AUGUSTINE'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN SOUL:

ORIGIN, LIFE, AND END

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Daeki Cho

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APPROVAL SHEET

AUGUSTINE'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN SOUL:

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For souls who desire to love God and their neighbors;

특별히, 하나님께서 보잘것없는 나의 삶에 선물로 주신 아내 유미와 하준, 하은,

하율이가 인생의 가장 중요한 문제인 하나님과 영혼의 문제에 관해 그 답을 성경에서

찾기를 바라는 나의 모든 사랑을 담아⋯

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acad.	Augustine, *Contra Academicos*
An. orig.	Augustine, *De animae et eius origine*
Armstrong	Plotinus. *Ennead IV*. Translated by A. H. Armstrong. Loeb Classical Library 443. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1984
Babcock I/6	Augustine. *The City of God*. Translated by William Babcock. Works of Saint Augustine 6. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2012
Babcock I/7	Augustine. *The City of God*. Translated by William Babcock. Works of Saint Augustine 7. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2013
Bapt.	Augustine, *De baptismo contra Donatistas*
Beat.	Augustine, *De beata bita*
Bettenson	Augustine. *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*. Translated by Henry Bettenson. London: Penguin, 2003
Borruso	Augustine. *On Order*. Translated by Silvano Borruso. South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's, 2007
Boulding	Augustine. *The Confessions*. Edited by John E. Rotelle. Translated by Maria Boulding. 2nd ed. Works of Saint Augustine 1. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2018
Burleigh	Augustine. *Augustine: Earlier Writings*. Translated by John H. S. Burleigh. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953
C. du. ep. Pelag.	Augustine, *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum ad Bonifatium*
C. Jul.	Augustine, *Contra Julianum*
Catech.	Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus*
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina
Christopher	Augustine. *The First Catechetical Instruction*. Edited by Johannes Quasten and Joseph C. Plumpe. Translated by Joseph P. Christopher. Ancient Christian Writers 2. New York: Newman, 1947
Civ.	Augustine, *De civitate Dei*

Colleran	Augustine. "The Greatness of the Soul." In *The Greatness of the Soul, the Teacher*. Translated by Joseph M. Colleran, 1–112. Ancient Christian Writers 9. New York: Newman, 1978
Conf.	Augustine, *Confessionum libri XIII*
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
Doctr. Chr.	Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*
Dyson	Augustine. *The City of God against the Pagans*. Translated by R. W. Dyson. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2017
Enarrat. Ps.	Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*
Enchir.	Augustine, *Enchiridion de fide, ape, et caritate*
Enn.	Plotinus, *Enneades*
Ep.	Augustine, *Epistula*
Faus.	Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*
Fid. symb.	Augustine, *De fide et symbolo*
Foley 1	Augustine, *Against the Academics*. Translated by Michael P. Foley. St. Augustine's Cassiciacum Dialogues 1. New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2019
Foley 2	Augustine. *On the Happy Life*. Translated by Michael P. Foley. St. Augustine's Cassiciacum Dialogues 2. New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2019
Fort.	Augustine, *Contra Fortunatum*
Gallagher	Augustine. *The Catholic and Manichaean Ways of Life (De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et De Moribus Manichaeorum)*. Translated by Donald A. Gallagher and Idella J. Gallagher. Fathers of the Church 56. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2008
Gen. imp.	Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram imperfectus liber*
Gen. litt.	Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*
Gen. Man.	*Augustine, De Genesi contra Manichaeos*
Gerson	Plotinus. *The Enneads*. Edited by Lloyd P. Gerson. Translated by George Boys-Stones, John M. Dillon, Lloyd P. Gerson, R. A. H. King, Andrew Smith, and James Wilberding. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2019
Grube	Plato. "Phaedo." Translated by G. M. A. Grube. In Plato, *Complete Works*. Edited by John M. Cooper, 49–100. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997

Hill I/13	Augustine. *On Genesis*. Edited by John E. Rotelle. Translated by Edmund Hill. Works of Saint Augustine 13. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2002.
Hill I/11	Augustine. *Teaching Christianity (De Doctrina Christiana)*. Edited by John E. Rotelle. Translated by Edmund Hill. Works of Saint Augustine 11. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1996
Hill I/5	Augustine. *The Trinity (De Trinitate)*. Edited by John E. Rotelle. Translated by Edmund Hill. Works of Saint Augustine 5. 2nd ed. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2017
Hill I/8	Augustine. "True Religion." Translated by Edmund Hill. In *On Christian Belief*, edited by Boniface Ramsey, 13–103. Works of Saint Augustine 8. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2005.
Immort. an.	Augustine, *De immortalitate animae*
Lib.	Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*
Mor. eccl.	Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*
Nehamas	Plato. "Phaedrus." Translated by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff. In Plato, *Complete Works*. Edited by John M. Cooper, 506–556. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997
Ord.	Augustine, *De ordine*
Quant. an.	Augustine, *De quantitate animae*
Ramsey	Augustine. *Revisions*. Edited by Roland J. Teske. Translated by Boniface Ramsey. Works of Saint Augustine 2. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2010
Retract.	Augustine, *Retractationum libri II*
Schopp	Augustine. "The Immortality of the Soul." Translated by Ludwig Schopp. In *The Immortality of the Soul; The Magnitude of the Soul; On Music; The Advantage of Believing; On Faith in Things Unseen*, 1–47. Fathers of the Church 4. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2002
Schumacher	Augustine. *Against Julian*. Translated by Matthew A. Schumacher. Fathers of the Church 35. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2004
Serm.	Augustine, *Sermones*
Solil.	Augustine, *Soliloquiorum libri II*

Taylor 1	Augustine. *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*. Translated by John Hammond Taylor. Vol. 1. Ancient Christian Writers 41. New York: Paulist, 1982
Taylor 2	Augustine. *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*. Translated by John Hammond Taylor. Vol. 2. Ancient Christian Writers 42. New York: Newman, 1982
Teske I/2	Augustine. *Revisions*. Edited by Roland J. Teske. Translated by Boniface Ramsey. Works of Saint Augustine 2. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2010
Teske I/20	Augustine. *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean (Contra Faustum Manichaeum)*. Edited by Boniface Ramsey. Translated by Roland Teske. Works of Saint Augustine 20. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2007.
Teske I/23	Augustine. "The Nature and Origin of the Soul." In *Answer to the Pelagians: The Punishment and Forgiveness of Sins and the Baptism of Little Ones, The Spirit and the Letter, Nature and Grace, The Perfection of Human Righteousness, The Deeds of Pelagius, The Grace of Christ and Original Sin, The Nature and Origin of the Soul*, edited by John E. Rotelle. Translated by Roland J. Teske. Works of Saint Augustine 23. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1997
Teske I/24	Augustine. "Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians." Translated by Roland J. Teske. In *Answer to the Pelagians, II*, edited by John E. Rotelle, 97–220. Works of Saint Augustine 24. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1998.
Teske II/3	Augustine. *Letters (Epistulae) 156–210*. Edited by Boniface Ramsey. Translated by Roland Teske. Works of Saint Augustine 3. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2004
Tilley and Ramsey	Augustine. *The Donatist Controversy I*. Edited by Boniface Ramsey and David G. Hunter. Translated by Maureen Tilley and Boniface Ramsey. Works of Saint Augustine 21. Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2019
Trin.	Augustine, *De Trinitate*
Util. cred.	Augustine, *De utilitate credenti*
Ver. rel.	Augustine, *De vera religione*

PREFACE

My interest in Augustine's understanding of the human soul began after reading his *Confessions*. The *Confessions* was not just Christian literature to me because it addresses many philosophical topics from a unique perspective that differs from other philosophers. *The Literal Meaning of Genesis* deepened my research of the Christian teaching on the human soul. While exploring topics that are not explicitly explained in the Scriptures, Augustine's description of the human soul seemed to suggest to me that Christians must rationally subordinate to the Word of God. This dissertation focuses on the doctrine of the human soul and tries to evaluate the superiority and inferiority of sources (i.e., Scripture, philosophy, and other thought) that Augustine carefully sorted out and differently utilized in his works. Studying his philosophical quest is a great blessing to people, like me, who desire to seek knowledge of the soul supported by the Scriptures.

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Louisville, Kentucky

December 2023

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

North Africa was not the best place to find an example of the faithful Christian belief, living a good life, when Augustine was born to a poor family on November 13, 354, in Thagaste.[1] Growing up in that background with a devout mother, Monica, he could not initially place his faith in the Scripture. He wandered in many systems of thought, such as Manichaeism and Neoplatonism, before converting to Christianity in 386 at the garden of Milan. When he decided to subordinate himself to Christ, in the end he discovered that God providentially led him through philosophy to Himself.[2] Yet, that conversion meant for him to begin his quest for the intellectual formation of his Christian faith. He devoted his entire life to elaborating on the Christian faith and doctrines until his death on August 28, 430, at the age of seventy-five.

Contemporary Augustine scholars, representatively including Adolf von Harnack, Prosper Alfaric, and Ronald Teske, tend to interpret his thought of the human soul as intimately dependent upon historical sources. They imagine that Augustine converted to Neoplatonism while imbibing other philosophical schools as well, and this philosophical influence upon him persisted even after his conversion to Christianity in

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[1] James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine* (Boston: Twayne, 1985), 2; Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 45th anniv. ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2000), 7; John J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine: The Growth of St. Augustine's Mind Up to His Conversion* (London: Longmans, Green, 1954), 29–32. O'Meara elaborated here that at the time of Augustine, besides ancient African cultic religions, Manichaeism was an obstacle to the Christian faith and the Donatists kept attacking the Catholics. While Manichaeism and Donatism were widespread, many Christians, including some bishops, were manifestly corrupt and were Christians only in name.

[2] *Conf.* 7.9.13.

386.[3] However, since the middle of the twentieth century, another group of scholars began questioning this assumption, especially Pierre Courcelle, Robert O'Connell, and A. Hilary Armstrong.[4] They pointed to the sharp differences between Augustine's thought and the prevailing philosophical, especially Neoplatonic, teachings. These differences are pronounced in the studies on Augustine's doctrine of the human soul. Some scholars continue to focus on comparative studies about the human soul and assume that Augustine converted to Neoplatonism and later to Christianity. I argue that Augustine's doctrine of the human soul was shaped more by Scripture, though, than by any other

[3] Brown, *Augustine*, 89–91, 93 (cf. 140–41, 212–13). Brown described here that Neoplatonism made significant influence on Augustine's spiritual life and led him to discover transcendent God, as "the most lasting and profound result of Augustine's absorption of Neo-Platonism" (91). Brown says that "Plotinus and his disciple Augustine" shared the theme of return of every part to the original source, One (89). Based on these such inspection, Brown concluded that Augustine converted "from a literary carrier to a life 'in Philosophy'" by reading of the Platonic books. He added, "Augustine's 'conversion to Philosophy' is one of the most fully-documented records of such a change in the ancient world" (93); Prosper Alfaric, *L'évolution Intellectuelle de Saint Augustin* (Paris: Émile Nourry, 1918), 399. Alfaric maintained that Augustine converted (*converti*) to Neoplatonism (*Néoplatonisme*) intellectually (*intellectuellement*) instead of the gospel (*plutôt qu' à l'Evangile*). Ronald Teske quoted Alfaric's view, along with Masai's argument of Augustine's philosophical fideism until AD 396, to emphasize Augustine's conversion to philosophy initiated from AD 373 after reading Cicero. Cf. Roland J. Teske, *To Know God and the Soul: Essays on the Thought of Saint Augustine* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2008), 15, 137; Robert J. O'Connell, "The Plotinian Fall of the Soul in St. Augustine," *Traditio* 19 (1963): 1–35. O'Connell thought Augustine took Plotinian solution of the soul's pre-existence into his combat the Manichaeism (34); Robert J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Confessions: The Odyssey of Soul* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1969), 19–20, 101–2. O'Connell explained "problems" of Augustine's conversion. He elaborated, rather than solved, these problems as derived from the doubtful conversion narrative in *Confessiones* 8. He stated Augustine's recount of his conversion "is viewed not as a return to Christianity, nor even to the *Catholica,* but to the contemplative heights of Cassiciacum and Ostia" (101); John J. O'Meara, *Studies in Augustine and Eriugena* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1992), 121–22. O'Meara summarized the debate on Augustine's conversion as being discussed based on the doubtful mind about the factuality of his conversion narrative in *Confessiones* 8. These scholars, including Alfaric and Gourdon, insisted that Augustine converted to Neoplatonism in AD 386 and he was not a sincere Christian until AD 400; Brian Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2009), 23–24. Dobell seemed like to take over the argument that Augustine was not fully converted to Christianity. He revived Alfaric's argument by softening it: "Augustine was not *intellectually* converted to Christianity (as described in *Confessions* 7) until c. 395." Dobell wanted to mean by conversion not only believing but also understanding the doctrine of Incarnation "in such a way as to distinguish between 'Catholic truth' and 'the falsity of Photinus.'" In conclusion, Dobell's claimed that Augustine's conversion to Christianity took place in the garden at Milan, but intellectual conversion was not complete until AD 395.

[4] O'Meara, *Studies in Augustine and Eriugena*, 210; John J. O'Meara, "The Neoplatonism of Saint Augustine," in *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought*, ed. Dominic J. O'Meara (Albany: State University of New York, 1982), 34–35.

thought. He crafted his doctrine of the human soul through careful attention to Scripture and tradition. Augustine was ready to use the insights of the philosophical schools, but not in a way that ultimately undermined the authority of divine revelation.

Thesis

I contend that Augustine made the doctrine of the human soul—origin, life, and end—subordinate to the teaching of Scripture and tradition, instead of other ideas. He had in mind a clear distinction among the belief in truth, the explanation of it, and aspects that are not suitable. He attempted to distinguish the level of credibility of Scripture, philosophy, and other thoughts. In this distinction, Scripture and tradition are considered the primary purpose that other sources support. With respect to this differentiation, he sorted out some elements of philosophy as superior to other thoughts in light of biblical teachings. To clarify the schematic order, Augustine tried to illustrate the nature of the human soul from the perspective of Scripture and tradition. He added supplements with philosophical ideas that he eclectically—not the whole—chose and modified for its plentiful understanding. He refuted concepts that contradict biblical teachings. The subject of the human soul illuminates his dependence on scriptural authority.

My goal for this dissertation is not necessarily to convince readers that my proposal of Augustine's doctrine of the human soul identified a place to rest in the historical investigation of the sociocultural background. Rather, this research focuses on exposing the internal consistency of his scriptural framework in describing the nature of the human soul.

Methodology

As a work of Christian philosophy, this dissertation will engage Augustine's prioritization of sources in explaining the human soul's origin, life, and end. From the start of his conversion, he acknowledged the absolute authority of the Scripture. This dissertation, therefore, selectively employs Augustine's works related to the human soul,

without distinction by time.[5] By constructing Augustine's doctrine of the human soul from these works, this dissertation will shape the superiority and inferiority of sources in the order below.

Initially, concerning the knowledge of the human soul, Scripture stands as the first and the foremost authority, providing true knowledge about the soul.[6] Augustine believed that the Scripture furnished the truth about the nature of the world and its elements. This thought led him to confirm scriptural teaching as the one true philosophy because it bestows divine wisdom.[7] Perceiving Christian teaching as philosophy does not

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[5] This dissertation does not devote too much attention to distinguishing between early works and later works of Augustine (on which other Augustinian scholars focused). This dissertation considers that Augustine accepted the belief in scriptural authority from the early period of his conversion, and it lasted throughout the rest of his life. This dissertation implements various works of Augustine including *Acad., Beat., Ord., Solil., Immort. An., Mor. Eccl. Quant. an., Gen. Man., Lib., Ver. Rel., Util. cred., De Duabus Animabus Contra Manichaeos, Fort., Gen. litt., De Sermone Domini in Monte, Doctr. Chr., Enarrat. Ps., Contra Felicem Manichaeum, Conf., Faus., Trin., Gen. imp., De Spiritu et Littera, Civ., An. Orig., C. Jul., Enchir.,* and *Retrac.*

[6] In Augustine's works, Scripture takes the highest authority, with church tradition. See *Acad.* 3.20; *Beat.* 4.34; *De Ordine* 2.9.26; *Lib.* 2.5; *Gen. litt* 1.19.38, 21.41, 6.9.15, 7.9.13, 28.42, 8.1.4; *Quant. an.* 7.12; *Conf.* 12.14.17, 19.28, 25.35, 13.23.33; *Faus.* 11.2, 5; *Doctr. Chr.* 2.7.10, 3.27.38; *C. Jul.* 4.14.72; *An. orig.* 4.23.37, 24.38; *Trin.* 2.9.22; *Civ.* 10.32, 11.3, 13.24, 18.41, 44, 19.18, 20.1, 21.27, 22.29. See also John J. O'Meara, *The Creation of Man in St. Augustine's De Genesi Ad Litteram*, The Saint Augustine Lecture 1977 (Villanova, PA: Villanova University, 1980), 69; John J. O'Meara, *Charter of Christendom: The Significance of the City of God*, The Saint Augustine Lecture 1961 (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 86; Phillip Cary, *Outward Signs: The Powerlessness of External Things in Augustine's Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2008), 43; John M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996), 71; Robert E. Cushman, "Faith and Reason," in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. Roy W. Battenhouse (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 296.

[7] For Augustine's early use of "*una verissimae philosophiae disciplina*" designating Christianity, see *Acad* 3.19.42; for later use of "*vera philosophiae*" pointing to Christianity, see *C. Jul.* 4.14.72. See also Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, trans. L. E. M. Lynch (New York: Random House, 1960), 37. Edmund Hill presents Augustine's view on Christian religion to be completed form of philosophy:

> He also brought philosophy to completion in all three of its parts. He completed physics inasmuch as his resurrection showed that bodily desire has for its goal not fleshly pleasure (*voluptas*) but the health and peace of the body. He brought ethics to its completion by teaching his commandment of love and showing how the striving for freedom has its true goal not in control over other human beings (*superbia*) but in true love. Finally, Christ brought logic to its completion inasmuch as his teaching in word and deed instructed human beings that their striving for knowledge has its true goal not in things of sight and the other senses (*curiositas*) but in spiritual and divine realities. The victory over the threefold desire shows the Christian religion to be philosophy in its perfect form. (Edmund Hill, introduction to "True Religion," in *On Christian Belief*, by Augustine, ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. Edmund Hill, 1:13–103, Works of Saint Augustine 8 [Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2005], 26–27)

affect its religious identity. Instead, Christian religion, by nature, can be called philosophy in the sense of pursuing the wisdom of God.[8] Christianity, as the true philosophy, affirms true knowledge as located in Scripture and tradition. Augustine concentrated closely on the Scripture, along with tradition, as the major authoritative sources to comprehend the nature of the human soul.

Second, Augustine selectively used philosophical thoughts to understand the nature of the human soul contained in Scripture.[9] He demonstrated a concrete conviction about such a methodology. He sought truth by recursively equipping philosophical ideas to ascertain the nature of the human soul. Philosophy can be utilized as an effective tool, although only some elements are compatible with Scripture. Augustine observed that some philosophers offer helpful thoughts in recognizing biblical truth even though they are "still far from the truth."[10] According to Augustine, these philosophers do not need to be Platonists, but their works should lead one to Christian faith, among those whose books he had read. Augustine mentioned the reason he prefers the Platonists' works:

> Here, then, is the reason why we rank the Platonists ahead of the others: although other philosophers have spent their talents and their energies in investigating the causes of things and the right way to learn and to live, the Platonists, with their knowledge of God, are the ones who have discovered where to locate the cause by which the universe was constituted, the light by which truth is perceived, and the fount at which happiness is imbibed. Thus the philosophers who hold this view of God, whether these Platonists or any others from any nation, are in agreement with us. But I prefer to deal with the Platonists in particular because their writings are better known.[11]

Neoplatonists developed an outstanding system of thought, compared with others, about God and the spiritual world. Augustine did not mean, by such praise, that any achievement

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[8] *Ver. rel.* 5.8. Augustine said that Christian faith contains both philosophical and religious elements (*non aliam esse philosophiam . . . et aliam religionem.*) Therefore, in *Civ.* 8.1 he argued that the true philosopher is a lover of God (*verus philosophus est amator Dei*).

[9] Philosophical thoughts were often equipped to investigate "spiritual meaning" of Scripture's passages. *Acad.* 3.20.43; *Gen. litt.* 1.18.37, 7.28.43; *Civ.* 10.32, 13.19.

[10] *Civ*. 11.5 (Dyson, 455). Cf. *Civ.* 8.8–10.

[11] *Civ.* 8.10 (Babcock I/6, 254).

of the Neoplatonists can replace Christian dogmatic teaching. Neoplatonist books do not convey the essential truth of Christianity. For example, if they want to claim their ideas as truth, Neoplatonists had to contain the doctrine of the incarnation of Jesus—as articulated in John 1:1–12—in their books, but they do not possess such a factor.[12] They are different from Christianity because their teachings lack the core aspects of Christian belief. But Augustine viewed Neoplatonist ideas as unique and exceptional, not only because they helped him to find Christianity, but because they came close to the Christian notion of the transcendent God. He understood Neoplatonism, compared with other secular thought, as the best way to explain aspects of the created world, including humans, to which the Word of God alludes. Neoplatonic language becomes an essential instrument of Augustine, which amplifies the given clues about the nature of the human soul by the Scriptures.

Third, Augustine abandoned some ideas that Christians cannot utilize to comprehend the human soul.[13] He distinguished between acceptable and unacceptable thoughts and denied unacceptable ones. He gained various knowledge from secular education and folklore. He did not, though, try to harmonize all such knowledge with Scripture. He employed some knowledge—like classical philosophy—in his intelligible works but following conversion declined others such as astrology and Manichaeism. Augustine's certain objective in using secular thoughts was namely to understand scriptural teachings; but he rejected specific thoughts not aligned with Christian belief. For example,

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[12] See *Conf.* 7.9.13, 14.

[13] Augustine refuted Manichaean doctrine of the human soul in *Fort* 28, 29. Augustine clarified the reason for his refutation of Manichaean teaching to be his devotion to the sacred writings, Scriptures. See *Faus.* 11.2. Augustine rejected his acquainted skills of astrology not because it is useless, but it does not fit into Christian life although it is useful in a practical aspect. See the process that Augustine come to reject astrology in *Conf.* 7.6.8–10. and his falsification of astrology based on the biblical doctrine of the final punishment in *Civ.* 5.1–10., especially the opposite example, against astrology, shown in Scripture in *Civ.* 5.4. Thomas O'Loughlin says that Augustine criticized astrology in order to remove unacceptable aspects of Roman paganism and to define Christian faith in distinction to it. See Thomas O'Loughlin, "The Development of Augustine the Bishop's Critique of Astrology," *Augustinian Studies* 30 (1999): 83–103. Concerning the unacceptable teachings about the human soul, Augustine lists the elements that contradict Scripture's teaching in *An. orig.* 4.24.38. See Augustine's rejection of the material soul, of Pythagorean philosophy, in Aug., *Conf.* 4.15.24.

he had skillful knowledge of astrology in his early life.[14] In Augustine's day, the revival of ancient astrology had greatly influenced the Roman elites until the emperor who tried to Christianize the entire empire banned it.[15] Augustine eagerly studied this high-class knowledge, Roman astrology, prior to his conversion. However, he denied it after he turned to the Christian faith, not because it was trivial but because it contradicted scriptural teachings.[16] As such, Augustine abandoned secular thoughts that cannot be compatible with the Christian faith.

This schematic approach will characterize my constructive approach to Augustine's instruction regarding the nature of the human soul.

Survey and Literature

In the late-nineteenth and early-and-mid-twentieth centuries, some scholars began to doubt Augustine's conversion in *Confessiones.* In his confessed life story, he stated his participation in Manichaean meetings as merely a Hearer—not as an elect who is allowed to be in "sancta ecclesia."[17] His reading of philosophy books led him to

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[14] Augustine says he was addicted to astrology books. See *Conf.* 4.3.5.

[15] Tamsyn Barton, *Ancient Astrology* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 32–63. Tim Hegedus contends that Greco-Roman astrology attained popularity among Roman elites and was give the illustrious title "mathematici," which was originally used in the Pythagorean schools. Tim Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology*, Patristic Studies 6 (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 7.

[16] *Conf.* 4.4.5. Augustine said that before the conversion "he devoted to the books of astrologers (*libris genethliacorum esse me deditum*.)" After conversion, yet, Augustine discovered that the Christianity rejects and condemns astrology and he confesses that he sinned by clinging to it, against God, in *Conf.* 4.3.4. Augustine employed the narrative of the twins Esau and Jacob in his argument against astrologers' teaching of human fate, which is similar to naturalistic determinism. He said that astrology is not only rationally inconsistent but also cannot be compatible with the understanding offered by the biblical narrative. See *Civ.* 5.1–5.

[17] Peter Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 108–9. Brown said,

> The Manichaean religion was based on a rigid distinction between the perfect, the Elect (men and women), and the rank-and-file, the Hearers. The *sancta ecclesia* of Mani was limited to the Elect. . . . Manichaeism, therefore, was a group with an unmistakable inner core: the Elect were vagrant, studiously ill-kept, they carried exotic books, they were committed to elaborate liturgies and fenced in with drastic taboos. The Hearers, by contrast, were indistinguishable from their environment. . . . Augustine and his friends were only Hearers. (Brown, *Augustine*, 35–49)

abandon Manichaean fables, which are materialistic.[18] The Neoplatonist books turned his eyes from the material outer world to the inner world, where the human soul is placed.[19] The soul was one of "the great themes of the Neo-Platonic tradition in its Christian form."[20] Augustine's emphasis on the problem of the soul was enough to drag modern scholars' interest with the resembled form of its expressions, compared with *Enneads*, by Plotinus.[21]

The statements in *Confessiones* that God providentially used Neoplatonist works seem as though Augustine accentuated the significance of the Neoplatonic philosophy of his time. This tone of *Confessiones* gave the impression to late-nineteenth-century scholars that Augustine's *Cassiciacum Dialogues* are somewhat distanced from his later works in terms of his affinity for Neoplatonism. Consequently, nineteenth-century scholars— including Adolf von Harnack and Gaston Boissier—cast suspicion on the sincerity of his conversion in Milan.[22] Since that time, the entirety of Augustine's conversion became one of the most controversial subjects among the following generation of academics. Augustine's peculiar view of the human soul spurred a number of twentieth-century scholars to consider him as more absorbed in secular thought that he mingled with the Christian faith.

Assumption 1: Neoplatonism Was a Rival to Christianity

Numerous late nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars—including Adolf von Harnack, Gaston Boissier, W. R. Inge, Prosper Alfaric, Willy Theiler, Père Paul Henry,

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[18] *Conf.* 5.10.19. This group of philosophers is called *Academicos*.

[19] *Conf.* 7.9.13, 10.16. Augustine mentions his discovery of soul in the inward place in *Conf.* 7.9.13: "*intravi et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae supra eundem oculum animae meae*"

[20] Brown, *Augustine*, 161.

[21] Brown, *Augustine*, 162.

[22] Adolf von Harnack, *Augustins Konfessionen* (Giessen, Germany: J. Ricker, 1888); Gaston Boissier, "La Conversion de Saint Augustin," *Revue des Deux Mondes* 85 (1888): 43–69.

Paula Fredrekson, Frederick Van Fleteren, and Leo C. Ferrari—leaned toward feeling that to some degree Augustine absorbed Neoplatonic thought in his Christian faith.[23] They identified in Augustine's works similarities with the Neoplatonic system of the universe and metaphysics.[24] These similarities became evidence demonstrating Augustine's commitment to Neoplatonism, which rivals Christianity. To justify his conversion to Neoplatonism and later to Christianity, or vice versa, one must assume both as the same type—either religion or philosophy. From this viewpoint, in consequence, Augustine recognized both Neoplatonism and Christianity as either religion or philosophy.

Adolf von Harnack claimed that Augustine converted initially to Neoplatonism and later to Christianity. Harnack maintained that Augustine, and ancient Christians, knew that Christianity and Neoplatonism are distinct.[25] Augustine's previous experience of conversion from Neoplatonism to Christianity caused him to be dependent on the former. Harnack said,

> Neoplatonism became to him, as to many before and after, a pathway to the Church; by its means he acquired confidence in the fundamental ideas of the ecclesiastical theology of the time. It is remarkable how speedily, how imperceptibly he passed from Neoplatonism to the recognition of the Scripture in its entirety and of the Catholic doctrine; or rather, how he came to see Neoplatonism as true, but not as the whole truth.[26]

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[23] Adolf von Harnack, *Das Mönchthum and Augustin's Confessionen* (Leipzig, Germany: J. Ricker, 1888); Adolf von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, vols. 1, 3 (Tüibingen: Mohr, 1909); Gaston Boissier, *La Fin du Paganisme*, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1894); Boissier, "La Conversion de Saint Augustin," 43–69; W. R. Inge, "The Permanent Influence of Neoplatonism upon Christianity," *American Journal of Theology* 4, no. 2 (1900): 328–44. Alfaric, *L'évolution Intellectuelle de Saint Augustin*; Willy Theiler, *Porphyrios und Augustin* (Halle/Saale, Germany: Niemeyer 1933); Père Paul Henry, *Plotin et l'Occident* (Louvain, Belgium: Bureaux du "Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense," 1934); Paula Fredrikson, "Paul and Augustine: Conversion Narratives, Orthodox Tradition, and the Retrospective Self," *Journal of Theological Studies* 37, no. 1 (1986): 3–34; Frederick Van Fleteren, "Augustine's Ascent of the Soul in Book VII of the Confessions: A Reconsideration," *Augustinian Studies* 5 (1974): 29–72; "The Cassiciacum Dialogues and Augustine's Ascents at Milan," *Mediaevalia* 4 (1978): 59–82; Leo Ferrari, *The Conversions of Saint Augustine* (Villanova, PA: Villanova University, 1984).

[24] Inge, "The Permanent Influence," 334–44.

[25] Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan (Boston: Roberts, 1895), 1:361.

[26] Adolf von Harnack, *Monasticism: Its Ideals and History and The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. E. E. Kellett and F. H. Marseille (London: Williams and Norgate, 1901), 161–62.

Harnack thought that Augustine developed the most core doctrines, depending on Neoplatonism.[27] According to Harnack, "In the most essential doctrines, viz., those about God, matter, the relation of God to the world, freedom and evil, Augustine always remained dependent on Neoplatonism."[28] Yet, based on Augustine's own words, Neoplatonist thought "came closer to the truth than" (*Hi . . . veritatis propinquitate transcendunt*) Varro did, not vice versa, in the sense of grasping the knowledge of the scriptural nature of the human soul.[29]

Gaston Boissier offered a detailed criticism of Augustine's conversion. Boissier held that the garden scene in *Confessions* Book VII is fictitious. The conversion scene is refabricated, depending on memory, to present the consistency of his faith. But Augustine frequently discussed "his hesitation (*hésitations*), struggles (*luttes*), progress (*progrès*)," and he advanced "step by step" (*pas à pas*) toward the perfection of the Christian faith.[30] Boissier concluded that not until long after his conversion to Neoplatonism did Augustine adapt his point of view, recognizing the Christian faith as in opposition to Neoplatonism.[31] However, John O'Meara noted that after 1920, this long-conversion view gradually lost

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[27] Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan (Boston: Little, Brown, 1899), 5:33–34; Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 1:361.

[28] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 1:361.

[29] *Civ.* 8.1 (Babcock I/6, 2012), 242. Augustine's compliment of Neoplatonists is especially focused on their grasp of knowledge about the scriptural nature of the soul—rational and intellectual:

> He was able to extend the whole reach of natural theology only as far as this world and its soul, but they acknowledge a God above the whole realm of soul, a God who made not only this visible world, which is often called heaven and earth, but also every soul whatsoever. They acknowledge, too, that it is this God who makes the rational and intellectual soul—and the human soul is of this kind—blessed by participation in his immutable and incorporeal light. Anyone with even the slightest grasp of these matters knows that these philosophers are called Platonists, a term derived from the name of their teacher Plato. (*Civ.* 8.1 [Babcock I/6, 2012], 242)

[30] Boissier, "La Conversion de Saint Augustin," 44. "Il y parle souvent de lui, de ses hésitations, de ses luttes, de ses progrès, et nous le voyons s'avancer pas à pas vers cette perfection de conduite et cette sûretè de doctrine à laquelle il aspire."

[31] Boissier argues that the conversion story is refabricated solely depending on Augustine's own memory. See Bossier, "La Conversion de Saint Augustin," 43–69; Boissier, *La Fin Du Paganisme*, 1:293–328.

steam among twentieth-century scholars, and after 1954, most scholars leaned toward holding that Augustine sincerely converted to Christianity in the garden scene even though he was impressed with Neoplatonism.[32]

The Harnack-Boissier view with regard to Augustine's conversion to Neoplatonism prevailed among scholars, such as Prosper Alfaric, in 1918.[33] Alfaric commented that Augustine intellectually and morally converted first to Neoplatonism and afterward to Christianity.[34] Considering Augustine's affinity to Platonists, Alfaric argued that there is "some difficulty to accept his point of view" (*quelque peine à adopter son point de vue*) concerning the complete conversion at Milan in 386.[35] From Alfaric's perspective, Augustine thought that to accept Christian faith was to stand against Neoplatonism.[36] Earlier, Louis Gourdon contended that Augustine began to become a Christian more and more only after 390.[37] This two-conversion viewpoint thrived among early-twentieth-century scholars who presumed that, to the ancient Christian, Neoplatonic language was something that must be immediately swept away after one's conversion.

Peter Brown thoroughly reflected on previous Augustine scholarship in *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Brown presented Augustine's *Confessions* as "the high-water-mark of Augustine's absorption of the *Ennead:* in them, he will talk the language of his master with greater conviction and artistry than in any other of his works."[38] Brown set the human soul—a "wandering" of the soul—at the center of the evidence showing

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[32] O'Meara, *Studies in Augustine and Eriugena*, 210.

[33] O'Meara, *Studies in Augustine and Eriugena*, 3, 121.

[34] O'Meara, *Studies in Augustine and Eriugena*, 121; Alfaric, *L 'evolution Intellectuelle de Saint Augustin,* 362–99.

[35] Alfaric, *L'évolution Intellectuelle de Saint Augustin,* 391–92.

[36] O'Meara, "Neoplatonism of Saint Augustine," 35.

[37] Louis Gourdon, *Essai sur la Conversion de Saint Augustine* (Paris: Cahors, 1900), 83.

[38] Brown, *Augustine*, 162. See Brown's description of Augustine's absorption of Neoplatonic thought in Brown, "The Lost Future," in *Augustine*, 139–50.

Augustine's absorption in Neoplatonism.[39] His great influence on Augustine scholarship led succeeding scholars to adopt the two-conversion view and the Neoplatonic understanding of the human soul, of Augustine.[40]

With the tremendous influence of Brown's *Augustine of Hippo,* a number of subsequent scholars continued Alfaric's two-conversion view, including Paula Fredrikson, Leo C. Ferrari, Roland J. Teske, and Brian Dobell. These scholars held that philosophy in Augustine's time differs from the twenty-first century meaning of philosophy. Ancient people thought philosophy was a way of life.[41] This characterization of philosophy means that Christianity is a competitive (or opposing) teaching.[42] The determination that Augustine converted to philosophy first is derived from the presumption that he had to opt for one alternative, either Neoplatonism or Christianity. Scholars following this division regard Augustine's "admiration" of the philosophy as his "conversion" to it before he became a Christian.[43]

The two-conversion view has been refuted not simply by many contemporary scholars, as in the next section, but also by the writings of Augustine himself. For instance, these scholars often referred to the *Cassiciacum Dialogues*. However, Augustine himself says in *Contra Academicos,*

> Moreover, no one doubts that we are urged on to learn by the twin weight of authority
> and reason. Therefore, I am determined not to depart ever, in any way, from the
> authority of Christ, for I find no authority more powerful. But what should be pursued

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[39] Brown, *Augustine*, 162.

[40] Carol Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2006), 14.

[41] Fredrikson called Augustine of *Cassiciacum Dialogues* as "a different person," due to his focus more on philosophy than theological issues, such as the will, sin, and grace. See Fredrikson, "Paul and Augustine," 20. Teske contended that Augustine's conversion to philosophy "began with the reading of the *Hortensius,* reached a high point in the momentous encounter with the *libri Platonicorum* in 386." Moreover, Teske insisted that Augustine, even in Thagaste, devoted himself to "the life of philosophy envisioned at Cassiciacum." Teske, *To Know God and the Soul*, 5, 10. Dobell claimed further that Augustine followed the discipline of philosophy after his conversion at Cassiciacum. Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion*, 111–18.

[42] Teske, *To Know God and the Soul*, 9–10.

[43] Teske, *To Know God and the Soul*, 3–13.

by a most subtle reason—for I am now of such a mind that I impatiently long to apprehend what is true not only through believing, but also through understanding—I am confident in the meantime that I shall find among the Platonists, and that it won't be incompatible with our sacred [teachings].[44]

This passage representatively illustrates that in the early days of his conversion Augustine formed the relation between Christian teaching and Neoplatonism: the higher authority of Christianity over the subordinating nature of Neoplatonic reasoning.[45]

Assumption 2: Neoplatonism Was Not a Rival to Christianity

In the middle of the twentieth century, some scholars started to maintain that in Augustine's time, Christian intellectuals did not consider Neoplatonic ideas as opposed to Christian teaching. These scholars skeptically saw the Harnack-Boissier view that assumes Christianity as competitive with Neoplatonism at the time of Augustine. Neoplatonism was not given to Augustine as an option rather than Christianity. Instead, numerous ancient Christians perceived Neoplatonic ideals as applicable to their Christian faith. This perspective undermined the two-conversion viewpoint as an unnecessary presumption for comprehending Augustine's use of Neoplatonic concepts.

In 1953, Pierre Courcelle sparked the opposite thought against the two-conversion view—Neoplatonism first and Christianity later.[46] Courcelle rejected the

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[44] *Acad.* 3.20.43 (Foley 1, 112).

[45] O'Meara's footnote on the same passage elaborated what Augustine held in mind about the nature of the philosophy:

> There is sufficient evidence to show that when he was writing the *Acad.* he believed: 1) that authority could dispense entirely with reason (cf. *Acad.* 3.11, 13, 42; *De ord.* 2. 16, 26, 27, 46); 2) that authority aided by reason was more desirable than authority alone (cf. *De ord.* 1.32; 2.16, 26); 3) that reason depended on some authority so that it might begin to operate (cf. *De ord.* 2.26; *Solil.* 1.12–15); and 4) that reason could arrive at an understanding of everything taught by authority. The last item may cause some surprise, but, nevertheless, it is found in many texts, and especially in the *De libero arbitrio* (388–391/395) 2. 5 f. (Augustine, *Against the Academics*, ed. Johannes Quasten and Joseph C. Plumpe, trans. John J. O'Meara, 12th ed., Ancient Christian Writers [New York: Newman, 1951], 197–98n)

[46] O'Meara stated that the Augustinian Congress held in Paris in 1954 permanently changed the academic landscape concerning the controversy of Augustine's conversion. The Augustinian Congress made a great extension of scholars' interest to the detailed relation between Augustine and Neoplatonism and its historical background. See O'Meara, "Neoplatonism of Saint Augustine," 34–35.

presupposition of the two-conversion perspective that Augustine had to choose one option between Christianity and Neoplatonism.[47] Augustine and other Christians in Milan in the late fourth century did not consider Neoplatonism as conflicting with Christian dogmas.[48] Courcelle's objection, since then, caused a number of advocates to side with him and expand the research pertaining to Augustine's implementation of Neoplatonic ideas in defense of Christian belief. Courcelle reported that the nature of the human soul, especially "the soul's return to beatitude," took central place in Augustine's discussion with Theodorus, who gave the Platonists' book to him.[49] To Christians at that time, mentioning the literary influence on themselves of certain Neoplatonic treatises was not something shameful to avoid.[50]

Robert O'Connell succeeded in two different phases of intellectual journey concerning the Neoplatonic effect on Augustine's conversion.[51] O'Connell felt that Neoplatonic elements, particularly regarding the nature of the human soul, persisted in Augustine's later writings—including *De Trinitate*, *De Genesi ad Litteram*, and *De Civitate*—even after his denial of the fall of the soul.[52] O'Connell maintained the debate about the impact of Neoplatonism on Augustine's work by sorting out specific elements.

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[47] Pierre Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and Their Greek Sources*, trans. Harry E. Wedeck (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1969), 189. Courcelle said, in opposition to Alfaric and Theiler's view, that Augustine converted to Neoplatonism first and then to Christianity. Rather, Courcelle's synthetic view contended that Augustine utilized Neoplatonism for the purpose of converting his opponents.

[48] Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 138–41. Courcelle presented two types of Neoplatonism—a Christian Neoplatonism and a pagan Neoplatonism—in Milan. Augustine admitted the Christian Neoplatonism introduced by Theodorus but denied the Macrobian type of pagan Neoplatonism. But later, in the *Retractationes*, Augustine finds the Christian Neoplatonist pursuit of earthly happiness to conflict with his understanding of Christian teaching, that is, the ascetic life.

[49] Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 138–39.

[50] Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, 139.

[51] Robert J. O'Connell, *The Origin of the Soul in St. Augustine's Later Works* (New York: Fordham University, 1987).

[52] O'Connell, *The Origin of the Soul*, 11–16. O'Connell characterized Neoplatonic elements concealed in Augustine's works in addition to the preexistence of the human soul and its fall, as serving as a marker of the influence of Plotinus, or Porphyry, on young Augustine.

Some of these are rejected, but others continue to assume a vital role in Augustine's later works.[53] O'Connell demonstrated that the nature of the soul, especially, is clarified to fit into the scriptural creation narrative, away from the Neoplatonic one.[54]

John F. Callahan discovered that Augustine's beliefs about the human soul rest in the traditional line of thought with his contemporaries—Ambrose and Gregory of Nyssa.[55] Augustine utilized several philosophies during his intellectual journey, seeking a way of life early on.[56] In particular, Neoplatonism seemed to prepare the way, leading to the Scripture, for those seeking the truth—Christianity. Yet, Augustine did not consider Neoplatonism as superior to biblical and traditional teachings, especially in investigating the nature of the human soul. Callahan clarified various other sources, besides Neoplatonism, that Augustine inherited with regard to the flight of the soul. Callahan carefully suggested that "Augustine is not the first to interject the parable of the prodigal son or the problem of the will into a discussion of the flight of the soul, and he is not original in this respect, at least in the way in which originality might commonly be understood."[57] Prior to Ambrose, Gregory of Nyssa employed Greek philosophical ideas to explain scriptural passages.[58] Augustine did not discard all philosophical terms to describe the human soul throughout his life, though he refined them according to biblical teachings as his contemporary Christian thinkers did.[59]

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[53] Cf. Ronnie J. Rombs, *Saint Augustine and the Fall of the Soul: Beyond O'Connell and His Critics* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2006).

[54] Robert J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 386-391* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1968), 130–31.

[55] John F. Callahan, *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers*, The Saint Augustine Lecture 1964 (Villanova, PA: Villanova University, 1967), 53–55.

[56] Callahan, *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers*, 47–51.

[57] Callahan, *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers*, 55.

[58] Callahan, *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers*, 55–58.

[59] Callahan, *Augustine and the Greek Philosophers*, 58–62.

A. Hilary Armstrong held a more favorable view of Augustine's use of ancient philosophies than other contemporary scholars do. According to Armstrong, philosophy could not threaten the core doctrines of Christian theology because Christianity consistently rejects any pagan theology.[60] Instead, for Augustine, Neoplatonism had been merely a "preparation for the Gospel" that was "powerless, as he saw after his conversion, to disclose the saving truth of God's self-revelation in Christ."[61] Armstrong, with Callahan, believed that ancient philosophy could not be regarded as a rival religion to Christianity.[62] Augustine continued to employ philosophical tools to fill the contents of the Christian faith.[63] This formulation had already been integrated into the Christian tradition by Irenaeus, and Augustine brought it upon himself.[64] The outstanding feature of the Christian Platonist, Augustine, is a representation of the journey of the soul.[65]

Entering the late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century, Carol Harrison and other scholars began to define the conversion of 386 to be sincere, so that "Augustine was not converted from paganism to Christianity."[66] These scholars maintained that Augustine's Neoplatonist-like languages are derived "from Christian tradition, rather than the Platonists."[67] Furthermore, Henri de Lubac identified Augustine as faithfully standing in the church tradition, although he partly borrowed vocabularies from

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[60] A. Hilary Armstrong and R. A. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1960), 146–47.

[61] Armstrong and Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, 147.

[62] Armstrong and Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, 152.

[63] Armstrong and Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, 148.

[64] Armstrong and Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, 148–49.

[65] O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man*, 130–31.

[66] Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology*, 22.

[67] Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology*, 30.

Neoplatonism.[68] Michael Foley claimed that Augustine's conversion at the garden was trustworthy.[69] Then, the subject of *Cassiciacum Dialogues* is published by the catechumen—not a priest—before he could be educated by core doctrines and participate in the Eucharist.[70] To this catechumen converted to Christianity, Catherine Conybeare argued that the apostle Paul revealed the "face of philosophy," for which Augustine equipped the traditional dialogue form of philosophy and filled it with Christian contents to deal with the human soul.[71] Augustine's retrospective integration of Greek philosophy into Christian philosophy intrigued modern scholars about whether Augustine prioritized Greek philosophy over Scripture, especially to describe the human soul. Centering on the problem of the human soul, academic debates leaned toward clarifying Augustine's faithfulness with respect to the Scripture and its tradition.

Significance of My Research

The nature of the human soul is important to clarify the structure of Augustine's thought in three respects.

First, the subject of soul shares the common philosophical interest both of Christians and non-Christians. To comprehend the nature of the soul is to obtain answers for other universal inquiries about the meaning of human life. One's understanding of the soul determines the viewpoint to such questions as whether a person possesses a soul, what will happen to the soul when an individual dies, and if evil deeds will be punished

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[68] Henri de Lubac, *Theology in History*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1996), 130–49.

[69] Michael P. Foley, introduction to Foley 1, xxvi–xxviii.

[70] Foley, introduction to Foley 1, xxiv.

[71] Catherine Conybeare, *The Irrational Augustine*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University, 2006), 17. Conybeare meant by the "face of philosophy" Augustine's dismissal of a mythical genealogy of philosophia and philocalia. After conversion, Augustine departed from the mythical genealogy toward the intellectual journey as a Christian philosopher. See Conybeare, *The Irrational Augustine*, 17, 23–27. The subject of the Cassiciacum Dialogue is "bracketed", according to Conybeare, by Alypius's statement, "we are dealing with our life, our habits, our soul" (Aug., *Acad.* 2.9.22). See Conybeare, *The Irrational Augustine*, 26.

following death. One's knowledge of the soul decides his or her worldview, both spiritual and material, regardless of one's religious belief,

Second, the nature of the human soul took central place in Augustine's concerns from the early point of his conversion. In *Soliloquiorum*, he attests that the most crucial aspects he wishes to know are nothing but God and the soul (*Nihil omnio Deum et animam*).[72] Hence, understanding the form of Augustine's knowledge of the human soul will elucidate the significance of the sources contributing to such knowledge.

Third, in the academy, the nature of the human soul has persistently been regarded as a litmus test for examining Augustine's conversion to Christianity. The similarities and dissimilarities between the language of Augustine and that of Neoplatonists have been considered as evidence, grading the degree of Augustine's loyalty to one or the other. At any rate, his terms describing the human soul correspond to Neoplatonist ideas. Thus, language equipped to illustrate the nature of the human soul takes central place in the academic debate among Augustine scholars.

However, for what reason should such terminological similarity make us think that Augustine's conversion in 386 may not have been sincere? What does it mean to employ Neoplatonic concepts in understanding the Christian faith? Does the Christian faith demand avoiding any language not located in Scripture? Have we observed the place that Augustine replaced core elements of biblical teaching with Neoplatonic ideas in an attempt to make them a legitimate part of the Christian faith? Or, did Augustine utilize Neoplatonic ideas to make the Christian faith seem more appealing, even though they are not adequate to be used by Christians? What does it mean for Christians to use nonbiblical sources—though

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[72] *Solil.* 1.2.7. In this early work, Augustine's discourse with the reason proceeds as below:

Reason. Now what do you want to know?
…
A. I desire to know God and the soul.
R. Nothing more?
A. Absolutely nothing. *Solil.* 1.2.7 (Augustine, "Soliloquies," trans. Thomas F. Gilligan, in *The Happy Life and Answer to Skeptics and Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil and Soliloquies*, trans. Denis J. Kavanagh et al., Fathers of the Church 5 [New York: CIMA, 1948], 350).

not anti-biblical sources—in their works? All these inquiries necessitate an investigation of Augustine's method of using secular ideas to learn more about the nature of the human soul. The formed order among Christian teaching, philosophy, and other thoughts will be thoroughly shown throughout the entire body of this dissertation with a concentration on the nature of the human soul.

Argument

The following three chapters will attempt to delineate the origin, life, and end of the human soul. These chapters do not intend to argue against the twentieth-century Augustinian scholarship, which tries to measure the accurate quality of Augustine's conversion to Christianity by timeline. Instead, each chapter will endeavor to demonstrate Augustine's framework formed when he was converted in Milan, focusing on the nature of the human soul. Investigations of the human soul in these chapters will make an effort to shape the framework, sorting sources by credibility, that Augustine kept using from the early stage of the conversion. He graded the credibility of knowledge attained from Scripture as superior, and other sources as inferior, to describe the nature of the human soul.

The second chapter will delineate the creation narrative of the human soul. This chapter will compare Plotinus's theory of emanation with Augustine's doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo*.[73] This comparison will illuminate Augustine's firm commitment to the reliability of Scripture in comprehending the origin of the human soul. The creation of the heaven of heaven (*caelum caeli*) exposes the creation of another heaven, which is spiritual.[74] Statements that are apparently contradictory to sinful humans additionally open

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[73] This chapter uses various works of Augustine, including mainly *Quant.* 1.1, 2; *Lib.* 3.21.59; *Fid. symb.* 2.2; *Gen. litt.* 3.19.29; 5.1.1, 4.10, 23.45, 46, 33.52; 6.5.8; 7.2.3, 5.8, 24.35, 28.43; *Conf.* 12.7.7, 17.25, 22.31, 28.38 ; 13.33.48; *Trin.* 4.1.3; *Civ.* 12.16; 13.24; 14.11.

[74] *Gen. litt.* 1.1.3, 9.15, 17.32, 19.38; *Conf.* 3.6.10; 12.8.8, 9.9; 13.2.3, 3,4. *Enarrat. Ps.* 113:15–18. Augustine gives the reason that he thinks the heaven of heaven as spiritual (or intellectual) creation in *Conf.* 12.13.16. According to Gen 1:2, God created the spiritual, or intellectual, realm before he laid the succession of time in the physical creation. In the spiritual realm things can be known all at once because

the door for the possibility of the deeper meaning hidden behind the seemingly contradictory statements, such as the existence of day and night before the creation of the sun.[75] The authoritative source (Scripture) articulates the spiritual creation in which the human soul is created with some *spiritual material* of its own kind: *aliquam materiam pro suo genere spiritualem.*[76] God creates the human soul when He fashions it into the body.[77] Having utilized the Scripture, Augustine identified a nonbiblical source that discusses the spiritual creation in a manner that resembles its authoritative image. Plotinus's philosophical imagination of the spiritual creation supplements the scriptural understanding of the spiritual creation. The use and effectiveness of the philosophical thought will come out more clearly when compared with other concepts that cannot be employed in the Christian faith.

The third chapter will describe Augustine's view with respect to the life of the human soul, implementing various works he wrote from early time of his conversion.[78] This chapter employs one of most controversial topics—immortality (*inmortalitas*) of the soul—along with the spiritual life in relation to the spirit (*spiritus*) and the body (*corpus*).[79] Plotinus did not have explicit conception of the human spirit corresponding to that of

there is the only order of things without the sequence of time ("*sic interim sentio propter illud caelum caeli, caelum intellectual, ubi est intellectus nosse simul.*")

[75] *Gen. litt.* 2.13.26, 14.28, 5.1.1–4.7, 11.27, 23.44–46 (in *Gen. litt.* Book V Augustine explains the reason, that is the Scripture's intention, for that the six creation days in Gen 1 must be comprehended spiritually); *Conf.* 12.13.16; *Civ.* 11.9.

[76] *Gen. litt.* 7.6.9. See Augustine's dependency on Scripture in describing the origin of the soul, especially, in *Civ.* 13.24.

[77] *An. orig.* 4.24.38. In this letter, Augustine consults Vincent Victor not to violate biblical teachings, saying that "it is not permissible to doubt that they were made by God the creator, though not from his substance" (Teske I/23, 540). See also Augustine's view on the creation of the soul, from nothing, from the viewpoint of his Catholic faith in *An. orig.* 2.3.5.

[78] Augustine's works include *Solil.* 2.1.1; *Acad.* 3.20.43; *Immort. An.* 15.24; *Quant. An.* 33.75; *Conf.* 7.9.13–15, 17.23; *Trin.* 13.9.12; *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11; *Doctr. Chr.* 1.19.18; *An. Orig.* 4.23.37; *Civ.* 13.24; and *Retract.* 1.4.3.

[79] Concerning the immortality of the human soul based on biblical teaching, see *Conf.* 6.11.19; *An. orig.* 1.16.26; *Trin.* 2.9.15, 13.9.12, 14.2.5, 6; *Civ.* 13.2, 19, 21.13.

Christianity which Augustine held. The relationship between the soul and the body helps to distinguish Augustine's understanding of it to be differed from Plotinus from the very early time of his conversion. However, I confined subject matters to elements directly relevant to the life of the soul for the limited length of this dissertation.

The fourth chapter will elucidate the narrative of the soul's ascension (*ascendere*) and purification (*mundare*) furnished in the Christian faith.[80] This chapter will focus on Augustine's works reflecting Christian teachings.[81] The Scripture taught that Christ ascended upward. The soul needed to be purified in the process of ascension that is the faithful life because Christ commanded it to his followers. Augustine distinguished between the Christian elements of the soul's life and the philosophical ideas that, although differently developed, offer a similar glimpse as those Christian elements (e.g., *ascendere*). These secular ideas could be investigated to expand human understanding of authoritative teaching, while acknowledging the impossibility of deriving sheer truthfulness from them. The distinction between the authoritative source and its derivatives regarding the soul's ascension yields the remnants of unacceptable elements from secular ideas. The impermissible elements include the soul's ascension to the visible heaven, the soul's transmigration, and other ideas that tempt to distract one from the Christian faith.

