

Ancient Church History 19

Augustine: His Theology

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”

—Ephesians 1:3-6 NKJV

I. Introduction: The Theological Significance of Augustine

II. Theological Contributions

a. Augustine: The Great Systematizer of the Christian Faith

b. Areas of Significant Contribution

- i. Theology Proper
Rejection of Subordinationism

Analogy of the Trinity

- ii. Soteriology

1. Man's Utter Inability

Original Sin

Total Depravity

Free Will

“Fourfold State of Man”

- a. Pre-Fall: *Posse peccare* (“possible to sin”)
- b. Post-Fall (Unregenerate): *Non posse non peccare* (“not possible not to sin”)
- c. Regenerate: *Posse non peccare* (“possible not to sin”)
- d. Glorification: *Non posse peccare* (“not possible to sin”)

2. God's Absolute Sovereignty

Double Predestination and Election

Perseverance

3. Critiques

Justification and Sanctification

Assurance

iii. Ecclesiology

1. Good Points

Visible and Invisible Distinction

Corpus Permixtum

The *Holy* Church

2. Bad Points

Church Authority

Sacraments

Warfield's Assessment: "The problem which Augustine bequeathed to the Church for solution, the Church required a thousand years to solve. But even so, it is Augustine who gave us the Reformation. For the Reformation, inwardly considered, was just the ultimate triumph of Augustine's doctrine of grace over Augustine's doctrine of the Church."

III. Conclusion

St. Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, trans. John K. Ryan (New York, NY: Image, 2014).

Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2000).