

# AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

*354 - 430 AD*



A Biography  
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# AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

*354 - 430 AD*

## **“Doctor of the Latin Church”**

### Introduction

Aurelius Augustine was considered to be the first medieval man and the last classical man. His influence came at a very strategic time in the history of mankind. It is said that he was a bridge between two civilizations, as he brought together old patristic tradition from ancient Greco- Roman culture and connected it to the middle ages which changed the face of Western Christianity for the rest of time.



*Images courtesy Google images*

His works consist of more than 500 sermons, over 200 letters and 113 books. Over five million words that Augustine wrote or preached are still available today. His life is a trophy of the grace of God. The story of one man, a sinner, recognizing his need for a saviour, and then, after having been redeemed, set out to fight for the freedom of others. His story inspires hope and purpose. Augustine was the last of the great leaders of the Imperial Church in the West. His work was, in a way, the last glimmer of a dying age and yet, through his writings he became the teacher of the new age. Throughout the Middle ages, he was known and quoted as a favorite theologian and so he became one of the great doctors of the Roman Catholic Church. No theologian was quoted more often than he was. His work and theology was also much enjoyed by the Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century. Thus, Augustine, variously interpreted, has become the most influential theologian in the entire Western church, both Protestant and Catholic. If Augustine were alive today, he would insist that he was a saint based purely on the fact that he had been washed by the blood of the Lamb and not by reason of his incredible theological insights nor the fact that he consecrated himself to God.

## His Life

### I. From his birth to his conversion 354-386

Augustine was born in 354 A.D. in Tagaste, which today is known as Souk Ahras, Algeria. The culture of the time was pagan, but thanks to his devoutly Christian mother, St. Monica, he received a Christian education. She had him signed with the cross and enrolled among the catechisms. Through her faithfulness she instilled in him a hunger for truth and meaning, a yearning for a Saviour that would ultimately lead him to changing the face of history. *"From my tenderest infancy, I had in a manner sucked with my mother's milk that name of my Saviour, Thy Son; I kept it in the recesses of my heart; and all that presented itself to me without that Divine Name, though it might be elegant, well written, and even replete with truth, did not altogether carry me away"* (Confessions, I, iv).

His father, Patricius, was a pagan until close to his death. He did not share his wife's passion for Christ, but was very proud of his son's academic achievements and encouraged him to study as much as he could. Augustine succeeded greatly in the schools of Tagaste and Madaura where he mainly studied rhetoric<sup>1</sup> and Latin literature. He became excellent in reading Latin as he studied the Roman poet Virgil (70-19 BC)<sup>2</sup>, and he learned to speak well by studying the Roman orator and politician, Cicero (106-43 BC)<sup>3</sup>. Although the reason for studying Cicero was more to improve on his speaking abilities, he was deeply affected by the wisdom of Cicero, so much so, that his focus moved from rhetoric to philosophy. *"My spirit was filled with an extraordinary desire for the eternal qualities of wisdom....I was on fire then, my God, I was on fire to leave created things behind and fly back to you, nor did I know what you would do with me; for with you is wisdom. But that book filled me with the love of wisdom (which is called philosophy in Greek)." Herewith began the great search for true wisdom, a journey that would eventually lead him to Christ who is wisdom. "to love wisdom itself, whatever it might be, and to search for it, pursue it, hold it, and embrace it firmly"* (Soliloquies I.10.17).

And so his father decided to send him to Carthage (equivalent of our university today) to set him up for a career in forensics (law). His father was a well respected man, but he was not rich and so he needed a year to save the money to send his son to Carthage for further studies. During this year of idleness, when Augustine was only sixteen years old, he began to slip into unbelief. By the time he got to Carthage, a place steeped in licentiousness and full of all manner of seductions, he had hit an intellectual and moral crisis. After reading the material of Cicero he was taken down a philosophical road which led him to join the gnostic sect of the Manichaeans.

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<sup>1</sup> the persuasive use of language

<sup>2</sup> regarded as the greatest Roman poet, known for his epic, the *Aeneid* (written about 29 B.C.)

