



**National Library
of Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

Augustine on the Moral Agent

Charles LePage

**A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Philosophy**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

September 1990

© Charles LePage, 1990



National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-64701-9

Canada

Abstract

Augustine on the Moral Agent

Charles LePage

The thrust of this thesis is to demonstrate how Augustine's notion of divine grace helps to clarify his conception of moral agency. More specifically, Augustine's mature writings on grace and predestination draw out the extraordinary difficulty involved in man's capacity to act in a morally upright manner. For Augustine, moral agency is a possibility for man because he has free will. However, it does not follow that man lives in freedom simply because he has free will. The notion of "living in freedom" will be developed in light of Augustine's concern with various states of human nature.

Man's moral experience may be understood partly as the awareness of determinate acts of willing. Philosophical considerations emerge out of the claim that man is aware of his will moving in the direction of either good or evil. Man's affective response to these particular acts of will is expressed in the form of piety. Yet there remain future acts of willing which bear upon man's moral experience. While man may have a sense of being morally upright, derived from the awareness of his will moving towards good, he cannot be certain that he will persevere in goodness. Predestination, in particular, heightens the difficulty of accomplishing a moral act, for there is no guarantee that man will be rewarded ultimately with everlasting life. Man must therefore bear the uncertainty of his destiny in a state of fear and trembling.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Gray at Concordia University for his patience and generosity in helping me to work through this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 1

1. The methodological approach to the thesis..... 5

2. Man in a state of moral innocence..... 22

3. Man under moral obligation..... 34

4. Man under grace..... 49

Conclusion..... 64

Endnotes..... 67

References..... 73

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this thesis is to characterize man's moral agency in light of three states of human nature with which Augustine is concerned. An analysis of moral agency in Augustine should consider seriously Augustine's theological concerns, for they help to clarify the meaning of moral agency in Augustine. Augustine is the theologian of grace and predestination. These notions originate in the biblical account of man as a fallen man whose nature forever bears the scars of original sin. It is in the biblical interpretation of man's fall out of which emerges Augustine's doctrine of grace, for man now requires divine assistance to will good. This thesis will attempt to show how it is possible that man may become morally engaged, given the role of supernatural grace.

Three states of nature with which Augustine is concerned are as follows: man in the state before moral evil is committed (moral innocence); man under moral obligation; and man under possible remedy (grace). Each state has a unique historical character, nevertheless there is an experience that may be distilled from these states which underpins any attempt to characterize moral agency. In all three states, man as individual is aware of himself as the one who moves his will; in other words, he becomes aware of his moral character through the act of willing. Chapter one will consider the methodological approach to the thesis. The purpose is to distinguish between the theological and philosophical notions which underpin Augustine's characterization of moral agency.

While grace enables man to will good, philosophical considerations arise from the claim that it is man who is aware of himself as the one who moves his will. It will be argued that the evidence for moral agency will be found in the awareness of willing, particularly in view of the affective response of the individual when he is aware of himself as a subject in the act of willing.

Chapter two will examine the original state of human nature, the evidence for it in Augustine, and the subsequent implications for moral agency. In the state of moral innocence, man did not need assistance to will good, because he had not yet lost goodness; he needed assistance, however, to continue in goodness, according to Augustine. While man in his original state had the ability not to do evil, he was not free from the ability to do evil. It will be argued that in this state man did not enjoy freedom, for he was not free from evil. The problem of morally innocent man is that he is unaware that the capacity of his will to choose good need not persevere over time. The biblical account of Adam bears upon this problem. For Adam, eternal life is contingent on his choosing good rather than evil, yet until the "fall" he had not the experience of choosing evil; and so evil arose only when Adam freely chose a lesser good. In other words, prior to the "fall", Adam had not yet the awareness of himself as subject in the act of willing evil.

Chapter three will focus on the nature of man under moral obligation. In this state, man is unaware that he has lost the ability to will good. This is rooted in the biblical account of original sin, in

which man's nature became vitiated in the aftermath of Adam's fall from Paradise. Although man under obligation may recognize how difficult it is to resist evil desires, he is unaware that without the ability to will good, he may will only evil. It will be argued that the pride of "fallen" man prevents him from tracing his evil habits back to an inherited tendency to evil. The problem of such a man is that while he may become aware of his evil moral character through his awareness of willing, his moral experience is derived from his awareness of willing, and so he cannot be aware that he is condemned to a life of evil until death.

Chapter four will explore the nature of man under possible remedy. Given that post-Adamite man has a vitiated nature, man now requires supernatural or divine assistance to will good. This is expressed theologically as man under grace. Man becomes aware of the possibility for freedom only when he experiences both the nothingness of his existence and his persistence in goodness. Given good actions, man will persist in goodness. Yet man under grace is aware of the non-necessity that he exists and the non-necessity that he continues to act in a good manner. Given the gratuitous quality of divine intervention, such a man is confronted with the uncertain character of his moral agency.

Man under grace is aware that he has lost the ability to will good on his own and he accepts responsibility for his own nothingness. It is the individual's experience of his nothingness which forms the relationship between freedom and responsibility. Those who are free could be found only in the state where the will of man is prepared such that man

chooses only the good with the gift of perseverance until the end. If man is aware of himself as the subject who wills good, he affirms that he cannot have willed so on his own, for he lost this ability with the "fall" of Adam. Thus, we see the stirrings of the "responsibility project", in which the pious man recognizes his need to be healed through the grace of God.

The relation between freedom and responsibility is made explicit through Augustine's characterization of affective response vis-a-vis predestination. From a theological point of view, God created man out of nothingness and it is not incumbent upon God to grant eternal life to man. While man under grace lives out his mortal existence, he must bear the uncertainty over whether he has received the gift of perseverance. As far as the "responsibility project" is concerned, man must bear the uncertainty of his destiny. This "terrible" uncertainty of man is expressed in Augustine's interpretation of Psalms, in which man is instructed to work out his salvation in fear and trembling. It will be argued that the affective responses of piety and of fear and trembling help to clarify Augustine's conception of moral agency. Moreover, an attempt will be made to link these affective responses to moral engagement.

Chapter One

The Methodological Approach to the Thesis

This chapter will consider the methodological approach to the thesis. The purpose is to distinguish the theological notions from the philosophical aspects, and to show how in addition to theological considerations which underpin Augustine's characterization of man, there remain philosophical considerations. The theological notions of grace and predestination originate in the biblical account of man as a fallen man. This interpretation of man's fall draws out the relationship between freedom and the fulfillment of man's nature; and it is this relationship which is brought to bear upon moral agency.

For Augustine, man's nature became vitiated in the aftermath of Adam's fall. As a moral agent, man has lost the ability to will good on his own. If man wills good, it is only because his will has been freed by God. However, it is the freedom of man, and not his will, which must be cured if he is to will good and persevere in goodness until the end of his mortal life. It will be argued that the evidence for freedom may be found in the act of willing, particularly in view of the affective response of the individual when he is aware of himself as the subject who wills good.

A key feature of this methodological approach is the distinction between freedom and free will. For Augustine, man retains free will both

before and after the fall. To speak of fallen man, then, is to suggest that it is man's nature and not his will that is damaged. This "scarring" of nature, which is Adam's legacy, may be reformulated philosophically as moral depravity. Without the aid of grace, "la condition humaine" is that of a tendency towards evil. For Augustine, moral depravity is the disease for which efficient grace is the cure. The claim that one's will must be freed if one is to act correctly allows for a philosophical apprehension of freedom: I wish to consider the notion of human freedom as an ongoing possibility; and I would claim that it is evidenced in human action. The theological account of man's fall provides a dramatic context in which to characterize moral agency. Given a dogmatic belief in the depravity of human nature, the notion of moral perfection originates out of an act of will and is sustained as a philosophical possibility. Moral agency is then stretched between the poles of good and evil.

The nature of man in the philosophy of Augustine has, as its proper context, man's relationship to God. The formulation of this relationship can be found on the first page of Augustine's Confessions, when he states, "The thought of You .tirs man so deeply that he cannot be content unless he praises You, because You made us for Yourself and our hearts find no peace until they rest in You."¹ Man's purpose is contained within the desire of his soul to return to God. Such a desire is reflected in man's awareness of willing. It will be argued that man's awareness arises out of an action, of which he is the subject. This desire forms the basis of man's moral experience and makes possible the fulfillment of his nature.

The claim that man as individual may fulfill his nature requires certain Augustinian qualifications. Firstly, the fulfillment of man's nature is achieved only with the help of divine grace. Augustine stresses the view that it is God who empowers the will of man so that man may move in the direction of the fulfillment of his nature. How it is that man receives divine assistance is a question that appears to be germinating in Book 1 of Augustine's Confessions. For example, Augustine states,

"Grant me, Lord, to know and understand whether a man is first to pray to you for help or to praise you, and whether he must know you before he can call you to his aid. If he does not know you, how can he pray to you? For he may call for some other help, mistaking it for yours."²

Man requires divine assistance if he is to will good, and willing good is a necessary condition for the fulfillment of one's nature. Yet as early as Book 1 of the Confessions, he allows the possibility that man may not request divine assistance. This foreshadows Augustine's mature writings on the gratuitous quality of divine grace. Secondly, Augustine delineates different states of human nature in order to indicate the requisite condition for the fulfillment of one's nature. More precisely, his condition is that man's nature is fulfilled when man wills in a state of freedom. For mortal man, the fulfillment of nature remains undetermined and uncertain; nevertheless, despite the gratuitous quality of grace, man must continue to act if he is to be a moral agent. Faced with an undetermined outcome, mortal man must have the courage to move his will despite the tension brought on by moral uncertainty. That man is free to move his will is, for Augustine, a first principle of morality. Therefore, man must risk the possibility that he may move in the direction of evil.

J.H.S. Burleigh insists that the interpenetration of philosophy and theology is clearly set out in one of Augustine's essays from his early period, Of True Religion: "Since its ostensible argument is that Christianity is the truth which philosophers have sought and dimly anticipated, it might also be called 'Of True Philosophy'."³ This does not mean that there is no role for philosophy. In this essay, which does not have the polemical context of Augustine's more mature writings, the basic theology of Augustine establishes a philosophical language. Augustine affirms that if we are to seek truth, we must look first within ourselves. The philosophical language, then, becomes a way in which to articulate man's inner experience.

This suggests a way of expressing Augustine's Christian interpretation of neo-Platonic metaphysics. As Burleigh maintains, the Plotinian conception of the absolute unity of a divine source of being enabled Augustine to overcome the skepticism of his day. "Augustine found at last an intellectual system which could satisfy at once his need for certainty and his capacity for criticism."⁴ Both Plato and Plotinus affirm that man has a divine origin. In the system of Plotinus, all the diversity of the spiritual and physical worlds stems from a series of emanations from a divine source, which Plotinus identifies as the "One".

Besides a divine origin, Plotinus maintains that man retains a residue of the divine source. "Every level retains a spark of divine

being inherited from the primal source. Man lies midway in the scale of being, capable of rising higher in the level of Mind (or even higher in mystical experience) or of falling to the level of mere body."⁵ Because man lies only midway in the scale of being, and therefore far from his divine origin, the Plotinian doctrine stresses that man is in a fallen state and that man must look for truth within himself if he is to achieve salvation. While one's inner self becomes the locus of truth, truth is discovered by the "eyes of the soul" because the soul has previously communed with the highest perfection. In the Plotinian theory of emanation and return, man's soul begins to mount higher levels of reality until it returns to the Absolute. Thus, there is an implicit moral sense in the Plotinian theory of emanation, which involves the soul's recognition of its fallen state and the subsequent need to recover its original state. This recognition arises out of the awareness of the profound gulf that separates soul from the "One". It is an experience, out of which arises recognition of one's fallen state and one's need to look further within oneself.

