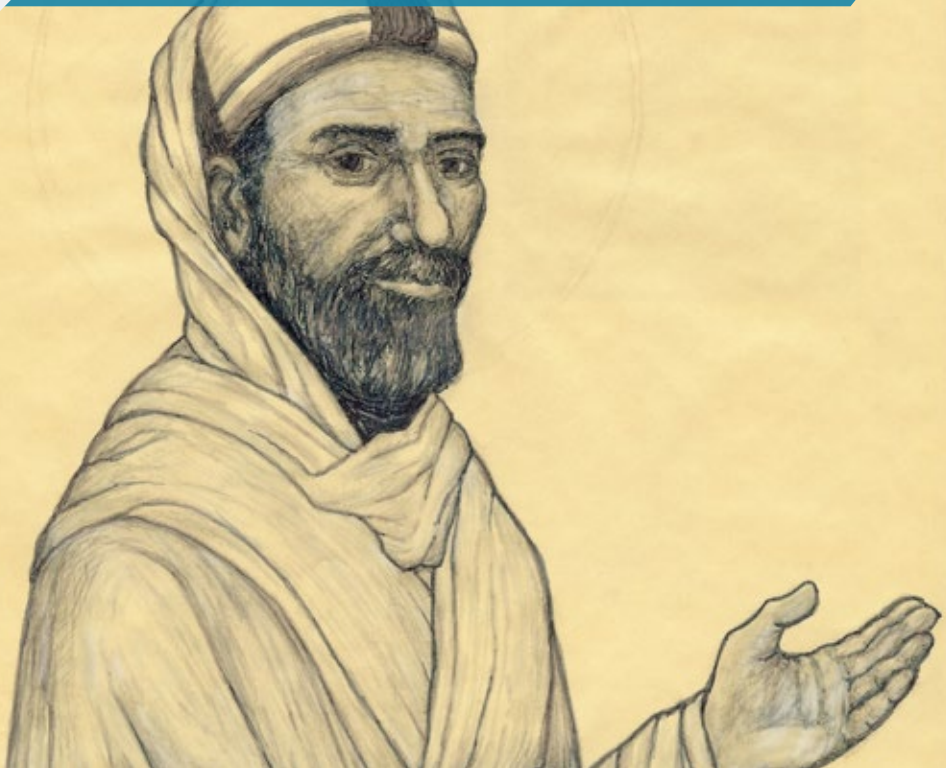


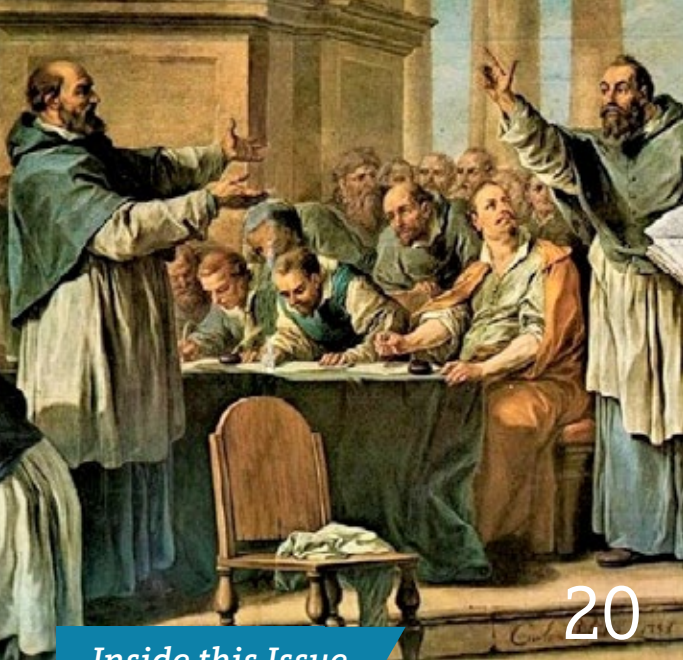
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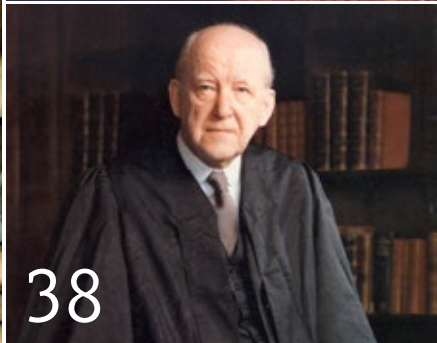
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The life and ministry of Augustine





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Editorial

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF AUGUSTINE

People often cynically remark that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn anything from history. Although all too often this is true, there are important cases where it does not apply. One of these is that our faith as Bible-believing Christians rests upon the historical facts of the birth, life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor 15). This goes even further as the events regarding Jesus Christ are the climactic fulfilment of a historical process of progressive revelation by God.

These two elements are used in the preaching of the apostles in the early church as we can read in the book of Acts. In this book, we find the testimony concerning Jesus Christ: He has been killed, God has raised him from the dead, and he has been seen by many witnesses. But in addition we also read several historical surveys from the Old Testament Scriptures which all lead up to the climax of the appearance and work of Jesus Christ.

It is of the utmost importance to realise how this forms the basis of our faith. It is therefore important that we can see how



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the events described in the Old Testament find their place in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan. Mostyn Roberts treats us to an exposition of a little known and difficult passage from the book of Genesis. In this exposition, he indicates how this text, presenting such a remarkable narrative, contains some very significant lessons for us.

The historical nature of our faith is subsequently also shown in the history of the church. The Lord had promised the outpouring of his Holy Spirit. This would set in motion the process of the worldwide proclamation of the gospel in order to save all of God's people and to build his church and his kingdom. As Jonathan Edwards has shown, this process is sometimes rapidly accelerated in times of revival. Furthermore, the Lord uses particular people in a remarkable way such that we should learn much from the history of their life and ministry.

One of the great examples is Augustine. His life was characterised by a process of transformation from a worldly life to a life of fruitful and influential ministry. He has left us a large legacy of written works which not only benefit the ordinary believer of today, but also keep a good number of scholars still occupied. We are very grateful to our brother Michael Haykin who together with other authors has assembled a set of inspiring articles for this issue of *Reformation Today*.

These articles cover only a selection of the life and ministry of Augustine, but the topics covered are still highly relevant for us today. We learn much about his spiritual life and the role of prayer which formed the fruitful ground out of which

came Augustine's preaching. We can test this for ourselves as we are also given a sample of Augustine's own writing. At the same time, we have much to learn from the way Augustine responded to three major challenges during his ministry. Two of these are covered in Brad Green's article; the third one is addressed by Michael Haykin.

This set of articles is completed by a selection of quotes from the writings of Augustine himself. I want to offer one other sample from Augustine on preaching to whet your appetite:

'If he [the preacher] succeed in this object [of preaching], and so far as he succeeds, he will succeed more by piety in prayer than by gifts of oratory; and so he ought to pray for himself, and for those he is about to address, before he attempts to speak. And when the hour has come that he must speak, he ought, before he opens his mouth, to lift up his thirsty soul to God, to drink in what he is about to pour forth, and to be himself filled with what he is about to distribute.'

Finally, as we benefit from the writings of those people whom the Lord has used in the past, we can also learn from the way they used books and libraries. Gary Brady gives us a fascinating insight into the way Dr Martyn Lloyd Jones built and used his library.

May our Lord bless you all as you read through the material in this issue. ■

The picture of Augustine on the front cover has been drawn by Hélène Grondines and her kind permission to use it is gratefully acknowledged.



GENESIS 38

Chapter 37 of Genesis ends with Joseph being taken down to Egypt. Just as we are getting ready to go down with him we are detained in Canaan.

We hope to hear more of Joseph but are dragged through a narrative about elder brother Judah.

We are half aware that there are spiritually uplifting lessons to be learned from Joseph's time in Egypt and moral inspiration to be derived from his purity in the face of temptation, yet we have to plough through a complex, obscure and unedifying tale of bad marriages, broken promises, deceit, sexual immorality and self-righteousness.

It is like settling down to watch *Little House on the Prairie* and having to sit through an episode of *East Enders*.

God is reminding us that the Bible is not a collection of heart-warming stories. It is a book about his grace, and the provision of a Saviour for sinners and through sinners.

The way to understand Genesis 38 is to remember that at the end an ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ has been born. Perez, one of the twins born to Tamar, is ten 'up' from King David. Tamar herself is one of five women named or referred to in Matthew's genealogy of Christ: in addition to Ruth and Mary, one (Rahab) was a prostitute, another ('the wife of Uria') an adulteress, and the other, Tamar, acts as a prostitute to achieve her goal.

'So we are reminded,' says Matthew Henry, 'that God's choice is of grace not of merit ... and that the worth or worthiness of Christ are personal, of himself, and not derived from his ancestors ... He came

into the world to save sinners and he is not ashamed to be allied to them ...'

Judah is the 'main' character in this chapter in terms of the storyline of the Bible, but it is Tamar's determination to accomplish her goal that is the catalyst of the story.

At the end we should not be reluctant to have stayed in Canaan a while longer; we should rejoice that we did. Where sin abounds, grace super-abounds; a child is born to Jacob's royal son..

1. A safeguard despised (vv1-11)

We assume that the chapter begins soon after Joseph is taken to Egypt. Judah is some years older than Joseph; let's say in his late twenties, perhaps thirty. Though the fourth son of Jacob and Leah, he stands to inherit the privileges of the firstborn, Reuben having forfeited his rights for sleeping with his father's concubine (Gen 35:22), Simeon and Levi for their deceptive massacre of the men of Shechem (34:25-29; see 49:3-7).

What kind of man is he?

At this point in time, he can only be described as 'backslidden'. He has left his father and brothers. He 'went down' from the hill country of Hebron to the low-lying Adullam. He is friendly with an Adullamite, a Canaanite, Hirah. He marries the daughter (never given a name) of another Canaanite called Shua. You detect a hint of spiritual 'going down' in his journey as well as geographical descent. A year or two previously the brothers had piously and indignantly refused to marry their sister to any Shechemite unless

he were circumcised. This was a ruse to weaken the men, but the brothers show they knew the danger of close liaison with Canaanites unless there was at least surface conformity to Israel. After all, Abraham had sent to his homeland for a wife for Isaac; Isaac and Rebekah wanted godly wives not Canaanites for their sons. Not until Moses was this made a law (Ex 34:10-16; Deut 7:1-6) but it was the practice of the family of Abraham.

Now here is Judah living among and marrying into Canaanite families.

Who are your friends? It is good to be on good terms with all people, but – who influences you? Trace Judah's journey. First he leaves his family. We are not told why. There is danger in 'leaving' the people of God (difficult people and sadly inadequate as disciples of Jesus as they often are). Long before this happens in a physical, visible sense, it happens invisibly, in the heart. There is a cooling off towards Christian fellowship, an indifference to the church, to worship, to the things of God. Acquaintances in the world, though it is a good thing in itself to have such acquaintances and friends, begin to take a dominant role in your life. Who determines how you spend your time? Your money? Your Sundays? Who introduces you to their friends, and then you find you are going out with them, spending leisure time with them, 'buddying up' with them?

Then you find that not only have you gone into the world as Judah went into Canaan but the world has got into you – as Canaan got into Judah.

Many Christian lives have been blighted by 'leaving' the people of God and going to the world – spiritually, not geographically. Judah soon shows he is thinking like the Canaanites, living by sight not by faith. They, not the people of God, have become his 'family'. His Canaanite daughter-in-law will be seen to have a firmer grip on the promises of God than he has. Judah like all backsliders knows far better than he acts. But he has lost the significance of who he is; his sense of identity as one of God's chosen family. The promises no longer grasp his heart. You can't teach a backslider much; he knows it all. The problem is, what he knows no longer moves or drives him. The drive now comes from the culture of Canaan.