The fifth chapter will illustrate that Augustine's recognition of the human soul's end exposes the root established in the soil of biblical authority. This chapter will use his works from early through late.[82] Topics of this chapter embrace the soul's reunion

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[80] The image of soul's ascension in *Solil.* 1.14.24. (Later, Augustine says Christians should not be confused with the opinion of Porphyry, the false philosopher, in *Retract.*1.4.3); *Conf.* 4.12.19, 5.1.1, 7.10.16, 17.23, 20.26, 9.4.9. 12.15.21, 13.9.10, 7.8; *Trin.* 2.17. Augustine contrasts between Christian teaching of ascension from Plotinian's ascension in *Civ.* 10.30, 13.16, 18, 14.5, 18.28, 22.4, 5, 26. 27, 29. 22.13. See Christ's ascension in *Civ.* 17.4, 18.44, 54, 22.18. and angel's ascension and descension in *Civ.* 16.38.

[81] This chapter furnishes various works of Augustine including *Ver. Rel.* 12.25; *Doctr. Chr.* 1.18.17–18; *Gen. litt.* 10.9.15, 16*; Conf.* 7.10.16, 18.24; 13.7.8, 9.10; *Civ.* 10.32; 17.4; and *Trin.* 2.17; 15.19.34.

[82] This chapter uses Augustine's works including *Solil.* 1.7.14*; Quant. An.* 1.2; 33.76*; Doctr. Chr.* 1.19.18; *Gen. litt.* 12.28.56, 33.62, 67, 34.66; 35.68; *Civ.* 13.11; 17.3; 21.3; 22.29, 30; and *Ep.* 21.3.

(*cohaerentia*) with the resurrected body, the soul's rest (*requies*) in the intermediate state following the separation from the body, and God's punishment for eternal life and eternal death (*poena Dei ad aeternam vitam, ad aeternam mortem*).[83] Augustine perceived the Platonic conception of the soul's immortality and its return to the Lord as mirroring—though incompletely—scriptural teaching.[84] While Neoplatonists had some ideas that reflected biblical teaching, other ideas concerning the end of the human soul had to be pruned away and classified as unbiblical elements. Such out-of-bounds concepts include the soul's flight out of the body, the denial of the soul's reunion with the resurrected body, and the soul's transmigration.[85]

The sixth chapter will restate my thesis, which is that Augustine developed the framework distinguishing priority and inferiority of resources early in his conversion and then applied it to his works illuminating the nature of the human soul. I will next review the chapters and their conclusions in relation to my thesis. The examination of Augustine's methodology of understanding the nature of the human soul will reveal his recognition of the absolute authority of Christian teaching (i.e., Scripture) in distinction to some Neoplatonist ideas supplementary to it.

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[83] See soul's reunion with resurrected body in *Civ.* 10.29, 13.12, 20.2, 6, 9, 15, 21.3, 22.24, 25, 28. See Augustine's derivative understanding of soul's intermediate state, after death, from Scripture in *Gen. litt.* 1.4, *Conf.* 13.38.53; *Civ.* 11.10, 12.21, 13.2, 8, 12, 15.1, 20.6, 21.23, 26; *An. orig.* 2.4.8. See the doctrine of the eternal punishment for eternal life and death in *Conf.* 2.2.2; *Gen. litt.* 1.16.26, 2.4.8; *Civ.* 13.8, 12; 15.1, 20.2, 5, 6, 16, 21.3, 7, 9, 10, 16, 23, 26.

[84] See Neoplatonic immortality of soul that Augustine presented in *Civ.* 9.8, 10.30 (compared with Plato, *Phaedo* 81e-82a). See Neoplatonic imagination of soul's return to God in *Civ.* 13.17, 14.5, 22.13, 26.

[85] These include soul's wandering out of body (*Civ.* 14.5), denial of the soul's reunion with the resurrected body (*Civ.* 13.17, 14.5, 22.13, 27), and soul's transmigration (*Civ.* 10.32, 12.27, 13.19, 22.12).

CHAPTER 2

ORIGIN OF THE HUMAN SOUL

Converted to Christianity in the garden of Milan, Augustine, a catechumen, continued his previous inquiry of seeking knowledge about the origin of the human soul. For him, Christians lived with different knowledge in terms of philosophy. Therefore, he needed to replace his previous knowledge about the origin of the human soul according to the faith he converted. The knowledge of God had clarified by previous Christian thinkers based on the Scriptures through theological battles against enemies inside and outside of the church. These battles before Augustine already yielded fine theological doctrines such as the doctrine of the Trinity, incarnation, and the Holy Spirit by using biblical and philosophical languages. He acknowledged these core Christian doctrines before and after he converted to Christianity. Now, he desired to explore another important topic—the origin of the human soul—within his faith, when he concluded his extensive philosophical journey from Thagaste to Milan, transitioning from turmoil to embracing Christianity.

Some scholars compared the origin of the human soul held by Augustine with the soul's fall argued by Plotinus for the purpose of showing its similarity. These scholars, like Robert J. O'Connell, argued that that similarity signifies that Augustine drew the human soul as something fallen to temporal realties.[1] Leading scholars of this view—including O'Connell, Jens Nörregaard, and H. de Leusse—claimed that Augustine situated the human soul thoroughly in Plotinus's cosmic order.[2] They alluded that Augustine

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[1] Robert J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 386–391* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1968), 171.

[2] Robert J. O'Connell, "The Plotinian Fall of the Soul in St. Augustine," *Traditio* 19 (1963): 1–35; Jens Nörregaard, *Augustins Bekehrung* (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1923); H. de Leusse, "Le

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accepted the soul's preexistence, before coming down to body, in his early time of conversion and changed it later. However, I will inspect here Augustine's consistent dependence on the authority of Scripture. When he needed to describe the origin of the human soul in detail, for pastoral purposes, he formulated biblical cosmology, which shows his faithfulness to Scripture and to core Christian doctrines such as the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*.

Beginning to describe the creation of the human soul, Augustine, after converting to Christianity, manifested that he subordinates his argument to the highest authority of Scripture as the foundation of his understanding.[3] He remarked his dependence on Scripture in the treatise focusing on the origin of the human soul, book 7 of *De Genesi ad Litteram*. Augustine claimed that true knowledge must correspond to the teaching of Scripture. To say the right thing (*recte loqui*) is to assert "what can be taught on the basis of the most certain authority of Scripture" (*quod autem doceri potest . . . vel Scripturarum auctoritate certissima*).[4] He advised that one should not reject or affirm anything before examining it with the Christian faith and its teaching. In other words, Augustine asked readers to test his description of the human soul in the light of Scripture that attests to truth. His belief in the authority of Scripture and Christian teaching over any other sources parallels with his early statements, such as, "I am determined not to depart ever, in any way, from the authority of Christ, for I find no authority more powerful,"[5] "We have also learned by divine authority,"[6] "We are led to learning by a twofold path: *authority* and

Probleme de la Preexistence des ames chez Marius Victorinus Afer," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 29 (1939) 197–239.

[3] *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1.

[4] "*Recte autem est veraciter atque congruenter nihil audacter refellendo, nihil temere adfirmando, dum adhuc dubium est, verum falsumne sit, sive fidei sive scientiae christianae, quod autem doceri potest, vel rerum ratione apertissima vel sciripturarum auctoritate certissima sive cunctatione adserendo.*" *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1.

[5] *Acad.* 3.20.43 (Foley 1, 112).

[6] *Beat.* 4.34 (Foley 2, 49).

reason. Authority comes first in time, reason in the reality of things . . . . Therefore, it is authority alone that opens the gate of learning."[7]

Augustine discovered that Scripture encapsulated the origin of the human soul in the spiritual creation in the book of Genesis. Scripture indicates it within four clues. First, the order of creation in Genesis—with the creation of day preceding heavenly objects—suggests that the creation began with a spiritual event. Second, placing faith in the accuracy of the Scripture and the use of the word "one day (*dies unus*)" in Genesis 1:5 compels one to interpret the Genesis creation narrative in a spiritual manner, as it does not use the term "the first day (*dies primus*)."[8] Third, Genesis 2:4 supports the concept of the spiritual creation by emphasizing that all aspects of the six-day creation simultaneously occurred within a single day, as indicated by the singular form (*factus est dies*). Last, the Christian faith does not hold the faith that God is subject to time and that God had to wait until the days in which he would create certain things in it. These four elements led Augustine to furnish the belief that God set the human soul in the spiritual creation.

On the other hand, Augustine's dependence on the authority of Scripture left some problems unsolved. The problem of Adam's descendants' souls became an unresolvable issue to Augustine who liked to begin with clues found in the Scripture. The problem of descendants' souls would be an everlasting question, as the special revelation, the Scripture, is permanently closed for Christianity, leaving no other authoritative way to confirm any possible theories. Such an open conclusion for what the Scripture omits would give clear evidence of Augustine's loyalty to the Scripture's authority in describing the origin of the human soul.

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[7] *Ord.* 2.9.26 (Borruso, 85, 87).

[8] Augustine recognized that the Scripture said the creation day was set on one day (*dies unus*), which is a cardinal number, instead of the first day (*dies primus*), which is an ordinal number. This discovery permanently affected his understanding of the creation narrative.

This chapter investigates Augustine's description of the origin of the human soul. Examining its details will reveal how Augustine fabricated his idea to be subordinate to the Scripture's teaching. For a close investigation of the creation of the human soul, this chapter will use various materials of Augustine to compare with Plotinus's thought.[9] The first section, "Creation *ex nihilo*," describes the consistency of Augustine's belief about the soul's origin rooted in scriptural teaching, which differed from Plotinus's thought that the origin of the soul stemmed from Platonic cosmology. The second section, "Augustine: Interpretation of Genesis," locates the soul in the creation narrative of Genesis. The second section, consisting of five subsections discusses Augustine's derivation of spiritual creation from the creation narrative in the Scripture, his attempt for amalgamating philosophical words *rationes seminales* into his understanding of God's creation, spiritual material, God's infusing of the soul into the body as creating act, and the creation of other souls. Descriptions about the soul's origin in these works will attest Augustine's faithfulness to the Scripture's teaching.

Creation *ex nihilo*

Plotinus Denies Creation *ex nihilo*

Plotinus, observing Plato's ideas of the soul, clarified the process of the origin of the human soul in terms of the descent to the body.[10] Basically, the concept of the soul could not divorce from the notion of animating principle of the objects in and below the heaven. Like Plato, Plotinus understood the human soul as the cause of the body's motion, just as stars and planets in the sky could move by the work of their designated souls. Based on the belief that the soul exists, Plotinus described the origin of the human soul within

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[9] Augustine's works include *Quant.* 1.1, 2; *Lib.* 3.21.59; *Fid. symb.* 2.2; *Gen. litt.* 1.17.33; 2.18.38; 3.19.29; 4.33.51; 5.1.1, 4.10, 5.13, 23.45, 46, 33.52; 6.5.8, 6.9; 7.1.1–3, 2.3, 5.8, 6.9, 16.22, 24.35, 28.43; 8.26.48; 10.9.16; *Conf.* 12.22.31; *An. orig.* 1.4.4; *Trin.* 4.1.3 ; *Civ.* 11.6, 7; 13.24.

[10] J. M. Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (New York: Syndics of the Cambridge University, 1967), 66, 112. Rist explained that Plotinus believed in Plato's *Phaedo* that the soul is captured in the body. The soul comes to live in the body and the material world that is inferior to the intelligible world. Plotinus described the soul as having fallen to the material world that is created by God according to *Timaeus* of Plato.

the framework of Platonic cosmology, presenting it as a component that descended during the universal event of the world's origin, known as emanation.

Plotinus heavily relied on Plato's authority with regard to the theory of the world's origin and incorporated his own idea regarding the origin of the soul, which he obtained through contemplation.[11] To describe the descension of the human soul into the body, Plotinus started with its mysterious existence in the intelligible world. This cosmological process of descent found the proper framework by "the godlike Plato" in which the descent of the soul could fit into the idea that the soul comes to be captured "in prison"—that is the body.[12] He interpreted the individual soul's descent to the lower realm, earth, and ascent to the higher realm, intellectual, from Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Timaeus*, especially in the vertical distinction between Cave and the light above, as the cosmological theater for the soul's travel up and down.[13] Plotinus expanded his narrative of the soul's descent in detail in order to fit the scheme of Plato's cosmology.

Plotinus differentiated the origin of the human soul from the soul of the universe. While he offers a vague thought of the relation between intellect and soul, individual souls unite with the body by descending from its original place, the intelligible world.[14] For Plotinus, the idea of emanation of Plato seemed more adequate to explain the

[11] *Enn.* 4.8.1; Rist, *Plotinus*, 66, 112; Richard T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995), 53. See Wallis's description of how Plotinus interweaved his own theory of soul into metaphysical hierarchy read from Plato's *Timaeus*. Cf. William Ralph Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, Gifford Lectures, 1917–1918 (London: Longmans, Green, 1918), 1:109–10. Inge mentioned that Plotinus would not admit that he ever differed from his master's teaching (109).

[12] *Enn.* 4.8.1 (Armstrong, 399). Armstrong translated ο θειος Πλατων as the godlike Plato and Gerson as the divine Plato.

[13] *Enn*. 4.8.1.

[14] Richard T. Wallis, "Soul and Nous in Plotinus, Numenius and Gnosticism," in *Neoplatonism and Gnosticism*, ed. Richard T. Wallis and Jay Bregman, Studies in Neoplatonism 6 (Albany: State University of New York, 1992), 461; *Enn.* 4.3.12.

descent of the soul to the body, rather than to relate it directly to One.[15] To explain the origin of the human soul, he implemented the Platonic emanation.[16]

The natural process of emanation produces the soul of the universe, and in that process individual souls that proceeded from the soul of the universe proceed to the extent of the lower world.[17] These individual souls that preexist would descend to the lower or physical world, and into mortal bodies. Plotinus described, "In this way, then, though soul is a divine being and derives from the places above, it comes to be encased in a body, and though being a god, albeit of low rank, it comes thus into this world by an autonomous inclination and at the bidding of its own power, with the purpose of bringing order to what is inferior to it."[18] The soul that is derived from the higher order (ἐκ τῶν τόπων τῶν ἄνω) comes down to the body (γίνεται τοῦ σώματος) in the lower order. This process of descension takes place by the natural inclination (ῥοπῇ αὐτεξουσίῳ), emanation, to bring order (αἰτία δυνάμεως) to the inferior rank (ὕστερος), that is the physical world. But, the soul's descension does not mean the descended soul is completely separated from the soul above. Plotinus described,

> For they did not come down with Intellect, but they descended on the one hand as far as the earth, while on the other, their heads are still "firmly fixed above the heavens." However, it happened that they descended to a greater extent than they should have, because their middle part was constrained, since attention was demanded by that to which they had descended. Father Zeus, thought, took pity on them in their labours and made their shackles, the focus of their toil, mortal, and grants them periods of respite, making them free from bodies from time to time, so that they, too, can be in the intelligible worlds where the soul of the universe always is, never turning its attention towards the things of this world.[19]

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[15] A. Hilary Armstrong, "'Emanation' in Plotinus," *Mind* 46, no. 181 (January 1937): 62; Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 63.

[16] Frederick Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, vol. 1 of *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Image Books, 1993)*,* 467–68.

[17] Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, 468–69; Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 87.

[18] *Enn*. 4.8.5 (Gerson, 518).

[19] *Enn.* 4.3.12 (Gerson, 400).

In this passage, Plotinus described that a part of the human soul descended to a greater extent, into the mortal body, while hanging the upper part above the heaven. Plotinus said, "Their heads are still 'firmly fixed above the heavens'" (κάρα δὲ αὐταῖς ἐστήρικται ὑπεράνω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). The descension into the mortal body appeared unfavorable, evoking even pity of Zeus. The soul sitting in the mortal body experiences all miseries in the life in it. Plotinus said,

> But let us turn to speak of the human soul, which is said to suffer all sorts of misfortune in the body and to "suffer" through falling into folies and appetites and fears and all sorts of other evil states, and for which the body is a "bond" and a "tomb," and the world its "cave" and discordant with itself because the cause [he indicates] for the descent are not identical.[20]

The human soul descended into mortal flesh enduring the suffering brought about by its "evil states" (κακοπαθεῖν). However, the descension does not mean that the lower souls lose hope entirely. The soul partially descended from its heavenly body, leaving its head in the world of the universe where the world soul rotates the heavenly bodies.[21] The soul would escape from the suffering of the lower realm by ascending back to the original place, the upper realm, where its head held still.

The soul's head held upon the above meant to sit in the place where the divine souls administer the circuit of the heavens. Plotinus refers to Plato to bring the idea of the souls of the universe as the power rotating the circuits of the heavens. He stated, "And when Plato declares that the souls of the stars relate in the identical manner to their bodies as does that of the universe—for the Demiurge 'inserts' their bodies also 'into the circuits' of the soul—he would thereby preserve also for them their proper state of happiness."[22] Within the Platonic scheme of cosmology, Plotinus elaborated the above world of the soul as a different kind of realm distinguished from the visible heavens, or circuits. He identified the soul of the world as having its own entity, circuits (ψυχῆς περιφοράς), upon which the

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[20] *Enn*. 4.8.3 (Gerson, 515).

[21] *Enn.* 4.8.2 (Gerson, 515).

[22] *Enn*. 4.8.2 (Gerson, 515).

human soul left its head apart, keeping a connection with the lower part of the physical body.[23]

On the other side, in describing the individual soul's descension, Plotinus not only reflected the ancient view of the physical universe but mingled his precedent philosophers' ideas as well.[24] This reasoning of the human soul operated with various sources that he found in the ancient philosophers' works.[25] He thinned these sources and borrowed them for agreement with his attempts to seek truth. Alongside the eclectically formed view of the universe, the origin of the human soul is also interwoven within it. Plotinus pursued such a prevalent methodology of Roman philosophers, merging selectively taken sources, while relying his argument of the human soul's origin on the authority of Plato.[26] Such aspects of Plotinus's thought, cosmology, and sources about the origin of the human soul make sharp distinction from that of Augustine, or Christianity.

Augustine Affirms the Creation *ex nihilo* and Discovers the Necessity to Locate the Human Soul

Christianity held the belief in the creation *ex nihilo*, including the human soul, to hold the Scripture's authority. Christianity has long held the doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* from the early time of its history as the teaching of the very first sentence of Scripture. At least from the second century, the creation *ex nihilo* characterized theologians as those holding an apostolic faith and the authority of Scripture in the complex religious and philosophical circumstances of Roman society.[27] The belief in the creation *ex nihilo*

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[23] For more on how Plotinus related the destiny of souls with the sun, planets, and other stars, see *Enn*. 3.4.6.

[24] Armstrong, "'Emanation' in Plotinus," 61–64; Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 17; Rist, *Plotinus*, 68.

[25] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 16–36.

[26] Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, 382.

[27] Gerhard May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo: The Doctrine of 'Creation Out of Nothing' in Early Christian Thought* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 148–78. May listed names of these theologians holding the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, against teachings of Gnostics and philosophers, including Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch,

by God ensures one distinguished from the Platonists' idea of creation, by emanation in particular, in consideration of cosmology that contains the origin of the human soul.[28] The cosmogonical debate of Christian theologians against Middle Platonists in the third century caused the completion of the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* in relation to the nature of God.[29] As a church father, Augustine also held the belief in the scriptural creation of the soul from nothing from the early days of his conversion until his death.[30] Inspecting the creation of the human soul *ex nihilo*, therefore, helps comprehend his recognition about the authority of Scripture and tradition.

As one of the defenders of the Christian faith, Augustine left a significant amount of works concerning the creation of God to refute opponents of Christianity. He worked toward defending the Christian faith in order to urge his readers to firmly rely on Scripture. His persistent claim for the truthfulness of the creation narrative is repeated particularly in his *Confessiones*, *De Genesi ad Litteram*, and *De Civitate Dei*. As will be demonstrated, Augustine used his philosophical knowledge in these books to vindicate his literal interpretation of creation account.[31] Viewing the origin of the human soul, Augustine takes Genesis 1 and 2 as a primary source for the origin of the human soul.

Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and Origen. Cf. Simo Knuuttila, "Time and Creation in Augustine," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2001), 103–4.

[28] Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, 89–90; Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, trans. L. E. M. Lynch (New York: Random House, 1960), 107; Carol Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2006), 77–80.

[29] May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo*, 3–5. Cf. William A. Christian, "Augustine on the Creation of the World," in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. Roy Wesley Battenhouse (Oxford: Oxford University, 1955), 315.

[30] Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology*, 74*;* Frederick Copleston, *Medieval Philosophy*, vol. 2 of *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Image, 1993), 74; Gilson, *Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 108.

[31] Augustine asserted that anyone who believes that the Scripture is inerrantly true must interpret the text in two ways: literally and figuratively. The passages of Scripture point to factual events of visible and invisible realm. The reader of Scripture can understand biblical events partly through common sense. On the other hand, when one finds some part of Scripture apparently incoherent with another, one must rely on a figurative interpretation. A figurative exegesis attempts to unearth the historical facts behind a passage

Pertaining to the creation of the soul, Augustine's explication about God's creation of the first human, Adam, affirmed the highest authority of Scripture over other sources. He observed that the creation of the first human attests that the human soul is a part of the creation, but the Scripture does not illuminate the way descendants' souls are given.[32] For the themes that the Scripture omits, the philosophical assumptions are taken as a mere possibility instead of taking a part the truth. On one hand, Augustine identified the usefulness of some philosophical words that correspond to scriptural teachings. In understanding the mysterious creation of the Lord, he comes to utilize some philosophical ideas as a tool to understand the written truth. On the other hand, he denied some concepts, like Manichaean creation myth and parts of Neoplatonic philosophy. Theses could not take any place in Christian faith, for it does not correspond to Scripture and dogmatic teachings of Christianity.

In *De Quantitate Animae*, written a year after his conversion, Augustine showed that his comprehension about the origin of the human soul depends on the doctrine of creation by God. He did not mention the Neoplatonic idea emanation from One or Manichaean descent from some other preexisting place, the Kingdom of Light.[33] Instead,

that is difficult to understand or difficult to reconcile with other passages. However, the figurative interpretation also seeks the historical facts like the literal interpretation. In this sense, he regarded both approaches as correct hermeneutics. On the other hand, in terms of discovering the historical, spiritual entity, like the soul, one can safely say that Augustine equipped a literal, instead of a figurative, methodology to find out the place where God created the soul in the Scripture. Cf. *Gen. litt.* 1.21.41, 1.17.34; William A. Christian, "Augustine on the Creation of the World," *Harvard Theological Review* 46, no. 1 (1953): 315–42; Thomas Williams, "Biblical Interpretation," in Battenhouse, *Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, 59.

[32] *Ep.* 190.5.17. Augustine said, "I have not yet, therefore, found anything certain about the origin of the soul in the canonical scriptures" (Teske II/3, 270). He presented four theories about the origin of descendants' souls and propagation. Then, he claimed that he cannot hold any of them because they do not provide plausible explanation to be compatible with the Scripture and the authoritative interpretation of the Catholic church. Cf. *Ep.* 143.11.

[33] Manichaeans believed that the human soul preexisted in the Kingdom of Light and become a human being by mingling it with the body that belongs to the Kingdom of Darkness. Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 45th anniv. ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2000), 45. Mani, the founder of Manichaeism, taught that "sin constructed the human body from evil matter. Yet, its soul is divine, being taken from the five sons of the First Man. . . . This led the soul into error and forgetfulness of its true origin." Iain Gardener and Samuel N. C. Lieu, ed., *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge:

answering to the philosophical question about the origin of the human soul, by Euodius, "Where does the soul come from? (*unde sit anima*)," Augustine responded based on his Christian belief in the creation of the soul by God (*a quo creata est*).[34] This laity author did not elaborate on the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* in relation to other doctrines as his contemporary church leaders do, but his readers could grasp his intention by setting his argument in the limitation bounded by the specific doctrine. Such dependence on the doctrine of creation will become more specific in his later writings.

In *De Credo et Symbolo*, the origin of the human soul appeared to have a strong connection with the omnipotent nature of God within the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. Augustine stated that if omnipotent God created the world, then he necessarily made it from nothing.[35] He could not conceive God's omnipotence apart from the creation *ex nihilo*.[36] He found that the creation narrative exposed not only creation of the seeable world but also unseeable creatures. Scripture tells something more than seeable things, such as formless matter (*terra . . . inanis*; Gen 1:2) and unseeable matter (*materia invisa*; Wis 11:18).[37] Augustine discovered these clues as playing a signpost designating the spiritual element that God created out of nothing to make human soul. This belief in the authority of the Scripture led him, consequentially, to reason that if the human possesses a soul, then it is also created by God *ex nihilo*.[38]

Cambridge University, 2004), 209. According to Mani, the human soul shares the nature of God, which Augustine recognized as conflicting with the Christian faith. Cf. *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11.

[34] *Quant. an.* 1.1 (CSEL 89, 131); *Quant. an.* 1.2 (CSEL 89, 132).

[35] "*si omnipotentem deum fabricatorem mundi esse concedunt, fateantur necesse est ex nihilo eum fecisse quae fecit.*" *Fid. symb.* 2.2 (CSEL 41, 5).

[36] *Fid. symb.* 2.2.

[37] Augustine comprehends both *terra autem erat inanis* in Gen. 1:2 and *materia invisa* in Wis 11:17 as disclosing the invisible material by which God created the spiritual existences.

[38] Later, in *Gen. litt.*, Augustine explicated *materia invisa* in the Scripture as the spiritual element consisting of the human soul. *Gen. litt.* 7.5.7–7.12.

Affirmation of Scripture as the authoritative source persisted in Augustine's philosophical reasoning about the creation of the human soul, *ex nihilo*, by God, in later works—including *De Genesi ad Litteram, Confessiones, De Trinitate,* and *De Civitate Dei*.[39] In *De Genesi ad Litteram*, he stated that "God created the soul out of nothing, which he gave to the first man" (*ex nihilo deum fecisse animam, quam primo hominem dedit*).[40] He told that the Scripture supports the soul's creation out of nothing "in Ecclesiastes . . . 'and before the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit goes back to God who gave it'" (Eccl 12:7).[41] He read this passage as refuting the thought that God created human souls from something else. The spirit, which is synonymous with the human soul, going back to the creator meant that nothing contributed to their existence except God's creating work itself. The intertextual relationship between this passage and the creation narrative in Genesis comprehensively teaches God's creation of the human soul from nothing, while not upholding any potential theories that are ratiocinated by human assumptions.

He needed to clarify some passages of Scripture that were seemingly complicated to those who do not hold correct knowledge of the doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* in relation to corresponding aspects of other doctrines. Some people thought that God drew descendants' souls out of Adam's soul "like a seed of the soul to vivify the body," referring to the Book of Wisdom, "A Good soul fell to my lot; and being good above the common, I came to a body undefiled."[42] Augustine pointed out that this theory supposes "the fountainhead of souls" to exist before entering to bodies. This assumption results in thinking that souls come down to bodies with some nature either good or evil

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[39] *Gen. litt.* 7.27.39, 28.40, 10.9.16; *Conf.* 12.7.7, 17.25, 22.31, 28.38, 13.33.48; *Trin.* 4.1.3; *Civ.* 12.16, 13.24, 14.11.

[40] *Gen. litt.* 10.9.16 (CSEL 28.1, 306).

[41] *Gen. litt.* 10.9.16 (Taylor 2, 107).

[42] *Gen. litt.* 10.7.12 (Taylor 2, 104).

out of bodies.[43] Thus, this theory contradicts the teaching of Paul the apostle that "those not yet born had done no good or evil" (Rom 9:11).[44] The belief in the preexistence of souls with the nature of good or evil in parents, known as Traducianism, could lead one to doubt God's sovereignty in salvation. Augustine raised this doubt because, according to Scripture, God chooses souls before they exist in a mother's womb. However, traducianists' argument implied that preexisting souls can independently acquire a good or evil nature through their own actions, even without a body. Augustine claimed that they placed the criteria determining the nature of the soul before God's sovereign choice.[45] He explained that the theory justified by a single aspect of that passage must consort with the good nature of God whose creation *ex nihilo* is inevitably good by nature. This did not mean he considered these two passages as contradicting one another. Instead, he contended that Christians must seek a way "that we may not find ourselves contradicting the faith as handed down by St. Paul."[46]

Another difficulty came along with a passage of the book of Psalm, in comprehending the creation *ex nihilo* of descendants' souls. Some people discovered Psalm 103:29–30 as implying a kind of traducianism when it said, "Though wilt take away their spirit, and they will fail and return to their dust."[47] He did not directly refute those who use this passage as supporting traducianism. He honestly said that the psalmist neither supports nor disputes that theory. Rather, Augustine took it as telling a spiritual aspect of the Christian life "as referring to the grace of God by which we are interiorly renewed."[48] He leaned toward interpreting the passage in connection with the renewing

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[43] *Gen. litt.* 10.7.12 (Taylor 2, 104).

[44] *Gen. litt.* 10.7.12 (Taylor 2, 105).

[45] *Gen. litt.* 10.7.12. Cf. *Gen. litt.* 6.9.15; Augustine, *C. du. ep. Pelag.* 2.10.22.

[46] *Gen. litt.* 10.7.12 (Taylor 2, 105).

[47] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.13 (Taylor 2, 106).

[48] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.14 (Taylor 2, 106).

work of the Spirit of God instead of in relation to the origin of the human soul.[49] He thought the word *dust* parallels the Christian teaching of looking at the justice of God. Christians consider themselves dust and ashes. He contended that this is what is meant by the words, "And they will return to their dust."[50] He read the passage as the psalmist is emphasizing the teaching of the Scripture that believers despise themselves before the justice of God. This humbling aspect of the Christian faith appeared in the confession of Paul the apostle: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20).[51] He understood this passage as teaching the attitude of Christians toward their own belief. Christians who received the Holy Spirit, through which Christ leads their lives, do not consider their personal beliefs to be any more certain than the teachings of the Scriptures. He saw the passage that traducianists employed for their own purpose as a teaching of the Christian life instead of contradicting the creation of the human soul *ex nihilo*.

The firm reliance on the doctrine of creation, appearing in *De Credo et Symbolo*, recurs in *Confessiones*. Augustine said that all existing things are created by God. Consequentially, God created everything, even though some of these creations are not explicitly mentioned in Scripture. He discovered that philosophy could help understand the creation narrative of Genesis. Especially, philosophical terms like form and matter granted a way to glimpse what invisible creation would be like. Through the lens of philosophy, he could have an inkling of the invisible creation of God as something that did not yet receive a form.[52] Though, he did not exaggerate the usefulness of philosophy. He confined his philosophical knowledge to understanding the mystery of the creation *ex nihilo* and some expressions of the Scripture that are difficult to explain with plain words. He concluded, "If Genesis is silent about something that God made, still, neither a healthy

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[49] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.14 (Taylor 2, 106).

[50] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.14 (Taylor 2, 106).

[51] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.14 (Taylor 2, 106).

[52] *Conf.* 12.22.31.

faith nor clear intellect doubts that God created it" (*si aliquid Genesis tacuit deum fecisse, quod tamen deum fecisse nec sana fides nec certus ambigit intellectus*).[53] He acknowledged that God created everything that exists, including the human soul, but he could not illuminate them all clearly by human language.

In *De Trinitate,* Augustine identified Christ as the subject person who executed the creation work in the beginning. Perceiving through his trinitarian faith, the Scripture teaches all things made by the Son of God, but neither by hypostases nor by the natural process of emanation that Plotinus thought. Instead, he directly referred to the subject of the creation action as Jesus, the Word of God, referring to John 1:3: "All things were made through him and without him nothing was made" (*Omnia . . . per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil*).[54] He thought this verse comprehensively taught the creation of the human soul by the triune God. Simple syllogism proves how he arrived at this conclusion: (1) the human soul exists; (2) nothing can exist without the creation of the Word of God; (3) therefore, the human soul exists by the creation of the Word of God out of nothing. Such attribution of the origin of things to a divine being did not exclusively belong to Christian theology. Many ancient philosophers, especially Plato and Plotinus, related gods with the origin of the world—such as Demiurge. Considering this aspect, Augustine's mention of Jesus as the subject of the creation identifies the Christian identity of his thought about the soul's origin, making the opposite point against other philosophies.

In *De Civitate Dei*, Augustine presented again that he is maintaining the belief in the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. Interpreting Genesis 2:7, in *De Civitate Dei* XIII he needed to dispute the argument of those who claimed that God created the human soul out of his substance.[55] They insisted that Sirach 24:3 alluded that the soul came out of God's

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[53] *Conf.* 12.22.31 (CCSL 27, 233).

[54] Augustine directly referred to Jesus as the subject of the creation by citing John 1:3, *Trin.* 4.1.3 (CCSL 50, 163).

[55] *Civ.* 13.24.

mouth; therefore, God created the human soul out of his substance. Augustine felt it necessary to elaborate on how that verse implicated the creation *ex nihilo*. To interpret it, in accordance with the creation *ex nihilo*, he illustrated the human process of breathing. Humans take the surrounding air and let it out by inhaling and exhaling. Humans do not send out their substance, but the air, by exhaling. In the same sense, the anthropomorphic expression of the soul's coming forth from the creator's mouth in Sirach does not contradict the doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo*. He approved again, "The omnipotent God can fashion breath . . . from nothing."[56] He read God's creation in Genesis 2:7 as supporting the creation *ex nihilo*, based on the doctrine of omnipotence. This was also coherent with the teaching of Sirach 24:3. He held the doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* until his death. His subordination to the authority of Scripture and the doctrine led him to perceive it as the primary source for his philosophical reasoning about the origin of the human soul.

Reflection on the Creation of the Soul *ex nihilo*, Distanced from Neoplatonic Cosmology

The belief in the doctrine of creation has been regarded as one of the most important teachings in Christian faith from the early period of church history. Early church theologians considered the doctrine of the creation by God out of nothing to be subordinate to the biblical teaching, distinguished from other schemes of thought.[57] For instance, Irenaeus contended for the highest trustworthiness of scriptural accounts, against gnostic myth, by holding the belief in the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*.[58] As seen, Augustine also

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[56] "*omnipotens Deus . . . de nihilo potuit facere flatum.*" *Civ.* 13.24 (CCSL 48, 412).

[57] Tresmontant Claude, *The Origins of Christian Philosophy*, trans. Mark Pontifex, Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Section 1: Knowledge and Faith 99 (New York: Hawthorn, 1963), 40-5. Claude presented how church fathers recognized the doctrine of creation to be distinguished from other thought. He traced the originality of this belief from the Shepherd of Hermas (Commendments 1.11) to Augustine. *Civ.* 7.29.

[58] Stephen Presley summarized Irenaeus's primary argument, saying, "He asserts that Moses is a more trusted authority (Heb 3:5) on creation than the Gnostic thinkers who amend Genesis in accordance

undoubtfully holds the Christian belief of the doctrine of creation as being different from other thought.

As his predecessors, Augustine also found that the creation of the human soul described in Scripture, *ex nihilo*, attests that Christians cannot use the entire system of Neoplatonic cosmology. God created the human soul as he created things of the world out of nothing.[59] The Christian doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* conflicts with the Neoplatonic creation of emanation.[60] In *De Anima et Eius Origine*, Augustine refuted Vincentius's circular argument refusing God's creation of the soul out of nothing, while contrarily supposing God is the author who made it.[61] Augustine could not believe that human souls come down from God or that they preexisted before God's creation.[62] While Augustine does not patently mention it, such a refutation forms a complete antithesis against the Neoplatonic concept of emanation of the human soul.

Plotinus's way of describing the origin of the Soul and individual souls began by drawing an utterly different cosmology. Plotinus gave a somewhat vague explanation about how Soul and individual souls come to exists. In the order of the Platonists cosmos, Intellect exists by observing the productive power of the One.[63] This Intellect is an activity of the One.[64] About relation between the two, the One did not need Intellect,

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with their own theological perspective. The reliability of Moses is also confirmed through its *continuity* with the apostolic teaching." Stephen O. Presley, *The Intertextual Reception of Genesis 1-3 in Irenaeus of Lyons* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 47. For Irenaeus, there could be no reason to firmly believe anything apart from the contents exclusively found in the intertextual understanding of Scripture. Consequently, myths were in vain because gods were not found anywhere in the Scripture. The only triune God created all things to exist, without any help or any pre-existence, so *ex nihilo* (cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 1.22.1.).

[59] *An. orig*. 1.4.4.

[60] God's free creation in Christian doctrine shows a significant difference from "the necessary creation by emanation" of Neoplatonism. However, I cannot go further on this topic because of the limited length of this dissertation. See more about it in Copleston, *Medieval Philosophy*, 74–80.

[61] *An. orig*. 1.4.4.

[62] *An. orig*. 1.4.4.

[63] *Enn.* 5.1.7, 2.1.

[64] *Enn.* 5.1.7.

while the Intellect is generated from something greater than it.[65] It is not certain whether Soul directly comes from the Intellect as a result of its activity or a more medium process must take place between the Intellect and Soul. But the Intellect and Soul have a kin relationship. The Intellect gave birth to the Soul, an expressed principle of the Intellect. The activity of Intellect generates the Soul, an expressed principle.[66] Consequently, Intellect became, by himself, the father of the Soul.[67]

The Soul is distributed into planets and stars in the universe. Referring to Plato, Plotinus mentioned that the soul of the universe comes to exist by the god, Demiurge, and next to it, for its good purposes.[68] The heavenly soul forms the astronomical circuits in which Demiurge inserts their bodies to be the stars.[69] People regarded these bodies, planets and stars, as divine beings, or gods.[70] These souls of planets and stars in the universe possess different powers that produce each of their own activities.[71] Augustine said his contemporary philosophers shared such the idea about the soul of planets and stars along with Varro and Plato.[72]

Exploring the relationship between the human soul and the soul of the universe, Augustine found the intricate nature of the celestial bodies' souls and the soul of the universe to be challenging to arrive at a definitive conclusion. Instead, he wanted to give no final words about the movement of planets and stars. Although Scripture teaches about the maker of the heavenly bodies, it does not give a scientific description of its movement.

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[65] *Enn.* 5.1.6.

[66] *Enn.* 5.1.6.

[67] *Enn.* 5.1.3.

[68] *Enn.* 2.1.5; 4.8.1, 2.

[69] *Enn.* 4.8.2; 5.1.10.

[70] *Civ.* 4.1; 7.15, 23; 10.26; 18.41.

[71] *Enn.* 3.4.6.

[72] *Civ.* 7.6; 13.16.

Therefore, Augustine refrains concerning the question whether the heavenly bodies have soul or not, in subordination to the authority of Scripture.[73]

Augustine follows the biblical statements and the interpretation, about the creation of the soul, that have come down to him through the church tradition. From the book of Genesis Augustine found two narratives about the origin of the human soul, which are completely different from Neoplatonic emanation. The two creation narratives obviously take a part of God's creation *ex nihilo*. The human soul is created by the triune God rather than emanated by the necessity that is taught by Neoplatonists. Augustine read the first creation narrative of Adam as obviously the work of the Trinity:

> I must briefly point out the importance of the fact that in the case of the other works it is written, *God said, "Let Us make mankind to Our image and likeness."* Scripture would indicate by this the plurality of Persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But the sacred writer immediately admonishes us to hold to the unity of the Godhead when he says, *And God made man to the image of God*. He does not say that the Father made man to the image of the Son, or the Son made him to the image of the Father; otherwise the expression *to Our image* would not be correct if man were made to the image of the Father alone or the Son alone. But Scripture says, *God made man to the image of God,* meaning that God made man to His own image. The fact that here Holy Scripture says *to the image of God,* whereas above it says*, to Our image,* shows us that the plurality of Persons must not lead us into saying, believing, or understanding that there are many gods, but rather that we must accept the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one God. Because of the three Persons, it is said *to Our image*; because of the one God, it is said *to the image of God*.[74]

Augustine saw that the first human came to be in the world as a result of the free decision and creation of the triune God, not as the necessary process and emanation of Neoplatonists.

The more he read Scriptures, the more specific knowledge he attained about the process of the soul's creation. Augustine did not simply distance his thought into a vacuum from Neoplatonist teachings. As said in *Confessiones*, he converted to Christianity that exclusively developed its doctrines through subtle debates in its history.

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[73] *Gen. litt.* 2.18.38. Instead of choosing one of uncertain theories about the stars and planets, Augustine worried about holding an error too resolutely that contradicts to scriptural teaching.

[74] *Gen. litt.* 3.19.29 (Taylor 1, 94–95).

The task of interpreting Scripture as a priest made him to elaborate upon his early belief in the creation of the human soul *ex nihilo*, based on clues in the creation narrative.

Augustine: Interpretation of Genesis

Interpreting the Scripture, Augustine could elaborate on the origin of the human soul corresponding to other Christian doctrines, especially the creation *ex nihilo.* He composed the soul's creation through adjoining clues that he discovered in the creation narrative. In this process of composition he pursued reasonable explanations about clues, whereas sometimes he needed to postpone the conclusion. This section provides four subsections. The following subsections describe his arguments that (1) the creation narratives enclosed four clues indicating the human soul in God's spiritual creation; (2) Scripture supports his use of the philosophical term *rationes seminales* to locate where the human soul was created; (3) Scripture said God created the human soul with spiritual material; (4) Scripture expressed God's invisible action of creation of the soul as infusing it into the body; and (5) all human souls that exist are created by God but Scripture did not elaborate details. These arguments of Augustine made critical points against other thoughts, defending and depending on Scripture's authority in understanding the origin of the human soul.

God Created the Human Soul in the Spiritual Creation

Augustine felt the need to write down a total comprehension about the course of the soul's origin based on Scriptures' teaching after some early publications mainly dealt with the nature of the human soul simply by rational quest.[75] The way Augustine described the origin of the first human shows how thoroughly rooted his knowledge was in Christian Scriptures and tradition. He perceived the Scripture as containing true knowledge about

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[75] Before he worked on *De Genesi ad Litteram Liber Duodecim*, Augustine had already published some books describing, or defending, the doctrine of the human soul such as *Immort. An.*, *Quant. an.*, *Gen. Man.*, and *Gen. imp.*

the cosmos consisting of visible and invisible. The Scripture exposes four clues of invisible (or spiritual) creation, to Augustine. First, the Scripture manifests the word "day" (*dies*) as not belonging to the sequence of time. Second, the Scripture furnishes cardinal number "*dies unus*" instead of ordinal "*dies primus*" to point out the creation day. Third, Augustine reads that God's creation includes the day, not he created in the day. Fourth, the Christian faith cannot imagine a creator who works under the rule of the time sequence. These four elements worked in Augustine's identification of spiritual creation in the scriptural creation.

Augustine first had to organize the order of creation. He discovered that Scripture encompassed the origin of the human soul in simultaneous creation. The word "days" in the creation account could not correspond to the immutable and simple character of God, the Creator (Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2–3). These characteristics of God implied significant meaning for those acquainted with philosophical reasoning. To think of the immutability of God, they could not imagine it directly affecting the physical world that necessarily changes. The immutable God cannot belong to any local spatial or temporal realm (or time).[76] This Christian doctrine-based belief led him to think of some spiritual realm implied in the creation narrative. This meant that God created invisible realm, containing time, where his creation narrative took place.

In *De Genesi ad Litteram*, Augustine examined Genesis 1 and 2. In these chapters he found two differently nuanced creation narratives. His old Latin Scriptures made them appear contradictory on the matter of the order and timing of creation.[77] The

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[76] In *Gen. litt.* 8.26.48, Augustine insisted that the immutable God cannot belong to any local, spatial, or temporal realm (or time). In *Conf.* 11.12.14–13.16, he clarified the relation between God and time (manifested as days in the Scripture). Augustine held the belief that nothing can precede God because he is the cause of all things, *ex nihilo.* If time exists it, then it is a creation of God that came into being along with the creation of heaven and earth (Gen 1:1). Therefore, time cannot exist eternally for God is the only one who is eternal.

[77] For Augustine's problem with the old Latin text, see Louis Lavallee, "Augustine on the Creation Days," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32, no. 4 (December 1989): 459–60. Ancient Greek and Latin translators of the Hebrew Scripture tried to harmonize the creation between Gen 1 and 2.

Latin translation of Genesis 2:4-5 reads, "This is the book of the creating of heaven and earth when the day was made God made heaven and earth, and all the greenery of the field before it was upon the earth, and all the hay of the field before it sprang up."[78] Augustine understood this passage to mean that when God created day (*dies*), he created heaven and earth (*caelum et terram*) and the human soul (*animam hominis*). This reading troubled Augustine as he sought to comprehend the Scriptures consistently.[79] Augustine believed both narratives to be true accounts. His belief in Scripture's factuality did not tolerate any sacrifice on the literal reading of either account. Instead, this apparent contradiction signified to him that God concealed spiritual facts in one of the two narratives.[80]

Augustine initially found that God created another heavens and earth (*caelum et terram*) before he creates the heaven (Gen 1:8; *caelum*) and earth (Gen 1:9; *terram*). He believed the two creation events of the heavens and earth do not contradict each other. For him, these were two separate occurrences in creation, one placed in the beginning and the other on the second and fourth creation days. Each of the occurrences conveys a factual event, and one should not deny or defame either one. Therefore, the creation preceding the six days of Genesis 1:3ff indicates an existence separate from what God created in the following six creation days. Furthermore, the heavens and the earth of Genesis 1:1 could not have physical properties or observable change since they existed before the creation of

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LXX and Jerome's translations also reflect these attempts of harmonization. See Andrew J. Brown, *The Days of Creation: A History of Christian Interpretation of Genesis 1:1-2:3* (Dorset, UK : Deo, 2014), 13–15.

[78] *Gen. litt.* 5.1.1 (Hill I/13, 276).

[79] Perhaps the creation narrative in the apocryphal book *Sirach* weighed heavy on Augustine's mind, because he greatly wanted to interpret the creation narratives consistently. But it is not certain whether he viewed *Sirach* as an authoritative book because he did not want to directly appeal to it to prove God's simultaneous creation. See *Gen. litt.* 5.3.6. For the view that Augustine thought *Sirach* conveyed an authoritative creation narrative, see Lavallee, "Augustine on the Creation Days", 460–61.

[80] *Gen. litt.* 2.8.16–19*,* 5.3.6.

time, a necessary component of change.[81] Augustine states, "This unformed matter has been called heaven and earth, which God made in the beginning before that one day which He made, and it is so designated because from it heaven and earth were made. It is also called invisible and formless earth and dark abyss."[82] His conviction in the truthfulness of Scripture led him to locate invisible heaven and earth that will become a clue for the existence of invisible material consisting of the soul.

Augustine was convinced that the six creation days of Genesis 1 must be interpreted in the sense of the spiritual creation, in which God created the first man and its soul. Since the heavenly objects, such as the sun, moon, and stars, were created only on the fourth day, the first three days lacked the circuit of the heavenly bodies. These days in the creation account must have had a different nature than the days commonly known by man. Augustine believed that human beings cannot fully understand this unusual nature, whatever it may be. He stated,

> In our experience, of course, the days with which we are familiar only have an evening because the sun sets, and a morning because the sun rises; whereas those first three days passed without the sun, which was made, we are told, on the fourth day. . . . But what kind of light that was, and with what alternating movement the distinction was made, and what was the nature of this evening and this morning; these are questions beyond the scope of our sensible experience. We cannot understand what happened as it is presented to us; and yet we must believe it without hesitation.[83]

Therefore, he concluded that all six creation days could not be like the days humans normally experience. And again, he endeavored to find the true meaning and nature of the days in the narrative of the biblical creation in which the human soul is created.

Augustine believed that God's creation, including the human soul, occurred in "one day" as a whole. The six sequential days in the Scripture seemed to conflict with his common sense and posed a challenge to his literal reading of the text. Again, Augustine

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[81] *Civ.* 11.6 (Bettenson, 435–36). Augustine thought, as Aristotle, that change cannot occur outside of time. Cf. *Conf.* 11.24.31.

[82] *Gen. litt.* 5.5.13 (Taylor 1, 154).

[83] *Civ.* 11.7 (Bettenson, 436).

thought that the two narratives, Genesis 1 and 2, cannot oppose each other, although the first mentions six days and the second mentions one day. His concern, then, was to uncover the truth behind this apparent contradiction. He found some philosophical ideas helpful for uncovering the hidden meaning within the two creation narratives. In this case, he rested on the idea of simultaneous creation, saying,

> Just as in that seed there were together (*simul)* invisibly all the things which would in time develop into the tree, so the world itself is to be thought to have had together—since God created all things together—all the things which were made in it and with it when the day was made, not only the heaven with the sun and the moon and the constellations . . . and the earth and the abysses . . . but also those things which the water and the earth produced potentially and causally, before they should arise in the course of time in the way we now know them, through those operations which God carries on even till now.[84]

Augustine's idea of simultaneous creation explained how God created the first human and its soul, irrespective of time and despite the six-day and one-day language of the text. Augustine believed God's simultaneous creation act produced all the potentials and causes necessary to form the material creation as seen now through the course of time. The idea of simultaneous creation enabled him to read the creation of the first human in Genesis 1 in continuity with Genesis 2.

Augustine argued that God used the word 'days' for those who cannot understand simultaneous creation. Using the word 'days,' Scripture communicates God's divine work in language that finite readers can understand. Augustine explained,

> In this narrative of creation Holy Scripture has said of the Creator that He completed His works in six days. . . . It follows, therefore, that He, who created all things together, simultaneously created these six days, or seven, or rather the one day six or seven times repeated. . . . The reason is that those who cannot understand the meaning of the text, *He created all things together,* cannot arrive at the meaning of Scripture unless the narrative proceeds slowly step by step.[85]

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[84] *Gen. litt.* 5.23.45, 46. The translation is quoted from Christian, "Augustine on the Creation of the World," 330.

[85] *Gen. litt.* 5.33.52 (Taylor 1, 142).

Therefore, the six days in Scripture refer to one single creation day. Scripture repeatedly expressed the one-day creation as a six-day creation only to reveal God's divine work to finite human beings.

Four clues for the soul in the spiritual creation. To summarize so far, Augustine discovered four clues within the creation narratives that compelled him to explore the idea that God created all things, including the human soul, simultaneously within the spiritual realm. First, although Genesis 1 repeatedly uses the word "day," God waited until the fourth day to create the heavenly objects, such as the sun, moon, and stars. However, human beings do not understand the concept of a day apart from the habits of the celestial objects.[86] These statements become the sign that God intended in this creation narrative to imply spiritual meaning in the word "day." In so doing, he made it possible for the notion of "day" to indicate the order of creation rather than the time sequence of creation.[87] For Augustine, this order of creation consisted of causes and effects rather than time.[88] Therefore, the creation narratives recount the actualization of

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[86] *Gen. litt.* 2.14.28, 29.

[87] *Gen. litt.* 2.2-6. Here, Augustine explained why the number six is more perfect than other numbers. The six-day creation manifests the perfection of the creation. In the fourth century, people regarded the number six as a perfect number. Augustine argued that he found the same thought from the church fathers' tradition at his disposal, which supported the mysterious perfection of the number 6. He stated,

> One is considered as not having a half or any part, but as being truly, purely, and simply one. Two has the number one as a part, namely, a half, but no other. Three has two parts, the number one, which is an aliquot part, for this is a third of it, and another larger part, two, which is not an aliquot part. Therefore, the parts of three cannot be reckoned among the aliquot parts that we are now considering. Four has two such parts: the number one, which is a fourth, and two, which is a half. But added together, one and two make three, not four. Therefore, four is not the total of its parts, for they add up to a smaller sum. Five has only one such part, namely, one, which is a fifth; for two, the smaller part of five, and three, the larger, cannot be called aliquot parts. But six has three such parts: a sixth, a third, and a half: a sixth being one; a third, two; and a half, three. These parts, one, two, and three, when added together make six. (*Trin.* 4.2.7-10 [Hill I/5, 159–64]; cf. *Civ.* 11.31.30)

[88] *Gen. litt.* 4.33.51. For more on this subject, see Taylor's reference in *Gen. litt.* (Taylor 1, 252–54). Much material is available that demonstrates the ancient worldview based on cause-effect and the principle running the chain of cause-effect. Augustine clearly defended the compatibility of the cause-effect view and the Christian faith. Augustine accepted this view only to defend God's foreknowledge. See *Civ.* 5.9.

events into the physical world by cause and effect. Only once an event, or act of creation, occurs through cause and effect will it belong to the lapse of time.

Second, Augustine translated Genesis 1:5 to say God created the day and night on *dies unus* (one day; as a cardinal number), instead of *dies primus* (first day, as an ordinal number).[89] Augustine asked, "Why the day . . . is not said the first day, but one day? (*an hic dies . . . non dictus est primus, sed unus dies*?)."[90] In his understanding, Scripture implanted a spiritual meaning in the word "one day," avoiding the ordinal word "first day." The confidence about the accuracy of the Scripture prompted him to find spiritual creation.

Third, Augustine read Genesis 2:4 as meaning, "This is the book of the creation of heaven and earth when day was created" (*hic est liber creaturae vel facturae caeli et terrae, cum factus est dies*).[91] He stated that all seven days in the creation narrative, including the sixth day in which God created the first human and its soul, occurred at the same time in the spiritual realm. He supported his view by saying that another part of the Scripture provides the same viewpoint with him: "God created all things simultaneously."[92] Augustine was convinced that the Scriptures teach about the simultaneous creation of the world and the human soul took place simultaneously.

Fourth, the Christian faith of Augustine could not comprehend a creator whose acts are subject to a sequence of time as well as to mutability. Christian doctrine teaches the Creator transcends all created things; hence, his creating work cannot belong to the time he himself created.[93] For God to create the sun, moon, and stars to be "*signs for the fixing*

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[89] *Gen. litt.* 1.17.33. See also *Gen. imp.* 7.28. Modern translations of אֶחָד יוֹם (*eḥād yôm*) in Gen 1:5 vary: "one day" (NASB, CSB, and ASV), "the first day" (ESV, KJV, NRSV, NET, and NIV), and "day one" (NETS). See also *Gen. litt.* 5.1.1–3.6.

[90] *Gen. litt.* 1.17.33 (CSEL, 24).

[91] *Gen. litt.* 5.1.1 (CSEL, 137).

[92] *Gen. litt.* 5.3.6. Here, Augustine says he found another passage supporting the simultaneous creation: "*ita iam nonex alio sanctae scripturae libro profertur testimonium, quod omnia simul deus creaverit.*"

[93] *Gen. litt.* 5.17.3; *Conf.* 11.13.16, 30.40; *Civ.* 11.6.

of times, of days, and of years, means that all the heavenly bodies are to mark the course of time (*tempora*)."[94] The passage of the sun rules the length of a day, the change of the moon's shape corresponds with a month, and the movement of constellations exhibits the change of seasons. Not only is this evident in nature, but Scripture also says that God created the dimension of time to depend on the circuit of the heavenly bodies.[95] Therefore, to claim the creator performed his creative act while subject to the rule of day would be to pose a challenge to his divinity and authority over all things. For such a creator cannot claim authority over all things since he himself is subject to a created thing; namely, time.[96] However, this does not describe the God of the Scripture. God created everything *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. He rules over all created things, including time and "days."[97] Therefore, the God of Scripture cannot be said to have worked under the rule of time. Augustine's attempt to explain how the transcendent God created the world in the six days of Genesis 1 outside the constraints of time resulted in his theory of simultaneous creation through seminal means. Thus, God's creation of the first man and his soul must have occurred in the spiritual realm prior to things arising with the physical form and its change that generates the lapse of time.