Augustine expresses the philosophical method of neo-Platonism when he claims that the search for truth within ourselves points to a vision of the Absolute. However, from Augustine's view, it is only through God's guidance that man can enter the depths of his soul. For Augustine, the philosophical language of inner experience is bound up with man's relationship to God. As Burleigh states, there is movement from the experience of things seen, touched and heard to a discovery of truths and standards; and finally, to a recognition of a superior reality which is

the foundation of the mind's ideas. "So the final step for Augustine is religion: the recognition that the truth of the mind's ideas is grounded in God, who is the creator of mind and its objects and who illuminates the mind to make it capable of knowledge."⁶ Burleigh restates a view held by Etienne Gilson that the direction of thought is from external things to interior experience, and from interior experience to superior reality.

Peter Brown maintains that Augustine's notion of fallenness points to an agonizing sense of weakness in man. He adds that this sense of weakness shows itself in numerous incidents of one's past life. "The profound, abstract intuitions of Plotinus have come to provide the material for a new, classic language of the unquiet heart."⁷ Whereas for Plotinus man is fallen but able to recover his original state on his own, the view of Augustine is profoundly different: Augustine employs the biblical symbol of man's fall from grace when he claims that man requires the help of God if he is to hope for salvation. In short, Augustine claims that God implants truth in man in order to rekindle his desire to return to God.

This sets the stage for the aim of the Confessions, in which Augustine attempts to demonstrate the presence of God in man's consciousness. While Augustine's theory of illumination contains a vital moral sense, it is a morality which is founded upon a state of total dependency. "The Confessions illustrates the shades of that 'theological freedom', especially stressing the necessity of divine Grace in order to act correctly."⁸ In short, Augustine's characterization of man is rooted

not only in the awareness of the enormous gulf that separates man from God but also in the view that man is unable to move towards God on his own.

At this point, it may be useful to explore the relationship between will and desire in terms of man's return to God. Augustine's early attempt to accept the Christian faith was strengthened by his rejection of Manicheism. Briefly, the Manichees believed that reality was guided by the two forces of good and evil. The dualism of man, then, was represented by the forces of good and evil which were forever in conflict. According to this view, "man has two natures, one of Light (in fact, it is a crumb of the divine substance), and the other of Darkness, which is responsible for all sin."⁹ As John G. Prendiville indicates, Augustine's solution is to deny Manichean dualism and to proclaim a monist conception of reality from the start. Prendiville employs the term "monist" to emphasize Augustine's conception of a reality that is based entirely upon the absolute goodness of God. "Evil springs from misplaced love: man, in loving corporeal things, deserts God."¹⁰ To claim that evil springs from misplaced love is to underscore the significance of desire in man's return to God.

By reformulating the notion of reality under a monist conception, Augustine is able to shift the burden of responsibility for sin from the Manicheist conception of a principle of Darkness to man himself. Moreover, by placing the burden of evil upon man, Augustine wishes to avoid the charge that God is responsible for evil. The influence of Plotinus is evident in Augustine's claim that of all the things that are

of a lower order than God, they have not absolute being in themselves, nor are they entirely without being. "They are real in so far as they have their being from You, but unreal in the sense that they are not what You are. For it is only that which remains in being without change that truly is."¹¹ Augustine adds that if things are deprived of all good, they cease altogether to be. "Whatever is, is good; evil is not a substance, because if it were a substance, it would be good."¹² On this showing, since God created everything, He cannot have created evil, for evil is that which lacks existence.

This leads Augustine to claim that evil has its source in the will of man. More precisely, he claims that evil is not a substance but a perversion of the will when it turns aside from God. He repudiates the Manichean dualism of good and evil in favour of the highest perfection of Christian faith; in this view, there is the ultimate good because there is God. It is not the case that God comes from goodness but rather goodness comes from God. On this showing, if evil has its origin in the will of man, then it is man's responsibility to shed his wickedness and embrace God. At this point, Augustine uses reason to purify his notion of God. However, he is not able to give assent, through his faith, until he can understand God.

Augustine's attempt to understand God is reflected in his critique of those Platonists who have not the "true love" of God. "They make no mention of the tears of confession or of the sacrifice that You will never disdain..."¹³ Augustine carries this conception of the love of God into

his later work City of God. In Book X of this work, he suggests that the Platonists' devotion to "the one true God" is undermined by their worship of many gods. Augustine puts forth the following question: "do these beings, whom the Platonists suppose that men should worship for the attainment of blessedness, desire that men should sacrifice to them, or to God alone?"¹⁴ Here, Augustine cautions against the worship of anything but that which is supremely good. While man has the ability to worship other gods, such worship does not help to mediate between his finite power and his desire to love "the supreme God". Confession, then, implies the awareness that one's love of the "Supreme God" is somehow beyond one's finite capacity for loving.

F. J. Weismann suggests that the attitude of confession underscores man's inability to love (on his own) that which is infinitely lovable. "In the Confessions, Augustine transmits to us his experience of an impotent will. God precedes the human act and inspires in man the desire for God. That desire unifies his divided will."¹⁵ As Weismann contends, freedom has a supernatural dimension, involving the capacity to will only what is good.

The question of freedom might well remain a theological consideration, were it not for the role of the will in responding to the desire for God. "God has the initiative and man can answer actively."¹⁶ Although God implants the desire in man to return to God, it is man who experiences himself as a subject willing good when he wills in a state of freedom. While God prepares the will of man, man's awareness of willing

may be understood as an experience which arises out of an action, of which he is the subject. This is the source of man's responsibility, for while God may call upon man, it is man who experiences his response.

This draws out the significance of the attitude of confession in the philosophy of Augustine. R. Di Lorenzo maintains that Augustine developed a new style of philosophizing which was geared towards the discovery of God through the attitude of confession. He adds that the way to find God requires piety in the seeker. Piety would reflect the affective response of the individual when he becomes aware of the persuasiveness of divine grace. "The pagans failed because, lacking piety, they exalted themselves when they should have exalted the Lord."¹⁷ This is in tune with the Augustinian view that there is ultimate good because there is God. In other words, the Augustinian God is not merely a regulative principle but rather represents the object of desire for those who will good. "In the piety of confessio, one becomes aware that God is seeking the soul more than the soul is seeking God, that even the soul's action of seeking is a consequence of God's own persuasive grace."¹⁸ The attitude of confession, then, is a way for man to establish a personal relationship with God; and such a relationship is achieved when the will of man responds actively to the desire for God.

Augustine's effort to understand God through Christian metaphysics uses the analogy between the neo-Platonic notion of Nous and its incarnation in reality. "The whole content of the truth of Christian faith can be reduced to the dogma of the Trinitarian God and the dogma

that man participates in the life of God through Christ."¹⁹ In the Plotinian view, since the soul participates in a trinity, the implication is that the soul has the perfections contained therein. The implication of the Christian Trinity, however, is that piety and humility are at the root of man's passage to God. Augustine's conversion is almost complete when he relates the Word of God to Jesus Christ. In Book VII of the Confessions, Augustine makes the following prayer: "The lesson of Jesus Christ is that your word, the eternal truth, which far surpasses even the highest parts of your creation, raises up to himself all who subject themselves to him."²⁰ To claim that the Word was made flesh (in the form of Christ) brings Augustine to the limit of rationality, for neither Incarnation nor creation can be proved rationally. In this sense, Augustine's conversion represents a leap of faith in order to recognize Incarnation or creation.

Paul Kuntz maintains that the affective tone of Christian metaphysics provides the means for man to respond actively to God. "What the Platonists left out was that 'the Word was made flesh'. The moral meaning of the Incarnation is to provide 'that charity building upon the foundation of humility, which is Jesus Christ'."²¹ In other words, it is man's response to a desire implanted by God that gives birth to man's moral life. Kuntz adds that if we identify God as holy, rather than as good or goodness itself, then we avoid the charge that the necessary relation between God and goodness itself is no more than a tautology. Again, there is goodness because of God but man does not derive "God" from the concept of goodness. To attribute holiness to God is to move the

relationship between God and man beyond philosophical analysis and into the realm of theology. While Augustine employs the philosophical method of neo-Platonism when he claims that the inward thrust of consciousness points to a vision of the Absolute, nevertheless the moral sense that grows out of this interior search is founded upon the grace of God. Man's experience of willing good arises out of an action, of which he is the subject. However, his experience of willing good could not occur without divine grace. Augustine draws a tight connection between man's moral experience and the mysterious ways of grace.

Towards the end of the Confessions, he states, "My thoughts, the intimate life of my soul, are torn this way and that in the havoc of change. And so it will be until I am purified and melted by the fire of your love and fused into one with you."²² In the Augustinian tradition, faith is the recognition that beyond a certain point, reason is powerless to grasp things clearly. While it may be argued that man's moral experience flows out of faith, the meaning of this experience, for mortal man, remains shrouded in the mystery of grace. In other words, the role of grace is a theological consideration which remains inaccessible to reason.

The pivotal role of grace in man's moral experience lies at the heart of the Augustinian view that God illuminates each soul by making the intelligence of man capable of seeing and judging correctly. Benjamin Warfield suggests that the significance of "confessio" is more clearly brought out as a function of grace. "The whole concern of the Confessions

is with the grace of God to a lost sinner. It is this, and not Augustine himself, that is its theme."²³ On behalf of Augustine, Warfield outlines a distinction between ideas, conceptions and perceptions. He holds that the ideas, which are reflections from the divine mind are always shining into the souls of men. However, he emphasizes that the perceptions and subsequent conceptions built upon these ideas vary according to the particular state of the soul. In other words, Warfield qualifies human knowledge in terms of the particular state of the human soul. "It is in this fact that the varying degrees of purity in which knowledge is acquired by men find their explanation."²⁴ Warfield adds that the underlying principle here is that knowledge is not a function of the intellect merely but involves the whole man. Warfield appears to be suggesting that something other than the intellect must be operative if one is to make sense of varying states of soul. It may be inferred that Warfield is directing attention to the role of the will as a key ingredient of the "whole man".

The basis for Warfield's claim seems to find support in Augustine's Retractations. In this later work, Augustine emphasizes the "preparedness" of the will as a precondition for choosing what is "correct"; that is to say, it is a precondition for living "rightly". For example, he states, "... it is entirely true that all men have this in their power if they will; but the will is made ready by God and is strengthened by the gift of charity to such a degree that they have it in their power."²⁵ Augustine seems to be suggesting that consideration of the whole man involves not simply intellectual apprehension of the ideas but

also the degree to which the will is capable of fulfilling these ideas. It is the fulfillment of these ideas which represents the heart of man's moral experience. It may be argued on behalf of Augustine that action, and one's subsequent awareness of said action, are sine qua non conditions of moral agency.

Further consideration of the effect of divine grace upon the lost sinner may help to show that moral experience belongs to the whole man, not a part. Etienne Gilson hints at the relation between grace and the role of the will as a first principle of morality in Augustine:

"Just as our truth is only a participation in Truth and our beatitude a sharing in Beatitude, so every man becomes virtuous only by making his soul conform to the immutable rules and lights of the Virtues dwelling eternally within the Truth and Wisdom common to all men."²⁶

As a first principle of morality, in Augustine, the role of the will is to make the soul conform to virtue. On this showing, it is man's responsibility to conform his soul to the virtues which are apprehended by his intelligence. Moreover, since man's ability to conform his soul to these virtues is contingent upon acts of will, then it is possible that the fulfillment of his moral sense may be realized through his awareness of willing. "Everything depends on the decision man will or will not make to allow the order he sees imposed by God on nature to reign within himself."²⁷ Gilson is concerned with the conditions which allow for the fulfillment of man's moral experience. On this showing, the exercise of man's will, and the awareness of such an action which results from such an exercise, are necessary for such fulfillment.