<sup>3</sup> Greek linguist, translator and philosopher

This sect had its origins with a Persian prophet named Mani<sup>4</sup> in the third century. In his book “Confessions”, Augustine tells us that he was enticed by the promises of a free philosophy unbridled by faith. The Manichaeans claimed that they had found contradictions in the Holy writings and that all the mysteries in nature could be explained scientifically. Augustine, being particularly interested in science began to devote himself to the teachings of the Manichaeans. He defended them fiercely and taught their doctrines. He had his audiences captivated by his rhetoric abilities. His literary skills were shaped into maturity at this time. Although Augustine subscribed to this set of beliefs for nine years he was never completely satisfied by their answers to the problem of evil. The Manichaeans believed that the god, or devil, created an evil world, where Christian belief says that the fall of Adam brought evil into the world. Augustine began to compare the writings of Cicero with christian scriptures in his pursuit for wisdom, but lost interest in the scriptures because he found the Latin very disappointing compared to “*the stately prose of Cicero*”.

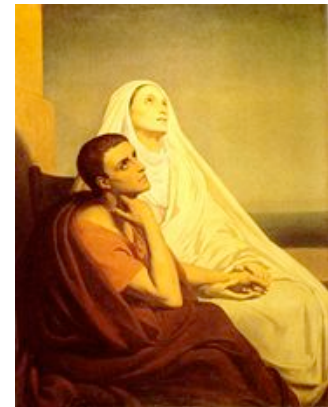
In 383 Augustine, at the age of twenty-nine, took up a professorship in Italy where he was exposed to the preaching of Bishop Ambrose. Bishop Ambrose was a highly learned man, who was passionate about bringing truth across to people through profound thought. He was skilled in Latin and Greek. He was also renowned for his kindness, and it seems that Augustine had a fascination with his way with people and so was drawn to sit regularly under his preaching. But it still took Augustine another detour of about three years before he finally came to the gospel conclusion. At first he turned towards the philosophy of the Academics with its pessimistic scepticism; then neo-Platonic philosophy inspired him with genuine enthusiasm. Augustine was always on a quest for truth “*Tomorrow I shall discover the truth. I shall see it quite plainly, and it shall be mine to keep...*” (*Confessions, VI, xi*). After reading books on Plato and Plotinus he finally thought that if he and his friends dedicated themselves to a monastic life,

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<sup>4</sup> The Persian prophet Manes or Mani founded the Manichaen sect in the third century AD. In legend his life seems to be almost a reincarnation of Christ. He was born of a holy virgin named Mariham, or Mar Mariam, whose title was "Mother of the Life of the Whole World." Mani performed the general feats that any Saviour performs. He preached, healed the sick, drew about himself twelve disciples, and eventually was martyred. He was crucified and flayed by a Persian king perhaps as a surrogate. Mani's doctrines were strictly Gnostic and puritanical. They included the strict abomination of all matter, especially the flesh. The Devil created the material world and also made sex to entrap the ethereal souls in the prison of the flesh. Similar views were taught by the Essenes. The Manichaeans abstained from sex, from all animal food, and eggs, believing all flesh was evil if begotten by copulation. The orthodox Church fiercely battled Manichaeism during the early centuries thinking that it had rooted the teaching out but it kept cropping up in the Middle Ages in sects such as the Cathars, Paulicians, Albigenses (or Albigensians), Bogomils, and many others. (the Mystica)

depriving themselves of all earthly pleasures, then they would find truth. But Augustine's sinful nature caught up with him and he soon realized that his passions were far greater than his self-control, particularly in the area of women. His mother Monica joined him in Italy and tried to persuade him to marry the young girl from Carthage with whom he had a son, named Adeodatus, but he felt that she was too young and released her to her own life. He had a deep affection for his son who stayed with him and his mother.

During this time Augustine felt to go and see a man called Simplicianus, the spiritual father of St. Ambrose, who told Augustine the story of the conversion of the celebrated neo-Platonic rhetorician, Victorinus (*Confessions VIII: i, ii*). This set the stage for his eventual conversion *"Are there not many who return to you from a deeper pit of darkness than Victorinus? They come to you and their darkness grows bright when they accept the light by which all who accept it are empowered to become the children of God."* (*Confessions VIII: iv*). Realizing the strength of his passions, and by reading scripture, he came to the conclusion that Jesus Christ was the only way to truth and salvation. And then at the age of thirty three he heard the wonderful message of grace which literally brought him to his knees in a garden in Milan. He then resigned from his professorship, went with Monica, Adeodatus (his son), and his friends to Cassiciacum, the country estate of Verecundus, where he devoted himself to the pursuit of true philosophy which, for him, now found its fulfillment in Christ.



