

The Father of Modern Religion

Who is most responsible for the Christian religion of our current culture, and religion for the last 1700 years? If you guessed Jesus, or Peter, Paul, or any of the Apostles, or anyone named in the Bible, including God Himself, you'd be wrong. Instead, the man who most influenced the Christian religion of today was Aurelius Augustine.

Fun Fact: The Christian religion, Protestant and Catholic, is found nowhere in the Bible. It is a made-up religion of many systems loosely defined by Bible verses taken out of context, and/or made-up traditions, superstitions, imaginations, mysticism's, stories and fables, extra-biblical writings, errant beliefs and rituals, all in a false religion of candles, statues, chanting, babbling, beads, costumes, empty practices and more, all wrapped in a form of liturgical pomp and show that has no biblical support, totally void of God's Spirit. Mormonism is the same type of religion and was also created in such a manner.

Yet, ask the man on the street about church and religion and you would be hard pressed to find anyone who would connect the fifth century bishop of Hippo, North Africa, to the modern-day religion called Christian. No one knows about Augustine, or what he believed, or his theology that set the course of religion 17 centuries ago. This is troubling since what Augustine believed is not true or biblical. This means that what your religion teaches, and what you were taught, and what you know and believe, is likely not true or biblical.

Augustine received a secular education in Greek philosophy and Neo-Platonism. He also trained in rhetoric and became quite skilled at the discipline, teaching the subject for decades in Carthage, Rome, and Milan. His religion of choice was Manichaeism, and after a decade, he abandoned it to follow the religion of Hellenistic philosophy. Finally, 50 years after Constantine legalized the Roman Church, Augustine switched his allegiance to Christianity and began what would be his life work of defining and defending the Christian religion. Lacking the Spirit of God, he was ill-suited to the task.

Augustine was a prolific writer and his works demonstrate his training in philosophy and rhetoric, and his encounters with other religious belief systems. What eventually emerged from Augustine was a unique blend of his past: essentially, philosophy mixed with various religious ideas. His theology is based loosely on Bible verses equating to his own interpretation of religion including influences from his years in Manichaeism and Hellenistic philosophy and others, and a personal life of regret in taking a concubine for 20 years and fathering a child who later died.

Many of Augustine's concepts are not biblical, and words he chooses to use from the Bible are not always biblically correct. This includes aspects of what is today called Covenant Theology that drives all the varieties of the Christian religion. Here are just a few of his many ideas that do not align with the Bible:

- The millennial reign of Christ is false and carnal, leading to his systematic doctrine of Amillennialism.
- Believing that Christ rules the earth today spiritually through his triumphant church.
- The concept of Purgatory
- Mariology: that Mary was a perpetual virgin, "conceived of a virgin, gave birth as a virgin and stayed virgin forever", etc.

- A metaphorical interpretation of the Bible instead of a literal understanding of the text.
- A misunderstanding of the fall of man through symbolism
- A skewed vision and understanding of creation, preferring to spiritualize the event
- Infants are eternally damned at birth, leading to the false concept of infant baptism, and that infant baptism saves the soul of the child.
- Taught that only through disdain for fleshly desire could one reach the ultimate state of mankind, leading to the false concept of celibacy as a higher form of spiritual life. (Many cults have this same theme in their beliefs)
- The Sacraments outside the Catholic church are worthless and ineffectual
- Transubstantiation
- Any attempt to prevent the creation of children in marriage made the marriage invalid and a cloak for turpitude. Such a marriage is not wedlock but debauchery.

And there are many others...

The corrupt Roman Pagan Christian Church adopted Augustine's conceptual Christianity which remains intact to this day. At the reformation, Martin Luther left the Roman church, but took with him the flawed theology of Roman religion. Calvinism in particular leans heavily on Augustinian ideas. Protestantism also carries the brand of Augustinianism in much of its theology.

Just what is this "philosophical Augustinian theology"? Reading Augustine's many writings, you will find a concept of man's efforts to follow the good words written in the Bible as if the Bible provided a recipe on how to live life. This is no better than all the religions of the world with their writings of sage old sayings, platitudes, laws, and good works man must do to rise to a higher spiritual plain. It is humanistic self-effort in trying to make yourself into a better person by your own effort. This "man-can" religion is inherent in humanity and the drive behind the many errant religions that fill our planet. Examples are the writings of the Christians, Catholics, Mormons, Hindus, Confucius, Buddha, Islam, Jews, Humanism, Atheism, Agnosticism, Charismaticism, Evangelicalism, Emergent-ism, Earth-ism, Climate-ism, Animal-ism, Save the Planet-ism, atheism, agnosticism, the religions of "anything but God-ism, and virtually every other religion you care to name, including the array of Protestant religions.

The Body of Christ is not a religion. It is a relationship with God and this is what distinguishes Christ's Church from the numerous religions of our world that are powerless to affect change in an individual. The Spirit of God indwelling man, working through an individual, creates in him a new spiritual being. This new spiritual being is brought to you by the sacrifice of God Himself in Christ, atoning for man's sins, and thereby reconciling man to God. No religion has the Spirit of God. No religion has salvation. No religion has God. Neither Augustine nor much of the present-day church understands this concept, teaching instead a fortune cookie approach to life and living, using a mish-mash of words from the Bible, all out of context.

In the end, what Augustinian religion of past and present lacks is the Apostle Paul and the Mystery of God given to him to give to us: that being salvation by grace through faith and the indwelling Spirit.