However, while the exercise of man's will may be held to be a

necessary condition, it does not follow that it is a sufficient condition. A necessary condition indicates what is requisite in yielding a particular result. A sufficient condition, on the other hand, indicates a state that must follow from a given condition. This highlights the importance of grace vis-a-vis man's moral experience. In his analysis of the relationship between grace and will, Augustine states, "Unless this will... is freed by the grace of God from the servitude by which it has been made 'a servant of sin', and unless it is aided to overcome its vices, mortal men cannot live rightly and devoutly."²⁸ Although it remains necessary for man to exercise his will if he is to fulfill his moral experience, this exercise is not a sufficient condition for the fulfillment of his moral experience. This fact brings attention to the issues of freedom and predestination.

According to Gilson, it is because the will is dependent upon grace that it retains its free choice, and it gains liberty (freedom).²⁹ This anticipates Weismann's critique of Augustine, in which Weismann approves of the manner in which Augustine stresses the necessity of divine grace in order to act correctly. In other words, the Augustinian view is such that grace is the unifying force behind free will and liberty. As Gilson contends, the will retains its free choice because, even granting that grace gives everything to free choice, free choice must still be there to receive it. "Even when God enables the will to will, and bestows on it the assistance it needs to do what He orders, it is still the will which wills and does what He commands."³⁰

Gilson contends that the will is always free to act even if grace is not given to it. This expresses the experience of willing, in which the individual is aware of himself as a subject in the act of willing. Gilson adds that God comes to the aid of the man who acts, not to dispense him from acting but to enable him to act correctly. "It is the spontaneous movement of a will which has been changed and liberated, a will which henceforth tends wholly towards God. Man is truly free when he sees to it that the object of his delight is precisely liberty."³¹ Freedom, then, reflects a state in which man is aware of his will tending only towards God. If God is the source of the ultimate good and if one's will tends only towards God, it follows that the liberated will is free from evil. Support for this view can be found in The Retractations, where Augustine states, "Are both sin and good action in free choice of the will? It is entirely true that this is so, but in order that one be free to do good, he is freed by the grace of God."³² This demonstrates the effect of grace upon a liberated will. If man is aware of himself willing good, it is only because his will has been liberated by grace.

One may argue that freedom has significant implications vis-a-vis predestination. John Cooper reiterates the Augustinian view that man is not immortal simply by definition but only by the action of God. He adds that without grace, man's freedom is only a freedom to sin. It is clear that while grace enables the will to move towards God, it is still man who experiences himself as the one who moves his will. "Outside of God's present grace, man is not free to choose good - true good, although he may choose to keep the Law out of fear or out of pride - which is not 'good'

but disguised evil."³³ Man's experience is that his will moves in one of two directions; that is to say, he becomes aware that his will is moving either towards good or towards evil. The effect of grace is to establish a direction of the will away from evil, but regardless of intervening grace, it is man who moves his will.

If one notes Augustine's claim that "God repays us what we deserve, yet owes us nothing,"³⁴ one may begin to appreciate the gratuitous quality of grace which underpins Augustine's concept of predestination. As a theological consideration, predestination remains baffling, for one cannot explain why some are predestined for eternal life and others are not. "The punishment for evildoers which is from God, is an evil for evildoers, but it is among the good works of God, since it is just to punish evildoers, and, certainly, everything that is just is good."³⁵ However, predestination begins to gather philosophical import from the assertion that one must consider not only the experience of willing good but also the experience of willing good over time. Since it is affirmed that the fulfillment of man's moral sense is realized in the wholeness of his character, there remains, for mortal man, the ever present uncertainty as to his destiny.³⁶ For Augustine, the fulfillment of man's moral experience would be the awareness both that one's will tends only towards good and that one is free from evil.

Chapter Two

Man in a State of Moral Innocence

The purpose of this chapter is to characterize man's moral innocence in the original state of human nature. In this state, man did not need assistance to will good, because he had not yet lost goodness; he needed assistance, however, to continue in goodness, according to Augustine.³⁷ Augustine relies on the biblical account of Adam to show that while man in his original state had the ability not to do evil, he also had the ability to do evil. It may be argued that in this state man does not enjoy freedom, for man is not liberated as long as he is unaware that his will may tend toward either good or evil. Moral innocence may then be expressed as living in ignorance. If freedom is defined as freedom from the ability to do evil, as Augustine suggests in The Retractations,³⁸ then moral innocence is highlighted by the utter unawareness of one's continuing capacity to will good.

Man in the state of moral innocence is unaware that the capacity of his will to choose good need not persevere over time. "To the first man... was given the aid of perseverance, not that by which it should be brought about that he should persevere, but that without which he could not of free will persevere."³⁹ On this showing, the assistance given to Adam was a necessary but not a sufficient condition for allowing him to persevere in goodness. Adam's moral experience, in his pre-fallen state, was such that he was aware of his will tending towards good. However, this is not to suggest that he was aware of a persevering tendency towards

good. Since it is affirmed that morally innocent man does not live in freedom, his life becomes contingent on choosing good. For Adam, eternal life is contingent on his choosing good rather than evil, yet until the "fall" he had not the experience of choosing evil; and so evil arose only when Adam freely chose a lesser good. In other words, prior to the fall, Adamite man had not the awareness of himself as subject in the act of willing evil. Thus, when Adam chose evil, the contingency of his capacity to choose good, and, therefore, the contingency of his continued existence, was brought to his awareness and became part of his moral experience.

If it is affirmed that man's moral experience derives from his awareness of willing, it follows that Adam, prior to the fall, experienced himself as a subject in the act of willing good. In other words, he experienced himself as a righteous man. The clue to Adam's sense of righteousness can be found in Adam's utter unawareness as to his continuing capacity to will good. As Augustine suggests, Adam's ability not to sin may have given Adam a false sense of his righteousness: "Thus God made man with free will; and although ignorant of his future fall, yet therefore happy, because he thought it was in his own power both not to die and not to become miserable."⁴⁰ Adam may have thought that his sense of happiness and righteousness would last forever; yet the contingency of his continued existence provides evidence for the claim that while Adam had the ability not to sin, and so persist in righteousness and happiness, nevertheless he was not free from sin.

While Augustine does not delve deeply into the experience or awareness of the morally innocent man, there are others who treat this issue in such a manner as to help "flesh out" Augustine's view of the matter. In his analysis of human nature in its fourfold state, Thomas Boston outlines a twofold conformity required of the morally innocent man: habitual righteousness and actual righteousness. For Boston, habitual righteousness suggests conformity of the soul to the law, while actual righteousness suggests conformity of one's actions to the law. Boston's point is that God made man habitually righteous and left man responsible for making himself actually righteous. The notion of a twofold conformity requirement for morally innocent man finds support in Augustine's consideration of the role of the will:

"And if he had willed by his own free will to continue in this state of uprightness, assuredly without any experience of death and of unhappiness he would have received by the merit of that continuance the fullness of blessing with which the holy angels are also blessed; that is, the impossibility of falling any more, and the knowledge of this with absolute certainty."⁴¹

For Augustine, Adam's ability to will good, expressed by Boston as habitual righteousness, was natural to Adam. From actions which he could trace to a movement of the will, Adam could gain a sense of his righteousness; that is, his awareness would derive from a determined set of actions. In gaining a sense of righteousness through one's actions, which Boston expresses as actual righteousness, one might consider all actions which bear upon conformity. On this showing, one might consider those determined actions which are made present to one's awareness; also, one might consider that there remain undetermined future actions which will be incorporated into one's awareness only at some future point in

time.

From Boston's perspective, it is evident that because of the fall, Adam did not fulfill the twofold conformity required of the morally innocent man. Boston allows that righteousness was natural to Adam; yet it was a righteousness that could be impaired by a movement of the will away from good. This is consistent with the Augustinian view as to Adam's unawareness vis-a-vis his continuing capacity to will good. While it is clear from the biblical account of the fall that Adam did not persevere in actual righteousness, the notion of habitual righteousness requires clarification. It may useful to begin by resuscitating the claim that moral innocence might be expressed as "living in ignorance". Then, it becomes important to draw out a deeper meaning from this latter expression.

Boston asserts that man in his original righteousness had perfect knowledge of the law. As he states, "the law was written upon Adam's mind."⁴² At first glance, the assertion that the law was written upon Adam's mind appears to contradict the claim that Adam lived in ignorance. However, the notion that man had perfect knowledge of the law must be viewed in a proper context. It has been affirmed, on behalf of Augustine, that one's sense of righteousness is derived from an act of willing. For Augustine, Adam had a natural ability to will good; however, given undetermined future actions, he could not have the certainty that he would persevere in goodness. Boston contends that man's original righteousness was natural to him, and not supernatural.

"Not that it was essential to man, as man, for then he could not have lost it, without the loss of his very being, but it was natural to him; he was created with it, and it was necessary to the perfection of man, as he came out of the hand of God, necessary to his being placed in a state of integrity."⁴³

While Adam had an ability to will good, he also had an ability not to will good. On this showing, not all that is natural to man suffices for his moral perfection.

Man's original righteousness may then be understood in the context of natural ability. As Boston emphasizes, such righteousness emerging out of natural ability had the character of mutability. "It was a righteousness that might be lost, as is manifested by the doleful event of the fall."⁴⁴ Thus, a more apt description of the morally innocent man lies not in his original righteousness but rather in the mutability of his will. Although righteousness was necessary to the perfection of man, the conformity of the soul to the law, which manifested itself in a capacity to choose good, was rooted in the mutable will of morally innocent man. While it may be correct to claim that the law was written upon Adam's mind, nevertheless it is important to consider that the ignorance of his mutable will made contingent Adam's capability to conform his soul to the law.

The issue of ignorance brings into question the extent to which man may be held accountable for his actions. If man is to be held accountable, then he must have free will. Fred Berthold maintains, on behalf of Augustine, that this capacity for free will was present in its

fullest sense in Adam. "Adam, unlike subsequent humans, enjoyed 'true freedom' (libertas). He was free to choose God, or lesser goods."⁴⁵ Berthold adds that Adam could have stood fast in his original righteousness, but he also had the free will to forsake good. This is consistent with the view that Adam was unaware of his continuing capacity to will good.

While his intention is to analyze Augustine's conception of the relationship between free will and freedom, Berthold's comments appear to be incorrect. Firstly, Berthold's use of the term "true freedom" is problematic. The problem arises in the meaning that he attaches to this term. Berthold suggests that the liberum arbitrium is fully realized as libertas when the will is able either to choose good or forsake good. The question can then be put forth: Is one truly free if one is able either to choose good or choose evil? In Berthold's analysis, the freedom of the will is not exhibited by always acting consistently in a certain way. "Rather it consists in the ability both to do such and such, given appropriate incentives and circumstances, and to refrain from doing such and such."⁴⁶ The conditions for free will may then be drawn out through a clarification of the state of moral innocence.

Berthold questions whether pre-fallen Adam possessed the requisite knowledge to exercise free will.

"Adam lacked the knowledge, or 'the healthy state of wisdom', which alone could have made it possible for him to understand the alternatives before him. Great weight is placed upon Adam's reason, which enabled him to receive the commandment. It is rather obvious, though, that Adam could have understood

the commandment only in a very limited sense."⁴⁷

Berthold's point is that the Augustinian view does not allow for the sort of knowledge that would be requisite for free will. He maintains that if one is to will freely, then one must be able to consider both the incentives for doing something, and the incentives for refraining. "What we find in Adam is not such knowledge but what might more properly be called childlike faith or trust..."⁴⁸ Berthold's position seems to be that in the absence of knowledge, the morally innocent man is freed from the constraints of having to will good.

