

# Augustine on *Initium Fidei*

## A Case Study of the Coexistence of Operative Grace and Free Decision of the Will

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Augustine once declared, “I labored for the free decision of human will, but the grace of God won out.”<sup>1</sup> The theme of grace attained a central position in his later works, especially those written during the Pelagian controversy.<sup>2</sup> In these polemic writings, Augustine vehemently defended the gratuity and the sovereignty of grace, which is never given as recompense for our merits and cannot be resisted by free decision of the will. In a letter to the Roman priest Sixtus written in 418 shortly after the Pelagians had been condemned in Rome, Augustine claimed that God not only foresees our faith, but actually prepares the will to believe for those who are predestined to be saved.<sup>3</sup> A few years later, this letter caused serious worries concerning the freedom of the will among the monks at Hadrumetum in Africa and initiated the controversy with the so-called Semi-Pelagians in Africa and in Provence during the last years of Augustine’s life.<sup>4</sup>

In response to the difficulties of the monks of Africa with his teaching on grace and free decision (of the will), Augustine first wrote the treatise *De gratia et libero arbitrio* in 426/7. In this work, he distinguishes three stages of the divine intervention in the salvation of the elect: conversion, good works, and the eternal life.<sup>5</sup> All achievements in a Christian life are ascribed to gifts from God, which are given gratuitously, not repaid in accordance to our good wills or good works.

Nevertheless, Augustine does not deny the obvious participation of the human will’s free decision in the steps to salvation.<sup>6</sup> Conversion, or the beginning of faith (*initium fidei*), primarily signifies the

1 *retr.* II, 1, 1. “In cuius quaestionis solutione laboratum est quidem pro libero arbitrio uoluntatis humanae, sed uicit dei gratia.” (For the abbreviation, the edition, and the translation of Augustine’s works, check the bibliography.) This claim was made in his revision of the second response in *Ad Simplicianum* of 396, where he tackles the fates of Esau and Jacob as mentioned in Romans 9:10-29. See also *praef. sanc.* 4, 8. It is precisely for this reason that *Ad Simplicianum* is widely accepted as a turning point in Augustine’s thought, especially in regard to his views on divine agency and free will. For an important study on this change of thought, see especially Kurt Flasch’s commentary in the German edition of *Ad Simplicianum* I, 2, id. 1990. For critical remarks on Flasch’s position, see Ring 1994 and Madec 2001. See also Burns 1980, esp. 39-44; Fredriksen 1988; Wetzel 1992, 155-60; id. 1992b, 121-32; Lössl 1997; Drecoll 1999.

2 Though Augustine would like his readers to believe that his position concerning grace remains consistent after *Ad Simplicianum*, most scholars discern a development in his subsequent writings after 396. This is an enormous topic that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. For recent studies on the development of Augustine’s reflections on grace, see Burns 1980; Hombert 1996; Lössl 1997; Drecoll 1999; id. 2004; Cary 2008. It deserves notice that Hombert opposes any radical change in Augustine’s teachings on grace after *Ad Simplicianum*.

3 Cf. *ep.* 194.15.

4 Cf. *ep.* 214-6. For a superb study of Augustine’s discussion with the Monks at Hadrumetum and Provence, see Ogliari 2003. Check in particular Ogliari 2003, 28-41 for comments on the influence of Augustine’s letter to Sixtus in the controversy with the monks of Hadrumetum, and *ibid.* 5-16 for the impropriety of the term “Semi-Pelagianism”, which was first employed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century during the controversy between Dominicans and Jesuits on grace.

5 *gr. et lib. arb.* 5, 10-7, 18.

6 See for instance, *gr. et lib. arb.* 2, 2. “Primum, quia ipsa diuina praecepta homini non prodesse, nisi haberet liberum uoluntatis arbitrium, quo ea faciens ad promissa praemia perueniret.”

conversion of the will to the love of eternal truth, which is already evident in Augustine's narrative of his own conversion.<sup>7</sup> Good works always presuppose good wills as their preceding efficient causes. Lastly, the eternal life is nothing but a recompense for our preceding good wills and good works.