Judah and the-girl-with-no-name have three sons. As they grow up Judah finds a wife for the eldest, a Canaanite called Tamar. She is a fine girl. Unwittingly Judah has been blessed by the Lord with a daughter-in-law with gumption. But the eldest son Er is wicked and the Lord puts him to death. He must have been really wicked. This is the first time this has been said of an individual in the Bible. How wonderful that for our sakes the Lord put his own beloved Son to death, not because he was wicked but because we are, and Jesus was bearing our sins.

Now there was a custom that the younger brother in such cases would marry the widow 'to raise up offspring' (v8) for the brother. Judah knows this custom of 'levirate marriage' (made law under Moses

- Deut 25:5-10) and gives his second son Onan to Tamar. It was a safeguard for the property rights of the deceased's family; for his name; and for the widow who might otherwise be left destitute or even have to sell herself to pay off debt. It seems strange to us. Individualists as we are, why, we ask, should a man marry someone he does not want to? Or a woman take a brother-

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in-law as husband? Calvin beautifully puts the sense of corporate responsibility at the heart of this custom into focus as he says, 'For since each man is born for the preservation of the whole race, if any one dies without children, there seems to be some defect of nature. It was deemed therefore an act of humanity to acquire some name for the dead, from which it might appear that they had lived ... that there might be no dry branch in the family ...' So also the reproach of barrenness is taken away. Moreover, points out Calvin, Tamar would now

have been 'given up' to the family of Judah. She was dependent on them. Her rights and duties derived from that family. Hence we see what Calvin calls the 'malignity' (or 'malice') of Onan who, while taking Tamar as wife, refuses to complete the act which might result in offspring. After all, Onan was now the eldest. Why should Er retain, as it were, that honour through Onan's son?

So God puts Onan to death. Judah now decides to cut his losses and keep his third son Shelah from Tamar.

Why? Were the deaths of Er and Onan Tamar's fault? Judah, like many a

backslider, is blind to both his faults and the faults of his loved ones. Tamar is to blame.

So the safeguard is despised. Tamar has to take her chance within her father's home (v11). Judah shuffles off his responsibilities. He dissembles; he has no intention of giving Shelah to her when the young man grows up. Tamar has been elbowed aside. Or so Judah thinks. But he has not reckoned with the tenacity of this canny girl.

And – this believing girl. For she has married not into just any family, but into a chosen family – the family chosen to bear God's promise of Seed who would one day be the Saviour of the world. Derek Kidner writes: 'Tamar was wholly concerned with her right as matriarch of Judah's eldest line' and she had the 'right to be the mother of Judah's heir'. How much of the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob she knew we do not know, but one suspects something. Whatever she knew, she did better than Judah who must have known much more. She at least acted on what she knew. Cling to what you know, however little, of the Word of God. Tamar was doing that. Judah was not. Judah was living according to the dictates not of faith but of sense, reason and, as we shall see, appetite. I believe it is fair in context to see Tamar now acting in faith – at least as to the end (a son) if not the means (deceit and immorality).

2. A desperate ploy (vv12-25)

You cannot condone what Tamar does but then – you can't condone what some of her in-laws and their ancestors had done in

the past either. It does not mean there is no faith there. Judah's wife dies. It is sheep-shearing time, time for a feast. Tamar is determined to claim her rights. Seeing that she will not be given Shelah she goes 'to the top' and will have Judah himself. She knows her man. Some reputation Judah must have had if she can be confident that by disguising herself as a prostitute she can catch him. Her disguise does the trick. She takes the pledges (seal, cord and staff) and bides her time.

When payment time comes no-one can find the 'holy woman' (cult-prostitute) by the roadside, so Judah calls off the search. He is afraid of embarrassment. When it is announced that Tamar is pregnant by 'immorality' he is indignant. 'Let her be burned,' he decrees. 'Double standards, we cry! One for men, another for women.' Yes, and one for others, another for self. Iain Duguid comments: 'The level of Judah's self-deception and blindness is both astonishing and frightening. It is astonishing because, as outside observers, we can see that he is so clearly in the wrong. It is frightening because we so naturally do the same thing.'¹ When we see wrong being done there is a natural sense of indignation. But when we are guilty too, particularly of the same thing, that justifiable indignation goes into overdrive. Remember David, and Nathan's parable of the rich man who took a poor man's lamb to feed his own guests? 'You,' said Nathan, 'are that man, David – taking Uriah's wife.' Judah has been blind to the wrong-doing of his sons Er and Onan, to his own bad faith in relation to Shelah and now to his double standards

in relation to Tamar's immorality. She did what she did out of determination to claim her rights within the family of Judah; even to see the Messiah born. Judah's engagement with her was simply lust-driven.

Tamar now pulls her master-stroke. 'Please identify these,' she calmly says holding out Judah's signet, cord and staff. Judah looks. He speaks. We see a ray of hope.

3. Judah humbled (v26)

"She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not know her again.'

He could have said simply – 'Well yes, they are mine. Fair cop. I did sleep with her. But – well we all make mistakes.'

But he goes much further than that. Perhaps the conscience has been stirred by Tamar's pregnancy. He is at least thinking in moral terms, albeit initially acquitting himself and condemning the girl. But something has happened to Judah. The mere presentation of the evidence would have drawn from him an admission of his fornication – after all, he could hardly deny it. It took more than that to get to the root of his sins. As Nathan said to David, 'You are the man,' so conscience has said to Judah, 'It is your fault. And it goes back to your refusal to give Tamar her right as the wronged widow.'

Tamar has proof that the child (or children) she bears are indeed of the line

of Judah – indeed of Judah himself. But something profound has happened to Judah. He sees that she is the righteous one. He is no longer blind to his sin. She is righteous because she was pursuing her rights as the widow of Judah's firstborn, to an heir, to protection of her husband's inheritance – perhaps to being the mother of the Messiah.

Could she have done anything else? We fault her methods. But levirate marriage

Judah's humbling is the making of him. May it be for you or me if we need it. Never give up praying for the backslider.

is not understood now as it was then. And is her act worse than Abraham twice passing off Sarah as his sister (Gen 12:13; 20:2)? Or Jacob and Rebekah deceiving old Isaac and Esau (Gen 27)? Or the brothers slaughtering the weakened Shechemites (Gen 34)? Surely Tamar has learned some lessons from her new family – deceit is deeply rooted there.

Judah meanwhile will never be the same. Only God can work this kind of repentance, that gets to the root of sin. Repentance is a gift of God. After twenty years (or so) Judah is beginning to change. Did Jacob pray for his son all those years, 'Lord, bring him back to you'? Such times can be long for those who love the backslider. The Judah we see later in Genesis is a different man from the lost soul of chapter 38. He is a man back with his family, caring for his brothers, for his father, humble and contrite, a real leader.

Judah's humbling is the making of him. May it be for you or me if we need it. Never give up praying for the backslider.

¹ *Living in the Light of Inextinguishable Hope*, Iain Duguid, Matt Harmon, (P&R, 2013), p36.

4. Tamar exalted (vv27-30)

Tamar meanwhile has twins. There is a struggle. Zerah puts a hand out, is marked with a red thread as Esau was marked by his red hair; but as Jacob grasped Esau's heel, so the younger Perez 'breaks through' and is first to be born. In both cases the younger supplants the older. God overturns the established order.

And Tamar the Canaanite becomes a mother in Israel. Five or so centuries later in Bethlehem Perez is first to be named among the ancestors of David and is therefore an ancestor of the Lord Jesus (Ruth 4:18).

The way God has worked has also cut out any unbelieving Canaanite from the ancestry of Christ. No descendant of the girl-with-no-name will be in the bloodline of Christ, for Tamar went straight to the fountain-head – to Judah. He, not any of his sons by the marriage that should not have been, is the father of Perez. A woman of faith, though a Canaanite, along with another Canaanite centuries later and a Moabitess, though sinners, take places of honour in the genealogy of Christ.

So the human ancestry of Jesus Christ is secured. Grace has 'broken through'. Joseph is a more Christ-like character than Judah will ever be but it is through Judah that Christ will come. Through a man who knew better than he acted; lost his grip on his people and God's promises; made bad decisions about the company he kept; married unwisely; broke faith in his duty to his daughter-in-law;

acted immorally; was blind to his own sins; but whose eyes God wonderfully opened. Nor does Scripture ever condone or belittle the seriousness of such sins. Judah's backsliding exacted a high price for himself and those close to him. Christ came, too, through a determined Canaanite girl who had much less knowledge than Judah but clung tenaciously to her rights as wife of his firstborn son and for an heir who – who knows – might have been the Messiah. Well, at least he was an ancestor of the Messiah.

A woman of faith, though a Canaanite, along with another Canaanite centuries later and a Moabitess, though sinners, take places of honour in the genealogy of Christ.

'He is not ashamed to associate with sinners,' says Matthew Henry. Though he never condones your sin, he will use it. The blessing of God is not according to merit, but of grace.

The story of Genesis 38 is not to make us feel good, to feel morally stirred to action, to make us in any way confident in our own righteousness or competent in our own merits. But it is about the grace of

God, sovereign grace o'er sin abounding, bringing his Son into the world through human sin and frailty.

'God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no flesh might boast in the presence of God' (1 Cor 1:27-29). ■

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BRADLEY G GREEN

Augustine:

A BRIEF SURVEY OF HIS LIFE

'Take and read.' 'Wherever one finds truth, it is the Lord's.' 'You have made us for yourselves, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.' These sayings – and many others – come from the pen of Aurelius Augustinus, known to us today as Augustine. Unarguably one of the greatest theologians in the history of the Christian church, and arguably the most significant. Who was this man whom Henry Chadwick could call 'the greatest figure of Christian antiquity'?¹

¹ In parts of this essay I have used/reworked material from my chapter, 'Augustine', in Bradley G Green, ed., *Shapers of Christian Orthodoxy: Engaging with Early and Medieval Theologians* (Nottingham, UK: Apollos; Downers Grove, IL, 2010), 235-92.

Early years

Augustine (354-430AD) is what we today call a 'Western' theologian – in that he spoke and wrote in Latin, and geographically lived and worked in the western half of Christendom. He was born in the small town of Thagaste in northern Africa on 13 November 354 (present day Souk-Ahras, in Algeria). Augustine's father Patricius does not appear to have been a Christian, but he was committed to his son, and to providing a good education for him. Augustine's mother was indeed a confessing Christian. She is portrayed by Augustine as zealously committed to her son's spiritual well-being,



and as praying fervently for him during his rather debauched youth.

It is difficult to come to terms with Augustine's life without having some understanding of his own spiritual, theological and philosophical pilgrimage, as well as the key controversies which mark his life. So, we will at times in this article make some forays into the very interesting array of spiritual, theological and philosophical issues which mark Augustine's life, and the key controversies which marked it indelibly.

Augustine was classically educated, in that he studied the trivium – the 'language arts' of grammar, logic or dialectic, rhetoric (ie the 'three ways' of the classical liberal arts; the quadrivium would be the 'four ways', or the mathematical arts, consisting of geometry, arithmetic, music and astronomy). He studied in Madauros (near Thagaste), then after a year of idleness in Thagaste (369-70), he moved to Carthage for further study (370-73). It is here that Augustine discovered a work by the 1st-century BC Roman orator and statesman, Cicero: *Hortensius*. Interestingly, this text ignited a love for wisdom in Augustine. In God's mysterious and sovereign way, he used this Roman orator as one piece of the mosaic of Augustine's life that would culminate in a life devoted to the love of wisdom.