One problem with Berthold's analysis is that he does not seem to consider seriously the notion that Adam exercised his free will in a state of innocence. For Berthold, the state of innocence does not lend itself to any intelligible moral meaning. "The crucial question with regard to the pre-fallen Adam has to do with his state of knowledge, for as we have seen Augustine holds that one cannot act with free will in the absence of knowledge."⁴⁹ However, the moral meaning that Berthold imputes to pre-fallen Adam does not consider the role of the will in forming Adam's moral experience. Berthold seems to suggest that, in the absence of knowledge, Adam's freedom is exhibited in his ability both to will good and forsake good. Yet Berthold does not seem to consider the view that Adam's sense of righteousness derives from his awareness of willing. The point is not that Adam acted without knowledge of the law but that he was ignorant of his continuing capacity to conform his soul to the law.

Moreover, the view that one is able either to choose good or forsake

good is not expressive of true freedom; rather, it reflects nothing more than the choices that are made in the exercise of will. As Etienne Gilson contends, the superiority of the morally innocent man vis-a-vis man under the law consists in the power he has of not forsaking good. "If man preferred himself and by doing so turned away from God, his fall must be ascribed to a simple failure on the part of his free choice, for God had given him everything needed to enable him to avoid it."⁵⁰ This undermines the position held by Berthold that the liberum arbitrium is fully realized as libertas when the will is able either to choose good or forsake good. Gilson maintains that liberty (libertas) is merely the good use of free choice (liberum arbitrium). "Now if the will always remains free - in the sense of free choice - it is not always good, and consequently not always free, in the sense of liberty."⁵¹ Thus, a distinction can be made between natural ability and libertas. If, as Gilson maintains, libertas is identified with the efficacy of a free choice oriented towards the good, then the liberum arbitrium is fully realized as libertas when the will is able to choose only good. In other words, it does not appear to be the case that pre-fallen Adam enjoyed "true freedom", for he was able to forsake good.

If it is affirmed that the moral experience of pre-fallen Adam was not one of "true freedom", then one can perhaps begin to examine more carefully the notion of free will and unravel its implications for moral innocence. The action of the morally innocent man in forsaking good involves violating the righteousness of his own existence through sin, which manifests itself as evil. It may be useful to articulate the manner

in which such a man may be held accountable for an action which manifests itself as evil. J. Patout Burns analyzes Augustine's literal interpretation of Genesis, in which Augustine assesses the plausibility of the morally innocent man succumbing to temptation. "He surmised that before she was tempted by the demon, Eve had already sinned, through pride. God allowed the devil to tempt her to an open transgression in order to manifest and correct that first, hidden sin."⁵² Burns' analysis of pride helps to clarify the mutable character of the morally innocent man.

While Adam became aware of his righteousness through the experience of willing good, it was not until his fall from natural grace that he became aware of his capacity to forsake good.

"The purpose of the divine prohibition of eating from the tree was to occasion an indisputable and indefensible sin which would manifest the prior, hidden sin of pride and lead thereby to its correction. Augustine remarked that the underlying pride was even more evident in the pair's attempt to excuse their transgression."⁵³

Burns' analysis suggests that pride was an aspect of Adam's mutable character. It may be more accurate to designate "hidden pride" as a character defect. On this showing, there would be no divine prohibition against a "hidden" character defect. This designation will be developed more fully in chapter three. For Burns, the reason for the divine prohibition of eating from the tree of knowledge was to discourage hidden pride from manifesting itself as evil, through the will of Adam. When Adam became aware of himself as a subject willing evil, the awareness of his evil character was formed only after the action of his will forever

severed him from the state of natural grace. This does not absolve Adam of the responsibility for having forsaken good. If it is allowed that an action such as choosing good gives rise to a righteous character, then it must be allowed that an action which forsakes good gives rise to a corresponding character. "The first man, Adam, had decided to follow his own inclinations rather than to obey the will of God, and hence was now cursed by God's confirmation of his choice (which Augustine held Adam freely made) of death and sin."⁵⁴ It may be argued that Adam's accountability grew out of a desire to follow himself rather than God, and that his desire to follow himself was rooted in a fundamental character defect. Only through the action of Adam's will was this desire transformed into evil.

The notion of accountability helps to draw out the meaning of Adam's fall from Paradise. The meaning of the fall emerges out of that aspect of hidden pride, which expresses itself as love of oneself above all else. John Prendiville suggests that the meaning of the fall, although hinted at in Augustine's earlier work, is clarified in his later work. "The De Vera Religione is still hugging the coastline of Plotinus, where sin is weakness rather than defiance cured by greater wisdom and a change of plan."⁵⁵ When Adam experienced himself as willing evil, he had already fallen from the state of natural grace, thereby transforming the mutability of his character into a particular type of determinacy. "Since he had chosen disorder (preferring himself to God), he would now experience disorder. A vitium developed in his nature, whereby evil desires revolted against the dictates of his mind."⁵⁶ Prior to Adam

actually choosing disorder, there must have been present that aspect of pride, which subsisted as ignorance of the deficiency in his mutable character, and which manifested itself as evil through the act of his will.

As Prendiville indicates, the presence of evil in the world supports the view that the condition of pre-fallen Adam was very different from that of his descendants since the Fall. In his analysis of Augustine's criticism of Julian, Prendiville supports the Augustinian view that Adam's sin brought evil into a good creation. Briefly, Julian's account of Adam's fall dispensed with natural grace. "Before the Fall, Adam was no different from any man today; he received no special gifts from God; he was subject to death, suffering, and concupiscence because these belong to man's nature."⁵⁷ Prendiville maintains that the implications of Julian's system are such that, today, man does not need help in order to be able to do good. On this showing, man's nature, both before and after the fall remains unchanged, so that the nature of post-Adamic man is not necessitated by an evil tendency. On the other hand, Augustine's account of the fall held that there is an inherited tendency to evil in post-Adamic man which remains throughout his life.

On behalf of Augustine, Prendiville insists that Julian's interpretation is a condemnation only of man's conduct, and not a condemnation of his vitiated nature. Prendiville reiterates Augustine's criticism of Julian as follows: "Surely the power and enormity of these habits cannot be explained merely by repetition, but argue to something

radically wrong with man, to a tendency to evil affecting his very nature."⁵⁸ Augustine's point, as expressed by Prendiville, is that habits which force one's will to depravity must extend beyond mere repetition of conduct.⁵⁹ This provides a rationale for the view that depravity functions as the penalty for original sin.

Chapter Three

Man Under Moral Obligation

This chapter will focus on the nature of man under moral obligation. In the state of man under moral obligation, man knows that evil is prohibited; yet he is unable to resist his own desires. Knowledge of good and evil is expressed in judgments that evil is prohibited and that man is unable to resist these evil desires, however such a man is unaware that he has forever lost the ability to will good. Although man under obligation may realize how difficult it is to resist evil desires, he is unaware that without the ability to will good, he may will only evil. The depravity of man in this state is such that not only has he the capacity to do evil, but also when man is aware of himself as the subject willing evil, he is unaware that when he wills he may will only evil, and is utterly without freedom.⁶⁰ For man under moral obligation, there remain undetermined future acts of willing. The problem of man living in moral evil is that while he may become aware of his vitiated nature through his experience of willing evil, his awareness is derived from the act of willing, and so he cannot be aware that he is condemned to a life of evil until death.

When Augustine speaks of the fallenness of man, he is referring to an evil that has invaded man's nature. However, from the claim that man is morally evil, it does not follow that man, as a created being, is evil. "God made man but He did not make sin in him."⁶¹ For Augustine, whatever is, is good. "Evil is not a substance because if it were a substance, it

would be good."⁶² Augustine clearly places the responsibility for evil upon Adam. "My action did not come from me, but from the sinful principle that dwells in me. It was part of the punishment of a sin freely committed by Adam my first father."⁶³ As Augustine suggests, the question of man's fallen state speaks not to man's created nature but to his moral agency.

As suggested in chapter one, an analysis of Augustine has, as its proper context, man's relationship to God. In order to better address the problem of evil, some further development of this relationship is required. Gilson puts forth the question as to how the imperfection of man can be reconciled with the perfection of God. Gilson contends that the imperfection of man is a necessary corollary to God's perfection. "Now a thing which comes from nothing participates not only in being but in non-being as well; hence, there is a kind of fundamental deficiency in a creature which in turn gives birth to the necessity of acquiring and, consequently, of changing as well."⁶⁴ Participation in both being and non-being expresses metaphorically the creation of man out of nothingness. If God is perfect and man is created out of nothingness from God, then man must be imperfect. For man to be perfect, he would have to be identical with God. This is why, for Augustine, there is a fundamental deficiency among created beings.

"Of all the things that are of a lower order than God, they have not absolute being in themselves, nor are they entirely without being. They are real insofar as they have their being from you, but unreal in the sense that they are not what you are."⁶⁵

However, it does not follow that this fundamental deficiency of man is an

evil in itself.

Gilson maintains that among all created beings, God has bestowed measure, form and order. He adds that since every nature is made up of these perfections, by definition every nature is good. "An evil nature is one in which measure, form or order is vitiated, and it is only evil in exact proportion to the degree in which they are vitiated."⁶⁶ To claim that evil is rooted in the fundamental deficiency of man is an oversimplification and serves only to distort the issue of man's vitiated nature. A vitiated nature is one that is overcome by evil desires. For Augustine, the man not yet under grace is overcome by concupiscence, and such a state is the penalty for original sin. "But if he does what he wills not, it is no longer he that does it, but the sin that dwells in him."⁶⁷ The expression "the sin that dwells in him" is a metaphor which is suggestive of the state of nature resulting from Adam's fall. The penalty for Adam's fall is that man's will moves only towards evil. The point is not that man under obligation is evil but that his nature is so scarred that he is unable to will good.

The implications of original sin are essential in understanding Augustine's conception of moral agency. It has been argued that human nature has a fundamentally deficient character; that is to say, human nature is not identical with the perfection of that which creates. In the case of morally innocent man, the deficiency was reflected in the ability not to will good. J. Prendiville suggests that the significance of the will must not be understated in drawing out the relationship between the

deficiency of man's nature and the fall of Adam. In fact, he criticizes Augustine's early conception of man in the De Vera Religione, for not giving proper attention to the role of the will. "His vision of man is partial. The will... is hardly mentioned in these pages. It is a book of the Intellect. Perhaps that is why it is such an optimistic book."⁶⁸ Prendiville suggests that in order to understand Augustine's conception of moral agency, one must consider the role of the will as a first principle of morality.

Prendiville's analysis of Adam's fall yields the view that it is the will, and not the intellect, which bears the burden of a scarred nature. Again, Prendiville criticizes Augustine's early conception of sin, in which sin is merely weakness. "In the De Vera Religione... there is the optimistic view that habit alone stands between God and the soul."⁶⁹ As Prendiville maintains, there is little here of "vitium", which, he adds, is a key concept of Augustine's later thought. In his letter to Simplician, Augustine states, "There is nothing easier for a man under the law than to will to do good and yet to do evil. He has no difficulty in willing, but it is not so easy to do what he wills."⁷⁰ This supports Prendiville's assertion that habits are not to be explained merely as a function of repetition. Augustine understates the claim that for man under the law, it is not so easy to do what he wills. In keeping with the view that a sinful principle dwells within man under the law, it is not just difficult but impossible for such a man to will good.

