

Revivals And Church History :: The Sins of Augustine

The Sins of Augustine - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/12/31 11:12

(<http://www.gospeltruth.net/aug/sinsofaug.htm>) The Sins of Augustine

This article deeply spoke to me of the harm produced when those in places of religious influence are not fully submitted to the Lord. As a result, they allow the world, and their sinful desires to influence their theology. The damage to the church is perpetuated for centuries.

Diane

Re: The Sins of Augustine - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/12/31 12:22

Diane,

I was wondering if you could give us some details about how the doctrine of original sin has "produced harm", perhaps something in the area of personal experience?

In the little that I know of Augustine's teachings, I think that his views concerning the role that the Catholic church and its administration of the sacraments has in salvation could be considered most harmful as this tends to bring men to faith in an institution instead of in Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by jimbob, on: 2006/1/1 20:24

Diane,

I have copied someone else's defense of Pelagius which I find very interesting. The author's name is Lewis Loflin. He not only denounces Augustine and Martin Luther, but also the Apostle Paul, for Mr. Loflin who is an antichristian is also astute in his observations about what this argument is really about.

Why Pelagius was Right

Protestants claim the Bible is the sole authority on God, and considering the hostility of both Protestants and Catholics towards Pelagius, we must turn to the Bible and our God-given reason for answers. Let's take the issues Pelagius confronted one at a time and see if his claims are false based on Scripture.

Adam was created liable to death, and would have died, whether he had sinned or not. There is nothing in Genesis that Adam was immortal. In 2:17 we have thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. He didn't die of course from eating the fruit, but we find also this in Genesis 3:22, "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever..." Adam was expelled from the Garden for the express purpose he would not be made immortal. It seems God never intended humans to be immortal, which throws any idea of life after death (bodily resurrection) into question. Pelagius was right on this count.

The sin of Adam hurt himself only and not the human race. Throughout the Jewish Scriptures God says over and over that only the sinner will die, not mothers, fathers, their children, etc. (See Deut. 24:16; 2 Kings 14:6; Ezek. 18:20; Ezek. 33:20; etc.) One is held liable for his/her own actions, not that of others. If Adam was the "father" of the human race, we are not responsible for his actions. Thus God said clearly the innocent are not liable for the actions the guilty.

The fact is Jesus Himself never mentions Adam or any "Fall" in any gospel. The Apostle Paul invented this entire concept of Adam causing humans to lose immortality because we are responsible for Adam. Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" Roman 5:19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners..." Paul by the way never met Jesus in the flesh. Th

The entire concept of God sacrificing His "Son" an innocent person just to make up for the "crime" of someone else is immoral in itself and contrary to God's words in the Old Testament.

Even before the coming of Christ there were some men sinless. This brings up one of the most thorny issues for Christians in that all of those prior to Jesus are burning in hell for the mere fact they were born before Jesus was ever "conceived." Thus they are punished for something they had no possible power to prevent. The Bible again proves Pelagius was right on this issue.

There were many sinless men: Numbers 14:24, "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully..." 2 Kings 22:2, "And he (Josiah) did that which was right in the sight of the LORD..." God went so far as to refer to Abraham as "My friend" (Isaiah 41:8) and Daniel as "beloved." (Daniel 9:23; 10:11; etc.) This brought up one of Pelagius' main arguments: Why would God give commands He knows nobody could carry out? His opponent St. Augustine and later Calvin, and Luther claimed just this. Again, enter Paul.

Among Paul's many abuses and misquotes of the Old Testament, none stands out more than Romans 10:8 as Paul wrote, ""But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach)." This was a misquote of Deuteronomy 30:10-14 which states: "if you will hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes...The word is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it."

Jesus Himself (whom Paul never met in the flesh) is very clear on this as well. In Matthew 19:16, "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus denied being God, and told the young man very specific things he could (and expected him to be able to do it) which didn't include any "faith in Jesus Christ" or blood atonement by His suffering and death. (Also see Mark 10:17 and Luke 18:18.)

But according to Calvin, even faith in Jesus won't "save" you. Under the Augustine/Calvinist view of predestination, God's "grace" is bestowed on people on a whim and one is damned even if they accept Jesus.

