

The Theological Mindset for Murder

To understand how someone could murder a Christian in the name of Jesus Christ and actually think they were serving God you must first meet the Donatists as we did in the last lesson. The next step in understanding how this could happen is meeting the man Augustine of Hippo and looking at his theology. Theology is not the study of God but rather the study of God and how He deals with man. You could say that a man's theology is his mindset upon approaching the Word of God. If a person's theology is wrong then his actions will be wrong. I believe that by taking a small look at Augustine's theology you will see more easily why we are so different as Baptists from the Protestants and the Catholics. Augustine developed the theology of the Catholic church. When Martin Luther and John Calvin started the reformation they kept their Augustinian theology. You could say that they drove the same car but with a new paint job. There are many more differences between Baptists and Protestants than just how we Baptize and observe the Lord's Table or the Lord's Supper.

Augustine (354-430) was born on November 13, 354, in Tagaste, Numidia (Algeria). His father, Patricius (died about 371) was a pagan (later converted to Christianity) but his mother, Monica, was a devout Christian who labored untiringly for her son's conversion. She was canonized by the Roman Catholic institution. Augustine was educated as a rhetorician in the former North African cities of Tagaste, Madaura and Carthage.

Between the ages of 15 and 30, he lived with a Carthaginian woman whose name is unknown; in 372 she bore him a son, whom he named Adeodatus, which is Latin for *the gift of God*. Augustine came under the influence of Ambrose in Milan in 387 and *embraced* Christianity. He was soon afterward baptized. He became Bishop of Hippo (now Annaba, Algeria) in 395, an office he held until his death.

Augustine systemized the theology of the sacraments and devised a works salvation based on the ordinances, which he falsely called sacraments. The sacraments according to Augustine *were a means or way to obtain grace*. The sacraments according to the present day catholic teaching are as follows: 1) Baptism, 2) Eucharist, 3) Reconciliation, 4) Confirmation, 5) Marriage, 6) Holy Order, 7) Last Rights (anointing of the sick). God's Word never uses the word sacrament and that is why we as Baptists never use the word but rather we observe the two scriptural ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (and we observe them in this order). Because Augustine put these beliefs in writing he was the first Roman Catholic Theologian and father of the predestinarian school of theology.

The idea of working the sacraments came from a reckless translation of the Greek word *mysterion* which the Apostle Paul used to describe the soul winning work of the New Testament local church. It is properly translated *mystery* in the received text of Scripture used by the first four centuries of Bible believers. The corrupt Latin Vulgate mistranslated it *sacramentum*. *Sacramentum* referred to the oath of allegiance taken by the soldiers who filled the ranks of the Roman Legion. How *mysterion*, which is "a hidden plan that becomes revealed," can become *sacramentum*, "an open oath of allegiance," is a *mysterion* all by itself.

Augustine engaged in two great theological conflicts. One was with the Donatists, a sect that believed the ordinances were not valid unless they were administered by worthy elders. The other conflict was with the Pelegians, followers of a British Monk who denied the doctrine of original sin. In the course of these debates, Augustine developed his doctrines of original sin, divine grace, divine sovereignty and predestination. **He also approved of Christians persecuting Christians**, fulfilling John 16:2, "*They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.*"

Augustine said:

Better that men should be brought to serve God by instruction, than by fear of punishment or by pain. But because the former means are better, the latter must not therefore be neglected. Many must often be brought back to their Lord, like wicked servants by the rod of temporal suffering. (See Jean Plaidy, *The Rise of the Spanish Inquisition*, P. 20.)

Jean Plaidy wrote:

He (Augustine) firmly believed that heretics should die, as their presence among believers was dangerous. (Jean Plaidy, *The Rise of the Spanish Inquisition*, P. 20.)

Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus alone, without works, and baptism is a work that follows belief and salvation. Based on your knowledge of salvation, compare Augustine's chapter titles about baptism with the Bible plan of salvation. Augustine to His Friend Marcellinus. (selected chapter titles)

Chapter 21 Unbaptized Infants Damned, But Most Lightly.

Chapter 24 Infants Saved as Sinners.

Chapter 25 Infants Described as Believers and as Penitents. Sins Alone Separate Between God and Men.

Chapter 26 No One, Except He Be Baptized, Rightly Comes to the Table of the Lord.

Chapter 27 Infants Must Feed on Christ.

Chapter 35 Unless Infants are Baptized, They Remain in Darkness.

Chapter 55 Unbaptized Infants Will Be Involved in the Condemnation of the Devil.

Borrowing from the doctrines of Cyprian in the second century, Augustine forever sealed **infant baptism** into the theology of the Catholic institution. If Augustine believed that baptism saves (see chapter 25 above), enlightens (see chapter 35 above) and overcomes the condemnation of the Devil (see chapter 55 above), then he died outside of Christ and is in Hell today.