These four elements signified to Augustine the need for spiritual creation before the origination of the physical world and the first man. One must notice that he keeps referring to the authority of Scripture that he showed from his early period of conversion. The creation of the human soul could be found in the spiritual realm not because he learned it from any other philosophical sects, but because the Scripture and the Christian doctrine teaches it.

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[94] *Gen. litt.* 2.14.29 (Taylor 1, 67).

[95] *Gen. litt.* 2.13.29.

[96] *Civ.* 11.6, 7.

[97] *Gen. litt.* 5.21.41.

On the other hand, Augustine did not connect the notion of the spiritual realm—that he found in the creation narrative to be a place where God created the soul—with the world of intellects that appeared in Neoplatonic cosmology, though he utilized the term for a certain purpose. Augustine used the phrase "intellectual realm" as an alternative to the biblical, spiritual realm to help understanding. However, one fact must be emphasized—Augustine did not use the concept of the intellectual world as an acquisition from Neoplatonic cosmology, apart from biblical teaching, from the early period of his conversion.[98] One who doubts Augustine's conversion must notice his silence on Neoplatonic cosmology and its origin because the nature of the heavenly bodies took critical subject in his young period wandering for truth.[99] Nevertheless, he does not mention any Neoplatonic idea as having, at least, some plausible explanation about the heavenly bodies that are tied with the soul. Instead, he finds the truth that the Scripture exposes the spiritual realm as the subject of God's creation in the book of Genesis.

Soul among *Rationes Seminales*

Augustine read the creation narrative in Genesis to mean it happened in the invisible realm. He tried to explain the Scripture with the best knowledge that he attained from his philosophical education. He felt it necessary to use some difficult concepts, such as *rationes seminales, potentialiter*, and *causalem rationem.* The use of these terms has four features: (1) Scripture takes the sole authority to comprehend the place where God created everything; (2) Scripture's creation narrative is the subject to understand, not

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[98] Augustine's works that he published in his early period includes *Acad., Beat., Solil., Immort. an., De musica, Mor. eccl., Quant. an., Gen. Man., De Diversis Quaestionibus Octoginta Tribus, De magistro*, etc. In these works, that Augustine wrote before he took a pastoral task at Hippo, a word signifying the Neoplatonic intellects related to cosmological entities does not appear.

[99] *Conf.* 5.3.6, 5.9, 6.11. Augustine confessed that he had been seeking a true answer for the cause making movement of the heavenly bodies. He learned mathematic astronomy, heard of the Manichean mythic explanation about it, and studied astrology seriously. It seems that Augustine regarded the explanation of heavenly phenomena to be important to decide what religious or philosophical sect is more credible. In this regard, the fact is significant that Augustine does not refer to Neoplatonic works when he explains the creatures and its movement in the heaven, other than Scripture. This brings doubt whether Augustine considered Neoplatonism more than a steppingstone to Christianity at any rate.

philosophical languages itself; (3) Augustine did not need to worry that utilizing these concepts might align him with particular philosophical groups because they were used by various Greek and Roman philosophers; and (4) church fathers before Augustine already used these words, though not all of them intended the same meaning. Scripture offered the foundation for the invisible creation, and philosophical knowledge helped to understand it. Indeed, for Augustine, the Scripture provided more specific clues concerning the constituent of the human soul.

First, Augustine sought to further understand *where* God created the human soul. To do this, he delved more into his philosophical knowledge. He concluded in his studies that God established his creations through seminal causes. The seminal causes are seeds from which every created thing developed into what God intended it to be through the course of time.[100] Augustine used his philosophical conclusion on *rationes seminales* to further explain how the creation in potential realm is actualized, according to Scripture:

> Nor can it be said that the male indeed was made on the sixth day, the female some days later, since on the sixth day itself it says as clearly as anything, *Male and female he made them and blessed them* etc., all of which is said about them both and to them both. So then, in one way both of them then, and in another way both of them now; Then, that is to say, in terms of a potentiality inserted as it were seminally into the universe through the Word of God, when he created all things simultaneously, resting from them on the seventh day, from these, all things would be made and happen, each in its own time, through the ordered course of the ages; now, on the other hand, in terms of the work to be bestowed on the march of time, at which "he is working until now"; and it was right and proper for Adam to be made now in his own time from the mud of the earth, and his woman out of the man's side.[101]

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[100] Copleston, *Medieval Philosophy*, 76. Augustine's use of the *rationes seminales* doubtlessly reflects his knowledge of philosophy. Copleston stated, "The idea of these germinal potentialities was to be found, and doubtless was found by Augustine, in the philosophy of Plotinus and ultimately it goes back to the *rationes seminales* or λογοι σπερματιχοι of stoicism, but it is an idea of rather vague content."

[101] *Gen. litt.* 6.5.8 (Hill I/13, 305).

Neque enim dicendum est masculum quidem sexto die factum, feminam vero posterioribus diebus, cum ipso sexto die apertissime dictum sit: masculum et feminam fecit eos et benedixit eos et cetera, quae de ambobus et ad ambos dicuntur. Aliter ergo tunc ambo et nunc aliter ambo: tunc scilicet secundum potentiam per verbum dei tamquam seminaliter mundo inditam, cum creavit omnia simul, a quibus in die septimo requievit, ex quibus omnia suis quaeque temporibus iam per saeculorum ordinem fierent, nunc autem secundum operationem praebendam temporibus, qua usque nunc operator, et oportebat iam suo tempore fieri Adam de limo terrae eiusque mulierem ex viri latere. (CSEL 28, 176)

In this passage he affirmed that God created the male and female at the same time according to Genesis 1:27: "Male and female he made them and blessed them." Such an interpretation was coherent with his understanding of day as a simultaneous creation. On the creation narrative of the first man and women, Augustine clarified that God created the two human beings simultaneously in terms of potentiality. This meant that God laid them outside the present in the sense of time, with the given ability to develop in the course of time. The potential creation was brought into time by the Word of God, as taught in Scripture. The humans set seminally into the world first, then, to appear in the course of time. Augustine presented this hypothesis as being supported by Word of God, that is Jesus (John 1:1, 14), when it says, "he is working until now" (John 5:17). Augustine affirmed, in the following section, that the Scriptures led him to assume the creation in the potentiality, but at the same time he acknowledged his hypothesis cannot be the truth itself, that is the Scripture.[102] Certainly, Augustine believed that Scripture teaches the truth of God—neither of Neoplatonic One nor of Demiurge—as the subject of the biblical creation narrative.

Second, although philosophical terms—such as *potentiam* or *seminaliter*—were introduced, Augustine identified the subject of creation and its context based on what he discovered in his reading of Scripture. As will be seen later in this section, Augustine frequently employed terms indicating the spiritual realm, such as *rationes seminales*, *causalem rationem*, and *potentialiter*, in Augustine's works.[103] However, he does not

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[102] *Gen. litt.* 6.6.9. Augustine has confidence about his interpretation of the creation as divided into visible and invisible. He says,

> Let us take it then as established that in allotting some of the works of God to those invisible days in which he created all things simultaneously, some to these visible ones in which he is working every day at whatever is being as it were unwrapped in time from those primordial wrappings, we have been following the words of scripture, and been led by them to make the distinction in a way that is not absurdly wrongheaded." (*Gen. litt.* 6.6.9 [Hill I/13, 305–6])

[103] For example, since Augustine divides the creation of the world as visible and invisible, he mentions words alluding the creation in potentiality—such as seed and seminal reason—to describe God's invisible creation. See Augustine's use of the words such as seminal reason (*rationes seminales*) in *Gen. litt.* 9.17.32; 10.20.35, 36; causal reason (*causalem rationem*) in 6.15.26; 7.6.9, 23.34, 28.40; 10.2.3;

demonstrate them, in any places, as dependent on some philosophical sects or as critical concepts in defining them; for intellects in his time were already acquainted with those philosophical concepts.[104] Instead, for Augustine, these words seem to fit in explaining the spiritual realm that the Scripture illustrates as the stage of the biblical creation narrative.

Significantly, Augustine's intellectual concentrated more on the literal understanding of the creation narrative than on seeking scientific vindication.[105] His study of *rationes seminales* was to support a literal reading of the text. Such philosophical explanations provide tools to help one understand the true, often hidden, meaning of Scripture. Therefore, Augustine's main goal in using this approach was to seek spiritual truth rather than the scientific, physical explanation of creation. He desired to read and accept the literal truth of Scripture. His complicated method of studying the Scripture demanded his reader focus heavily on the literal truth of the Scripture.

Augustine's view on the creation of humans in the *rationes seminales* must not be confused with agricultural or botanical illustrations. Comparing with the creation of plants, Augustine further elaborated,

> It appears rather that the seeds sprang from the crops and the trees, and that the crops and trees themselves came forth not from seeds but from the earth. This is what the word of God itself declares. For it does not say, "Let the seeds in the earth bring forth the grain and the fruit-bearing tree"; but it says, *Let the earth bring forth the grain scattering its seed.* It thus reveals that the seed is from the crops, not the crops from the seed.[106]

This meant that God's act of instant creation did not cooperate within natural laws, for the natural laws were not in effect until after all things were created. It is not as if God planted a seed of a created object in the same way a farmer sows wheat and waits for his crop to

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potential (*potentialiter*) in *Ver. rel.* 18.36; *Gen. litt.* 5.5.14, 7.22; 6.5.7, 6.10, 15.26; 10.26.44; and seminal (*seminales*) in *Gen. litt.* 3.14.23; 6.5.8; 10.21.37.

[104] Michael J. McKeough, "The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales in St. Augustine" (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, 1926), 17–27.

[105] Copleston, *Medieval Philosophy*, 76.

[106] *Gen. litt.* 5.4.10 (Taylor 1, 152). Concerning the translation issue of Gen 1:11–12, see Taylor's note in Taylor 1, 253–54.

grow. In this case, the planted seeds come forth from the ground by natural law. But such an understanding limits God's creative work within the boundaries of natural laws. Instead, Scripture says that God created the plants as fully grown to be brought from the earth, not from seeds. Thus, reasoning from the origin of nature, Augustine focused on convincing his readers to accept a true, literal understanding of creation based on Scripture. He did not try to present a scientifically plausible explanation of the creation. His implementation of *rationes seminales* was meant to provide supplemental help in comprehending the meaning of Scripture as it is written.

Third, Augustine's intimacy with philosophical terms like *rationes seminales* does not necessarily mean he was absorbed into a specific philosophical sect's idea, like Neoplatonism. Holding a viewpoint that one definitive term is arbitrarily possessed by a thinker or sect could be an anachronical perspective in the sense of ancient philosophy. For instance, Michael J. McKeough said that many Latin writers and Greek philosophers used the term *ratio seminales* in various ways to give plausible explanation about the world and its origin.[107] McKeough's study included the early Alexandrian church fathers along with various philosophers, such as Thales, Anaximenes, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Heraclitus, Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, and Neoplatonists.[108] Augustine lived in the epoch when many thinkers continued to present their own theory of *rationes seminales* to explain the origin of the world, but he stood with church fathers in subordination to the authority of Scripture.

Fourth, Augustine was neither the first nor sole thinker who utilized other philosophical ideas, even in Christian history in his time. Matthew Drever discovered that many thinkers in Augustine's time had their own definition about the same philosophical

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[107] McKeough, "The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales," 17–24.

[108] McKeough traced the use of the term *rationes reminales* beyond Augustine, through Thomas Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, and even after Charles Darwin's publication of *Origin of Species*. McKeough argues here that these writers, along with Augustine, used the terms to describe the origin of the world. McKeough, "The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales," 24–27.

word, *rationes seminales*.[109] Drever added that Augustine paved his own way, like other thinkers, of employing the word, though, standing in Christian tradition with Basil and Gregory of Nyssa.[110] Particularly, Gregory of Nyssa denied Origen's dualistic theory about the origin of the human soul. Gregory employed the word "seminal power" (σπερματικὴ δύναμις), corresponding to *rationes seminales*, as a place where God created the seed of the soul, in opposition to Origen.[111] Likewise, Augustine utilized the term *rationes seminales* just as his predecessors employed it for their own purpose. Christian writers vividly implemented philosophical ideas to explain Christian faith.

God Created the Human Soul
with Spiritual Material

The mutability of the human soul granted the confirmation, to Augustine, that God created it with a certain material, but different from terrestrial elements. He found that the mutability of the human soul attests to its distinctive nature from the creator as well. Ancient Christians embraced the pursuit of understanding the soul's constituents through intellectual effort. Philosopher A. H. Armstrong argued that Augustine's view parallels that of Gregory of Nyssa: "Both Augustine and Gregory of Nyssa insist again and again that the soul is a creature, not a part of God, and stress the intrinsic mutability and peccability, which is essential in being a creature and is to be seen even in the highest, angelic creation."[112] Armstrong might have such a passage of Augustine in mind:

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[109] Matthew Drever, *Image, Identity, and the Forming of the Augustinian Soul* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2013), 19.

[110] Drever, *Image, Identity*, 20. See also McKeough, "The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales," 141–58.

[111] Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Presence and Thought: Essay on the Religious Philosophy of Gregory of Nyssa*, trans. Mark Sebanc (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), 57–58. See Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* 27.

[112] A. Hilary Armstrong, "St. Augustine and Christian Platonism," in *Plotinian and Christian Studies* (London: Variorum, 1979), XI. 5, 6. The intrinsic distinction between the human soul and God makes an antithesis against O'Connell's view that Augustine had a Plotinian understanding of the human soul.

For if the soul were something immutable, we should have no need to look for its own special kind of matter; however, its mutability shows it sometimes deformed by vice and deception and formed by virtue and true doctrine, its nature a soul meanwhile remaining, just as the flesh remains by nature flesh though it is glowing with health or disfigured by disease or wounds. . . . Perhaps, then, the soul, before it was made into the nature of soul, whose beauty is virtue and whose deformity is vice, could have had its own kind of spiritual material which was not yet soul, whose beauty is virtue and whose deformity is vice, could have had its own kind of spiritual material which was not yet soul, just as the earth from which the flesh was made was already something, although it was not flesh.[113]

In this passage Augustine perceived the nature of the human soul as different from that of God. Virtue and vice make an impact on the soul's growth or deformity. He derived plausibility of the existence of the spiritual material from such facts and the creation of the flesh from the earth. Because God created the human body from the earth, it is reasonable to think that the mutable human soul could be created with its own kind of spiritual material. Furthermore, Armstrong maintained that Augustine's understanding of the soul's mutability disputes some scholars' viewpoint that Augustine explained it in light of Plotinian doctrine.[114] Augustine's deductive approach to discovering spiritual material, composing of the soul, exhibits his affinity to shared methods among Christian writers before himself, making a contrast to other thoughts.

Augustine perceived his limited ability to clarify the full nature of the spiritual material from the early time of his conversion. In *De Animae Quantitate* he confirmed that God created the human soul with some material other than what philosophers had thought of, such as earth, water, air, fire, or any combination of any of these things.[115] He maintained that it is not contradictory to think that the soul is composed of some distinct element from these elements because the soul is not a byproduct of nature but God created it. He could not yet give further description about the constituent of the soul when he wrote *De Animae Quantitate*. As he continued to read the Scripture and held his

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[113] *Gen. litt.* 7.2.3 (Taylor 2, 4).

[114] Armstrong, "St. Augustine and Christian Platonism," XI. 5.

[115] *Quant. an.* 1.2.

philosophical curiosity about the soul in mind, he eventually began to specify the distinct constituents of the soul. However, at that time, he still could not find a definitive answer.

His use of term "formless matter" began to appear in his work *De Vera Religione*.[116] He attempted to explain "formless matter" with somewhat complicated philosophical terms such as form, potentiality, and Good. Still, this Christian intellectual enjoyed utilizing sophisticated, abstract words to show the truthiness of the Christian faith in terms of philosophy. He thought that Christians who are familiar with these philosophical terms could grasp the meaning of the formless matter in Genesis 1:2 as a constituent that God shapes by transiting from potentiality to actuality. He described it specifically in *Confessiones* in relation to the Scripture. To Augustine, the creation of the invisible things in Genesis looked like a complete description of the world to people like himself who were acquainted with philosophy.

In *Confessiones* he concretized the meaning of the formless matter (*informis materia*) with plain language focusing on God's work of the creation.[117] The creation of the formless matter according to Genesis 1:2 would become a clue to understanding the constituent of the human soul. The earth was invisible and unorganized because God created the spiritual things in that verse. To his understanding of the creation narrative, God created the spiritual heaven first in order (Gen 1:1). This meant for him that the creator might set invisible, formless matter that stays in a different course of becoming existence from material things proceeding to the temporal realm. Although he concentrated here on praising God's greatness and transcendence, he showed the conviction that Scripture alluded that God created invisible matter by which the soul might be created.

Writing in *De Genesi ad Litteram*, Augustine seemed to solidify his conviction about the invisible matter as he discovered Wisdom of Solomon 11:18, "For your all-powerful hand, which created the world out of formless matter" (*non enim inpossibilis*

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[116] *Ver. rel.* 18.36.

[117] *Conf.* 12.12.15.

erat omnipotens manus tua quae creavit orbem terraum ex materia invisa). He read this

verse as supporting his understanding of the formless matter in Genesis 1:2.[118] The

formless material that God created firstly became the source of his following creation. He

manifested that he did not invent this interpretation nor import any philosophy to it. Rather,

he clarified that he is elaborating on it within the Catholic faith (*catholica fides*) in

understanding the nature of the invisible matter. To his perception, both the Wisdom of

Solomon and the tradition of his faith support his comprehension of the invisible material.

Also in *De Genesi ad Litteram* he explicated his reasoning of the formless matter

to the extent of its relationship with Christ's creating work proclaimed in John 1:3–10.

These passages announced Christ as the triune God who created the formless matter in

Genesis 1:2.[119] He brought these verses to show consistency of Scripture on the formless

matter within the doctrine of Trinity. He read John 1:3 as clarifying Christ as the person

who created the formless matter appearing in Genesis 1:2 and Wisdom of Solomon 11:18.

The Son of God set the formless matter when he created all things together (*creavit omnia

simul*) as said in the Wisdom of Solomon 18:1.[120] Scripture implemented the term

"formless matter," which might have sounded somewhat philosophical to the people,

aiming to lead them to comprehend the deeper meanings within this spiritual text.[121]

Then, Augustine closely overviewed theories that tried to describe the spiritual

material. These theories included the theory of irrational soul, four elements of the

philosophical tradition, and fire and air of medical writers.[122] He contended that these

materials could not offer a proper comprehension of spiritual material. In his rejection of

these physical sources as spiritual material, he seemed to be prepared to embrace the

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[118] *Gen. litt.* 1.14.28.

[119] *Gen. litt.* 5.17.35.

[120] *Gen. litt.* 5.17.35.

[121] *Gen. litt.* 1.14.28.

[122] *Gen. litt.* 7.9.12–13.20 (Taylor 2, 10–15).

Neoplatonic perspective on spiritual material. However, he formed all these refutations in light of scriptural teachings.[123] None of these theories could properly explain the function of the soul, stated as "Man was made a living being" (Gen 2:7) in the Scripture.[124] He returned to the biblical teaching after showing that no plausible theory explained the spiritual material. To contemplate the spiritual material, he once again turned to the literal understanding of biblical creation rather than Neoplatonic sources.[125]

He confirmed the plausibility of assuming the spiritual material by which God created the human soul when he breathed it into Adam's body. [126] He reasoned the existence of the spiritual material from observation of the creation of the human body with dust. He thought of it as alluding to the spiritual constituent that God made it the soul. According to Augustine,

> Was God's breath, then, quite simply made from nothing when it pleased Him to breathe forth and His breath became the soul of man? Or was there already existing some spiritual entity which, whatever its nature, was not yet soul, and from this entity was there made the breath of God, identified with the soul itself? There is a parallel with man's body, which was nonexistent before God formed it from the slime or dust of the earth. For dust or slime was not human flesh; nevertheless, it was something from which would be made a being which was not yet in existence.[127]

The creation narrative of the human body from the dust of the earth furnished a reason for Augustine to consider the human soul as made of some spiritual material. The distinctiveness of the human soul, from God, and its mutability could grant legitimacy to believe in the existence of the spiritual matter.[128] It is reasonable to consequently assume, "Perhaps, then the soul, before it was made into the nature of soul, whose beauty is virtue

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[123] Augustine refuted all these materials as consisting of the human soul because they cannot be paralleled with biblical statements. See more in *Gen. litt.* 7.9.12–13.20.

[124] *Gen. litt.* 7.16.22 (Taylor 2, 17).

[125] Augustine seeks the literal understanding of the book of Genesis throughout his commentary, *Gen. litt.*

[126] *Gen. litt.* 7.5.7, 8; 7.3.5.

[127] *Gen. litt.* 7.5.8.

[128] *Gen. litt.* 7.6.9.

and whose deformity is vice, could have had its own kind of spiritual material which was not yet soul, just as the earth from which the flesh was made was already something, although it was not flesh."[129] In this passage, Augustine put rational assumptions about the order of God's creation of the human soul, in observance of the narrated creation of the body. Although the soul and body are composed of different substances, it is reasonable to think that God would create the soul in a similar way that he created the body with the earth. He assumed that God might create some kind of spiritual material to compose the soul by the order of creation. Because the Christian believes the creator of the Scripture created all things that exist, he could take the spiritual material as a possible way of the soul's creation that can be derived from the order in which the body is created. However, this logical conclusion was founded on a *philosophical assumption* because it pertains to human comprehension, unless Scripture explicitly affirms it.

Augustine did not assert that he could determine, through reasoning or Neoplatonic insight, the specific location pointed out in Scripture where the creation of the spiritual material is included. While some scholars, including Armstrong, recognized he was referring to the *caelum caeli*, he appeared to defer making a final statement for the order in which God created spiritual matter.[130] He noticed that the Scripture does not provide information on this subject. He acknowledged the weakness of *assumption* because it was not supported by the authority of the Scripture. Augustine remarked,

> If the authority of Scripture, therefore, and the light of reason do not contradict us, let us assume that man was made on the sixth day in the sense that the causal reason of his body was created in the elements of the world, but that his soul in its own proper being was already created with the making of the first day, and that thus

[129] *Gen. litt.* 7.6.9.

[130] A. Hilary Armstrong, "Spiritual or Intelligible Matter in Plotinus and St. Augustine," in *Plotinian and Christian Studies*, VII. 279. The *caelum caeli* in Gen 1.1 is the invisible and unformed place that God created spiritual beings. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning* 1.1.2; *Conf.* 12.8.8. Armstrong's integrative interpretation alludes to the fact that Augustine thought the spiritual matter preexisted in the *caelum caeli* before God created the human soul with it.

created it lay hidden in the works of God until at the proper time He would breathe it into the body He would form from the slime of the earth.[131]

He stated again that his thought of the spiritual material is an open assumption. According to Augustine, God created the human body on the sixth day by order, not by order of time. He believed it is conceivable to think that God might have created the soul on the first day prior to infusing it into the human body. However, this line of thought is conditional upon it not contradicting the authority of Scripture (*si nulla Scripturarum auctoritas seu Veritatis ration contradicit*). He aimed to present a harmonious theory of the soul's creation that aligns with the teaching of the Scriptures and rational thinking.

Augustine wanted to make a clear distinction between thoughts supported by the Scripture and those mere assumptions:

> With regard to the soul, which God breathed into the face of man, I have no firm position except to say that it is from God in such a way that it is not the substance of God; that it is incorporeal, that is, not a body but a spirit; that it is not born of God's substance and does not proceed from God's substance, but is made by God; that it is not made by the conversion of a body or an irrational soul into it; and hence it is made from nothing. And I hold that it is immortal in view of the nature of the life that it has, which it cannot possibly lose; but that in view of a kind of mutability that it has, making it possible to change for the better or the worse, it can be rightly considered also as mortal, for only He has true immortality of whom it has been justly said, *who alone has immortality*.

> The other interpretations that I have put forth in this book should be of some interest to the reader: either he may discover from them how one must investigate without rash assertions the questions which Scripture does not clearly answer; or if my way of investigation is not to his liking, he may see how I carried it on, and as a result I hope that if he can instruct me he will not refuse, and that if He cannot he will join me in searching for someone from whom both of us may learn.[132]

Perceiving knowledge of the human soul, he set sources other than Scripture aside. He distinguished certain thoughts that can be supported by Scripture and aspects that are omitted in the Scripture. He could find the fact that God created the human soul when the Scripture said God breathed it into the face of man, but he could not discover further philosophical compositions concerning the origin of the human soul from the Scripture.

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[131] *Gen. litt.* 7.24.35 (Taylor 2, 35).

[132] *Gen. litt.* 7.28.43 (Taylor 2, 31).

On the one hand, Christian doctrines helped him distinguish certain knowledge that the Scripture teaches from uncertain assumptions people reasoned. He could distinguish some theories that contradict the doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* and God's immortality. These theories could not even take part of a legitimate assumption projecting the biblical creation of the human soul. He could derive some clarity, such as incorporeality, mutability, mortality, and rationality of the human soul, from the relation between creator and creature. However, this presumptive knowledge could not be regarded as the highest form of understanding, which is where Scripture's teachings hold its authority.

On the other hand, although Augustine did not mention any other theories except those related to the Scripture, he repudiated Neoplatonic belief in emanation through that statement. He could not say many things clearly concerning spiritual material and the place of its creation in Scripture, but he remarked that he certainly rejected ideas that the soul is born of God and shares substance with God. This evokes the philosophy of Neoplatonists, who asserted that individual souls took their incorporeal substance from a higher source through emanation and remained inextricably connected with it.[133] In the Neoplatonic philosophy, One and hypostases hold relationship in the system of emanation. The hypostases were born of One and proceeded from its substance. Individual souls came out of the substance at the end of its emanation. Conversely, Augustine refuted such ideas when he said, "It is not the substance of God . . . that it is not born of God's substance and does not proceed from God's substance, but is made by God." The doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* describes the human soul as sharing nothing in common with the creator, but rather holding a formal relationship as the creator and creature. This indicates that he recognized a Neoplatonic explanation cannot align with his Christian beliefs.

After investigating the possibility of spiritual material, Augustine affirmed that its creation day must stay on the level of philosophical assumption under the authority of

133 Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 128.

Scripture. The two factors make it possible to view spiritual materials as a possibility, although not as probable as attesting their origin: (1) Scripture says the existence of spiritual material and (2) Scripture does not expose the day in which God created it. To Augustine, the spiritual material seemed a resource with which God created the human soul when he infused it into the first human body.

To Infuse Means to Create
the Human Soul

Augustine soon found in Genesis 2 that Scripture presents a more detailed statement about the creation of the human soul. He recognized that "a human soul first began to exist when God breathed forth and made it and put it into man."[134] Although the Scripture clearly reads that God breathed a soul into Adam's body,[135] this did not offer philosophical understanding in detail. Augustine affirmed that philosophical concerns must be answered. "What, then, are we to say about the creation of the soul? Did God make it from that which was entirely nonexistent, that is, from nothing, or from something which He had already made in the spiritual order but which was not yet a soul? This is a real problem."[136] He did not doubt here whether Scripture offered reliable statements about the origin of the human soul. The subject he aimed to discuss revolved around a specific inquiry: whether God created the spiritual material and the soul individually, one by one, or simultaneously . He noted that the subject of his argument aimed at discovering the philosophical way of understanding the creation process based on the Scriptures' teachings, not investigating the reliability of the Scriptures.

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[134] *Gen. litt.* 7.5.7 (Taylor 2, 6–7).

[135] Concerning Augustine's conviction that the Scripture supports that God breathed the soul into Adam's body, see *Gen. litt.* 7.3.5. Augustine reads Isa 57:16-17 from his Latin Scripture: "For My spirit goes forth from Me, and I have made every breath." For the issue about the translation of Augustine's Latin Scripture, see Taylor's reference on it in Augustine, *The Literal Meaning*, 243.

[136] *Gen. litt.* 7.5.7 (Taylor 2, 6–7).

Spelling out the creation of the human soul, he remarked that his line of reasoning followed the way directed by the creation narrative and Christian doctrines. He presented three things he wanted to show in his explanation of the soul's creation. First, he said he put certain presuppositions that guided his philosophical exploration of the origin of the human soul:

> To say the right thing is to say what is true and appropriate, not arbitrarily rejecting anything or thoughtlessly affirming anything so long as it is doubtful where the truth lies in the light of the faith and Christian doctrine, but unhesitatingly asserting what can be taught on the basis of the obvious facts of the case or the certain authority of Scripture. [137]

Elaborating on the creation of the soul, he manifested that his description is directed to fit into Christian doctrines. He agreed that to say the right thing (*recte autem est veraciter atque congruenter*) is to be based on obvious facts or subordinate to the authority of Scripture (*vel rerum ratione apertissima vel scripturarum auctoritate certissima*). For him, this meant that he must prioritize the Scriptures' teachings about the way God created the human soul.

Second, he began his analysis by exploring the Greek words that were translated into Latin in the Scriptures he was reading. He said, "First, then, let us examine the statement in Scripture which says, *God breathed into his face the breath of life.* Some manuscripts read, *He inspired into his face.* But since the Greek codices have ενεφυσησεν, it is clear that the Latin should be *flavit* or *sufflavit.*"[138] He confirmed that the Latin word *flavit* is correctly translated for the Greek word ενεφυσησεν to mean breathing or infusing. He regarded the verb *flavit* as the most important word implying God's specific act in the creation. Based on the careful analysis of the literal expression and the translation, he initiated his quest for the creation of the soul.

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[137] *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1–3 (Taylor 2, 3).

[138] *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1–3 (Taylor 2, 3).

Last, he proceeded further investigation in consideration of Christian doctrines of God. He started with the expression of the Scriptures and interpreted it in observance of the nature of God. He stated,

> In the preceding book I discussed the question of "the hands of God" when man was represented as formed from the slime of the earth. What, therefore, need I say now about the statement, *God breathed*, except that He did not breathe with mouth and lips any more than He formed man with bodily hands? Nevertheless, by this word I think Scripture gives us considerable help in dealing with a difficult question.[139]

In this passage he reminded readers that he addressed the reason for metaphorical expressions, like *breathed*, to emphasize God's authority and power over creatures.[140] Although the Scripture furnishes man-like words to explain God's creation of the human soul, God does not have a physical mouth or lips which bodily creatures possess. Therefore, regarding such metaphorical aspect of expressions in the Scriptures, one must interpret them in light of God's transcendent, immutable, and immortal nature. Considering this aspect he thought that the Scripture provides significant help in addressing difficult issues (*Verbum tamen hoc verbo scriptura in quaestione difficillima plurimum nos, quantum opinor, adjuvit*). As seen, Augustine's aim was to give a proper understanding of the authority instead of synthesizing other ideas with it.[141] The true description of the human soul comes just with the light of Scripture and faith in its teachings.

Augustine perceived in Scripture that God created the first human to possess a living soul (*in animam viventem*). Adam's soul animated the body, as the Latin participle *viventem* (to live) designates the status of *animam* (soul) in the Latin Scripture that he read.[142] Consequently, he contended the authority of the Scripture in affirming the creation

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[139] *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1–3 (Taylor 2, 4).

[140] *Gen. litt.* 6.12.20.

[141] This contradicts to the view that Augustine ideologically synthesized Neoplatonism with the Christian faith.

[142] The Latin word *viventem* in participle form describes the verbal function of *animam* in the sentence, concerning the relation of soul, life-spirit. Augustine uses the Latin *anima* for soul in general. See Roland Teske, "Augustine's theory of Soul," in Stump and Norman, *Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, 116.

of the human soul.[143] One must believe in the existence of the human soul because the Scripture teaches that God created humans with it. The perspective that prioritized the teachings of Scripture remained central to his works, particularly in his descriptions of the soul. In addition, one needs to look into his attitude toward what is right to say; that is, holding fast to the obvious facts based on Scripture and not hastily affirming anything doubtful in light of the Christian faith.

He initially refuted an idea alluding to the human soul as sharing some preexistent substance. Scripture reads that Adam's soul is "breathed." Some interpreters assert that the word "breathed" implies that God's substance is infused into Adam's body.[144] Augustine described,

> Some interpreters, basing their theory on the word "breathed," have thought that the soul is something from the very substance of God, that is, something of the nature which is His. They hold this opinion because when man breathes he casts forth something of himself in his breath. But for this very reason we should be cautioned to reject this opinion as opposed to the Catholic faith. For we believe that the nature and substance of God, which is in the Trinity, as many believe but few understand, is absolutely unchangeable. But who doubts that the soul can be changed for better or worse? Hence, it is sacrilegious to suppose that the soul and God are of one substance. For this simply amounts to believing that He is changeable.[145]

Rejecting the false teaching of Manichaeans, he confirmed the meaning of the word "breathed" in observation of the doctrinal teaching of the church tradition. Manichaeans taught that God shared his substance with human beings, based on their misunderstanding of the word "breathed." This resulted in the mutable human soul sharing the same substance with immutable God. However, traditional Christianity held the belief that God is absolutely unchangeable. He reads the word "breathed" having the Catholic faith in mind, along with the doctrine of the Trinity and unchangeability of God. Consequently,

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[143] *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1 (Taylor 2, 3).

[144] *Gen. litt.* 7.2.3 (Taylor 2, 4). Augustine's refutation of the idea that Adam's soul shares God's substance corresponds to his denial of Manichaean teaching. Cf. *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11.

[145] *Gen. litt.* 7.2.3 (Taylor 2, 4).

Augustine concluded that it is unreasonable to hold the belief that unchangeable God shared his substance with a changeable human soul.

He once again confirmed that the Scripture states that God infused the human soul into the body, which he created as a separate entity but still distinct from himself. Augustine stated, "Hence, we must believe and understand without any shadow of a doubt what the true faith teaches, namely that the soul is from God as a thing which He made, not as something from His own nature whether generated by Him or proceeding from Him in any way whatsoever."[146] Augustine could not offer an explanation about every detail of God's creating work of the soul in the body, but the doctrine of God helped him to make a distinction between God and the soul, as well as between Christianity and other belief systems.

He disputed Neoplatonic emanation of the human soul by the same reason that he refuted Manichaean teaching. The human soul, in *Enneads*, departs from Intellect—where it already exists to unite with the physical body—whereas a part of the soul remains in the Intellect as being connected with the other descended part. In Neoplatonic cosmology, the human soul belongs to two distinct realms—the intellectual realm and the earth. Plotinus says, "For they did not come down with Intellect, but they descended on the one hand as far as the earth, while on the other, their heads are still 'firmly fixed above the heavens.'"[147] Plotinus taught about the human soul as possessed of two heads—one in the above and the other on the earth. One another problem of Plotinus's theory of soul was that it closely relates to theological elements of Platonism. For example, in describing the indivisible substantiality of the soul, Plotinus refers to Plato's "divinely inspired riddling utterance" as the authoritative source: "This, therefore, is the meaning of the divinely inspired riddling utterance: 'From the indivisible and ever-unchanging Substantiality and from the divisible substantiality which comes to be in bodies, he mixed from both a third

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[146] *Gen. litt.* 7.2.3 (Taylor 2, 4).

[147] *Enn.* 4.3.12 (Gerson, 400).

type of substantiality.'"[148] Regardless whether the worshiping god took an important place in Plato's philosophy or not, Plotinus credits the soul's union with the body to the Platonic god, Demiurge. For Augustine, on the contrary, the God of the Scripture created the human soul, by breath, as a completely individual entity; the soul does not share its substance, in its existence, with the higher world or God. Instead of employing Neoplatonic union of the preexisting soul with the body, he tries to explain the biblical creation of the soul, adhering to its authority.

God Created Every Other Human Soul

Augustine found that the soul of Adam's descendants has a knottier problem than for the first human.[149] Scripture offers the creation narrative of the first human to a somewhat detailed extent. But concerning the origin of the individual soul, he could not even make the least finding in the Scripture. Eve's soul produces the immediate problem to solve, representatively, to understanding the soul of her descendants. Scripture reads that her body is derived from Adam but does not say about her soul (Gen 2:22). Augustine suggested three hypotheses instead of quickly declaring the other ideas as an alternative possibility: (1) God created all souls as seminal causes in the sixth creation day; (2) all individual souls come from Adam's soul—that is, traducianism; and (3) God creates every soul in the course of time to give it to each baby born.[150] While the first two assumptions do not interrupt one from understanding the creation narrative, Scripture does not clearly support any of them concerning descendants' souls.[151]

Augustine suggested the third-way resolution, which is to postpone final words and to hold the certain stance of uncertainty about this subject. He thought that Scripture

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[148] *Enn.* 4.1.2. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 35A1–4. Plato definitely manifested the nature of the soul as given by the platonic god, Demiurge.

[149] *Gen. litt.* 7.23.34.

[150] *Gen. litt.* 10.2.3.

[151] *Gen. litt.* 10.3.5.

limits possible reasoning of it by not giving further evidence. Therefore, the Christian faith cannot agree with any of these hypotheses for theological reasons.[152] He says, "On the other hand, if anyone is tenacious of his opinion, not because of the authority of God's word or the force of manifest reason, but because of his presumption, I hope he will not refuse to share my uncertainty."[153] These hypotheses could not attain exclusive support by Scripture. He devoted the whole *book X* of *De Genesi ad Litteram* to examine these assumptions, along with scriptural teachings and the church tradition, particularly Tertullian's growing soul view.[154] Notably, Augustine rejected bringing human reason or secular knowledge prior to a scriptural examination of these hypotheses. As a result, he found that he cannot take any of them with confidence.[155] If he admired a firm conclusion, then he could equip one of three theories and harmonize it with other themes, such as original sin and infant baptism.[156] As he used to do, instead, he came back to Scripture to determine whether one of the hypotheses is properly supported by authoritative teaching and if it does not cross the line drawn by it. This reiterative return to biblical authority demonstrated his belief that the Scripture offers criteria in explaining the truth about the origin of the human soul.

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[152] Augustine could not solve the problem of the descendants' souls. These hypotheses could not explain the reality of original sin and the responsibility for sins that humans commit by free will. Christianity believed that humanity participates in the original sin of Adam but makes a sinful choice of their own free will. Therefore, the origin of the human soul directs the fountain of one's evil decision. Cf. John. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: HarperCollins,1978), 363–64.

[153] Gen. litt. 10.3.5 (Taylor 2, 101).

[154] *Gen. litt.* 10.25.41–26.45.

[155] *Gen. litt.* 10.23.39. He decided not to choose any theory that is not supported clearly by the Scripture. See *Ep*. 143.11; 190.6.20.

[156] Roland Teske claimed,

While traducianism seems most easily to explain the common inherited guilt of original sin and the need for infant baptism, it seems to endanger the incorporeality of the soul insofar as it thinks of souls as propagated in a bodily fashion, as Tertullian had done. While creationism is thoroughly compatible with the incorporeality of the soul made to the image of God, it makes it more difficult to understand how a soul could be created by God with the guilt of Adam's sin. Hence, the first hypothesis seems least problematic as representing Augustine's view at this point. (Teske, "Augustine's Theory of Soul," 121–22.)

Denial of Four Hypotheses Not
Supported by Scripture

Augustine resolutely denied the hypothetical, philosophical conclusion for the origin of other souls. Christians cannot depend merely on such the philosophical method, especially when its conclusion clearly contradicts the authority of the Scripture and its teaching—such as God's free creation *ex nihilo*, the incarnation and resurrection of Christ, and the doctrine of Sin.[157] Instead, Augustine critically reviewed the four hypotheses, two of which resonate with Neoplatonic assumption.

> Now there are these four opinions about the origin of the soul, viz., that it comes by propagation, that it is newly created with each individual who is born, that it exists somewhere beforehand and comes into the body of the newly-born either being divinely sent or gliding in of its own accord. None of these views may be rashly affirmed. Either that question, because of its obscurity and perplexity, has not been handled and illumined by catholic commentators on Holy Writ. Or, if it has been done, their writings have not come into our hands.[158]

These hypotheses suggested four rational possibilities of the soul's origin: natural propagation, new creation, God's sending away from preexistence, and descension by its own will from preexistence.[159] But, for Augustine, these hypotheses come neither from the Scriptures nor down from the Christian tradition. He persistently held the undecided stance of church tradition on this subject.[160]

However, two theories seemed plausible for him, including traducianism and the new creation. He needed to elaborate on the tension between the feasibility of the two theories and the fact that the Scripture does not unequivocally support any of them:

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[157] *Civ.* 10.29.

[158] *Lib.* 3.21.59.

[159] Augustine rejected natural traducianism, here in *Lib.*, more boldly than in his later work, *Gen. litt.* Augustine seems to discover natural traducianism difficult to be harmonized with the doctrine of the original sin and the punishment (cf. *Lib.* 3.20.56). He tried to formulate a spiritual version of the theory but could not make a conviction to it. Cf. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 345–46. However, this fact does not mean he accepted or denied any of these hypotheses, so, does not necessarily mean his earlier view of traducianism contradicts the latter view.

[160] In reminiscent *Lib.*, Augustine reaffirmed that he consistently postponed his decision about the origin of descendants' souls from then and now when he was penning the letter to Marcellinus. He explained the reason for his hesitation: that is because none of the theories can find support from Scripture, the church, or common sense. Cf. *Ep.* 143.7, 11.

Let us now look at that testimony from Genesis, where the woman, having been made from the man's side, was brought to him and he said, *Now this is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh* (Gn 2:23). This fellow thinks that Adam ought to have said, "soul from my soul" or "spirit from my spirit," if this was also taken from him. But those who maintain the propagation of souls think that they can provide an even more unbeatable defense for their view from this text. For, when scripture said that God took the rib from the side of the man and built it into the woman, it did not add that he breathed into her face the breath of life. The reason was, they say, that she already had her soul from the man. After all, if she did not, the holy scripture would certainly not have deprived us of knowledge on this point. To the objection that Adam said, *Now this is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh* (Gn 2:23) and did not say, "spirit or soul from my spirit or soul," they can answer as we have explained above, namely, that in the expression "my bone and flesh" the part stands for the whole and the parts taken from Adam were ensouled, not dead. One should not, of course, deny that the Almighty could have done this, just because no human being can cut off a piece of human flesh along with the soul.[161]

In this passage he presented Vincent Victor's argument that the Scripture simply omitted the indication that the first man's soul propagated to the first woman's body. On the other hand, Victor's opponents claimed that the woman's soul was not derived from the man because the Scripture does not mention it as such. Augustine commented that both acknowledged that the Scripture does not clearly state how the woman's soul came to exist in her body. While it can be propagated from the man and there is nothing impossible for the omnipotent God, Scripture only mentions that God took a part of man's body to create woman. To sum up, he noted that traducianism is a plausible theory but not supported by the Bible. Furthermore, proponents of the new creation theory must be careful not to compromise the doctrines of God and original sin—not to explain God as a giver of sinful souls.[162]

As a result, he rejected these hypotheses because they are not supported by the Scriptures with certainty. He believed that holding an uncertain view, that is not supported by the Scriptures, could potentially undermine individuals' understanding of God. He stated,

God gives us a true faith that will hold no false or unworthy opinion concerning the substance of the Creator. For by the path of piety we are wending our way towards

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[161] *An. orig.*1.18.29 (Teske I/23, 474–75).

[162] *An. orig.*1.19.34.

him. If we hold any other opinion concerning him than the true one, our zeal will drive us not to beatitude but to vanity. There is no danger if we hold a wrong opinion about the creature, provided we do not hold it as if were assured knowledge. We are not bidden to turn to the creature in order to be happy, but to the Creator himself. If we are persuaded to think otherwise of him than we ought to think or otherwise than what is true we are deceived by most deadly error. No man can reach the happy life by making for that which is not, or, if it does exist, does not make men happy.[163]

He said that Christians must hold the doctrine of the soul according to that of God and the creation. If not, he could end up having false a understanding about the doctrine of God. True knowledge of the creator provides a happy life to a Christian but wrong knowledge about God and creation leads one's life to vanity and unhappiness. With respect to the nature of creatures, Christians should thoroughly examine the Scriptures and refrain from rashly taking any opinions that are not clearly supported by them. These discoveries about the knowledge of God and creatures provide insight into Augustine's underlying intentions in his works related to the creation of the human soul.

Conclusion

Searching for the origin of the human soul, Augustine held faith in the creation *ex nihilo* from the early time of his conversion. The doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* characterized his thought of the soul in distinction from the Neoplatonic idea of emanation. Based on the Christian belief he elaborated on its origin based on his understanding of the Scriptures. He needed some additional concepts such as *rationes seminales* to help him explain the spiritual creation implied in the creation narrative, but he distanced himself from other thoughts that the Scriptures and Christian doctrines do not support, such as traducianism. His search for the origin of the human soul, using such a method, identified him as a Christian thinker.

Scripture conceals the truth regarding the historical origin of the human soul. Augustine felt it was his intellectual responsibility to uncover it. He searched equiprobable terms in philosophy and modified them to gain a better understanding of the deeper

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[163] *Lib.* 3.21.59 (Burleigh, 206).

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meaning of the Scripture concerning the origin of the soul. According to Augustine, God prepared Neoplatonists to develop outstanding terms that enable the perception of biblical truth regarding the human soul, better than other philosophers. As he honestly stated in *Confessions*, Neoplatonist ideas shockingly resembled Christian teaching in many aspects, especially concerning knowledge of invisible beings.[164]

However, he refrained from using Neoplatonist ideas in a manner that would undermine the authority of scriptural teachings. The philosophy itself could not be a primary source offering a definitive statement about the human soul. Such an observation of Augustine formed four salient points in comprehending the biblical creation of the human soul: simultaneous creation, creation by a breath, creation with a spiritual material, and postponed decision about souls of Adam's descendants. These points expose the authority of Scripture specifically in the writings focusing on the origin of the soul, although he held this belief from his early works.

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[164] Augustine was not the first Christian thinker who discovered that Plato and his followers' ideas seemed too similar with Scripture's teachings. Its resemblance made many Christian thinkers believe that Plato copied Moses—including Clement of Alexandria (*The Stromata* 1.25), Justin Martyr (*The First Apology* 59), Tertullian (*Apology* 47), and Origen (*Against Celsus* 4.39). Therefore, readers should not be embarrassed when Augustine the faithful Christian shows intimacy with Platonic ideas presented by its followers, including Plotinus and Porphyry.

CHAPTER 3

LIFE OF THE HUMAN SOUL, PART 1—
IMMORTALITY, SPIRIT, AND BODY

In the previous chapter, I discussed Augustine's reliance on the Scriptures and his adherence to Christian doctrines, searching for the origin of the human soul. The doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* that he held contradicted the Neoplatonic idea of emanation regarding the soul's origin. Over time, as he read the Scriptures, he could provide specific descriptions of the topic. Although he denied ideas that conflicted with Christian beliefs, he employed some concepts that he did not directly derive from reading the Scriptures to describe its teachings. As he made a deeper investigation into the Scriptures, his understanding of the nature of the soul within the context of his Christian faith became more specific and defined.

Since Adolf von Harnack and Gaston Boissier argued that Augustine converted to Neoplatonism before Christianity, scholars concentrated their investigation into his early works to figure out the proportion of the Neoplatonic influence. Particularly, Augustine's belief in the soul's immortality took the center of the debate as one of the crucial pieces of evidence showing the stains of Neoplatonic influence on him. Augustine's *De Inmortalitate Animae*, in particular, stands out as the most pivotal work, showing his deep engagement with philosophical ideas during his early time of conversion. However, one might wonder if the apparent division between his early and later works would help in understanding their distinctive features, without considering the varied responsibilities he undertook before and after becoming a priest in North Africa.

Many scholars, particularly when it comes to aspects of the human soul, like immortality and ascension, have considered it possible that Augustine was influenced by secular ideas such as Neoplatonism. These scholars emphasized the similarity of

Augustine's thought with those of others, particularly of Plotinus who started the Neoplatonist school in the third century AD. These scholars thoroughly investigated Augustine's works to test and show them as being tainted. They left the competency of Augustine's thought, in the consideration of Christian faith, about the soul's life, unexplored.

The difficulty of finding specific nature of the human soul stirred Augustine's mind from the early period of his conversion to Christianity. Augustine often showed his interest in the human soul but realized it to be difficult to figure out solely by the antithetic conversation with reason, in *Soliloquies*.[1] He could not settle this topic—the nature of the human soul—until he invested the Scripture to discover its specific nature. In exegetical, anthropological analysis, Augustine ended up suggesting that the Scripture provides some nature and functions of the human soul.

On the other hand, one must consider that Augustine's priestly obligation made him change his writing subjects and methodology of arguments, later, according to his task as a spiritual leader in North Africa. He continued his previous philosophical quest for the soul as a Christian thinker at least from his conversion. Therefore, this chapter considers his early works as philosophical in general terms of their subjects and methodology seeking truth by reason, and latter works as Christian-philosophical in the sense of their dependency of subjects and matters on the Christian teachings.[2] While Augustine acknowledged that he must subordinate to Scripture as a Christian thinker, in the early era he was not given the right to teach Christian dogmas to other laities until he became a priest in North Africa in AD 391.[3] Instead, in the early time, he continued to write his

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[1] In *Solil.*, the recently converted Augustine struggles to discover the nature of the human soul in detail, but to conclude it is not to be completed.

[2] The early works written in Cassiciacum and Milan include *Acad.*, *Beat.*, *De Ordine*, *Soliloquiorum*, *De Immort. an.*, and *De musica*.

[3] Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 45th anniv. ed. (Berkeley: University of California, 2000), 64, 108. Brown suggested Augustine's priest ordination date as AD 391 and it seemed to be agreed upon by most Augustinian scholars. Augustine left some treatises—such as *Mor. eccl.*, *De*

philosophical reasoning about the soul, so as not contradict to the Christian teachings. This division helps readers comprehend the reason for different subjects and styles of arguments between the early and later works, although this chapter does not go over historical background in detail.

In this context, one might wonder if Augustine mixed anomalously all ideas that he learned in his life into his Christian works to describe the life of the soul, after the conversion. As Augustine stated when he exegeted the creation narrative of Genesis, understanding the spiritual book, the Scripture, could be difficult for sinners whose spiritual eyes are tainted by sins and especially for those not acquainted with philosophical jargon. As previously mentioned, the quest to understand the nature of the soul is guided by the Christian faith, initially rooted in the Scripture, then with reason serving as a tool to gain insight. In this context, he employed various knowledge acquired from the world that God created. This hermeneutic principle established in the early period of his conversion remained throughout his life, in seeking the soul's life, up to his magnum opus—*De Civitate Dei*.

This chapter manifests that Augustine comprehended the life of the human soul in relation with core Christian doctrines.[4] This chapter deals with the specific nature of the soul including the relation between the human soul and the human spirit, immortality, and the soul's life in the body. The first section shows that Augustine discovered the immortality of the soul from the Scripture, while Plotinus referred to Plato's writings. The second section figures out how Augustine differentiated the life of the human soul from animal soul, apart from Plotinus. Then, the last section describes the relation between the soul and the body in observance of eschatological hope.

Magistro, and *Ver. rel.*—defending his Catholic faith before being ordained, though the ordination manifested that he is granted the official authority to teach Christian dogmas to other members.

[4] This chapter will use various works of Augustine including *Solil.* 1.7.14; 2.1.1; *Acad.* 3.20.43; *Immort. an.* 15.24, 16.25; *Quant. an.* 1.1–3.4, 7.12, 33.73, 75, 76; *Conf.* 7.9.13–15, 17.23, 12.11.11; *Trin.* 13.9.12; *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11; *Doctr. Chr.* 1.19.18; *Gen. litt.*, *An. orig.* 2.4.8, 4.23.37; *Civ.* 13.24, 18.19, 22.28; and *Rectatione* 1.4.3, 1.5.1–3, to show the consistency of his faithfulness on the Christian teachings.

Immortality

This section suggests that Augustine's early philosophy about the nature of the soul does not precisely align with the ideas of Plotinus. After viewing Neoplatonic argument of the soul's immortality, the next part of this section will show that Augustine's arguments do not contradict the Christian faith. The final part will show that the concept of the soul's immortality has descended in the Christian tradition for a long time, so Augustine did not need to depend on a specific philosophy.

Plotinus Relied on Plato's Cosmology

Plotinus attempted to prove the immortality of the soul by relying on Platonic cosmology. He set two arguments for the immortality of the human soul mainly in *Enneads* IV. The arguments heavily relied on his Platonic belief in the existence of the Soul, superior to the individual soul, and its sharable divine nature. The divine Soul bestows its nature on human souls, so the individual soul comes to possess immortality. In addition, the immaterial nature of the soul allowed Plotinus to demonstrate its indestructibility.

First, Plotinus argued that the human soul possesses immortal life because it descended from the Soul, not completely separated from it though, which is divine.[5] He called the Soul divine because the heavenly beings of the cosmos, that are planets in the night sky, attain divine status and their existence and movements depend on the power of Soul. He identified the location where the Soul exerts its influence to cause the motion of planets and stars in the sky as being in the celestial space between the sun and the moon.[6] Based on Platonic cosmology, Plotinus maintained that the human souls descended to the earth to give life to human bodies, after departing from the divine Soul, but not

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[5] Richard T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995), 92. Cf. Frederic Copleston illustrates how Plato's cosmological scheme influenced Plotinus's thought of the human soul's immortality and its divine nature in relation with its order. Frederick Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, vol. 1 of *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Image, 1993), 210–15.

[6] *Enn.* 4.3.11.

completely separated from it.[7] The human souls, though, becoming inferior by descending to the lower world, share the divine nature because "their heads are still 'firmly fixed above the heavens.'"[8] Plotinus said,

> For this reason, any of us who is like this would be very little different from the inhabitants of the world above in respect of his soul itself, being inferior only as regards this part, which is in the body. For this reason indeed if every human being were like this, or even if a substantial multitude were endowed with such souls, there would be no one so sceptical as not to be convinced that the part of them which is soul is entirely immortal. As it is, however, seeing the soul in the great majority of people to be in various ways corrupted, they do not regard it as being a thing either divine or immortal. But one must view the nature of each thing rather by looking to its purified state, since the state that accrues from without tends always to get in the way of knowledge of that to which it accrues.[9]

He ascribed the soul's immortality to the structure of Platonic cosmology and the indivisible nature of the soul. Although the lower part of the soul inhabits the mortal realm, which is inferior, its upper part still lives in the realm of divine beings. The human soul is ontologically one being while two divided parts temporally stay in different realms until the lower ascends to the higher and reunite with it. The lower part of the human soul in the human body shares the immortality that the higher part possesses due to its habitation in the higher world. Someone might not understand immortality in its entirety, both higher and lower parts of the soul, because one's soul is corrupted so that it obscures one looking to the soul's purified state that is above. In short, the soul accrues immortality by nature from the higher soul. The lower soul shares the immortality of the higher soul genetically.