*"St Augustine and Monica" <sup>5</sup>*

## **2. From his conversion to his episcopate 386-395**

As Augustine became more acquainted with Christian doctrine he began to write against the philosophies that once held him captive. From this time came his books "Against the Academics" and "Dialogues". He also began to hold his own conferences in which he had his audiences riveted as they had deep, meaningful discussions on stirring themes. The favourite topics at their conferences were truth, certainty (Against the Academics), true happiness in philosophy (On a Happy Life), the Providential order of the world and the problem of evil (On Order) and finally God and the soul (Soliloquies, On the Immortality of the Soul).

In the spring of 387, Augustine was baptized together with Adeodatus and Alypius by Bishop Ambrose during Easter, and went to Milan to take up his place among the

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<sup>5</sup> (1846), by Ary Scheffer.

competentes.<sup>6</sup> This was a real signpost moment for him as it meant that his convictions were, in a sense sealed. For some, being baptized was a momentary experience where after, they carried on with life per usual, but not for Augustine. For him it meant having to give up the comforts of Rome, to put faith into action. Augustine, his son, his mother and his friends, returned to Africa, to commit to a life of solitude, where he made war with pen and paper.



In the autumn of 387, His mother Monica died. Augustine had faced the agony of grief a few times in his life, starting with the death of his father when he was a teenager. He does not make much mention of this in his book *Confessions*. However you do read of the death of his best friend in his early 20's, which seems to have played a big part in his search for the author of eternity. The death of his mother was the saddest time of his life, but also a time where he discovered more of the depths of the nature and character of God. He also realized "*how little the human mind can understand God's purpose!*" (*Conf*). It so happened that a few days before his mothers' death, they had a conversation about the mystery of eternal life and what the saints of old were experiencing. *And while we spoke of the eternal Wisdom, longing for it and straining for it with all the strength of our hearts, for one fleeting instant we reached out and touched it. Then with a sigh, leaving our spiritual harvest bound to it, we returned to the sound of our own speech, in which each word has a beginning and an ending..*" (*Confessions IX*). Augustine wrestled in his heart as he tried to reconcile knowledge with reality. The knowledge that his mother was in the best place ever, with Christ in eternity, and yet he was overwhelmed by the reality of his sorrow. *"With all my heart I begged you to heal my sorrow, but you did not grant my prayer. I believe that this was because you wished to impress upon my memory, if only by this one lesson, how firmly the mind is gripped in the bonds of habit, even when it is nourished on the word of truth."* (*Confessions IX*).

After this, Augustine stayed in Rome for a while, mainly to refute the lies of Manichaeism. Then he travelled back to Africa and Carthage for a short while before he returned to his native Tagaste where he planned to settle down and live the ideal monastic life. Together with his friends, Augustine sold all his belongings and gave the proceeds to the poor, moved to his estate and gave himself to prayer and the study of sacred letters. Some of his great works come from this season of his life. Augustine was not interested in becoming a Bishop, he avoided cities where an election was necessary for someone like him to become a priest. But one day he had to go and see a friend in Hippo whom he wished to invite to join the small community at Cassiciacum. While at Hippo he attended church. Bishop Valerius preached that day on how God always sends a shepherd for his flocks and told the people to pray as

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<sup>6</sup> those who are being instructed in the word

there may be someone in their midst whom God had sent to be their minister. Obviously he had hoped that Augustine would respond to this call. The people immediately recognized Augustine as that person, and so, in 391, after much protestation, Augustine was ordained to serve as a priest in Hippo.

Later, in his book "City of God", Augustine wrote about why he agreed to the will of the people to become their priest.

*"No one should be so given to contemplation that in this condition he gives no thought to the needs of his neighbour; nor so given to activity that he allow no time for the contemplation of God..."*

*"The love of truth seeks out holy leisure, but the compelling force of love takes on necessary activity. But if no one imposes this burden, time should be passed in searching out and looking into truth."*

*"If, however, the burden is imposed, it ought to be borne because of the compelling force of love."*

*"However, not even in this case should the delight for learning be entirely abandoned, lest that delight be lost and the burden crush him." [Augustine, City of God, 19, 19]*

Augustine was a priest for four years before becoming a bishop. This was a formative time for him.