Augustine's conception of memory helps to draw out the relationship

between intellect and will. In Book X of the Confessions, Augustine considers the power of the memory, and discovers that it is an extraordinary faculty of the soul. For example, he states, "The power of memory is prodigious my God. It is a vast, immeasurable sanctuary. Who can plumb its depths? And yet it is a faculty of my soul. Although it is a part of my nature, I cannot understand all that I am."⁷¹ He concludes that human reason cannot account for its own power; hence, it must come from something else. Since, for Augustine, the soul is greater than our capability of understanding, intelligence turns out to be some sort of gift from God. In order to demonstrate the presence of God in man's consciousness, Augustine argues that the sublime powers of the intellect are found in memory. For Augustine, God is the source of all powers available to our consciousness. The strongly Platonic influence in this section of the Confessions is suggested by the notion of in-born harmony and order. When Augustine looks for God in a certain part of his memory, he realizes that we must go into ourselves, for it is within ourselves that the models of perfection are clearer.

The significance of this notion of in-born harmony and order is brought out in Augustine's theory of illumination. In De Magistro, written ten years before Confessions, Augustine points to divine illumination as an explanation of the cause and guarantee of the truth of our judgments. In this text, Augustine maintains that we are able to understand the meaning of a word only if we apprehend the reality for which the word is merely a signifier. "Regarding... all those things which we understand, it is not a speaker who utters sounds exteriorly whom

we consult, but it is truth that presides within, over the mind itself; though it may have been words that prompted us to make such consultation."⁷² While words are meaningful in that they are signifiers, nevertheless they are never more than an occasion to look at reality. Words remind us to seek reality within ourselves.

The thrust of De Magistro is to suggest that God teaches by illuminating the soul, so that the inner man is capable of seeing and judging correctly. Yet, while Augustine insists that wisdom is accessible through illumination, he maintains that to each man only so much is manifested as he is capable of receiving because of his own good or bad will. "And if one sometimes falls into error, that does not occur by reason of defect in the Truth consulted, any more than it is a defect of the light which is outside of us that the eyes of the body are often deceived."⁷³ Augustine appears to be drawing a distinction between the intellectual apprehension of judgments that are gained through illumination and the role of the will in helping to integrate such judgments into one's moral existence. In other words, there is arguably a hint here as to Augustine's more mature thoughts on the role of the will in the moral life of man.

Further consideration of Augustine's conception of memory helps to show why the will bears the burden of a scarred nature. In his analysis of memory, Augustine wishes to explain the source of misery in man. For example, he states,

"Why are some men not happy? It is because they attend far more closely to other things whose power to make them unhappy

is greater than the power of their dim memory of truth to make them happy. There is still a faint glow of light in man. Let him walk on, for fear that darkness may engulf him."⁷⁴

In this passage, Augustine stresses the role of the intellect in the achievement of happiness. For Augustine, man has not entirely forgotten the truths that guide him. Augustine suggests that even man under law retains, albeit dimly, the meaning of the experience of joy: "No one can say that he has no experience of joy, and this is why he finds it in his memory and recognizes it when he hears the phrase 'a state of happiness'."⁷⁵ Thus, for Augustine, the experience of joy is contained in the memory. The problem of man under moral obligation, however, is that while he has a memory of the experience of joy, it is true a priori that he does not actually experience joy while under the law. In other words, since one's experience is founded upon an act of will, one would have to will good in order to experience joy. This explains why it is the will, and not the intellect, which bears the burden of a scarred nature.

Augustine states, in the Confessions, that when the impulses of man clash with his spirit, man discovers that he cannot do all that his will approves, and so he falls back upon what he is able to do. "Their will to do what they cannot do is not strong enough to enable them to do it."⁷⁶ This period, in which Augustine wrote the Confessions, foreshadows his more mature understanding of the will. J. Prendiville acknowledges Augustine's view that bad habits are the penalty for Adam's sin. However, he insists that Augustine's account of his own personal struggle in the Confessions tends to minimize the significance of inherited evil. "Augustine was writing his biography, on account of his own struggle to

overcome his habits; in these circumstances he would tend to emphasize personal rather than inherited evil."⁷⁷ Prendiville argues that Augustine's work on Galatians is a watershed in his thinking about the relationship between God and man. He suggests that Augustine's work on Galatians, in which Augustine develops his understanding of "flesh", reflects more mature thought vis-a-vis man's absolute need of grace to do good and avoid evil.

"Up till now Augustine has tended to see the conflict between flesh and spirit in purely psychological terms, i.e., bad habits of the senses opposed to the good intentions of the mind. Now he becomes aware of a more profound theological dimension: the flesh warring against the spirit is the love of self warring against the love of God."⁷⁸

While it may be the case that higher truths dwell in man's memory, the effect of inherited evil is to prevent man from moving his will towards those principles which are retained in the dim recesses of his mind.

The effect of inherited evil bears upon the vitiation of man's nature. The fundamental deficiency of Adam, which manifested itself in the mutability of his character, was transformed into a fully blown pride after the fall. Adam's weakness lay in his ignorance as to the deficiency of his character. However, man's nature was not vitiated until Adam chose to move away from God. It was only when Adam exercised his capacity not to will good that human nature became vitiated. This bears upon J. Patout Burns' claim that the hidden sin of pride manifested itself as evil. It may be more accurate to characterize this "hidden pride" as ignorance as to the deficiency of character. This may help to spare Adam from the criticism that he exercised his capacity not to will good because of his

love of self. It is only with a vitiated nature that the love of self arises as an instance of fully blown pride. "In the condition of man under moral obligation, man loves himself so much that he refuses to obey the law of God."⁷⁹ On this showing, a love of self would not precede but rather it would follow an act of will.

Prendiville pursues this notion of love of self more deeply. He maintains that evil habits become quasi-natural aspects of man under moral obligation.

"When Augustine says in his sermon De fide et symbolo '... consuetudo in naturam versa est secundum generationem mortalem peccato primi hominis...' he means that bad habits have become so rampant among men as to form their 'second nature'."⁸⁰

Yet Prendiville insists that Augustine's focus on "second nature" helps to push beyond man's self-made habits to a basic inclination to evil that is with man from his birth. "Augustine turns more and more to original sin and its effects on the race, and he begins to explain evil in this new formula that places an innate inclination to evil first, and self-made habits second."⁸¹ Prendiville's point is that while habits are added to inherited evil to form a second nature, the only reason why habits develop at all is due to man's inherited tendency to sin. This is supported quite explicitly by Augustine when he speaks of the inherited tendency to evil as the penalty of original sin, and the addiction to pleasure as the penalty of repeated sinning. For example, he states, "We are born into this life with the former and add to the latter as we live."⁸² The significance of inherited evil is to dispel any doubt that in order for man to will good, he must simply try to alter his bad habits.

A somewhat sinister notion leaps out from this analysis of inherited evil and bad habits. It would seem that for one who is so enmeshed in bad habits, there is the great possibility that such a person would not trace this chain of habit to a vitiated nature founded upon original sin. Augustine's account of the pear tree incident in the Confessions helps to illustrate how man, left to himself, becomes enslaved to his own perverted will. Augustine recalls an event from his childhood in which he and some friends plucked the fruit from a pear tree. "I was willing to steal, and steal I did, although I was not compelled by any lack, unless it were the lack of a sense of justice or a distaste for what was right and a greedy love of doing wrong."⁸³ Augustine adds that the tree was loaded with fruit that was pleasing neither to look at nor to taste. He concludes that the only real pleasure in stealing the pears consisted in doing something that was forbidden.

Some may argue that Augustine exaggerates the significance of this pointless robbing of the pear tree in order to dramatize the evil character of the incident. On this showing, it would signify nothing more than the harmless prank of a child. Yet Augustine's revulsion over the incident suggests a richer meaning. Peter Brown asserts that Augustine's reflection over this incident brought him to a new awareness of the limitations of human freedom. "The destructive acts of will forge a 'chain of habit'... in which one is held in the iron links of one's own will."⁸⁴ As Brown maintains, the lesson of the pear tree incident is to emphasize the misery of man when he is trapped in the habits of a

lifetime. To say that the robbing of the pear tree was a pointless exercise is to affirm that through a chain of habit, man comes to take pleasure in doing something for the sake of evil, and for no other reason.

The danger of forging this chain of habit is that it tends to render man helpless as far as being able to trace the root of his actions. "The sombre preoccupation of Augustine with the manner in which a man could imprison himself in a second nature by his past actions makes the Confessions a very modern book."⁸⁵ While it may be "modern" to consider the impact of past actions in forming a "second nature", this should not detract from Augustine's commitment to inherited tendency. That idea that man could be imprisoned in a second nature allows for the possibility that he will never trace the source of his vitiated nature. When Augustine recalls the pear tree incident, he maintains that the real pleasure consisted in doing something that was forbidden. "My soul sought its own destruction, looking for no profit in disgrace but only for disgrace itself."⁸⁶ The pear tree incident, as an example of a link in a chain of habit, offers a clue as to how a soul seeks its own destruction; that is, the soul does not wish to profit from its actions but rather it wishes only to disgrace itself. Why a man should wish to disgrace himself, in the Augustinian sense, can only be answered if one is able to trace one's habits back to an inherited tendency to evil.

It may be useful to contrast Augustine's view as to man's capacity to will good with other traditional reference points. A brief look at the views put forth by Aristotle and Aquinas may help to highlight Augustine's

conception of the imprisoned nature of fallen man. In The Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle is concerned with the conditions and causes involved in the betterment of the individual. For him, nothing can be rejected for the good one sees in it; this is not a matter of option but a matter of nature. For Aristotle, the good is that at which all things aim. Essential to the telos of man is that improvement must be within his power.

For Aristotle, knowing what it is to be good will not make a man good; so that one's moral life is rooted in good praxis. Central to the notion of moral experience is that one has either a desirous mind or desire permeated with intelligence - man is the union of desire and intelligence. Aristotle's view that desire is requisite for human freedom is found in his flat denial that there is any sense to a faculty or ability being devoid of an orientation. For Aristotle, this "will" or "desirous mind" can be understood only in terms of the internal make-up of each individual. Therefore, although will is determined by nature, each man is free to realize his potentiality. This, for Aristotle, is the essence of the practical; that is to say, the freedom that a human being has lies in choice and not in the nature of will. In effect, Aristotle maintains that it is within man's power to better himself. While Aristotle shares Augustine's view that the will is suggestive of some sort of movement or orientation, he does not allow for its orientation to be other than a tendency towards the good.

Aquinas picks up on the Aristotelian notion that the improvement of

man is within his own power. For Aquinas, the free man is the one who has built himself up through his own choices or decisions. In other words, we become aware of ourselves as free in the moment of making a choice or decision. Thus, the experience of moral goodness is made possible through our own actions. In this view, human freedom is founded upon the interweaving of intellect and will, where the will affirms the truths that are apprehended by the intellect. For Aquinas, grace is offered to all human beings from the moment of conception, and it functions in such a way as to draw man towards union with God. For him, the reason why some reject grace is at least in part due to man's capacity or ability to turn away from the good. For Aquinas, man turns away from the good because he has not built up a habit of choosing good. Thus, it is only by choosing to do good that man develops "good habits" and, finally, a desire for the good.

While Aquinas acknowledges the Christian conception of original sin, his insistence on the significance of habit in helping to orient one toward the good is simply inconsistent with Augustine's mature conception of predestination. One need only reiterate the claim that the significance of inherited evil is to dispel any doubt that in order for man to will good, he must simply try to alter his bad habits. The notion of an imprisoned nature is susceptible of liberation neither through man's choices nor changes of habits, but only through the gratuitous quality of grace.

The idea that man is imprisoned in a second nature is a key element

in understanding Augustine's claim regarding the punishment of evildoers: "The punishment of evildoers which is from God is an evil for evildoers, but it is among the good works of God, since it is just to punish evildoers, and, certainly, everything that is just is good."⁸⁷ If man could trace his chain of habit to an inherited tendency which is founded upon original sin, then he might conclude that the punishment of evildoers is among the good works of God. However, man under moral obligation is so enmeshed in his chain of habit that he does not accept the root justification of his misery; that is, he does not accept that the justification of his misery is the inherited tendency to sin, as well as the "second nature" which follows from it. This is an argument in favour of the view that man under moral obligation is not able to trace his chain of habit to a vitiated nature founded upon original sin.