Second, the indestructible nature of the soul grants immortality to it.[10] Plotinus defended the immortality of the soul against those who argue that the soul perishes in time.

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[7] *Enn.* 4.3.12.

[8] *Enn.* 4.3.12 (Gerson, 400). See also *Enn.* 4.7.10.

[9] *Enn.* 4.7.10 (Gerson, 505–6).

[10] William Ralph Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus: The Gifford Lectures at St. Andrew, 1917–1918*, vol. 2, Gifford Lectures, 1917–1918 (London: Longmans, Green, 1948), 9. Inge presents that Plotinus depended on Plato's proof of the soul's immortality by the formula that the soul is substance and substance is indestructible. Cf. Dominic J. O'Meara, "Plotinus," in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010), 1:307–8.

Plotinus remarked that the soul belongs to the transcendent, as not mingled with the body, which means it is indestructible by nature. He asked those who doubted the soul's indestructability, "How indeed could soul be destroyed, since life is not added to it from outside?"[11] He kept saying that the soul differs from the body in composition: "Everything, after all, that is dissoluble, having assumed composition for the purpose of existing, is naturally disposed to suffer dissolution according to the method of its composition. But the soul is one and a simple nature, whose actuality consists in its living; so, due to this, it will be indestructible."[12] He said here that the soul by nature does not have composition, unlike the body. This line of reasoning suggests that the human soul is simple, without any divisible substance. Therefore, the simple nature of the soul indicates it is indestructible and immortal.

He insisted that the soul does not lose its simple nature even in the separated state in the body. Concerning the problem of the individual soul separated into each human persons, he stated, "But [one might say] as it is divided, therefore, by reason of being split up into individual bits, it would be prone to perishing, No, the soul is not any sort of physical mass or quantity, as has been demonstrated."[13] The individual soul keeps holding indestructibility because it does not have a physical body that subsists by material composition. Plotinus concluded that the nonphysical nature of the soul provides its indestructibility, so to be necessarily immortal.

The argument of the soul's immortality from indestructibility seems not complete in the sense that nonphysical nature does not directly prove its indestructibility by logic. In theory, nonphysical beings can be destroyed, just like physical beings, as long as their strength does not surpass the power attempting to destroy them. On the other hand, Plotinus demonstrably set his argument of the soul's immortality on the affirmation of

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[11] *Enn.* 4.7.11 (Gerson, 506).

[12] *Enn.* 4.7.12 (Gerson, 507).

[13] *Enn.* 4.7.12 (Gerson, 508).

Plato's cosmology and philosophy. However, Christians do not accept the authority of Plato. Augustine frequently emphasized the significance of the authority of Scripture in understanding the knowledge of the cosmos created by God. The following section will demonstrate that the logical basis for Plotinus's cosmology, which supports his belief in the soul's immortality, contradicts Augustine's arguments on the same topic.

Augustine Concentrated on Christian Doctrines

In *Confessiones*, Augustine described that he had a belief in the soul's immortality even before he read Neoplatonist books. According to *Confessiones*, Cicero's *Hortensius* led him to be interested in philosophy and to seek wisdom for immortality. He thought God guided him to himself through the philosophy book.[14] Later this fugitive belief in the soul's immortality protected him from falling into an Epicurus's nihilistic argument about life.[15] At this time he already began to think that some teachings of Christianity are agreeable while recognizing their lacking rational explanation for their beliefs.[16] Still, he held the belief in punishment after bodily death along with the soul's immortality even before reading Platonist books when he discussed Epicurus's nihilism with his friends.[17] This background of his intellectual quest for the soul's immortality might explain why he rashly dove into writing rational descriptions about the soul's immortality even before he thoroughly examined the Scriptures.

The immortality of the human soul appeared in the very early work of Augustine, *Soliloquies*, as one of the most important topics that he sought to understand. Beginning with a philosophical exploration about the soul's immortality, he confessed

[14] *Conf.* 3.4.7.

[15] *Conf.* 6.16.26.

[16] *Conf.* 6.5.7.

[17] *Conf.* 6.16.26.

that he desires to know it even more than to live with it.[18] After taking on his pastoral role in North Africa, he wrote down his profound comprehension of the soul's immortality as he discovered in Scripture.[19] Even when he was not under any obligation of a pastoral task for a flock, Augustine, a prolific writer, did not cease to document his journey of seeking the immortality of the soul through reason. Fortunately, the early affirmation to the higher authority of the Scripture over reason in *Contra Academicos* helps recognize the penetrating principle of Augustine's conviction to the Christian faith.[20] The life-long subject of Augustine, the immortality of the soul, appeared in different works as being saturated by their different purposes—expressly between works written by the just-converted Christian and the aged overseer of the church of Hippo.

This section examines Augustine's works to understand his belief in the immortality of the soul. I will explain why philosophical concepts more boldly appeared in his early works than in later works when discussing the soul's immortality despite holding Christian doctrines. Then, I will discuss his later emphasis on the soul's immortality in relation to happiness, which must be understood within the eschatological drama in the Christian faith that all souls will ultimately face.

The young convert. Augustine's quest for the knowledge of the soul's immortality began with the philosophical inquiry of how the human soul could be imperishable. In *Soliloquies*, this catechumen, who was not certified by baptism yet, desired to know how the human soul could be immortal like God.[21] His intellectual struggle in this work could be called philosophical in the sense that he is pursuing true knowledge by reason concerning the cause of the soul's immortality. Indeed, he aimed to

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[18] *Solil.* 2.1.1.

[19] Especially in *Trin.* and *Civ.*

[20] *Acad.* 3.20.43.

[21] *Solil.* 2.

discover a technical way of granting immortality to the soul rather than questioning the giver, for he had already acknowledged that it is the God of the Scriptures. In Book 2, Reason attempted to persuade him that the soul became immortal because the truth subsisted in it.[22] But he could not plainly accept Reason's argument because of its lengthy, complicated explication which weakened its plausibility, lacking clarity.[23] This catechumen could not make a conclusive statement proving the cause of the soul's immortality by the philosophical discussion with Reason in *Soliloquies,* as stated later in *Retractiones.*[24]

In *De immortalitate Animae*, Augustine, a recently baptized layman, strived to figure out the soul's immortality only by reason again, and only to finish his reasoning begun in the previous work, *Soliloquies*.[25] He started with laying a presupposition, "If science (to learn) exists anywhere (*Si alicubi est disciplina*)." Based on this presupposition, he developed his argument to show the invisible place where the soul and its connections are supposed to be. He tried to show the imperishable nature of the soul in relation to other abstracts, such as science, reason, mind, and art (chaps. I-IV), and anthropological substances including mind and body (chaps. V-XVI).

The topics and methodology of this work obviously fall into the category of philosophy rather than Christian theology or pastoral ministry. Perceiving his argument, four features are recognizable. First, Augustine formulated his argument upon the philosophical premise, "if science exists anywhere." Second, Augustine did not rely on any authority, except employing reason. Third, he focused on figuring out metaphysical formulas concerning abstract concepts. Fourth, he did not attempt to connect it with Christian doctrines or derive pastoral lessons for the Christian life. Therefore, one should

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[22] *Solil.* 2.19.33.

[23] *Solil.* 2.14.25.

[24] Cf. *Retract.* 1.4.1.

[25] *Retract.* 1.5.1.

regard *De immortalitate Animae* as a philosophical work of a Christian author rather than as Christian teachings that must be directly derived from the Scripture.[26]

However, Augustine worked on *De Immortalitate Animae* rashly at any rate, as he said in *Retractatione*s 1.5.1, though this does not mean this philosophical treatise violated important elements of Christian faith. On the one hand, he tried to formulate the immortality of the human soul only by reason. On the other hand, he employed some philosophy to support his conviction about the soul's immortality, which he believed to be compatible with the Christian faith.

To clarify, Augustine sometimes enjoyed pondering philosophical imagination in *De Immortalitate Animae.* When he formulated the relationship between mind, soul, and body, he said, "This nearness is not one in space, but in the order of nature. In this order, then, it is understood that a form is given by the highest Being through the soul to the body—the form whereby the latter exists, in so far as it exists."[27] In this descriptive formulation, the soul and body passively receive the form by the higher being. The highest Being, it is God as will be seen, gives the form to a person through the soul to the body. He provided the clearest and most intelligible explanation of the soul and body in philosophical terms. Here, Augustine recognized that there is a giver of the soul, and as he already mentioned, this highest Being is God, neither One, Demiurge, or Soul of Neoplatonists.[28] Therefore, God gives the form to the soul and the body. This might not be called a kind of a traditional Christian doctrine, but can be called a philosophical, anthropological understanding of human being. He did not draw a connection between this description and the Neoplatonic concept of emanation, which was the basis for Plotinus's thought that the soul and body originated.

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[26] Augustine later realized that he rashly worked on *Immort. an.* and that some sentences in the work need to be clarified in accord with Christian doctrines. See *Retract.* 1.5.1–3.

[27] *Immort. an.* 15.24 (Schopp, 43).

[28] "However, more excellent than the rational soul—as all agree—is God." *Immort. an.*13.22 (Schopp, 42).

Another aspect of his implementation of philosophical words needs more clarification to see if young Augustine took them seriously. The later parts of this work, like chapters 15 and 16, give impression that one would not grasp his thought without the background knowledge of ancient metaphysics. For example, Augustine said,

> This can be said, also, of the irrational soul or life, that the rational soul cannot be converted into the irrational. If the irrational soul itself were not subjected to the rational by reason of its inferior rank, it would assume a form in an equal way and be like the latter. In natural order, the more powerful beings transmit to the lower ones the form which they have received from the supreme Beauty. And, surely, if they give, they do not take away. The things of inferior rank, in so far as they are, are for the very reason that the more powerful beings transmit to them the form by which they are; these are by reason of their power more excellent. To these natures it is given that they have greater power, not for the reason that they are heavier than those of lighter weight, but for the reason that without large extension in space they are more powerful because of the very form that makes them more excellent. In this way the soul is more powerful and excellent than the body. Hence, since the body subsists by the soul, as has been said, the soul itself can in no way be transformed into a body. For no body is made unless it receives its form from the soul.[29]

In this passage, Augustine is obviously enjoying the metaphysical, anthropological imagination of the relationship between soul and body. Augustine looks like he is trying to map the place where a soul is supposed to be in metaphysical formulae. He distinguished a soul into rational and irrational, superior and inferior rank, and did not hesitate to use the words that make some ideas look Platonic. He described the anthropological constituent of a human being with philosophical jargons but neither attempted to ascribe it to any authority to support its certainty nor mingled it with Christian teachings as if it could replace or influence it.

The anthropo-metaphysical work, *De Immortilitate Animae*, falls into a category of philosophical work in that this work depended mainly on human reason. However, such categorization does not mean that Augustine violated or betrayed the Christian faith. First, he does not locate the divided soul in the scheme of Platonic cosmology. Second, he does not relate the nature of the soul with deities that consist of a theological part in Neoplatonism. These features enable readers to interpret this early work as a rational

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[29] *Immort. an.* 16.25 (Schopp, 45–46).

endeavor rooted in his faith in Christ rather than immersion in a specific philosophy. This is significant in light of the historical struggles within ancient philosophy, particularly Neoplatonism, and religion, as they struggled with the task of developing their cosmology and theology in pursuit of true insights about the world. On the other hand, Augustine's intellectual struggle ended with an unsuccessful conclusion in this early work, just as other philosophers who built their philosophy upon bare reason. The somewhat lax argument regarding the nature of the human soul in *De Immortalitate Animae* might be an inevitable result for the young convert, even though he had already embraced the supreme authority of Scripture.[30]

In the following work *De Animae Quantitate*, a year after he wrote *De Immortalitate Animae*, Augustine penned a conversation with Evodius concerning the nature of the soul. This conversation centered around the biblical comprehension of the human soul, especially seeking a rational understanding of its immortality according to God's creation. The two speakers do not make a conclusion about the capacity of the human soul's immortal nature. However, their conversation evolves within explicit acceptance of the Scripture's authority in the Christian faith.[31] Joseph M. Colleran said,

> Pages of this book, as of his other earlier ones, breathe an unmistakable Catholicity, quite alien to anything of which Plotinus ever dreamed. . . . Whatever difficulties he has, speculatively, in conceiving the precise nature of the union of body and soul in man, Augustine, even at this early date, perceives that such a union is part of the beauty and order of the universe, which is due to God alone. In fine, it can be said that though the philosophy is in good part the philosophy of Plotinus, there is more than philosophy here. There is unequivocal acceptance of Divine Revelation, there is acknowledgment of the need of external help from God, and there is the specifically Christian concept of love for all human beings as creatures of God.[32]

Colleran observed the significant difference between Augustine's thought in *De Animae Quantitate* and Plotinus's philosophy, in entirety, unlike nineteenth- and twentieth-

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[30] *Acad.* 3.20.43.

[31] *Quant. an.* 1.1–3.4, 7.12, 33.73.

[32] Joseph M. Colleran, introduction to Augustine, *The Greatness of the Soul, The Teacher*, trans. Joseph M. Colleran, Ancient Christian Writers 9 (New York: Newman, 1978), 8–9.

century scholars who concentrated the philosophy.[33] Colleran read the conversation in *De Animae Quantitate* as dealing with the universe that is created by God. This early work of Augustine contained philosophical aspects, but the entire conversation plays within the Catholic faith that Plotinus never intended. Augustine depended on Christian God and the divine revelation in search of the soul's immortal nature, which cannot fit in Platonist conversation. Instead, the soul's immortality in this early work of Augustine comes up in the discourse of the two Catholic men in the Christian faith.

Augustine perceived the unperishable life of the human soul as compatible with the Christian faith. Christianity taught doctrines such as hell and paradise that could be comprehended based on the soul's immortality afterlife. He could acquire some limited extent of knowledge about the soul's immortality. However, readers of Augustine's early works might glimpse that he was searching for an unwavering authority to support his inquiry into the soul's immortality.

The soul's immortality in other works. As he began to work on pastoral and instructive writing, Augustine focused more on distinguishing the Christian faith from Neoplatonic ideas concerning the soul's immortality rather than continuing to enjoy his intellectual freedom to selectively use it. Although he believed in the immortality of the soul since God created it, in the early period of his conversion, later works strive to explain it in relation to other doctrines—especially, as will be sees in chapter 4 of this dissertation, with the doctrine of the final punishment.

Augustine believed that only God possesses immortality. Thus, only God can give immortality to the human soul—by no other means the soul can obtain it. He said,

> Loud and clear have you spoken to me already in my inward ear, O Lord, telling me that you are eternal, and to you alone immortality belongs, because no alteration of form, no motion, changes you. Nor does your will vary with changing times, for a

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[33] See Colleran, introduction to Augustine, *The Greatness of the Soul*, 9n. Colleran presents *Quant. an.* as opposing evidence—that has been used as a piece showing Augustine's conversion to Neoplatonism by the previous Augustinian scholarship that began by Gaston Boissier, "La conversion de Saint Augustin," *Revue des Deux Mondes* 85 (1888).

will that can be sometimes one thing, sometimes another, is not immortal. In your sight this is clear to me, but I beg you that it may grow clearer still, and in that disclosure I will prudently stand firm beneath your wings.[34]

He attributed the source of immortality to God, as the necessary nature of his absoluteness—as nothing can change him and he does not change his will. God, who is eternal, solely possesses immortality. Maria Boulding noted that Augustine seemed to bring the words *quia tu aeternus es, solus habens inmortalitatem* (to you alone immortality belongs) from First Timothy 6:16, *qui solus habet inmortalitatem.* If he was thinking of 1 Timothy 6:16 when he wrote the passage, then he might be considering the meaning of immortality within the aspect of the doctrine of the final punishment, as said "keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim 6:14 ESV). This reasoning yields the result that Augustine believed immortality of the human soul depends on God, the only one who possesses it. God is the only (*solus*) one who can give immortality to creatures, therefore, in consequence, to the human soul. Augustine explained it in detail in relation to one of the most important Christian beliefs that God became flesh—the doctrine of the incarnation—and the final punishment. Believers' souls not only live immortal lives but also will come to possess the eternal felicity by the sonship of God in Christ.

The soul's happiness and immortality. Augustine felt necessary to make clear vantage points of Christian teaching concerning the soul's immortality over the Neoplatonists' ideas discorded among themselves. He pointed out that the platonic soul must reunite with any sort of body to achieve true felicity (*felicitate*). He found that Virgil also proves Plato's teaching of the soul's admiration for the reunion with a body. However, Porphyry did not want to designate the human soul's return to an animal body to achieve felicity.[35] Instead, Porphyry contrasted his teaching in opposition not only to Plato but also to the Christian teaching of the soul's immortality and its reunion with the resurrected

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[34] *Conf.* 12.11.11 (Boulding, 318).

[35] *Civ.* 18.19.

body.[36] Such Platonists' riddles on the soul's felicity could not make a clear point about how the human soul could achieve everlasting happiness in the end. In contrast, Christianity provides the solution to attain genuine happiness: the doctrine of the resurrection.[37]

The immortality of the soul taught by Christianity qualifies the true happiness of human life. In the first place, the just-converted laity Christian, Augustine, felt that his philosophical desire for truth was satisfied simply by knowing God. He needed not much more than God because that was happiness to his soul. Later, however, he came to acknowledge that the Christian faith has more and deeper teachings for those who want to know about the soul's true happiness. In the *Soliloquies*, he said that the soul can attain happiness (*Beata*) by the knowledge of God.[38] However, the soul in earthly life can suffer under pain. Augustine set the soul's happiness to expand the three stages progressing to God in accordance with the Christian teaching of faith (*fides*), hope (*spes*), and love (*charitas*).[39] The three essences of faith, hope, and love undoubtedly reflected 1 Corinthians 13:13: *nunc autem manet fides spes caritas tria haec maior autem his est caritas.* Then, in his old age, Augustine revised the previous thought, he said, "And I also regret that I said that 'in this life the soul is happy when it has known God,' which is not the case except perhaps in hope."[40] He meant that knowledge of God brings nothing more than hope. Instead, one must become a son of God in Christ with an immortal soul and resurrected body.

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[36] *Civ.* 18.19.

[37] *Civ.* 22.28.

[38] *Solil.* 1.7.14.

[39] *Solil.* 1.7.14. The soul's three stages are healing (*sana sit*), looking (*aspiciat*), and seeing (*videat*).

[40] *Retract.* 1.4.3 (Teske I/2, 34).

Later, Augustine found that the Scripture teaches the soul's true happiness as being attainable by the sonship of God in Christ. The human soul's happiness holds no meaning for Christians without the teachings of divine authority—Scripture. Augustine, an overseer of a faithful community, documented the doctrine of the soul's happiness, guided not only by his personal conviction that it could be achieved through knowledge of God. He said in *De Trinitate*,

> This faith of ours, however, promises on the strength of divine authority, not of human argument, that the whole man, who consists of course of soul and body too, is going to be immortal, and therefore truly happy. That is why in the gospel it did not just stop when it had said that Jesus *gave those who received him the right to become sons of God*, and briefly explained what receiving him meant by saying *to those who believe in his name*, and then had shown how they would become sons of God by adding that they *are born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of the man, but of God* (Jn 1:12). But in case this feebleness that is man, which we see and carry around with us, should despair of attaining such eminence, it went on to say *And the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us* (Jn 1:14), in order to convince us of what might seem incredible by showing us its opposite. For surely if the Son of God by nature became son of man by mercy for the sake of the sons of men (that is the meaning of *the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us*), how much easier it is to believe that the sons of men by nature can become sons of God by grace and dwell in God; for it is in him alone and thanks to him alone that they can be happy, by sharing in his immortality; it was to persuade us of this that the Son of God came to share in our mortality.[41]

In this passage, Augustine situated the human soul's immortal nature—and the body after the resurrection—in the antithetic arguments about Christ's incarnation as a source of true happiness. According to the teaching of the divine document, in the end, the human soul and body will attain immortality not because they are immortal by nature, but because Jesus gives them the right to become sons of God (*Iesus dederit potestatem filios dei fieri*). He discovered that John the apostle wrote about this spiritual transaction of the believers' identity. John declared that "Jesus gave those who received him the right to become sons of God" (John 1:12). The capacity to become sons of God became reality through the doctrine of the Incarnation—that the Son of God became a son of man. Augustine believed this passage approved the possibility of eternal happiness of the human soul by

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[41] *Trin.* 13.9.12 (Hill I/5, 453).

the antithetic argument with the actualized incarnation of the son of God, Jesus. The immortality became real to the world in the incarnation of the son of God. The doctrine of the incarnation convinces believers that the Son of God shares (*particeps*) his immortality with the soul and body of those who believe in him. Following the example of the incarnation, the immortal soul and the resurrected body attain true happiness in Christ, through the sonship of God.

Concerning the way believers can attain immortality, Augustine employed the word *particeps* to describe the sharing of God's immortality among believers. Some may think that the term "participation" implies a mystical image of the soul's state, particularly in the Platonic system of the universe. However, Augustine's conception of the participation could not be Platonic, given his acceptance of the creation narrative of Genesis as a description of the structure of the universe, as already seen. Augustine scholar Patricia Wilson-Kastner stated, "Participation is not a metaphor for Augustine, but expresses the real dependence of the creature on the Trinity itself. . . . Augustine formulated his theology of divinization to include a whole dimension of participation in the divine life."[42] Thus, participation in God's immortality only occurs "through faith in the Savior."[43] Wilson-Kastner's insight is helpful to understand immortality in accordance with the fact that Augustine's thoughts on the soul's afterlife are heavily dependent on the eschatological process taught by the Scriptures. Augustine emphasized the importance of faith in the Mediator rather than providing philosophically accurate formulas for how the soul could receive immortality.

He continued to elaborate on the soul's immortality given by God in relation to other aspects of the Christian faith. Concerning if God could make the human soul and flesh immortal in other ways, he vindicated that God chose the best way of giving

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[42] Patricia Wilson-Kastner, "Grace as Participation in the Divine Life in the Theology of Augustine," *Augustinian Studies* 7 (1976): 146.

[43] Wilson-Kastner, "Grace as Participation," 146.

immortality with happiness to people through "*the mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus* (1 Tim 2:5)."[44] Faith in Christ works as the guiding principle, leading believers toward the ultimate good, which is immortal happiness. He read that Paul explained it when he said, "*the charity of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has given to us* (Rom 5:5)."[45] Augustine understood his description of the pouring of charity as meaning the initiation of the journey toward immortal happiness. He perceived it as intertextually explicating what is said, "*he ascended on high, he took captivity captive, he gave gifts to men* (Ps 68:19; Eph 4:8)."[46] Christ gave gifts, the charity of the Holy Spirit, to his people to lead them to a place of eternal happiness, where they may rest in peace.

He appeared to limit the significance of the concept of immortality to the impact of Christ's ministry. He reminded that Paul said, "*For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more being reconciled shall we be saved in his life* (Rom 5:10)."[47] This passage presented how Paul explained the participation in God's immortality. Augustine recognized that believers attain immortal happiness through faith and by receiving grace—the means by which God reconciles with sinners, to save them through Christ's life. His description of immortality encompassed the soul and body of believers within the context of the relation between immortal life and happiness within the eschatological drama of the Christian faith. The theme of justification was crucial in this context, but further exploration of the topic is beyond the scope of this dissertation due to its limited length and focus.

In *De Civitate Dei*, Augustine refined the relationship between the soul's eternal life and happiness in relation to the doctrine of punishment. Against mythical beliefs, he

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[44] *Trin.* 13.10.13 (Hill I/5, 454).

[45] *Trin.* 13.10.13 (Hill I/5, 455).

[46] *Trin.* 13.10.13 (Hill I/5, 455).

[47] *Trin.* 13.10.13 (Hill I/5, 455).

needed to clarify indivisible relation of eternal life and happiness. Greeks believed that false gods could grant eternal life and happiness separately, but Augustine asked, "How can one who does not give happiness possibly give eternal life?"[48] It seemed unreasonable to him that eternal life could be granted without happiness. He said,

> What we mean by eternal life is precisely life where there is happiness without end. For if a soul is living in eternal torments, by which the unclean spirits will themselves be tortured in the end, that is not eternal life but eternal death. And there is no greater or worse death than when death never dies. For, since the soul was created immortal and by nature cannot exist without some sort of life, the supreme death of the soul is alienation from the life of God in an eternity of punishment. Thus eternal life, that is, the life of unending happiness, is only given by the one who gives true happiness.[49]

In this passage, he described the human soul as having an eternal life that is inextricably linked with happiness. Eternal life did not simply mean surviving an endlessly prolonged length of time. The eternal life of the soul must be understood in relation to its alignment with God, who is the supreme source of life and goodness. The soul's inherent immortality does not automatically lead to eternal life. Only those who become children of God receive eternal life, while others face unending punishment, which is equivalent to eternal death. As a result, the immortal soul faces either eternal life with unending happiness or eternal death with the ceaseless pain of the punishment.

Augustine believed that Paul taught the immortality of both the soul and body in 1 Corinthians 15:44, where he said, "It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body."[50] In Christian belief, the soul does not solely possess the nature of immortality. The body will also be transformed and raised to share in immortality, for the ultimate happiness with the soul. He found that the apostle described the Holy Spirit abiding within believers as granting hope for the resurrection and transformation when he said, "*But if the Spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will*

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[48] *Civ.* 6.12 (Babcock I/6, 205).

[49] *Civ.* 6.12 (Babcock I/6, 205).

[50] *Civ.* 13.20 (Babcock I/7, 87). Cf. *Gen. litt.* 6.19.30, 27.37.

give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you (Rom 8:10–11)."[51]

Augustine read this passage as elaborating on the role of the Holy Spirit in granting immortality to the body because it is "the life-giving spirit."[52] Through the reunion with the immortal body, the human soul recovers the image of God that the creator gave to the first man in Genesis. He also referred to Colossians 3:9–10, where the apostle said, "Putting off the old man with his deeds, put on the new man who is being renewed in the knowledge of God according to the image of his Creator."[53] He perceived that through the clothing of the immortal body, Christians recover the image of their creator that they lost due to the sin of Adam and their own. Scripture assures a transformed body as a reward for a virtuous soul, leading to eternal happiness. The soul and body that are immortal will live together in Paradise.

Augustine began to describe the soul's immortality based on comprehensive acceptance of the Christian teaching on the sovereignty of God. His philosophical argument grasped God of Scripture as the one and only source for the human soul's nature of immortality. As time flows, he discovered that Scriptures teach it in engagement with the doctrines of incarnation and final punishment. The human soul's immortality implied more than indestructibility, unlike Plotinus thought. Immortal souls receive eternal life or death—as a reward or punishment—as a consequence of their lives in the world. Human souls need a savior to escape the eternal death of punishment. Therefore, he must explain the soul's immortality in relation to the happiness granted only to those who become children of God through Christ.

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[51] *Civ.* 13.23 (Babcock I/7, 90).

[52] *Civ.* 13.23 (Babcock I/7, 90).

[53] *Gen. litt.* 6.27.38 (Taylor 1, 206).

**Immortality Distinguished Augustine
from Neoplatonists**

In his early time of conversion, Augustine kept his habitual thinking about the nature of the human soul. Some scholars presented his early works, dealing with the soul's immortality and other natures, as evidence of his absorption of Neoplatonism. However, before judging Augustine's philosophical leisure, such questions are to be regarded: how can a Christian philosopher better exemplify a distinctly Christian approach to philosophical thinking? Should Christians invent new concepts to grasp the nature of the soul more deeply as described in Scripture? Alternatively, if thinkers like Augustine incorporated Aristotelian terminology, would this enhance their perceived piety among fellow Christians? Before answering these questions, one needs to consider diverse contexts in which Augustine wrote and the specific writing strategies he employed to achieve various objectives in his works.

This laity Christian did not yet hold the official authority to teach other Christians. He knew some important doctrines forming Christian faith before baptism, but he limited time to dedicate himself to in-depth scriptural research on intricate subjects that philosophers delved into extensively, often surpassing the focus of Christian intellectuals, such as the nature of the soul. Augustine, an intellectual author who embraced the Christian faith, continued to publish thought-provoking treatises without concealing his newfound belief.

Augustine equipped different methodologies in various written works according to their distinct objectives. In the early period following his conversion, he seems to suggest that the subject of the soul's immortality could not be clarified solely through human reason. He did not claim, like other thinkers such as Plotinus, to possess the authority or ability to establish with certainty that the human soul is immortal by nature. He did not refer to named philosophers to fortify his argument. Instead, he showed that he struggled to prove it only by reason and that it could not produce a certain outcome. In

some sense, he might not be able to avoid such an obscure argument as he acknowledged that Christian belief requires support from authoritative teachings.

In his later works he evaluated the philosophical method of relying solely on reason in the search for the soul's immortality and happiness. He said,

> People have tried to work these things out by human reasoning, but it is the immortality of the soul alone that they have succeeded in getting to some notion of, and then only a few of them, and difficulty, and only if they have had plenty of brains and plenty of leisure and plenty of education in abstruse learning. Even so, they never discovered a lasting, which is to say a true, life of happiness for this soul.[54]

In this passage he discussed that the uncertainty about the nature of the soul's immortality is more relevant to its happiness. Even those who are considered among the most knowledgeable could not acquire it. Augustine inspected the cause of their failure and found that they do not rely on an authoritative source to support the validity of their theories. Philosophers, including Porphyry, a Neoplatonist, could not discover the true happiness of the immortal soul, a truth affirmed by the doctrine of the incarnation.[55] Philosophy could gain knowledge about the immortality of the soul, but was unable to find a way to achieve its eternal happiness.

In such various writing strategies, Augustine did not deviate from the crucial element of Christian belief concerning immortality of the soul. First, the creation by God who possesses immortality, only, could explain the immortality of the human soul. The soul could not possess immortality by nature in the scheme of the emanated universe that Plotinus said. This difference apparently looked similar in the sense that it relates to some divine being, or beings. However, the overall methical framework of the argument made critical differences. Augustine derived the concept of immortality from the order of creation, the nature of God, and its relationship with other Christian doctrines. On the other hand, Plotinus's perspective differed from Augustine's claim in that he rejected the belief in Greek gods and the cosmological order that offered immortality to the human

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[54] *Trin.* 13.9.12 (Hill I/5, 353).

[55] *Trin.* 13.9.12.

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soul. Augustine's argument for the soul's immortality was closely tied to Christian beliefs, such as the incarnation and final punishment. Moreover, he could not consider himself a Platonist as long as he attributed the soul's immortality to the Christian God and his creation.

Second, Augustine believed that the immortal nature does not guarantee true happiness for the human soul. From an early stage in his conversion, he was captivated by the idea of promoting the happiness of the soul, which aligns with the biblical concepts of faith, hope, and love. Later, the concept of happiness became associated with other beliefs, such as the incarnation and punishment. This belief exposes that those who do not believe cannot achieve true happiness, according to the doctrines. Platonists may not pay attention to Augustine's argument that is rooted in these Christian teachings. They believed that souls come to possess an immortal, indestructible nature through emanation. All souls are fated to return to the higher soul and to One in the end. As a result, the immortal nature of higher ranks originated the soul's genetic fate, making them achieve felicity at the end of life in their cosmic order. The requisition of the Christian faith for the soul in order to achieve true happiness and to escape from eternal punishment makes Augustine's thought distinct from Plotinus's claim of the fated happiness of the inherently immortal soul.

Augustine's argument of the soul's immortality presented its relevance to other doctrines of Christianity. He seemed to consider this topic as falling within the category of philosophy, even after he converted. However, he soon realized that he could not harmonize rational imagination about this subject successfully with the teachings of his new spiritual community. Upon thorough examination of the Scriptures, he found that the Christian faith offers inclusive doctrines that satisfy his desire for knowledge about the immortality of the soul. Although he was not hesitant to use philosophical language to discuss some topics, his treatment of the subject of immortality in both his early and later works shows that he did not consider philosophy as a replacement for a significant aspect of the Christian faith and concerning doctrines.

Soul and Spirit

Augustine formed the Christian identity in his concept of spirit from his early works. The concept of spirit and soul manifested in this lay Christian's pursuit of knowledge about them, driven by his new decision to live by the faith. Contrarily, Plotinus did not take the concept of spirit to the core theme in his works. Neoplatonists did not employ terminology corresponding to the spirit or Spirit in the Trinitarian faith.[56] However, Neoplatonists, especially Plotinus, demonstrated some conceptual relation between the human soul and other entities in his cosmological scheme above. This expressed relation with spiritual, intellectual, entities might serve to compare with the concept of the human spirit that Augustine used. This section will discern the anthropological relationship between the soul and the spirit in Augustine's works by comparing it with the human soul's upper life in Plotinus's cosmology. Examining the relation between the soul and the spirit will reveal Augustine's spiritual journey of seeking knowledge and understanding within the context of the Christian faith.

**Plotinus's Implicit Idea of the
Human Spirit**

Plotinus thought that the human soul lives in two realms: the rational and the irrational. While the irrational part relates to the sensible, terrestrial world, the rational part enjoys a superior life in the higher realm. Some aspects of the lower soul's life could match some of the Christian worldview, though the upper soul fully experiences its existence within the schematic order of the Neoplatonic, organic cosmos.

As the human soul came to live in the intellectual realm through Soul, the human soul lives in the transcendent realm sharable with other souls and sources such as One and Intellect. In the intellectual realm, the upper part of the individual soul exists as a being united in one form in terms of its substance.[57] Plotinus believed it from the conviction that

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[56] Although scholars take different English words such as Intellect or Spirit to translate *Νοῦς* of Plotinus, they seem to agree that it does not correspond to the human spirit. Cf. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 53.

[57] *Enn.* 4.9.4; 4.2.1.

individual human souls share "the same experiences as a whole, whereas it is unclear whether what affects us personally makes any contribution to the whole."[58] In other words, "the intelligible cosmos that true Substantiality is to be found" contains "souls without bodies" in a single united form.[59] The individual souls, divided and fallen down to the sensible world, live intellectual lives in a united form with other souls, at the same time, in the upper realm.

Plotinus heavily depended on Plato's authority in suggesting the existence of the upper soul's life. To understand the life of the upper part of the human soul, one must equip proper belief in the transcendent world—transcending the whole of heaven.[60] He said that one "is necessary to believe" (οὕτω χρή νομίζειν) that "there is the One which transcends Being" (ὡς ἔστι μὲν τὸ ἐπέκεινα ὄντος τὸ ἕν); and, after One, "next in line is Being and Intellect; and that third is the nature that is Soul" (ἔστι δὲ ἐφεξῆς τὸ ὂν καὶ νοῦς, τρίτη δὲ ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς φύσις).[61] These three hypostases exist outside the sensible world because they transcend it, but one can find them from the inner man, the soul.[62] Above all, belief in Plato's words is required to explore the knowledge of transcendent beings.

The higher soul possesses the pure function that is the so-called calculative reasoning, or discursive reasoning. So, he said, "Someone who supposed it to be separate and not mixed with body and in the primary intelligible world would not be mistaken. For we should not search for a place in which to situate it; rather, we should make it outside all place" (τοῦ παντὸς οὐρανοῦ ἔξω).[63] He suggested that instead of searching for the location

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[58] *Enn.* 4.9.2 (Gerson, 525–26).

[59] *Enn*. 4.2.1 (Gerson, 384).

[60] *Enn.* 5.1.10. Cf. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 30, 60; H. J. Blumenthal, "Nous and Soul in Plotinus: Some Problems of Demarcation," in *Soul and Intellect: Studies in Plotinus and Later Neoplatonism* (Hampshire, England: Variorum, 1993).

[61] *Enn.* 5.1.10 (Gerson, 545).

[62] *Enn.* 5.1.10.

[63] *Enn*. 5.1.10 (Gerson, 545).

where discursive reasoning takes place, it is better to acknowledge that it exists beyond the visible world and remain at that level of belief. The lower soul or body cannot interrupt its activity. As a result, the soul's pure life involves calculative reasoning with which it can live without a physical brain.

Plotinus clarified that Plato's words have authority over those who hold this mystic belief. He said, "Because of this, Plato says that the Demiurge 'in addition' encircled the soul of the universe from 'outside', pointing to the part of the soul that abides in the intelligible world. In our case, he hid his meaning when he said that it is 'at the top of our head.'"[64] Based on the philosopher's authority who lived five hundred years ago from the time of himself, Plotinus specified the scheme of the cosmos—including transcendence. In his quest to unravel the mysteries of the higher soul, he had to heavily rely on the teachings of Plato, although his own capacity for critical thinking played a significant role.

Plotinus, who is considered the founder of Neoplatonism, posited that the higher soul exists beyond the physical realm. It operated calculative reasoning independently from the lower soul and bodily activities. It also shared being in transcendence with higher ranks. However, he claimed that the existence of the higher soul in the transcendent can only be perceived through submission to Plato's authority. This system of belief sharply distinguishes itself from Christianity.

Augustine Explicitly Referred
to the Scriptures

Augustine's description of the relationship between the soul and the spirit reveals the Christian identity of his thought. Over time, following his conversion, he developed a deep longing to expound upon the subject using the knowledge he had acquired through diligent study of the Scriptures. Accordingly, Augustine quoted only a few words concerning the relationship between the soul and spirit from Scripture in early

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[64] *Enn.* 5.1.10 (Gerson, 545–56).

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works, especially in *De Quantitate Animae*. Nevertheless, he does not hastily refer to any other nonauthoritative sources, such as Plato, Aristotle, or Platonist books that predominated the thoughts of his contemporary intellectuals, to replace the authority of Scripture. Later, in a thorough examination of the Scriptures, he came to associate the spirit with the soul while concurrently distinguishing the Spirit from the human spirit and soul.

In *De Quantitate Animae*, he mentioned the spirit as a derivative term from the book of Psalm 50:12. He said, "Hence, the divinely inspired prophet says most appositely: *Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels.*"[65] He discovered that the Scripture teaches different ontological components consisting of human beings. Compared to Plotinus, who was ambiguous about existence of the human spirit, Augustine surely affirmed that according to the Psalmist, God granted a right spirit (*spiritum rectum*) in human beings. He did not give an explanation whether God offered the right spirit only to those who believe in him or not in relation to the Holy Spirit (*spiritum sanctum*) that mentioned in the preceding verse, but he manifested that this spirit must be renewed by God. To be renewed the spirit by God, the person must cleanse his heart, control his thought, and detach his mind from desiring earthly things.[66] He perceived that the Psalmist particularized the human spirit in light of faithful life in the Christian faith. The right spirit that God renewed in him will guide the soul not to deviate from truth that is the Scripture.

Setting seven levels of the soul's transformation, Augustine furnished the existence of "a right spirit" (*spiritum rectum*) in the inner men in the sixth level, in accordance with prophetic words. That soul appeared as something that must be renewed by God to perceive the truth. He stated,

> We shall also see such great changes and transformations in this physical universe in observance of divine laws, that we hold even the resurrection of the body. . . . Then, indeed, shall we contemn those who ridicule the assumption of human nature by the

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[65] *Quant. an.* 33.75 (Colleran, 104).

[66] *Quant. an.* 33.75 (Colleran, 104).

almighty, eternal, immutable Son of God as a warranty and as first fruits of our salvation, and His birth from a Virgin, and the other marvels of that historic account.[67]

This passage shows that he equipped the seven levels of the soul within such Christian doctrines as the resurrection of the body, immutability, salvation, Christology (in the sense he mentioned Christ as the first fruit of salvation), and virgin birth. The spirit as an ontological component of human beings appeared in the sixth level as something medium through which God can help the faithful person to his truth. In this early work he composed his philosophy of the soul's capacity along with the spirit within the thorough observance of such Christian doctrines.

Regarding seven levels of the soul, the philosophical, categorical consideration shaped these stages. However, this speculative thought did not necessarily mean that Augustine depended on a particular philosophy. As Urban T. Holmes manifested, such philosophical speculation predominated ancient thinkers in North Africa even before the time of Jewish Hellenistic philosopher Philo (AD 20 BC–50).[68] Holmes articulated that such a tendency endured in Christian tradition before and after Augustine and his contemporaries. Augustine's philosophical endeavor speculating the soul's levels could not be strictly distinguished from the intellectual tradition of Christianity. Considering these historical, philosophical aspects, it is implausible to confer his philosophical speculation on the levels of the soul to a specific philosophical sect.

On the other hand, he arrived at the final stage that reveals the seven levels as Christian ones. The doctrine of Incarnation served as a reminder that Augustine, in his later work *Confessiones*, deliberately differentiated it in the same way, as a unique truth held by those who embraced the Christian faith, effectively setting himself apart from Neoplatonists.[69] While he gave subtle hints suggesting his perception of the spirit within

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[67] *Quant. an.* 33.76 (Colleran, 105).

[68] Urban T. Holmes, *A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction* (New York: Seabury, 1980), 16.

[69] *Conf.* 7.9.13, 14

the inner being aligned with Christian beliefs, a comprehensive explanation of the precise relationship between the spirit and the soul is deferred to his later works, promising a more elaborated and detailed account.

To refute Manichaeans, Augustine penned to detail how the spirit functions in the human soul in terms of Christian teaching. In *De Genesi contra Manicaeos*, he stated that Scripture verifies the human possesses the spirit through God's creation.[70] He read creation narrative, again, "We are certainly not to suppose that because it said *He blew into him the spirit of life and the man was made into a living soul,* something like a part of God's nature was turned into the man's soul." Interpreting this passage, he differentiated the spirit of the human from that of the creator. Although God created the spirit and blew into the human being, it differed from the Holy Spirit by nature. Although Augustine refuted the Manichaean interpretation, at the same time his logical consequence disputed the Neoplatonist argument as well, which described everything through their theory of emanation.

Augustine presented more evidence from Scripture showing that God granted the spirit to humans that are discerned from himself and other creatures. He quoted Psalm, "*And the one who fashioned the spirit for them all, he it is that knows all things* (Ps 33:15)" and Zechariah, "*who fashioned the spirit of man within him* (Zech 12:1)."[71] He recognized that these passages proved the existence of the spirit in humans (*Ergo factum esse spiritum hominis*). Humans possess spirit and that God created it different from himself by nature. He found that Paul the apostle also referred to the human spirit in 1 Corinthians, saying, "But the scriptures give the name of 'the spirit of man' to the soul's power of reason, which distinguishes him from the animals and gives him mastery over them by natural law. It is about this spirit that the apostle says: *Nobody knows what*

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[70] *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11 (Hill I/13, 78).

[71] *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11 (Hill I/13, 78).

a man has except the spirit of the man which is in him (1 Cor 2:11)."[72] He read this passage as meaning that God gave the spirit of man (*spiritus hominis*) to appear as a soul's power of reason (*animae potentia rationalis*). Depending on the authority of Scripture, other than Plato, Augustine identified the human spirit as a special element of a human being distinguished from animals. The spirit bestowed upon humans makes them responsible for caring for animals. God created humans to manage other creatures by giving the intellectual capacity in the human soul.

Throughout his lifetime, Augustine steadfastly maintained this initial perspective of the spirit as a hallmark that sets apart the human soul from that of animals and believed it was confirmed by Scripture. He needed to restate the biblical relationship between the spirit and the soul to refute other teachings astray from the Catholic teachings. Observing Jesus's case, Augustine argued that Scripture calls the spirit to indicate the soul. He said, "When you hear or read what scripture said at the death of the Lord, *And having bowed his head, he handed over his spirit* (Jn 19:30), you want us to understand it in the sense that it signifies the whole by the part, not in the sense that the soul can also be called spirit."[73] John the apostle alluded to Jesus's soul when he called it spirit. While the spirit takes a part in the soul, the Scripture alternatively utilized two words for some reason. This kind of use of language often appeared in the Scripture. In Ecclesiastes 3:1, the author called both the human soul and animal soul spirit (*spiritus*), though animals do not possess spirit except the animal soul. While he discovered more places where Scriptures used the term spirit identical to the soul (such as Gen 7:21-22; Ps 107:25; 104:29; 146:4), he perceived that the Scripture speaks that God created humans differently from animals by offering spirit, the rational capacity, to humans only.[74]

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[72] *Gen. Man.* 2.8.11 (Hill I/13, 78).

[73] *An. orig.* 4.23.37 (Teske I/23, 538).

[74] *An. orig.* 4.23.37.

He brought up the subject to defend his viewpoint of the Scripture about the categorical nature of the spirit, soul, and body against the debate of Vincent Victor. Augustine stated the agreeable point with Vincent:

> After all, you defined "spirit" so that it is clear that animals do not have a spirit, but a soul; they are, of course, called irrational, because they do not have the power of intelligence and reason. Hence, when you counseled human beings to know their nature, you spoke as follows: "God who is good did not, after all, create anything without a reason, and he made human beings rational animals, capable of intelligence, possessed of reason and quick in mind, to govern all non-rational beings by their wise providence." With these words of yours you have stated quite clearly a point that is entirely correct, namely, that human beings are capable of intelligence and possessed of reason—something which irrational animals certainly do not have. Hence, on the basis of God's testimony you compared those people who do not understand to animals that do not, of course, have understanding. This point is made in another passage, *Do not be like a horse or a mule which does not have understanding* (Ps 32:9).[75]

Investigating the spirit, he comprehended that the Scripture functionally distinguishes the rational part of the soul, the spirit, but calls it inclusively to signify the entire human soul.[76] The fact that humans implement reason proves that they possess the spirit. Humans can use rational capacity to make intelligent decisions and govern other irrational creatures, like animals. This is the reason God offered rational capacity to human beings. The spirit distinguishes the human soul to live a different life from animals, even his opponent agrees that the Scripture teaches it. Irrelevant to the result of the debate, and resembling other philosophy, Augustine showed the dependence of his thought, about the relationship between the spirit and the soul, heavily on biblical statements, as he had been doing from the early time of conversion.

Again, Augustine strictly adhered to Scripture to defend the limited relationship between the human spirit and the creator Spirit. The spirit of the inner man does not share the nature of the Spirit the creator. Augustine observed it to have been taught in Scripture comprehensively by differentiating the use of two terms—*spiritus* and *flatus*. He stated,

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[75] *An. orig.* 4.23.37 (Teske I/23, 538).

[76] *An. orig.* 4.23.37 (Teske I/23, 538).

In the passage where we read, *And God fashioned man from the dust of the earth, and breathed*, or *inspired, into his face the breath of life* (Gn 2:7), the Greek does not say *pneuma*, the usual word for the Holy Spirit, but *pnoe*, a word more often used for a creature than for the creator. Consequently, many Latin speakers preferred to translate this word not with *spiritus* but with *flatus*, in order to mark the distinction. For the same word also occurs in the Greek of the passage in Isaiah where God says, *I made every breath* (Is 57:16 LXX), meaning, no doubt, every soul.[77]

He described that Scripture used different words when it refered to the Spirit the creator and when it points out the human spirit the creation. Augustine saw that the Book of Genesis implemented the Greek word *pnoe* to signify the human spirit, generally, while using *pneuma* to mean the creator, but not strictly. In the creation narrative, the human spirit appeared within a distinct use of the term *pnoe*, or *flatus*, to clarify its intention of pointing out the human soul. This meant that God created the human spirit to be different from the Holy Spirit by nature in the first place.

However, he thought that the Scripture distinguished the human spirit and the Holy Spirit in conceptualization, not strictly in language. For example, Paul used the word spirit (*pneuma* in Greek*; spiritus* in Latin) to signify both the human spirit and the holy spirit when he said in the 1 Corinthians 2:11, "*quis enim scit hominum quae sint hominis nisi spiritus hominis* [τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου] *qui in ipso est ita et quae Dei sunt nemo cognivit nisi Spiritus Dei* [τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ; Vulg)]" This passage attested that the human possesses the spirit (*spiritus*) whereas it differed from that of God. On the other hand, the Scripture employed the word *spiritus* without distinction between that of humans and animals when Ecclesiastes 3:21 stated, "*quis novit si spiritus filiform Adam ascendat sursum et si spiritus iumentorum descendat* deorsum" (Vulg). Here, the author of Ecclesiastes implemented the word *spiritus* to signify both the human soul and animal soul.[78] Augustine perceived from these examples that the Scriptures intentionally stated the nature of the human spirit different from the Holy Spirit and the animal soul, while

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[77] *Civ.* 13.24 (Babcock I/7, 94–95).

[78] *Civ.* 13.24.

not strictly differentiating the kind of language to describe them. But Latin translators conceptually recognized the intended distinction between them.

He remarked that anyone who wanted to know the nature of the human spirit must pay close attention to the expression of the Scripture, not to other sources. One must discern the ordinary use of the two terms by the comprehensive, doctrinal understanding of the Scripture. He continued,

> And this is the breath which he is quite appropriately said to have inserted into man's body by inspiring or breathing it into him. It was incorporeal, just as God is incorporeal; but, unlike God, who is immutable, it was mutable, because it was created and not, like God, uncreated. Still, so that those who want to talk about Scripture, but who pay no attention to its modes of expression, may know that it is not only what is equal to God or of the same nature that is said to come forth from his mouth, let them hear or read what is written in the passage where God says, *Because you are lukewarm, and neither hot not cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth* (Rv 3:16).[79]

The spirit inserted into man's body appeared in the creation narrative as incorporeal. But this fact did not mean it entirely resembled incorporeal God. The human spirit cannot parallel to God, by nature, because Christian doctrines teach the Holy Spirit to be immutable and uncreated. The spirit came to exist in the inner side of the body, the soul, by the creator's act of inspiring or breathing. The soul lives a human life, distinct from animals, by inspiring, but its mutable nature manifests that it differs from the Spirit who is immutable. Christians could distinguish the relationship between the human spirit and soul from the Spirit if they possess a fervent love for the Word of God.

The above passage implies that Augustine believed that the Christian doctrine of God does not allow one to think that the human spirit shares its nature with the Holy Spirit. Indissoluble differences between the creator and creation strictly applied to his reading of the Scripture. He saw the warning to the lukewarm-minded person in Revelation 3:16 as being written to those who do not pay thorough attention to "its modes of expression." The one who fervently desires to subordinate to the authority of the Scripture

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[79] *Civ.* 13.24 (Babcock I/7, 96).

and the traditional doctrine of God could comprehend the human spirit as part of the soul and distinguish it from the Holy Spirit and the animal's soul as well.

To sum up, Augustine perceived that the human possesses the spirit discernable from the soul from his reading of Psalm 50:12, when he wrote *De Animae Quantitate*. Like other subjects, he needed more time to do further research on the Scripture to describe the nature of the spirit. He might already attain sufficient knowledge to technically distinguish human beings from animals from secular education and his reading of philosophy books. He could emphasize the uniquity of the intellectual capacity that humans possess, but he waited until he discovered what the Scriptures teach about the subject. When he finally perceived the spirit to characterize human intellectual capacity, he could proceed with his argument on that subject.

Augustine's Perspicuous Description
Relying on the Scriptures

Augustine created a different argument of the spirit from Plotinus. Although Plotinus did not explicitly show a word corresponding to the Christian concept of spirit, one can compare some aspects of the two thinkers by and large. Augustine presented four different aspects of the spirit in relation to the soul: the foundation of belief, the giver, the location, and the purpose of the function of the spirit.

First, Augustine and Plotinus, in their discussions of the spirit, each based their thoughts on distinct foundations rooted in their beliefs. Augustine derived his argument from trusting the Scripture as providing valid knowledge about spirit, whereas Plotinus argued that one must believe in Plato's teaching of hypostases. Plato taught that the soul possesses a pure function. Plotinus put Plato's authority as the pillar supporting the system of hypostases. On the other hand, Augustine perceived the Scriptures as the primary authority providing valid knowledge. From the early time of conversion, he recognized that the Scriptures teach that human beings possess a spirit in the inner side of the body. God placed the spirit in the body according to the creation narrative. He presented the

passage in the Scripture as the evidence for existence of the spirit in individual beings. Augustine and Plotinus colored each of their concepts of spirit with totally different beliefs.

Second, Augustine thought that the giver of the spirit was different from other philosophies. In Plotinus's thought, hypostases granted the human soul with distinctive function, calculative reason. The upper part of the human soul lives a whole different life in the transcendent realm with these hypostases. According to the creation narrative, God infused the spirit into the first human being when he created it, which Augustine learned. Augustine could not agree with the thought that the spirit descended from or was generated by any other hypostases.

Third, Augustine located the spirit in a different place from Plotinus. Plotinus identified the higher realm in his cosmology wherein the pure function of the soul's calculative reasoning takes place. Consequently, calculative reasoning is not associated with any bodily activities. In contrast, Augustine believed that God placed the spirit in the human body for the human being to live a different life from other creatures. The human, which is composed of the soul and body, possesses the spirit in its being. The human spirit does not share the location with transcendent, which is comparable with the place where Plotinus's hypostases abide.

Fourth, Scripture states that God granted the soul dominion over other creatures by giving it the spirit. Augustine believed that the creation narrative remarks the purpose for the creation of the human spirit. God distinguished human beings to take care of other creatures by giving intellectual capacity to the soul through the spirit. The Christian belief in the providence of the creation distinguishes the specific functionality of the human spirit from that of Plotinus. Plotinus distinguished the activity of calculative reasoning, which corresponds to the spirit's function in Augustine's view, and placed it in the transcendent realm, unrelated to the physical world. Such features of calculative reasoning are

incompatible with Augustine's belief that the spirit is given to human beings to live in the world and take care of the created world.

These four aspects offer clues that Augustine developed his concept of the spirit with the recognition of his identity as a Christian, instead of converting from other philosophies to Christianity. As the spirit equips the intellectual function to the soul, the subject of the spirit can be investigated for pastoral purposes in consideration of theological aspects—such as repentance, conversion, ethical life, and punishment. However, this dissertation cannot extend the subject that far for the limited length. Focusing on the soul, rather, and its relationship with the body will show Augustine's reliance on Christian doctrines.

Soul and Body

Plotinus Disliked the Body
in Favor of the Soul

Plotinus felt it necessary to explain the kinship of two parts of the soul and the body. Soul exists in the body as divided into two parts. These two parts have inseparable relation with one another, while divided as higher and lower. These two parts are one soul, but the lower part only relates to the sense perception. He thought of the body, the soul, as something implemental, but eventually as what should be abandoned in the end. Plotinus shows three aspects of the body, considering the soul.

First, the body differs from the soul by nature even though the two came to join in the earth.[80] The soul substantially belongs to the heavenly soul (ουρανιος ψυχη), while it departed to the sublunary region, that is on earth.[81] The sublunary bodies, bodies under the moon, the human bodies, cannot pertain to the upper side realm of the moon. However, the soul exists as a part of the heavenly soul in the body because of its connected

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[80] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 51. Cf. *Enn.* 6.3.13; Damian Caluori, *Plotinus on the Soul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2015), 180–92. Caluori explains that Plotinus thought the different nature of the soul gives a trace of its activity to the body in their relationship.