In *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Augustine goes to great lengths to demonstrate that the insistence on the dominion of divine providence does not necessarily result in the denial of human freedom in living a righteous life. He maintains that divine agency does not work alone, but works on (*operari*) and along with (*cooperari*) our wills in making them perfect. Divine grace takes its effects on human affairs by preparing or producing and cooperating with human wills.<sup>8</sup>

To clarify Augustine's final position on the freedom of the will and human agency in righteous dispositions and actions, we should consider this active operation of divine grace, which is so intimate to our decisions. In the subsequent discussion, I will focus on the case of *initium fidei* for the reasons that follow.

First, following Saint Paul's distinction between faith and works, Augustine maintains that we are justified by faith rather than by good works, because faith is given first as the foundation of good works.<sup>9</sup> The acceptance of Christian faith signifies also the beginning of virtue, that is, the good will by which we seek to live a righteous life.<sup>10</sup> By the faith that originates from divine grace, our good merits begin to exist as well.<sup>11</sup> It is senseless to talk about human agency in good works before the will to believe, for there are no genuinely meritorious works unless preceded by faith.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the operation of God in producing the first good will at the point of conversion offers a good starting point to attain an appropriate understanding of human agency in good will.

Moreover, by attributing the onset of belief to the operative grace of God, Augustine definitely acknowledges the causal relationship between divine providence and our first will to what is good. "It is certain that we will when we will, but he *causes (facere ut)* us to will what is good, of whom were said the words..., *The will is prepared by the Lord.*"<sup>13</sup> Unlike the grace of beatitude and the grace of good works, which effects a human agent equipped with a good will by faith, the grace of faith (*gratia fidei*) directly works on the faculty of will itself by generating a new disposition of the will. In light of this, the direct influence of divine agency on the will in the process of conversion is a more serious menace to the freedom of the will that underlies human agency.

7 Augustine explicitly recognized the illness of the will as the ultimate hindrance to his wholehearted conversion to Christianity. See *conf.* VIII, 5, 10; VIII, 8, 20-10, 22. Accordingly, Augustinian scholars identify Book VIII of *Confessiones* as a record of his moral conversion (in contrast with the intellectual conversion in Book VII), which was completed by the submission of his will. For an excellent survey of this so-called "two-conversions-theory", see O'Meara 1980 155-175; more recently, see Brachtendorf 2005, 119.

8 *gr. et lib. arb.* 5, 12. "Non ego autem, sed gratia dei mecum: id est, non solus, sed gratia dei mecum: ac per hoc nec gratia dei sola, nec ipse solus, sed gratia dei cum illo." *Ibid.*, 17, 33. "Et quis istam etsi paruum dare coeperat charitatem, nisi ille qui praeparat uoluntatem, et cooperando perficit, quod operando incipit? Quoniam ipse ut uelimus operatur incipiens, qui uolentibus cooperatur perficiens... Vt ergo uelimus, sine nobis operatur; cum autem uolumus, et sic uolumus ut faciamus, nobiscum cooperatur."

9 *praed. sanct.* 7, 12. "Sic ergo distinguit Apostolus ab operibus fidem, quemadmodum in duobus regnis hebraeorum distinguitur iudas ab israel, cum et ipse iudas sit israel. Ex fide autem ideo dicit iustificari hominem, non ex operibus, quia ipsa prima datur, ex qua impetrentur caetera, quae proprie opera nuncupantur, in quibus iuste uiuitur."

10 For Augustine's emphasis on the necessity of Christian faith for true virtue and his attitudes to pagan virtues, see the excellent account in Wang Tchang-Tche's monograph of 1938, esp. 66ff.

11 *gr. et lib. arb.* 6, 13. "Sed plane cum data fuerit, incipiunt esse etiam merita nostra bona, per illam tamen:..."

12 In his discussion on the distinction between faith and works in Paul's epistles, Augustine even comes to the point that Cornelius' praiseworthy acts, for instance, giving alms and prayers as reported in Acts 10:4, before accepting the Christian religion, are also preceded by some faith (*aliqua fides*). Certainly, this faith should be attributed to God as well. Cf. *praed. sanct.* 7, 12. "Quod de Cornelio dici potest, cuius acceptae sunt eleemosynae et exaudita orationes antequam credidisset in Christum: nec tamen sine aliqua fide donabat et orabat. Nam quomodo inuocabat, in quem non crediderat?... Quidquid igitur et antequam in Christum crederet, et cum crederet, et cum credidisset, bene operatus est Cornelius, totum Deo dandum est, ne forte quis extollatur."