It was also in Carthage that Augustine encountered the Manicheans and joined them. The Manicheans were a dualistic and gnostic sect which had its origins in the third-century AD in Persia (modern day Iran), with a man named Mani. Augustine would remain enmeshed

in Manicheism for nine years. The Manicheans believed that at one point Spirit and Matter, Good and Evil, Light and Dark, had all been separated from one another. However, these things had become mixed together, and our current world is a mixture of Spirit and Matter, Good and Evil, and Light and Dark. And this dualism runs through the heart of all things – including human beings. Hence, salvation is to be released or rescued from materiality, which was considered to be intrinsically evil – hence the gnostic flavour to Manicheism, since Gnosticism posits that physical stuff is inherently bad or evil. Augustine became disillusioned with Manicheism, especially after a leader of the Manicheans was unable to satisfactorily resolve some of Augustine's intellectual dilemmas.

In Carthage Augustine also took a mistress, or a concubine. They had one child together, a son named Adeodatus (Latin for 'given by God'), who was born in 372.

Augustine spent a year in Rome (383-84), and then went to Milan where he met Ambrose, the bishop of Milan. In Milan Augustine served as a teacher of rhetoric. Ambrose influenced Augustine greatly. Besides Ambrose, Augustine came into an influential circle of friends, and discovered the *libri platoniorum* (the books of the Platonists). If we think of Cicero's *Hortensius* and *Manicheism* as the first two most important intellectual influences in Augustine's life, then the books of the Platonists would be the third, sequentially. Augustine refers to this discovery explicitly in his *Confessions*. Augustine is referring to the 'Neo-Platonists', a development or form of

Platonism seen in thinkers like Plotinus (204-270) and Porphyry (234-305). Neo-Platonism is platonic in that it privileges the immaterial over the material, but unlike Manicheism it does not see the material world as inherently evil. Thus, Neo-platonism seems to have given Augustine some tools, or at least a viable framework, for thinking of the created order as good – an affirmation which would of course be necessary as Augustine worked out his own theological convictions. Augustine wrote in his *Confessions* that he was 'on fire' reading the books of the Platonists. While Augustine laboured to extricate himself from those aspects of Neo-platonism which were less friendly to Christian belief, he arguably never fully extricated himself from Neo-platonism as a system or world-view.

In 385, Augustine's mother Monica arranged a marriage for Augustine. For Monica, Augustine was destined for great things, and his current concubine simply would not do. Augustine ultimately sent his mistress/concubine back to North Africa, but Adeodatus stayed with Augustine. The marriage planned by Monica never took place. The young woman Monica had chosen was indeed rather young, and thus it would be a while before the marriage could take place. Augustine remained single for the rest of his days.

Conversion to Christ

But Augustine's time in Milan is most remembered for his conversion, which took place in a garden in that Italian

city (386). Augustine offered his own spiritual autobiography in his *Confessions*. Augustine for a time had certain intellectual or even aesthetic quibbles with the Christian faith. For example, the Old and New Testament seemed rather crude, and lacking in classical form. Should not the very Word of God be written in a grander form? And what about evil? If the Christian God is truly all-powerful and all-good, how does one explain evil? But

Augustine's writing in book eight of *Confessions* is likely reckoned one of the great classic conversion stories in the history of the Christian faith.

over time these intellectual or aesthetic objections were resolved for Augustine. But such a resolution only revealed that Augustine's objections to Christianity were deeper than even he had initially grasped. Augustine came to realise that he did not believe in Christianity because he did not want to believe. Readers are encouraged to read book (=chapter) eight of *Confessions*. Augustine recounts that he was like someone asleep and wants to wake up, but simply cannot wake up. Augustine can even pray: 'Grant me chastity and self-control, but please not yet' (*Confessions* 8.7.17). Augustine's writing in book eight of *Confessions* is likely reckoned one of the great classic conversion stories in the history of the Christian faith. To make things worse, Augustine heard that Victorinus (a significant intellectual) had converted to Christianity as had Augustine's friend Alypius. Thus, Augustine's spiritual lethargy was now compounded with a kind of perverse jealousy!

In the midst of this Augustine, while in his garden in Milan, hears voices saying

'Take, read!' (*tolle lege*). Augustine looks around to try and see who is speaking. Is this some sort of children's game? But Augustine could find no source for the voices. But he looks next to him on a bench and finds a Bible, and turns to Romans 13, where he reads: 'Not in riots and drunken parties, not in eroticism and indecencies, not in strife and rivalry, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts' (Rom 13:13-14). Augustine writes in *Confessions*: 'I neither wished nor needed to read further. At once, with the last words of this sentence, it was as if a light of relief from all anxiety flooded into my heart. All the shadows of doubt were dispelled' (*Confessions* 8.12.29).

Early Christian experience

After his conversion, Augustine resigned from teaching rhetoric. He, his mother and brother (Navigus), and some friends, moved to Cassiciacum (a small town outside Milan). This was to be a place for friends to live and discuss central philosophical issues. Three key works from Augustine emerged from this time: *Against the Sceptics*, *The Happy Life*, and *On Order*. But this (hoped for) idyllic existence was not to last. Augustine returned to Milan (early 387), and was baptised by Ambrose. Augustine and his family and friends left Milan to head to Africa (summer or early autumn 387), and stopped in Ostia for a while (where Monica died). Augustine and his entourage actually went to Rome instead of Africa, where Augustine wrote the anti-Manichean polemical works: *Morals of the Catholic Church* and *Morals of the Manicheans*. Works such as *The Greatness of the Soul* and (parts of) *On Free Will* were written during this time (387-388). In the autumn of 388 Augustine and

his son, Adeodatus, returned to Africa.

During his initial time in Africa Augustine wrote *On True Religion* (where he explores the importance of happiness in the life of a person) and *The Teacher* (where he explores how to think about signs – a concern which shows up often in Augustine, including in his work *On Christian Doctrine*). In 391 Augustine was visiting Hippo. While at the church in Hippo the congregation surrounded him and virtually forced him to accept the role of priest. It seems that this was an act of passionate persuasion rather than force! The bishop of Hippo, Valerius, was older, and the church thought Augustine would be a wonderful successor. Augustine and Valerius served together until 395 or 396, at which time Augustine was ordained as bishop of Hippo.

Like many leaders in church history, Augustine wanted time to read and write. But this was not to be – at least not in the sense of a leisurely life. Augustine served as bishop until he died in 430 – about 35 years. It is important to remember that during those 35 years he was a busy pastor. He performed weddings, counselled persons, advocated for his people with the civil authorities etc. His literary output is astounding, all the more given that he spent almost the last half of his life in pastoral ministry. And part of his pastoral ministry was responding to a number of doctrinal controversies, and requests for pastoral, biblical and theological insight on a number of issues.

It was during his years in Hippo that Augustine lived through, worked through, and wrote through three different key

controversies, which are helpful ways of grasping something of his life and significance:

1. The Pelagian controversy, centering on the nature of sin and grace;
2. The Donatist controversy, centering on the nature of the church – and ultimately of the sacraments;
3. The Pagan controversy, resulting in Augustine's *magnum opus*, *The City of God* – dealing with (virtually!) everything, and originating in pagan criticisms that the invasion of Rome by Alaric and the Visigoths (410) was due to Rome's rejection of their traditional pagan gods and embrace of Christianity.

AUGUSTINE IS OFTEN CALLED – RIGHTLY – THE DOCTOR OF GRACE.

Let us look at the first and third of these controversies.²

The Pelagian controversy

Augustine is often called – rightly – the Doctor of Grace. This title is a fair one, and might be said to have emerged in history because of a prolonged literary battle with a British monk named Pelagius, and his intellectual heirs, persons we generally label 'Pelagians'. Indeed Augustine would be battling various Pelagians until the day he died. Pelagius was a monk who was zealous for moral reform in the church, and seems to have thought that Augustine might be an ally. But Pelagius heard a few lines from

Augustine's *Confessions* which concerned him greatly:

'My entire hope is exclusively in your very great mercy. Grant what you command and command what you will ... O love, you ever burn and are never extinguished. O charity, my God, set me on fire. You command continence; grant what you command, and command what you will' (*Confessions* 10.29.40).

Such language troubled Pelagius significantly. Could it be the case that it is God who must grant the ability to obey God's commands? Even if Augustine, at the time of

writing *Confessions* (some time between 397-400) had not worked out in detail all the implications of these lines, he would certainly work these issues out in the thirty or so years following Pelagius' discovery of Augustine's teaching.

Pelagius' teachings can be grasped through his commentary on Romans (one can purchase it today), or even in a quite revealing 'Letter to Demetrius'. Augustine lists seven key tenets of Pelagianism, culled from the Pelagian Caelestius (these can be found in Augustine's *The Deeds of Pelagius*, 11.23. These are Augustine's summary from a Council of Carthage in 411 or 412):

1. 'Adam was created mortal so that he would die whether he sinned or did not sin.'

² I team up with Michael Haykin to examine the Donatist controversy in a separate article in this issue.

2. 'The sin of Adam harmed him alone and not the human race.'
3. 'The law leads to the kingdom just as the gospel does.'
4. 'Before the coming of Christ there were human beings without sin.'
5. 'Newly born infants are in the same state in which Adam was before his transgression.'
6. 'The whole human race does not die through the death or transgression of Adam, nor does the whole human race rise through the resurrection of Christ.'

In short, there is no real connection between a person living today and Adam. Hence, you and I come into the world with neither guilt nor corruption. To make sense of this Pelagius has to say Adam was created mortal – hence severing the Pauline (1 Cor 15 and Rom 5) connection between sin and death. In fairness to Pelagius himself, it is reported that he actually denied (3) above. Thus rather than saying there were sinless human beings before the time of Christ, he wants to say it is theoretically possible that someone could live a life without sin. In fact no one does, but it would be possible, Pelagius holds, for no one is actually born sinful or guilty or corrupted by sin. It would be worth the reader's time to simply read slowly and carefully the six Pelagian points above to grasp the significance of this challenge. To understand Augustine's response to Pelagius, we will lay out in general terms Augustine's understanding of grace and salvation.

First, Augustine emphasises that there is a true and important distinction between pre-fall man and post-fall man. Pelagius denies this, while for Augustine

this distinction is utterly central. Pre-fall man is *posse non peccare* (able not to sin) and *posse peccare* (able to sin). That is, pre-fall man is both able not to sin and able to sin. After the fall, there is a fundamental change in man. Man is still able to sin, but lacks the ability not to sin. This does not mean man sins as much as could conceivably be committed. But nonetheless fallen man does sin. This is now a part of who he is.

Second, Augustine affirms – contra Pelagius – that there is a real connection between all post-Adam man and Adam himself. That is, all persons who descend from Adam are sons of Adam. Whether one emphasises the more biological or realistic sense of Adam's headship (the idea, as older theologians could say, that we were 'in his loins'), or the notion that Adam represented us in a more legal or covenantal sense (a sense which develops more fully in Western Reformational theology), it is the case that we today are caught up in Adam's transgression, and come into the world both corrupted, creatures who die, and are guilty. The Reformers will follow Augustine here, while the Eastern Orthodox deny that we are guilty in Adam.

Third, Augustine affirms that man – even before conversion – has 'free will': 'We do by our free will whatsoever we know and feel to be done by us only because we will it' (*The City of God* XIII.14). Nonetheless, Augustine does affirm free will in this sense. But at times Augustine can speak more negatively of 'free will': 'I have tried hard to maintain the free choice of the human will, but the grace of God prevailed' (in Augustine's *Reconsiderations*,

or *Retractationes*, to *To Simplicianus*). It appears that Augustine is saying that we are free to do what we want, but we are not free to change our wants! And especially in terms of salvation, before conversion we will not, simply flowing from our own wills, turn to God for salvation.