AUGUSTINIAN THEOLOGY

Augustine created a theological system based on:

1. Original sin
2. Infant baptism and baptismal regeneration.
3. Sacerdotal salvation only through the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church.
4. Predestination and Election before being born or born again.
5. Covenant theology, theocracy and post-millennialism. He rejected *chiliasm*, or pre-millennialism in accordance with the ecumenical council in Constantinople in 381.
6. Capital punishment upon heretics. His opponents were called "dualists" or "Manichaeans."

PAULINE THEOLOGY

Baptists are **not Augustinian**, but **Pauline** in Theology

1. Our sin condemns us individually.
2. Regeneration is by the Holy Spirit at conversion.
3. Each man must be born again, not by the will of any other person. (John 1:12-13) Individually we are to be the salt of the earth. (Matthew 5:13)
4. Predestination is the condition of man before the fall and the destination of man *after* conversion. (Romans 8:29-30)
5. Israel and the local churches are **not** one and the same.
6. The church is a local exclusive assembly separate from the world. (II Corinthians 6:17) She is a garden enclosed, a little flock, an elect lady and the virgin bride of Jesus Christ. She is in the world but not of it. (I John 2:15) She does not rule the world, for Jesus said in John 18:36, "*My kingdom is not of this world.*" We do not marry the church with the state.
7. Christ return is premillennial. History is dispensational with the Old Testament and New Testament rightly divided. (II Timothy 2:15)
8. We await Christ's return, not the antichrist (I Thessalonians 1:10), for Jesus return is imminent. (Matthew 24:42, Matthew 25:13, Titus 2:13)

Augustine's theology logically set the stage for murder in the name of Christ and he justified it by believing the church of the New Testament was the replacement for Israel in the Old Testament. This is why the Catholics use the title "Priest" for the leadership of their churches. The word "priest" is found 27 times in the Book of Acts and only once is it used in a good way in Acts 6. Because of Augustine's Replacement Theology Catholics use the Old Testament title of "Priest" to imitate Israel of the Old Testament. This also explains why Catholics and many Protestants are Anti-Semitic or against Jews. Augustine believed that if Israel could stone or execute Achan in the Old Testament, the church could use capital punishment on those who did not submit to the church and its teachings. As Baptist we believe that God did deal with people differently in the Old Testament than He did in the New Testament. As Baptist we preach and persuade men but never persecute. Augustine believed that heretics were to be "reformed" and made to "conform" but God says a heretic is to be rejected not reformed. (Titus 3:10)

Augustine's theology said that just like circumcision was the token of the Covenant God made with Abraham in the Old Testament, infant baptism would be the token of the Covenant in New Testament. From this point on when someone in the Catholic church was asked why they baptize babies when it was never found in the New Testament, the reply would always be the reference to circumcision in the Old Testament. This is the theology behind all churches that baptize infants.

Augustine's theology taught that God created some people to go to Hell and that God created some people to go to Heaven. Because of this, the simple plan of salvation did not have to be presented to anyone since a person's salvation was totally dependent God's predetermination and not upon a person's free will. This view was resurrected and reinforced as PREDESTINATION by John Calvin, the founder of the Presbyterian denomination. This is why this view is referred to now as CALVINISM. Because Augustine was a lost man who was trying to understand God's Word, he did not have the Holy Spirit to teach him. Because of Augustine was a lost man trying to interpret God's Word without the Holy Spirit, he was open game to the doctrines of devils and all of hell's delusions and deceptions. As Baptists we believe in God's sovereignty and God does know who is going to trust Him as their Saviour, but God does not make anyone to go to Hell but rather wants all men to be saved. (1 Timothy 2:4 and many "whosoever" verses) God PREDETERMINES what every person would receive when they trust Christ, salvation, justification, forgiveness of sin, peace and assurance, and many other beautiful PREDETERMINED benefits. Predestination is mentioned four times in the Bible and when read in context, it is a beautiful study.

Most people say, "What's the big deal?" Augustine's theology carried it through the dark ages as it butchered and burned God's children all in the name of "Christianity." I know we make fun of theologians and how boring doctrine is but it is our theology that determines our interpretation when we read God's Word. Have you ever wondered how two people can read the same verse and get a different interpretation? The reason is their theology or their mindset or what they believe about God and how He deals with man and has dealt with man differently in different times. To be honest, I know there are bad theologians out there who don't believe the Bible is the Word of God and mess up simple Christianity but I have only met two of those apostates in my life. If someone said, "Well I know a whole lot of bad theologians," my question to them would be "Why do you know so many?" The men of God I have had the privilege of knowing and serving the Lord with have been sound in their theology and doctrine.

I am a Baptist. I am not a Protestant and I am not a Catholic. What makes me different than them is far more than just externals but my Baptist distinctives are rooted and grounded in the soil of scripture. I am not just different in name or church building, I am theologically and doctrinally different. After taking a look at this I hope you understand the wrong thinking behind "The Theological Mindset for Murder".