop, or made the treatise *De natura boni* out of his discussions with Felix; a little later, also, the letter of the Manichean Secundinus gave him occasion to write *Contra Secundinum*, which, in spite of its

comparative brevity, he regarded as the best of his writings on this subject. In the succeeding period, he was much more occupied with anti-Donatist polemics, which in their turn were forced to take second place by the emergence of the Pelagian controversy. But this conception should be denied. But the new trend was given to them before the time of his anti-Donatist activity, and so before he could have heard anything of Pelagius. He himself names the beginning of his episcopate as the turning-point. Accordingly, in the first thing which he wrote after his consecration, the *De diversis quæstionibus ad Simplicianum* or , we come already upon the new conception. In no other of his writings do we see as plainly the gradual attainment of conviction on any point; as he himself says in the *Retractationes*, he was laboring for the free choice of the will of man, but the grace of God won the day. So completely was it won, that we might set forth the specifically Augustinian teaching on grace, as against the Pelagians and the Massilians, by a series of quotations taken wholly from this treatise. It is true that much of his later teaching is still undeveloped here; the question of predestination though the word is used does not really come up; he is not clear as to the term " election"; and nothing is said of the " gift of perseverance.

## 2: Neoplatonism and Christianity - Wikipedia

*Saint Augustine of Hippo* (/ ˈɔːɡəˌstɪn /; 13 November - 28 August AD) was a Roman African, early Christian theologian and philosopher from Numidia whose writings influenced the development of Western Christianity and Western philosophy.

Irenaeus against the Gnostics Irenaeus 2nd century AD c. He was an early church father and apologist, and his writings were formative in the early development of Christian theology. He was a hearer of Polycarp, who in turn was a disciple of John the Evangelist. Apollinaris of Laodicea Christology: Theodore of Mopsuestia Theodore the Interpreter ca. He is also known as Theodore of Antioch, from the place of his birth and presbyterate. He is the best known representative of the middle School of Antioch of hermeneutics. AD c. He also, therefore, denied the more specific doctrine of original sin as developed by Augustine of Hippo. Pelagius was declared a heretic by the Council of Carthage. His interpretation of a doctrine of free will became known as Pelagianism. He was a Latin philosopher and theologian from Roman Africa. His writings were very influential in the development of Western Christianity. Augustine of Hippo Saint Anselm: Anselm of Canterbury c. Called the founder of scholasticism, he is famous as the originator of the ontological argument for the existence of God. Anselm of Canterbury Peter Abelard: His refusal to retract all of his writings at the demand of Pope Leo X in and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms in resulted in his excommunication by the pope and condemnation as an outlaw by the Emperor. He was a principal figure in the development of the system of Christian theology later called Calvinism. Originally trained as a humanist lawyer, he broke from the Roman Catholic Church around After religious tensions provoked a violent uprising against Protestants in France, Calvin fled to Basel, Switzerland, where he published the first edition of his seminal work *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* in John Calvin Friedrich Schleiermacher on Religion Friedrich Schleiermacher November 21, c. February 12, was a German theologian and philosopher known for his attempt to reconcile the criticisms of the Enlightenment with traditional Protestant orthodoxy. He also became influential in the evolution of Higher Criticism, and his work forms part of the foundation of the modern field of hermeneutics. Wesley is largely credited, along with his brother Charles Wesley, as founding the Methodist movement which began when he took to open-air preaching in a similar manner to George Whitefield. Methodism in both forms was a highly successful evangelical movement in the United Kingdom, which encouraged people to experience Jesus Christ personally. Beginning with his experience as a pastor, he rejected his training in the predominant liberal theology typical of 19th-century European Protestantism. Instead he embarked on a new theological path initially called dialectical theology, due to its stress on the paradoxical nature of divine truth e. Other critics have referred to Barth as the father of neo-orthodoxy c. a term emphatically rejected by Barth himself. He produced many religious publications from Harnack traced the influence of Hellenistic philosophy on early Christian writing and called on Christians to question the authenticity of doctrines that arose in the early Christian church. Adolf von Harnack Leave a Reply Your email address will not be published.

### 3: St. Augustine of Hippo > By Individual Philosopher > Philosophy

*Julian took potshots at Augustine's character as well as his theology. With Roman snobbery, he argued that Augustine and his other low-class African friends had taken over Roman Christianity.*

