

A Case Against Calvinism – Lesson 2

Augustine: Calvin's Major Influence 1 John 4:1

Introduction: There is an important question concerning Calvinism. Is Calvinism really a Protestant doctrine? In this lesson we will try to get to the heart of this question. While the doctrine bears his name modern day Calvinist readily admit that Calvin largely copied his theology from Augustine, a fact that Calvin did not hide but boldly proclaimed in his writings. Because of this Augustine is considered to be the Father of Calvinism or Reformed Theology.

Laurence Vance provides numerous astonishing quotations from Calvinists praising Augustine: “One of the greatest theological and philosophical minds that God has ever so seen fit to give to His church...The greatest Christian since New Testament times...greatest man that ever wrote Latin...[His] labors and writings, more than those of any other man in the age in which he lived, contributed to the promotion of sound doctrine and the revival of true religion.”

Many prominent evangelicals today are followers of Augustine, which is evident and astonishing, considering his numerous heresies. Norm Geisler has said, “St. Augustine was one of the greatest Christian thinkers of all time.” Yet Augustine said, “I should not believe the gospel unless I were moved to do so by the authority of the [Catholic] Church.” That statement was quoted with great satisfaction by Pope John Paul II in his 1986 celebration of the 1600th anniversary of Augustine's conversion. The Pope went on to say: “Augustine's legacy...is the theological methods to which he remained absolutely faithful...full adherence to the authority of the faith...revealed through Scripture, Tradition and the Church.” Likewise the profound sense of mystery, “for it is better,” he exclaims, “to have a faithful ignorance than a presumptuous knowledge...I express once again my fervent desire that the authoritative teaching of such a great doctor and pastor may flourish ever more happily in the Church.”

I. The life of Augustine

- A. Born November 13, _____, died August 28, _____
- B. Born in Tagaste, Numidia [now Souk Ahras, Algeria]
- C. Name: Aurelius Augustinus
- D. Young Augustine
 1. Augustine's parents were of the respectable class of _____.
 2. Augustine studied first in Tagaste, then in the nearby university town of Madauros, and finally at _____, the great city of Roman Africa.
 3. As a youth Augustine lived a _____ lifestyle for a time, associating with young men who boasted of their sexual exploits.

4. At about the age of _____, Augustine began a relationship with a young woman in Carthage.

E. Older Augustine

1. In late August of 386 at the age of 31 _____ to _____.
2. Augustine turned against his profession as a _____ professor in order to devote more time to _____.
3. There is no argument that Augustine had a good _____ and _____.
4. Augustine was _____ and later recognized as a Doctor of the Church in 1298 by Pope Boniface VIII.

II. The theology of Augustine

A. Early Augustine.

1. He _____ Manichaeism.
2. His early theology.
 - a. His view on _____.
 - b. His view on _____.
 - c. His view on _____.
 - d. His view on _____.

B. Later Augustine.

1. He _____ the Donatists.
2. His later theology.
 - a. His view on _____.
 - b. His view on Christ _____.
 - c. His view on the _____.
 - d. His view on the _____ of _____.
 - e. His view on _____.
 - f. His view on _____.