Man's failure to trace his chain of habit to original sin expresses his fully blown pride. "The love of self rather than love of God is the primary form of self-corruption."⁸⁸ According to J. Patout Burns, pride is the driving force behind all misunderstanding and perversion of Christian truth. The significance of pride can be seen in the difficulty of reconciling man's condemnation with just punishment. In The Retractations, Augustine states, "The ignorance and difficulty which every man experiences from the beginning of his existence are involved with this misery of just condemnation, and no one is freed from this evil except by the grace of God."⁸⁹ It is pride which prevents man from reconciling his misery with just punishment. Moreover, it is pride which prevents man from reconciling his own condemnation with just punishment. As Patout

Burns suggests, pride has no salvic significance, and therefore, it has no role in the Augustinian scheme of return to God.⁹⁰ "It is a fundamental failure of love... pride serves only to measure the distance of the creature's fall into an imagined independence and away from the Truth which is the Good common to all."⁹¹ The pride of man under moral obligation is such that not only is he condemned to a life of evil until death, but he is also unaware of this situation due to his failure to reconcile his experience of evil with man's condemnation, which is his payment for original sin. Moreover, pride represents the chief obstacle to what Augustine considers as man's purpose; which is the desire of man's soul to return to God.

Chapter Four

Man Under Grace

This chapter will explore the nature of man if a remedy for moral evil were to be supplied. Given that post-Adamite man has a vitiated nature, man now requires supernatural or divine assistance if he is to will good. This is expressed theologically as man under grace. On behalf of Augustine, Gilson contends that the whole purpose of grace is to make man's salvation possible in the state of fallen nature. "Since grace now deals with a perverted nature, it no longer has as its object the founding of God's work, but rather its restoration through the correction of a disorder for which man is fully responsible."⁹² Gilson's comment points to an ambiguity in the term "grace" as far as the biblical interpretation of Adamite and post-Adamite man is concerned. The ambiguity is rooted in the distinction between natural and supernatural grace. Natural grace is reflected in Adam's ability to will good on his own. In the biblical account of man's fall, man now requires divine assistance, in the form of supernatural grace, if he is to will good. Whether supernatural grace is a new faculty of soul or a facilitating of the old will remains unclear in Augustine writings. However, in The Retractations, Augustine states that grace "frees the will from the servitude from which it has been made a servant of sin"⁹³ Because Augustine speaks of the will being freed, it is plausible to claim that Augustine's notion of grace suggests not a new faculty of soul but refers rather to the same will which has been empowered to will good.

Given the gratuitous quality of divine intervention, man under grace is confronted with the uncertain character of his moral agency. Augustine expresses this uncertainty when he describes life as a perpetual trial: "No one should be confident that although he has been able to pass from a worse state to a better, he may not also pass from a better state to a worse. Our only hope, our only confidence, the only firm promise that we have is your mercy."⁹⁴ This attitude of uncertainty is perhaps best understood in light of Augustine's concern with man's relationship to God. On behalf of Augustine, Peter Brown claims that man's attempt to understand himself leads him into a limitless world of inner experience. "It was unusual to insist, as Augustine does, that no man could ever sufficiently search his own heart, that the 'spreading, limitless room' was so complex, so mysterious, that no one could ever know his whole personality."⁹⁵ For man under grace, there is the recognition that only God can penetrate the heart of man. While man under grace is aware that he has an ability to move his will, he is also aware that it is only because of divine assistance that his will may move in the direction of good. More importantly, perhaps, there is the recognition that moral agency and indeed existence itself have no meaning or content apart from man's relationship to God.

Man's relationship to God bears significantly upon the relationship between freedom and responsibility. Man becomes aware of the possibility for true freedom only when he is aware of both the nothingness of his existence and his persistence in goodness. Given good actions, man will

persist in goodness. Yet man under grace is aware of the non-necessity that he exists and the non-necessity that he continues to act in a good manner. Man is aware that he has lost the ability to will good on his own and he accepts responsibility for his own nothingness. This reaches to the heart of Augustine's message in the Confessions, in which "confessio" is understood both as accusation and recognition of oneself, and also as praise of God. "In this one word 'confessio', Augustine had summed up his attitude to the human condition."⁹⁶ It is the individual's awareness of his nothingness apart from God which forms the relationship between freedom and responsibility. Those who are free could be found only in the state where the will of man is prepared such that man chooses only the good with the gift of perseverance until the end. "For man under grace, the gift of perseverance is such that he has an inability to forsake good."⁹⁷ This is perhaps better expressed as freedom from the ability to forsake good.

While Augustine insists that the purpose of man is contained within his desire to return to God, he adds that it is only by the path of piety and devotion that man achieves this purpose. This affective response of the individual when he is confronted with the uncertain character of his moral agency underscores man's responsibility vis-a-vis the correction of his disordered nature. If man is aware of himself as the subject who wills good, he affirms that he cannot have willed so on his own, for he lost this ability with the fall of Adam. In consideration of a nature which forever bears the scars of original sin, there is the recognition, for man under grace, as to the "torn" condition of moral agency. While

such a man may acknowledge that he has received grace, as far as a particular act of willing is concerned, it does not follow from a particular act of willing that he may be certain that he has received persevering grace. Thus, we see the stirrings of the "responsibility project", in which the pious man recognizes his need to be healed through the grace of God.

Evidence of an individual will can be found in Book Eight of the Confessions. In this section, Augustine considers why it is that when the mind commands itself to make an act of will, the order is not obeyed. "The reason why the command is not obeyed is that it is not given with the full will. For if the will were full, it would not command itself to be full, since it would be so already."⁹⁸ If the will were full, it would move only in the direction of good. It follows that the mind would not have to command itself to make an act of will if the will were full. Given a full will, every act would necessarily be a good act, and therefore would not have to be commanded. To claim that a command is not obeyed due to a lack of full will is to emphasize the infirmity of man's will, and such an infirmity represents the scarring of original sin. According to Peter Brown, the full impact of man's scarred nature is felt in Book X of the Confessions: "This book is not the affirmation of a cured man; rather it is the self-portrait of a convalescent."⁹⁹ Man under grace remains a convalescent because he is never free from the sense of guilt incurred by original sin. As Brown contends, the pace of the Confessions is determined by the growth of Augustine's awareness of the need to confess. "The avoidance of confession now struck Augustine as the

hallmark of his Manichean phase: 'it had pleased my pride to be free from a sense of guilt...'.¹⁰⁰ This helps to shed light on J. Patout Burns' comment that pride has no role in the Augustinian scheme of return to God. Pride, which serves to measure the distance of the creature's fall into an imagined independence, is founded upon one's "imagined" sense of freedom from the guilt of original sin. For man under grace, the possibility of freedom opens up only when he humbly accepts the guilt incurred by original sin.

For Augustine, moral agency has, as its counterpart, the acceptance of one's own vitiated nature. Moral agency is nothing more than the awareness that one has willed good. Recognition of one's vitiated nature suggests an awareness that somehow one is not entirely good. Since, for Augustine, full will implies freedom from the ability to forsake good, then divine assistance must intervene if man is to be a moral agent; that is, man requires grace if he is to be morally upright. J. Prendiville insists that man under grace is able to resist his evil inclinations but he wonders whether such a man has found peace. He adds that the tension between good and evil still exists even in a man who has received grace. "But his complete peace of mind comes only when he has 'shuffled off the mortal coil'.¹⁰¹ This highlights the role of the "responsibility project" in the life of man. While man lives out his mortal life, he is subjected to many evil inclinations and desires. Man under grace does not consent to his evil inclinations. Nevertheless, while he is in this mortal life, he cannot deny the inclinations and desires that spring from within.

It has been affirmed that it is only with a vitiated nature that the love of self arises as an instance of fully blown pride. It has also been affirmed that moral agency rests upon man's humble acceptance of his vitiated nature. It is then important to articulate how a creature with a vitiated nature may avoid slipping into a love of self, so that he may move piously towards God. Prendiville offers insight into this problem in his discussion of habit. On behalf of Augustine, Prendiville maintains that man obeys bad habits because he is enslaved to these habits.¹⁰² He insists, however, that fear of damnation is not strong enough to induce a man to overcome his habit. "Only the love of God can do this. But this love of God must be poured into a man's soul from outside, for of himself he has only self-love to show."¹⁰³ It is pride that overcomes man's fear of damnation, and it is this affective response of the individual which results in his enslavement to evil habits. It is only through piety that man may trace his chain of habit to a vitiated nature incurred by original sin. Moreover, it is the piety of "confessio" which opens the possibility that man may fulfill his desire to return to God.

A discussion of affectivity in the moral agent should consider the extent to which piety may be sustained by the moral agent. Thomas Boston's view of affectivity may help to clarify Augustine's view of the relationship between moral agency and affectivity. Boston allows that the birth of regenerate man (man under grace) may be marred in two ways. Briefly, he maintains that such a man may simply lose the sharpness of his pious convictions or that he may receive insufficient grace to allow him to sustain his awakened piety. "All these things may be, where the

Sanctifying Spirit of Christ never rests upon the soul, but the stony heart still remains; and in that case these affections cannot but wither, because they have no root."¹⁰⁴ From Boston's analysis, it may be argued that grace operates at two levels: there is grace which allows one to will good and there is grace which allows one to persevere in goodness. The former grace manifests itself in the awareness of determined acts of willing. One may therefore acknowledge divine assistance in the act of willing good. The latter grace, however, remains unknown to man while he lives out his mortal existence, for he does not know whether divine assistance will be brought to bear upon his future acts of willing. At this point, Boston emphasizes that piety and devotion must be sufficient and have the character of perseverance if man is to be morally upright, and thus move in the direction of fulfilling his desire to return to God.

Furthermore, Boston's analysis of original sin highlights an issue that is left unresolved in Augustine. More precisely, it directs attention to whether assistance is given to man in the form of degrees of grace or whether assistance is something that simply is either given or not given to man. Boston asserts that because of original sin, man made himself his chief end and his own will his law. By making himself his own chief end, he developed a love of self which overrode any fear of damnation. "But when man is new made in regeneration, grace rectifies this disorder in some measure, though not perfectly: because we are but renewed in part, while in this world."¹⁰⁵ When Boston stresses that grace rectifies this disorder in some measure, he seems to be directing attention only at the grace which allows one to will good. He employs the

term "measure" not to suggest that grace is given in degrees but rather to suggest that man remains unaware of persevering grace while he lives out his mortal life. Why it is that man's love of self overrides his fear of damnation may be attributed either to the view that he has no supernatural grace or to the view that what grace he has received is not sufficient to help move his will in the direction of good. This has not been adequately explicated in Augustine's writings.

In view of the claim that man is newly made in regeneration, two considerations leap to the forefront. Firstly, the grace which rectifies the disorder of post-Adamite man, and which empowers his will to move in the direction of good, is given to man. Therefore, there is a legitimate question as to whether piety is given to man upon his request or whether it is a gratuitous gift from God. Secondly, it is of critical importance to consider that while grace rectifies this disorder in some measure, man is not perfected in his mortal existence. The cornerstone of both these considerations is the biblical interpretation of Adam's fall from Paradise. It has been affirmed in chapter two that ceasing to act in innocence was the result of an act of will, yet the act did not stem from a vitiated nature. More precisely, the act was rooted in an ability to forsake good, which reflected man's ignorance as to the deficiency of his character. This moral interpretation of Adam's fall suggests that the vitiation of human nature was not inherent in Adam's ability to forsake good but only followed upon an act of will. It is because of a vitiated nature that man expresses the pride of his self-love by making himself his chief end.