Who was Saint Augustine of Hippo in church history? Saint Augustine was a philosopher and theologian who had a profound effect on both Protestant and Catholic theology. He was born Augustine Aurelius in A. The son of a Christian mother and a pagan father, he developed a strong interest in rhetoric and philosophy, and he left home in his late teens to study in Carthage. Although his childhood had a heavy Christian influence, Augustine did not follow Christian teachings or practices, but rather lived a hedonistic lifestyle. While in Carthage, he associated with other young men who boasted of sexual exploits, and he himself began a long-term affair with a woman. At the age of 20 or 21, he began to teach rhetoric, and by the age of 30 he was one of the premier academicians in the Latin world, teaching rhetoric at the imperial court in Milan, where he took another lover, having left the first. While in Carthage, still as a young man, Augustine left the Christian church to follow the Manichaean religion. Manichaeism was a syncretistic form of Gnosticism which taught a dualistic view of good and evil. Creation was seen as flawed and under the equal influences of light and darkness. While in Carthage, Augustine began to move away from this school of thought, and he left it entirely while in Milan. In Milan, at the urging of his mother, Monica, Augustine converted to Christianity and was baptized in A. He subsequently left his teaching position and returned to his native Thagaste where he was ordained into the priesthood, becoming a well-known preacher. Just a few years after his return, he was ordained as the Bishop of Hippo, in Africa. He lived a mostly monastic life until his death in A. Augustine was a prolific writer. He is best known for his Confessions, a personal account of his life, and City of God , written to encourage Christians after the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in A. He remains one of the most influential thinkers in history. His ideas of memory and the nature of time formed the framework for our modern understanding of those concepts, including the theological idea that God exists outside of time, in eternity. Augustine, who was himself heavily influenced by the works of Virgil, Cicero, and Aristotle, also exerted an influence on secular philosophers, such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Also, his works strongly affected the ideologies of such church figures as Thomas Aquinas and Bernard of Clairvaux. Many modern Reformed theologians still look to him as a key source for their own writings. Much of Reformed doctrine, especially in relation to predestination, original sin, the bondage of the will, and efficacious grace, has been attributed to the work of Augustine. He was never officially canonized but was accepted as a saint early on by consensus. He is considered the patron saint of brewers, printers, theologians, and those with sore eyes. Catholics observe August 28 as his feast day. Among his other influential views, Augustine pioneered the idea of two aspects of the Church: He also advanced the doctrine of a just war to defend innocents and preserve peace.

### 4: Augustine of Hippo - OrthodoxWiki

*Augustine on Salvation and the Christian Life In this article I will explain the perspective of 4th-century theologian Augustine on the nature of salvation and the Christian life. I will trace his perspective through the three primary stages of the gospel story: creation, fall, and redemption.*

Salvation and the Christian Life Augustine on Salvation and the Christian Life In this article I will explain the perspective of 4th-century theologian Augustine on the nature of salvation and the Christian life. I will trace his perspective through the three primary stages of the gospel story: Augustine on Creation According to Augustine, human nature as God originally created it was good. First, this bond brought death to human beings. Augustine understands the condition of sinfulness to issue from the human will, damaged by the fall. Immediately prior to his conversion, Augustine was aware of two wills within him, one that desired God and another that rejected Him. He understands habit as a pattern of behavior that conforms the will to sin. First, sin grew from his perverted will. Second, yielding to sin produced habit. You shone upon me; your radiance enveloped me; you put my blindness to flight A Upon conversion, God restores human free will. Also, God forgives converts of their sins. While this process is occurring, the Christian life remains a struggle between flesh and spirit A, , hindered by temptations A and a continuing tendency to sin A While transformation includes the obedience of the believer, Augustine attests that the power to accomplish good works comes from God A; A, , The process of gradual transformation, continues until this time A, For Augustine, Christ is central to salvation. Christ played several roles in the process of salvation. Fourth, Christ defeated the powers of evil on the cross. First, he could argue that if the human will is inevitably bent toward sin in its fallen state, God could not hold humans responsible for their sin. Second, as a corollary, Pelagius might argue that if people are inevitably bent toward sin, they could not accomplish the moral commandments of God. Would God command something that is not possible? Third, Pelagius could argue that Augustine radically underestimates the goodness and power of human nature. Fourth, Pelagius might argue that if God sovereignly initiates salvation, and if all people are equally sinful and unable to help themselves, it would be unjust for God save some and condemn others. God is just and therefore leaves the choice of salvation up to people. In light of this anthropology, Augustine views salvation as a process initiated and completed by Christ.

## 5: Augustine | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

*Advanced Historical Theology - The Theology of Augustine - by C. Matthew McMahon Historical Theology Articles Today, many Christians are turning back to the puritans to, "walk in the old paths," of God's word, and to continue to proclaim old truth that glorifies Jesus Christ.*