[81] *Enn.* 2.1.5.

state of being, as R. T. Wallis described it, "Soul's 'indivisibility' Plotinus interprets as non-spatiality, not as the indivisibility of a geometrical point."[82] The lower part of the human soul shares the nature of the higher part because they were not divided in the sense of space. Plotinus thought that the soul survives irrelevant to the body being deceased because of its indivisible nature.[83]

Second, the higher soul reigns over the body through the lower soul mixed with it.[84] Plotinus tried to preserve the Platonic structure of the soul while extending its lower part to the epistemological description in relation to the sense-perception, considering Aristotle's claim.[85] Plotinus said, for example, that although the feeling of pain comes in through the complex organs of the body, the soul, not the body, possesses the power to perceive it.[86] However, he did not mean that the sensibles appertain to the soul. He stated,

> But the soul's power of sense-perception should not be understood as being of sensibles but rather of the impressions that arise from sense-perception and which are graspable by the living being. For these are already intelligible. So, sense-perception of externals is a reflection of this [grasp of impressions], whereas this [grasp of impressions] is true in substantiality, since it contemplates only forms, without being affected.[87]

The soul takes impression only, leaving the perceived through the bodily sense. The sense perception cannot make an epistemological impact on the soul because the soul finds its true substance from the contemplation of its forms. Therefore, the epistemological process is stimulated by the body's sense-perception, though, the soul does not take anything from the bodily process. Instead, it reflects impressions to seek its substantial forms in the higher realm where it belongs as well.[88] The body can spark the soul to ponder forms, but the

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[82] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 51.

[83] *Enn.* 2.1.4, 9.7.

[84] *Enn.* 1.1.3.

[85] *Enn.* 1.1.4.

[86] *Enn.* 1.1.5, 6.

[87] *Enn.* 1.1.7 (Gerson 48).

[88] Caluori, *Plotinus on the Soul*, 181.

physical senses cannot directly partake in the higher soul's contemplation. The soul animates and controls bodily movements, but it does so without any influence from the body.

Third, the soul desires to avoid the body. The body enmeshes the soul preventing it from ascension to the intellect, though not harming the soul. The soul's ascension proceeds in the state of being in the body through contemplation; therefore, the soul must overcome corporeal things to make progress to the higher.[89] Concerning the body, Plotinus saw it as the temporal place of the soul's residence. The soul has never willed to be in it at any moment since departed from the above. It seeks a way to escape from the temporal state in the body and ascend to the higher realm to reunite with the higher part of the soul.

Plotinus integrated Plato's cosmology with his ideas about the relationship between the soul and the body. Three features are figured out here: (1) the soul differs by nature from the body; (2) the soul lives a different life in terms of epistemology; and (3) the soul desires to depart from the body in the end. These three characteristics justify Plotinus's hopes for the soul's ascension and union with One, as will be seen in the next chapter. However, these kinds of relationships between the soul and the body could not be compatible with the Christian faith that Augustine held.

Augustine Needed the Body for the Soul

Early on in his conversion, Augustine, a learned layman, continued his quest for the philosophical inquiry into the relationship between the soul and body. On one hand he toned his argument to fit into the Christian teachings; on the other hand he utilized philosophical language to fill the gap between what Scripture reveals about the soul and body, examining the topics in greater depth. He would have known the creation narrative from hearing Ambrose's sermon at Milan. Viewing that the Scripture describes

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[89] *Enn.* 3.4.2; 6.7.31, 9.9, 10. The subject of the soul's ascension will be dealt in the next chapter in detail.

God's simultaneous creation in plain words, he comes to feel the necessity to depict it in a technical way in line with his contemporary philosophy.

Augustine took it upon himself to provide a philosophical account of the relationship between the soul and the body. Initially, he could not draw a simple description of how the immaterial soul could have any connection to the material body. Modern readers can empathize with Augustine when considering the challenge of explaining the psychological connection between the mind and neurons, assuming they are separate entities. They may require a specific language that can comprehend both and convey it to people. In Augustine's case, he addressed the issue of the soul and body with philosophical language that trimmed off incompatible ideas from the perspective of the Christian faith.

In *De inmortalitate Animae*, he began to modify his knowledge of the soul and body to fit into the Christian faith that he accepted. He discovered that Plato and his followers paved their own way and part of their language could help, better than other philosophies, explaining the relation between the soul and body, not spoiling Christian faith. The following philosophical statement might most align with his later thought:

> Finally, united with the body (and this not in space, although the body occupies space) the soul is affected prior to the body by those highest and eternal principles, changeless and not contained in space, and not only prior, but also to a greater extent. For, the prior affect in the soul occurs to the extent that the soul is nearer to these principles, and, by the same token, the soul is more greatly affected in proportion to the superiority over the body. This nearness is not one in space, but in the order of nature. In this order, then, it is understood that a form is given by the highest Being through the soul to the body—the form whereby the latter exists, in so far as it exists.[90]

Here, Augustine utilized philosophical words to explain the relation between the soul and body, such as the principle, the prior (which is the higher soul), the superiority of the soul to the body, and the order out of space. He demonstrated that the soul takes a superior position to principle but, he says, "This nearness is not one in space, but in the order of nature" (*Nec ista propinquitas loco, sed naturae ordine dicta sit*). Augustine thought that these philosophical terms largely support Christian teaching as he said in the *Confessiones*

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[90] *Immort. an.*15.24 (Schopp, 43).

Book VII.[91] The soul appeared to exist in the body as being separable both in Christian canon and Platonist books, although different from each other in their origin and end. The soul dwells closer to an invisible realm than the body, yet it resides within it. This statement reflected Neoplatonic language but betrays it in essence, at the same time. For example, he did not equate the nature of the soul with the divine essence of gods—which would make it inherently superior to the body in the Neoplatonic sense. This perspective is pivotal in shaping the Neoplatonic belief regarding the relationship between the soul and the body but stands in contrast to Christian faith. Instead, he trimmed off such elements that he could not accept in his Christian faith. He employed some helpful words while abandoning unworthy concepts from his Christian perspective. Neoplatonists presented useful conceptions for Augustine to understand the soul and the body within the faith.

He also believed he should explain the nature of the body in relation to the soul, including its origin. He said,

> This can be said, also, of the irrational soul or life, that the rational soul cannot be converted into the irrational. If the irrational soul itself were not subjected to the rational by reason of its inferior rank, it would assume a form in an equal way and be like the latter. In natural order, the more powerful beings transmit to the lower ones the form which they have received from the supreme Beauty. And, surely, if they give, they do not take away. The things of inferior rank, in so far as they are, are for the very reason that the more powerful beings transmit to them the form by which they are; these are by reason of their power more excellent. To these natures it is given that they have greater power, not for the reason that they are heavier than those of lighter weight, but for the reason that without large extension in space they are more powerful because of the very form that makes them more excellent. In this way the soul is more powerful and excellent than the body. Hence, since the body subsists by the soul, as has been said, the soul itself can in no way be transformed into a body. For no body is made unless it receives its form from the soul. Again, in order that the soul become a body, it could do so only by losing, but not by receiving a form; this is impossible for the reason that the soul is not contained in space and is not united in space with the body. For, if this could be so, perhaps a larger mass could through a *form* turn the soul, in spite of the soul's higher rank, into its own of lower rank—as with the larger air and the smaller fire. But, that is not so. Each mass that occupies space is not in its entirety in each of its single parts, but only in all taken together. Hence, one part is in one place; another in another.[92]

[91] *Conf.* 7.9.13–15.

[92] *Immort. an.* 16.25 (Schopp, 45–46).

In this passage, this intellectual layman attempted to explain how the human body could be originated in relation to the soul. He seemed to consider Platonic philosophy in mind, though he did not directly refer to it. For example, he equipped the language of rational and irrational souls, form and matter, and superior and inferior ranks. He explained the substance of the body as something that can be understood in terms of form and matter. The body cannot exist without the soul's conveyance of its form. The soul is present within the body without taking a spatial portion. These philosophical descriptions definitely reflected Platonic philosophy regardless of whether the use of such terminology implied his conversion to a specific group of Plato's followers.

It is important to note, however, that he did not mention any higher beings that were associated with the soul's origin and its activities in Neoplatonic beliefs. He acknowledged what Neoplatonist teachings carried and not in comparison to Christianity. A faithful Neoplatonist could not avoid mentioning such higher beings as Soul, Intellect, intelligibles, and names of gods to explain the origin of the soul and the body. He chose to use words to provide an intellectually sound explanation about the connection between the soul and body, while avoiding any association with religious elements in Neoplatonic ideas, such as gods, spiritual realms, and the Soul or Intellect that exist beyond the physical realm. Instead, he confidently and openly proclaimed his Christian beliefs using language that reflected the teachings of God's creation, even before receiving baptism. Consequently, he seemed to have no intention of expressing approval for any spiritual or authoritative figure regarding the origin of the soul and body.

Moreover, he focused on offering a philosophical investigation into the soul and body. He traced the line of thought regarding how the soul and the body could come to exist in the world together. He elaborated on the unity of the soul and body but emphasized the separateness of their substances. A soul cannot become a body and a body a soul. He utilized Platonic words and described that a body cannot become a body unless it receives a form through a soul. The body subsists by the soul, but the soul cannot be transformed

into the body. A rational soul, which is an intellectual soul, cannot become an irrational soul, that is the vivifying soul of the body. These descriptions expounded into minute details of the relationship between soul and body, which were of interest to philosophers and not necessarily part of Christian teachings. This subject of the soul and body neither contradicted Christian teachings nor embraced the Neoplatonic belief in beings of the transcendent world.

As his faith grew over time, Augustine tried to discern his Christian faith from that of Manichaean argument in understanding the relation between the soul and body.[93] He could not directly refer his anthropological investigation to the Scripture because he did not find a description of the relationship between the soul and body from it yet. Here, in *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et De Moribus Manichaeorum*, he defined a human being as a unity of a soul and body.[94] The soul gives life to the body and controls it. The soul is the highest good of the body. He said, "Hence, the supreme good of the body is not sensual pleasure, nor absence of pain, nor strength, nor beauty, nor swiftness, nor whatever else is ordinarily numbered among the goods of the body, but the soul alone."[95] In this passage he exalted the soul as the prime subject deciding the value of the highest good for the body. Although other things could enhance the physical state of the body, one must regard the soul as superior to them all because it animates and rules the body.

He stated that the soul plays the role of receiving the highest good for the body. He formulated the soul as the subject seeking virtue that perfects it.[96] Virtue arises in the soul when it pursues something else. He narrowed down the probability by removing improbable cases and arrived at God as the most probable being who can give

[93] *Mor. eccl.* 1.3.5–8.13.

[94] *Mor. eccl.* 1.4.6.

[95] *Mor. eccl.* 1.4.7 (Gallagher, 8).

[96] *Mor. eccl.* 1.6.9.

the highest good to the soul through virtue.[97] He said, "Only God remains, therefore, if we follow after Him, we live well; if we reach Him, we live not only well but happily."[98] Here, he inclusively mentioned beings as consisting of the soul and body. The soul must follow God to bring a good life and happiness to itself and the body. As he did about other topics, he attempted to praise the Christian faith as the best philosophy in terms of it bringing the highest good and happiness. He could understand best the relationship between the soul and the body within the Christian faith.

Based on the belief that the soul and body cooperate in the epistemological process, Augustine explored the essence of memory in *Confessiones* Book X. He elaborated on it with the belief that God created the soul to perceive the external world. He paved the Christian version of epistemology in which humans can possess reliable knowledge about the external world. God created everything that exists, and he knows them all without exception.[99] A person consisting of the soul and body can know of things in the created world but not all. Humans possess limited capacity not only in exploring the external world but also in search of the depth of their own mind.[100] He sought his own version of the quest seeking knowledge, with affirmation about the corporation of the soul and body in a person. Nevertheless, he was not living in a time when philosophers concentrated their interests on the study of epistemology. Ancient skeptics directed some philosophical, unceasing inquiries about errorless knowledge of philosophical things.[101] Their arguments tended to pursue logical perfection about philosophical concerns in

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[97] *Mor. eccl.* 1.6.9–10. Augustine's method of removing improbable cases one by one resembled so-called Bayesian inference. Bayesian inference is developed by Judea Pearl in 1998 as a powerful model to increase the accuracy of Artificial Intelligent. In the Bayesian system, AI efficiently yields the most probable case by removing improbable cases. Cf. Stuart J. Russell and Peter Norving, *Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach*, 4th ed. (Harlow, England: Pearson, 2021), 43.

[98] *Mor. eccl.* 1.6.10 (Gallagher, 10).

[99] *Conf.* 10.5.7.

[100] *Conf.* 10.8.15.

[101] *Acad.* 2.5.11.

terms of ancient philosophy. They taught ways of skeptical life that contradict the Christian faith. Modern epistemology—as a set of studies about a process that senses perceptions of the external world becoming knowledge in a person's inner side—would become one of the greatest subjects to philosophers since Rene Descartes cast doubt for everything except the fact itself that he is doubting. Yet, Augustine's search for knowledge aimed at a purpose, which is discovering God through the world through bodily perceptions.

He believed that the body's epistemological function helped him find God through the external world. Especially, in *Confessiones* Book VII, he accounted the acknowledgement of God's divine natures to the epistemological process from the sense perception of the body to the soul. He restated the philosophical process of the sense perception: "I pursued my inquiry by stages, from material things to the soul that perceives them through the body, and from there to that inner power of the soul to which the body's senses report external impressions."[102] He could continue the intellectual quest through the bodily perception of the created world. His soul could use the power of discursive reason to judge the information it perceived from bodily senses. The soul perceives invisible reality through sense perceptions. To summarize, the soul communicates with the external world through the body. The body functions as a transmitter, relaying impressions from external stimuli to the innermost soul, thereby guiding one in their quest to perceive the presence of the invisible God. The soul needed the body to know God through the perception of things in the external world.

During his time of church ministry, Augustine took useful things from philosophy into his biblical description of the soul and body. However, he already realized from the early time of his conversion that Scripture teaches the origin and end of the soul and body as differed from what Neoplatonists said. The soul came to exist in the body by the creation of God, *ex nihilo*. The soul animates and rules the body. These two are not separated beings but are together as a unified whole known as a person. The body receive

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[102] *Conf.* 7.17.23 (Boulding, 131).

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the highest good that is God only through the soul. In this sense, the soul is nearer to God than the body. On the other hand, the body plays an important role as an epistemological guide leading the soul to perceive God through sense perceptions. The soul temporarily stays in the flesh until the body collapses, and then the soul will reunite with the transformed body that is resurrected and changed to be immortal by God. God will change the mortal flesh when he resurrects it from death.[103] The soul needs the body to step on the salvific course of human history according to Christian teachings.

He considered the body a necessary place where the soul's salvation takes place in companionship with it. He said, "Souls are judged when they leave their bodies, before they come to that judgment at which they must be judged, after they receive back their bodies, and experience torment or glory in the same flesh in which they lived this life."[104] The soul can be saved during the time in the body. Once it leaves the body, that is the body's death, and the soul enters the punishment process, as the Scripture teaches. Therefore, for Augustine, the body exists as the primary place for the soul's salvation. After the body passes away, the soul loses the chance to avoid eternal punishment. The body holds significant meaning to the soul in cosmological terms of Christian eschatology.

He later placed greater emphasis on the authority of the Scripture, to avoid the mistake of putting human reason above it, concerning the relationship between the soul and body. The body's hereditary factors could make an effect on the interpretation of the Scripture. He said,

> He says, "By saying, *And he gives to all life and spirit*, and then adding, *and made the whole human race from one blood* (Acts 17:25–26), the apostle refers the origin of the soul and spirit to the creator and the origin of the body to generation." By no means! Those who do not want rashly to deny the propagation of souls, before it becomes fully clear whether it is or is not the case, have something in these words of the apostle that they should understand as favoring their side. He said, *from one blood*, in the sense of "from one human being," using the figure by which the part signifies the whole. After all, if we allow him to understand the words of scripture, *And the man became a living soul* (Gn 2:7), as signifying the whole by a part, so

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[103] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.19.18.

[104] *An. orig.* 2.4.8 (Teske I/23, 483–84).

that one also understands there the spirit, which scripture does not mention, why should we not allow others to understand the words, *from one blood*, in such a way that they can understand there both the soul and the spirit? After all, a human being designated by the term, "blood," is not composed of the body alone, but also of soul and spirit.[105]

This passage demonstrates Augustine's approach to interpreting the Scriptures regarding the contingent issue arising from the relationship between the soul and body. He found some errors in the teaching of Vincent Victor who argued that a soul is generated from the souls of one's parents, as well as in the interpretation of certain Scriptures where the tension between the soul and body is relevant. Victor asserted that Peter the apostle meant that God gave the souls and spirits of individuals while their physical bodies were generated from the bodies of their parents, when he said, "*And he gives to all life and spirit, and then adding, and made the whole human race from one blood* (Acts 17:25–26)." Victor read this passage as if he could compromise all the teachings in the Scriptures regarding the problem of the relationship between the soul and body. Concerning this issue, Augustine remarked the importance of understanding the intertextual nature of language employed in the Scriptures, especially when a part is designated to represent the whole. Peter might use the phrase "one blood" to describe the entire human being, including the soul, spirit, and body. So, he could mean that all the elements composing a human being are received from their parents. Augustine provided another example with Genesis 2:7: "And the man became a living soul." Here, God called the whole person by a part, a living soul. Similarly, one could interpret that Peter meant by "one blood" the whole person including the soul. If one takes this point of view, then one accepts traducianism as a result, which holds that souls are transmitted from one generation to the next. However, as previously mentioned, he postponed providing an answer as to which one was correct because he could not discover conclusive evidence in the Scripture to support either one.

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[105] *An. orig.* 1.17.28 (Teske I/23, 473).

The argument for traducianism is derived through inductive reasoning from the fact that bodies are propagated from the previous generation. The Scriptures provide a clear account of the propagation of physical bodies but notably lacked information on the transmission of the soul. He said,

> As these sides argue back and forth with each other, I judge between them as follows: I admonish each of them that they should not rest their case upon what is not known and that they should not dare rashly to assert what they do not know. After all, if scripture had said, "He breathed the breath of life into the face of the woman, and she became a living soul," it still would not follow that the soul is not propagated by the parents, unless we read that it said this same thing about their child as well. It is, after all, possible that a member not having a soul, but taken from the body, needed to receive a soul, but that the soul of a child would be derived from the father through the mother by the transmission involved in propagation. A point passed over in silence is something hidden from us; it is neither denied nor affirmed.[106]

Although he did not agree with any theory about the soul's transmission, the Scripture stated in the creation narrative of the first woman that God created her body from the man's bone. However, it does not describe whether the creator infused her soul into her body, like the man, or created the soul in the man to be transmitted to her body. He read that the Scripture omitted anything about the soul. Consequently, although it is reasonable to think that a child's soul would be inherited from parents, he maintained an undetermined stance, just like the Scripture does. This complicated issue regarding the soul and body helps readers to distinguish his reliance on the authority of the Scripture over human reasoning.

The Christian doctrines teach that the metanarrative of human history in God's plan for human salvation furnishes meanings of human life. Augustine acknowledged the importance of the doctrines to comprehend the soul's origin in the creation *ex nihilo* and its end in the final punishment. The soul could not pass through this entire process, from creation to punishment, without the body. The soul could not abandon the body to complete its perfection, unlike what Plotinus thought. Certain philosophical frameworks provided him with valuable insights to understand and articulate the relationship between the soul

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[106] *An. orig.* 1.18.30 (Teske I/23, 475).

and the body. However, within the context of the Christian faith, the soul and body live distinct life, diverging from the philosophical system.

Irreconcilable Differences between Them

The human soul in Augustine's works lives a different style of life regarding the body, compared with that of Plotinus's *Enneads*. When he wrote early works, as a Christian intellect, he concentrated on making rational description of the soul and body using philosophical language, while sticking to the Christian belief. Later, he perceived that he needed to emphasize a more doctrinal, eschatological aspect of the relation between soul and body. He presented three features representing Christian faith: (1) the soul is a distinctive feature compared with the body; (2) the soul works together with the body to recognize the existence of God; and (3) the soul and body hold mutual hope for salvation in Christ.

First, the soul owns intellectual features that the body does not possess. While Augustine employed philosophical words to describe the soul, this emphasis on the functional features does not take a shape commingled with other scheme of cosmology. As he mentioned, the soul's closeness to invisible substances takes place in its nature. The superiority of the soul comes up in the intellectual scheme in terms of modern philosophy, not ancient cosmology. On the contrary, Plotinus thought the soul was superior to the body in the scheme of the world consisting of the visible and invisible. In contrast, Augustine's description of the soul seemed like a demythologized version of Plotinus's illustration of the soul that abides in the mythic universe.

Second, Augustine described the soul's attitude toward the body in a positive way. Plotinus emphasized the separation of the soul's epistemological function from bodily perceptions in observance of its divine nature like gods. The body weighs down the soul from contemplative turning toward higher ranks. The soul must find a way to overcome the obstacle and ultimately abandon it. On the other hand, Augustine observed that the soul needs the body to attain knowledge of God through the sense perceptions of created

things. The soul requires the body as a necessary tool for transmitting information about the world to knowledge of God. Such a perspective not only distinguishes Augustine from Plotinus but also links the soul's eschatological hope with the necessity of the body.

Third, the soul needs the body for the completion of the salvation. In Neoplatonic philosophy, the soul must abandon the body for its liberation, perfection. The body draws the soul down to the physical world, restricting its complete freedom. The soul must overcome the body's dragging power. On the contrary, Augustine understood the relation between the soul and body in the biblical metanarrative of the salvation of human beings. Human history is proceeding toward the time for the final punishment. The soul's spiritual perfection begins in the body by the work of the Holy Spirit who grants primary good. The soul will temporarily depart from the mortal body. At the time of the saints' resurrection, the body will be raised and transformed. The transformed body and soul will be reunited to enter the eternal kingdom.

Reading the Scripture thoroughly, Augustine could elaborate more on the relationship between the soul and body. Intellectual cultivation toward the eschatological hope could help other Christians more than the philosophical speculation of the subject. He did not try to stress obstinately the positive role of the body for the soul only to accentuate his faithfulness toward Christ. Instead, in the *De Civitate Dei*, he brought agreeable aspects of Platonists' wish for the soul's return to the body to show the Christian doctrine of resurrection as the universal truth the philosophers desired to discover.

Conclusion

His conversion to Christianity made Augustine to discover difference between his newly accepted faith and what he read in philosophy books. Scripture lays out a distinct structure for the cosmos and explains the human soul's purpose in this world as ordained by the creation of God. Though, both Christian faith and philosophy were not looking totally eccentric in terms of subject and matter. Both shared interests in similar topics such as the life of the soul, whether it can survive after bodily death, and how it

relates to the spirit and the body. He acknowledged that becoming a Christian means accepting the authority of Scripture over the rational way of understanding such topics. He could not technically acquire profound knowledge about such complicated subjects in a short amount of time, though holding some important doctrines supporting his faith.

He enjoyed his intellectual leisure of pondering and writing about the life of the soul, to the extent that does not deviate from Christian doctrines. He emphasized philosophical subjects in the works he wrote before beginning pastoral tasks. Fifteen hundred years later, scholars distinguished them by nuanced words *early works influenced by philosophy*, instead of plainly categorizing them *philosophical works* of a Christian Roman layperson. These scholars retroactively attributed these early works to Augustine a pastor who wrote a great number of pastoral writings thereafter. However, this distinction made one confused about how to harmonize his spontaneous confessions of Christian doctrines with his philosophical emphasis on the life of the soul.

Topics such as immortality, spirit, and the body reveal Augustine's consistent dependence on the authority of Scripture. He shifted from emphasizing philosophical language for understanding Scripture to prioritizing Christian doctrines in defense of the faith against opposing viewpoints. He could not agree with Plotinus, at least based on his writings either earlier or later. His concept of the spirit in relation with the soul came out of the Christian doctrines, apart from Plotinus. He considered the body as the necessary companion of the soul that lives in the meta-history of the creation and punishment narrated in Scripture. These features show that Augustine did not confusedly mix the Christian faith with other contradicting ideas in philosophy.

CHAPTER 4

LIFE OF THE HUMAN SOUL, PART 2—
ASCENSION AND PURIFICATION

Since the late nineteenth century, scholars regarded the concept of the soul's ascension as one of philosophical languages influenced on Augustine's thought. This debate concentrated on the similarity between Augustine's concept of the soul's ascension and Neoplatonic one.[1] These scholars went to the deeper, microscopic investigation of how these two thinkers similarly reasoned the soul's upward movement through contemplation while still struggling to specify the Platonic source of Augustine.[2] Based on such methodology, for example, Brian Dobell concluded, "Augustine was not intellectually converted to Christianity until c. 395."[3] However, the research has not sufficiently explored the reason behind their specific thought processes or the ultimate objective toward which the soul's upward journey is directed.

Augustine seemed to think he was justly using the concept of ascension through the teaching of the Scripture and the Christian tradition. The soul's ascension in his works confirmed the authority of Scripture and was founded in the philosophical continuity of Christian tradition. Contrastingly, Plotinus asserted that the soul's ascension occurs in an order of the distinct universe from that taught in Christian tradition. He depended on

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[1] Frederick Van Fleteren, "Augustine's Ascent of the Soul in Book VII of the Confessions: A Reconsideration," *Augustinian Studies* 5 (1974): 29–72; Frederick Van Fleteren, "The Cassiciacum Dialogues and Augustine's Ascents at Milan," *Mediaevalia* 4 (1978): 59–82; Robert J. O'Connell, "Faith, Reason, and Ascent to Vision in St. Augustine," *Augustinian Studies* 21 (1990): 91.

[2] Pierre Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and Their Greek Sources*, trans. Harry E. Wedeck (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1969), 171–96. Courcelle argued that Augustine was not faced with the alternative problem of Christ or Plotinus, based on the uncertainty of sources that Augustine might read.

[3] Brian Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2009), 111. Dobell's conclusion continued Alfaric's decision that Augustine firstly converted to Neoplatonism, and over time, he increasingly embraced Christianity. Cf. Courcell, *Late Latin Writers*, 181.

Plato's teaching of the universe and soul. He thought the lower soul ascends to the higher soul by the nature order of the emanated cosmos. These differences made Augustine's concept of the soul's ascension difficult to fit in with the Neoplatonic scheme of the world, at large. While his language shares superficial similarities with that of Plotinus, they certainly relied on different foundations and sources of authority.

This chapter contends that Augustine comprehended the soul's ascension within the Christian faith from the early time of his conversion. He could not detail everything immediately when he just became a Christian. However, he implemented the ascension of the human soul at least based on Christian teachings—including the doctrine of the incarnation and life following Christ. To prove this argument, the first section of this chapter begins by presenting Plotinus's conception of the soul's ascension. Then, it demonstrates that Augustine composed the soul's ascension as a subordinating character to the authority of Scripture and the traditional Christian faith. The next section shows the concept of purification as an abstract element differentiating Augustine's thought from that of Plotinus's *Enneads*. Since the soul's ascension relates to the theological problem of sin and death of the body, this chapter employs his later works more often than the early works.[4]

Ascension

Plotinus Thought That the Soul Ascends by Nature

Plotinus found a way to approach the Good that is said to be in the highest place in the world.[5] To delineate the ascension of the soul to the Good, he heavily relied on the

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[4] This chapter furnishes various works of Augustine including *Ver. rel.* 12.25; *Doctr. Chr.* 1.10.10, 14.13, 17.16, 18.17, 20.19, 39.43; *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1–9.13; 10.8.13, 14, 10.9.15, 16*; Conf.* 4.12.19, 7.9.13, 7.20.27, 27, 10.16, 17.23, 18.24, 8.2.3, 12.29, 30, 13.7.8*,* 9.10; *Civ.* 6.5, 10.24, 32, 13.8, 17.4, 18.28, 32, 44, 46, 49, 52, 54, 22.5, 8, 9, 18; and *Trin.* 1.4.7, 2.17, 5.8, 8.15, 18; 4.3.6, 18.24, 8.5, 13.10.14, 14.18, 16.22, 15.19.34, 26.46.

[5] In *Enn.*, Plotinus equated the Good with the One, and so used the two words as alternatives and as the same being by nature. Therefore, this chapter uses the word Good by means of implying the One, at the same time.

philosophy of Plato and accordingly composed the order of the universe. This section will describe three ways Plotinus set to the soul for ascension. First, he discovered the pathway of the soul leading to the Good in contemplation. The soul goes up toward the Good through the invisible pathway, through the contemplation. The soul could arrive at the Good by ascending through the contemplation, even before the actual death of the body.[6] Second, he discovered from Plato's work that the soul can reach the Good through the way of learning. He often justified his thought of the soul's ascension by clarifying its dependence on and subordination to Plato's teaching at large. Third, he thought the descended soul, the lower, would ascend back to the higher soul for union, through the natural process of recession.

First, Plotinus presented the platonic image of the extended soul in explaining his ecstatic union of the lower part of the soul with the higher part, and with the One as the primary purpose of the union.[7] He employed ecstatic contemplation to enjoy his belief about the connected structure of the two parts of the human soul, higher and lower. He said,

> But, after all things had been made beautiful by that which is prior to them, and had got possession of light—intellect acquired the light of intellectual activity, by which it illuminates nature, and soul the power to live, when a greater life came to it—intellect was raised up to the intelligible world and remained joyful at being near the Good, and that soul which was capable of it, when it knew and saw, had joy in the spectacle, and was awestruck and shaken insofar as it was able to see.[8]

In this passage he remarked that the intellectual function of the soul allows itself to recognize the light of beauty through the perception of things in the lower world. The recognition of beauty lets the soul rise to the intelligible world. The soul ascends to the

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[6] John Peter Kenney, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity: A Study in Augustine*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University, 2013), 33.

[7] Richard T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995), 5, 73–74, 85; William Ralph Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, Gifford Lectures, 1917–1918 (London: Longmans, Green, 1918), 1:161. Cf. J. M. Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (New York: Syndics of the Cambridge University, 1967), 90, 154.

[8] *Enn*. 6.7.31 (Gerson, 837).

intelligible world through intellectual activity within the contemplation. The intellectual

perception of beauty played an important role in explaining the soul's ascension. The

united soul, through Beauty, from the sensible beauty, proceeds near Good.[9] Such mystic

experience can take place by the desire of the soul to love the Good.[10] The contemplative

ascension from the sensible to the intellectual world liberates the soul from the evil that is

the sensible world.[11] That experience of the soul's union and ascension occurs in the

ecstatic contemplation as being in unconsciousness.[12]

Second, to ascend to the Good, one must consider the intellectual aspect of

learning.[13] Plotinus, with Plato, must emphasize knowledge because "touching of the Good

is the most important thing" to the soul.[14] He said,

> Plato says it is the greatest subject of learning, because he means by subject of
> learning not the seeing of the Good, but learning something about it beforehand. For
> analogies, negations, and knowledge of things derived from it, teach us about the
> Good; and also by certain "means of ascent." But purifications, virtues, and orderings
> set us on the way to it, the "rungs of the ladder" towards the intelligible, settling in
> it, and feasting on it.[15]

In this passage, he referred to Plato to accentuate the importance of learning. The idea of

ascension through contemplation aims for the same goal for the Good that Plato

encouraged to achieve through the rational work of learning. The soul can ascend to the

Good by other means of Plato's ladder, which are understanding, thought, belief, and

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[9] *Enn*. 6.7.33, 34.

[10] *Enn*. 6.7.31. Plotinus said, "Because it [the soul] wants to be carried towards the Good, it despises things in the sensible world, and even though it sees beautiful things in this universe, it despises them, because it sees that they are in flesh and bodies, and defiled by their present habitation, divided by their extension, and so not the beautiful beings themselves" (*Enn*. 7.7.31 [Gerson, 837]).

[11] *Enn*. 6.9.9.

[12] Plotinus said that the goal of the ecstatic contemplation—to experience the union of the soul with Good—must be as deep as the one does not even think that one is not thinking. *Enn.* 6.7.35.

[13] *Enn*. 6.7.35; 9.11. Cf. *Enn.* 1.3.2, 3. Kevin Corrigan and Tuomas Rasimus, eds., *Gnosticism, Platonism and the Late Ancient World: Essays in Honour of John D. Turner*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 82 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 312–13.

[14] *Enn*. 6.7.36 (Gerson, 843).

[15] *Enn*. 6.7.36 (Gerson, 843).

imagination.[16] He mentioned Plato's thought of ascension by learning as another way of seeking the same object, which is escaping from the sensible world—or from the cave or prison in Plato's analogy.[17] Therefore, Plotinus tried to clarify that his conception of the soul's ascension did not deviate from the teaching of Plato.

Third, when he divided the human soul into the higher and lower, Plotinus set it to be destined for returning to the higher world by keeping their connections to one another. As its linked structure shows, the two parts of the soul exist as one same entity, so the lower soul does not lose its immortal identity. In the end, immortal individual souls will return to and abide in the best state just as the soul of Socrates does.[18] In that state, the soul will remain as one unity above all together.[19] Thus, the idea of the lower soul's restoration to the higher, where it departed from, has nothing strange because the extended part has never completely separated from its original part.[20] The inseparably divided structure of the human soul is fated to reunite by the natural process of the lower soul's ascension.

To sum up, Plotinus found the possibility of the lower soul's ascension—even before the death of the body—in union with the higher soul. He presented two ways of approaching the Good, with less emphasis on the liberation by the body's death. First, he found the secret pathway of the soul's ascension in the intuitive contemplation of the Platonic light through the perceived beauty. Second, the soul's journey in contemplation strictly limited its region to the Platonic abstract system reflecting the sun, stars, and planets in the sky. However, he did not claim that he invented the whole mechanism of the soul's ascension. He not only referred to Plato as the authoritative source sustaining

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[16] Plato, *Republic* 511d.

[17] Plato, *Republic* 514a-c.

[18] *Enn.* 4.3.5.

[19] Frederick Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, vol. 1 of *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Image, 1993), 469.

[20] *Enn.* 6.7.23, 31; 9.9.

his cosmological scheme, but also Plato's pathway of learning to touch the Good must be considered another aspect to achieve the soul's ascension.

These features characterized Plotinus's philosophy of the soul's ascension, depending on Plato's authority. Such extended ideas demonstrated the source and authority justifying the theory of the soul's ascension. At the same time, these characteristics became a hallmark distinguishing the identity of his thought featured by the philosophy of Plato from other thinkers clinging to other authority and beliefs, such as Christian thinkers who relied on Christian doctrines. Especially, Augustine's conception of the soul's ascension showed its own way based on the authority of the Scripture and Christian doctrines, in contradiction to Plotinus.

**Augustine Believed That the Soul Ascends
through the Belief in the Mediator**

The necessity to ascend. Before his conversion, Augustine conceived that he must find the way leading to transcendent God. He stated that he found the necessity of ascension through the guidance of God leading him to himself through Neoplatonist works. Reading them, he learned that he needed to return to his inner place, the mind. In this place, his soul abided and discovered the true light, triune God of Christianity, that he had been seeking throughout his whole life.

He discovered Christian God when he cared for his inner man, motivated by Platonist books. In this reminiscent narrative, the soul witnessed the existence of transcendent God revealed by the light in his mind. In the illustration of his spiritual experience in *Confessiones* VII, his soul in the mind observed the unrealistic light (*lucem*) from the above (*supra*). His soul recognized the light to be different from the light of the sun shedding to the earth. He must describe it with human language reflecting the created world. The light shone on his mind did not come down from the upper side in terms of directions; nevertheless, he should describe it to be higher in terms of order and authority. He stated,

I entered, then, and with the vision of my spirit (*animae mea*: my insertion), such as it was, I saw the incommutable light far above my spiritual ken (*oculo animae meae*: my insertion), transcending my mind (*supra mentem meam*: my insertion): not this common light which every carnal eye can see, nor any light of the same order but greater, as though this common light were shining much more powerfully, far more brightly, and so extensively as to fill the universe. . . . The light I saw was not this common light at all, but something different, utterly different, from all these things. Nor was it higher than my mind in the sense that oil floats on water or the sky is above the earth; it was exalted because this very light made me, and I was below it because by it I was made. Anyone who knows truth knows it, and whoever knows it knows eternity. Love knows it.[21]

In this passage, his soul witnessed the light above his mind (*supra mentem meam*) and above the soul's eye (*supra . . . oculom animae*)—but not above like oil on water or the sky above the earth, but just as it transcends the order of creation. The soul observed the light, who is transcendent God, above in the mind to which it desired to ascend. Therefore, the desire of the soul for God manifestly transcended the perception of a geographical up and down, while he expressed it in that way for the limitation of the human language for describing the spiritual experience.

Augustine needed to illustrate the fountainhead of the light as above (*supra*) for two reasons. First, the light is superior to his soul in the sense that it is created by the light. This description reminds readers of John 1:3–4, stating that God is light who created everything in the beginning of the world. He read this passage as presenting triune God the Creator. The Creator must come first by order than creatures and he is superior to creatures by nature. He perceived the light, presenting the superiority of the Creator, shined upon his soul that is creation. Second, he must express his spiritual experience through human language that reflects created things. He acknowledged that human language cannot draw his experience of uncreated being. He possessed only a limited capacity to manifest his ineffable experience through human language. For this reason, he implemented the directional word above because he has already learned that truth must be

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[21] *Conf.* 7.10.16 (Boulding, 127).

seen and understood "through the things that are made."[22] But he attested that the light

came down from God who sent it from the place transcendent all beings.

Augustine's experience of God did not stop at simply observing the transcendent

light. By hearing the voice from above, he could soon identify the light as that of the God

of the Scripture. He described,

> O eternal Truth, true Love, and beloved Eternity, you are my God, and for you I
> sigh day and night. As I first began to know you you lifted me up and showed me
> that while that which I might see exists indeed, I was not yet capable of seeing it.
> Your rays beamed intensely upon me, beating back my feeble gaze, and I trembled
> with love and dread. I knew myself to be far away from you in a region of
> unlikeness, and I seemed to hear your voice from on high: "I am the food of the
> mature; grow then, and you will eat me. You will not change me into yourself like
> bodily food: you will be changed into me." And I recognized that you have
> chastened man for his sin and caused my soul to dwindle away like a spider's web,
> and I said, "Is truth then a nothing, simply because it is not spread out through space
> either finite or infinite?" Then from afar you cried to me, "By no means, for *I am
> who am*." I heard it as one hears a word in the heart, and no possibility of doubt
> remained to me; I could more easily have doubted that I was alive than that truth
> exists, truth that is seen and understood through the things that are made.[23]

In this passage Augustine expressed with full assurance that the experience of his inner

man, that is the soul, discovered the God of the Scripture. He could identify it as he heard

that the voice came down from above: "I am who I am (*ego sum qui sum*)" (Exod 3:14).

Augustine could recognize that these words designate the one who called Moses in the

burning bush. The one who sent the voice to him is the same who sent Moses to the

children of Israel.[24] In this narrative of his spiritual experience of God, he attested that it

was not vague and fragmentary but that he is clearly called by the personal being that

Christians believe. The God of the Scripture unveiled his being to him. Augustine attested

that he could never doubt the factuality of what he experienced. Further, he asserted that

his spiritual experience of God was certain even more than any of what he experienced in

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[22] *Conf.* 7.10.16 (Boulding, 128).

[23] *Conf.* 7.10.16 (Boulding, 127–28).

[24] *Fid. symb.* 4.6. Cf. Gen 3:14.

the physical world. Through that spiritual experience he could settle his philosophical pursuit for a truth that agonized him so far.

Augustine realized that the God of the Scripture led him to find himself, who is transcendent, through his mind by shedding unrealistic light on his soul and sending the voice from the above.[25] His soul could gaze at the light and hear the voice in the mind. He did not read about such an experience of transcendental hearing from Plotinus's *Enneads*.[26] The experience of God left so deep a stigma in his soul that he could not doubt that he experienced the existence of God. The voice identifying itself as sent from God of the Scripture called him to settle his philosophical journey seeking truth in his spiritual community.

So far, in the journey of witnessing the transcendent God, the books of the Platonists motivated him to initiate the internal experience. However, Augustine soon realized that God led him to be motivated by the Platonist books to meet and show himself to his own soul within the inner place. Admittedly, he discovered God of the Scripture through these books. Thus, he needed to reinterpret his reading of Platonist books as the initiation of his conversion to Christianity by God's providence. To summarize, the light and voice from the God of Moses opened his eyes to perceive the fact that God's providential work drew his attention to Platonist books only to find himself.

[25] Some scholars wanted to call Augustine's experience of the inner vision as Plotinian ecstasy. However, besides mentioning Platonic books briefly, he kept focusing on explaining relations of conceptual elements in the Christian faith such as God of Scripture, Christ, sin, and the problem of evil. Paul Z. Kuntz also suggested that Augustine did not try to connect his experience with Plotinus's mystical ecstasy and the theme of the unification of the soul into the Fatherland. Kuntz stated, "It is significant that Augustine does not mention the ecstacy of Plotinus, even the return to the beloved Fatherland, and mystical unification. The closest parallel by which to understand this exceptionally laconic confession, most extraordinary in loquacious Augustine, is not to the Hellenic mystical experience but to the Hebraic experience of prophetic revelation." Paul G. Kuntz, "St. Augustine's Quest for Truth: The Adequacy of a Christian Philosophy," *Augustinian Studies* 13 (1982): 15.

[26] Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion*, 215–16. Dobell pointed out that Augustine's experience of hearing God's voice could not be sought in Platonist books that he read while emphasizing the resemblance of his experience of vision with that of their works.

Augustine needed to mention the Platonist books for two reasons. First, he wanted to convince his readers that God providentially led him to discover himself in the mind, even when he was not a Christian, and even through non-Christian books. Through Platonist books, God led his soul to find the reality of his existence, God of the Scripture, not One or Demiurge of the Platonists, or gods of other religions. Second, this fact implied that Augustine began a new journey of seeking a way to approach God who showed and told him to his mind. Especially the latter came to be more certain when he realized his soul does not have the ability to ascend to it, although he would already know the concept of the soul's ascension from reading Platonist books. Therefore, the realization of the soul's incapability of ascension contradicted the knowledge he attained from reading the Platonist books.

Christ, the mediator of the soul's ascension. Although he experienced the God of the Old Testament, Augustine did not hastily proclaim that he converted to Christianity at this moment. Simply having an experience of God's existence did not mean for him that he must become a Christian. Instead, he realized that his soul needed a Mediator to guide himself to God. The inner man still struggled to find a way to enjoy (*ad fruendum*) God and it continued until he came to find the Mediator Christ Jesus in the end. He said,

> Accordingly I looked for a way to gain the strength I needed to enjoy you, but I did not find it until I embraced the mediator between God and humankind, the man Christ Jesus, who also is God, supreme over all things and blessed for ever. Not yet had I embraced him, though he called out, proclaiming, *I am the Way and the Truth and the Life*, nor had I known him as the food which, though I was not yet strong enough to eat it, he had mingled with our flesh; for the Word became flesh so that your Wisdom, through whom you created all things, might become for us the milk adapted to our infancy. Not yet was I humble enough to grasp the humble Jesus as my God, nor did I know what his weakness had to teach. Your Word, the eternal Truth who towers above the higher spheres of your creation, raises up to himself those creatures who bow before him; but in these lower regions he has built himself a humble dwelling from our clay, and used it to cast down from their pretentious selves those who do not bow before him, and make a bridge to bring them to himself. He heals their swollen pride and nourishes their love, that they may not wander even further away through self-confidence, but rather weaken as they see before their feet

the Godhead grown weak by sharing our garments of skin, and wearily fling themselves down upon him, so that he may arise and lift them up.[27]

In this passage, Augustine recalled his experience of God before the baptism. He stated why he felt weak when he saw the light above, with the addition of a theological explanation. Although he observed the light and heard his voice, he did not yet know how to go up there to be with him. He needed a mediator who could connect him to ascent to the truth. At this time, he said he did not know that one must abandon the life swollen by pride and subordinate oneself to the Christ who lowered himself as much as the highest lowered himself to the place where clays are, by which Christ himself created humans. Thus, he realized he could not accept Christ because he was not humble enough to do it. Eagerly desiring to find a way to the Lord, in the end, he converted to Christianity when he heard another voice in the garden of Milan to pick up and read the Scripture.

When he picked up the Scripture and read Romans 13:13–14 (these are verses he immediately found as he opened it), he felt that God called him to become a Christian for a new spiritual journey leading to himself. It said, "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh or the gratification of your desires" (*induite dominum Iesum Christum et carnis providentiam ne feceritis in concupiscentiis*).[28] In *De Baptismo*, he remarked that Paul the apostle elaborated how to put on Christ in Galatians 3:27: "Many of you as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ."[29] Augustine thought that Paul said "put on Christ" to demand one to become a temple of God through baptism.[30] One becomes a member of the church by being baptized in front of the community, but baptism itself does not make an avaricious person a temple of God.

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[27] *Conf.* 7.18.24 (Boulding, 132).

[28] *Conf.* 8.12.29 (Boulding, 207).

[29] *Bapt.* 5.24.34 (Tilley and Ramsey, 525).

[30] *Bapt.* 4.4.6.

In addition, the one who is baptized must abandon desires for earthly things to put on Christ. This is because of avarice "which is the service of idols (Col 3:5)."[31] These passages demanded him to abandon his previous life pursuing earthly desire and live a sanctifying life. He found later that these passages emphasized sanctifying life over receiving baptism, though implied both. If one who is baptized lives an avaricious life, then one cannot become a temple of God.[32] Thus, one can respond to the call to "put on Christ" with life following Christ and his teachings, that is sanctifying life. Augustine found not only God of the Scripture but also discovered the way to reach it. The command of the Scripture to put on the Lord Jesus meant for him to live after Christ within his spiritual community. The soul living in accordance with Jesus's teaching could walk through the way of Christ to the Lord he observed through the mind.

Although the way of Christ made a great difference between the teachings of Christianity and the Neoplatonists, the latter greatly resembled the former in understanding God and Son to which the soul desires to ascend. The significant similarities with crucial differences could potentially help those who seek the truth. Contemporary Christians recognized how much Neoplatonic ideas resembled and differed from Christianity. Augustine stated,

> When I mentioned that I had read certain Platonist books, translated into Latin by Victorinus, who had formerly been a rhetorician in Rome but had, as I had heard, died a Christian, Simplicianus told me how fortunate I was not to have stumbled on the writings of other philosophers, works full of fallacies and dishonesty that smacked of the principles of this world, whereas those Platonist writings conveyed in every possible way, albeit indirectly, the truth of God and his Word.[33]

In this passage Augustine reminisced when he met the Christian intellect, Simplicianus. Like Augustine, he also thought that Neoplatonist books came closer to the Christian faith compared to other philosophical works. Other philosophies, according to Simplicianus,

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[31] *Bapt.* 4.4.6 (Tilley and Ramsey, 469). Cf. Eph 5:5.

[32] *Bapt.* 4.4.6 (Tilley and Ramsey, 469).

[33] *Conf.* 8.2.3 (Boulding, 138–39).

attracted readers to seize their interests in worldly things such as principles of this world. On the other hand, Neoplatonists held the least view comparable to God and his Word to which the Christian faith is devoted. Their books contained helpful clues to find the truthfulness of Christian teaching over other philosophical writings. For these reasons, Augustine and his friend regarded the books of Neoplatonists as superior to other philosophies. They recognized the superiority of these books by their interest in divine beings rather than the perfection of logic or fame of Neoplatonists. As a Christian who holds the criteria of the truth, that is the Scripture, Augustine and other Christian intellectuals saw the philosophy of contemporary Platonists as something that came closer to Christian teaching than others.

Nevertheless, theories of the soul's ascension that Augustine read in Neoplatonist books came to be plain as lacking an effective way to ascend. Augustine identified Christianity as the completion of the soul's desire for ascension when he perceived Christ as the Mediator between God and human beings. On the other hand, from the early time of his conversion to the late time that he wrote *De Civitate Dei*, he thought that the Neoplatonists did not attain the knowledge of the soul's ultimate deliverance from the body to ascent. He stated,

> When, near the end of the first book of *On the Return of the Soul*, Porphyry says that no view containing a universal way of the soul's liberation has as yet been received into any specific philosophical school—not from any supremely true philosophy, not from the morals and practice of the Indians, not from the initiations of the Chaldeans, nor from any other way—and that no such way has as yet come to his knowledge from his historical inquiries, he acknowledges beyond any doubt that there is such a way, but it has not yet come to his knowledge. Nothing that he had learned from all his diligent study, nothing that he seemed—if not to himself, at least to others—to know and to comprehend, was enough to satisfy him. For he felt that there was still a need for some preeminent authority that it would be right to follow in a matter of this import. And when he says that no school containing a universal way of the soul's liberation had as yet come to his knowledge, not even from the truest philosophy, he makes it quite clear, in my view, that the philosophy he himself followed either is not the truest or does not contain such a way.[34]

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[34] *Civ.* 10.32 (Babcock I/6, 344).

Here, he presented *On the Return of the Soul* written by Porphyry, a student of Plotinus. Porphyry concluded that philosophers had not yet found the universal way of the soul's ascension out of the body. He could not find the agreeable point for the soul's ascension from many sources written by intellects from various cultures, nevertheless, he believed there is a universal way for it. After pointing out the inconsistency among Neoplatonists' theories, Augustine drew a sympathetic conclusion about Porphyry. That is, the Neoplatonist acknowledged that no authoritative teaching about the soul's liberation from the body has been found yet, among ancient thinkers. This fact meant to Augustine that none of these ideas about the soul's liberation for ascension could compete with Christianity.

He discovered such differences from similarities, and it allowed him to recognize the philosophical superiority of Christian teaching even before his conversion, as said above. The philosophical superiority of Christian teachings comes with the doctrine of the incarnation. It manifested the actualized universal way of the soul's ascension, as will be seen in the next section. He described in *Confessiones*,

> In them I read (not that the same words were used, but precisely the same doctrine was taught, buttressed by many and various argument) that *in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; he was God. He was with God in the beginning. Everything was made through him; nothing came to be without him. Wat was made is alive with his life, and that life was the light of humankind. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to master it*; and that the human soul, even though it bears *testimony about the Light*, is not itself the Light, but that God, the Word, is *the true Light, which illumines every human person who comes into this world*; and that he was in this world, *a world made by him, but the world did not know him.* But that *he came to his own home, and his own people did not receive him; but to those who did receive him he gave power to become children of God: to those, that is, who believe in his name*—none of this did I read there.[35]

He remarked in this passage that he identified, from Platonist books, some overlapping contents with that of the Gospel of John. He brought the entire passage of John 1:1–5 and 1:9–10 to contend that the Neoplatonists taught the frameworks, by different words though, that John the apostle provided. Neoplatonist philosophy of the Godhead, as the creator of

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[35] *Conf.* 7.9.13 (Boulding, 125).

the world and source of life, resembled that of John the apostle's elaboration on the work of the second Godhead in the creation. But they did not teach what it means to people living in the world. Therefore, they did not furnish the way through which people can return to God. John declared the way "to become children of God" (John 1:12). Those who believe in Christ the incarnated Word of God will receive the power to become children of God, according to the Scripture. This doctrine of Incarnation might look satisfying to the young convert who was seeking a way to reach the true light, instead of keep learning the speculative description about the relation of hypostases.

Although it is difficult to locate a specific place in *Enneads* where Augustine had in mind, it is obvious that he maintained Neoplatonists offered a framework that resembled the witness of John the apostle, not vice versa. This perspective gives some points to think about his consistent stick to the superiority of the Scripture over *Enneads*. First, he presented John 1 as the original form of the framework that Neoplatonists fabricated in a similar shape. Modern scholars focused on illuminating his intention of mentioning Neoplatonic doctrines, rather than his bringing out the passage of John 1 as it is. However, one needs to give attention to the fact that Plotinus lived in the time when he could read the Gospel of John if he wanted to, but the author of John could not know of Plotinus's *Enneads*. Based on the chronological order of the two documents, he could not infer any possibility that the author John could refer to *Enneads*. Accordingly, Augustine's take of Platonist books as resembling the Gospel of John gives full assurance to readers who are acquainted with the timely order of these documents. No reader would doubt that the older resource, that is the Gospel of John, possessed the original form of the structure if one of them copied the other. Consequentially, if he must weigh one of the two to be the more credible truth, he could not consider Platonist books produced doctrines themselves without the help of Scripture.

Second, he might think that the doctrines of Neoplatonists are practically useless because he could not approach God whom he observed from afar. He seemed not to have

a so-called Neoplatonic, ecstatic experience of uniting with One of Plato. If he had had it, he would have no reason to convert to Christianity. However, he witnessed that he saw God of the Bible and was disappointed by the situation that he could not reach it, which he has been seeking throughout his life. This Christian intellectual knew Neoplatonic doctrines such as ranks of hypostases and the soul's ascension to it through contemplation. Though, what he felt through his experience of God was his inability to reach it in any way. If he converted to Neoplatonism first, so that he had a conviction about the soul's ascension by contemplation and the mechanism dragging it to ascend apart from the body, he would not worry about "the way" to ascend. Contrarily, he maintained that he needed a way to lead to God. His knowledge of Neoplatonic philosophy had nothing to do with such a primary problem that his soul encountered.

When Augustine realized the necessity of a Mediator for ascension, he discovered, by God's grace, the incarnation of the Word. The doctrine of the incarnation could complete the puzzle that philosophers and Augustine himself were missing. Neoplatonist books did not teach the incarnation of the Word, while they desired to find it. Instead, the Christian faith taught the soul's ascension as its actualized journey toward the preparatory rest before the union with the resurrected body within that doctrine. The doctrine of incarnation that he accepted, in the end, imposed him to reestablish his philosophical understanding of the soul's life according to Scripture.

Some elaboration of the soul's contemplative ascension appeared in his autobiographical description about his mother, Monica. In *Confessiones* IX, he delineated,

> And step by step traversed all bodily creatures and heaven itself, whence sun and moon and stars shed their light upon the earth. Higher still we mounted by inward thought and wondering discourse on your works, and we arrived at the summit of our own mind; and this too we transcended, to touch that land of never-failing plenty where you pasture Israel for ever with the food of truth. Life there is the Wisdom through whom all these things are made, and all others that have been or ever will be; but Wisdom herself is not made: she is as she always has been and will be for ever. Rather should we say that in her there is no "has been" or "will be," but only being, for she is eternal, but past and future do not belong to eternity. And as we talked and panted for it, we just touched the edge of it by the utmost leap of our hearts; then, sighing and unsatisfied, we left the first-fruits of our spirit captive there, and returned to the noise of articulate speech, where a word has beginning and end.

How different from your Word, our Lord, who abides in himself, and grows not old, but renews all things.[36]

In this passage he described the spiritual experience of the soul's ascension. He narrated the transcendental going-up of the souls beyond the visible heaven to the heaven of heavens. The souls traveled in mind up to the land where God pastures his people, Israel. The souls saw Wisdom who created the world in the beginning. Wisdom did not belong to the tenses of time, past or future, because she is an eternal being. After observing the eternal land, the souls come back to the visible world.