If it is affirmed that the vitiation of nature led man to make himself his chief end, then it is puzzling as to why such a man should seek piety from without. Clearly, if man has himself as his chief end, then it remains to be explained what would motivate him to change his desired end. According to Benjamin Warfield, the solution to this puzzle is contained in the theme of Augustine's Confessions. "The theme of the Confessions is the ineffable goodness of God, which is illustrated by what He has done for Augustine's miserable soul, in delivering it from its sins and distresses and bringing it out into the largeness of the divine life and knowledge."¹⁰⁶ It is difficult to understand why a man of "proud ambition" would alter his desired end by requesting piety. As long as man makes himself his chief end, there is no reason to request piety. The point is that grace is not requested. This is the meaning of "gratuitous gift". This supports the view that piety is a gratuitous gift from God. The notion that grace is a gratuitous gift from God is heavily emphasized in Augustine's later works. In his treatise, "On Grace and Free Will", Augustine underscores the gratuitous quality of grace: "The spirit of grace causes us to have faith in order that through faith we may, on praying for it, obtain the ability to do what we are commanded."¹⁰⁷ For Augustine, man's soul remains miserable unless God intervenes to heal his vitiated nature through grace.

Along with the notion of gratuitous grace as a gift from God, Augustine affirms that this gift is given only to some and not all. "How can any man claim jurisdiction over those who are without grace, when he

does not know which of them will come into the sweet domain of Your grace and which remain forever in the bitter exile where You are not loved?"¹⁰⁸ This is a reference to Augustine's conception of predestination. According to Augustine, those who are predestined for salvation are called by some certain calling peculiar to the elect. "They have been elected before the foundation of the world; not because they were foreknown as men who would believe and would be holy, but in order that by means of that very election of grace they might be such."¹⁰⁹ The meaning of the term "gratuitous" is brought out in light of Augustine's claim that election of the predestined occurs prior to the foundation of the world. If one is to take Augustine's mature writings seriously, one is led to the view that not only is grace a gift given to some but it is entirely unmerited.

Émile Faguet's analysis of Calvin draws attention to this particular notion of grace. A sixteenth-century exponent of predestination, Calvin borrowed heavily from Augustine's conception of unmerited election. As Faguet interprets Calvin, there are no degrees between the perfect and that which is not perfect, because there is no common measure. Hence, there is an infinite gap. This is reflected in the profound limitations that define man's finiteness. On behalf of Calvin, Faguet indicates that one should not pray to God for mercy, for that would be like giving God advice. "Dieu sait ce qu'il a à nous donner."¹¹⁰ Faguet portrays the "stunted" individual as follows: "Nous te servons bien. Paye-nous. Paganisme pur."¹¹¹ On this showing, the function of prayer is to express one's desire to be united to God. Confession may be regarded then as a form of prayer in which one recognizes the possibility of bridging this

gap between the imperfect and the perfect. As an authentic affective expression of one's desire to be united to God, confessions opens up the possibility of one's moral perfection.

The notion of unmerited election has a profound impact on moral agency. In the Augustinian perspective, it is only man under grace who achieves moral uprightness through piety and devotion to God. Yet, for mortal man, this is no guarantee of salvation. Again, for Augustine, the desire of man's soul to return to God forms the basis of man's moral experience and makes possible the fulfillment of his nature. The nature of man in fulfillment would represent the final state of man in which the conflict between inclinations and desire is dissolved. This would mark the end of a long journey, begun by the pious man, where the freedom of man is perfected in the realm of spirit; that is to say, the individual man fulfills his nature when he wills in a state of freedom. However, this is a state reserved for those who have passed beyond mortal existence and who have received eternal life. Recalling Boston's contention that no man may be perfected in his mortal existence, man under grace cannot be certain that he will fulfill his nature.

The relation between freedom and responsibility is made explicit through Augustine's characterization of affective response vis-a-vis predestination. That anyone should achieve salvation through predestination is, for Augustine, not incumbent upon God. This is perhaps the most difficult notion to uphold on behalf of Augustine. While faith marks the beginning of man's journey back to God, "it is uncertain that

anyone has received the gift of perseverance as long as he is alive."¹¹² This is expressed also in Augustine's interpretation of the Psalms, where man is instructed to work out his salvation with fear and trembling.¹¹³ Thus, as far as the responsibility project is concerned, man must bear the uncertainty of his destiny.

A striking feature of Augustine's conception of predestination is that it guards against the insincere piety that manifests itself as smug vanity and self-righteousness.¹¹⁴ For Augustine, moral agency is possible precisely because man can answer actively to the initiative of God. In other words, God prepares the will of man such that man is aware of himself as the subject who wills good. Man's awareness of willing may be reformulated as an experience which arises out of an action, of which he is the subject. Moral agency implies an active soul. "Augustine conceives the soul as at once active and acted upon, but as active only because acted upon. It is only in the light of God, the sun of the soul, that the soul is illuminated to see light."¹¹⁵ Man under grace may acknowledge that God has acted upon his soul but he cannot be aware that God will continue to act upon his soul. The uncertainty of mortal man that he has received the gift of perseverance means only that he can trace his experience of past actions to God's initiative, for his experience of the future remains to be determined. The vanity or self-righteousness of mortal man must surely point to a basic sense of insecurity inherent in the uncertainty over one's destiny.

It is clear, from Augustine's perspective, that the infusion of

grace in man's life is to provide the means for the "possible" fulfillment of man's nature. As a moral agent, though, man's responsibility is to act when acted upon. As Warfield contends, the means put in action by grace provide a remedy for man's vitiated nature, but they do not actually restore his nature while he is mortal. "This is guarded from the fancy that attainment in this life can proceed so far as to be freed from the necessity of means - it is among the inheritances of Augustinians until this day."¹¹⁶ This reveals the folly of self-righteousness. If it is affirmed that one's awareness of willing arises out of an action, of which one is the subject, and future actions remain undetermined, then one's awareness of future willing cannot be determined in the present. At every moment and with an awareness arising out of successive actions, man under grace retains a desire to return to God, yet he must bear the uncertainty that he will fulfill this desire.

Augustine's interpretation of the Psalms, in which man is instructed to work out his salvation with fear and trembling, bears significantly upon his conception of moral agency. For Augustine, the affective response of piety is a function of God's grace in rekindling man's desire to return to God.

"One can confess only because his soul is first turned to humility by the persuasive effects of God's own speech, teaching, delighting, and moving the soul in various media - created nature, the sacred Scriptures, and most important of all, through the interior of the soul itself."¹¹⁷

On this showing, man is moved to "tears of confession" precisely because God calls upon man's soul to be humble. Therefore, man may be said to be pious if and only if his will is prepared accordingly by God. "That God

speaks within the soul and that in turn the soul responds in both an interior speech to God and an exterior speech to men is the fundamental reality of the whole of the Confessions.¹¹⁸ Man's desire to return to God is reflected in the pious and humble attitude of his soul, yet the means to fulfill this desire elude him throughout his mortal life and so he is left to bear, in fear and trembling, the "terrible" uncertainty of his destiny.

While it may be that man is left to tremble at his destiny, it may be argued that this uncertainty serves as a catalyst for moral action. Paul Ricoeur insists that weakness and fragility characterize man's very being. For Ricoeur, this characterization of man's being opens up many possibilities. "Man is no less destined to unlimited rationality, to totality, and beatitude than he is limited to a perspective, consigned to death, and riveted to desire."¹¹⁹ For Ricoeur, man's being is, to speak metaphorically, a possibility that is located between the poles of finitude and infinity. "In order for human finitude to be seen and expressed, a moment that surpasses it must be inherent in the situation, condition, or state of being finite."¹²⁰ In terms of human action, it may be argued that moral perfection, as an aspect of infinity, remains a possibility within a finite act of will.

Ricoeur's account of man's being in relation to finitude and infinity can be usefully and effectively applied to Augustine's characterization of the moral agent. For Augustine, man's responsibility is to act, and the moral tension increases with the uncertainty as to

whether he shall move in the direction of good or evil. Managing this uncertainty may be greatly facilitated if man is awakened to the possibility of moral perfection in a finite act of will. In effect, moral engagement may be bridged by the possibility of human freedom or moral perfection as evidenced in human action. For Ricoeur, the "awakening" of such a possibility may be achieved without recourse to any presumption that one is predestined. Thus, a philosophical attitude is fashioned out of theological content.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to come to grips with Augustine's conception of moral agency and to link affectivity with moral engagement. Consideration of the methodological approach to the thesis shows not only how theological notions underpin Augustine's conception of the nature of man but also how theology helps to clarify the meaning of moral agency in Augustine. The nature of man in the philosophy of Augustine has, as its proper context, man's relationship to God. For Augustine, man's purpose is contained within the desire of his soul to return to God, and this desire forms the basis of man's moral experience.

It is in Augustine's analysis of the will that moral agency takes on philosophical significance. He argues that God empowers the will of man as a provision for the possibility that man may move in the direction of the fulfillment of his nature. Next, man's return to God would be the fulfillment of his nature. Moreover, man's nature would be fulfilled when he willed in a state of freedom. Augustine's theological understanding of the various states of human nature helps to draw out the relationship between freedom and the fulfillment of man's nature. Attention to this relationship might have pushed this thesis entirely into the realm of theology were it not for the role of the will in responding to its desire. What is of philosophical interest is that it is man who is aware of his will moving towards either good or evil. It has been argued that the evidence for freedom is found in the experience of willing. On this showing, God prepares the will of man such that man is aware of himself

as the subject who wills good. Man's awareness of willing may be reformulated as an experience which arises out of an action, of which he is the subject. It is these experiences which make man aware of the character of his moral agency. Since these experiences refer to man's capacity to act in a certain manner, man's moral awareness may be said to rest upon particular acts of willing. However, man's awareness is limited to those experiences which arise out of determinate actions.

Augustine's theological understanding of the various states of human nature clearly shows that freedom only becomes a possibility for man under grace. Freedom is synonymous with the fulfillment of man's nature, for Augustine, yet the fulfillment of one's nature is never more than a possibility for mortal man. While it is correct to claim, on behalf of Augustine, that piety opens up such a possibility, mortal man cannot be certain that he will fulfill his desire to return to God. On this showing, piety is a necessary condition for the fulfillment of one's nature. As far as his moral experience is concerned, man is left to bear the uncertainty of his destiny. As a moral agent, his responsibility is to act when acted upon by God; but man can never be certain that he will have sufficient piety to help him persevere throughout his life. Man is therefore left trembling at this "terrible" uncertainty. Since, from the perspective of mortal man, future experiences remain undetermined, man must bear his uncertainty in a state of fear and trembling.

The notion of moral agency, as it is explored in this thesis, is intricately tied up with Augustine's conception of predestination.

Predestination provides a rich context in which to understand Augustine's conception of moral agency. Indeed, predestination heightens the difficulty of accomplishing a moral act, for there is no guarantee that man will be rewarded as he lives out his life. Yet it is the affective response to this uncertainty which awakens man to the possibility of moral perfection. I submit then that the tension between freedom (as an ongoing possibility) and responsibility (the resolve of the individual) may provide a bridge to moral engagement.

It might appear that Augustine's conception of predestination, treated explicitly only in his mature writings, is set out only in the context of his polemics with the semi-Pelagians. One might suspect that because of this polemical context, Augustine somewhat, if not entirely, distorts his notion of moral agency. However, from the fact that a claim is set out in a polemical context, it does not follow that such a claim either helps only to distort or is simply based on falsehood. In this thesis, an attempt has been made to take seriously Augustine's mature writings on predestination. The point was not to determine whether Augustine's theological principles were correct. Instead, the point was to show how these principles, and more specifically, the concept of predestination, help to clarify the meaning of moral agency in Augustine.