Augustine of Hippo Introduction St. Augustine of Hippo A. He is one of the most important early figures in the development of Western Christianity, and was a major figure in bringing Christianity to dominance in the previously pagan Roman Empire. He is often considered the father of orthodox theology and the greatest of the four great fathers of the Latin Church along with St. Unlike the later Scholastics who took Aristotle as the classical model to be integrated into Christian thought, Augustine developed a philosophical and theological system which employed elements of Plato and Neo-Platonism in support of Christian orthodoxy. His many works profoundly influenced the medieval worldview. His father Patricius was a pagan, but his mother Monica or Monnica was a devout Catholic and is herself revered as a Christian saint , so he was raised as a Catholic. At the age of 11, he was sent to school at Madaurus, an old Numidian town just south of Tagaste, famed both for its schools and for its pagan influence, where he became very familiar with Latin literature, as well as pagan beliefs and practices. Later he read the "Hortensius", a dialogue by the Roman philosopher and politician Cicero , which was largely responsible for sparking his interest in philosophy. At the age of 17, he went to Carthage, Tunisia the metropolis of Roman Africa to continue his education in rhetoric, and there he came under the influence of the controversial Persian religious cult of Manichaeism, much to the despair of his mother. He lived a hedonistic lifestyle for a time, including frequent visits to the brothels of Carthage, and developed a relationship with a young woman named Floria Aemilia, who would be his concubine for over fifteen years, and who bore him a son, Adeodatus. After a year or two teaching grammar back in his hometown, he returned to Carthage where he spent nine years conducting a school of rhetoric, until, in at the age of 29 , he moved to Rome to teach rhetoric. However, he was disappointed with the apathetic and crooked Roman schools, and the next year he accepted an appointment as professor of rhetoric for the imperial court at Milan, a highly visible and influential academic chair. During his time at Rome and Milan, he had moved away from Manichaeism, initially embracing the Skepticism of the New Academy movement. A combination of his own studies in Neo-Platonism , his reading of an account of the life of Saint Anthony of the Desert, and the combined influence of his mother, his friend Simplicianus and, particularly, the influential bishop of Milan, Saint Ambrose - , gradually inclined Augustine towards Christianity. In the summer of , he officially converted to Catholic Christianity, abandoned his career in rhetoric, quit his teaching position in Milan, and gave up any ideas of the society marriage which had been arranged for him, and devoted himself entirely to serving God, the priesthood and celibacy. He detailed this spiritual journey in his famous "Confessions", which became a classic of both Christian theology and world literature. In , he returned to Africa, although his mother died on the way there, and his son Adeodatus died soon after, leaving him alone in the world, without family. He sold his patrimony, giving the money to the poor, and converted the family house into a monastic foundation for himself and a group of friends. In , he was ordained a priest and later bishop at Hippo Regius on the Mediterranean coast of Algeria, and he became a famous preacher, particularly noted for opposing Manichaeism and heresies such as Donatism and Pelagianism. He remained in this position at Hippo until his death in , working tirelessly to convert the diverse local racial and religious groups to the Catholic faith. His body was later moved to Pavia, Italy or, according to another account, to Cagliari on the island of Sardinia. Almost throughout his life he had been a lonely, isolated figure, not attached to any intellectual or academic movement, and without any university or institutional support for his work. At the time of his death, he was apparently the only person in his whole town who possessed any books at all. He was made a saint patron saint of brewers, printers, sore eyes and theologians of the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches, and among the Orthodox he is known as Blessed Augustine or St. He is the patron of the Augustinian religious order the Catholic monastic order of both men and women living according to a guide to religious life known as the Rule of Saint Augustine. In , he was made a pre-eminent Doctor of the Church.

Work Back to Top Augustine wrote over works in Latin, many of them texts on Christian doctrine and apologetic works against various heresies. He is best known for the "Confessiones" "Confessions", a personal account of his early life, completed in about 400, "De civitate Dei" "The City of God", consisting of 22 books started in 413 and finished in 426, dealing with God, martyrdom, Jews and other Christian philosophies and "De Trinitate" "On the Trinity", consisting of 15 books written over the final 30 years of his life, in which he developed the "psychological analogy" of the Trinity. In both his philosophical and theological reasoning, he was greatly influenced by Stoicism, Platonism and Neo-Platonism, particularly the "Enneads" of Plotinus his generally favorable view of Neo-Platonic thought contributed to its entrance into the Christian, and subsequently the European, intellectual tradition. He was also influenced by the works of the Roman poet Virgil for his teaching on language, Cicero for his teaching on argument and Aristotle particularly his "Rhetoric" and "Poetics". Augustine argued that Skeptics have no basis for claiming to know that there is no knowledge, and he believed that genuine human knowledge can be established with certainty. He believed reason to be a uniquely human cognitive capacity that comprehends deductive truths and logical necessity. He opined that "We are too weak to discover the truth by reason alone". In his theological works, Augustine expounded on the concept of original sin the guilt of Adam which all human beings inherit in his works against the Pelagian heretics, providing an important influence on St. He helped formulate the theory of the just war, and advocated the use of force against the Donatist heretics. Augustine took the view that the Biblical text should not be interpreted literally if it contradicts what we know from science and our God-given reason. Although he believed that God had chosen the Jews as a special people, he considered the scattering of Jews by the Roman empire to be a fulfillment of prophecy, and believed that the Jews would be converted at the end of time. He associated sexual desire with the sin of Adam, and believed that it was still sinful, even though the Fall has made it part of human nature. In "The City of God", he conceived of the church as a heavenly city or kingdom, ruled by love, which will ultimately triumph over all earthly empires which are self-indulgent and ruled by pride. Begun in the aftermath of the sacking of Rome by the Visigoths in 410, it was to some extent written as a defense against those who blamed Christianity for the fall of Rome, and to restore the confidence of his fellow Christians. Augustine of Hippo Books Back to Top See the additional sources and recommended reading list below, or check the philosophy books page for a full list.

### 6: Philosophy and Christian Theology (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*Answer: Saint Augustine was a philosopher and theologian who had a profound effect on both Protestant and Catholic theology. He was born Augustine Aurelius in A.D. , in Thagaste (in what is now Algeria), during the Roman occupation of that region.*