### **3. As Bishop of Hippo 395 - 430**

Once Augustine moved back to Africa, he sold everything he owned and gave it to the poor. He only kept his house which was turned into a monastic foundation for him and some of his friends. He became a sought after preacher. In 396 he was made coadjutor<sup>7</sup> bishop of Hippo and then became the full bishop after the death of Bishop Valerius. He worked hard at preaching, preparing sermons and writing. It is said that he combated the religion of the Manichaeans through his persistence as he tirelessly tried to convert people to the Catholic faith. When Augustine became the full bishop of Hippo, he was obliged to move into the bishop's house for reasons of hospitality and so that he could perform his episcopal duties. He continued his simplistic way of living that he had started when he lived in his own house, and insisted that everybody that lived with him do the same. The clothing and furniture had to be modest and decent, not unclean or untidy. The only silver in the house was his spoons and all his dishes were made of earth, wood or marble. Augustine was always hospitable, but frugal. Meat was served only to strangers and to the sick. They had wine but a strict limit was adhered to even by guests. Around the dinner table, wholesome conversation was encouraged. He enjoyed talking about meaningful topics. Idle chatter was discouraged especially if it was at the cost of somebody else. He had the following inscription on his table. *"This board allows no vile detractor place, whose tongue shall charge the absent with disgrace."* Any other person who wished to become a priest was expected to live a life of poverty, believed by Augustine to be the

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<sup>7</sup> Assistant with the right of succession on the death of the current bishop

perfect life. To this day, there are those that live in the order of St. Augustine, that attempt to live in a similar manner.

*“Augustine was an exceptional defender of truth and a shepherd of souls. He preached frequently, sometimes for five days consecutively, his sermons breathing a spirit of charity that won all hearts; he wrote letters which scattered broadcast through the then known world his solutions of the problems of that day; he impressed his spirit upon divers African councils at which he assisted, for instance, those of Carthage in 398, 401, 407, 419 and of Mileve in 416 and 418; and lastly struggled indefatigably against all errors. To relate these struggles were endless; we shall, therefore, select only the chief controversies and indicate in each the doctrinal attitude of the great Bishop of Hippo.”* (Catholic Encyclopedia)

On his death bed he was read the Enneads of Plotinus<sup>8</sup>. Augustine died on 28 August, 430 during the siege of Hippo by the Vandals. He died just as the Vandals were tearing down the city walls. They destroyed everything except for Augustine’s cathedral and library, which they left untouched. There is a discrepancy as to where Augustine’s body was laid to rest. Some say he was moved to Pavia, and others say that he lies in the sanctuary of Bonario.

## His Theology

Augustine believed that Scripture should not be interpreted literally if it contradicts science and reason. *“It not infrequently happens that something about the earth, about the sky, about other elements of this world, about the motion and rotation or even the magnitude and distances of the stars, about definite eclipses of the sun and moon, about the passage of years and seasons, about the nature of animals, of fruits, of stones, and of other such things, may be known with the greatest certainty by reasoning or by experience, even by one who is not a Christian. It is too disgraceful and ruinous, though, and greatly to be avoided, that he [the non-Christian] should hear a Christian speaking so idiotically on these matters, and as if in accord with Christian writings, that he might say that he could scarcely keep from laughing when he saw how totally in error they are. In view of this and in keeping it in mind constantly while dealing with the book of Genesis, I have, insofar as I was able, explained in detail and set forth for consideration the meanings of obscure passages, taking care not to affirm rashly some one meaning to the prejudice of another and perhaps better explanation.”* – The Literal Interpretation of Genesis 1:19–20, Chapt. 19 [AD 408]

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<sup>8</sup> Plotinus (Greek: Πλωτῖνος) (ca. AD 204–270) was a major philosopher of the ancient world who is widely considered the founder of Neoplatonism (along with his teacher Ammonius Saccas.) Much of our biographical information about him comes from Porphyry’s preface to his edition of Plotinus’ Enneads. His metaphysical writings have inspired centuries of Pagan, Christian, Jewish, Islamic and Gnostic metaphysicians and mystics. (wikipedia)



9Here are some of Augustine's beliefs:

### **1. Creation**

Augustine believed that everything in the universe was created simultaneously by God, and not in six consecutive days. He believed that those six days represent a logical framework rather than the physical passage of time. Augustine did not believe that original sin brought about structural changes in the universe, and he suggests that Adam and Eve were already created mortal before the fall. He admits that the creation story is difficult to interpret and that one should be open to change of opinion as new information comes up.