The narration above presented three features, at least. First, the souls traversed across the cosmos that he comprehended through the Scripture. They ascended to the visible heaven, where planets and stars abide, then, to the heaven of heavens which is the spiritual heaven. He mentioned it as an arrival at the summit of their mind. Then they went beyond it to the transcendent land where the Wisdom, that is the creator, and her people rest. This journey of the souls did not ascend to the cosmos that Plato and Plotinus broke down to several ranks of hypostases even beyond the intellectual heaven. They did not experience the union with the higher soul. They did not report that they saw souls wandering until the next transmigration for purification or intelligibles in the spiritual heaven, though these must be found there in Plotinus's system of the cosmos. Also, they did not face Good or Beauty in the transcendental realm, while these are the destination of the Neoplatonic ascension of the soul. Instead, this narrative represented Augustine's Christian version of contemplation.[37]

Second, he did not mention that he practiced a unique method of contemplation learned from a specific group. As seen in previous chapters, Augustine did not need to invent everything to enjoy religious life. He was not thrown into the vacuum when he converted to Christianity. Although levels of the souls' ascension could resemble Plotinus's levels of knowledge, this similarity does not prove by logic that Augustine borrowed it and

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[36] *Conf.* 9.10.24 (Boulding, 227–28).

[37] Kenney, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 156.

fabricated his experience to harmonize with it. Many religions, both ancient and modern, have taken contemplation as a spiritual practice. Particularly, Eastern Orthodox still teach levels of soul and contemplation and Western Catholics also practice contemplation. Christians did not regard it weird to pursue spiritual experience in prayer or contemplation.

Moreover, for he does not refer to a specific group or person, it seems best to postpone the final word on whether he thought the practice of contemplation exclusively belonged to Platonists, or it was widely utilized by various groups at his time. Plotinus felt an intimacy with Aristotle's contemplation. R. T. Wallis argued that Plotinus grounded his thought of contemplation with discursive reasoning on Aristotle's doctrine of contemplation of a mental image.[38] Philosophers developed their way of contemplation upon the interaction with each other's thoughts on it. These ancient philosophers— including Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus—practiced contemplation within their own philosophical system.[39] The practice of contemplation itself could not become a piece of critical evidence proving the influence of philosophy on another. This dissertation cannot furnish deeper research on the historical background of practicing contemplation in philosophies and religions because of the limited scope of the subject, but regardless of the source from which Augustine acquired the contemplation practice, his soul traversed the cosmos that God created in Genesis.

Third, the spiritual journey of souls in Ostia proceeded differently compared to the failure of the soul to ascend in *Confessiones* VII. John Peter Kenney remarked the difference,

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[38] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 52, 80; H. J. Blumenthal, "Plotinus' Psychology: Aristotle in the Service of Platonism," in *Soul and Intellect: Studies in Plotinus and Later Neoplatonism* (Hampshire, England: Variorum, 1993), 342; Jacqueline Feke and Alexander Johns, "Ptolemy," in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010), 1:208–9. Ptolemy, an ancient astronomer, also emphasized contemplation of objects in the sky giving the philosopher a divine exemplar.

[39] Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, 272. Copleston remarked on the difference between the contemplation of Plato and Aristotle. Each of their contemplation is submerged in each of their own philosophical systems.

That is the key point that surfaced in the ascent narratives of *Confessions* VII: his soul was forced to face its own spiritual state in the act of contemplation itself. In that encounter with the light of truth, the soul was repelled back down into its fallen state. While this occurred to Augustine in the ascents of Book VII, it did not in the joint ascension of Ostia. The difference was the soul's purification through baptism.[40]

In this passage Kenney comparatively figured out the historical, ontological difference of the soul's state between *Confessiones* Book VII and IX. Before his conversion in Book VII, Augustine's soul could not reach the true light. The soul failed to ascend to it. But after conversion in Book IX, his soul could arrive at the transcendent land and enjoy it along with the other soul. Kenney inclusively stated the biggest difference was the soul cleansed by baptism. Augustine became a Christian by putting on Christ, through baptism, abandoning earthly desire, and living after Christ within his spiritual community, as previously discussed. He attested his soul, that was purified by Christ, could experience spiritual ascension that he could not acquire before conversion to Christianity.

Conversion to Christianity required him to take Christian teachings about the creation, life, and end of the soul in its entirety. Augustine might have felt the need to start a new journey studying the soul's life to ascent, based on the Christian faith. He did not consider Christ, the Mediator, as a conceptual addition to his previously acquired philosophical knowledge about the world and life in it. The books of Christians taught the different, absolute truth about the soul, completely distinguished from other philosophies. Distinctly, the Christian faith taught him that the human soul has an unsurmountable distance from God without the mediator—that is the problem of sin.

Soul's ascension after body's death. From the early time of his conversion, Augustine initiated to compose the concept of the soul's ascension based on the Christian faith. In *Soliloquies,* He explained the Scripture's teaching of faith, hope, and charity (*fides, spes et charitas*; 1 Cor 13:13) in relation to the soul. Here, he felt it necessity to explain what the human soul could possess when the soul will be collected in God, after death,

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[40] Kenney, *Contemplation and Classical Christianity*, 157.

but the charity will remain where it is to be held in that place (*sed cum post hanc vitam tota se in Deum collegerit, charitas restat qua ibi teneatur*). Such understanding of the relation between the soul and charity consistently appeared in the later works. For example, in *De Doctrina Christiana*, he said, "When anyone attains to the things of eternity, while the first two fade away, charity will abide, more vigorous and certain than ever" (*cum quisque ad aeterna peruenerit, duobus istis decendentibus caritas auctior et certior permanebit*), according to the Christian teaching.[41] He meant that the soul will not lose the charity even in the place where it will live in eternity. He tried to figure out the soul's life in eternity in parallel with the Scripture's teaching of charity. In his later works—especially in *De Genesi ad Litteram*, *Confessiones*, *De Civitate Dei*, and *De Trinitate*—Augustine attempted to visualize the image of the soul's transition to the eternal world as he found it certain from his reading of the Scripture, with some employment of philosophical words.

In *De Genesi ad Litteram*, he observed that the Scripture illustrates the transition of the soul after death in the image of returning to God. The soul's return affirmed the doctrine of creation out of nothing. Augustine elaborated,

> As for what is written in Ecclesiastes: . . . *and the dust is turned into the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it* (Sir 12:7); it does not give its vote to either opinion against the other, but stays firmly in the middle between them. When these, you see, on this side say that this proves the soul is given by God, not derived from parents, because once the dust is turned into its earth (that means the flesh, which was made from dust), "the spirit returns to God who gave it"; the others on that side answer: "Certainly, that is so; the spirit, you see, returns to God who gave it to the first man when he puffed into his face, once the dust, that is the human body, has been turned into the earth it was originally made from. There is no question, after all, of the spirit returning to the parents, although it is created from there, out of that one spirit given to the first man, just as the flesh itself after death does not return to the parents, from whom we all agree it was certainly propagated. So then, in the same way as the flesh does not return to the human beings from whom it was created, but to the earth from which it was formed for the first man, the spirit also does not return to the human beings from whom it was transfused, but to God by whom it was given to that first flesh.[42]

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41 *Doctr. Chr.* 1.39.43 (Hill I/11, 130).

42 *Gen. litt.* 10.9.15 (Hill I/13, 406).

In this passage he antithetically framed the soul's return to run parallel with the creation narrative in which God created it to exist in the flesh. As said in Ecclesiastes12:7, the soul will "return to those who created it" (*ad Deum qui dedit eum*), while the body goes back to the earth because it was made from dust.[43] He viewed that this passage affirms the nature of the creation in Genesis. The soul will go back to the creator by whom it was created in Genesis. He read the creation narrative that God gave the soul to the first men, not that it was derived from parents. Contrastingly, the body returns to the dust from which God created it. By the order of the creation, the flesh goes back to the earth after death, which is the separation of the soul from the body. Although God created souls of descendants in relation to that of parents, those souls return to their creator, not back to human beings. But the flesh returns to the earth by which it was created; then, after death, it awaits the time of resurrection there. Each element, the soul and flesh, goes back to the place where Scripture ordained it. In this illustration, he showed that his reasoning about the returns of the soul and body fully subordinated to the Christian doctrine of the creation of God *ex nihilo*.

However, Augustine did not mean that all souls can go back to the bosom of God. The doctrine of salvation taught the different destinations of souls. He stated,

> This evidence, for sure, is a sufficient reminder to us that it was out of nothing that God made the soul which he gave to the first man, not out of some creature already made, like the body out of earth; and that is why when it goes back it has nowhere to go back to except the author who gave it, not to any creature it was made out of, like the body to earth. There is, after all, no creature it was made out of, because it was made out of nothing. And thus the one that goes back to its maker, by whom it was made out of nothing. They do not all go back, you see, since there are those of whom it is written: *a spirit walking about and not returning* (Ps 78:39). [44]

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[43] Augustine was referring to Eccl 12:7 when he said "*Illud etiam quod apud Ecclesiasten scriptum est, et convertatur pulvis in terram, sicut fuit, et spiritus revertatur ad Deum qui dedit eum*" (*Gen. litt.* 10.9.15). Augustine understood the word *spiritus* as meaning to signify the soul. He observed that the soul is created when God fashioned the first human body by the puff of life, and it became a live soul, in Gen 2:7. In his understanding of the creation, God created the soul with spiritual material that is created out of nothing by order. See *Gen. litt.* 7.1.1–9.13; 10.8.13, 14.

[44] *Gen. litt.* 10.9.16 (Hill I/13, 407).

In this passage he perceived the paths of souls left their bodies, in observance of the creation out of nothing. Souls go back to their creator by whom they came to exist. Augustine confirmed again that the doctrine of creation demands human souls to go back to the creator. The soul returns to the creator, but not to the place where Intellects exist, which Neoplatonists imagined. On the other hand, the Scripture manifested that not all human souls can go back to God. Some souls cannot arrive at the creator after death for some reason, as said, "A spirit walking about and not returning" (*spiritus ambulans, et non revertens*). These souls would not be able to return to him, although they are creations of God.

He employed the theme of the soul's return to the creator in the exclusive sense for those who renewed his mind toward him. He comprehended that the soul only of those who renovated inwardly—that was to "*strip off the old man* (Col 3:9)" (*exuunt se veterem hominem)*—could return to God.[45] When Augustine read 1 Corinthians 3:9, he perceived that some people living after earthly things (*secundum terrenum hominem viventium*) cannot receive life in heaven. They must abandon the sinful life desiring terrestrial things. He remarked these people will ascend to the heaven of heaven. They will confess as Paul the apostle said, "I am alive though, now not I, but it is Christ alive in me" (*vivo autem iam non ego, vivit autem in me Christus*), "when they have received the Spirit of God" (*accepto autem Spiritu Dei*).[46] He read Galatians 2:20 to mean that the souls of those who were transformed by the Holy Spirit only would return to the creator by ascension.

In *Confessiones*, Augustine drew the soul's return to God through the image of Christ's coming down and going up for his people. The typical model for ascension took place when Christ went upward after the resurrection to the place, that is hidden, to save people from death. Augustine said,

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[45] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.14 (Hill I/13, 406).

[46] *Gen. litt.* 10.8.14 (Hill I/13, 406).

He who is our very life came down and took our death upon himself. He slew our death by his abundant life and summoned us in a voice of thunder to return to him in his hidden place, that place from which he set out to come to us when first he entered the Virgin's womb. There a human creature, mortal flesh, was wedded to him that it might not remain mortal for ever; and from there he came forth like a bridegroom from his nuptial chamber, leaping with joy like a giant to run his course. Impatient of delay he ran, shouting by his words, his deeds, his death and his life, his descent to hell and his ascension to heaven, shouting his demand that we return to him. Then he withdrew from our sigh, so that we might return to our own hearts and find him there.[47]

In this passage he explained that the Christian teaching delivers the incarnation of God in the language of coming down (*occidere*) and his return to the original place in the language of ascension (*ascendere*). In Christ's coming down and ascending to the hidden place, God encapsulated the message summoning (*clamans*) his people to return to their own hearts and finding him. For this, Scripture declared that Christ came down to the world first into the Virgin's womb (*processit ad nos*, *in ipsum primum virginalem uterum*) and could not be patient with "shouting by his words, his deeds, his death and his life, his descent to hell and his ascension to heaven, shouting his demand that we return to him" (*clamans dictis, factis, morte*, *vita*, *descensus*, *ascensu*, *clamans ut redeamus ad eum*). This image of descension and ascension signifies God becoming a visible one from an invisible being; that is, becoming a human person in mortal flesh (*caro mortalis*) instead of physically moving downward from the visible heaven to the earth. The ascension of the resurrected Christ attested to the meaning of return as going back to the original place that is hidden. He went back to the hidden place where humans cannot see with physical eyes anymore. But now their soul can return to their own heart and find him there (*redeamus ad cor et inveniamus eum*). For Augustine, the doctrine of the incarnation, visualized in terms of descension and ascension, embodies the Christian message for humans to return to Christ who ascended to the hidden place to be found in the heart.

In *Doctrina Christiana* he explained the image of ascension within the relation between the human soul and sins. The ascension of Christ embodied the salvific vision for

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[47] *Conf*. 4.12.19 (Boulding, 104).

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believers' ascension because "the Word of God . . . became flesh, in order to dwell amongst us" (*verbum dei . . . caro tamen factum est, ut habitaret in nobis*).[48] He identified this passage in *Confessiones* VII as manifestly distinguishing the Christian faith from Neoplatonic philosophy. This passage not only taught the doctrine of Incarnation but also exposed the principal event demonstrating the doctrine of salvation. The incarnation took place in the world to restore sinners to complete its spiritual health.[49] The Wisdom of God came down and became a spiritual physician for sinners. By taking on a human being, the Wisdom recovered the true wisdom of humility for those who were deceived by the fallen wisdom of the serpent that is pride. Christ the incarnated Wisdom showed the way of preparing for ascension through his life of humility and suffering for those who did not yet believe in him.[50] Though not all people witnessed the salvific vision in Christ, as said in John 1:1, "The world did not know him" (*mundus eam non cognouit*). Only believers accepted the true hope of ascension shown by Christ. Consequently, the hope for the soul's ascension necessarily correlates with a group of believers.

The exclusive meaning of believers' ascension implied the particular thought of the spiritual community—that is the doctrine of the church. Augustine stated,

> These then were the keys that he gave to his Church, so that whatever it loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven, and whatever it bound on earth would be bound in heaven; which means that any who did not believe they were forgiven their sins in the Church would not be forgiven them, while those who did so believe and by amending their lives turned away from their sins, finding themselves in the bosom of the Church, would be healed by that very faith and amendment. Those on the other hand, who do not believe their sins can be forgiven them, become even worse through despair, as though nothing better remains for them than to be evil, seeing that they have no trust in the fruits of their conversion. . . . We are to believe and hope that the body, after this death which we all owe to the chains of sin, is going to be changed for the better at the time of the resurrection. Thus it will not be flesh and blood taking possession of the kingdom of God, which cannot be; but *this perishable thing will put on imperishability, and this mortal thing will put on immortality* (1 Cor

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[48] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.13 (Hill I/11, 115).

[49] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.14.13.

[50] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.15.14.

15:50, 53), and will cause the spirit no trouble, because it will not experience any need, but will be quickened in perfect peace by a perfect and blissful soul.[51]

Augustine distinguished the destinations of the souls of believers and unbelievers. The ascension of believers' souls takes place depending on the church. The church possesses the keys (*claues*) that Christ gave for the foundation of the forgiveness of sinners. One must turn away from sin and discover his identity in the community of faith. By doing so, one can maintain hope for the ascension to the kingdom of God (*regnum caelorum*) by turning away from sins, which are forgiven, by Christ, in the bosom of the vhurch (*in eiusdem ecclesiae gremio*). Those who do not believe, and stay in a sinful life, cannot hope for the kingdom of God. The souls of believers will take possession in the kingdom of God, which is given to souls when they become perfect and blissful by reunion with resurrected bodies. In the church, believers find "the pavement under our feet along which we could return home" (*qui se ipsum nobis, qua rediremus, substernere voluit*)[52] Souls in the Christian faith, and with the proper life, can discover the way of ascension laid before them. But their bodies must await resurrection through which "*this perishable thing will put on imperishability, and this mortal thing will put on immortality*" (*corruptibile hoc induat incorruptionem et mortale hoc induat immortalitatem*). Souls outside of the faith will fall "into a more grievous death" (*in graviorem mortem*) than the body.[53] Augustine interweaved the soul's ascension within the Christian belief of sin and salvation. The souls of believers take part in the kingdom of God, while the souls of unbelievers fall into death. The ascension could not happen to every soul by nature as Neoplatonist thought.

So far, the description of believers' ascension can correspond to what he comprehended when he read Romans 13:14, commanding to put on Christ, in *Confessiones* VII. After he converted to Christianity in the garden of Milan, his soul initiated the sanctifying life being transformed by the Holy Spirit since his deliverance of baptism. His

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[51] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.18.17–18 (Hill I/11, 117–18).

[52] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.17.16 (Hill I/11, 117).

[53] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.20.19 (Hill I/11, 117).

spiritual experience at Ostia, of traversing to the heaven of heaven, might present that his soul is enabled to ascend by the Holy Spirit, contrary to failing to reach God before conversion. The factuality of this ascension narrative implies that he not only intellectually accepted Christianity but also endeavored to put on Christ—through baptism and a sanctifying life following Christ, as a temple of God—to keep restoring his soul from evil desire for bodily things. He perceived a life seeking heavenly things as another aspect of the soul's ascension.

Ascension as Christian life. Augustine found that the ascension of the Christian faith contains another aspect of a faithful life. That is, Christians seek the internal path of spiritual ascension through life seeking spiritual values. Augustine discovered the ascension as a spiritual life from Scripture.

Christians who are poured with the Spirit from above initiated the new path of life going upward. Augustine did not doubt that the believers' life was an upward journey, not downward, or sideward. He said,

> I think, in your Gift we find rest, and there we enjoy you. Our true place is where we find rest. We are borne toward it by love, and it is your good Spirit who lifts up our sunken nature from the gates of death. In goodness of will is our peace. . . . Now, my weight is my love, and wherever I am carried, it is this weight that carries me. Your Gift sets us afire and we are borne upward; we catch his flame and up we go. In our hearts we climb those upward paths, singing the songs of ascent. By your fire, your beneficent fire, are we enflamed, because we are making our way up to *the peace of Jerusalem*. For *I rejoiced when I was told, We are going to the Lord's house*. There shall a good will find us a place, that we may have no other desire but to abide there for ever.[54]

In this passage Augustine defined the ascension as the faithful life of the inner person seeking the pathway leading to "*the peace of Jerusalem*" (*pacem Hierusalem*). He brought the theme of ascension to Jerusalem from the songs of ascent in Psalms, especially Psalm 122. The Psalmist was glad (*laetatus sum*) when he was said to go up to the Lord's house (*domum Domini*). Augustine read this as a request for his soul to climb a spiritual, inward

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[54] *Conf.* 13.9.10 (Boulding, 348).

path to the Lord's house. He perceived that the Psalmist alluded to Jerusalem as signifying the place where the soul will abide eternally.

Christians who are poured by the Gifts, that is the Holy Spirit, begin to "climb those upward paths, in their heart, singing the songs of ascent" (*ascendimus ascensions in corde et cantamus canticum graduum).* The Spirit in them ascends by its nature so that it "lifts up our sunken nature" (*exaltat humilitatem nostrum*) along with itself. Christians laud such life of ascension by the Spirit, as the Psalmist sings songs of ascension in Psalm 120–34 by which they will find the eternal abide in "the Lord's house" (*domum domini*). The ascension of Christians' inner lives appeared to be necessary, for the Holy Spirit in them tends to drag them upward, just like oil floats above water and fire flames upward.[55] He learned from the Scripture that the Christian life seeks the upward path toward the heavenly Jerusalem.

Concerning a figurative expression of fire, he thought that the nature of fire helps in understanding how the Holy Spirit engages in the Christian life. He formulated oil as signifying charity poured into believers' minds. In his sermon on the parable of Ten Virgins, the oil that five virgins prepared meant charity.[56] He defined the Holy Spirit as charity.[57] He felt that the Scripture supports the equation of oil and charity. He said,

> That is the more excellent way, namely charity, which is deservedly signified by oil. Oil, after all excels all other fluids. Pour in water, pour oil on top, the oil excels by staying on top. Pour in oil, pour water on top, the oil excels by coming to the top. If you keep the right order, it wins; if you reverse the order, it wins. *Charity never falls away* (1 Cor 13:8).[58]

Here he explained the nature of the oil floating up to the top of other fluids. Such nature makes the oil excel other fluids. Likewise, Paul the apostle remarked that charity exalts the

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[55] *Conf.* 13.9.10.

[56] *Serm.* 93.5.

[57] *Conf.* 13.7.8; *Serm.* 227.

[58] *Serm.* 93.5 (Augustine, *Sermons 51–94 on the New Testament*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill, Works of Saint Augustine [Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2009], 471).

value of one's behavior, like speaking in tongues in this case, because of its nature excelling all other values. Therefore, Paul said, "Charity never falls away." Like the oil never sunken below other fluid, charity floats up and does not fall away in the spiritual order. The charity of the Holy Spirit enkindles Christians' minds with the desire for God and lets them deny loving worldly things.[59] Augustine might have this formulation in mind when he said in *Confessiones*, "By our fire, your beneficent fire, are we enflamed, because we are making our way up to *the peace of Jerusalem.*"[60] Through the rising nature of the oil and flame, he tried to illustrate the Christian life of inwardly ascending toward the heavenly Jerusalem through the practice of charity of God and neighbor.

He elaborated that Christian life means walking on the upward path since the Holy Spirit is poured with charity into the hearts of believers. He connected the creation of the soul with the spiritual matter with the revived charity of Christ in the believers' hearts by pouring the Holy Spirit. He stated,

> Anyone with enough mental agility should here follow your apostle, who tells us that *the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given us*. But then, minded to instruct us on spiritual matters, the apostle points out a way of loftiest excellence, the way of charity; and he kneels before you on our behalf, entreating you to grant us some understanding of the charity of Christ, which is exalted above all knowledge. This is why the Spirit, who is supereminent Love, was said to be poised above the waters at the beginning.[61]

This short passage is involved in many Scripture passages. The book of Genesis exposed the nature of the Holy Spirit as being above, by nature (Gen 1:2). He intended that the Spirit remains above, not in height. Then, humans are fallen by sin. After Christ, the Holy Spirit was poured out, which helped them understand and experience the love of Christ. (John 14:26). The Spirit is the one who can impart a correct understanding of the charity

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[59] *Serm*. 227.

[60] *Conf*. 13.9.10 (Boulding, 348).

[61] *Conf*. 13.7.8 (Boulding, 346).

of Christ. This type of charity is elevated above all other forms of knowledge.[62] Augustine understood that the Holy Spirit, Christ's charity, and loft knowledge all share the same spiritual nature, characterized by being uplifted in the spiritual realm. To restate, the charity that is the Holy Spirit, who abided above the water, remains above all knowledge by nature.

He found that God poured the charity in believers' hearts through the Holy Spirit. He read Romans 5:5 "*caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per spiritum Sanctum qui datus est nobis* (Vulg)" as elaborating spiritual phenomena that took place in one's heart at conversion. The souls received the divine charity of God through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This charity holds the utmost importance in the hierarchy of its creation.

The apostle demanded that believers strive for the excellence of Christ's teachings in their lives. He remembered that the apostle encouraged to strive to know spiritual things (*De spiritalibus autem, fratres, nolo vos ignorare* [1 Cor 12:1]). Scripture taught that followers of Christ must prioritize spiritual values over earthly desires. Paul encouraged them to strive for spiritual excellence in their endeavor to the utmost degree (1 Cor 12:31). He emphasized the pursuit of the highest level of excellence in Christian life. Augustine recognized that these teachings presented a way of practicing spiritual disciplines while maintaining the charity poured out by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 13).

He stressed the importance of charity in Christian living. He emphasized that the practice of charity helps believers prepare their souls for the hope of salvation (as ascension in terms of going up to the bosom of Abraham) by demonstrating their humble faith through pursuing good works. He stated,

> For without love knowledge of the law puffs one up with pride rather than builds one up, as the same apostle says most clearly, *knowledge puffs up, but love builds up* (1 Cor 8:1). This statement is like the one in which he said, *The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life* (2 Cor 3:6b). For *knowledge puffs up* is like *the letter kills,* and *love*

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[62] Boulding refers this theme, the charity exalted above all knowledge, to Eph 3:19. See *Conf*. 13.7.8 (Boulding, 346n).

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builds up is like *the Spirit gives life,* because *the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us* (Rom 5:5). The knowledge of the law, then, makes a proud transgressor, but through the gift of love it is a delight to observe the law.[63]

In this passage he portrayed love given by the Holy Spirit as an antithesis to the knowledge of the law without love. He interpreted 1 Corinthians 8:1 as the apostle expressing knowledge as leading to a proud transgression against the love that the Holy Spirit intended. Second Corinthians 3:6 testified that the Holy Spirit, who pours love into one's mind, gives life. He observed that the phrase "love builds up" seemed to have a similar meaning to the expression "the Spirit gives life." As a result, those who lived their lives with love received eternal life because the life that comes from the Holy Spirit is eternal.

He discovered that pride is the beginning of sin, and the beginning of sin is the gate of hell. By simple syllogism, pride is the gate of hell.[64] In his view, the Scriptures consistently contrast love and knowledge.[65] He exemplified Neoplatonists as a case that their philosophical knowledge led them to fall away from truth. They came closer to the truth than any other philosophers, but their pride prevented them from becoming Christian. He stated,

> Instead, I thought that I should raise just the one issue against those who make it a point of pride to be called or to be Platonists, and whose pride in this name makes them ashamed to be Christians. They fear that sharing a name with the vulgar crowd will cheapen the elite status of those who wear the philosopher's cloak, a status that is the more inflated the more it is restricted to the few.[66]

He argued that Neoplatonists took pride in being called philosophers. They liked to appear in public wearing the philosopher's cloak.[67] These Neoplatonists could not embrace

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[63] *C. du ep. Pelag.* 4.5.11 (Teske I/24, 194).

[64] *Serm.* 346B.3.

[65] Chap. 6 of this diss. will elaborate on Augustine's distinction between the souls of believers who ascend to paradise through the practice of charity, and the souls of unbelievers who descend to hell due to their pride.

[66] *Civ.* 13.16 (Babcock I/7, 81).

[67] A garment was traditionally worn by Greek philosophers to identify themselves as philosophers. Cf. *Civ.* 13.16n (Babcock I/7, 81n26).

Christianity because they thought it was the religion of an unlearned group of people. Those who were proud of their philosophical knowledge forsake eternal life granted only to those who humble themselves and love after Christ.

Pride made Neoplatonists fall away from perceiving the doctrine of Incarnation, which is the actualized descension of God in flesh. Although they came close to Christian truth, their pride blocked them from becoming children of God. This blockage resulted in their failure to recognize Christ's ascension to the heaven of heaven to raise his children to paradise. Before converting to Christianity, Augustine previously read books of these prideful philosophers.[68] These books helped him nurture his inner life, but they did not provide the fundamental teachings he desired to know, a way to ascend to God that is hidden in Christ's coming into the flesh.

He recognized that these two groups—Christians and Neoplatonists—teach irreconcilably different concepts of ascension, one rooted in the Christian life of loving and the other in the pride of being philosophers as an elite class in society. In contrast to Neoplatonists, he converted to Christianity when he accepted the irresistible demand to put on Christ through receiving baptism to participate in the spiritual community, abandoning earthly desires, and living a sanctifying life after Christ. He perceived these spiritual practices of putting on Christ as specifying a person as a Christian. If he admired a Neoplatonist who liked to boast pride in their philosophy at his conversion, then he would not accept any of these practices rooted in the humble obedience of Christ's incarnation.

As a pastor who was obliged to instruct others on ways of putting on Christ, Augustine needed to elaborate on the relationship between charity and love that appeared in the Scriptures. The love of God is the loftiest knowledge given through the Holy Spirit to lift believers' souls up to the place where the love belongs. Explaining this image, Augustine affirmed the authority of the Scripture again:

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[68] *Conf.* 7.9.13.

I thought that I should mention this because some people suppose that cherishing and charity are different from love. They claim that cherishing is to be taken in a good sense and love in a bad sense. It is quite certain, however, that not even the writers of secular literature spoke in this way. And so the philosophers will have to see for themselves whether and on what grounds they can make such a distinction. Their books, at any rate, indicate clearly enough that they place a high value on love when it is concerned with good things and directed toward God himself. But the point I want to make is that the Scriptures of our religion, whose authority we rack above all other writings, make no distinction between love and cherishing or charity. For I have already shown that they speak of love in a good sense.[69]

In this passage he felt the need to clarify how the Scriptures teach about charity (*caritas*) and love (*amor*). He took this task with earnest concern because some Christians misunderstood these concepts and applied them to their lives. Secular authors of literature unhesitatingly differentiated charity and love as one is good and the other is bad. To this point, philosophers praised love over charity because they believed it was directed toward God and good things. But Augustine did not want to borrow other literature to define these spiritual gifts taught by Scripture. In his view, Christianity did not differentiate one from the other because the Scripture, the highest authority of his religion, does not strictly distinguish the two words.

He discovered that the Scripture uses the two terms—charity (*caritas*) and love (*amor*)—interchangeably.[70] He presented the conversation of the resurrected Christ with Peter the apostle to explain the identical nature of charity and love:

In fact, however, it was not three times but only once that the Lord asked, *Do you love me?* The other two times he asked, *Do you cherish me?* From this we can see, then that even when the Lord asked, *Do you cherish me?* What he meant was no different from when he asked, *Do you love me?* Peter, however, did not change the word he used for the same thing but replied the third time, *Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you* (Jn 21:17).[71]

Augustine read that Christ used the two words, charity and love, to ask the same thing to Peter. Christ asked Peter first, two times, "Do you cherish me? (*diligis me?*)" Then, he asked the same question a third time, "Do you love me? (*Amas me?*)" Augustine said that

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[69] *Civ.* 14.7 (Babcock I/7, 106).

[70] *Civ.* 14.7.

[71] *Civ.* 14.7 (Babcock I/7, 106).

Christ used *diligis* to ask if Peter is holding *caritas* of him.[72] The third time Christ said "*amas me (*Do you love me*)*" to ask and Peter answered, "*Domine tu scis quia Amo te* (Lord, you know that I love you)," as he did in the same way for the other two times. Augustine believed that Christ and the apostle affirmed that the two words (charity and love) carry identical meanings in Scripture.

As seen, Augustine took the teachings of Scripture about charity significantly because the way of understanding the words of Scripture profoundly impacts one's decision to live in accordance with the Word of God. Some people claimed that cherish must be used in a good sense and love in a bad sense. On the other hand, secular writers and philosophers seemed to place love over charity. But Augustine loved to subordinate to the teachings of Christ more than philosophers or other intellectuals. He said that Christians ought not vacillate between human thoughts.[73] Instead, Christians must live according to God and not according to man by pursuing good works and abandoning evil behaviors.[74] One following the Scripture loves to seek the good life.

The concept of ascension repeatedly appeared in the later works of Augustine to emphasize its importance in the Christian faith. In *De Civitate Dei*, he mentioned that Scripture implied Christ's ascension in the prophecy of Hanna, Samuel's mother. He said,

> Hannah's prophecy then goes on to speak of the retribution that is to come on the day of judgment: *The Lord has ascended into the heavens and has thundered; he himself shall judge the ends of the earth, for he is just* (1 S 2:10 LXX). Here she has followed precisely the order of the confession of the faithful: the Lord Christ ascended into heaven, and from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead. For, as the Apostle says, *Who ascended but the one who also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who also ascended above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.* (Eph 4:9–10) It was, then, through his own

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[72] While *Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary* presented subtle differences in the usage of *amor* and *diligere*, it defined *diligere* and *caritas* as the same meaning of love in different forms. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *Harpers' Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Harper, 1891), 108.

[73] *Civ.* 14.7.

[74] *Civ.* 14.6 (Babcock I/7, 106).

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clouds that he thundered, which he filled with the Holy Spirit when he had ascended.[75]

In this passage, Augustine understood Hanna's prophecy of the Lord's ascension as a concept penetrating the eschatological vision of the New Testament. This prophecy manifested the important element of the Christian faith—that is the witness that "the Lord Christ ascended into heaven" (*Dominus ascendit… in caelos*). Paul also confirmed the fulfillment of that prophecy in the ascension of Christ.[76] Affirming the ascension, Augustine read that Paul alluded to the descension of Christ. The descension of Christ presupposed in the ascension prophecy in the Old Testament is accomplished in the doctrine of the incarnation. Then, his ascension to heaven reaffirmed the doctrine of punishment, signifying the certainty that Christ will "come to judge the living and dead" (*venturus est ad vivos et mortuos iudicandos*). Through the descension and ascension he comprehended the salvation narrative enclosed in the doctrines of the incarnation and the punishment.

In *De Trinitate*, Augustine employed the language of ascension in the directional sense as well, while he knew that it meant transcendent. He thought it the best method directed by the Scripture because it implemented geographical words to explain that Christ sends the gift of the Holy Spirit from the high where Christ ascended. He stated,

> He mentions many gifts, and then says, *All these does one and the same Spirit achieve, distributing them severally to each as he wills* (1 Cor 12:2). The same word is found in the Letter to the Hebrews, where it is written, *God bearing witness with signs and portents and various mighty deeds and distribution of the Holy Spirit* (Heb 2:4). In this place too, after saying *he ascended on high, he took captivity captive, he gave gifts to men*, he goes on, *But that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the one who ascended above all the heavens that he might fill all things; and he gave some to be apostles, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers* (Eph 4:8–11).[77]

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[75] *Civ.* 17.4 (Babcock I/7, 247).

[76] See more places where Augustine mentioned Christ's ascension in *Civ.* 13.8, 17.4, 18.28, 32, 44, 46, 49, 52, 54, 22.5, 8, 9, 18.

[77] *Trin.* 15.19.34 (Hill I/5, 547).

He found that specific passages of the Scripture support the use of the words ascension and descension to illustrate the doctrine of Incarnation, Resurrection, and ascension back to Father. Representatively, in Ephesians 4:8–11, Paul employed these words to make the effective expression of God's benevolent work for human beings. He implemented the words ascension and descension as the framework through which Christians can comprehend Christ's ministry hosting captives that are themselves. He said that Christ "descended into the lower part of the earth" (*discendit in inferiors pares terrae*) and then, "ascended on high" (*ascendit in altum*) above all heavens (*super omnes caelos*). Augustine with Paul recognized that Christ's ascension presupposed his descension through the virgin birth, that is the doctrine of Incarnation.

Paul the apostle kept using the geographical terms high and low to state Christ's sending of spiritual gifts. The passage says that "he might fill all things" (*adimpleret omnia*) and give many gifts (*multa dona*) from the high. Christ's ascension brought more results than simply unveiling his nature of transcendent. Augustine continued,

> So there you have the reason why talked about gifts. Just as he says elsewhere, *Are all of us apostles, are all prophets?* Etc. (1 Cor 12:9), so here he added for the perfection of the saints toward the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ (Eph 4:2). This is the house which as the psalm declaims is being built after the captivity, because it is from those who have been delivered from the devil by whom they were held captive that the body of Christ is built' and this house is called the Church. And he took this captivity captive by conquering the devil. To stop him from dragging down to eternal punishment with himself those who were going to be members of the holy head, he first bound him with the bonds of justice and then with those of power. So it is the devil who is called the captivity which was taken captive by him who ascended on high and gave gifts to men or received them among men.[78]

In this passage he elaborated the impact of Christ's ascension in relation to the birth of the church and the conquest of the devil. In Ephesians 4:2, Paul mentioned the spiritual gifts to demonstrate that the members of Christ's body, the church, received them. Christ's ascension did not merely expose the transcendental structure of the created world, but also his communication with his people in his spiritual body. Such a description differed from

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[78] *Trin.* 15.19.34 (Hill I/5, 547).

the way of Plotinus, who tried to find formulated mechanisms for the soul's ascension in the system of Plato's cosmos. Augustine believed that the ascension was the catalyst for God's establishment of the spiritual community, church, in the world. He saw this as a result of the ministry of the one who ascended above. The ascended one communicates with his people by bestowing spiritual gifts, liberating them from the devil's captivity, in order to receive them.

Augustine explained Christ's ascension in relation to the problem of sins and the devil. Christ's ascension consequentially brings down eternal punishment to the people who are captivated by the devil. Thus, Peter the apostle preached to people after Christ's ascension, "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37)."[79] Peter demanded people to repent their sins and become members of the spiritual community through baptism. Augustine himself became a member of the community decades ago in Milan. Now, he could explain what it meant for him and other Christians. He could not elaborate on the meaning of the term ascension without the metanarrative of the creation, fall, and salvation held by Christianity. Augustine with Paul and Peter recognized the great impact of Christ's ascension upon human history, the initiation of the eschatological phase.

In this late work, Augustine did not try to replace the word ascension with something fancier or more transcendental. He could choose sophisticated words such as the transition from actuality to potentiality or from being temporal to being atemporal. However, the Scripture expressed it with plain words that Christ descended into the earth and ascended on high. These words still reflect spatial senses, such as the high and the low, and directional indications, such as ascension and descension, while he already acknowledged some of them imply transcendent meanings, according to the Scripture. God the creator who cannot belong to the creation must transcend the languages chosen

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[79] *Trin.* 15.19.34 (Hill I/5, 547).

to reveal the Word of God.[80] God who is invisible "is plainly to be understood through created things" *(a constitutione mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur)*.[81] Likewise, Christians should understand the ascension through language reflecting the world created by God while being cautious not to have materialistic thoughts about it.[82] He kept the conviction that proper employment of words reflecting the world helps Christians hold their faith firmly, until the latest time of his life.

Augustine set the concept of the human soul's ascension in the biblical and theological context. He showed in many places that Scripture teaches the human soul's ascension after death. The soul will ascend following the example of Christ's ascension as the Scriptures teach. The human soul experiences the ascension to the transcendent above, instead of plainly directional above—in accordance with the order God created. However, Augustine was not satisfied with simply clarifying the life of the soul after bodily death. He wanted to expand his understanding of the life of the soul with some philosophical ideas to make it more comprehensible for those familiar with philosophy.

**Augustine's Permanent Crack
from Other Ideas**

As a Christian, Augustine delineated the ascension of the soul in the economy of the spiritual life. He could not understand the concept of the soul's ascension apart from its faithful life in the body. He seemed to think he could properly implement the conception of the ascension for his own theological purpose. He redefined the concept of ascension in terms of the Christian faith, understanding it to mean becoming the people of God through metaphysical, or spiritual transformation of the soul. Augustine's idea of the soul's ascent differed from that of Plotinus in five ways.

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[80] Cf. Augustine's reference to Scriptures in employing the word ascension in *Trin.* 1.4.7, 5.8, 8.15, 18; 4.3.6, 18.24, 8.5, 13.10.14, 14.18, 16.22, 15.19.34, 26.46.

[81] *Conf.* 7.17.23 (Boulding, 131).

[82] *Trin.* 4.3.6. Augustine described that Scripture intended not to be understood by materialistic thought when it says Christ is seated at God's right hand after the ascension.

First, Augustine could identify the light he experienced in *Confessiones* VII as that of the God of Scripture. He felt the necessity of the soul's ascension according to the Christian faith. The light communicated with him. He stated that the light he observed sent voice "*ego sum qui sum.*" Therefore, he remarked that he discovered Christian God by the passive experience of hearing. Such a description of God obstructed him to frame it in the category of the Platonic, or Neoplatonic, experience. Plotinus held his own sense of gods, based on Roman myth, and One, with Plato. In the time of Augustine, intellectuals identified gods according to their belief system.[83] To say, the identity of God disclosed the belief system that Augustine held when he recognized the light. In other words, Augustine could not make a "Neoplatonic ascension" while acknowledging the Christian God to whom the soul desired to approach.

Second, Augustine realized that he could not ascend to God when he discovered him through the light. He recognized in this spiritual experience that the light he observed was placed above not below him. In *Confessiones*, he explained why he needed to find a way to ascend, not descend. This explication based on his personal experience manifested that he did not intend to justify his conception of ascension by philosophy or any kind of mechanism. For example, Neoplatonists believed in the Platonic scheme of the world so that the power of its mechanism lifts the lower soul to ascend to the higher realm by nature. Some souls needed to purify to unite with One though, the universe bears the human souls within a set of order dragging them to the higher realm. Contrarily, Augustine did not think of himself as belonging to some kind of mechanism that could lift up his soul. When he found the light above, he immediately came to know that he needed a Mediator who could help his soul to ascend.

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[83] *Civ.* 6.5. Augustine investigated ancient intellects and concluded that philosophers identified gods for their own philosophy. According to Varro, he received three types of theologies: the theology of poets, the theology of philosophers, and the theology of civic citizens. Augustine estimated that each of them illustrated places of gods in their own belief systems for their own purposes.

Third, he believed that the human soul must ascend out of the body in preparation for reuniting with the resurrected body later. The separation of the soul from the body, that is death, does not mean that the soul detests or abandons the body. The separation and ascension of the soul from the body occur as a part of a salvific vision through the doctrine of the resurrection. The preparatory ascension takes place following the example of Christ's ascension. In Neoplatonic ascension, the human soul is not involved in any salvific narrative or examples. The soul just goes back to its original place where it existed before descension, without any concerns of sins and punishment. Augustine's thoughts on the soul's ascension differed from other philosophies that lack such a Christian metanarrative of salvation from sin.

Fourth, Augustine framed the Christian concept of ascension, by the teaching of the Scripture, as a life heading upward path. As seen, the Scriptures demand Christians to live spiritual lives following an upward climb to the Lord's house in the mind. The Scriptures describe Jerusalem, the Lord's house, and Heaven to be above in the spiritual order, not any other direction. The way of Christ has directional implications, that is upward. The Holy Spirit drags the inner man upward to live a holy life. His elaboration with reference to the Scriptures exhibits clear differences between Augustine's Christian perspective on ascension and Neoplatonic upward ascension set by the natural scheme of the universe formed by emanation.

Fifth, Augustine traced the history of the Christian belief concerning the soul's ascension back to the time of the Old Testament. He read Hanna's prophecy, "The Lord has ascended into the heavens and has thundered" as laying the foundation for the completion of Christ's ascension.[84] To say about time, the upward path into heaven already appeared in the Old Testament, before the time of Plato. Such investigation dating back to the Old Testament betrays the Neoplatonic claim heavily depending on the authority of

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[84] *Civ.* 17.4 (Babcock I/7, 247).

Plato about the theme of ascension. The Christian faith already found the upward path of believers in the prophecy of the Old Testament about Christ.

These five differences show that Augustine possessed the Christian faith in mind when he explicated the concept of ascension. On one hand, the Christian faith describes the entire journey of the human soul from its origin to the end, in which ascension takes place as a part of the immortal soul's life. On the other hand, the Christian concept of the soul's ascension held by Augustine included more meanings than the natural ascension of the soul in Neoplatonism, in relation to other Christian doctrines. In addition, he displayed his faith when he described the purification of the soul according to the Scriptures.

Purification

Plotinus Repeated Platonic Purification by Virtues

The purpose of ascension referred to the condition of the soul enmeshed within the body, a state considered to be evil.[85] As the soul in Plotinus's philosophy could make ascension in the scheme of the Platonic cosmos, the goal of purification is to become like a god that appeared in the night sky.[86] By turning around against the world below, the soul prepares by virtues to embark on its upward journey with the expectation of being separated from the sensible body.[87]

Plotinus put Plato's theory of purification as a necessary basis for the soul to make ascension.[88] The soul needs to be purified in accordance with Plato's teaching of

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[85] *Enn.* 1.2.3.

[86] *Enn.* 1.2.4, 6, 7. Plotinus manifested the aim for the soul's purification as "the focus is not on being exempt from moral error, but on being god" (*Enn.* 1.2.7 [Gerson, 60]). Both Plato and Plotinus consistently and repeatedly descried the reality of the gods as shining beings, planets, in the night sky.

[87] *Enn.* 1.2.5.

[88] Cf. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 85. Wallis described that purification precedes contemplation for the soul: "The higher soul's purification involves turning her attention away from the sense-world toward the Intelligible order."

virtues.[89] Admiring Plato, Plotinus explained that the soul prepares for ascension by undergoing purification, a process in which the lower soul within the body struggles to assimilate itself with the higher soul, ultimately leading to the soul's transformation into a divine state. He presented four virtues leading to the soul's purification: thinking wisely, self-control, courage to be separated from the body, and justice that follows reason.[90] The soul must equip these virtues to assimilate to the gods in the Platonic cosmos, "not to good human beings."[91] The following passage showed the role of virtues:

> So, the justice in the soul that is greater is activity in relation to intellect, and the greater self-control is a turning inward towards intellect, and the greater courage is a lack of affection inasmuch as there is an assimilation of itself to the unaffected nature towards which it is looking. This is assimilation comes for virtue, and ensures that the soul does not share affections with the inferior element with which it lives.[92]

Here, Plotinus described the relation between virtue and the soul. The soul assimilates with the unaffected nature through substances of virtue such as justice (δικαιοσύνη) and courage (ἀνδρία). The virtues do not directly impact the soul to be capable of ascension but ensure the soul cuts out affections from inferior things (ἵνα μὴ συμπαθῇ τῷ χείρονι συνοίκῳ)—which come from the material world through the body. Purification by virtues prepares the soul only to separate itself from the sensible, inferior, body. He limited the role of virtues in the preliminary stage for the soul's ascension. The purification process through virtues offers a path for the soul to turn toward intellectual activity, leading to contemplation and to the hidden path to the gods in the Platonic cosmos—enabling the soul to ascend.

He focused the purpose of the purification on liberating the soul from the body. He regarded the body and the world as what the soul must get over to achieve purification. Purification meant for the soul to forsake the body at any possible moment. His strategy for

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[89] *Enn.* 1.2.3. Cf. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 41–42.

[90] *Enn.* 1.2.3.

[91] *Enn.* 1.2.7 (Gerson, 62).

[92] *Enn*. 1.2.6 (Gerson, 61).

the soul's ascension molded the narrative entirely distinctive from Augustine's portrayal of the soul's purification. Augustine explored the theological and practical implications of Christ's teachings and life in his writings.

Augustine Believed Purification by Christ

When Augustine found that the soul must live according to the teaching of Christ, he understood it as a process of purifying the soul. This purification occurs within the soul's relationship with the spirit and mind. Although the theme of the soul's purification partly overlaps with the way of the ascension, it will be discussed in detail in the next chapter within the context of the doctrine of punishment. Augustine derived his understanding of the need for the soul's purification from his interpretation of the Scripture, which emphasizes living in accordance with Christ's teachings.

Augustine believed the soul must undergo a process of purification in order to receive the bliss of the Trinity. He stressed the importance of purifying one's inner self as commanded by Christ. He said,

> By his gift also which is given to the soul, that is by the Holy Spirit, it is not only its recipient, the soul, that is rendered safe and peaceable and holy but the body too that will be quickened and in its own order will be of the utmost purity. For he is the one who says: *Purify the things that are inside, and the things that are outside will be pure* (Mt 23:26). The apostle too has this to say: *He will also give life to your mortal bodies on account of the Spirit abiding in you* (Rom 8:11). So, with sin removed, the punishment of sin will be removed, and where is evil then? *Where, Death, is your striving? Where, Death, is your sting?* Being, after all, overcomes nothingness, and thus *death shall be swallowed up in victory.*[93]

In this passage, he presented that Christ commanded, "*Purify the things that are inside*" (*mundate quae intus sunt*). The Holy Spirit ministers the soul's transformation into a pure state by coming into the inner person. Augustine comprehended this command as demanding to remove sinful mind and evil behavior from the soul and body. Removal of sin consequentially leads to avoidance of the punishment for that sin. He presented the purification as the ministry involved in the Trinity. The Holy Spirit's purifying ministry

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[93] *Ver. rel.* 12.25 (Hill I/8, 44–45).

aids in fulfilling Christ's command to purify oneself from the inside out. If one submits to his command of purification, one will evade the punishment ordained by God for sinners.

Augustine believed that the purification of the soul through the Holy Spirit also affects the state of the body. Paul taught that the Holy Spirit's purification not only cleanses the soul but also the body when he said, "*He will also give life to your mortal bodies on account of the Spirit abiding in you.*" This purification occurs because of "the Spirit abiding inside" (*Spiritum manentem in nobis*). Augustine held this belief within an eschatological context, as Scripture instructs the resurrection of the body and the soul's reunion to face punishment for their sins. Neoplatonists, however, disagreed with this idea.

Although this spiritual process of purification occurs in the mind, Augustine thought that the Scripture teaches practical aspects of purification. The soul could undergo the purification process during its lifetime within the body. He stated,

> That is why, since we are meant to enjoy that truth which is unchangeably alive, and since it is in its light that God the Trinity, author and maker of the universe, provides for all the things he has made, our minds have to be purified, to enable them to perceive that light, and to cling to it once perceived. We should think of this purification process as being a kind of walk, a kind of voyage toward our home country. We do not draw near, after all, by movement in place to the one who is present everywhere, but by honest commitment and good behavior.[94]

In this statement, he argued that the soul must submit itself to the process of purification of its mind to fully perceive the true light of the Trinity. Once one has perceived the light of the Trinity, it is important to continue to hold onto it so as not to fall away. One can keep the perception of the light by cleansing one's mind throughout life, which is called purification. To maintain the perception of the light, one must continually purify one's mind throughout one's life.

He elaborated on the soul's subordination to purification as a kind of committing oneself to the practice of a good life. He remarked the purification "as being a kind of walk, a kind of voyage toward our home country" (*quasi ambulationem quamdam, et quasi*

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[94] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.10.10 (Hill I/11, 114).

navigationem ad patriam). This purification process is metaphorically expressed by the act of walking but is meant to make good behavior (*bonisque moribus*) and hold honest commitment (*bono studio*) to Christ's commands. The practice of purifying life, departing from sinful mind and behavior, brings the soul closer to God who is above all. Of course, this approach does not take place in terms of physical movement because he is omnipresent. Augustine comprehended that the Scriptures teach purification as the soul's spiritual journey in life within the body toward God the Trinity.

Some people who are proud of their knowledge, like Neoplatonists, could not recognize Christ's way of purification laid for human souls. Augustine believed that Christ the Wisdom showed the way of purification through the example of how to live. He descended to the world to serve as a model for the purifying life by sacrificing himself. Those who are proud cannot comprehend the humble wisdom of God. Paul attested to this when he said, "*The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men* (1 Cor 1:25)."[95] Because of pride, they could not perceive the Scripture's way of purification following Christ who leads his people to their home that is himself.

In *Trinitate*, he explained the metaphoric expression of walking in detail, as a metaphor for living a good life and ascension:

> This is the sight which everyone yearns to behold who aims to *love God with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his mind* (Mt 22:37); and as far as possible he also builds up his neighbor by encouragement and good example to behold it, since he *loves his neighbor as himself; the two commandments on which the whole law depends and the prophets* (Mt 22:39). They are illustrated in this very case of Moses; after his love of God, with which above all else he was on fire, had prompted him to say, *If I have found favor in your sight, show yourself to me openly, that I may be one who has found favor before you,* he immediately added for love of his neighbor too, *and that I may know that this nation is your people* (Ex 33:13). This then is the sight which ravishes every rational soul with desire for it, and of which the soul is the more ardent in its desire the purer it is; and it is the purer the more it rises again to the things of the spirit; and it rises the more to the things of the spirit, the more it dies to the material things of the flesh. But while *we are away from the Lord and walking by faith and not by sight* (2 Cor 5:6), we have to behold Christ's back, that is his flesh, by this same faith; standing that is upon the solid foundation of faith,

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[95] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.10.11 (Hill I/11, 114).

which is represented by the rock, and gazing at his flesh from the security of the lookout on the rock, namely the Catholic church, of which it is said, *And upon this rock I will build my church* (Mt 16:18). All the surer is our love for the face of Christ which we long to see, the more clearly we recognize in his back how much Christ first loved us.[96]

In this passage Augustine remarked on two overarching elements of purification. In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ demanded the soul to walk on the way of Christ by following the two great commandments: love God and neighbors (*diligere deum . . . proximum . . . diligit*). The life of loving God and neighbors secures a soul to be purified and to become an example of encouraging neighbors to live a loving life together. The law and prophets of the Scriptures demand believers to keep that love to the end, with the hope of meeting Christ who showed this love first. Augustine thought that such an understanding of walking closely linked the soul to purification and the image of ascension. He emphasized that both the Old and New Testaments consistently teach this.

The case of Moses presented the very example of that practice of a pure soul. Augustine perceived that Moses had a strong affection for both God and his neighbors. He loved God and wanted to perceive him more clearly. He expressed his yearning for perceiving God as a sign to convey to the Israelites that they belong to him. His love for God could not be separated from his love for neighbors. Augustine recognized that the Scriptures teach the love of God and neighbor as an indivisible single desire. Like Moses, Christians must practice that desire for love both of God and neighbor in subordination to Christ's command to be purified.

Moreover, he illustrated the practice of love for God and neighbor as the soul's ascension toward spiritual things. He described from 2 Corinthians 5:6 that Christians "walk by faith not by sight" (*per fidem ambulamus non per speciem*). The metaphorical expression of walking by faith implied living a life beholding Christ's example. Through following Christ's example, the soul becomes spiritually purer, in the sense of departing away from sins. The purer (*mundiorem*) soul rises closer to the spiritual things (*ad*

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[96] *Trin.* 2.17 (Hill I/5, 139).

spiritalia resurgentem) against material things (*a carnalibus*). The more Christians practice Christ's love by desiring his presence, the clearer they will perceive his sacrificial love granted to them.

He believed that the Christian faith initiates souls' purification and ascension in human life through subordinating their life to the teachings and example of Christ. According to his interpretation, Christ established the church on their faith, through which Christians undergo the purification process. The spiritual rise to the spiritual things takes place by standing upon the solid foundation of faith that is the church. Christ built it upon the faith to secure his people at the time of resurrection and punishment. So, Augustine said,

> But as regards this flesh of his, it is faith in its resurrection that saves and justifies. If you believe in your hearts, it says, that God raised him from dead, you will be saved (Rom 10:9); and again, Who delivered himself up for our transgressions and rose again for our justification (Rom 4:25). So it is the resurrection of the Lord's body that gives value to our faith.[97]

Here he emphasized that the resurrection of Christ is central to Christian belief. The risen body of Christ provided meaning to their life as they strive for purification in anticipation of ascension. Christians who believe in his resurrection will be saved through justification when they internalize examples of Christ's life, resurrection, and ascension, in their hearts where their souls sit.

According to Augustine, the human soul becomes clean when it follows the example of Christ by holding the belief. Unlike Plotinus who sought to purify the soul by abandoning the body, the Christian faith requires living a life of ascension within the body as demonstrated by Christ's life in the flesh. He derived this theorem from his interpretation of the Scriptures and the practical teachings summarized in the two great commands. He identified the way of ascension in observance of the Wisdom who descended in the flesh. Christ, the incarnated Wisdom, revealed the knowledge of how

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[97] *Trin.* 2.17.29 (Hill, 140).