Thus, fourth, Augustine affirms that there is a priority and an efficacy to the grace of God in terms of salvation. Thus, it is God's grace which so powerfully and mysteriously works, such that a person wants to believe – savingly. For Augustine, it is always God's grace which leads to human response, and this includes the response of initial saving faith. It is certainly the person who must believe, but it is God's grace which leads to human response: 'This, then, is the choice of God of which he said that he cooperates in all things for the good with those who have been called according to choice (Rom 8:28). Subsequently grace, of course, helps the good choice of a human being, but that choice would not even exist if grace did not precede it. Although, once the desire of a human being, the desire which is called good, has begun to exist, it is helped by grace, it does not, nonetheless, begin to exist without grace' (*Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 2.22). And grace is efficacious. That is, it brings about the response of saving faith. Thus, Augustine writes: 'But everyone who has learned from the Father not only has the possibility of coming, but actually comes! And in this result are already included the use of the capacity, the affection of

For Augustine, it is always God's grace which leads to human response, and this includes the response of initial saving faith. It is certainly the person who must believe, but it is God's grace which leads to human response.

the will, and the effect of the action' (*On the Grace of Christ and Original Sin* 1.27). Likewise: 'Again, it is certain that when we act, we are the ones who act. But it is God who causes us to act, by applying efficacious powers to our will...' (*On Grace and Free Will* 32).

Fifth, Augustine affirms that God's grace in the life of a Christian is desire-transforming and life-transforming. Without denigrating a proper sense of 'duty', the Christian life for Augustine is much more than simply 'doing one's duty'. One obeys the Lord because one wants to, and the life of faith-filled obedience is, ultimately, the most joyous life possible. Augustine writes: 'The true meaning of grace, however, is the love that God breathes into us, which enables us with a holy delight to carry out the duty that we know' (*Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 4.11). Indeed: 'The blessing of sweetness is the grace of God by which he brings it about in us that we find delight in and we desire, that is, that we live, what he commands us' (*Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 21).

Sixth, the Christian is one who perseveres, and perseverance is itself a gift of God's grace. As Augustine writes: 'the grace of God both for beginning and for persevering up to the end is not given according to his most hidden and at the same time most just, most wise, and most beneficent will' (*The Gift of Perseverance* 13.33).

The challenge of the pagans

Aside from *Confessions*, the book for which Augustine is most known is undoubtedly *The City of God*. In 410 Alaric and the Visigoths had invaded Rome and captured the city. For some this was a cataclysmic event. How could Rome be successfully invaded by pagan invaders? If only Rome had not become Christianised, and had remained faithful to the Roman gods, such a tragedy would not have happened. At least this was the thinking of some. In light of such criticisms of Christians and their faith, Augustine began to write *The City of God*. Written from 413-427 (finished just three years before Augustine's death), *The City of God* is undoubtedly Augustine's *magnum opus*.

Augustine takes the title from Psalm 87:3: 'Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God'. *The City of God* can be divided into two broad sections. The first (Books 1-10) features Augustine's explicit refutation of the false teachings of the pagans. The second (Books 11-22) demonstrates the Christian faith's truthfulness through a recounting of the origin, development, and end of the two cities.

Books 1-10 (the first main division) can be a bit slow-going (at least it has been for this reader of Augustine), but is nonetheless worth the reader's time. Here Augustine argues that the Christian faith does not in fact annul or even diminish a person's commitment to the city, or commonwealth (per certain pagan criticisms). Nor does Christianity's emphasis on the unity of the human race as bearers of God's image, as well as love for one's enemies, necessarily weaken the

Christian's commitment to defend the city or commonwealth. Rather, the Christian faith (with Romans 13 in view) actually encourages, rather than discourages, a proper kind of patriotism. Additionally, Christianity, with its strong emphasis on morality, helps establish a more just and stable social order. Among other responses, Augustine also teaches that Rome and the Roman empire had been having difficulty establishing justice and dealing with opponents long before Christianity began to be accepted by the Roman empire. In short: do not blame Christians for problems which existed long before Christians came along!

Books 11-22 recount the origin, development, and end of the two cities. But what are the two cities? The two cities are the city of God and the city of man. In short, the city of God consists of Christians and the city of man consists of those who will not believe in Christ. But there is some elasticity in how the terms are used. At times, the city of God and city of man seem to denote one's ultimate destiny (the city of God) and one's more mundane or earthly existence and associations (the city of man). Nonetheless, in the present these two cities both exist and are intermingled. They grow and develop throughout history. While Augustine of course affirms the providence of God, he cautions that we cannot guess God's providence, and we should be hesitant about trying to say exactly what God is doing and why in history.

What truly constitutes the two cities? Probably the best summary is found in 14.28 of *The City of God*. 'Two loves, then have made two cities.' These two loves

are 'love of self, even to the point of contempt for God', and 'love of God, even to the point of contempt for self'. The love of self consists of, or includes, a 'lust for domination' (Latin: *libido dominandi*). On the other hand, in the love of God, 'both leaders and followers serve one another in love, the leaders by their counsel, the followers by their obedience'.

In the beginning, in Genesis 1 and 2, there was just the City of God, although Augustine could say, at least in God's foreknowledge, Adam contained the city of man within himself (*The City of God* 12.27). With sin's entrance into the world we have the entrance of the city of man into the world. The rest of what later theologians would call 'redemptive history' really consists of the development and end of these two cities. Cain is highlighted as an early representative of the city of man, and such empires as Assyria, Babylon, and Rome are paradigmatic of the city of man. The city of God is seen as culminating in the church, which fulfils the promises to Israel. The end of the city of man is destruction, and the citizens of that city will not reach the end of the city of God – which is the beatific vision, in which the citizens of the city of God will be able to see God. Augustine can write: 'And along with the other great and marvellous discoveries which shall then kindle rational minds in praise of the great Artificer, there shall be the enjoyment of a beauty which appeals to the reason' (22.30).

Such empires as Assyria, Babylon, and Rome are paradigmatic of the city of man. The city of God is seen as culminating in the church, which fulfils the promises to Israel.

Final days

Augustine died in 430, three years after *The City of God* was published. He was a busy pastor (ie a bishop). Serge Lancel has commented that Augustine was no 'egghead' theologian simply poring over texts and writing academic treatises. However, he did write some of the most significant theological treatises ever

penned. And he wrote them amidst the challenges of the busy life of a pastor. When he died he was still battling the Pelagians – in particular the feisty Julian of Eclanum (whom Lancel calls 'this hotheaded youngster who could have been his son'). Augustine had Psalms hung on his wall in the room where he lay dying. Possidus (who wrote a biography of Augustine) wrote that Augustine 'wept freely and constantly' as he read the Psalms. For good or for ill – and I think largely

for good the Reformation tradition is in a great debt to Augustine, who laid much of the doctrinal edifice for the later Western tradition. This is especially so in his doctrine of grace, of which legacy the Reformational churches can rightly claim to be the true heir. Western theology has justifiably been called a long series of footnotes to Augustine. The Reformation churches differ from Augustine at key points, but he nonetheless is a key theologian in our tradition – especially on the issues of God's grace. ■

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AUGUSTINE AND THE DONATISTS

Augustine fought three great theological battles in his lifetime. The first was against the Donatists and was a struggle over the nature of the church. The second, in the final years of the Roman Empire, was a battle with pagan critics of Christianity with regard to theodicy in which Augustine sought to outline God's purposes in history. And the third was a theological quarrel with Pelagianism, a quarrel of great subtlety over the essentials of faith and salvation. Let us look more closely at the first of these battles.¹

The Donatist schism

Donatism was named after Donatus, a bishop at Carthage some eighty years before Augustine's time in Hippo

Regius. In those days the church had just recovered from the last bitter wave of persecution begun in 303AD by the emperors Diocletian and Galerius. When

the persecution subsided, Christian leaders had to discuss the lapses of some of their number in time of trial. The official position of the church was that those Christians who had compromised their religion in time of persecution could, with due repentance and atonement, be

readmitted to full membership in the religious community. But the minority faction, the Donatists, insisted that cooperation with the authorities in time of persecution was tantamount to total apostasy and that if any 'traitors' wanted to re-enter the church they had to start



¹ See the previous article for a discussion of the other two battles.

all over again, undergoing rebaptism. Evaluation of the credentials of those who sought re-entry would be in the hands of those who had not betrayed the church. Moreover, the Donatists condemned all those who maintained any contact with those who had lapsed during the persecution. The idea was that all of those who stayed within the Catholic communion were tinged with the sin of those who had fallen during the persecution. By this, the Donatists justified their separation. They claimed support in Isaiah 52:11.

The factors that animated Donatism are extremely complex and disputed among historians. Augustine viewed them as motivated by sheer arrogance. Donatists, on this reading, saw themselves as the exclusive possessors of a tangible holiness and an unblemished church and tradition. Those opposing this position saw in it a rigorism inimical to the spirit of the Gospels. Yet, the Donatists were seeking to preserve the identity of the church in marked contrast to the world. They were seeking to uphold the idea of the church as a fellowship of the holy/perfect.

Africa was known for its religious zealots and the new Donatist movement proved a resilient one. Even after official imperial disapproval had been expressed, the schismatic church continued to grow and prosper. By the time of Augustine's

consecration as bishop, in fact, it looked as if his party were on the wane. In Hippo Regius itself the larger church and the more populous congregation belonged to the Donatists in the early 390s. A constant state of half-repressed internecine warfare persisted between the communities. Popular songs and wall posters were pressed into service in the cause of sectarian propaganda. In the countryside, Donatist brigands actually ambushed their ecclesial opponents in bloody assaults.

The principle for which Augustine fought deserves emphasis. Christianity was not, he claimed, something external and visible. Christianity was a matter of spirit rather than law, something inside people rather than outside.

Augustine against the Donatists

Augustine began his anti-Donatist campaign with tact and caution. His first letters to Donatist prelates are courteous and emphasize his faith in their good will. He assumed that reasonable men could settle this controversy peaceably. But Augustine soon discovered that reason and good manners would get him nowhere. Augustine then affirmed a dictum that originated with Cyprian: 'There is no salvation outside the Church,' a phrase that was later used by Calvin

and appears even in the Westminster Confession. Outside of the visible church, Augustine affirmed, the Holy Spirit gives life to none. To support his point, Augustine used Jude 19. Augustine sees in this verse a warning to the Donatists who have broken away from the church. In so doing, they have lost the presence of the Spirit, since the Spirit uniquely belongs to

the church. Augustine cites this verse no less than eight times in his anti-Donatist works. Augustine also argued that the church is a *corpus permixtum*, a mixed body. Using Matthew 13:24-30 and 2 Timothy 2:20 to argue his point, Augustine maintained that the Donatist desire for a pure body would only be realised eschatologically.

By the late 390s, Augustine resigned himself to a course of action others in the church had long been urging: the invocation of government intervention to repress the Donatists. Augustine was dismayed at coercion in matters of religion, but consented to the new policy when he became convinced that the perversity and obtuseness of the Donatists were complete (Letters 182.2.8; 6.21-24). Love itself demanded that the Donatists be compelled to enter the true church in the hope that at least some would genuinely benefit from the change. Augustine's biblical justification was Luke 14:23, where the master of the feast asks his servants to compel people to come to the feast.

The upshot of the controversy with the Donatists

In 411, an imperial commissioner conducted a detailed hearing into the facts of the matter, attended by hundreds of bishops from both the Catholic and Donatist factions, and decided in favour of the Catholic party. From this time on Donatism was illegal and, though the schismatic community apparently showed some signs of life in remote parts of Africa until the Muslim invasions centuries later, the back of the

movement had been broken, and at least the security and position of the Catholic party had been guaranteed.