Infants at their birth are in the same state as Adam before the fall. Christians on the abortion issue claim life begins at conception and equally deny reincarnation. Thus a new life begins as a blank slate with nothing other than instinct or reflex. This also calls into questions of infant Baptism (which Pelagius felt only introduced one to God) because as we saw, because God said in the Old Testament we are only responsible for our own actions. Only Paul's discredited claims address such an issue.

Neither by the death nor fall of Adam does the whole race of man die, nor by the resurrection of Christ rise again. This is the real reason why Christianity needs the Original Sin doctrine. If Original Sin is false as the Old Testament shows and there are clearly men who overcame sin with faith in Jesus, then by our own efforts we can achieve this task. Thus we don't need Christianity, its institutions, and leaders to control our lives.

The Law introduces men into the kingdom of heaven, just in the same way as the Gospel does. Jesus in no manner did away with the Law of Moses. Matthew 5:17, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Mt. 19:17 "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." It's given through much of the Old Testament that in fact the Law given by God to Moses is the way to the Kingdom.

But Paul has a different view of things. He is inconsistent and confused on this issue as we shall see:

Romans 2:6, 13 "Who will render to each one according to his deeds". For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified." 2 Cor. 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." 2 Cor. 11:15 "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."

But Paul contradicts himself: Romans 3:20 "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Romans 3:28 "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." This one is even more questionable: Romans 1:16-17 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God salvation to every one that believeth As it is written, The just shall live by faith." This only appears in Paul's writings (Galatians 3:11-12, Hebrews 10:38) and nowhere did Jesus ever say such a thing and nowhere in the Old Testament is such a statement to be found. In fact the very word "faith" does not appear at all in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John!

I used an electronic Bible with word/phrase search, so don't try any games with me. So again Paul is just flat out wrong. So Augustine's entire theology hinges on Original Sin, a concept perverted by Paul. But Pelagius never attacked Paul as such. He rejected Augustine's poisoned view of humanity. Just as I do.

Diane, there is a very good reason this man lumps Augustine's and Paul's views together over and against Pelagius's and that is because they are against him. Even this unbeliever can see that Augustine's views basically lined up with Paul's.

Pelagius was a heretic, politics of the times notwithstanding.

Re: - posted by CyberCarbon (), on: 2006/1/2 1:28

Read the Confessions of Saint Augustine, go to the source and learn from the original work not someone's interpretation.

Re: Two bad apples don't produce a good one - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/1/2 9:33

This article, though, favoring Pelagius, exposes his heresy. (<http://www.sullivan-county.com/z/pelagius2.htm>) Pelagius: To Demetrius

I think we see the age-old pendulum-swing in action - people reacting to each other. They merely swing far off in the other direction. Pelagius, nor Constantine wished to submit to the Lord, but used the errors of the other to strengthen their own errors.

There is a point in all this that I wish to consider: Was it Adam's predisposition to sin that we have inherited, or was it the actual guilt of sin? I think it is important to differentiate. We must own our own guilt before we will embrace Christ's atonement. The blame game never saves anyone.

Another question has come to my mind: Can we blame Augustine for our centuries-old bad religious traditions that promote trust in the church? Or is there something in our nature that predisposes us that way. I think that later. People are "wired", or should I say, predisposed to put their trust in religion. That is part of the sin nature - to reject God, and trust in man.

The other consideration: the legal model of justification that Augustine seems to have promoted. It seems to be prevalent - a driving force for antinomianism. So we have a lot of people who think that they have a pardon, and are putting their trust in that. They missed the references to "Remain in Christ", Persevere, overcomers.. etc." So they stay loyal to religious law while blind to God's moral law.

Lewis Laflin is another swing of the pendulum. His attack against hyper-Calvinistic predestination, in my opinion, is justified. However he reacts, ie, swings into, what I view as Armenian thinking. He still bases his thinking on a legalistic foundation (don't all non-Christians, or pseudo-Christians?)

I grew up reformed, and am amazed at how inconsistent their thinking is: Freed by grace, predestined, but I saw them all bound up in a hellish enslavement to religious law. Wouldn't that characterize Augustine?

Quote:

-----go to the source and learn from the original work not someone's interpretation.

I have the book, Augustine's Confessions, and will take you up on the challenge... might take a while to get there...

Diane