13 *gr. et lib. arb.* 16, 32. "Certum est nos uelle, cum uolumus; sed ille **facit** ut uelimus bonum, de quo dictum est, ...: *Praeparatur uoluntas a Domino.*" The emphasis is mine.

Finally, in his controversy with those misnamed Semi-Pelagians, Augustine discusses in detail two forms of operative grace: the grace of conversion and the grace of perseverance. Though the virtue of perseverance is a greater achievement than the beginning of faith,<sup>14</sup> it has been pointed out that Augustine's understanding of the operative grace of perseverance is modeled on his interpretation of divine operation at the point of conversion.<sup>15</sup> A close examination of the problem of *initium fidei* will suffice for a reconstruction of the basic model of the coexistence of operative grace and free decision of the will in Augustine's late thought.

In this study, I shall first reconstruct the development of Augustine's position on the issue of *initium fidei*. The emphasis will be on the actual effects of divine grace in the psychological process of willing in the act of faith. It is intended to demonstrate that Augustine's stress on the absolute authority of grace in his final years accords with his deepened understanding of the will and its freedom. Following this relocation of Augustine's conception of *initium fidei* in its theoretical context, I will appeal to Augustine's later reflection on the will (*uoluntas*) to argue that his final rigid position on operative grace is compatible with his sincere defense of human agency.

### The development of Augustine's interpretation of *initium fidei*

Augustine's responses to the monks at Hadrumetum provoked further disturbances among their confreres in Southern Gaul.<sup>16</sup> Augustine's assertions on the insuperable grace were sharply criticized and the issue of *initium fidei* became the central point of the controversy with these monks in Provence, the Massilians.<sup>17</sup> In response to their objections, Augustine composed his final works: the *De praedestinatione sanctorum* and the *De dono perseuerantiae*.

What was at stake here is the source of the first step our soul takes towards its salvation or beatitude. Is it a gratuitous gift from God preceding any kind of merit or a recompense for the good merits that originate from human agents themselves? The Massilians maintained that the ability to believe remains in post-lapsarian agents, though damaged by the Fall of Adam.<sup>18</sup> This goodness of nature, however weak it may be, initiates their conversion to the Christian truth, though it should be augmented and strengthened by divine grace. In this effort to defend human agency in our will to believe Augustine detected, however, a latent danger of the Pelagian error that "the grace of God is given in accord with our merit".<sup>19</sup> In his responses, Augustine conceded that the same danger was also contained in his own earlier account of faith contained in the Pauline exegeses written before 396.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the old Augustine reminded his contemporary readers that he had corrected this error and identified the beginning of faith as a gift of God in *Ad Simplicianum* of 396.<sup>21</sup>

14 *persen.* 21, 54. "...multo magis nos habere a nobis illud initium (fidei), si a nobis habemus permanere usque in finem, cum perficere quam inchoare sit maius."

15 Cf. Burns 1980, 9; 168-175.

16 See the letters from Prosper and Hilary, two Gallic Augustinians, to Augustine, in *ep.* 225 and 226. For the dating of these letters to 427 rather than in 429, see Oglari 2003, 93-97.

17 Cf. Djuth 1999; Ring 2004. I should point out that *initium fidei* is simply a term preferred by Augustine. It is absent in Prosper and Hilary's letters reporting the position of Massilians to Augustine. Moreover, Cassian, the star of Massilianism, only referred once to this phrase. See Oglari 2003, 289.

18 *Ep.* 226, 4 "... nec de hac fide posse dici: *Quid habes quod non accepisti?* cum in eadem natura remanserit, licet uitata, quae prius sana ac perfecta donata sit."