Late antiquity[ edit ] Certain central tenets of Neoplatonism served as a philosophical interim for the Christian theologian Augustine of Hippo on his journey from dualistic Manichaeism to Christianity. As a Manichee, Augustine had held that evil has substantial being and that God is made of matter; when he became a Neoplatonist, he changed his views on these things. As a Neoplatonist, and later a Christian, Augustine believed that evil is a privation of good and that God is not material. Perhaps more importantly, the emphasis on mystical contemplation as a means to directly encounter God or the One, found in the writings of Plotinus and Porphyry , deeply affected Augustine. He reports at least two mystical experiences in his Confessions which clearly follow the Neoplatonic model. The most influential of these would be Origen , who potentially took classes from Ammonius Saccas but this is not certain because there may have been a different philosopher, now called Origen the pagan , at the same time , and the late 5th century author known as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. Neoplatonism also had links with Gnosticism , which Plotinus rebuked in his ninth tractate of the second Enneads: Although Neoplatonism has been referred to as orthodox Platonic philosophy by scholars like Professor John D. Plotinus believed the followers of gnosticism had corrupted the original teachings of Plato. Despite the influence this philosophy had on Christianity, Justinian I would hurt later Neoplatonism by ordering the closure of the refounded Academy of Athens in His works were translated into Latin by John Scotus Eriugena in the 9th century. Neo-Platonism in Orthodox theology[ edit ] From the days of the Early Church until the present, the Orthodox Church has made positive selective use of ancient Greek philosophy, particularly Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. In the Christian context, Logos takes on a deeper meaning and becomes a name for the second person of the Trinity. However, the meanings of words sometimes evolved along different lines. In other cases, philosophical ideas and concepts were sometimes adapted and changed by Christian writers. Any exegetical endeavor trying to unravel the influence of Neo-Platonic thought on Christian theology needs to keep these principles in mind. One should also note that philosophy was used quite differently in the Eastern and Western theological traditions. The writings attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite are among the most enigmatic works of late antiquity. Byzantine scholars such as Gregory Palamas cited Dionysius especially in matters of Mystical Theology such as theoria, the divine energies and the unknowability of God. Among Orthodox scholars, the later view seems to be shared by such writers as Andrew Louth [6] and Vladimir Lossky. His friend, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola was also a major figure in this movement. Both were students of Jewish mystical Kabbalah , which was heavily influenced by Neoplatonism. Renewed interest in Plotinian philosophy contributed to the rational theology and philosophy of the " Cambridge Platonist " circle B. Renaissance Neoplatonism also overlapped with or graded into various forms of Christian esotericism. Christoplatonism[ edit ] Christoplatonism is a term used to refer to a dualism opined by Plato, which influenced the Church , which holds spirit is good but matter is evil.

### 7: The 40 Greatest Theologians Throughout History Â» [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*St. Augustine of Hippo (A.D. - ) was an Algerian-Roman philosopher and theologian of the late Roman / early Medieval period. He is one of the most important early figures in the development of Western Christianity, and was a major figure in bringing Christianity to dominance in the previously pagan Roman Empire.*

Philosophy and Christian Theology In the history of Christian theology, philosophy has sometimes been seen as a natural complement to theological reflection, whereas at other times practitioners of the two disciplines have regarded each other as mortal enemies. Some early Christian thinkers such as Tertullian were of the view that any intrusion of secular philosophical reason into theological reflection was out of order. Thus, even if certain theological claims seemed to fly in the face of the standards of reasoning defended by philosophers, the religious believer should not flinch. Other early Christian thinkers, such as St. Augustine of Hippo, argued that philosophical reflection complemented theology, but only when these philosophical reflections were firmly grounded in a prior intellectual commitment to the underlying truth of the Christian faith. Thus, the legitimacy of philosophy was derived from the legitimacy of the underlying faith commitments. It was during this time however that St. Thomas Aquinas offered yet another model for the relationship between philosophy and theology. According to the Thomistic model, philosophy and theology are distinct enterprises, differing primarily in their intellectual starting points. Philosophy takes as its data the deliverances of our natural mental faculties: These data can be accepted on the basis of the reliability of our natural faculties with respect to the natural world. Theology, on the other hand takes as its starting point the divine revelations contained in the Bible. These data can be accepted on the basis of divine authority, in a way analogous to the way in which we accept, for example, the claims made by a physics professor about the basic facts of physics. Since this way of thinking about philosophy and theology sharply demarcates the disciplines, it is possible in principle that the conclusions reached by one might be contradicted by the other. According to advocates of this model, however, any such conflict must be merely apparent. Since God both created the world which is accessible to philosophy and revealed the texts accessible to theologians, the claims yielded by one cannot conflict with the claims yielded by another unless the philosopher or theologian has made some prior error. Since the deliverances of the two disciplines must then coincide, philosophy can be put to the service of theology and perhaps vice-versa. How might philosophy play this complementary role? First, philosophical reasoning might persuade some who do not accept the authority of purported divine revelation of the claims contained in religious texts. Thus, an atheist who is unwilling to accept the authority of religious texts might come to believe that God exists on the basis of purely philosophical arguments. Second, distinctively philosophical techniques might be brought to bear in helping the theologian clear up imprecise or ambiguous theological claims. Thus, for example, theology might provide us with information sufficient to conclude that Jesus Christ was a single person with two natures, one human and one divine, but leave us in the dark about exactly how this relationship between divine and human natures is to be understood. The philosopher can provide some assistance here, since, among other things, he or she can help the theologian discern which models are logically inconsistent and thus not viable candidates for understanding the relationship between the divine and human natures in Christ. For most of the twentieth century, the vast majority of English language philosophyâ€”including philosophy of religionâ€”went on without much interaction with theology at all. While there are a number of complex reasons for this divorce, three are especially important. The first reason is that atheism was the predominant opinion among English language philosophers throughout much of that century. A second, quite related reason is that philosophers in the twentieth century regarded theological language as either meaningless, or, at best, subject to scrutiny only insofar as that language had a bearing on religious practice. The former belief is. Since much theological language, for example, language describing the doctrine of the Trinity, lacks empirical content, such language must be meaningless. The latter belief, inspired by Wittgenstein, holds that language itself only has meaning in specific practical contexts, and thus that religious language was not aiming to express truths about the world which could be subjected to objective philosophical scrutiny. In the last forty years, however, philosophers of religion have returned to the business