Christians spiritually rise above earthly things. Christians must practice Christ's way of life in the flesh to rise up closer to Christ who ascended.

Living Differently for Purification

Augustine established the concept of the soul's purification based on Christian teachings. Christians need purification in observance of the doctrine of sin and punishment. Such an approach to purification shows his exclusive dependence on the authority of Scripture and the Christian faith.

First, Augustine developed the concept of purification from reading Scripture passages. The concept of purification is concentrated in the later works, especially in *De Trinitate*, in which he presented many Scripture passages that command the human soul to be purified by walking by faith. On the other hand, through this inductive reasoning from Scripture, one could arrive at an idea similar to Plotinus's concept of purification attributed to the authority of Plato. Although both Augustine and Plotinus required a virtuous life for purification as a result of each of their beliefs, however, this similarity could not assimilate them to be the same in nature. Many ancient religions and philosophies required specific ways of life; and for this reason, early Christian thinkers called teachings of the Scriptures as philosophical in terms of demanding the way of life.[98] Regarding such aspects, rather, Augustine's dependence on the teaching of Scripture and directing its end to the two great commandments manifested that he held a Christian identity in understanding the concept of purification.

Second, he held the belief in the purification of the soul through the doctrine of incarnation. He remarked that the incarnation of Christ accomplished the purification of the soul, but Platonists did not know it. He says, "Porphyry . . . was not willing to recognize

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[98] Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2002), 247–52. Hadot argued that some early Christians called their faith as philosophy because of its presentation of the way of life.

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that the Lord Christ is principle by whose incarnation we are cleansed."[99] The purification occurred by the work of *the principle* not by the work of flesh. He disputed the Platonist: "This Platonist, then did not recognize that Christ is the principle; if he had, he would have known that he is our purification."[100] The doctrine of incarnation distinguished the Christian understanding of the soul's purification from that of Platonists.

Third, Augustine viewed purification as a process of preparing the soul to escape the punishment of sin. This purification could not be set to work without the help of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cleanses the inner man so that he can escape the punishment in the last days. Purification of the soul took a part in comprehending the doctrine of sin and punishment, as a work of the Holy Spirit releasing it from the shackle of sinful life. This relevance to the Christian belief could not accommodate the Neoplatonic concept of purification that the soul requires virtues only to enter the natural process of ascension.

The Christian way of life came out of Scripture's teaching. Christian purification requires souls to keep away from sinful life. Purification of the soul came along within its life of ascension. Such a purifying life of the Christian soul could not accommodate Plotinus's preparatory purification for the natural ascension of the soul by abandoning the body, without any sense of God's punishment for sin.

Conclusion

Before the conversion, Augustine acknowledged, according to *Confessiones*, what elements of the faith make him a Christian. So, even when he observed and heard the voice of God of the Old Testament, he did not regard it to mean that he experienced a Christian mystery, nor Neoplatonic union with One. Instead, since this experience could not be Neoplatonic, he needed more knowledge concerning the way to reach the

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[99] *Civ.* 10.24 (Babcock I/6, 331).

[100] *Civ.* 10.24 (Babcock I/6, 331).

transcendent being, which he could attain only by giving his mind to Scripture.[101] He knew

that he must admit the teachings of the Scriptures in search of the way to the homeland.

After this spiritual experience, he reread the works of Paul the apostle. Now he

could feel that obstacles that were disturbing his comprehension of the Scriptures were

removed.[102] In the garden at Milan, he heard a voice calling him to "put on the Lord Jesus

Christ."[103] He perceived this voice as a call to a life of following Christ, as a Christian. The

Christian life following Christ meant participating in the process of the soul's ascension

guided by the Holy Spirit. The whole story of his conversion was initiated with the

perception of the Christian life as the way of the soul's ascension—that is different from

Neoplatonic ascension—and he entered the life of the Christian version of the ascension.

He knew important doctrines distinguishing Christianity from other

philosophies, such as the doctrine of Incarnation, even before his conversion. Later, he

supplements the way of the soul's ascension, life following Christ, with Christian teachings

when he became more acquainted with the Scriptures. The Scriptures delineated that the

human soul ascends upward and rests there, after separation from the body until it

reunites with the resurrected body. In the following chapter, the soul ends up entering

paradise, which is completely different from that of Plotinus's philosophy, by means of

two aspects of the soul's ascension—Christian life and salvific going upward like Christ.

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[101] *Conf.* 7.20.26.

[102] *Conf.* 7.20.27.

[103] *Conf.* 8.12.29 (Boulding, 207).

CHAPTER 5

END OF THE HUMAN SOUL

Scholars in this contemporary debate attempted to figure out similarities in the ultimate destiny of the soul between Augustine and Neoplatonists. These scholars concentrated their debate on the contemplative, mystic going up of the soul toward the union with Neoplatonic One. The debate seemed to promise if Augustine's composition of the soul's ascension resembled that of Neoplatonists it meant that Augustine bought the whole system of the Platonic universe, to the upper side to which the human soul ascends.[1] Other scholars like Robert O'Connell refined the debate by showing that Augustine did not accept the emanationist metaphysics of the One, *Nous*, and Soul from the early writing *Contra Academicos*.[2] However, Neoplatonic contemplative ascension mainly seeks its completion after the separation from the body in the end. The Neoplatonic ascension through contemplation must be regarded as a preliminary ascension that the soul will accomplish after the body's death. Therefore, the contemplative ascension seeks its union with One at the upper place of its cosmic order. This fact makes distinctive points between Augustine's Christian ascension in the order of the created universe and that of Platonists in the order that appeared in Plotinus's *Enneads*.

As seen, Augustine held important Christian doctrines such as the creation *ex nihilo*, sin, Incarnation—which is the descension of God—and Resurrection from the very early time of his conversion. These doctrines set the order of the invisible heavens,

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[1] Brian Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2009), 111–37. Dobell argued that the ascension of the soul in *Confessiones* is Platonic considering its proceeding by steps to reason or understanding.

[2] Roland J. Teske, "In Memory of Robert John O'Connell, S.J. 1925–1999," *Augustinian Studies* 31, no. 1 (2000): 41–58.

distinguished from Neoplatonic ones, toward which the soul is believed to ascend after the separation from the body. He might not necessarily need to completely discard the envisioned concept of the soul's ascension that he derived from reading Neoplatonic books. It could partially aid him in shaping his imaginative understanding of the soul's ascension as he explores the Scriptures. However, if Augustine held such Christian doctrines, he could not confuse them with conflicting theories about the heavens, such as that of Neoplatonists.

Since it ascends upward, Christianity taught that the human soul enters different phases according to its life in the world. The doctrine of the creation *ex nihilo* and Incarnation set the scheme of the universe differently from that of Neoplatonists. Scripture taught that heaven consists of three orders—the sky, the spiritual realm, and the paradise. According to the Christian teaching, the human soul ascends when it is separated from the body to paradise as compensation for a faithful life. Augustine must understand these aspects of the soul's ascension because the traditional Christian faith is rooted in eschatological hope based on such crucial doctrines as the resurrection of the body and eternal punishment. The separation of the soul from the body meant for Christians to enter the last phase of the Christian teaching—reunion with the resurrected body and eternal punishment. Augustine could not imagine the Neoplatonic end of the soul that designated the soul to the union with One or to resend to animal bodies according to each of its purification levels.

This chapter argues that Augustine held the soul's afterlife within the frame consisting of the core Christian doctrines—such as doctrines of the creation *ex nihilo,* of sin, of incarnation, of resurrection and ascension of Christ, and of the resurrection of the body. He described souls as attaining reward or punishment in the metanarrative framed by Scriptures about the afterlife. Such doctrines appeared from his early works that he wrote at Milan before baptism. To show the distinctiveness of his thoughts from Plotinus's *Enneads,* which is believed to have been read by him before his conversion, this chapter

will delineate Plotinus's thoughts of the human soul's life after departure from the body, first. The following section expresses how Augustine framed the Christian version of the soul's afterlife based on his comprehension of the Christian faith. This chapter uses various works of Augustine including *Soliloquies* 1.7.14; *De Animae Quantitate* 1.2, 33.76, 36.81; *De Doctrina Christiana* 1.19.18; *De Genesi ad Litteram* 12.28.56, 29.57, 33.62, 67, 34.65, 35.68; *De Civitate Dei* 13.11, 12; 17.3; 21.3, 13, 16, 23; 22.29, 30; 32.13; and *Epistola* 21.3. Then, the last section investigates six points that Augustine made in contrast to Platonist thought of the soul's afterlife.

Plotinus Sought for Union with One

Plotinus defined death as the lower soul's departure from the body. The two souls inseparably divided into the lower and the higher reunite in the intellectual world from which a part of it fell to the visible world. However, not all souls can complete the union to proceed near One. After the departure from the body, the lower soul receives a reward or punishment. The lower soul of an unjust person enters the cycle of temporal punishment for preparatory purification for ascension and reunion with the higher soul.

The union of the souls occurs as a part of the natural process of all souls' reciprocal return to their original state. In the union, the just soul turns back to the original state when it had been staying alone before having put on the garment, the body. Plotinus delineated this reciprocal event as having somewhat different meanings for each part of the soul.

First, since the higher soul inhabits the upper place apart from the body, it does not fear the separation of the lower soul from the body.[3] Instead, by death, the higher soul achieves its own original desire to be alone away from the lower world. Plotinus stated,

> The soul, then, when it is purified, becomes form, and an expressed principle, and entirely incorporeal and intellectual and wholly divine, which is the source of beauty

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[3] H. J. Blumenthal, "Marinus' Life of Proclus: Neoplatonist Biography," in *Soul and Intellect: Studies in Plotinus and Later Neoplatonism* (Hampshire, England: Variorum, 1993), 478. Cf. J. M. Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (New York: Syndics of the Cambridge University, 1967), 125, 153.

and of all things that have a kinship with it. . . . For this reason, it is correctly said that goodness and being beautiful for the soul consist in "being assimilated to god," because it is in the intelligible world that Beauty is found as well as the fate of the rest of Beings. Or rather, Beings are what Beauty is and ugliness is the other nature, primary evil itself, so that for god "good" and "beautiful" are identical, or rather the Good and Beauty are identical.[4]

In this passage Plotinus delineated the desire of the soul—to assimilate to god (γίνεσθαι ὁμοιωθῆναι εἶναι θεῷ). The higher soul when it is purified does not fear the separation from the body or suffering for it.[5] Rather, it achieves the primary purpose of its desire, nearing Good by the lower soul's separation from the body.[6] The higher soul can partake in Beauty by purification, turning away from the sensible world. Although the soul can experience such progress—being assimilated to god and nearing Good and Beauty even in the body through contemplation, however, it naturally becomes the pure state when the lower part ascends and unites with the higher part after death. Death, the separation from the body, accomplishes the higher soul's desire for reunion with the lower soul and nearing Good.

Second, the lower soul achieves its desire for purification when it leaves the body.[7] The lower soul seeks to fly from the body to reunite with the higher part. Plotinus defines the purification in relation to the flight from the body:

But the extent of purification should be addressed. For in this way, it will be clear what the assimilation is to and with what god we are identified. And we should especially examine purification in regard to anger and appetite and the rest, pain and related feelings, and to what extent separation from the body is possible. Perhaps the soul actually collects itself in some sort of place apart from the body. . . . For it will be fearful of nothing—though the involuntary is here, too—except when fear serves as a warning.[8]

He restated here the meaning of purification to the lower soul. The lower soul must overcome bodily irritation such as anger, appetite, rest, pain, and related feelings (θυμὸν . . .

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[4] *Enn*. 1.6.6 (Gerson, 99).

[5] Cf. *Enn*. 1.2.5.

[6] *Enn*. 6.7.34. It is the body that fears death because it will be destroyed and fail to perceive earthly pleasures anymore. See *Enn.* 1.1.4.

[7] Rist, *Plotinus*, 217.

[8] *Enn*. 1.2.5 (Gerson, 59–60).

καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ τἆλλα πάντα, λύπην καὶ τὰ συγγενῆ). When it departs from the body, by death, the lower soul completes its purification process for the union with the higher soul. The higher soul will collect up the lower soul from its temporal, involuntary habitation in the body.[9] Then, the soul resumes being a total soul in the intellectual world as a being united. This reunion recovers the lower soul's original identity in the intellectual world as being divine.

Only after the purification process, the lower souls previously captured in the cycle of reincarnation, because of impurity, become the pure state enabling them to fly and unite with the higher soul.[10] Since then, the pure soul—the soul as a being united with the higher and the lower—steps on the returning process to the One. Plotinus did not strictly distinguish the difference in levels of capacity for the soul's return to One after death and the soul's contemplative ascension. Both potential events of the soul aim at returning to its original source, One. Once the soul unites in the intellectual world, the place where no deception is, it becomes stronger "by being filled with the Life of Being."[11] In the intelligible world, the journey of the soul ends by coming near to Good, or One. Plotinus says, "It is its beginning because the soul is from the intelligible world, and it is its end because the Good is there."[12] In there, the immortal soul enjoys a happy life as being unified with god in the archetype that Plato shaped and set primary hypostases— such as One, Intellect (and Being), and Soul, by order.[13] Therefore, the pure soul ends its journey in its original place, the intellectual world by the natural process of return.

[9] *Enn*. 6.7.31. The soul despises inhabitation in the sensible world by division.

[10] Cf. Richard T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995), 85; Rist, *Plotinus*, 191.

[11] *Enn*. 6.7.34; 6.7.31 (Gerson, 838).

[12] *Enn*. 6.9.9 (Gerson, 894).

[13] *Enn*. 6.9.9; 5.1.10. Plotinus faithfully depended on the authority of Plato's teaching in mapping the order of the archetype.

On the other hand, Plotinus believed that unjust souls undergo punishment by the Platonic mechanism of circulation according to their life in the lower world.[14] Plotinus argues with Plato,

> The soul, then, is a composite of all these things and is actually affected as a whole, and it is the composite that errs; and it is this which undergoes punishment, not the other. Hence, Plato says, "we have gazed upon soul like those who have seen the sea-god Glaucus." But if someone really wants to see its nature, he says, he must "knock off the accretions" and look at '"its philosophy" to see '"hat it adheres to" and "what it owes its kinship to" such that it is the sort of thing it is. The life and other activities of the soul, then are one thing, what is punished another.[15]

In this passage Plotinus brought Plato's argument of punishment from *Republic* 10.[16] Plotinus explained punishment (δίκας) in relation to the soul, depending on the authority of Plato. In the story of the sea god Glaucus's misery, Plato provided the sense of the human soul's punishment. The human soul could also face a similar kind of punishment because of its errors that produce unjust behavior. The soul can escape from the course of punishment through "its philosophy," which can make one divine, according to Plato.[17] The platonic system leads these unjust souls to the place of punishment.

These souls undergo punishment for its activities in the body. Plotinus stated in detail about the punishment,

> Given that there are many possible places for each such soul, the difference must have come from the respective disposition of each, and also from [natural] justice in things. For one will never escape suffering the due retribution for unjust acts; there is no dodging the divine law, which has inherent in it the execution of the judgment already made.[18]

Here, the punishment works by the divine law, as Plato ascribed to it. When Plotinus mentioned "many possible places" for unjust souls, he might consider what Plato said: "It wanders . . . around graves and monuments, where shadowy phantoms, images that such

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[14] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 83.

[15] *Enn.* 1.1.12 (Gerson, 52).

[16] Cf. Plato, *Republic* 10 (611c5–612a8).

[17] Plato, *Republic* 10 (611e).

[18] *Enn.* 4.3.24 (Gerson, 412).

souls produce."[19] Plato connected the punishment of these souls with his contemporary

mysticism. Likewise, Plotinus believed that these souls depart to these places by the

platonic law and justice in nature, not by the decision of a personal being like Christians

believe.

Unjust souls experience involuntary suffering of punishment in any form of a

body in the lower world. If the judgment is made, unjust souls must undergo suffering the

punishment without exception. Plotinus said,

> The person on whom it is inflicted is unwittingly borne towards what it is proper for
> him to suffer, blown about everywhere on an unstable motion in his wanderings, but
> in the end, as if greatly exhausted by his resistance, he falls into the place appropriate
> to him, taking on involuntary suffering as a result of his voluntary motion. And it
> has been specified in the law how much he must suffer and for how long, and again
> there is a concordance between the release from punishment and the power of
> escaping upwards from those places, through the power of that harmony which
> controls everything.[20]

In this passage he interweaved the punishment of unjust souls with the soul's wandering

after the separation from the body. Unjust souls enter the cycle of punishment by being

borne into another body—that is its proper suffering place. They wander in the system of

the platonic cosmos and in the en, fall into that place where it cannot escape except

"through the power of that harmony" (ἁρμονίας δυνάμει). This power "controls everything

(κατεχούσης τὰ πάντα) in the system of Plato. Unjust souls must involuntarily face the cycle

of punishment in the platonic cosmos, by that power, because of their voluntary life.

In that cycle, the soul's unjust life in the body causes its reunion into animal

bodies.[21] Plotinus rooted the idea of the reincarnation of the soul into an animal body in

Plato's teachings, especially in *Paedo* and *Phaedrus*[22]:

> And so those who maintain their humanity will return again as human beings, while
> those how lived by sense-perception alone will return as animals. But if their sense-

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[19] Plato, *Phaedo* 81c8–81d3 (Grube, 71).

[20] *Enn*. 4.3.24 (Gerson, 412).

[21] Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 72.

[22] Cf. Plato, *Paedo* 81d–82b. *Phaedrus* 246b–248e.

perceptions are accompanied by passion, they will return as wild beasts. And the difference in their dispositions determines that which decides what kind of animal they become. . . . Those who pursued astronomy and were always raising themselves to heaven, but without wisdom, will become birds that soar high in flight. The human being who practices civic virtue will become a human being, but one who shared to a lesser degree in civic virtue will become a social animal, a bee or similar creature.[23]

Here, Plotinus prolonged Plato's thought of the soul's return to animal bodies. Souls must experience such reincarnation into other bodies for ten thousand years "since its wings will not grow before then, except for the soul of a man who practices philosophy without guile or who loves boys philosophically" (οὐ γὰρ πτεροῦται πρὸ τοσούτου χρόνου—πλὴν ἡ τοῦ φιλοσοφήσαντος ἀδόλως ἢ παιδεραστήσαντος μετὰ φιλοσοφίας), according to Plato.[24] Plotinus held with Plato that the soul needs some kind of body for punishment, after departure from the human body, to undergo the cycle of reincarnation.[25]

Plotinus needed to extend his theory of the soul's afterlife based on its original form paralleled with Plato's cosmology. The lower soul must achieve reunion with the higher soul. The soul will achieve union and all souls will go near to One, in the end, because it can strive for it again and again in its immortal state. On the other hand, Augustine could not harmonize his Christian belief with Neoplatonists' mystic union of the soul. He knew that Christianity teaches a different process in its entirety. Later, he discovered some point of contact between the Christian teaching of the soul's reunion with the body and the Platonist idea that the soul needs any kind of body for purification. Augustine investigated this subject to lead Platonists to Christianity in his later life.

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[23] *Enn*. 3.4.2 (Gerson, 285).

[24] Plato, *Phaedrus* 249a (Nehamas and Woodruff, 526).

[25] Cf. *Civ.* 10.30. Augustine noted the fact that Platonists inconsistently claimed that souls return to some kind of body after death. He points out here that Porphyry who held the soul's return to another human body maintained superior thought to Plato and Plotinus those who believed in the soul's return to animal bodies. Augustine's critical analysis of Platonists' idea of the soul's return was executed from the strict standpoint of the Christian faith.

Augustine Elaborated on the Soul's Afterlife
Appeared in the Scriptures

Concerning the afterlife of the human soul, Augustine, the Catechumen who loves wisdom, initiated to reshape his knowledge previously attained from secular reading, even prior to proclaiming his conversion to Christ through baptism in the church at Milan. He desired to attain perfect knowledge about the end of the human soul within Christian teachings. In consequence, his early writings about the soul's end stayed and played in the philosophers' arena, formulating relations of abstracts, while deeply saturated by the Christian faith. He left some stains of his intellectual habits that were developed before his conversion, in thinking about the soul's procession after the body's death, partially in *Soliloques* and *De Animae Quantitate*. However, this intelligent but naïve Christian wrote early works to show the philosophical plausibility of the Christian faith to which he had recently converted. He could not even imagine at that time that people would take these works, written at leisure, into a part of works written by one of the great church leaders in more than a thousand years of Christian history. But when he began to serve other believers as a priest, he needed to write about human souls' ends in detail based on his profound reading of the Scriptures, which he could not do before.[26]

In this section, I will examine partial records about the soul's journey after death that appeared in early works such as *Soliloques* and *De Animae Quantitate* to demonstrate that the Christian identity is present in these works. Then, I will illustrate Augustine's particularized destination of souls of both good and evil in later works. Especially, in *De Genesi ad Litteram*, Augustine presented his comprehensive belief that the creation narrative of the book of Genesis 1–3 implies the place where the souls of believers are ordained to proceed after they depart their bodies.

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[26] *Ep.* 21.3.

Early Glance of the Soul's Afterlife

In *Soliloques*, Augustine tried to find out what abstract qualities out of faith, hope, and charity will persist when a believer's soul leaves the body. The human soul needs all three abstract qualities in the earthly life, while charity alone will be necessary in the afterlife.[27] In the course of such description, God appeared as something to which the soul will unite afterlife. Augustine's language aptly corresponded with Christian beliefs. However, his contemplation of the soul's unity with God suggested that he did not try to articulate the specific structure of the invisible realm that the soul enters after the body's death, for any reason. He rearticulated the Christian qualities with a philosophical explanation—that the soul rests in the secure possession of everything after death—and exalted the quality of charity as the most necessary over the other two. This fact shows that this catechumen tried to explain his intellectual quest for how the human soul ends its earthly life in harmony with what he heard about what Scripture teaches.

In *De Animae Quantitate*, written after his baptism at Milan, his philosophical reasoning took a more confessional tone regarding sin. Every soul confronts the body's demise in the end. Human death is the result of sin. Augustine asked, "Considering all this . . . who would think of inquiring how the soul is affected in this corruptible and frail body, seeing that it has justly been thrust with it into death as a result of sin, and that virtue enables it to raise itself up even in this life?"[28] He was convinced that sin caused the death into which the soul enters after separation from the body. In the way of reflecting on the cause of death, he differed from Plotinus who did not contemplate the reason for death of human beings. According to Plotinus, the lower soul should desire the body's death in order to ascend and unite with the higher soul. Conversely, the young Christian intellectual saw death as a consequence of sin.

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[27] *Solil.* 1.7.14.

[28] *Quant. an.* 1.2 (Colleran, 111).

He also illumined the possibility of the soul residing in a specific place after death, calling it the soul's "homeland."[29] He could not describe every detail about its homeland at this time. He might be regarding the homeland as God Himself the creator (*patriam Deum ipsum credo esse a quo create est*), not the intellectual world or Plato's One. He acknowledged that the soul would exist somewhere after death. This belief appeared as a crucial part of his Christian faith when he affirmed sin as the cause of death.[30] To resolve the problem of sin and death, the soul needs true religion to reconcile with God against whom it sinned.[31] But for now, he must refrain from describing the realms where good and evil souls reside until he gains a comprehensive understanding of the spiritual world through a more thorough investigation of the Scripture.

In Death

He needed a philosophical investigation of the word "death" (*mors*) to find what exactly it means to Christians. The word death seemed difficult to provide the ontological understanding of death, which is the separation of the soul and body. He said,

> Thus, just as there are three instances when we say "before death," "in death" and "after death," so there are the three corresponding cases, correlated each to each, of "living," "dying" and "dead." And so it is extremely difficult to determine when a person is dying—that is, when a person is in death—and is neither living, which is before death, nor dead, which is after death. For, as long as the soul is in the body, especially if sensation is also present, there is no doubt that the person is alive, for he consists of soul and body. And for this reason we must say that he is still before death, not in death. But, when the soul has departed and has taken away all bodily sensation, he is already said to be dead and thus after death. Thus the point at which he is dying, or is in death, simply disappears between the other two. If he is still living, he is before death, and, if he has ceased to live, he is already after death. He is never understood, therefore, to be dying, that is, in death. It is the same with the passage of time: when we look for the present, we do not find it, because the instant of time's passage from the future to the past has no duration at all.[32]

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[29] *Quant. an.* 1.2 (Colleran, 14).

[30] *Quant. an.* 36.81 (Colleran, 111).

[31] *Quant. an.* 36.81.

[32] *Civ.* 13.11 (Bobcock I/7, 76).

In this passage he practiced his philosophical investigation of the precise meaning of death to human beings. He felt it extremely difficult to define the state of death through reason alone. He examined three possible phrases: before death, in death, and after death. The exact moment of a person's death could not be found between before and after death. A person is alive before death, but a person is considered dead after death. Although it is impossible to define the ontological state of a person who is dying, it is still considered alive before death. Philosophical examination without authoritative sources seemed to fail to provide meaningful insights for determining the separation of the soul and body.

He perceived the challenge of seeking the appropriate way of defining death, in comparison with his knowledge of the perplexity of time. He likened it to the difficulty of searching for the moment of the present tense in the progression of time. In *Confessiones*, he stated,

> As for present time, if that were always present and never slipped away into the past, it would not be time at all; it would be eternity. If, therefore, the present's only claim to be called "time" is that it is slipping away into the past, how can we assert that this thing *is,* when its only title to being is that it will soon cease to be? In other words, we cannot really say that time exists, except because it tends to non-being.[33]

He described an exceptional state of present in the sequence of time. The present is supposed to be a part of the concept of time, but the relentless flow of time does not allow any interval for the concept of present. When one says that now is the present, the moment of speaking immediately slips away into the past. People use the word present as a part of time, but it is hard to explain what it is. This is why Augustine said, "What, then, is time? if no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to someone who asks me, I do not know."[34] Similarly, he used the word death to mean the separation of the soul and body without any hesitation. However, when he tried to explain it in terms of time and order, he encountered the same difficulty and was unable to resolve it. He needed a specific way

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[33] *Conf.* 11.14.17 (Boulding, 296).

[34] *Conf.* 11.14.17 (Boulding, 295).

to describe the soul's condition "in death" and discovered that the Scripture provides it as it relates to the doctrine of sin.

Augustine thought he needed a more precise definition of death that accounts for the different paths the soul and body take after separation. Plus, given its immortal nature, the concept of death as a soul departing from the body does not offer a compatible apprehension of its entering into the spiritual realm, yet it is still alive. He said,

> And we may use the same expressions as we find in holy Scripture. For the Scripture has no hesitation about referring to the dead as being "in death," not "after death." Hence we get the statement, "Because there is no one who remembers you in death." For until they come to life again, they are correctly spoken of as "in death" just as a person is said to be "in sleep" until he wakes.[35]

In this statement, he argued that the soul's departure from the body as "after death" (*post mortem*) cannot fit his understanding of the soul and of the teaching about it in the Scripture as well. Considering the entire life of the soul and body, the departure of the soul from the body could not occur as a one-time event extinguishing both and giving another state to each of them. The word death meant corruption to the body but could not give the same meaning to the immortal soul. Instead, the human soul enters a state of death. He could find the reason why the Scripture calls the soul's departure from the body as being "in death."

The Scripture elucidates that the state of separation described as "in death" (*in morte*), is a consequence of the sin committed by the first man, Adam. In the Garden, God warned him about the consequence of disobedience. He will fall into a state of death if he eats the fruit of the tree of knowledge in the Garden.[36] According to Scripture, the departure of the soul from the body puts him in a state of death. Augustine viewed the atemporal nature of the term "in death" from Paul's words. He said,

> Thus, even if we presume that what was signified when God said, *On the day that you eat of it you shall die the death* (Gn 2:17), also included that obvious death in which the soul is separated from the body, it still should not seem absurd that the

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[35] *Civ.* 13.11 (Bettenson, 520–21).

[36] *Civ.* 13.12 (Bettenson, 522).

first human beings were not instantly severed from their bodies on the very day that they ate the forbidden and death-dealing food. For on that very day, in fact, their nature was changed for the worse and vitiated; and, due to their wholly just separation from the tree of life, they were subjected to the necessity of bodily death, which characterizes us from birth. That is why the Apostle does not say, "the body is going to die because of sin," but rather, *The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* And he immediately goes on to say, *But if the Spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.* (Rom 8:10–11) The body, therefore, will then be to the life-giving spirit what it is now to the living soul. But the Apostle still calls it dead because it is already bound by the necessity of dying. Originally, however, it was related to the living soul (although not to the life-giving spirit) in such a way that it could not rightly be called dead, because, if there had been no commission of sin, it would not have come under the necessity of dying.[37]

This passage suggests that Augustine believed that the Scripture explained the death of humans in terms of atemporal perspective, without distinction tenses of time, just as God does not belong to time. He remarked that the first man and woman did not immediately die when they ate the death-dealing fruit, despite God's warning. He explained that the Scripture meant the transformation of their nature to die in the end. Their disobedience affected the nature of their souls. If they did not commit sin, human souls would experience death by necessity. Yet, while they were still alive, the Scripture calls them dead.

Paul also knew that the Scripture used the word dead to describe the state of the first man and woman who had eaten the forbidden fruit while they were still alive in the garden. Augustine pointed out that Paul read it as the Scripture said, "the body is dead because of sin," instead of altering words to the future tense, like, "the body is going to die because of sin." Due to the soul being immortal by nature, both authors of Genesis and Romans meant the death of the body, not the soul. Augustine explained that the apostle calls it dead "because it is already bound by the necessity of dying." Augustine with Paul perceived that the Scripture used the word death from the atemporal perspective. Therefore, human beings are destined to die unless the Holy Spirit comes into them and

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[37] *Civ.* 13.23 (Bobcock I/7, 90).

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gives life to their mortal bodies. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in individuals signifies

the resurrection of their bodies at the end of time.

Augustine comprehended the word "in death" as an inclusive term. It not only

remarked on the state of the human soul and body after separation. The word is also

engaged with the theological aspect of the spiritual corruption of souls as well. He stated,

> This is because the first death consists of two, the death of the soul and the death of
> the body, so that the first death is the death of the whole person, when the soul is
> without God and without a body, and undergoes punishment for a time. The second
> death, on the other hand, is when the soul is without God, but undergoes punishment
> with the body. Thus when God spoke about the forbidden food to the man whom he
> had placed in the garden, he said, "On whatever day you eat of it, you will surely die";
> and the threat embraced not only the first part of the first death, when the soul is bereft
> of God, nor only the second part, in which the body is bereft of the soul; it comprised
> every kind of death, down to the last or second death, which has no other death to
> follow it.[38]

In this passage he equipped theological themes of sin and punishment into his explanation

of the soul's afterlife. The atemporal term death, signifying the first death, remarked the

soul's state without God. Although the first death occurs when the soul departs from the

body, some souls are spiritually dead from the time when they abandon God. Since they

leave their bodies, the souls undergo temporal punishment without the bodies until they

reunite with the transformed bodies and enter the second death. Augustine summarized the

death of these unbelievers' souls: "The death of the soul occurs, then, when it is abandoned

by God, just as the death of the body occurs when it is abandoned by the soul."[39] The

Scripture calls unbelievers' souls dead because they abandoned the God who gives true

life.

The Scripture teaches of two deaths, each of which has a different impact on

the souls of believers and unbelievers in different ways. In the first death, God punishes

the unbeliever's soul while its body waits for the second death in which it reunites with

the soul to undergo eternal punishment. However, the believer's soul experiences a

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[38] *Civ.* 13.12 (Bettenson, 522).

[39] *Civ.* 13.2 (Bobcock I/7, 69).

different mode of being in the bosom of Abraham. This biblical narrative of the souls in death demanded the bishop of Hippo to inspect it thoroughly in consideration of its unique use of terms, such as death and eternal punishment, which differed from any other philosophy.

He delved into the second death to contrast it with the first. In the second death, unbelievers' souls will fully recover their sense perceptions when they reunite with the resurrected bodies they lost in the first death. He said,

> This death of the whole human being is followed by what the authority of Divine Scripture calls the second death. This is the death to which the savior referred when he said, *Fear him who has the power to destroy both body and soul in hell* (Mt 10:28). But, since this second death only occurs after the soul and body have been so tightly bound together that nothing can pull them apart, it may seem strange that the body is said to be destroyed by a death in which it is not abandoned by the soul but rather undergoes torment precisely because it retains both its soul and its feeling. For, in that final and eternal punishment (which I shall have to discuss more fully in its proper place), we can rightly speak of the death of the soul, since it will draw no life from God. But how can we speak of the death of the body, since it will draw life from the soul? For without the soul it could not feel the bodily torments that will beset it after the resurrection. Perhaps it is because life of any sort is a good, while pain is an evil, that we ought not to say that the body is alive when its soul is present not for the sake of giving it life but only for the sake of giving it pain.[40]

In this passage he elaborated that the second death differs from the first. While the first death meant the soul's separation from the body, the Scripture describes the second death as the soul's reunion with the resurrected body. This did not simply mean that the soul will bond to the transformed body, but also that it would fully regain sense perceptions. The soul's recovery of bodily senses brings lively pain of eternal punishment. In contrast to the first death, unbelievers' souls suffer eternal punishment within their bodies in the second death.

Although the soul or the body will not be destroyed in the second death, the Scripture still calls it death because it removes all hope of life. Augustine understood that Christ meant it when he said, "Fear him who has the power to destroy both body and soul in hell" (Matt 10:28). He interpreted this passage as pointing out the second death, based

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[40] *Civ.* 13.2 (Babcock I/7, 69).

on the doctrine of eternal punishment and the immortality of the soul. Christ warned about the soul's being in death in hell. Although God does not demolish the soul and body in hell, they cannot have life because they are separated from life that only God can give. As their bodies draw life from their souls, their souls receive life from God when they live rightly. The souls within the bodies suffer under the second death as a result of their sin, which severed their relationship with God. God abandons souls that live after bodily lusts instead of the heavenly desire that is living after the example of Christ. Therefore, rejection to live according to Christ's teaching means that these souls lose the fountainhead of life.

To sum up, souls' lives in the world divide their journey afterlife, entering the state "in death." Augustine described, "Thus it can be said of the first death, the death of the body, that it is a good for those who are good and an evil for those who are evil. But the second death, since it happens to no one who is good, is obviously not a good for anyone at all."[41] He mentioned the second death to explain the eternal punishment of unbelievers' souls. The second death waits only for those who pulled themselves apart from the one who gives eternal life. Believers' souls do not experience the second death because they go through a different journey in the afterlife.

Departed from the Body

In *De Genesi ad Litteram*, Augustine drew the figure of the soul departed from the body, in detail. The human soul departs the body into death with a body-like shape. Many narratives in the Scripture and some people who experienced being out of the body as a soul attest to the likeness of the soul with the body when it goes into the afterlife. Augustine said,

> But the soul is incorporeal; and this I proclaim confidently, not as my opinion but as certain knowledge. However, anyone who says that it is impossible for the soul to have a likeness of the body or of any members of the body ought also to deny that the soul in sleep sees itself walking or sitting or being borne away and returned, now this way, now that, on foot or through the air. None of this happens without some likeness of the body. Hence, if the soul in the lower world bears this likeness, which

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[41] *Civ.* 13.2 (Babcock I/7, 70).

is not corporeal, but similar to a body, it seems also that it is in a place not corporeal but like the corporeal, whether at rest or in torment.[42]

He apologetically defended his argument of the soul's body-like shape (*similitudinem corporis*) in death before presenting the narrative of the poor in Abraham's bosom and the rich in hell. He reputed those who think the soul cannot have a body-like shape. They unreasonably denied the soul's body-like shape, considering the soul experiences third person view out of the body in sleep (*in somnis*). Then, he explained that the Scripture describes the soul out of the body as acting like being in the body. The soul seemed to sense such joy, pleasure, pain, thirstiness, and sorrow just as it was in the body, as seen in the narrative of Jesus about the poor in Abraham's bosom and the rich under punishment.[43] For Augustine, the Scripture teaches him to understand the human soul in death to behave like in a body-like shape, supporting the third-person experience in the dream. The soul ought to be either at rest or in punishment in a body-like shape once it is separated from the body.

He found that the Scripture teaches a way to understand the soul in death through the description of the soul's behavior like in the body. He examined the given story of the rich and poor. He said,

> I might indeed have said that these spirits are going to burn, despite the fact that they have no body of their won, in the same way that the rich man was burning in hell when he said, *I am tormented in this fire* (Lk 16:24). I noticed, however, that there is an apt reply to this point. One could say that this flame was of the same kind as the eyes which the rich man raised to see Lazarus, or as the tongue on which he yearned to have a drop of water poured, or as the finger of Lazarus which he asked to do this for him. All this took place where souls do not have bodies. Thus, both the flames burning the rich man and the little drop of water that he requested were incorporeal, just like the visions of people who are asleep or who see things in a trance that are incorporeal but that look like bodies.[44]

This passage illustrated the way Augustine perceived the soul's shape out of the body. Augustine discovered in Matthew 25:41 that Christ remarked that the devil and his angels

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[42] *Gen. litt.* 12.33.62 (Taylor 2, 225).

[43] *Gen. litt.* 12.33.63.

[44] *Civ.* 21.10 (Bobcock I/7, 465).

will be burnt in eternal fire.[45] He understood this passage illuminated the visible fire-like features of the eternal fire. These evil spirits will be burned as if they had their own bodies, while they had never possessed one. Christ who created everything taught that souls of evildoers will suffer by the same kind of fire in the same way.

He contended that the story of the rich and poor manifests the body-like shape of souls without bodies. This story contains a lot of evidence that the human soul in the fire of the punishment has a body-like shape and senses. The rich said, "I am tormented in this fire" (Luke16:24). Augustine interpreted that the soul of the rich could feel pains when he was suffering from the fire of hell. He could feel thirsty, so he yearned for Lazarus to give him a drop of water. He could see, with his eyes, Lazarus, who was in paradise. The rich's soul could not escape from that place. Christ portrayed the place where the rich is tortured as located below the peaceful place where Lazarus could look at him, although there was a great gap between the two places. He illustrated the story of two souls, that of the rich and poor, as if it took place in visible places and in body-like shapes, though they were incorporeal at that moment. He remarked that the Scripture shows more clues about punishment by fire and souls' reception of pains from it.[46] Particularly, the author of the Book of Revelation called this fire the lake of fire (*stagnum ignis*).

Arguing about the shape of the soul in death, Augustine contended two noticeable things that contradict Plotinus's thought of the soul. First, the soul must have a body-like shape to be in a region either of peace or punishment—as the Scriptures teach the existence of two regions. Second, the body-like shape of the soul betrays Neoplatonist belief that the soul unites with the upper soul to become its original state. Plotinus's soul gives form to a body to be shaped as a human in the lower world. But the lower soul afterlife cannot have a body-like shape regarding its following process to reunite with the intellectual soul and with One in the end. On the other hand, the body-like shape of the

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[45] *Civ.* 21.10.

[46] Cf. *Civ.* 21.9–10.

soul, in Augustine's works, prepares for entering the spiritual regions, revealed in

Scripture, in which souls enjoy peace or undergo punishment.

Paradise

When it comes into the invisible realm, the believer's soul proceeds to the place

where it can rest. Thinking about the order of invisible heavens, Augustine found that God

created spiritual heaven when he created the heaven of heaven. In addition, he discovered

that some people in the Scripture experienced another place above the spiritual heaven.

He arranged the heavens that appeared in the Scripture in order. He said,

> It seems that we are right, then, in understanding the first heaven in general as this
> whole corporeal heaven (to use a general term), namely, all that is above the waters
> and the earth, and the second heaven as the object of spiritual vision seen in bodily
> likenesses (as, for instance, the vision seen by Peter in ecstasy when he saw the dish
> let down from above full of living creatures), and the third heaven as the objects seen
> by the mind after it has been so separated and removed and completely carried out
> of the senses and purified that it is able through the love of the Holy Spirit in a
> mysterious way to see and hear the objects in that heaven, even the essence of God
> and the Divine Word through whom all things have been made. If all this is true, then
> I believe that Paul was carried off to that third heaven and that there is a paradise
> which is more excellent than all others and is, if we may use the term, the paradise
> of paradises.[47]

This brief passage attested to his dependence on the Scriptures in his cosmology. Although

he knew the creation of the heaven of heaven by Genesis, he might hesitate to say about

the scheme of the invisible heaven because the Scriptures do not provide a well-organized

structure of the heavens. He needed to infer with scattered clues. He attempted to integrate

witnesses from the experience of Peter and Paul. From his reading of the Scriptures, he

figured out that God set the first heaven (*coelum primum*) to the sky that is visible, the

second heaven (*secundum*) to the spiritual realm, and the third (*tertium*) heaven to paradise.

The first heaven is the sky ornamented with stars and planets to proclaim the

glory of God. He viewed the sky above the earth as the first heaven that subordinates to

the power of God. But he disliked the way Platonists expounded on the sky and earth.

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[47] *Gen. litt.* 12.33.67 (Taylor 2, 228).

These Platonists used the order of elements in the sky and earth as a basis for their rejection

of bodily resurrection. He said,

> But these reasoners—whose *thoughts the Lord knows, that they are empty* (Ps
> 94:11)—argue against this great gift of God on the basis of the wights of the
> elements. They have learned from their master Plato that the world's two greatest
> material elements, at opposite extremes from each other, are linked and conjoined
> by two intermediate elements, namely, air and water. Accordingly, starting here at
> our level and working up, earth is the first element; water is the second, above earth;
> air is the third, above water; and the fourth, above air, is heaven. For this reason,
> they claim, it is impossible for an earthly body to be in heaven. For each individual
> element is held in balance by its own weight so that it says in its proper place in the
> order.[48]

In this passage Augustine needed to openly refute the Neoplatonist theory on elements of

the sky and earth. They argued that the doctrine of resurrection cannot be realized

considering the order of elements. Bodies are fated to stay on earth by the order taught by

Plato. Their argument wholly denied the soul's reunion with the resurrected body and its

dwelling in paradise or hell. These Neoplatonists claimed that the natural order of elements

disables the soul's reunion with the transformed body.

Augustine reputed the Neoplatonist theory on the order of natural elements by

affirming the authority of God who is omnipotent.[49] He presented examples contradicting

their theory of the order. After offering many cases against their theory, he said,

> Why, then, are they unwilling for us to believe that at some point the nature of earthly
> bodies will be made incorruptible and suited to heaven, just as the corruptible fire is
> now suited to earth? From the weights and order of the elements, then, the Platonists
> actually derive no grounds for declaring that God cannot make our bodies such that
> they can also dwell in heaven.[50]

In addition to presenting their errors, Augustine emphasized that even Neoplatonists cannot

rationally reject the possibility that God can transform human bodies to suit dwelling in

heaven—paradise. Therefore, the sky that Augustine thought, unlike that of the

Neoplatonists, cannot impede the creator's work to make the soul reside in paradise with

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[48] *Civ.* 22.11 (Bobcock I/7, 520).

[49] *Civ.* 22.11.

[50] *Civ.* 22.11 (Bobcock I/7, 522).

the body. He remarked the first heaven as the sky, recognizing it as a creation that is subordinate to the omnipotent creature in Scripture.

The second heaven is the spiritual, and Augustine thought that one can perceive things in it through the spiritual vision. The spiritual heaven entails some spiritual phenomena according to Scripture. Such phenomena in the second, spiritual heaven can appear in the way people perceive them. He arranged, "Or something might be presented in the spirit, by means of images of bodies, either in a dream or in ecstasy. Such were, for example, Jacob's ladder, Daniel's rock hewn without the use of hands that grew into a mountain, that sheet which Peter saw, and likewise many things which John saw."[51] Scripture showed such cases that human vision viewed phenomena associated with the spiritual heaven. The representative case was Peter's vision in Acts 10:11–12. Here, Peter the apostle testified to the second heaven in vision by observing living creatures coming down from it in the dish. He did not see the animals in the dish as physical but spiritual and symbolized to mean all nations.[52] The Scripture expressed these spiritual things of the second heaven through figurative language by divine inspiration.[53] The second heaven is located beyond the visible sky but differs from the third heaven which is paradise.

The third heaven is paradise where Paul the apostle has visited. Paul attested to the existence of the third heaven when he visited it by the power of the Holy Spirit, in 2 Corinthians 12:2. It is the place where believers' souls will abide forever. Augustine remarked that Scripture supports calling it paradise:

> But why should we not believe that, when the great Apostle and teacher of the Gentiles was carried up to such an extraordinary vision, God wished to show him the life that is to be ours forever after this life on earth? And why should not the name "paradise" be given to this also, as well as to that place where Adam lived in the body among the shade trees and the fruit trees? For the Church also, who gathers us into the bosom of her charity, is called *a paradise with the fruit of the orchard.*

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[51] *Faus.* 15.6 (Teske I/20, 190). Cf. *Gen. litt.* 12.11.

[52] *Gen. litt.* 10.25.43.

[53] *Gen. litt.* 10.25.43.

But this was said figuratively on the ground that the Church was signified, through a figure of what was to come, by that Paradise where Adam actually was.[54]

In this passage he said that both the Garden where Adam lived and the church on earth figuratively signified the paradise (*paradisus*) in the third heaven. Here, Augustine viewed the original figure both of Paradise where Adam had lived, and the church that believers gather as the body of Christ. He described that the originality of paradise is in the third heaven where Paul ascended and saw. God showed it to Paul who wrote it in Scripture to give hope for eternal bliss to the souls of believers who lived their lives seeking heavenly things.

Augustine discovered that the third heaven appeared in the Scriptures by many different names. It is called paradise, Abraham's bosom, and New Jerusalem. He reminded readers that Jesus called paradise Abraham's bosom and both terms are identical places in the sense that the human soul enjoys a peaceful rest afterlife.[55] Also, Jerusalem on earth "is a sign of Jerusalem, our eternal mother in heaven (*significat Jerusalem matrem nostram aeternam in coelis*)," as Paul called Jerusalem above as our mother (*mater nostra*) (Gal 4:26).[56] Believers' souls are saved in hope and anticipate eternal life in the realm that they do not yet see, but belong to it. He believed that Scripture signifies the paradise of the third heaven by various names and exposed its existence through many authors' experiences as written in the Scriptures. The human soul in death stays in the third heaven until it reunites with the resurrected body at the end of days.

He suggested this third type of vision to his fellow Christians to encourage them to hold hope for the heavenly Jerusalem. Believers desire this heavenly Jerusalem in the mortal body by "lifting their hearts toward her" in the journey of pilgrim life.[57] While the call for lifting the heart has already been a part of formal church liturgy, dating back to

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[54] *Gen. Litt* 12.28.56 (Taylor 2, 219–220).

[55] *Gen. litt.* 12.34.65.

[56] *Gen. litt.* 12.28.56 (Taylor 2, 220). Cf. *Conf.* 12.16.

[57] *Conf.* 12.16.23.

the council of Laodicea in the fourth century AD, it can be traced back to an older tradition that dates back to Cyprian.[58] As a spiritual leader of a spiritual community, he aspired for other Christians to embark on the journey of spiritual journey, holding fast to the hope that they would one day rest in the heavenly Jerusalem in peace.

Regarding paradise, he characterized his thought with three distinct features. First, paradise exists in the third heaven in a biblically structured cosmos. He tried to derive levels of heavens in accordance with his reading of the Scriptures. Second, paradise has a spiritual reality. Paradise is not just mere knowledge but a spiritual place that a spiritual person, like Paul, can perceive within the body. Third, human beings can proceed toward paradise through the faith of the Mediator Christ and through life following him. While the apostle could see it in vision, Christianity teaches that those who live according to the teachings of Christ will ascend to it in the end. These elements are exclusively Christian and distinguish Augustine's thought from non-Christian thinkers.

Heaven's Upper Boundary

Augustine restricted his description of the heavens—to which the human soul ascends—to his comprehension of the Scripture. The Scripture seemed to limit the third heaven as the highest place that human souls can ascend. He stated,

> In explaining the third heaven to which St. Paul was carried, some may which to conjecture the existence of a fourth heaven also, and above this still more heavens, beneath which is found the third heaven; and some actually do say that there are seven, eight, nine, or even ten; and in the one called the firmament they assert that there are many heavens and accordingly argue and conclude that they are corporeal. But to discuss these arguments and theories at the present time would take too long.[59]

In this passage he presented that some people argued that heaven consists of more physical layers. His portrayal recalls Aristotle and Pythagoreans who physically divided the heaven as being layered by the number of planets.[60] He acknowledged that some people presented

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[58] Cyprian, *De Oratione Dominica* 31. Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 23.4

[59] *Gen. litt.* 12.29.57 (Taylor 2, 220).

[60] Aristotle, *De Caelo* 2.9.

their own theory about the number of heavens, simply adding some philosophical assumption to his reading of the Scripture. He could also expand his imagination about the heavens and set the order of their spiritual levels, at least, based on the prevailing knowledge of ancient philosophy, as many others do. Unlike those people, however, Augustine tried to integrate witnesses from the experience of Peter and Paul just as written in the Scripture.

He needed to identify the marginal point where scriptural clues indicated the location of the third heaven (*tertium coelum*) as the highest heaven. He said,

> Moreover, one can hold, or demonstrate if he is able, that in spiritual or intellectual visions there are also many grades and that these are distinguished according to a progression of revelations under the influence of more or less illumination. Now whatever the facts may be and whatever different opinions men may be pleased to adopt, I have thus far been unable to recognize or maintain any objects or visions other than the three kinds perceived by the body and the spirit and the mind. But in establishing the number and degrees of difference in the various classes and in determining the relative grades of excellence in them, I admit my ignorance.[61]

In this passage he admitted that people can present their own ideas about the number of heavens, based on their experience. However, these are human ideas, meaning that they are not authoritative. He distinguished human ideas from the authority of Scripture's teachings. The Scriptures taught only three heavens that are perceived through three kinds of visions—through the body, the spirit, and the mind. Concerning more divisions other than the three, he said he would admit his ignorance (*ignorare me fateor*) instead of talking about something that Scripture does not say.[62] He restricted his understanding of the number of heavens to that which is taught in the Scriptures.

The existence of the third heaven came across with certainty into his understanding. He acknowledged that the Scriptures expose the third heaven by means of an orderly higher than the second heaven, which is spiritual; though it did not mean to be higher in terms of altitude. He denied accepting other ideas that imagine more heavens in

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[61] *Gen. litt.* 12.29.57 (Taylor 2, 220–21).

[62] *Gen. litt.* 12.29.57.

addition to the three. This discernment makes him distinctly Christian compared to those who freely expand their imagination out of the scope of the Scriptures.

Hell

Sinners' souls in death go to hell, a separate region from paradise for the punishment of their sins. Many passages in Scripture designated the place of hell to be under the earth. Augustine said,

> I fall this is so, hell is said or believed to be under the earth because of the way it is represented appropriately in the spirit by means of the likeness of corporeal things. Now the souls of the dead who are deserving of hell have sinned through love of the flesh. They are affected, therefore, by the likenesses of bodies and are subjected to the same experience as the dead flesh itself buried under the earth. Finally, hell is called the lower world, or *inferi* in Latin, because it is beneath the earth. In the corporeal world all the heavier bodies occupy a lower place if the natural tendency of their weight is not interfered with; and so in the spiritual order the gloomier realm is in a lower position.[63]

In this passage he described other souls that cannot enter paradise. The Scripture teaches hell as the place where souls go that "sinned through love of the flesh" (*carnis amore peccaverunt*). These souls pursued bodily desires and failed to prioritize the teachings of Christ to love God and their neighbors. As a result, they fall into hell, like their dead bodies were buried beneath the ground. Augustine presented hell in association with their denial of the Christian faith to follow the life of the one who rose from the dead and ascended to heaven.

Scripture calls the lower world hell because the soul experiences the same falling underneath as when their mortal flesh is buried under the earth. Here, Augustine elaborated again his understanding of the nature of the Scripture as written by human language reflecting corporeal things to reveal spiritual truth. The soul's falling to hell meant going down to the lower world in the spiritual order, although expressed "by means of the likeness of corporeal things" (*per illas corporalium rerum similitudines sic demostrantur*). Unbelievers' souls go down to the lower world that is called "*inferi* in

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[63] *Gen. litt.* 12.34.66 (Taylor 2, 227).

Latin," hell. Just as the third heaven of paradise exists as something incorporeal, hell the gloomier region has reality in a lower region in the incorporeal order.

He discovered that the Scriptures signify hell to accompany phenomena resembling events of the corporeal world. To describe the incorporeal state of hell, Augustine again brought the story of the rich and the poor:

> There, also, there is a light that belongs to that state, different from light elsewhere and quite excellent in its nature. It was this light that the rich man saw from his torments in the darkness of hell; and though he saw it from such a great distance, because there was a vast gulf between them, nevertheless he saw it clearly enough to recognize there the poor man he had once despised.[64]

This passage portrayed some shape of hell and paradise in a geographical manner through reflection of the narrative of the poor and the rich in Scripture. In that narrative, hell is placed in the region from which the rich could recognize the poor in paradise, while a great distance divided the two (*cum magnum chasma esset in medio*). The rich man in hell could see the light from paradise wherein the poor lived with it. That light was something different from other light in nature (*Neque enim et lux ibi non est propria quaedam et sui generis*) and was excellent by nature (*et profecto magna*). Such interpretation represents that Augustine comprehended hell according to the Scripture. He believed that Christians must understand hell, and heaven, in a way "not departing from the authority of Sacred Scripture (*nos ab auctoritate divinarum Scripturarum*)."[65]

The human soul in hell perceives senses like when it was in the body. God created the human soul as the subject of sense perception whether it sits in the body or not. Augustine stated,

> If we consider the matter more closely, however, we shall see that pain, which is said to belong to the body, actually pertains to the soul. For it is the soul, not the body, that feels pain, even when the reason for its pain stems from the body, in that it feels pain where the body is hurt. Thus, just as we say that bodies feel and bodies are alive, even though it is only due to the soul that the body has sensation and life, so also we say that bodies feel pain even though, apart from the soul, there can be no bodily pain. The soul, then, feels pain together with the body at the point where something

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[64] *Gen. litt.* 12. 34. 65 (Taylor 2, 227).

[65] *Gen. litt.* 12. 33. 62 (Taylor 2, 224).

happens to put it in pain; and the soul feels pain on its own, even though it is in the body, when it is saddened by some cause, even when the cause is invisible, but the body itself is not injured. The soul also feels pain even when it is not present in a body, for the rich man was certainly feeling pain in hell when he said, *I am in torment in this flame* (Lk 16:24). The body, on the other hand, feels no pain when the soul is not present; and, even when the soul is present, it still does not feel pain on its own apart from the soul. [66]

In this statement he elaborated on how the soul can feel pain (*dolor*). Considering the narrative of the rich and the poor, again, the sense perception belongs to the soul itself. The human soul does not lose the natural functionality of sense perception in hell, as the story of the rich and the poor illustrates. In the narrative, the soul with sense perception confronted the phenomena of hell, becoming the subject of that experience. The human soul in hell underwent such things as fire, pain, and sorrow, as was experienced within the body, as the rich cries, "*I am in torment in this flame* (*Crucior in hac flamma*).[67] Therefore, the soul can feel the pain of hell even without the flesh.