19 Cf. *praed. sanct.* 2, 3. "Non ergo receditur ab ea sententia, quam Pelagius ipse in episcopali iudicio Palaestino, sicut eadem *Gesta* testantur, damnare compulsus est: "Gratiam Dei secundum merita nostra dari"; si non pertinet ad Dei gratiam quod credere coepimus, sed illud potius quod propter hoc nobis additur, ut plenius perfectiusque credamus"

20 *Ibid.*, 3, 7.

21 *Ibid.*, 4, 8; *persen.* 20, 52.

The work *Ad Simplicianum* proves to be a turning point in Augustine's position on the *initium fidei*, which is the summit or culmination of his early Pauline exegeses.<sup>22</sup> The first explicit reference to the term *initium fidei* occurs in his comments on Gal 4:19 in *Expositio Epistulae ad Galatas* of 394/5.<sup>23</sup> However, as Gerhard Ring observes, Augustine did not associate the term *initium fidei* with the problem of whether faith is a merit or grace in his early reflections on faith.<sup>24</sup>

Without referring to the special term of *initium fidei*, the issue under discussion is first explicitly addressed, along with his doctrine of predestination, in *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistula ad Romanos* of 393/4.<sup>25</sup> In his comments on the case of Jacob and Esau in Rom 9:11-13, Augustine claimed that election (*electio*) is in accord with merit (*meritum*).<sup>26</sup> God's discriminating love of Jacob is based on his foreknowledge of the Jacob's future faith. God does not select (*elegere*) according to our good works, which pertain exclusively to divine grace through the gift of charity, but according to faith.<sup>27</sup> Here, faith is openly regarded as the only merit of human agents, which enables us as believers to receive the gift of God so as to perform good works.<sup>28</sup> Certainly, Augustine noticed that the free decision of human beings to accept the Christian faith is impossible without the call (*uocatio*) from God's mercy.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the ultimate decision to adhere to the *uocatio*, i.e. the *initium fidei* is left to human beings, in particular to the faculty of *liberum arbitrium*.<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, divine assistance is restricted to a gracious calling and the ability to perform or to accomplish our decision of faith. In this context, the former simply paves the way to faith without working directly on the faculty of willing, while the latter follows on our free decision as a reward.<sup>31</sup> Human agency presents itself in its full control over our consent to the *uocatio* of the divine agent. It helps create the impression that in Augustine's earlier writings, the genuine freedom of the will resides in its ability to do otherwise, that is, to refuse the suggestion from the *uocatio*.<sup>32</sup>

A similar account of the beginning of faith can be found as well in *De diuersis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* 68 composed during the same period.<sup>33</sup> Augustine stressed again that believing (*credere*) is the sole merit that human beings obtain by their own efforts in the progress to salvation. Before actually attaining this faith by the decision of the will, they have been called and urged to faith by the death of Christ, which

22 Cf. Drecoll 1999, 21-22; Lössl 2002, 241-255. See also note 1.

23 *ep. Gal.* 38, 9. "Non ergo propter initium fidei, quo iam nati erant, sed propter robor et perfectionem dictum est: *Quos iterum parturio, donec Christus formetur in uobis.*" Cf. Ring 2004, 177. Djuth takes the passage of *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 9, 14 as the first explicit reference to the term *initium fidei* and dates it to 392. See ea. 1999, 448. However, Ring follows Rondet's study to insist that the date of this *enarratio* is controversial. Cf. Rondet 1961, 114-27, cited in Ring 2004, 178, note 6.

24 Cf. Rings 2004, 177-8. For further references to the term in Augustine's early writings, especially his exegeses of Psalms, see *ibid.*, 178.

25 Cf. *ibid.*, 178-9.

26 *ex. prop. Rm.* 52 (60), "Si enim nullo merito, non est electio; aequales enim omnes sunt ante meritum nec potest in rebus omnino aequalibus electio nominari."

27 *Ibid.*, "Sed quoniam spiritus sanctus non datur nisi credentibus, non quidem deus eligit opera, quae ipse largitur, cum dat spiritum sanctum, ut per caritatem bona operemur, sed tamen elegit fidem."

28 *Ibid.*, "Quod ergo credimus, nostrum est, quod autem bonum operamur, illius qui credentibus in se dat spiritum sanctum."

29 See for instance, *ibid.*, 54 (62), "Quia neque uelle possumus nisi uocemur."; 56 (64), "Misericordia Dei uocamur, ut credamus."