of theorizing about many of the traditional doctrines of Christianity and have begun to apply the tools of contemporary philosophy in ways that are somewhat more eclectic than what was envisioned under the Augustinian or Thomistic models. In keeping with the recent academic trend, contemporary philosophers of religion have been unwilling to maintain hard and fast distinctions between the two disciplines. As a result, it is often difficult in reading recent work to distinguish what the philosophers are doing from what the theologians and philosophers of past centuries regarded as strictly within the theological domain. In what follows, we provide a brief survey of work on the three topics in contemporary philosophical theology that "aside from general issues concerning the nature, attributes, and providence of God" have received the most attention from philosophers of religion over the past quarter century. We thus leave aside such staple topics in philosophy of religion as traditional arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil, the epistemology of religious belief, the nature and function of religious language. We also leave aside a variety of important but less-discussed topics in philosophical theology, such as the nature of divine revelation and scripture, original sin, the authority of tradition, and the like.

Trinity From the beginning, Christians have affirmed the claim that there is one God, and three persons "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" each of whom is God. Although we profess three persons we do not profess three substances but one substance and three persons. If we are asked about the individual Person, we must answer that he is God. No doubt this is an understatement. Indeed, it looks like we can derive a contradiction from the doctrine, as follows: Either way, however, we have a problem. If the Father is identical to God and the Son is identical to God, then by the transitivity of identity the Father is identical to the Son, contrary to the doctrine. On the other hand, if the Father is divine and the Son is divine and the Father is distinct from the Son, then there are at least two divine persons. Either way, then, the doctrine seems incoherent. At first blush, it might seem rather easy to solve. The answer, in short, is that the Christian tradition has set boundaries on how the doctrine is to be explicated, and these sorts of models fall afoul of those boundaries. Modalism confounds the persons. It is the view that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are mere manifestations, modes, or roles played by the one and only God. Ruling out modalism thus rules out analogies like the Superman analogy just given. Tritheism divides the substance. It is a bit tricky because controversial to say exactly what tritheism, or polytheism more generally, is. For discussion, see Rea. But whatever else it might be, it is certainly implied by the view that there are three distinct divine substances. Assuming the items in your shopping cart count as multiple distinct substances, then, the problem with the shopping cart analogy is that it suggests polytheism. In what follows, we will consider several more sophisticated models of the trinity: These do not exhaust the field of possible solutions, but they are the ones to which the most attention has been paid in the recent literature. For more detailed surveys, see Rea and, at book length, McCall. This suggests the analogy of a family, or, more generally, a society. Thus, the persons of the trinity might be thought of as one in just the way that the members of a family are one: Since there is no contradiction in thinking of a family as three and one in this way, this analogy appears to solve the problem. Those who attempt to understand the trinity primarily in terms of this analogy are typically called social trinitarians. This approach has been controversially associated with the Eastern Church, tracing its roots to the Cappadocian Fathers "Basil of Caesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and their friend Gregory Nazianzen. Against this practice, see especially Ayres and Barnes b. Consider, for example, the children of Chronos in Greek mythology, of whom Zeus was the liberator. These children included Zeus, Hera, Ares, and a variety of other Olympian deities "all members of a divine family. Nobody, however, thinks that the fact that Zeus and his siblings nor even, say, Zeus and his begotten daughter Athena count in any meaningful sense as one god. For this reason, social trinitarians are often quick to note that there are other relations that hold between members of the trinity that contribute, along with their being members of a single divine family, to their counting as one God. Richard Swinburne, for example, has defended a version of this view according to which the unity among the divine persons is secured by several facts in conjunction with one another. First, the divine persons share all of the essential characteristics of divinity: Second, unlike the deities of familiar polytheistic systems, their wills are necessarily harmonious, so that they can never come into conflict with one another. Third, they stand in a relationship of perfect love and necessary mutual interdependence. On this sort of view, there is one God because the community of divine persons is so closely

interconnected that, although they are three distinct persons, they nonetheless function as if they were a single entity. One might think that if we were to consider a group of three human persons who exhibited these characteristics of necessary unity, volitional harmony, and love, it would likewise be hard to regard them as entirely distinct. And that is, of course, just the intuition that the view aims to elicit. Still, many regard the sort of unity just described as not strong enough to secure a respectable monotheism. Thus, some social trinitarians have attempted to give other accounts of what unifies the divine persons. Perhaps the most popular such account is the part-whole model. Moreland and William Lane Craig have argued that the relation between the persons of the Trinity can be thought of as analogous to the relation we might suppose to obtain between the three dog-like beings that compose Cerberus, the mythical guardian of the underworld. One might say that each of the three heads—or each of the three souls associated with the heads—is a fully canine individual, and yet there is only one being, Cerberus, with the full canine nature. At this point, therefore, it is natural to wonder what exactly it is that makes both proposals count as versions of social trinitarianism. Unfortunately, this is a question to which self-proclaimed social trinitarians have not given a very clear answer. However, this answer is less than fully illuminating. What is needed is some characterization of the common core underlying the diverse views that are generally regarded as versions of social trinitarianism. The following two theses seem to capture that core: One of the more serious problems is that it is inconsistent with the Nicene Creed. Likewise, the Creed says that Father and Son are consubstantial. This claim is absolutely central to the doctrine of the trinity, and the notion of consubstantiality lay at the very heart of the debates in the 4th Century C. But the three souls, or centers of consciousness, of the heads of Cerberus are not in any sense consubstantial. Other versions of the part-whole model raise further worries. A cube, for example, is a seventh thing in addition to its six sides; but we do not want to say that God is a fourth thing in addition to its three parts. The reason is that saying this forces a dilemma: Either God is a person, or God is not. If the former, then we have a quaternity rather than a trinity. If the latter, then we seem to commit ourselves to claims that are decidedly anti-theistic: Bad news either way, then. Thus, many are motivated to seek other models. Historically, the use of psychological analogies is especially associated with thinkers in the Latin-speaking West, particularly from Augustine onward. Augustine himself suggested several important analogies, as did others in the medieval Latin tradition. However, since our focus in this article is on more contemporary models, we will pass over these here and focus instead on two more recently developed psychological analogies.