ENDNOTES

- 1 St. Augustine, Confessions, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1961), 21.
- 2 Ibid., 21.
- 3 St. Augustine, Of True Religion, trans. J.H.S. Burleigh (Indiana: Gateway Editions, Ltd., 1959), Introduction, XI.
- 4 Ibid., Introduction, XIV.
- 5 Ibid., Introduction, XV.
- 6 Ibid., Introduction, XVII.
- 7 P. Brown, Augustine of Hippo (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 169.
- 8 F.J. Weismann, "The problematic of freedom in St. Augustine: Towards a new hermeneutics," Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes 35 (1989): 108.
- 9 John G. Prendiville, "The Development of the Idea of Habit in the thought of St. Augustine," Augustinian Studies 28 (1972): 44
- 10 Ibid., 45.
- 11 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 147.
- 12 Ibid., 148.
- 13 Ibid., 156.
- 14 St. Augustine, City of God, trans. H. Bettenson (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1984), 371.
- 15 F. J. Weismann, op. cit., 109.
- 16 Ibid., 110.
- 17 R. Di Lorenzo, "Non Pie Quaerunt: Rhetoric, Dialectic, and the Discovery of the True in Augustine's Confessions," Augustinian Studies 14 (1983): 120.
- 18 Ibid., 127.
- 19 J. Pieper, Belief and Faith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), 88.
- 20 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 152.

- 21 Paul Kuntz, "The I-Thou Relation and Aretaic Divine Command Ethics: Augustine's Study of Virtue and Vices in the Confessions," Augustinian Studies 16 (1985): 119.
- 22 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 279.
- 23 B. Warfield, Calvin and Augustine (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1980), 339.
- 24 Ibid., 402.
- 25 St. Augustine, The Retractations, trans. Sister Mary Inez Bogan (Chicago: The Catholic University of America Press, 1968), 42.
- 26 E. Gilson, Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, trans. L.E.M. Lynch (New York: Random House, 1960), 131.
- 27 Ibid., 132.
- 28 St. Augustine, The Retractations, op. cit., 35.
- 29 Gilson's view regarding this particular point can be found in Gilson's book, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine. This book is a translation of his work, Introduction a l'Etude de St. Augustin. The Philosophers Index Retrospective Section (1940-1967) indicates no reply to either version of Gilson's book.
- 30 E. Gilson, op. cit., 161.
- 31 Ibid., 162.
- 32 St. Augustine, The Retractations, op. cit., 108.
- 33 John C. Cooper, "The Basic Philosophical and Theological Notions of St. Augustine," Augustinian Studies 15 (1984): 109.
- 34 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 23.
- 35 St. Augustine, The Retractations, op. cit., 107.
- 36 This aspect of predestination is part of what will be discussed in chapter four.
- 37 St. Augustine, "On Rebuke and Grace," Saint Augustine: Anti-Pelagian Writings, trans. R. E. Wallis and Benjamin B. Warfield, ed. Philip Schaff, 14 vols. (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1956) 5: 485.
- 38 In The Retractations, Augustine maintains that if one is free to do only good, then one is freed by divine grace.
- 39 St. Augustine, "On Rebuke and Grace," op. cit., 485.

- 40 Ibid., 483.
- 41 Ibid., 483.
- 42 T. Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State (Great Britain: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1964), 40.
- 43 Ibid., 44.
- 44 Ibid., 44.
- 45 Fred Berthold Jr., "Free Will and Theodicy in Augustine: An Exposition and Critique," Religious Studies 17 (1981): 528.
- 46 Ibid., 532.
- 47 Ibid., 534.
- 48 Ibid., 534.
- 49 Ibid., 532.
- 50 E. Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine, op. cit., 150.
- 51 Ibid., 163.
- 52 J. Patcut Burns, "Augustine on the Origin and Progress of Evil," Religious Ethics 15-16, (1987-1988): 20.
- 53 Ibid., 21.
- 54 John C. Cooper, "The Basic Philosophical and Theological Notions of St. Augustine," op. cit., 95.
- 55 John Prendiville, "The Development of the Idea of Habit in the Thought of St. Augustine," op. cit., 56.
- 56 Ibid., 84.
- 57 Ibid., 85.
- 58 Ibid., 93.
- 59 The notion that habits extend beyond mere repetition will be developed further in chapter three.
- 60 The position that man is utterly without freedom when he may will only evil has been deduced from the claim in chapter one regarding the movement of the will, where it is held that the liberated will is free from evil.
- 61 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 28.

- 62 Ibid., 148.
- 63 Ibid., 173.
- 64 E. Gilson, op. cit., 143.
- 65 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 147.
- 66 E. Gilson, op. cit., 144.
- 67 St. Augustine, "To Simplician - On Various Questions. Book 1," Augustine: Early Writings, trans. with Introductions by John H.S. Burleigh (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953) 6: 381.
- 68 J. Prediville, op. cit., 56.
- 69 Ibid., 56.
- 70 St. Augustine, "To Simplician...", op. cit., 381.
- 71 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 216.
- 72 St. Augustine, "The Teacher", Ancient Christian Writers. trans. J.M. Collieran (Maryland: The Newman Press, 1950), 177.
- 73 Ibid., 177.
- 74 Ibid., 229.
- 75 Ibid., 228.
- 76 Ibid., 229.
- 77 J. Prediville, op. cit., 81.
- 78 Ibid., 75.
- 79 Ibid., 76.
- 80 Ibid., 77.
- 81 Ibid., 77.
- 82 St. Augustine, "To Simplician...", op. cit., 380.
- 83 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 47.
- 84 P. Brown, Augustine of Hippo, op. cit., 173.
- 85 Ibid., 173.

- 86 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 47-48.
- 87 St. Augustine, The Retractations, op. cit., 107.
- 88 J. Patout Burns, op. cit., 15.
- 89 St. Augustine, The Retractations, op. cit., 39.
- 90 The notion of pride, and its connection to freedom and moral agency, will be discussed in chapter four.
- 91 J. Patout Burns, op. cit., 25.
- 92 E. Gilson, op. cit., 152.
- 93 St. Augustine, The Retractations, op. cit., 35.
- 94 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 238.
- 95 P. Brown, Augustine of Hippo, op. cit., 179.
- 96 Ibid., 175.
- 97 St. Augustine, "On Rebuke and Grace," op. cit., 485.
- 98 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 172.
- 99 P. Brown, Augustine of Hippo, op. cit., 176.
- 100 Ibid., 176.
- 101 J. Prendiville, op. cit., 80.
- 102 This view is expressed by Augustine in his treatise, "To Simplician...", where he speaks of the addiction to pleasure as the penalty of repeated sinning.
- 103 J. Prendiville, op. cit., 79.
- 104 T. Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State, op. cit., 207.
- 105 Ibid., 215.
- 106 B. Warfield, Calvin and Augustine, op. cit., 340.
- 107 St. Augustine, "On Grace and Free Will," Basic Writings of St. Augustine, trans. P. Holmes, ed. Witney J. Oates, 2 vols. (New York: Random House, 1948) 1: 756.
- 108 St. Augustine, Confessions, op. cit., 333.
- 109 St. Augustine, "On The Predestination of the Saints," Basic Writings

of St. Augustine, trans. P. Holmes, ed. Witney J. Oates, 2 vols. (New York: Random House, 1948) 1: 777.

110 Émile Faguet, Seizième Siècle (Paris: Boivin et Compagnie, 1900), 159.

111 Ibid., 159.

112 St. Augustine, "On The Gift of Perseverance," St. Augustine: Anti-Pelagian Writings, trans. Robert E. Wallis and Benjamin B. Warfield, ed. Philip Schaff, 14 vols. (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1956) 5: 526.

113 Ibid., 550.

114 It may be noted that there is a conspicuous absence, among the secondary literature pertaining to Augustine, of any discussion explicitly relating moral agency with predestination. The lack of discussion relating moral agency with predestination suggests that among Augustine scholars there is little if no support for the view that predestination helps to clarify the meaning of moral agency.

115 B. Warfield, Calvin and Augustine, op. cit., 397.

116 Ibid., 476.

117 R. Di Lorenzo, "Non Pie Quaerunt....," op. cit., 123.

118 Ibid., 124.

119 P. Ricoeur, Fallible Man, trans. C.A. Kelbley (New York: Fordham Press, 1986), 3.

120 Ibid., 24-25.

REFERENCES

- Augustine, Saint. "The Teacher" Ancient Christian Writers. Trans. J.M. Collieran. Maryland: The Newman Press, 1950.
- "On Grace and Free Will," Basic Writings of St. Augustine. Trans. P. Holmes. Ed. Witney J. Oates. 2 vols. New York: Random, 1948. 1: 733-74.
- "On Rebuke and Grace," Saint Augustine: Anti-Pelagian Writings. Trans. Rev. Robert Ernest Wallis and Benjamin B. Warfield. Ed. Philip Schaff. 14 vols. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Church, 1. Michigan: Eerdmans, 1956. 5: 468-91.
- "On The Gift of Perseverance," Saint Augustine: Anti-Pelagian Writings. Trans. Rev. Robert Ernest Wallis and Benjamin B. Warfield. Ed. Philip Schaff. 14 vols. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 1. Michigan: Eerdmans, 1956. 5: 521-52.
- "On The Predestination of the Saints," Basic Writings of St. Augustine. Trans. P. Holmes. Ed. Witney J. Oates. 2 vols. New York: Random, 1948. 1: 777-817.
- "To Simplician---On Various Questions, Book 1," Augustine: Earlier Writings. Trans. John H.S. Burleigh. 26 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1958. 6: 370-406.
- City of God. Trans. H. Bettenson. Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1984.
- Confessions. Trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin. Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1961.
- Of True Religion. Trans. J.H.S. Burleigh. Indiana: Gateway Editions, Ltd., 1959.
- The Retractations. Trans. Sister Mary Inez Bogan. Vol. 60 of Fathers of the Church. 79 vols. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1968.
- Berthold, Fred Jr. "Free Will and Theodicy in Augustine: An Exposition and Critique," Religious Studies 17 (1981): 525-535.
- Boston, T. Human Nature in its Fourfold State. Great Britain: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1964.
- Brown, Peter. Augustine of Hippo. London: Faber and Faber, 1967.
- Burns, J. Patout. "Augustine on the Origin and Progress of Evil," Religious Ethics 15-16 (1987-88): 9-27.

- Cooper, John C. "The Basic Philosophical and Theological Notions of St. Augustine," Augustinian Studies 15 (1984): 93-113.
- Di Lorenzo, R.D. "Non Pie Quaerunt: Rhetoric, Dialectic, and the Discovery of the True in Augustine's Confessions," Augustinian Studies 14 (1983): 117-127.
- Faguet, Émile. Seizième Siècle. Paris: Boivin et compagnie, 1900.
- Gilson, Etienne. The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine. Trans. L.E.M. Lynch. New York: Random, 1960.
- Kuntz, Paul G. "The I-Thou Relation and Aretaic Divine Command Ethics: Augustine's Study of Virtue and Vices in the Confessions," Augustinian Studies 16 (1985): 107-127.
- Prendiville, John G. "The Development of the Idea of Habit in the thought of St. Augustine," Augustinian Studies 28 (1972): 29-99.
- Ricoeur, Paul. Fallible Man. Trans. Charles A. Kelbley. New York: Fordham Press, 1986.
- Warfield, Benjamin. Calvin and Augustine. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1980.
- Weismann, F.J. "The problematic of freedom in St. Augustine: Towards a new hermeneutics," Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes 35 (1989): 104-119.