### **2. Original sin**

This was one of the main arteries of Augustines writings. Particularly against the Pelagians. Pelagius<sup>10</sup> taught that the Christian life was a constant effort through which one's sins could be overcome and salvation attained. But Augustine believed that there are times when the will is powerless against the hold sin has on it. The will is not always its own master, for it is clear that the will does not always have its way. According to Augustine, the power of sin is such that it takes hold of the will, and as long as we are under its sway we cannot move our will to be rid of it. Before the Fall we were free both to sin and not to sin. But between the Fall and redemption the only freedom left to us is freedom to sin. When we are redeemed, the grace of God works in us, leading our will from the miserable state in which it found itself to a new state in which freedom is restored, so that we are now free both to sin and not to sin. Finally in the heavenly home, we shall still be free, but only free not to sin.

### **3. Ecclesiology (doctrine of the church)**

Augustine developed his doctrine of the church principally in reaction to the Donatist sect who believed they were the only "true" or "pure" church on earth. He made a distinction between the "church visible" and "church invisible". The "church visible" is the institutional body on earth which proclaims salvation and administers the sacraments. This institutional body could consist of good and wicked people (Matt 13:30), while the "invisible body" is the body of Christ made up of the elect, the genuine believers from all ages, and are known only to God.

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<sup>9</sup> This information was sourced from Wikipedia and Gonzalez, Justo L. "The story of Christianity"

<sup>10</sup> Pelagius was a monk from Britain who had become famous for his piety and austerity

#### **4. Sacramental theology**

Augustine believed that infants needed to be baptised in order to be saved. Also in reaction against the Donatists, Augustine developed a distinction between the "regularity" and "validity" of the sacraments. Regular sacraments are performed by clergy of the Catholic (that is, the legitimate) church while sacraments performed by schismatics are considered irregular. Nevertheless, the validity of the sacraments do not depend upon the holiness of the priests who perform them; therefore, irregular sacraments are still accepted as valid provided they are done in the name of Christ and in the manner prescribed by the church.

#### **5. Mariology**

Augustine did not develop an independent mariology, but his statements on Mary surpass in number and depths those of other early writers. The Virgin Mary "conceived as virgin, gave birth as virgin and stayed virgin forever" Even before the Council of Ephesus, he defended the ever Virgin Mary as the mother of God, who, because of her virginity, is full of grace. She was free of any temporal sin, Because of a woman, the whole human race was saved.

#### **6. Eschatology**

Augustine originally believed that Christ would establish a literal 1,000-year kingdom prior to the general resurrection (premillennialism or chiliasm) but rejected the system as carnal. He was the first theologian to systematically expound a doctrine of amillennialism, although some theologians and Christian historians believe his position was closer to that of modern postmillennialists. The mediaeval Catholic church built its system of eschatology on Augustinian amillennialism, where the Christ rules the earth spiritually through his triumphant church. At the Reformation, theologians such as John Calvin accepted amillennialism while rejecting aspects of mediaeval ecclesiology which had been built on Augustine's teaching.

Augustine taught that the eternal fate of the soul is determined at death, and that purgatorial fires of the intermediate state purify only those that died in communion with the Church. His teaching provided fuel for later theology.

#### **7. War**

Augustine believed that a war must be just, but that in order for it to be so certain conditions must be fulfilled. The First is that the purpose of the war must be just - a war is never just when its purpose is to satisfy territorial ambition, or the mere exercise of power. The second condition is that a just war must be waged by properly instituted authority. This seemed necessary in order not to leave the field open to personal vendettas.<sup>11</sup>

#### **8. Lust**

In short, Augustine's life experience led him to consider lust to be one of the most grievous sins, and a serious obstacle to the virtuous life.

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To the pious virgins raped during the sack of Rome, he writes, "*Truth, another's lust cannot pollute thee.*" *Chastity is "a virtue of the mind, and is not lost by rape, but is lost by the intention of sin, even if unperformed."*

## His Writings

The work of Augustine consists of more than a hundred separate titles. His earlier works had more of an apologetic nature as he wrote against the heresies of the Arians<sup>12</sup>, Donatists<sup>13</sup>, Manichaeans and Pelagians<sup>14</sup>. Later he began to do exegetical commentaries on the book of Genesis, the Psalms and Romans. These can be found in his book called "*On Christian Doctrine*"

Many sermons and letters are found in "*Retractions*" which was written more towards the end of his life as he recaptured some events and beliefs. But arguably, his three most famous works are "*Confessions*", "*City of God*" and "*On the Trinity*".