The principle for which Augustine fought deserves emphasis. Christianity was not, he claimed, something external and visible. Christianity was a matter of spirit rather than law, something inside people rather than outside. Most important, the church had room within itself for sinners as well as saints, for the imperfections of those in whom God's grace was still working as well as for the holiness of the blessed. Augustine drew the boundary of the church not between one group of people and another but rather straight through the middle of the hearts of all those who belonged to it. The visible church contained the visible Christians, sins and all. The invisible church, whose true home lay in heaven, held only those who were redeemed. Charity dictated that the visible church be open to all.

On the other hand, the adoption of Augustine's policy, which was the political coercion of the Donatists, would have drastic consequences for the history of Christianity down to the modern era. It would give 'Christian' states legitimation for persecution. Here we see that the legacy of the thought of Augustine, great theologian though he was, could have negative consequences. ■

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*‘Where there is
humility, there
is love’*

The spirituality of
Augustine of Hippo



‘The first way to truth is humility; the second way is humility, and the third way is humility.’

(Augustine, Letter 118.22)

Introduction

In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle spoke to the role of glory and power in the pursuit of happiness. He asserted, ‘The truly great-souled man must be a good man. Indeed greatness in each of the virtues would seem to go with greatness of soul.’ Some 300 years later, in his

Tusculan Disputations 1.45, the Roman philosopher and statesman Cicero stated, ‘Glory follows virtue as if it were its shadow.’ The concept of humility therefore was foreign to both these philosophers’ conception of virtue and happiness. The Greeks and Romans hardly seem to have known this virtue.

This was not the case with Augustine of Hippo (354–430AD). So drastically different was Augustine’s conception of humility that it would find its place as the centre of his spirituality. This was not always the case throughout his life, as he was one reared and fed upon the works of classical literature, imbibing its values as a young man. Only in his quest for truth and eventual acceptance of the Catholic faith did his view of humility shift in a dramatic fashion. For Augustine, this virtue was not a self-mustered humility but was rather Christ-centred through and through. Humility was not simply one of a few key virtues for the Christian – it is the defining virtue of the Christian faith. Humility defined the person and work of Christ, but it was a humility born from love. Hence, humility and love are bedfellows in the spirituality of Augustine. Augustine observed, ‘Where there is humility, there is love.’ The role of humility thus figures prominently within the entire corpus of Augustine’s works. Humility, according to Augustine, is the ‘door of our heart’ which allows the Lord to enter upon opening. Augustine observed, ‘Everywhere indeed are found excellent precepts for manners and discipline, but this particular thing, humility, is not to be found.’ It was Augustine’s quest to find humility at every corner of a properly understood Christian spirituality.

The folly of pride

Augustine recounted how the lesson of humility was a difficult one early in his life. At best, humility in the classical sense was simply a recognition of the human condition and its limitations and the general stigma of an earthly existence. At worst, it was a state for the lowly who had been deemed such by fate, including inferior socio-economic classes. In the classical world, power and greatness had not a thing to do with the notion of humility. In his *Confessions*, Augustine related how he viewed Scripture as inferior to the eloquence of Roman writings. Poorly translated Latin texts about numerous figures of folly such as the patriarchs of the Old Testament could not touch the polished eloquence of Greek and Roman classics, so thought Augustine. It was pride that kept him from seeing the beauty contained therein. Pride, therefore, was the central vice in Augustine’s pre-conversion life. Pride, in fact, is the chief of sins that informs all other sins and keeps one from truly approaching God. At a fellow-bishop’s ordination he related, ‘Pride is a great vice, and the first of vices, the beginning, origin and cause of all sins.’ His main reference for this notion was in *Sirach* 10:13: ‘For the beginning of pride is sin, and the one who clings to it pours out abominations.’ Pride, or arrogance, therefore was the first and defining sin of humanity. Pride, as the archetypal sin, is the desire to replace God with oneself. Thus, every sin in some way involves pride.

In his *Confessions*, Augustine took pains to direct his readers’ gaze towards the beauty and goodness of God who would be so kind as to seek out and save the lost. Augustine displayed the

transforming effects of humility by writing an autobiography that had less to do with himself and more to do with the one who worked on his behalf. Hence, *Confessions* is best seen as a prayer for gratitude towards his Saviour, rather than a strict recounting of his life and endeavours. The narrative of Augustine's conversion is a narrative of humility on display. Though he was greatly influenced by the rhetoric of Ambrose of Milan (c340–397AD), it was the carolling of a child who prompted Augustine to 'take up and read' Holy Scripture, the text which he once held in contempt. A dramatic and self-focused conversion was far from Augustine's experience. Whereas Christians might be tempted to look to a public and somewhat victorious profession

To love who we are as God's creation is proper and good. Improper love of self is setting oneself up as an alternative to God. To love oneself to the detriment of loving God is the epitome of pride.

of faith by one such as the pagan philosopher Victorinus (recounted in *Confessions* 8.2.3), they are prompted by Augustine to seek a more humble way. While certainly prominent examples of conversions should not be chided, Augustine's example should lead readers to see how God uses unexpected moments from unseen people to bring about everlasting results.

Another way to understand pride is self-love, though not all self-love is necessarily evil. The dual command of love, a pivotal passage in understanding Augustine's spirituality, assumes that one will love him or herself. Oliver O'Donovan notes that Augustine is the first of the Latin Fathers 'to make any serious use of the expression *amor sui* (love of self)' and

the first of any of the Fathers to offer an account of the scriptural phrase 'as yourself' in this connection.' However, such love is framed in proper perspective to God. We love ourselves since God loves us and created us in his image. To love who we are as God's creation is proper and good. Improper love of self is setting

oneself up as an alternative to God. To love oneself to the detriment of loving God is the epitome of pride. The reality of this sort of self-love plays out on the plane of human existence, as Augustine observed in his *City of God*. He noted, '[In] one city love of God has been given first place, in the other, love of self ... The earthly city was created by self-love reaching the point of contempt for God.'

The relationship between love and humility

For Augustine, practising true humility meant that one's heart must be focused in the proper direction. Therefore, humility was impossible without love. Love and humility are inseparable in that true humility guarantees the practice of true love. Thomas Martin notes for Augustine, 'Love transforms humility, making it redemptive; humility transforms love, making it universal.' Humility opens us to God; pride removes our capacity to love God. The grace of God is necessary to transform our wills, making us able to choose God's will out of love and with joy. Love for the believer is inspired by divine love, and seeks to mirror it. Love as a gift of God endows the human will with a new desire, a striving

for the things of God including truth, wisdom, and the virtues of Christ. Such love excludes possessive or egotistic love, pretension, and self-glorification. From this transformation, spiritual practices such as prayer and loving others seek to further instil God's love while one continually humbles oneself before him.

The Holy Spirit in us propels us to the love of our neighbour. A human being's capacity to love God comes from God alone, and by this divinely-inspired love we should love our neighbour. All such attitudes are furthered through humility, knowing that our love for others demands that we cast aside our own desires for the sake of the other. True love consists in loving others with God's love given to us by the Holy Spirit.

When one adopts Christ's attitude to the Father, one is exhibiting the sort of love-based humility that Christ models. The Son was open to the Father's love and returned that love by doing his Father's will. God revealed his love in the Incarnation, demonstrating the 'great value that [he] places on us, and how much he loves us'. Additionally, Christ was open to the Spirit in loving others. The reforming of our image can be seen in the redirection of love towards God and neighbour by the power of the Spirit. Part of this transformation for the believer is understanding how God's love should be extended to every person. Augustine, in reading John's Gospel, was assured that mankind was especially loved by God. Therefore, love of neighbour is inseparable from the love of God. This love is seen both in the example of Christ,

but was also intrinsic to who God is as triune. Augustine emphasised the union of love among the persons of the Godhead. Thus, Christians must image the union of love 'both in our relations with God as well as among ourselves. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.' Christ's humility in

taking on flesh was the most visible display of this love.

The Holy Spirit and humility

For humility to take shape in someone's life, there must be a vivifying agent. Though humility is Christ-focused, it is Spirit-empowered. Augustine consistently relied upon Romans 5:5 to demonstrate various theological truths, namely, the work of the Holy Spirit to produce genuine

Christ-like love in the heart of a Christian. The Spirit provides a specific kind of love – one that is focused on Christ and the character-forming virtues that he exhibits. It is the Spirit that enables our hearts to gravitate towards the love of God. As Augustine prayed, 'We are inflamed by your gift and carried upwards.' This gift is necessary if one is to walk the path of Christ-like humility. The Spirit is what enables human beings to delight in the good. The Spirit infused in the heart aids in one's resistance of contrary impulses, namely pride and its devastating effects. The Spirit also unifies the hearts and minds of believers just as he unites the Father and Son in the bond of love.

Life in the Holy Spirit is crucial for living the Christ-centred life of humility as

THOUGH HUMILITY IS CHRIST-FOCUSED, IT IS SPIRIT-EMPOWERED

envisioned by Augustine. Because the Spirit is the bond of love within the Trinity, he is also the proper bond in the church which promotes Christian love in all its forms. Only when one is bound by the Spirit in the unity of Christ's church, is one able to practise true humility. This is why the chief error of the Donatists, for instance, was pride. By separating from the Catholic Church they had separated from its Head and therefore were unable to fully practice the love and humility of Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who conforms human beings to Christ through the giving of caritas which enables them to cry out, 'Abba! Father!' (Rom 8:15). Indeed, it is the Holy Spirit who has poured forth in our hearts the love of God (Rom 5:5). In this way, the believer is able to grow in their contemplation of God in his all-encompassing perfection. This is most readily seen in the gathering of the saints who share in the Holy Spirit and the mutual goal of displaying the love and humility in which he empowers the church to walk.

Conclusion

Though humility was rejected in the classical world, its value from a Christian perspective was seen through the example of Christ. Augustine integrated this key virtue into his theology and employed it through his spirituality. Though not coldly rejected, humility in today's world is not viewed in quite the same way as Augustine would envision it. While many praise the value of humility, humility

has become more of a utilitarian virtue, as numerous articles on humility in leadership and personal advancement can attest. The fact remains that the spiritual nature of humility is seen more as a unique quality for a chosen few rather than a vital virtue for all.

Augustine's spirituality confronts this view and provides a biblical perspective for how humility is the central virtue in which all other virtues find their place and meaning.

Augustine's spirituality confronts this view and provides a biblical perspective for how humility is the central virtue in which all other virtues find their place and meaning. By relating humility to almost every aspect of his thought and spirituality, Augustine significantly influenced the understanding of Christian humility in the Western Church. Humility was the key to understanding Christ and the Christian life.

Though the effects of pride are never entirely healed in this life, the more one is conformed to the image of Christ, the more one moves away from the world dominated by pride. In the end, it must be the grace of God moving in the heart of an individual in order for them to see the beauty of the divine humiliation, God made man for our sake, so that we may be healed and made whole and begin the journey of the humble life towards the city of God, which is the true road to the happy life. ■

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IAN HUGH CLARY

'By piety in prayer'

Augustine and the preaching of Scripture

Augustine of Hippo (354–430AD), though a tremendous theologian and philosopher, was first and foremost a bishop and preacher. How did he approach the task of preaching, and what influence has he had on the church since his day? While much can be and has been said about Augustine as preacher, I want to focus specifically on one particular work that he published to help Christians in his day and ours to learn how to rightly handle and preach God's Word. In what follows we will trace Augustine's approach to preaching

more broadly, and then narrow in on his handbook for preaching called *On Christian Teaching* (*De doctrina Christiana*). We will ask and answer the question, 'Was Augustine committed to expository preaching?'

Augustine and preaching

There are many ways into Augustine's approach to preaching. An obvious one would be to look at his sermons themselves and determine his rhetorical and exegetical approaches.