Augustine acknowledged that the result from his philosophical survey of the soul's emotions and senses differed from that of Neoplatonists. He summarized, "It is true that Platonists have claimed that the soul's fears and desires, griefs and joys, stem from these earthly bodies, and death-bound members."[68] Platonist belief in the soul's separateness from bodily senses, especially pain, contradicted the Christian faith in the suffering of evildoers' souls in hell. Contrarily, Augustine saw the contradiction in themselves as well. They argued that souls desire to return to bodies. This fact meant the souls out of the body could feel pain because of that "frustrated desire" (*frustrata . . . cupiditas*). He pointed out that if Platonists claim that the souls desire to return to bodies, then, that desire for bodies can be pain. This desire is frustrated "either because it does

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[66] *Civ.* 21.3 (Babcock I/7, 450).

[67] Augustine thought that the human soul out of the body is possible to perceive senses because the soul is the subjective self of experiencing them even in the body. On the other hand, the body loses all sense when the soul departs. Augustine detailed this in *Civ.* 21.3.

[68] *Civ.* 21.3 (Babcock I/7, 450).

not get what it wants or because it loses what it had obtained."[69] As a result, Augustine

saw that Platonists' theory of the soul's liberation from bodily desire is self-contradicting

both in logic and among those who claim different theories. Although they could discover

the truth of the soul's functionality without the body, they were caught in self-contradiction

and lost the truth that is taught by Christianity.

Augustine needed to give an explanation about the fire and souls in hell. Some

people claimed against Christianity that it is unreasonable to think that souls and bodies

do not lose their substance in the fire of hell. Augustine argued that God created marvelous

things in nature that surprise and humble the people who think they can offer rational

accounts for everything. He presented many exceptional materials such as diamond and

lime that the flame of a natural fire cannot extinguish. People could not explain why a

natural fire cannot burn the materials that are found in nature. Augustine stated that he

could not explain how the fire in hell torments the souls of sinners without causing them

harm or extinguishing their existence. He said,

> And, since we cannot provide one, inasmuch as these are things that exceed the
> powers of the human mind, they presume that what we say is false. Let them
> provide, then, a rational account of all the wondrous things that we can see or do
> see. And, if they recognize that this is beyond human capacity, they should admit
> that the bare fact that a rational account cannot be provided for something does not
> mean that it did not happen or that it will not happen, given that there are all these
> things which are equally inexplicable.[70]

While the fire of hell exceeded his ability to explain it, he believed that the

existence of wondrous things that nobody can explain does not prove something does not

exist. Rather, he says, "But this at least is completely certain—that nothing which God

wills is impossible for him."[71] He based his argument on the omnipotent nature of God.

His argument showed that he held the doctrine of hell based on the teachings of

Scriptures instead of picking up things only that can be explained by human reason.

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[69] *Civ.* 21.3 (Babcock I/7, 450).

[70] *Civ.* 21.5 (Babcock I/7, 454).

[71] *Civ.* 21.5 (Babcock I/7, 455).

The fire of hell gives pain to the souls for eternal punishment. Augustine recognized that Christ taught the punishment will last without the end of time. He said,

> Would it not be odd to hold that "eternal punishment" means "fire lasting for a long time" but at the same time to believe that "eternal life" means "life without end"—especially in view of the fact that in this same passage Christ included both phrases in one and the same sentence: *These shall go into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life* (Mt 25:46)? If both are eternal, we should obviously take the term in the same sense in both cases. Either both last a long time but have an end, or both have no end. For the two expressions—*eternal punishment* and *eternal life*—stand in parallel. And to use eternal in one and the same sense to mean that eternal life will have no end, but that eternal punishment will have an end, is utterly absurd. Consequently, because it is certain that the eternal life of the saints will have no end, there can be no doubt that the eternal punishment of the condemned will also have no end.[72]

In this passage he presented Christ's words that both punishment and the lives of souls will be eternal in the afterlife. He interpreted it that the fire of punishment will be eternal; Christ equated its duration with the eternal life in paradise. The agony of the eternal hellfire begins even before the reunion with their resurrected bodies.

The existence of hell as the place of eternal punishment for those who do not believe in Christ could not parallel Neoplatonic cosmology in any sense. Neoplatonists believed in temporal punishment for the universal salvation of the soul from the corporeal world. They believed the corporeal world was the lowest realm in their cosmic order. The soul must abandon it to be liberated through ascension. Contrarily, Augustine held hell as the lower in order and the corporeal world as the place where the soul's ascension takes place, as seen in the previous chapter. Considering these differences, the theme of hell dramatically differentiated the cosmic order that Augustine convinced other than what Neoplatonists delineated.

Souls both in paradise and hell do not live there without body forever. All souls must face the time to resume either the rest in paradise or the suffering in hell, with their bodies that are resurrected in transformed figures. Therefore, the souls enter the so-called eschatological phase represented in the doctrines of resurrection and the final punishment.

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[72] *Civ.* 21.23 (Babcock I/7, 478).

Reunion with the Resurrected Body

Augustine held the belief of bodily resurrection. The theme of the resurrection of the body characterized Augustine's early thought to be Christian. Moreover, the soul's reunion with the resurrected body in the upper realm shows that he directed his intellectual endeavor in or toward Christian doctrines instead of other philosophies. Of course, he did not derive this belief from his philosophical reasoning or personal experience. The human soul's ascension and reunion with the transformed body appeared in the doctrine of incarnation, resurrection, and final punishment. These doctrines distinguished Christianity from other philosophies as he perceived such differences before his baptism. Augustine began to reflect on the resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul from his early writing after baptism.

In his early work *De Animae Quantitate*, Augustine expressed his belief in the soul's reunion with the resurrected body. He thought that the incarnation of Christ warrants the soul's reunion with the resurrected body. He said,

> We shall also see such great changes and transformations in this physical universe in observance of divine laws, that we hold even the resurrection of the body, which some believe with too many reservations and some do not believe at all, to be so certain that the setting of the sun is no greater certainty to us. Then, indeed, shall we contemn those who ridicule the assumption of human nature by the almighty, eternal immutable Son of God as a warranty and as first fruits of our salvation, and His birth from a Virgin, and the other marvels of that historic account.[73]

Here, he explained the importance of holding the belief in the resurrection of the body (*resurrectionem carnis*). The Christian faith demands a great turn away of thought from other ideas to the belief in the historical resurrection of the body and the salvation of the soul in that marvelous event, according to the doctrine of Incarnation. In this doctrine, Christianity taught that "the almighty, eternal immutable Son of God" (*a Filio Dei potentissimo, aeterno, incommutabili*) became "first fruits of our salvation" (*ad exemplum salutis nostrae ac primitias*) through "His birth from a Virgin" (*natum esse de virgine*). Augustine believed that the resurrection of the body to reunite with the soul was more

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[73] *Quant. an.* 33.76 (Colleran, 105).

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certain than observing the setting of the sun in the sky because the Scripture teaches the Incarnation as a historical event. The historicity of the Incarnation guarantees the resurrection of the body. He already acknowledged that the doctrine of the resurrection played a crucial part in his Christian faith, from the early time of his baptism.

Considering the nature of the soul, he felt the necessity to explain the reason for the importance of the body's resurrection, particularly after taking a pastoral task in North Africa. However, he could not find in Scripture the reason for the soul to reunite with the resurrected body. Once again, he needed to employ philosophical investigation to fit his reasoning on the nature of the human soul into the doctrine of the Incarnation. Augustine said,

> There should, however, be no doubt that a man's mind, when it is carried out of the senses of the flesh in ecstasy, or when after death it has departed from the flesh, is unable to see the immutable essence of God just as the holy angels see it, even though it has passed beyond the likenesses of corporeal things. This may be because of some mysterious reason or simply because of the fact that it possesses a kind of natural appetite for managing the body. By reason of this appetite it is somehow hindered from going on with all its force to the highest heaven, so long as it is not joined with the body, for it is in managing the body that this appetite is satisfied.[74]

In this passage the human soul cannot become perfect by itself simply by departing from the body into the state of death because of its habituation acquired in the body—as said, "a kind of natural appetite for managing the body" (*naturalis quidam appetitus corpus administrandi*). The soul out of the body still cannot fully recover its visionary ability to see the immutable essence of God (*non sic videre posse incommutabilem substantiam*). The soul could not discard this hindrance that is habituated during the time in the mortal body. Augustine might mean here that God created the human soul to work fully with any kind of body either mortal or immortal that is transformed body in the resurrection. Such the functional nature of the human soul necessitates it to reunite with the resurrected body and the union makes it fully recover its visionary ability.[75] The resurrected body will not

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[74] *Gen. litt.* 12.35.68 (Taylor 2, 228-29).

[75] Augustine contends that the soul in the resurrected body will see things with its penetrating gaze. God will be known to the saved souls. See *Civ.* 22.29.

cause any trouble to the soul to perceive God. After the union with the resurrected body, the soul will make perfect peace.[76]

Augustine remarked that the soul's reunion with the resurrected body is the theme dependent on God's omnipotence and associated with the practice of God's justice:

> Believe, therefore, with a strong and unshaken conviction, that all things that seem to be withdrawn from the eyes of men, as it were, by decay, are safe and sound as regard the omnipotence of God, who shall restore them without any delay or difficulty, at His pleasure—those of them at least that His justice deems worthy of being restored—in order that men may render an account of their actions in those bodies in which they performed them; and that in them they may merit either change to heavenly incorruptibility as the reward of their goodness, or a corruptible state of body as the reward of their wickedness, a corruptible state of body not to be ended with death, but destined to furnish material for everlasting pains.[77]

In this passage he emphasized the importance of the belief in bodily resurrection. Christians hold the belief in the body's resurrection in observance of the omnipotence of God. God will restore the substance of bodies that have already decayed. He remarked that the soul's reunion with the transformed body is related to the justice of God. Within the incorruptible body, souls will receive either a good reward for their good works in the mortal body or eternal torment for their wickedness practiced in the mortal body. God will judge souls in the resurrected body for their deeds in the former body.

Augustine described that the Scripture teaches the necessity of the transformed body for the soul. He read Paul's teachings as,

> So the bodies of the saints will rise again with do defect, no deformity, no corruption, burden, or difficulty, and their facility in living will be equal to their felicity. That is why they are called spiritual, although there is no doubt that they will be bodies, not spirits. But as we now speak of an ensouled body, which however is a body and not a soul, so then the body will be spiritual, while being a body and not a spirit. And as for the corruption which now weighs down the soul, and the vices which cause the flesh to have desires contrary to the spirit, then it will be not flesh but a body, for there are also said to be heavenly bodies. That is why it is said: *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,* and the author goes on as if to explain what he has said: *nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable* (1 Cor 15:50). What he previously called *flesh and blood* he subsequently called *corruption,* and what he previously called *the kingdom of God* he subsequently called *incorruption.* But, as for its substance, even then it will be flesh, which is why even after the resurrection the

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[76] *Doctr. Chr.* 1.19.18. See also *Civ.* 22.29.

[77] *Catech.* 25.46 (Christopher, 78).

body of Christ is called flesh. But that is why the apostle says, *It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body* (1 Cor 15:44), because there will be such harmony between flesh and spirit, the spirit giving life without need of any sustenance to the body that will be subject to it, that nothing within us will fight against us, but just as we shall have no external enemies, so we shall not have to suffer ourselves as our own inner enemies.[78]

In this passage he derived the nature of the resurrected body from Paul's words. The believers' bodies will rise into new forms of bodies. It is still called the body but does not consist of flesh. The transformed bodies will live lives of felicity without defect, deformity, corruption, burden, or difficulty. Paul called this body the spiritual body because it is a body, although it does not consist of mortal flesh. The apostle called this body spiritual because it obeys God's will.

In addition, he interpreted 1 Corinthians 15:50 as remarking on the importance of the transformed body for the soul. Paul said that flesh could not enter the heavenly kingdom, just as John said that those who follow the desire of flesh cannot become sons of God. The corrupted nature of the human being within the mortal body distracted the soul from following Christ's teachings. Although the body itself is created by God so that it is good, it ended up being mortal when the first human sinned against God in the Garden. Therefore, as the apostle said, again, "It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body." When the body dies, the earthly desires will be buried with it. This immortal body is pleased to obey the Holy Spirit. The spiritual bodies of believers will need "no tree to protect them from dying of disease or of advanced old age, nor will they need any other bodily foods to ward off the distress of hunger and thirst."[79] The soul united with the resurrected body will not suffer from the battle against earthly desires anymore.

Augustine viewed that Christians must understand the spiritual body through the doctrine of sin and the resurrection of Christ:

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[78] *Enchir.* 23.91 (Augustine, "The Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Charity," in *On Christian Belief*, ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. Bruce Harbert, I/8, Works of Saint Augustine 8 [Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2005], 325).

[79] *Civ.* 13.22 (Babcock I/7, 89).

On the other hand, to show how the spiritual body should be understood, he adds, *The last Adam became a life-giving spirit* (1 Cor 15:45). Here, beyond doubt, he is referring to Christ, who had already risen from the dead with the result that he could no longer die again. Then he goes on to say, *But it is not the spiritual that is first but the animal, and then the spiritual* (1 Cor 15:46). Here he declares much more openly that he was insinuating a reference to the animal body where Scripture says that the first man became a living soul, and a reference to the spiritual body where he says, *The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*[80]

In this passage he thought that Christians must understand the nature of the spiritual body in relation to the first man. The apostle said in 1 Corinthians 15:45, "The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." Adam had a body that is flesh, and it would not become mortal if he did not sin. Since then, all human beings possess the same kind of body as Adam.[81] Christ, the last Adam, also became flesh of the same kind. But the resurrected body of Christ differed from the natural body. Christ's body is transformed into the spiritual body to assume his people at the final resurrection of the dead. On the other hand, Paul contrasted the first man who became a living soul with the last Adam who became a life-giving spirit. Augustine understood this contrast that Paul called the last Adam a life-giving spirit not because he was a spirit but because he was heavenly and destined for dwelling in heaven. Believers' souls will reunite with the body that was corporeal by birth but become spiritual by resurrection.

Christ is the power enabling the union of the soul and body. Augustine wanted to clarify the principle of the resurrection. He said,

The Apostle puts this even more clearly in the same epistle: Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as all die in Adam, so shall all be made alive in Christ (1 Cor 15:21–22); they will then be, that is, in a spiritual body, which will be a life-giving spirit. This does not mean, however, that all who die in Adam will be members of Christ, for far more of them will be punished with the second death for eternity. Rather, the reason why the Apostle uses the word all in both cases is that, just as no one dies in the animal body except in Adam, so no one is made alive in the spiritual body except in Christ.[82]

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[80] *Civ.* 13.23 (Babcock I/7, 91).

[81] *Civ.* 13.23.

[82] *Civ.* 13.23 (Babcock I/7, 92).

Here he attempted to explain the reason for those who will reunite with a spiritual body. Christ brought the resurrection of the dead into the world. This type of the resurrected body differs from that of Adam's body before he sinned. the transformation can occur only in Christ as he is the source of the eternal lives of the believers' souls and bodies. For this reason, Paul referred to Christ as the life-giving soul, not a living soul as was Adam's soul before sin. Such reasoning regarding the soul and the resurrected body, regardless of whether one agrees or not, shows its Christian identity.

The soul might recover its capacity to observe incorporeal things after the union with the resurrected body, while the Scripture does not give a strong testimony on the opinion of it seeing God. The soul in the transformed body possesses an ability similar to the eyes of the mind. With high possibility, the soul, through the eyes of the new body, will perceive the incorporeal God ruling all things. However, he postponed the final word by saying, "God then will be seen by those eyes in virtue of their possession (in this transformed condition) of something of an intellectual quality, a power to discern things of an immaterial nature. Yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to support this suggestion by any evidence of passages in holy Scripture."[83] Here, he manifested that his view is not strong because it is not supported by the Scripture. One can imagine by inductive reasoning that the soul in the new body will perceive things corporeal and incorporeal.[84] But for Augustine, the Scriptures do not provide clear evidence of whether the soul in the resurrected body can observe God with its spiritual eyes. He gazed at its possibility through reasoning but limited himself not to sound like going beyond the teaching of Scripture.

Besides the inspection of the functional relation between the soul and the resurrected body, he found that Scripture talks more about the soul's life in paradise. Although the soul ended the earthly life when it left the body, it begins a new life in the

[83] *Civ.* 22.29 (Bettenson, 1087).

[84] *Civ.* 22.29.

union with the new body in the heavenly Jerusalem. Scriptures provide a covenant about what the souls will experience in paradise.

The Life to Come

The soul reunited with the transformed body enters the Heavenly City, or heavenly Jerusalem. Scripture prophesized the existence of Jerusalem above through prophets, from the early era of patriarchs in the promise of blessing through the covenant. The word Jerusalem in Scripture implies double meaning, one is the temple of Israel on the earth and the other the Jerusalem in heaven, the City of God.[85] God achieved this new covenant in Christ to give eternal life and the kingdom of heaven.[86] The soul will enjoy eternal life in eternal felicity in the heavenly Jerusalem that lasts forever.

In the heavenly Jerusalem, the soul receives the ultimate rewards: God himself, as a culmination of its faithful life.[87] Augustine interprets Jeremiah's words about the reward of God and its significance: "God himself; and to possess him, and to be his possession, is the Highest Good, and the Entire Good, in that City" (*Deus ipse praemium est, eumque habere atque ipsius esse summum ibi est atque totum bonum*).[88] Scripture promised the believer's soul with the transformed body to receive the highest Good when it becomes the possession of God in that city. Augustine explicated what it means for the soul to receive the highest Good:

> No one will wish to be what it has not been granted him to be; and yet he will be bound in the closest bond of peaceful harmony with one to whom it has been granted; just as in the body the finger does not wish to be the eye, since both members are included in the harmonious organization of the whole body. And so although one will have a gift inferior to another, he will have also the compensatory gift of contentment with what he has.[89]

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[85] *Civ.*17.3.

[86] *Civ.* 17.3.

[87] *Civ.* 17.3; 22.30.

[88] *Civ.* 17.3 (Bettenson, 714).

[89] *Civ.* 22.30 (Bettenson, 1088).

In this passage he articulated that the soul with the body satisfies in entirety whatever it receives from God in the Heavenly City. This meant that the soul would desire for nothing because the soul achieves the goal that every soul has longed (*finis erit desideriorum nostrorum*). They will "see him for ever (*sine fine videbiture*)"; "love him without satiety (*sine fastidio amabitur*)"; and "praise him without wearying (*sine fatigatione laudabitur*)."[90] The soul in the heavenly Jerusalem does not desire anything except God because God "shall be the source of their satisfaction (*Ego ero unde satientur*)," as Paul the apostle said, "so that God may be all in all (*Ut sit Deus omnia in omnibus*)."[91] In the heavenly Jerusalem the soul fulfills all desires in God himself.

When the soul reunites with the transformed body it recovers the sight of the eyes with perfection. The perfect sight of the soul enables it to see the Lord. Augustine said,

> As for the Apostle's phrase, "face to face," that does not compel us to believe that we shall see God by means of this corporeal face, with its corporal eyes. We shall see God by the spirit without any interruption. For if there was not also a 'face' of the inner man the same Apostle would not say, "But we, gazing at the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as it were by the Spirit of the Lord."[92]

Here he accommodated what Paul the apostle said about the soul in paradise. The corruptible body no longer hinders the soul's sight. The soul in the transformed body has a face (*faciem*), as Paul alluded to in "face to face" (*Faciem ad faciem*). Augustine connected the perfection told by Paul with the perfect functionality of the resurrected body, including its eyesight. This follows that the soul will see the Lord through the eyes that now become perfect, as the apostle mentioned, "When perfection comes then all that is incomplete will disappear" (*autem venerit quod perfectum est, quod ex parte est*

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90 *Civ.* 22.30 (Bettenson, 1088).

91 *Civ.* 22. 30 (Bettenson, 1088).

92 *Civ.* 22. 29 (Bettenson, 1085).

evacuabitur).[93] For Augustine, this teaching of the Scriptures meant that the soul would observe God through the eyes of the perfected body without corruption.

The soul in the resurrected body possesses transformed free will. Augustine believed that the free will of the soul in the heavenly Jerusalem, with the body, becomes even freer than before to be in accordance with the sinless nature of God. He stated, "The first freedom of will, given to man when he was created upright at the beginning, was an ability not to sin, combined with the possibility of sinning. But this last freedom will be more potent, for it will bring the impossibility of sinning; yet this also will be the result of God's gift, not of some inherent quality of nature."[94] In this passage he attempted to define the free will (*liberum arbitrium*) of the soul in the heavenly Jerusalem in comparison with that of the first man in the garden. The first man used the free will to sin, while he had free will not to sin (*primum liberum arbitrium . . . potuit non perccare, sed potuit et peccare*). Compared with it, the freewill of soul in the heavenly Jerusalem cannot sin anymore (*quo peccare non poterit*). This freewill is "God's gift, not of some inherent quality of nature" (*Dei munere, non suae possibilitate naturae*). Believers' souls will receive this gift, transformed free will, in paradise for their eternal felicity.

Although it loses the ability to sin in the heavenly Jerusalem, the soul still possesses memory about its experience of evil in past times. Augustine seemed to differentiate the memory of evil that the soul experienced in the corruptible body from the experience of the body itself. He stated,

> Thus, knowledge of evil is of two kinds: one in which it is accessible to apprehension by the mind, the other in which it is a matter of direct experience. Similarly, ices are known in one way through the teaching of the wise, and in another way in the evil life of the fools. There are two corresponding ways of forgetting evil. The learned scholar's way of forgetting is different from that of one who has experienced suffering. The scholar forgets by neglecting his studies; the sufferer, by escaping from his misery. The saints will have no sensible recollection of past evils; theirs

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[93] *Civ.* 22. 29 (Bettenson, 1083).

[94] *Civ.* 22. 30 (Bettenson, 1089).

will be the second kind of forgetfulness by which they will be set free from them all, and they will be completely erased from their feelings.[95]

In this statement he distinguished knowledge of evil into two kinds: one as being "accessible to apprehension by the mind" (*potentiam mentis non latent*), the other as "a matter of direct experience" (*experientis sensibus inhaerent*). Saints in the heavenly Jerusalem undergo the process of forgetting about the second type of memory, "experienced suffering" (*expertus et passus*). They do remember past evils in the sense that they become free from past miserable feelings. The souls "will be free from all evil and filled with all good, enjoying unfailingly the delight of eternal joys, forgetting all offenses, forgetting all punishments."[96] As said, they will not recall the misery of evil experience and enjoy the delight of eternal joys (*aeternorum iucunditate gaudiorum*). However, saints hold the memory of past things. The memory of past miseries causes saints to be thankful for the mercies of the Lord's saving grace.

Souls of saints in the resurrected bodies enjoy the eternal Sabbath and the following Lord's Day. Framing the history of humanity, in accordance with the Scripture by the six creation "days," Augustine designated the resting state of saints into the seventh day. He finished *De Civitate Dei* by emphasizing,

> The important thing is that the seventh will be our Sabbath, whose end will not be an evening, but the Lord's Day, an eighth day, as it were, which is to last for ever, a day consecrated by the resurrection of Christ, foreshadowing the eternal rest not only of the spirit but of the body also. There we shall be still and see; we shall see and we shall love; we shall love and we shall praise. Behold what will be, in the end, without end! For what is our end but to reach that kingdom which has no end?[97]

Here Augustine elaborated that saints' souls end up living in the heavenly Jerusalem without end. They will rest in God on their Sabbath (*sabbatum nostrum*). That Sabbath does not have an evening. Instead, the Lord's Day (*dominicus dies*) follows the Sabbath, he calls it the eighth day, which is consecrated by the resurrection of Christ (*octauus . . .*

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[95] *Civ.* 22. 30 (Bettenson, 1089–90).

[96] *Civ.* 22. 30 (Bettenson, 1089).

[97] *Civ.* 22. 30 (Bettenson, 1091).

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qui Christi resurrection sacratus est). The saints will rest (*vacabimus*), see (*videbimus*), love (*amabimus*), and praise (*laudabimus*) there forever (*sine fine*). He understood these eternal verbs of the soul to have a place in the extended "day" following the last "day" of God's creation. He could make sense of day 8 to exist as the extension caused by the resurrection of Christ, for believers' souls and their transformed bodies.

On the other hand, unbelievers' souls undergo prolonged punishment after the reunion with the body. This extended punishment has no end in time.[98] Anyone who wants to avoid eternal punishment must repent, be baptized, be justified in Christ "to pass over in truth from the devil to Christ" (*ac sic vere transeat a diabolo ad Christum*).[99] Here, unbelievers' souls meant those who did not convert to Christianity. These souls fall into eternal punishment with resurrected bodies as believers' souls enter eternal life with their resurrected bodies. Scripture destined such division, and Augustine found it encapsulated in a single sentence spoken by Christ: "So those people will go into eternal punishment, while the righteous will go into eternal life" (*Sic ibunt isti in supplicium aeternum, iusti autem in vitam aeternam*).[100] Augustine read this passage that if eternal life means infinite life, then eternal punishment will be infinite as well.[101] Based on such comprehension, he assured that the eternal punishment continues with no end.

Augustine needed to correct some errors in understanding the nature of eternal punishment. Platonists falsely thought that all punishments aim only for the temporal purification of the soul for its preparation for the reunion with One in the higher rank. Augustine contended that Platonists claimed such a false nature of punishment to fit it into their cosmology. He stated, "Those who hold this view will have it that the only punishment after death are those intended to purify, so that souls may be cleansed from

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[98] *Civ.* 22. 23.

[99] *Civ.* 21.16 (Babcock I/7, 472).

[100] *Civ.* 21.23 (Bettenson, 1001).

[101] *Civ.* 21.23.

any infection contracted by contact with the earth by purifying pains inflicted by one of the elements superior to the earth, which are air, fire and water."[102] Augustine summarized Platonists' claim that all punishments intended for souls to become cleansed by some elements superior to the earth (*quoniam terris superiora sunt elementa*). Their thought of temporal punishment for purification could not parallel to the Christian doctrine of eternal punishment.

Christians believe that the punishment of unbelievers lasts forever. Augustine distinguished between the souls of believers and unbelievers in terms of their destination in punishment. Believers experience some punishments in the earthly life for the purpose of spiritual purification, according to God's providence. Augustine reasoned that the purification might have some exceptions for those who believe in Christ but committed a sin either through ignorance or through ill-will. Such kind of people "will receive forgiveness in the world to come for what is not forgiven in this, as I have said above, so that they may not be punished with the eternal chastisement of the world to come."[103] Here he explained that punishments, in this life and after bodily death, exercise purification only for "those who are disciplined and corrected by them" (*qui eis coherciti corriguntur*).[104] Otherwise, unbelievers' souls fall into eternal punishment from this life into eternal death to come. He made a clear distinction between the Christian teaching of the punishment and Platonists' concept of it.

Describing the soul's afterlife, Augustine concentrated his argument on the doctrines of incarnation, resurrection, and punishment. In many places he depended on

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[102] *Civ.* 32.13 (Bettenson, 990). He thought that Virgil's poet well represented Platonists' thought of purification.

[103] *Civ.* 21.13 (Bettenson, 990).

[104] *Civ.* 21.13 (Bettenson, 990). This is one passage that represents Augustine's thought of purgatory. Before Augustine, many Christian thinkers held the possibility of purgatory fire for Christian sinners—including Ambrosiaster, Jerome, and Ambrose. John N. D. Kelly maintained that Augustine relied his thought of purgatory on his reading of Scripture. See John N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: HarperCollins, 1978), 484–85. See 1 Cor 3:13-15; Matt 12:32. Cf. Augustine, *Enchiridion ad Laurentium* 18.69; *Civ.* 21.24, 26.

ratiocination to harmonize the teachings of the Scripture. He investigated the Scripture to project life to come. He articulated the concept that the life of souls would stem from their reunion with resurrected bodies. Scripture taught different destinies of believers' and unbelievers' souls. He interweaved his thoughts of souls' lives to receive either eternal felicity or punishment, which exclusively reflects the Christian faith.

Christian Teachings Distinguished from Neoplatonism

Augustine was immersed in the Christian vision of the soul's afterlife. Christianity taught that the human soul ascends to the places where the Scriptures allocate for good and evil souls. He could distinguish different destinies of souls, which differed from what Neoplatonists believed. Describing the soul's afterlife, Scripture alluded to the structure of the visible and invisible heavens. All souls are destined to reunite with resurrected bodies in the last days. Christian tradition effectively condensed these narratives into its core doctrines, including creation *ex nihilo*, incarnation, resurrection of the body, and punishment. Augustine's consistent engagement with these doctrines made six distinctive points contrasting with the Neoplatonists regarding the belief of souls' ends.

First, Augustine explained the scheme of the heavens, where the soul ascends, by interpreting clues found in the Scriptures. He discovered some insights into the composition of the heavens, consisting of three orders: sky, spiritual realm, and paradise. The human soul ascends to the third heaven when it departs from the body. He believed that Scripture called the same place by several different names, such as Abraham's bosom, paradise, Jerusalem above, and third heaven, as mentioned by Paul. He knew many other ancient thinkers layered the heaven for their own purpose but he held on to the limitation that the Scripture imposes. The soul's ascension to paradise described in Augustine's works made a great difference from the Neoplatonic ascension of the soul. Neoplatonists believed the human soul must go through many desirable processes, in higher ranks, by the ascension. The soul ascends to the intellectual realm first and unites with the upper soul there, then goes up to the higher ranks to be close to Good. This type of hierarchical

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ascension could not be paralleled with Augustine's thought that the soul takes rest in the bosom of Abraham when it departs from the body. He did not make subdivisions or extensions of the heavens like other ancient thinkers. The soul in death rests in the bosom of Abraham, just as the Scripture teaches.

Second, he maintained that metaphorically, the human soul's upward or downward journey upon leaving the body is determined by the soul's faith and way of life. The Scriptures say that some souls go in the upward direction while other souls go in the downward direction. Although these languages do not point out the geographical direction, Augustine used them in his description of heaven and hell as they appeared in the Scriptures. On the other hand, his description of evil souls' descension to hell contradicted the Neoplatonic teaching. Neoplatonists thought that the invisible realm is by nature superior to the visible realm. Plotinus elevated the invisible realm to a higher order than the visible realm in his cosmology, through his detailed illustration of it. The invisible place of hell placed in the directionally downward realm violated the Neoplatonic scheme of order, although Augustine did not mention it. As a result, he disputed the fundamental structure of the universe that Neoplatonists believed, by following Scripture's teaching of hell.

Third, he believed that the soul, even after departing from the body, continues to function in the same way it did within the body. The feature of the soul's life without the body corresponds to other doctrines. He viewed the soul to be subject to punishment even before reuniting with the resurrected body. Scripture suggests that the state of the soul without a body can be best understood through the language depicting it as having a body-like shape. The body-like soul operates the functional feature of the physical body so that it suffers the punishment of hell. This approach to delineating the soul's state out of the body could not parallel the Neoplatonic idea of the soul's state. In Neoplatonic metaphysics, the soul must be shapeless to unite with the upper soul, which is an undivided entity. The upper soul receives the form from One, but it can actualize it only in the visible

realm. Therefore, the soul freed from the body does not receive any punishment unless it is sent back to the animal body for punishment to the visible realm. Regarding his early acknowledgment of the doctrine of sin and its penalty, Augustine recognized that such a phantasmal state of the soul in the Neoplatonic philosophy does not support the Christian teaching of the soul suffering under sensory punishment in hell.

Fourth, he believed that human souls enter the irreversible procession of eternal reward or punishment. Augustine saw that Scripture teaches that all human beings are destined to face the final punishment. Between the moment of death and the resurrection of the body, the soul stays in the irrevocable state, either resting or suffering eternal fire, and it will be prolonged without end after reunion with the resurrected body. On the other hand, Neoplatonists aimed at all souls' ascension and reunion with One. Through the fundamental principle of emanation, Neoplatonists believed that Good emitted the soul, granted immortality, and fated it to return to Good in the end. Punishment cannot take place once the soul ascends to the higher ranks. Consequently, some souls suffer under temporal punishment in the visible realm only when they need to purify themselves for complete purification, which makes it possible to ascend. The souls attain punishments in terms of infinite regression, during which they are subject to transmigration until they are purified and liberated from the body, then they ascend to reunite with the higher ranks. Augustine denied such a concept of transmigration of the soul. When it leaves the body, the human soul cannot earn a second chance to escape from the punishment. He discovered this rectilinear process of the soul's journey in the Scriptures but not in the works of Neoplatonists.

Fifth, he contended that every human soul would reunite with the resurrected body. Christian doctrines teach that every human dies since the first human has sinned. As Augustine acknowledged from the early time of his conversion, the whole of human history proceeds toward the soul's reunion with the resurrected body.[105] Then, each soul

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[105] *Quant. an.* 33.76.

receives either eternal felicity in paradise or eternal punishment in hell according to their life. Christians believe that this biblical narrative represents the universal destiny toward which every human soul is directed. Therefore, souls advance for the reunion with the body, not for the liberation from the body. The Christian belief in the reunion of the soul and body forms a critical point against Neoplatonists. Plotinus, for example, believed that the soul must return to the original state to unite with One by being freed from the shackle of the mortal body. Although Plato and Porphyry felt that the soul needed some kind of body, as Augustine presented, Neoplatonists did not believe in the resurrection of the human body and the soul's reunion with it. Neoplatonists believed the soul must return to its original state before falling into the visible realm. But Augustine followed the rectilinear history of Christianity that the soul's life ends up with the reunion with the original body that is transformed.

Sixth, he viewed that the resurrected body might functionally accomplish the soul's eternal life. He knew from the early time of his conversion that the soul needs the resurrected body according to the teachings of Christianity. The soul out of the body cannot perceive spiritual things as they are because of the lack of natural appetite it uses to manage the body.[106] Though, by receiving the transformed body, the soul recovers the perfect functions such as "obeying and commanding, vivified and vivifying."[107] The soul with the resurrected body recovers the sight of the eyes and free will not to sin.[108] Such biblical and dogmatic frameworks on the relation between the soul and the resurrected body could not be paralleled with Neoplatonic ideas of the soul's felicity in the complete liberation from the body. Augustine believed that the soul enters eternal felicity or punishment with the functionally, spiritually perfected body, while Plotinus thought the

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[106] *Gen. litt.* 12.35.68.

[107] *Gen. litt.* 12.35.68 (Taylor 2, 229).

[108] *Civ.* 22.29, 30.

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soul must abandon it to be perfected. Augustine's belief that the soul requires the resurrected body distinguishes his thought from that of Neoplatonists.

These features appear coherently in the early time of his conversion and later when he came to work as a pastor. The rectilinear life of the soul runs toward the end of the time at which God will punish all souls united with the resurrected body according to their faithful life. Christian faith does not hold the regressive return of the soul to the earth for their purification as Neoplatonists thought. The soul will recover its perfection in the original human form created *ex nihilo*, consisting of both the soul and body, but with a transformed body. The reunion with the resurrected body will grant the completion of the soul's liberation from sin. Such a narrative of the human soul unfolded within the scope of core Christian doctrines that were said above. This deployment of the soul's afterlife does not deviate from Christian teachings that form the crucial identity of the Christian faith.

Conclusion

Considering the end of the human soul, Augustine faced many philosophical tasks in terms of defining concepts based on the Scriptures. The word death challenged him to rethink its meaning in consideration of the soul's immortality. He knew that the Christian faith does not hold the dual habitation of the soul, the higher and lower. Therefore, he needed to perceive the soul as being in death after separation from the body instead of returning to or reunion with the higher soul like Plotinus believed.

Compared with Neoplatonists, Christianity taught an entirely different afterlife of souls entering either paradise or hell, in death. The human soul lives in the body irreversible life by which they will receive reward or punishment. Such a rectilinear proceeding of the soul's afterlife differed from Neoplatonists' thought that souls would be purified in the cycle of transmigration for the completion of purification and the universal return to Good. Augustine delineated the three heavens and hell based on the Scriptures, which made his thought distinctive compared to other ancient thinkers. The

eschatological narrative about the soul's eternal destiny featured his faith to be Christian from the early time of conversion, in association with other doctrines.

Augustine consistently held core Christian doctrines including creation *ex nihilo*, sin, incarnation and resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the body, and the punishment for good and evil. Perceiving such doctrines, he defined and explained words given by Scripture regarding the soul's afterlife. Over time, his descriptions became more profound and clearer as he delved further into the Scriptures and engaged with other doctrines. Human souls end up receiving either eternal reward or punishment according to the eschatological narrative of Scripture. Considering these aspects, one cannot overemphasize the Christian identity in Augustine's description of the end of the soul.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Waiting for his baptism, Augustine already manifested his deep interest in the subject of the human soul in *Cassiciacum Dialogues*. His conversion might trigger his hope that he could find the truth of the human soul—origin, life, and end. This catechumen already gave itself into crucial Christian doctrines such as creation *ex nihilo*, sin, incarnation, and punishment. Some of his early philosophical efforts of seeking the soul's activity with acceptance of these doctrines could not be successful. He had to wait to write specific natures of the soul until he read and investigated the Scriptures deeply for a pastoral purpose.

Nevertheless, this intellectual convert could not leave himself to stay in a vacuum of knowledge about the soul in terms of the Christian faith. He kept doing the intellectual endeavors that he had been doing throughout his whole life before conversion. This lay Christian sometimes seemed to locate his argument for the human soul among non-Christian thinkers, employing some philosophical language. He was not confused about implementing philosophical concepts while keeping crucial beliefs through Christian doctrines. With his intellectual quest he not only pondered the human soul but also published its result into philosophical, or neutral, titles such as *Contra Academicos*, *De Beata Vita*, *De Ordine*, and *De Animae Quantitate.* As these titles imply, he seemed not to regard them as a part of source materials for teaching other Christians, for he did not have the authority to do it when he wrote them. He attempted to comprehend the human soul, a concept mentioned in Scripture without specific details, by employing the philosophical language used by intellectuals of his time.

He elaborated on the human soul to serve other believers with his intellectual talent by clarifying its nature and emphasizing the significance of understanding it after the Scriptures' teaching. Neoplatonic books could be an inroad for him to begin to seek the nature of the soul more deeply and concretely. He sought the nature of the soul by focusing on its relationship with Christian doctrines, especially after becoming a priest. Considering these aspects, this dissertation categorized his thoughts on the human soul by subjects of its origin, life, and end. Then, each chapter elaborated on Augustine's steadfast faith and its intellectual trajectory, beginning with his early works and enduring throughout his life.

In the second chapter I described that Augustine accepted the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. He apparently sought the knowledge of its component by reason in his early time of conversion before he became more acquainted with the Scripture. Although his early attempt was not elaborate, compared to later works, he remained committed to the Christian belief of the creation *ex nihilo*. He refrained from replacing the creation *ex nihilo* with other philosophical ideas, especially as emanation of Plotinus, to focus exclusively on perfecting his description of the origin of the soul. Augustine's distancing from the core theory of Neoplatonists, emanation, could not be done if he was "a real convert to Neoplatonism," as some modern scholars thought. Moreover, he did not hesitate to elaborate on the creation of the soul depending on the creation narrative of Genesis, as needed. At some point he must mobilize philosophical terms to explain concepts presented by Scripture that surpass human understanding—such as day (*dies*) as the timeless cosmic order and heaven (*caelum*) as the invisible realm. The subject of the origin of the human soul indicated his allegiance to the authority of Scripture and conviction that he could find the true knowledge to some extent.

In the third chapter I inspected the immortal nature of the soul and its relationship with the spirit and the body. Augustine's thought of these elements exposed his perception of Christian doctrines distinguished from Plotinus's thought. While Plotinus

made his argument about the life of the soul to be referential to his master, Plato, Augustine derived his apprehension from the Scriptures and Christian doctrines. The two thinkers formed different concepts of the immortality of the soul based on different authorities. Subordination to distinct authorities made a great difference in their descriptions of the relationship between the soul, spirit, and body. Plotinus shaped the immortality of the soul to fit into the Platonic system of the cosmos. On the other hand, Augustine encapsulated his description within the bosom of Christian teaching. He appreciated the human soul and its nature as given by and for the creator. Within the Christian faith, the human soul requires the body for the completion of salvation. He elaborated on the immortal life of the soul, initiated in the body, to parallel such crucial Christian doctrines as Creation *ex Nihilo*, Incarnation, and salvation.

In the fourth chapter I presented Augustine's concept of ascension at large. Although he left some plain metaphysical, or philosophical, perception of ascension and descension, he did not mingle it with the Neoplatonic principle of the universe. Instead, he perceived the meanings of these terms in God's work for humans' salvation according to Scripture. He discovered the directional language of ascension and descension within the doctrine of Incarnation and Christ's ascension. Before his conversion he was perplexed because when he discovered the God of the Scripture, he could not apprehend the way to ascend to the God of Scripture. The mediator, who descended in the flesh, proclaimed the way of life that ascends, following the manner of his own ascension. Believers' souls will ascend after the body's death into a place where they can rest, but unbelievers' souls will not. The ascension of believers' souls is initiated when they begin to live by the faith after Christ. None of these elaborations that Augustine held within Christian doctrines could fit in any place in the Neoplatonic philosophy and natural reunion of the souls, higher and lower.

In the fifth chapter I narrated Augustine's comprehensive image of the soul's afterlife. As seen in previous chapters, he held a different cosmology from Plotinus. This

meant for him that the human soul ascends to a different place that is transcendent, apart from the body. To describe the afterlife, he must define death with words that correspond to the Scriptures' teaching. He found that the Scriptures teach in their own terminology about the cause and effect of the soul's afterlife. Sin caused the death and Christ recovered hope for the soul's eternal felicity. Christ proclaimed human souls to go either to heaven or hell and to reunite with resurrected bodies. His belief in the creation *ex nihilo* could not confer any of the soul's proceeding to the afterlife to be natural. Plotinus and his followers might never accept souls' eternal life in the kingdom of God and eternal suffering in hell because they believed all souls are divine and are to be united with One in the end. Augustine did not isolate his appreciation of the soul's afterlife from other doctrines. The Christian faith taught that human souls proceed toward the new Jerusalem in the universe created by God as revealed in the Scripture. Human souls end up encountering the final punishment with reunited bodies to enter paradise or hell.

He seemed to understand that becoming a Christian meant denying many parts of knowledge that he attained from reading other sources, including Neoplatonist books. Holding the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, he could not employ the orders of cosmoses that Neoplatonists and Gnostics delineated. The doctrine of sin made him deny the natural ascension of the soul apart from the body. The doctrine of incarnation paved the way for the ascension of the soul in death and the way for salvation from the responsibility of sin. The doctrine of punishment could not parallel with Neoplatonists' ideal of the universal reunion of human souls with One. Accepting these core doctrines confined Augustine's philosophical reasoning to stay at the level of the mind and in the scope of not infringing or replacing these doctrines, from the early time of his conversion. Though, when he accepted pastoral responsibility, he expanded and philosophized the subjects concerning the human soul by emphasizing biblical terminology and contrasting it with other philosophical sects' ideas.

Abandoning a particular philosophy did not mean for him that he should never use predominating philosophical words that his contemporaries plainly employed to explain the invisible substances, such as *rationes seminales* and *immortalitas.* Therefore, he did not need to take self-censorship by worrying about whether he would be looking kin to a specific philosophical sect for using philosophical terms. His precedents defended the Christian faith for hundreds of years and to some Christians these terms worked as a positive philosophy explaining the faith, especially, in his case, explicating the doctrine of the Trinity and its relationship with the human soul.

Augustine seemed to hold his own principle of employing philosophical languages. He regarded the Christian faith as the true philosophy.[1] He was among those church fathers who recognized Platonic ideas resembled Scripture's teachings. He also discovered that Neoplatonists set forward some useful concepts to explain the Christian faith. Though their thought came close to those of Christianity, he could not accept it in its entirety. They delineated a different origin, life, and end of the human soul. He equipped a philosophical framework to refine and utilize these philosophical concepts, including those of Neoplatonists, to explain the human soul taught by the Scriptures.

Augustine's Philosophical Framework

Augustine had a peculiar way of taking secular knowledge into understanding the Christian faith. He vividly manifested the subordinate nature—to the authority of Scripture—of secular knowledge that he gained from reading before his conversion. In seeking the truth, especially, Augustine held that belief in the authority of Scripture must precede knowledge that originated from outside of it. He contended, "Things [authoritative] must first be believed of which a man may later achieve understanding if he conducts himself well and proves himself worthy."[2] The belief, therefore, preceded the

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[1] Cf. *C. Jul.* 4.14.72; *Ver. rel.* 5.8; *Civ.* 8.1.

[2] *Util. cred.* 9.21 (Burleigh, 308).

understanding.[3] Christians ought to rely on the authority of the Scriptures as their primary source for truth and, if needed, consult other sources to gain deeper insight and explanations. Such an approach forms three layers of philosophical strategy in his method of seeking truth. Clarifying the three layers in his thought will help comprehend how philosophical knowledge worked in Augustine's quest for the knowledge of the human soul.

First of all, Augustine believed that Scripture reveals the genuine truth of the nature of the human soul. This thought led him to affirm Christianity as one true philosophy because it possesses true wisdom.[4] Perceiving Christianity as the truest philosophical group did not mean that it tweaked the nature of its religious identity. For Augustine, a religion by nature could be identified with a philosophy in the sense of pursuing wisdom. He said, "Our faith and teaching have demonstrated (and this is the fundamental principle of human salvation) that there is not one thing called philosophy, that is devotion to wisdom, and another called religion, when those whose teaching we do not approve of are not even admitted to share the mysteries with us"[5] Christianity, as the true philosophy, holds true knowledge about the soul based on the Scriptures. Therefore, he took Scripture as the first and the foremost authoritative source, prior to any other sources, to methodically implement in understanding the nature of the human soul revealed in Scripture. He demonstrated a concrete conviction about such a methodology in seeking truth, as seen when he explained the nature of the human soul in the metanarrative consisting of the Christian faith, expressed in doctrines.

Second, Augustine observed that some philosophers provided helpful thought in recognizing biblical truth.[6] Among those philosophers, Neoplatonists developed an

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[3] *Util. cred* 8.20; 9.21 (Burleigh, 306-8).

[4] *C. Jul.* 4.72 (Schumacher, 228).

[5] *Ver. rel.* 5.8 (Hill I/8, 34–35).

[6] *Civ.* 8.8, 9.

outstanding scheme of thought about God and the spiritual world, while they were "still far from the truth."[7] Augustine did not mean that any achievement of the Neoplatonists could take into part of dogmatic teachings in Christianity. Instead, Neoplatonist books, according to Augustine, did not convey the essential truth of the Scripture. He delineated the incarnation of Jesus, in John 1:1–12, as a crucial element that Neoplatonist books need to contain if they wanted to be considered truthful—but did not actually possess it.[8] They were different from Christianity because their teaching lacked core aspects that identify the Christian faith. However, he viewed Neoplatonist books as distinctive and special, compared to books of other philosophers. Not only did Neoplatonist books lead him to Christianity, but it also closely aligned with the Christian concept of the transcendent God. He did not buy the entire system of Neoplatonist philosophy, though he seemed to discover it provided some helpful ways of explaining the human soul that the Word of God alludes to existing in the created world. The Neoplatonist philosophy of the invisible realm opened the door for him to expand his comprehension of the existence of the human soul and the creation narrative of the Scriptures within intellectual harmony.

Third, Augustine discerned unacceptable thoughts and refused to apply them in his explanation of the human soul. Augustine attained various knowledge from secular education and his personal interest in folklore. He did not use all of that knowledge to harmonize with the Scripture. He employed some of that knowledge, like some parts of classic philosophy, in his intellectual works, but rejected others. He had a certain purpose in utilizing secular ideas, which was to make it easy to understand scriptural teachings, but he turned them down if they did not fit into Christian beliefs. For example, he denied the soul's preexistence and transmigration not because these beliefs were unreasonable but because they could not be paralleled with Christian teachings like doctrines of the creation *ex nihilo* and punishment. As another example, his entire rejection of astrology

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[7] *Civ.* 11.5 (Dyson, 455).

[8] *Conf.* 7.9.13, 14.

might help understand his third level of the framework. He had a skillful knowledge of astrology attained at a young age.[9] During Augustine's time, the revival of ancient astrology had great influence on the Roman elites until it was banned by the emperor who tried to Christianize the entire empire.[10] He eagerly studied this high-class knowledge, Roman astrology, before his conversion. However, he never brought any of astrology's concepts into his Christian writings, not because it is trivial, but because it contradicts scriptural teachings.[11] Such factors show that Augustine implemented or denied secular ideas as a result of a thorough investigation from the perspective of the Christian faith.

These schematic layers could explain that he had in mind a clear distinction between belief in truth, the explanation of it, and contradiction against it. He put the first-layer belief as the place to recur from his implementation of the second-layer knowledge. The knowledge found outside of Scripture could not be a certain truth. He utilized it to understand the teachings of Christianity. He was not confused that the Christian faith holds the belief in the Scripture as the authoritative teaching. He perceived Scripture as the primary purpose of using the second-layer data to verify the rationality of Christian belief. On the other hand, he did not attempt to harmonize the third-layer knowledge with the Christian faith. These philosophical frameworks might explain how he looked at the origin, life, and end of the human soul, by holding the authority of Scripture superior to other sources.

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[9] *Conf.* 4.3.5. Augustine said he was addicted to astrology books.

[10] Tamsyn Barton, *Ancient Astrology* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 32–63.

[11] Tim Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 7. Hegedus contended that Greco-Roman astrology attained popularity among Roman elites and was named by the illustrious title "mathematici," which was originally used in the Pythagorean schools. Cf. *Civ.* 5.1–5. Augustine implemented the narrative of the twins, Esau and Jacob, in his argument against astrologers' teaching of human fate, which is similar to naturalistic determinism. He said that astrology cannot be compatible with the Christian understanding of the biblical narrative of Easu and Jacob.

Conclusion

Augustine composed his thoughts on the human soul based on the Scripture and traditional doctrines of the church. As seen, he embraced the established Christian beliefs of his time that reflected the fundamental teachings of the Scriptures. The length of this dissertation did not allow me to trace all the historical backgrounds of how core doctrines developed before Augustine concerning the human soul. However, he did not merely refer to Christian doctrines but also conferred specific places where Scripture teaches about the nature of the human soul. These passages paralleled with doctrines of the church's faith that he accepted. During the early time of his conversion he tried to reconcile the teaching of Scripture regarding the human soul with a rational understanding of the soul, incorporating some philosophical concepts. Though, he could not enjoy such intellectual leisure for long because he soon discovered that the Scriptures provide more specific clues than he thought. He tried to conceptualize many words that he found from Scripture with his contemporary philosophy at the same time, attempting not to deviate from crucial doctrines. Therefore, Augustine remained faithful to Christian doctrines while vividly utilizing philosophical concepts to describe the origin, life, and end of the human soul.

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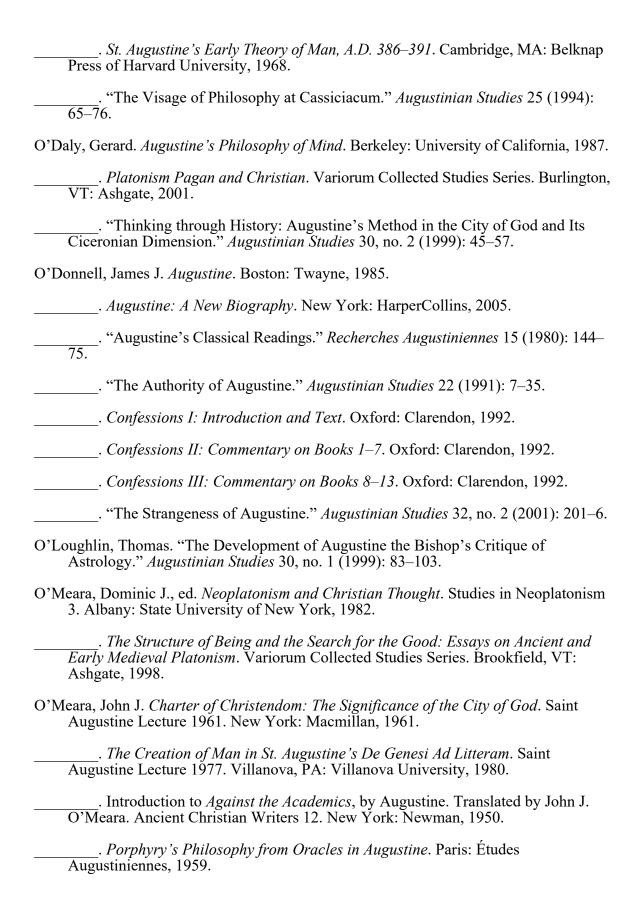
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ABSTRACT

AUGUSTINE'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN SOUL:
ORIGIN, LIFE, AND END

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This dissertation argues that Augustine's conceptualization of the human soul is intricately linked to the guidance provided by Scripture and tradition. Augustine believed that the Scriptures teach the creation of the human soul, its anthropology, spiritual growth, and its eventual reunification with the resurrected body.

The first chapter introduces the thesis, methodology, and historical overview of academic discussions surrounding Augustine's understanding of the human soul. This chapter positions the argument of this dissertation within the contemporary debates, elucidating the significance of the research conducted and its relevance to current scholarly discourse.

The second chapter presents the creation of the human soul by God. The creation *ex nihilo* takes center stage, setting Augustine's perspective apart from Neoplatonism and other philosophical ideologies. This chapter shows Augustine's articulation of the Christian doctrine of creation *ex nihilo,* examining its presence in various works by him.

The third chapter unfolds the human soul's life, centering on the relationship between the soul and immortality, the spirit, and the body. Augustine's unwavering reliance on the authority of the Scriptures proves his steadfast commitment to the Christian faith.

The fourth chapter explores the distinct concepts of ascension embraced by Augustine and Plotinus. By scrutinizing these concepts of the soul's ascension, this investigation underscores Augustine's commitment to the authority of Scripture, which teaches that the soul's ascension encompasses its life after Christ.

The fifth chapter illustrates the culmination of the human soul's journey. Augustine's vision delineates the anticipated trajectory of the human soul following the cessation of the physical body, ultimately culminating in its reunion with the resurrected body as outlined in the teachings of Scripture. This distinctive perspective on the soul's end emphasizes the inherently Christian nature of Augustine's teachings.

The sixth chapter explains Augustine's methodology for categorizing sources in depicting the human soul. In this framework, Scripture precedes alternative ideologies, with philosophical reasoning considered secondary to Scripture yet superior to other secular thoughts.

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