### 8: Augustine of Hippo, Bishop and Theologian

*St. Augustine of Hippo Augustine of Hippo, also known as Saint Augustine, is one of the most important and well-known theologians in the history of the Christian religion. Augustine has one of the most dramatic conversions ever in the Church, a change of belief and behavior, which led to his most influential written works, Confessions and the.*

Augustine responded to the shock and dismay his contemporaries experienced with the collapse of the Roman Empire. Even then, approaching his 60th year, Augustine found a last great challenge for himself. Taking offense at the implications of the teachings of a traveling society preacher named Pelagius, Augustine gradually worked himself up to a polemical fever over ideas that Pelagius may or may not have espoused. Other churchmen of the time were perplexed and reacted with some caution to Augustine, but he persisted, even reviving the battle against austere monks and dignified bishops through the 5th century. At the time of his death, he was at work on a vast and shapeless attack on the last and most urbane of his opponents, the Italian bishop Julian of Eclanum. Through these years, Augustine had carefully built for himself a reputation as a writer throughout Africa and beyond. His careful cultivation of selected correspondents had made his name known in Gaul, Spain, Italy, and the Middle East, and his books were widely circulated throughout the Mediterranean world. In his last years he compiled a careful catalog of his books, annotating them with bristling defensiveness to deter charges of inconsistency. He had opponents, many of them heated in their attacks on him, but he usually retained their respect by the power and effectiveness of his writing. His fame notwithstanding, Augustine died a failure. When he was a young man, it was inconceivable that the Pax Romana could fall, but in his last year he found himself and his fellow citizens of Hippo prisoners to a siege laid by a motley army of invaders who had swept into Africa across the Strait of Gibraltar. The Vandals, holders to a more fiercely particularist version of the Christian creed than any of those Augustine had lived with in Africa, would rule in Africa for a century, until Roman forces sent from Constantinople invaded again and overthrew their regime. A revival of orthodox Christianity in the 6th century under the patronage of Constantinople was brought to an end in the 7th century with the Islamic invasions that permanently removed North Africa from the sphere of Christian influence until the thin Christianization of French colonialism in the 19th century. Augustine survived in his books. His habit of cataloging them served his surviving collaborators well. The story was told that his mortal remains went to Sardinia and thence to Pavia Italy, where a shrine concentrates reverence on what is said to be those remains. The story of his early life is exceedingly well known—better known than that of virtually any other Greek or Roman worthy. Yet it is a story told with a sophisticated purpose, highly selective in its choice of incident and theological in its structure. The goal of the book was ultimately self-justification and self-creation. He dated this experience to his time in Milan, and in relation to this he explained his ensuing career. But contemporaries found it odd to single out that particular moment—when he was conveniently away from Africa and from any scrutiny of his motives and actions—in a life that was not always as he seemed to narrate it. Augustine was always dutiful and restrained. Neither he nor any of his modern biographers has yet succeeded in getting at the essence of his personality. The hostages he left to psychobiography in *Confessions* have not made it any easier for modern readers to find him. In an odd way, the Freudian readings of Augustine common in the 20th century shared with him an emphasis on the selected emotional high points he chose to narrate and so were captives of his own storytelling. Neither was particularly devout, but Monica became more demonstratively religious in her widowhood and is venerated as St. Augustine was enrolled as a pre-baptismal candidate in the Christian church as a young child, and at various points in his life he considered baptism but deferred out of prudence. In that age, before the prevalence of infant baptism, it was common for baptism to be delayed until the hour of death and then used to wash away a lifetime of sins. His classical education was supplemented by a curious but dismissive reading of the Christian Scriptures, but he then fell in with the Manichaeans, enjoying their company and their polemics, in which he took eager part, for most of a decade. He sheltered himself with them and used them for political influence even after he claimed to have dissociated himself from their beliefs. He abandoned them when he found himself in Milan. It was there, where St. Ambrose was making a name for