30 *Ibid.*, 52 (60), "Quod si uocatus uocantem secutus fuerit, quod est iam in libero arbitrio..."

31 As noted by scholars, at that time Augustine had not worked out the full meaning of *uocatio* and its effect on our decision to believe as he did in and after the work *Ad Simplicianum*. As precisely formulated by Ring, "Die Berufung ist eine Art äußerer Gnade", see *id.* 2004, 180. Cf. also Burns 1980, 37ff. Drecoll 2004, 195-8. Ogliari 2003, 299.

32 Cf. *ex. prop. Rm.* 54 (62) "cum tamen homini non auferatur liberum uoluntatis arbitrium siue ad credendum deo, ut consequatur nos misericordia, siue ad impietatem, ut consequatur supplicium." This position is quite close to his definition of voluntary movements in *De libero arbitrio* III, 1,2, which was written almost during the same period. For an appropriate understanding of Augustine's conception of *liberum arbitrium* in his earlier writings, see see my article "Augustine on *Liberum Arbitrium*" (in Chinese), in *Zhongwai Remwen Jingshen Yanjiu* 2 (2009), 112-125. Ogliari also notices the similarity of Augustine's positions in these two works, see *id.* 2003, 299.

33 For the dating of this *quaestio*, see BA 10, 30-36.

is a grace preceding any merit.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, this will to believe does not suffice for attaining peace of mind unless God shows further mercy on us because of our preceding good will.<sup>35</sup> In line with the earlier account, the merit (*meritum*) of faith is located between the prevenient grace of calling and the subsequent grace of good works. However, this *questio* is an exegesis of the verse in Rom 9:20, “O man, who are you to answer back to God?” Due to the difference of context, Augustine paid more attention to the function of divine grace in the calling before conversion and its effect on the act of willing:

And since no one can will unless urged on and called, whether inside (*intrinsecus*) where no one sees, or outside (*extrinsecus*) through the sound of the spoken word or through some visible signs, it follows that God produces (*operari*) in us even the willing itself (*uolle ipsum*) ... Accordingly neither should those who came give themselves the credit, for they came by invitation, nor should those who did not want to come blame it on another, but only on themselves, for they had been invited to come of their free will. Therefore, before merit, the calling works on (*operari*) the will (*uoluntas*). For this reason, even if (*et si*) someone called takes the credit for coming, he cannot take the credit for being called. And as for him who is called and does not come, just as his calling was not a deserved reward, so his neglecting to come when called lays the foundation for a deserved punishment.<sup>36</sup>

It is somehow unexpected that Augustine explicitly acknowledged divine operation on the faculty of will in this passage written before 396. Furthermore, this divine grace not only presents itself externally as a sensible calling, but even occurs from within (*intrinsecus*). However, this internal operation of the *uocatio* should not be exaggerated such that one might claim that it could determine the disposition of the will.<sup>37</sup> It is not difficult to infer that this internal call is most likely a thought, which occurs spontaneously in our mind, for its external manifestation refers to the sensible signs outside of the mental sphere.<sup>38</sup> It works on the will only in the sense that it offers an invitation or an opportunity to obtain the merit of faith, not in that it directly and irresistibly causes the will to develop a predetermined disposition. In short, the internal call is still *external* to the crucial decision of the will. For the impious and sinners are called indiscriminately and therefore it is within the power of the will to neglect this divine invitation. Human beings are rewarded or condemned according to their free decision to believe or not to believe. Nevertheless, corresponding to his awareness of the internal perspective of divine grace, Augustine also showed that he was suspicious of the extent of our credit in the act of faith itself when he added the conjunction “even if (*et si*)”.

This suspicion became an open denial of human merit in the process of believing in Augustine’s interpretation of *uocatio* in *Ad Simplicianum* I, 2.<sup>39</sup> Augustine began his reinterpretation of Romans 9:10-

34 *diu. qu.* 68, 3. “Merces enim cognitionis meritis redditur; credendo autem meritum comparatur. Ipsa autem gratia quae data est per fidem, nullis nostris meritis praecedentibus data est... Christus autem pro impiis et peccatoribus mortuus est, ut ad credendum non merito, sed gratia uocaremur, credendo autem etiam meritum compararemus.”