1. "*Confessions*" is the story of his own life as he journals it before God. It is written down as if it were mere musings, but depth of theology humbles you as you read.
2. "*City of God*" was written to remind the Christians of that time, about their true home, the city that God was preparing for them. The Christians were downcast as they saw the fall of Rome to the Visigoths in 410.

3. "*On the Trinity*" is considered to be a true masterpiece. It took him sixteen years to complete this work. He wrote for a verdict against non-Trinitarian heresy. He also had a desire to understand the Trinity more deeply himself.

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<sup>12</sup> A heresy which arose in the fourth century, and denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ. (wikipedia)

<sup>13</sup> The Donatists (named for the Berber Christian Donatus Magnus) were followers of a belief considered a schism by the broader churches of the Catholic tradition, and most particularly within the context of the religious milieu of the provinces of Roman North Africa in Late Antiquity. They lived in the Roman province of Africa and flourished in the fourth and fifth centuries. (wikipedia)

<sup>14</sup> Pelagianism is a theological theory named after Pelagius (ca. 354 – ca. 420/440). It is the belief that original sin did not taint human nature (which God called very good), and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without Divine aid. Thus, Adam's sin was "to set a bad example" for his progeny, but his actions did not have the other consequences imputed to Original Sin. Pelagianism views the role of Jesus as "setting a good example" for the rest of humanity (thus counteracting Adam's bad example). In short, humanity has full control, and thus full responsibility, for its own salvation in addition to full responsibility for every sin (the latter insisted upon by both proponents and opponents of Pelagianism). According to Pelagian doctrine, because humanity does not require God's grace for salvation (beyond the creation of will),[1] Jesus' execution is devoid of the redemptive quality ascribed to it by orthodox Christian theology. (wikipedia)

## Influential Quotes

*"Give what Thou dost command, and command what Thou wilt."*

*"Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it repose in Thee."*

*"Love the sinner and hate the sin" , literally "With love for mankind and hatred of sins "*

*"Excess [i.e., 'extravagant self-indulgence, riotous living'] is the enemy of God"*

*"Heart speaks to heart"*

*"Nothing conquers except truth and the victory of truth is love"*

*"To sing once is to pray twice" literally "he who sings, prays twice"*

*"Lord, you have seduced me and I let myself be seduced" (quoting the prophet Jeremiah 20.7-9)*

*"Love, and do what you will" Sermon on 1 John 7, 8*

*"Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet"*

*"God, O Lord, grant me the power to overcome sin. For this is what you gave to us when you granted us free choice of will. If I choose wrongly, then I shall be justly punished for it. Is that not true, my Lord, of whom I indebted for my temporal existence? Thank you, Lord, for granting me the power to will my self not to sin."*

*"Christ is the teacher within us"*

*"Hear the other side"*

*"Take up [the book], and Read it"*

*"There is no salvation outside the church"*

*"To many, total abstinence is easier than perfect moderation." Lit. 'For many it is indeed easier to abstain so as not to use [married sexual relations] at all, than to control themselves so as to use them aright.'*

*"We make ourselves a ladder out of our vices if we trample the vices themselves underfoot."*

*"Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are." (quoted in William Sloane Coffin, The Heart Is a Little to the Left)*

*"If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself."*

*"I have read in Plato and Cicero sayings that are wise and very beautiful; but I have never read in either of them: Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden."*

*"Humility is the foundation of all the other virtues hence, in the soul in which this virtue does not exist there cannot be any other virtue except in mere appearance."*

*"If we did not have rational souls, we would not be able to believe."*

*"God had one son on earth without sin, but never one without suffering."*

*"Charity is no substitute for justice withheld"*

*"Will is to grace as the horse is to the rider."*

*"Who can map out the various forces at play in one soul? Man is a great depth, O Lord. The hairs of his head are easier by far to count than his feeling, the movements of his heart."*

*"A thing is not necessarily true because badly uttered, nor false because spoken magnificently."*

*"Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility."*

*"Don't you believe that there is in man a deep so profound as to be hidden even to him in whom it is?"*

*"Forgiveness is the remission of sins. For it is by this that what has been lost, and was found, is saved from being lost again."*



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