himself as a champion of orthodoxy, that Augustine found orthodoxy—or at least found orthodoxy satisfactory as something a gentleman could practice. When Augustine accepted baptism at the hands of Ambrose in , thereby joining the religion of his mother to the cultural practices of his father, he managed to make it a Christianity of his own. To some extent influenced by Ambrose but few others influenced by Ambrose went in the same direction , Augustine made his Christianity into a rival to and replacement for the austerity of ancient philosophers. Reading Platonic texts and correctly understanding some of their doctrine, Augustine decided for himself that Christianity was possible only if he went further than any churchman said he was required to go. He chose to remain celibate even though he was a layman and under no requirement to do so. His life with a succession of lovers ended. Augustine accepted sexual abstinence as the price of religion. After a long winter in retirement from the temptations of the city, he presented himself to Ambrose for baptism, then slipped away from Milan to pursue a singularly private life for the next four years. That this life ended in his entering the Christian clergy was something he did not foresee, and he should probably be believed when he says that he did not want it. It was in office as Christian bishop of Hippo that he chose to tell the story of his life as a drama of fall and rise, sin and conversion, desolation and grace. He told that story at a time when his own credentials were suspect—his Donatist opponents thought it queer, or at least suspiciously self-serving, that he left Africa a raving Manichaean and returned meekly claiming to have been baptized in the official church. It is likely that his telling of the story was meant to reassure his followers and disarm his opponents. If *Confessions* had not survived, we would not surmise its story. The book is a richly textured meditation by a middle-aged man Augustine was in his early 40s when he wrote it on the course and meaning of his own life. Those who seek to find in it the memoirs of a great sinner are invariably disappointed, indeed often puzzled at the minutiae of failure that preoccupy the author. Of greater significance is the account of redemption. Augustine is especially influenced by the powerful intellectual preaching of the suave and diplomatic bishop St. Ambrose , who reconciles for him the attractions of the intellectual and social culture of antiquity, in which Augustine was brought up and of which he was a master, and the spiritual teachings of Christianity. Augustine heard Ambrose and read, in Latin translation, some of the exceedingly difficult works of Plotinus and Porphyry. He acquired from them an intellectual vision of the fall and rise of the soul of man, a vision he found confirmed in the reading of the Bible proposed by Ambrose. Religion for Augustine, however, was never merely a matter of the intellect. The seventh book of *Confessions* recounts a perfectly satisfactory intellectual conversion, but the extraordinary eighth book takes him one necessary step further. Augustine could not bring himself to seek the ritual purity of baptism without cleansing himself of the desires of the flesh to an extreme degree. For him, baptism required renunciation of sexuality in all its express manifestations. The narrative of *Confessions* shows Augustine forming the will to renounce sexuality through a reading of the letters of St. The rest of *Confessions* is mainly a meditation on how the continued study of Scripture and pursuit of divine wisdom are still inadequate for attaining perfection and how, as bishop, Augustine makes peace with his imperfections. It is drenched in language from the Bible and is a work of great force and artistry. The *City of God* Fifteen years after Augustine wrote *Confessions*, at a time when he was bringing to a close and invoking government power to do so his long struggle with the Donatists but before he had worked himself up to action against the Pelagians , the Roman world was shaken by news of a military action in Italy. Finally, in , his forces attacked and seized the city of Rome itself, holding it for several days before decamping to the south of Italy. The military significance of the event was nil. Such was the disorder of Roman government that other war bands would hold provinces hostage more and more frequently, and this particular band would wander for another decade before settling mainly in Spain and the south of France. But the symbolic effect of seeing the city of Rome taken by outsiders for the first time since the Gauls had done so in bce shook the secular confidence of many thoughtful people across the Mediterranean. Perhaps the new Christian God was not as powerful as he seemed. Perhaps the old gods had done a better job of protecting their followers. That his readers and the doubters whose murmurs he had heard were themselves pagans is unlikely. At the very least, it is clear that his intended audience comprised many people who were at least outwardly affiliated with the Christian church. During the next 15 years, working meticulously through a lofty architecture of argument, he outlined a new way to understand human society , setting up the *City of God*

over and against the City of Man. Rome was dethroned and the sack of the city shown to be of no spiritual importance in favour of the heavenly Jerusalem, the true home and source of citizenship for all Christians. The City of Man was doomed to disarray, and wise men would, as it were, keep their passports in order as citizens of the City above, living in this world as pilgrims longing to return home. *De civitate Dei contra paganos* c. The first 10 refute the claims to divine power of various pagan communities. The last 12 retell the biblical story of humankind from Genesis to the Last Judgment, offering what Augustine presents as the true history of the City of God against which, and only against which, the history of the City of Man, including the history of Rome, can be properly understood. The work is too long and at times, particularly in the last books, too discursive to make entirely satisfactory reading today, but it remains impressive as a whole and fascinating in its parts. The stinging attack on paganism in the first books is memorable and effective; the encounter with Platonism in Books VIII–X is of great philosophical significance; and the last books especially Book XIX, with a vision of true peace offer a view of human destiny that would be widely persuasive for at least a thousand years. The City of God would be read in various ways throughout the Middle Ages, at some points virtually as a founding document for a political order of kings and popes that Augustine could hardly have imagined. At its heart is a powerful contrarian vision of human life, one which accepts the place of disaster, death, and disappointment while holding out hope of a better life to come, a hope that in turn eases and gives direction to life in this world. In form, the book is a catalog of his writings with comments on the circumstances of their composition and with the retractions or rectifications he would make in hindsight. One effect of the book was to make it much easier for medieval readers to find and identify authentic works of Augustine, and this was surely a factor in the remarkable survival of so much of what he wrote. There is very little in the work that is false or inaccurate, but the shaping and presentation make it a work of propaganda. The Augustine who emerges has been faithful, consistent, and unwavering in his doctrine and life. Many who knew him would have seen instead either progress or outright tergiversation, depending on their point of view. Of greatest interest are the following: Augustine of Hippo, undated engraving. It was widely influential in the Middle Ages as an educational treatise claiming the primacy of religious teaching based on the Bible. The Trinity The most widespread and longest-lasting theological controversies of the 4th century focused on the Christian doctrine of the Trinity—that is, the threeness of God represented in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Augustine is carefully orthodox, after the spirit of his and succeeding times, but adds his own emphasis in the way he teaches the resemblance between God and man: They cover a wide range. Many are simple expositions of Scripture read aloud at a particular service according to church rules, but Augustine followed certain programs as well. There are sermons on all Psalms, deliberately gathered by him in a separate collection, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*; *Enarrations on the Psalms*. These are perhaps his best work as a homilist, for he finds in the uplifting spiritual poetry of the Hebrews messages that he can apply consistently to his view of austere, hopeful, realistic Christianity; his ordinary congregation in Hippo would have drawn sustenance from them. Other sermons range over much of Scripture, but it is worth noting that Augustine had little to say about the prophets of the Old Testament, and what he did have to say about St. Paul appeared in his written works rather than in his public sermons. Early writings Moderns enamoured of Augustine from the narrative in *Confessions* have given much emphasis to his short, attractive early works, several of which mirror the style and manner of Ciceronian dialogues with a new, Platonized Christian content: If they were all we had of Augustine, he would remain a well-respected, albeit minor, figure in late Latin literature. Of his works against the Manichaeans, *Confessions* probably remains the most attractive and interesting. The sect itself is too little known today for detailed refutation of its more idiosyncratic gnostic doctrines to have much weight. To the young and still Anglican John Henry Newman, what Augustine had written about the provincial self-satisfaction of the Donatists seemed an equally effective argument against the Church of England. *De spiritu et littera*; *On the Spirit and the Letter* comes from an early moment in the controversy, is relatively irenic, and beautifully sets forth his point of view.