Some 700 of Augustine's sermons survive. It is interesting to note how they vary in form. Some are more exegetical; for instance, his sermons on the Gospel of John take what might be called a 'grammatical-historical exegesis' of biblical texts and are rich in theological content. Others are more allegorical and reveal a deep interplay between texts of Scripture, for instance, his sermons on the Psalms. These are less a series of sermons, but a collection that range over a period of many years preached in Hippo. As Hughes Oliphant Old says, 'Here we see Augustine's fruitful imagination. What an inventive man he was! So full of play and fantasy!' In his preaching on 1 John, Augustine displays a keen awareness of congregational needs. These were ten sermons for newly baptised Christians, used to introduce them to the faith, preached just after Easter. He answers the key questions of the Christian faith and directs his words to the human heart, setting forth hope. In each sermon, the text is pressed into the lives of the congregation in almost a kind of dialogue, anticipating questions and answering them. These are not the more lofty sermons of the Psalms, but direct, simple, and easy to understand.

As fruitful as a study of his sermons might be, another way into Augustine's thought about preaching comes with his own written work on preaching, particularly his manual of hermeneutics and homiletics: *On Christian Teaching*. This work is essentially the first homiletical textbook for Christians that we have from antiquity, and certainly the most influential for the ancient and medieval church. In this section we will consider what Augustine has to say about biblical exposition in this book.

'The truth that presides within'

Let us briefly consider what Augustine has to say about handling Scripture in the first three books of *On Christian Teaching* before looking more closely at his thoughts on preaching. As Paul Scott Wilson tells us, Augustine's basic approach to understanding Scripture is threefold:

1. He believed that the Old Testament is revealed in the New;
2. The New Testament is hidden, but noticeable with the sanctified eye, in the Old;
3. The Old Testament is just as much about Christ as the New.

In terms of Christ-centred preaching, also a contemporary discussion, Augustine tells us that Christ is not just a teacher to consult, but is rather 'the truth that presides within' the Scripture (2.38). He also distinguishes between literal and figurative readings of Scripture. That is, the literal are those things that are plain, or 'open' to all, namely, 'all those teachings which involve faith, the mores of living, and ... hope and charity'. The clear text illuminates the unclear or obscure; this is the principle of the 'analogy of faith', that was picked up by the Reformers – Scripture interprets Scripture. Those texts that are unclear are 'allegorical,' 'figurative,' or 'prophetic.' It is wrong, according to Augustine, to take a figurative text and make it literal, this is a 'carnal' reading of scripture and does not edify the soul (3.5,7). When we cannot understand a text because of its ambiguity, we must turn to the 'rule of faith,' what the church has taught concerning that passage. Interestingly, and following the thought of his day, he also appealed to numerology and music to help us understand obscure

texts (2.14). We tend to think of patristic and medieval exegesis as too allegorical. While this certainly can be the case, allegorical interpretation of Scripture need not be without a framework – Augustine recognised this, seeking to provide just such a thing in his manual. As a rhetorician, he knew that details draw listeners into a story and the use of the senses pass through the mind into the interior life. All preaching is to bring us to the 'interior of understanding'. Scripture's own use of allegory forces us to have to use it as well and it sets its own limits, namely that the gospel was never to be spiritualised – it was always to be read straightforwardly and plainly.

Above all, Augustine wants us to approach Scripture under the 'rule of charity' (3.15), or love, which is 'the motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of God for his sake, and the enjoyment of one's self and of one's neighbour for the sake of God' (3.10). If we do not have this rule we cannot understand the Bible. We operate instead by the 'rule of cupidity,' or 'love of self' for the sake of self that leads to bitterness and anger towards God (3.11). To interpret the Scripture correctly, then, the preacher needs a five-fold perspective, namely a biblical fear of God; deep personal piety – that is, regular prayer, fasting, reading of Scripture, meditation, almsgiving, etc; knowledge of God and Scripture; fortitude; and a love for mercy – here Augustine means the recognition of the primacy of God's grace. To make a command is to emphasise God's enabling the Christian to fulfil that

command; effectively he articulates the classic law and gospel distinction.

As a practical aside, Augustine suggests that the interpreter of Scripture needs to know the original biblical languages. This is not an absolute, as Augustine himself did not know Hebrew and had only a rudimentary knowledge of Greek. But even then, he recognised the importance of knowing the languages. He also argued that interpreters and preachers should have a knowledge of secular learning. Famously he wrote: 'Let every good and true Christian understand that wherever truth may be found, it belongs to his Master; and while he recognises and acknowledges the truth,

even in their religious literature, let him reject the figments of superstition' (2.18). This requires care, as pagan learning is mixed with truth and error, and so he advises avoiding divination or astrology. Rather, the preacher should pursue subjects like history, philosophy, culture, and even zoology, botany and geography!

Subdued style

Book IV of *On Christian Teaching* turns specifically to the question of preaching. We asked earlier, did Augustine believe in biblical exposition? The answer we find in Book IV is yes! As Hughes Oliphant Old says, 'Augustine gave first importance to expository preaching.' Following classical rhetoric (ie Cicero or Quintilian), Augustine argued that the principal purpose of preaching is to teach, to delight, and to persuade. Yet teaching

In terms of Christ-centred preaching, also a contemporary discussion, Augustine tells us that Christ is not just a teacher to consult, but is rather 'the truth that presides within' the Scripture.

is to be emphasised and the others will follow (4.12). We are told that '[I]t is needful when people, knowing what they ought to do, do it not. Therefore, to teach is a necessity.' Therefore it is imperative that the preacher 'should not consider the eloquence of his teaching but the clarity of it' (4.9). This is an interesting admonition from one of the greatest rhetoricians of the ancient world. But Augustine is adamant that a preacher who places such emphasis on what he calls 'the beauty of expression' (4.14) such that the Word of God is displaced, is effectively taking part in 'deeds of wickedness and baseness' with a desire only to be 'read with pleasure'. For Augustine, clarity forms the true beauty of teaching and, as the Word of God is able to shine forth unencumbered, it

Therefore it is imperative that the preacher 'should not consider the eloquence of his teaching but the clarity of it' (4.9). This is an interesting admonition from one of the greatest rhetoricians of the ancient world.

is where the truth can be found. From this stance on the primacy of clear preaching, the preacher is then to use rhetorical style in order to persuade the hearer to act upon the clearly preached Word. In Book 4.13 he says, 'For what does it profit a man that he both confesses the truth and praises the eloquence, if he does not yield his consent, when it is only for the sake of securing his consent that the speaker in urging the truth gives careful attention to what he says?' The emphasis on clarity and persuasion on the part of the preacher is such because he recognises that God is the true Teacher behind all preaching, particularly God the Holy Spirit. Augustine reminds his readers that 'men are made teachers by the operations of the Holy

Spirit' so that 'the duty of men to teach even the teachers does not cease when the Holy Spirit is given, yet that neither is he who plants anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase' (4.16).

To help build a personal connection between the expositor and the congregation Augustine argues for spontaneity in preaching. Interestingly, though, he suggests that sermons should not be prepared word for word and then committed to memory, as he believes that halts good communication (4.10). Nevertheless, the chosen biblical passage should be studied in-depth so that its meaning and application pour out of the preacher in the act of preaching. This allows for an encounter

between the speaker and the listener. In 4.17 Augustine points to three rhetorical styles of speaking:

1. Subdued – plain style for clear teaching and understanding;
2. Temperate – 'middle style', which was for pleasure or delight on the part of the hearer;
3. Grand – to impact the affections, to persuade or move the hearer.

By drawing the parallels he does between classical rhetoric and Christian preaching, Augustine elevated the role of preachers in society. The great preaching models that Augustine chooses to illustrate the best of preaching styles are near and dear to his heart, namely Ambrose of

Milan (d.397) and Cyprian of Carthage (d.258). Ambrose, as we learn in the Confessions, was Augustine's first pastor whose preaching convinced him of the beauty of the gospel, and Cyprian was the doyen of North African Christianity from a generation before. Both, Augustine says, preached in a 'subdued style', or plainly, in order to allow 'not the beauty of diction, nor the swaying of mind by the stir of emotion, but facts and proofs' (4.21). The preacher is, Augustine reminds us in Book 4.18, necessarily dealing with greater themes than even the greatest of the classical tradition, because the preacher is dealing with God. Thus the need to emphasise truth. Even what appear to be 'pecuniary matters' are important because their ultimate reference is to God and are thus never unimportant.

Pertaining to the character of the one who ascends the pulpit, Augustine concludes Book 4 with matters of Christian character. In chapter 27 he tells his readers that no matter the homiletical style, the 'life of the speaker will count for more in securing the hearer's compliance'. If one preaches with great wisdom, yet lives wickedly, he may profit others 'but is unprofitable to himself'. Such preachers would do good to everyone 'if they lived as they preached'. Consistent living, however, can only be obtained by a devoted life. Thus it is not surprising that he would focus in his penultimate chapter (4.30) on the necessity of prayer. Taking Queen Esther as his example of one who prayed before she addressed the king, the preacher ought to 'pray for the same blessing' as a labourer 'in word and doctrine for the eternal welfare of men.' This reflects well what he wrote in an earlier chapter (4.15)

when he tells us that grace is infused into the sermon by way of prayer:

'If he [the preacher] succeed in this object [of preaching], and so far as he succeeds, he will succeed more by piety in prayer than by gifts of oratory; and so he ought to pray for himself, and for those he is about to address, before he attempts to speak. And when the hour has come that he must speak, he ought, before he opens his mouth, to lift up his thirsty soul to God, to drink in what he is about to pour forth, and to be himself filled with what he is about to distribute.'

Not only Book 4, but the entirety of *On Christian Teaching*, became an authority for the church both in Augustine's day and after. In the North Africa of late antiquity, pastors were not typically well educated, so Augustine gave them something of an education in preaching. He gave the rudiments of good hermeneutics and homiletics. Likewise, the book dominated preaching in the Middle Ages and even into the Reformation. As Augustine scholar James J O'Donnell says, 'The truly distinctive feature of the work ... is its focus on the Bible ... In the place of the canon of authors of classical literature he has substituted the Christian Scriptures.' It is this emphasis on the teaching of Scripture brought forth out of a life of study and deep devotion that has made this ancient preaching manual stand the test of time, and should remain a book to be consulted by preachers of that same Word that Augustine so revered and submitted himself to. ■

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Extracts of Text by Augustine

*The following extracts have been
selected by Michael Haykin*



On Psalm 85:8

When therefore death shall be swallowed up in victory, these things shall no longer be: there will be full and eternal peace. We shall be in a City, of which, brethren, when I speak I find it hard to leave off, especially when offences wax common. Who would not long for that City from which no friend goes out, into which no enemy enters, where is no tempter, no seditious person, no one dividing God's people, no one wearying the Church in the service of the devil; since the prince himself of all such is cast into eternal fire, and with him those who consent unto him, and who have no will to retire from him? There shall be peace made pure in the sons of God, all loving one another, seeing one another full of God, since God

shall be all in all. We shall have God as our common object of vision, God as our common possession, God as our common peace. For whatever there is which he now gives unto us, he himself shall be unto us instead of his gifts; this will be full and perfect peace. This he speaks unto his people: this it was which he would hearken unto who said, 'I will hearken what the Lord God will say unto me: for he shall speak peace unto his people, and to his saints, and unto those who turn their hearts unto him.' Look, my brothers and sisters, do you wish that unto you should belong that peace which God utters? Turn your heart unto him: not unto me, or unto that one, or unto any man. For whatever man would turn unto himself the hearts of men, he falls with them. Which is better, that thou fall with him unto whom you turn yourself, or that you stand with him with whom you turn yourself? Our joy, our peace, our rest, the end of all troubles, is none but God: blessed are they that turn their hearts unto him.