*Augustine was born on 13 November at Tagaste, in northern Africa, in an area that is now Algeria, and died in 28 August, in Hippo Regius, also in what is modern Algeria. Coincidentally, this was when the Arian Christian Vandals were besieging Hippo.*

Indexes Endorsements "Matthew Levering introduces Augustine through seven of his most important texts--a wonderful idea. It points the way for those who are interested in how Augustine is relevant to our own theological quandaries, and it guides those who are just beginning to find their way in things Augustinian by helping them see theological themes as they are embodied in whole texts. He previously taught at the University of Dayton. Levering is the author of Methodologically, this project has no real precedent in the field. Lower-division undergraduates through graduate students; general readers. Yet he is a vast and subtle thinker and, while the Confessions is broadly accessible, his body of writings as a whole is not. That is why it is such a pleasure to be able to commend the latest book from the distinguished theologian Matthew Levering. This is a book that should be read by thoughtful pastors. Preachers and those in other ministerial vocations who seek to walk alongside a spiritual master will find this book inviting, challenging, and rewarding as it provides a deeper appreciation not only of what Augustine thought but, more important, how he thought. Levering is reliable and astute in his reading of Augustine, and he provides more substantial footnotes than one would expect in such an introductory work, demonstrating the depth of his scholarship and directing the non-expert reader to the most significant secondary works in an overcrowded field. There are manifold themes in Augustine one could attend to in an introductory text, and the theme of love is a major one that is sure to shine a pure and true light on Augustine. Thirdly, Levering did his homework, as evidenced by the many footnotes on almost every page. His sources are up to date, and representative of the major voices and movements in current Augustinian research. Levering packs into pages what feels like pages of solid research and scholarship--and for a great price. I would gladly give this book to the interested parishioner, undergraduate, or beginning graduate student. The Theology of Augustine is the product of a brilliant idea: This book would be a helpful addition for college, university, and introductory graduate level courses on the early Church or the figure of Augustine. Assigning this textbook along with primary text material could make an easy addition. Even for teaching, the text offers simple and adaptable comments for pedagogy. White, Southern Baptist Journal of Theology "Levering does what a good introduction should do, which is to invite us to read Augustine for ourselves. This text-directed approach constitutes the uniqueness of this introduction. I would recommend this book both as a guide to the rudes among Augustine scholars, and to his more advanced readers. The footnotes point the reader to the most important secondary literature in English, which is not an unwelcome aid to cut oneself a way through the forest of Augustine scholarship. Levering skillfully leads us through seven dense works of Augustine and shows how each one is fundamentally about the God who is Love drawing us into his inner life in order that we might learn to love him and our neighbor as God has loved us. There are a number of features of this book that make it unique as well as useful both to scholars and to students just starting out. First, the selection of texts is both traditional and non-traditional. The discussion of these texts will initiate new students and edify advanced scholars. Second, the footnotes will be enormously valuable to any beginning student of Augustine I wish I had this book when I wrote my dissertation! The Theology of Augustine will be valuable not only for learning the mind of Augustine, but. Levering selects seven key works of Augustine for consideration. His writing is direct and easily comprehended, and he is intentional in making sure his own interpretations and musings on Augustine are as limited as is possible. In the main body of the text Levering wears his own erudition lightly, but the footnotes demonstrate his grasp of the immense body of secondary literature that has accumulated around Augustine. Those who desire some knowledge of the terrain before they set off into City of God or On the Trinity will find in Levering a faithful and knowledgeable guide. Each work is presented in a clear and penetrating style giving a contextualization of the work along with an overview. Especially useful are the cumulative summaries of each of the discussed works. This book is an excellent introduction to the thought of Augustine seen through the prism of his key

works. It is highly recommended for those wishing to learn more about this preeminent Christian thinker.

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