Letter to Nebridius (389AD)

For the union of persons in the Trinity is in the Catholic faith set forth and believed, and by a few holy and blessed ones understood, to be so inseparable, that whatever is done by the Trinity must be regarded as being done by the Father, and by the Son, and by the Holy Spirit together; and that nothing is done by the Father which is not also done by the Son and by the Holy Spirit; and nothing done by the Holy Spirit which is not also done by the Father and by the Son; and nothing done by the Son which is not also done by the Father and by the Holy Spirit.



Letter to Jerome (403 AD)

(Jerome was producing a fresh translation of the entire Bible in Latin, which came to be called the Vulgate. But, as this story attests, some people in North Africa liked the old Latin translation better.)

A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many generations in the church. There arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew manuscripts were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man [that is, the bishop] was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation – a calamity which he narrowly escaped! From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken.



Letter to Jerome (404AD)

True friendship can harbour no suspicion; a friend must speak to his friend as freely as to his second self.

Letter to Proba (412AD)

When we say: 'Hallowed be Thy name,' we admonish ourselves to desire that his name, which is always holy, may be also among men esteemed holy, that is to say, not despised; which is an advantage not to God, but to men. When we say: 'Thy kingdom come,' which shall certainly come whether we wish it or not, we do by these words stir up our own desires for that kingdom, that it may come to us, and that we may be found worthy to reign in it. When we say: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' we pray for ourselves that he would give us the grace of obedience, that his will may be done by us in the same way as it is done in heavenly places by his angels. When we say: 'Give us this day our daily bread,' the words 'this day' signify for the present time, in which we ask either for that competency of temporal blessings which I have spoken of before ('bread' being used to designate the whole of those blessings, because of its constituting so important a part of them), or the sacrament of believers, which is in this present time necessary, but necessary in order to obtain the felicity not of the present time, but of eternity. When we say: 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,' we remind ourselves both what we should ask, and what we should do in order that we may be worthy to receive what we ask. When we say: 'Lead us not into temptation,' we admonish ourselves to seek that we may not, through being deprived of God's help, be either ensnared to consent or compelled to yield to temptation. When we say: 'Deliver us from evil,' we admonish ourselves to consider that we are not yet

enjoying that good estate in which we shall experience no evil. And this petition, which stands last in the Lord's Prayer, is so comprehensive that a Christian, in whatsoever affliction he be placed, may in using it give utterance to his groans and find vent for his tears – may begin with this petition, go on with it, and with it conclude his prayer. For it was necessary that by the use of these words the things which they signify should be kept before our memory.

Letter to Proba (412AD)

'Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.' This is not to be understood as if it meant that the Holy Spirit of God, who is in the Trinity, God unchangeable, and is one God with the Father and the Son, intercedes for the saints like one who is not a divine person; for it is said, 'He makes intercession for the saints,' because he enables the saints to make intercession ... He therefore makes the saints intercede with groanings which cannot be uttered, when he inspires them with longings for that great blessing, as yet unknown, for which we patiently wait.

Letter to Proba (412AD)

By all means remember to pray earnestly for me. I would not have you yield such

deference to the office fraught with perils which I bear [that is, his being a bishop], as to refrain from giving the assistance which I know myself to need. Prayer was made by the household of Christ for Peter and for Paul. I rejoice that you are in his household; and I need, incomparably more than Peter and Paul did, the help of the prayers of the brethren.

Letter to Fortunatianus (413AD)

The very blessed Athanasius, also bishop of Alexandria, when contending against the Arians, who affirm that the Father alone is invisible, but suppose the Son and the Holy Spirit to be visible, asserted the equal invisibility of all the Persons of the Trinity, proving it by testimonies from Holy Scripture, and arguing with all his wonted care in controversy, labouring earnestly to convince his opponents that God has never been seen, except through his assuming the form of a creature; and that in his essential Deity God is invisible, that is, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are invisible, except in so far as the Divine Persons can be known by the mind and the spirit.

Letter to Evodius (415AD)

Let us with steadfast piety believe in one God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; let us at the same time believe that the Son is not [the person] who is the Father, and the Father is not [the person] who is the Son, and neither the Father nor the Son is [the person] who is the Spirit of both the Father and

the Son. Let it not be supposed that in this Trinity there is any separation in respect of time or place, but that these Three are equal and co-eternal, and absolutely of one nature: and that the creatures have been made, not some by the Father, and some by the Son, and some by the Holy Spirit, but that each and all that have been or are now being created subsist in the Trinity as their Creator; and that no one is saved by the Father without the Son and the Holy Spirit, or by the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, or by the Holy Spirit without the Father and the Son, but by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the only one, true, and truly immortal (that is, absolutely unchangeable) God. At the same time, we believe that many things are stated in Scripture separately concerning each of the Three, in order to teach us that, though they are an inseparable Trinity, yet they are a Trinity. For, just as when their names are pronounced in human language they cannot be named simultaneously, although their existence in inseparable union is at every moment simultaneous, even so in some places of Scripture also, they are by certain created things presented to us distinctively and in mutual relation to each other: for example, [at the baptism of Christ] the Father is heard in the voice which said, 'Thou art my Son'; the Son is seen in the human nature which, in being born of the Virgin, he assumed; the Holy Spirit is seen in the bodily form of a dove – these things presenting the Three to our apprehension separately, indeed, but in no wise separated. ■

The Dr Lloyd-Jones Library

LONDON SEMINARY



In 1914 Scots preacher and scholar George S Duncan wrote that 'the minister's library is his chest of tools.' 'How very essential tools are!' he says, 'Every worker, mental or manual, must have them.'¹

In the first volume of his biography of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981), Iain Murray describes how when he began his first pastorate in Sandfields, Aberafan, South Wales, in 1927, the 'middle room' at 57 Victoria Road, in Sandfields, Port Talbot, a room ten feet by twelve 'at once became the study, where the 300 to 400 books which he had brought with him from London soon lined the walls. In a real sense that room was to become the centre of the work, not only as the place where young converts were to visit him in the years ahead, but more as his place of retreat where prayer, study and preparation for the pulpit occupied the best part of the hours of each day.'²

Today at the London Seminary in leafy Finchley, North-West London, adjacent to the main lecture hall, there is a slightly larger room, about 10 feet by 20 feet, with glass-fronted lockable bookcases on three sides, that is known as The Dr Lloyd-Jones Library. The library has been housed at the seminary, though not in this room, for many years and was moved to this room in 2009. To add to the atmosphere the walls are adorned with framed photographs of Lloyd-Jones and the exterior and interior of Westminster

Chapel, London, where he went on to minister from 1939-1968.

Some caveats

It has been said that 'you can learn a lot about a man by looking through his library'. If that is true then here is an interesting vantage point from which to consider the towering figure of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

Having said that, some prior caveats are necessary. Firstly, this is technically not Lloyd-Jones' library but the Lloyd-Jones

family library as handed on to the Seminary. So, for example, there is a copy of *The Agricultural Community in South-West Wales at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* by David Jenkins, a present to his wife in 1971, inscribed 'To Bethan with all my love Martyn x.' He writes, 'A reminder of our origins and the places where we both spent so many happy days together.' Also, some of the volumes here, such as *The*

Collected Writings of John Murray and other Banner of Truth publications did not appear until after Lloyd-Jones' death.

Further, we know that he was given a set of the Works of John Owen – not found here – and he surely had a set of Matthew Henry commentaries, again conspicuous by their absence. Although there are some secular volumes here, one assumes there were others now dispersed to the four corners, John Buchan and Walter Scott

'YOU CAN
LEARN A LOT
ABOUT A MAN
BY LOOKING
THROUGH HIS
LIBRARY'

¹ *The Biblical World* Vols 43 and 44, Chicago 1914.

² Iain Murray, *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years, 1899-1939* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1982) 154.

novels for example, which we know he enjoyed. I did hear someone once suggest that all the Doctor's medical books and journals were here, but that is not the case.

Even the books that were his were never, of course, found in this form. The books have been arranged according to the library cataloguing system used at the Seminary. The first 42 items in the collection are Bibles and Testaments and similar material which are no more likely to have sat together like that in Lloyd-Jones' time than the more than 80 hymnals that come a little later in the collection.

It should also be remembered that Lloyd-Jones was a great user of libraries. Iain Murray describes how, in 1932, Lloyd-Jones discovered B B Warfield in the library of Knox Seminary, Toronto, and his fascination with the Beinecke Library at Yale on a later trip across the Atlantic.³ His daughter Elizabeth Catherwood, in a lecture given in 1982, says he had read everything by the historian Owen Chadwick, but only one volume is found here (the one on *The Reformation*).⁴ She also mentions him reading the Roman Catholic theologian Hans Küng but there is again only one volume here (*What must remain in the church?*).

Iain Murray's second volume of biography refers to his enjoyment in retirement of the Sion College Library (now subsumed by the Lambeth Palace Library).⁵ He was introduced to that library by his friend Philip E Hughes.⁶ In one of the volumes

(the 1975 work *Perspectives on Charismatic Renewal* edited by E D O'Connor) there is a note from Sion College asking for the return of the book *Jesus and the Spirit* by James Dunn (also published in 1975) dated 21.10.76.

His championing of the Evangelical Library and his instrumentality in bringing it to London is fairly well known. The library was always very good to the Doctor about borrowing volumes and when his own library was transferred to the Seminary, there was some confusion over whether some volumes had been his or had belonged to the library.

First impressions

There are nearly 3000 volumes in the library altogether. One notices immediately the variety of spines – some dust-wrapped and quite modern, others leather-bound and ancient. The multi-volume sets are noticeable – a five-volume *Hastings Bible Dictionary*; *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; *The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*; word studies by Kittel, Robertson, Vincent, Vine and Wuest; several commentary sets (Alford, Calvin, Ellicott, Hawker, Kitto, Lange, Poole, Scott, Trapp, etc); Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters* in six volumes.

There is also *Annals of the American Pulpit* in nine volumes; *Nelson's Encyclopedia* in 25 small volumes; Neale's *History of the Puritans*; Stoughton on *The History of Religion in England* and six volumes on the early Methodists.

As for Puritan and other evangelical works, there is a nicely tooled 23-volume edition of Baxter, a ragged three volume edition of Bunyan and a modern six volume edition of Flavel. Also, multi-volume sets of Thomas Brooks, Thomas Charles, Thomas Goodwin, Oliver Heywood, John Angell James, John Newton, B B Warfield, George Whitefield and John Wesley.

At the very end of the collection there are seven or eight shelves of books chiefly of Welsh interest. Many, perhaps half of these, are in the Welsh language, which both Dr and Mrs Lloyd-Jones spoke and read fluently.

Kenneth Kirk on *The Vision of God*

Lloyd-Jones would keep larger volumes for holiday reading. Here you will find, for example, Kenneth E Kirk's 1928 Bampton Lectures *The Vision of God*. Iain Murray tells us that the Doctor found the book 'absolutely seminal'. He regarded it as one of the greatest books he had ever read.

Emil Brunner's *The Divine Imperative*

Elizabeth Catherwood describes her father with the family sitting on the beach at Borth, near Aberystwyth, some time in the thirties. As the family went about more traditional beach activities, the Doctor, in grey three-piece suit and hat, was leaning against a rock and reading the 1937 volume *The Divine Imperative* by Emil Brunner. The book is in the library. I have checked it for grains of sand and found none!

The Works of Edwards

More gratifying, however, is to see among

the works two large volumes of Jonathan Edwards. (Another tatty six-volume edition is next to it). This must be the set Lloyd-Jones once described finding. The New England preacher was the Doctor's favourite author. He discovered Edwards' name in *Protestant Thought Before Kant* by A C McGiffert. Lloyd-Jones wrote: 'After much searching I at length called at John Evans' bookshop in Cardiff in 1929, having time available as I waited for a train. There, down on my knees in my overcoat in a corner of the shop, I found the two-volume 1834 edition of Edwards which I bought for five shillings. I devoured these volumes and literally just read and read them. It is certainly true that they helped me more than anything else. If I had the power I would make these two volumes compulsory reading for all ministers! Edwards seems to satisfy all round; he really was an amazing man.'⁷

Interestingly, the first volume has the pencil mark '2 vols 6/-'. That suggests Lloyd-Jones, a good Cardiganshire man, managed to beat down the price!

Commentaries

Knowing that Lloyd-Jones preached extensively on Romans, one expects to see a good supply of commentaries on that book and one is not disappointed. There are some 40 volumes from Barth's tome that appeared in English in 1933 to G B Wilson's little digest of 1977 via Haldane, Murray, etc, compared with only a quarter of that number on Galatians. Similarly, there are about twenty volumes on Ephesians, another subject for an early series of published sermons.

³ Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield 1851–1921 Professor of Theology at Princeton Seminary 1887–1921.

⁴ F and E Catherwood, *Martyn Lloyd-Jones: the man and his Books*, (London and Bridgend, 1982).

⁵ Iain H Murray, *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith, 1939–1981* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1990), 710.

⁶ Philip Edgcumbe Hughes 1915–1990 Anglican clergyman and New Testament scholar born in Australia, who spent his formative years in South Africa, was ordained in England and died in the USA.

⁷ *David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty years*, 253, 254.

History and biography

It is no surprise to see large sections of Church History and biography. Perhaps it is similarly unsurprising to see large sections on the Holy Spirit and revival and on healing and speaking in tongues – areas of interest to him as a medical practitioner and pastor and areas over which controversy raged in the 1960s and 1970s. Volumes here include the one by Henry Frost for which he wrote an appreciation. His name can be found in this copy.⁸

Better and faster reading

One book that stands out because of its clear spine is *How to read better and faster* by Norman Lewis published in 1960. This is the volume that Lloyd-Jones apparently sent for after seeing an advertisement for it. He was frustrated that he was a rather slow reader. There is no evidence that the book helped him to get any faster.

Inscriptions

Most of the books appear to have no identifying marks. In some the Doctor has written his name – perhaps books he lent to others. A few have been given as gifts.

So for example there is a very nicely bound two-volume set of Luke Tyerman on Whitefield, a gift from Peter Golding, a member of the Westminster Fellowship.⁹ The Doctor first read the Tyerman biography in the summer of 1969. David Otis Fuller has inscribed a copy of his

1961 volume *Valiant for Truth: a Treasury of Evangelical Writing*.¹⁰ (He has written Martin instead of Martyn. This was something Dr Lloyd-Jones had lived with since childhood. A book in the library is a prize from Tregaron County High School and also spells his name incorrectly.)

From 1952 Lloyd-Jones began to commend the writings of the American A W Tozer and in 1956 they met for the only time, sharing a conference in Toronto. Inside the 1964 biography of A W Tozer by D J Fant it says 'To D M Lloyd-Jones with best wishes, Leonard Ravenhill.'¹¹

A volume called *Ysgrifau Beirniadol vol viii* (Critical writings 8) edited by J E C Williams has a typewritten inscription in Welsh signed by J Elwyn Davies. It is intended to recall a get-together (Encil) in Bryn-y-Groes, Bala and thanks Lloyd-Jones and his wife for their Christian love and kindness.¹²

Cornelius Van Til

Lloyd-Jones was a great admirer of Cornelius Van Til and in 1964 he wrote a review of Van Til's *Barth and Christianity for The Westminster Theological Journal*.¹³ His copy of the volume is inscribed 'Martyn Lloyd-Jones with warm regard C Van Til.' Still between the pages are two pieces of paper with typewritten notes headed 'Disseminated sclerosis'. On the reverse are some scrawled notes in pencil that have

been written for the review. In the library the earlier Van Til volume *Has Karl Barth become Orthodox?* can also be found.

Marginalia

One would need to go through each individual book page by page to discover what exactly is hidden away here. Certainly some of the books are well marked. The 1975 book by Thomas Smail (1928-2012) *Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians* is full of pencil marks, mostly disagreeing with the author. On page 44 where Smail says, 'The Holy Spirit is central' Lloyd-Jones adds a firm 'No!' in the margin. Again, to Smail's contention that the second blessing obscures the centrality of Christ, we have another emphatic 'No!'

Similar pencil-written 'No!'s can be found in the book *Fundamentalism* by James Barr (1924-2006), published in 1977. He objects to Barr's idea that Scripture was given divine status merely because it was written down and he is very unhappy with the idea that fundamentalists have not studied what non-conservatives say. The library itself would suggest that Barr is wide of the mark with regard to Lloyd-Jones certainly.

Further study

The purpose of this short article is to do two things. Firstly, to alert people to the existence of the library. Any future work on Lloyd-Jones ought to be aware of this resource for the study of his life and work. Who knows what might be buried in the pages to be found here?

Secondly, here is a reminder to pastors of the importance of reading. Thomas Murphy writing for pastors in the 19th century says, 'It will be taken for granted that the pastor will read much, and that most of his reading will of course be on religious subjects. The importance of this should be very deeply impressed upon the mind of every minister.'¹⁴

In our own day, the American Presbyterian pastor Ligon Duncan III has lamented that 'Protestant pastors don't read or study very much these days, and most churches don't encourage them to do so. There are fewer pastor-readers than ever before (and surfing the web, dabbling in this oddity and that, doesn't count!).'¹⁵

He quotes Spurgeon on 2 Timothy 4:13 who notes what a rebuke it is to those who do not read. 'He is inspired, and yet he wants books! He has been preaching at least for thirty years, and yet he wants books! He had seen the Lord, and yet he wants books! He had had a wider experience than most men, and yet he wants books! He had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard things which it was unlawful for a man to utter, yet he wants books! He had written the major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books!'¹⁶

As in so much else, Dr Lloyd-Jones is an example to us in his library of a diligent pastor who gave himself to reading. ■

Gary Brady is Pastor of Childs Hill Baptist Church, London.

⁸ Henry Frost, *Miraculous Healing: Why does God heal some and not others?* Originally published 1931.

⁹ *The Westminster Fellowship* is the ministers' fraternal begun by Lloyd-Jones in 1941.

¹⁰ David Otis Fuller 1903-1988 was an American pastor in Atlantic City then Grand Rapids, USA.

¹¹ Aiden Wilson Tozer 1897-1963 American pastor, author and magazine editor. Leonard Ravenhill 1907-1994 Evangelist and author who focused on prayer and revival. *Why Revival Tarries* is his best known book.

¹² J Elwyn Davies 1925-2007 was a leading minister in Wales, a founder of the *Evangelical Movement of Wales*.

¹³ Cornelius Van Til 1895-1987 Dutch American Christian philosopher and Reformed theologian credited as the originator of modern presuppositional apologetics.

¹⁴ Thomas Murphy, *Pastoral Theology: The Pastor in the Various Duties of His Office* (Philadelphia 1877), 141.

¹⁵ See <http://t4g.org/2006/02/pastors-studying-and-reading-1/> accessed June 7 2018.

¹⁶ Spurgeon Sermon #542 'Paul - His Cloak And His Books' in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* 9 (1863), 668, 669.

New Books

The following books have been published recently and are recommended for your attention:

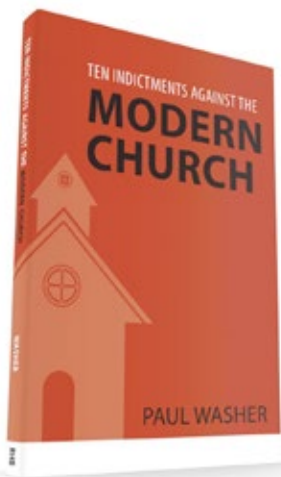
- J V Fesko, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books), 336 pages, ISBN 978-1-60178-619-7.
- Michael P V Barrett, *Beginning at Moses. A Guide to Finding Christ in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books), 464 pages, ISBN 978-1-60178-623-4.
- Joel R Beeke (ed.), *The Beauty and Glory of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books), 224 pages, ISBN 978-1-60178-621-0.
- Michael A G Haykin, Paul M Smalley, *Puritan Piety. Writings in Honor of Joel R Beeke* (Christian Focus & Reformation Heritage Books), 224 pages, ISBN 978-1-52710-158-6

Two new books from Paul Washer:

- Paul Washer, *Narrow Gate – Narrow Way* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books), 64 pages, ISBN 978-1-60178-630-2.
- Paul Washer, *Ten Indictments against the Modern Church* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books), 78 pages, ISBN 978-1-60178-627-2.

Publisher's description:

The modern church is in need of revival. But as author Paul Washer contends, 'We cannot simply do what is right in our own eyes and then expect the Holy Spirit to come down and bless our labours.' Truth be told, the devil has little need to oppose the church's prayer for revival unless God's people are seeking to live lives and order congregations according to God's Word. This book examines ten areas where churches have neglected clear biblical direction and need to prayerfully seek reformation.



Please note that we are unable to supply these books; please contact your local bookshop.

NEWS

Reformation in Finland: New Reformed Baptist church plant.

An encouraging report about a church plant in this country has recently been published by *Evangelical Times*. Please see the report at:

<https://www.evangelical-times.org/43877/reformed-baptist-church-plant-in-jyvaskyla-finland/>. ■



Uganda

Some readers may remember Bosco and Heidi Bukeera. They have now moved to Uganda with a view to planting a new

church in Kayunga, Uganda. Please, pray for them as they settle in the country and their new home and start their ministry. ■

Baptist Historical Society

The BHS Summer School and CBHH Conference is planned for 16-19 July 2019 at Woodbrooke Conference Centre, Selly Oak, Birmingham, UK.

The theme is: Twentieth-Century Baptists: People, Places and Principles.

Main Speakers include Professor David

Bebbington, Dr Ruth Gouldbourne, Dr Sally Nelson, Dr Keith Clements, Dr Simon Oxley, Dr Ian Randall, Andy Goodliff, Alec Gilmore, Dr Keith Jones.

Further details can be found at: www.baptisthistory.org.uk or <http://www.rpc.ox.ac.uk/research-life/centre-for-baptist-history-heritage/>. ■



African Pastors' Conference News

The table gives an overview of recent conferences held July and August 2018 in Uganda and Tanzania, and the number of books distributed.

The total distributed since the start of APC in 2006 now stands at 134,540.

| COUNTRY | LOCATION | DELEGATES | BOOKS Sold & Free |
|----------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Uganda | Kampala | 81 | 234 |
| Uganda | Jinja | 81 | 449 |
| Uganda | Mbale | 165 | 529 |
| Uganda | Fort Portal | 60 | 119 |
| Tanzania | Zanzibar | 40 | 33 |
| Tanzania | Dar es Salaam | 97 | 245 |
| Tanzania | Itanana | 89 | 89 |
| Tanzania | Arusha | 95 | 49 |



Participants at work at the APC in Jinja, Uganda



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Single copies may be purchased. In this case the cost is one-sixth of the annual cost. Postage is included, but please note that we have to charge extra for airmail. A 1-year subscription has surcharge of £5.00 if airmail delivery is required.



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Please make any cheques payable to 'Reformation Today'.

Donations to APC: These should be sent to Phil Roberts, 121 Hartshill Road, Hartshill, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 7LU. Cheques should be made payable to 'African Pastors' Conferences'. Could UK donors please let Phil Roberts know if they intend to use gift aid.



Further Details

Further details about individual APC conferences are available from Phil Roberts (phil@tentmaker.org.uk) or Frederick Hodgson (frederick.hodgson@gmail.com)

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Further information: www.careyconference.org.uk

Next Issue

▶ **Salt and Light**
(Bill James)

▶ **Leading a Believers' Church**
(Ray Evans)