35 *Ibid.*, 68, 5. “Parum est enim uelle nisi deus misereatur; sed deus non miseretur, qui ad pacem uocat, nisi uoluntas praecesserit, quia in terra pax hominibus bonae uoluntatis.”

36 *Ibid.*, “Et quoniam nec uelle quisquam potest, nisi admonitus et uocatus, siue intrinsecus, ubi nullus hominum uidet, siue extrinsecus per sermonem sonantem, aut per aliqua signa uisibilia; efficitur ut etiam ipsum uelle deus operetur in nobis. ... Itaque nec illi debent sibi tribuere qui uenerunt; quia uocati uenerunt: nec illi qui noluerunt uenire, debent alteri tribuere, sed tantum sibi; quoniam ut uenirent, uocati erant in libera uoluntate. Vocatio ergo ante meritum uoluntatem operatur. Propterea et si quisquam sibi tribuit quod uenit uocatus, non sibi potest tribuere quod uocatus est. Qui autem uocatus non uenit, sicut non habuit meritum praemii ut uocaretur, sic inchoat meritum supplicii cum uocatus uenire neglexit.” The English translator renders “uoluntatem operatur” as “determine the will”, which is obviously too strong in this context, for Augustine still acknowledges the merit of faith.

37 Cf. Burns 1980, 38-9; Ogliari 2003, 300-1; Ring 2004, 192-3.

38 The internal call under discussion here is much closer to the function of *cogitatio*, which precedes the consent of the will. Cf. *praed. sanct.* 2, 5. “Nullus quippe credit aliquid, nisi prius cogitauerit esse credendum...necesse est tamen ut omnia quae creduntur, praeviente cogitatione credantur.”

39 Even in the first *quaestio* of *Ad Simplicianum*, Augustine continues to insist that the will to good still lies in the power of a man “*sub*

29 by revealing the purpose of the whole epistle to be that no man should glory in meritorious works.<sup>40</sup> Right from their commencement, good works are not without prevenient grace.<sup>41</sup> However, in the opening of Augustine's exegesis, the grace of *uocatio* that precedes the inchoate beginning of faith (*inchoatio fidei*) is still restricted to the internal and external admonition that motivates the will to believe.<sup>42</sup>

Here, the distinction that underlies the election of Jacob and the rejection of Esau was brought into focus. In this text, Augustine refused to reduce election to the foreknowledge of future faith. For the same logic could be applied to future good works as well, which were also foreseen by God before the birth of Jacob. However, it is unmistakably indicated in the Scriptures that election was not based on their works because they had not been born when the predetermination was declared. It follows that the faith was not selected as well because they had neither faith nor works before their birth.<sup>43</sup> The same reason forced Augustine to consider if faith itself should be numbered among the gifts of grace.<sup>44</sup> Without any doubt, faith is preceded by the grace of calling, which comes before all merits, open to both the pious and impious.<sup>45</sup> However, it is equally obvious that the effects of this gracious calling differ in Jacob and Esau. In this context, for the purpose of precluding any kind of possible boast on our part, either in good works or in faith, Augustine explicitly ascribed this difference to the nature of divine calling rather than to our response. The beginning of faith, or our decision to adhere to the *uocatio*, is not primarily a decision of will, but first of all the result of the mercy of God.

If God will have mercy on a man so as to call (*uocare*) him, he will also have mercy on him so that he may believe (*ut credat*); and on him on whom he in mercy bestows faith he will show compassion, i.e., will make him compassionate, so that he may also perform good works. ... If anyone boasts that he has merited compassion by his faith, let him know that God gave (*praestare*) him faith. God shows compassion by inspiring (*inspirare*) faith in one on whom he had compassion in giving to one who was still an unbeliever a share in his calling.<sup>46</sup>

As modern commentators notice, the clause *ut credat* certainly signifies the causal relationship between

*lege* before receiving aid from divine grace, though this will is too weak to overcome one's internal conflict and enable one to perform good works. There, the *initium fidei* is definitely ascribed to human agency. Cf. *Simpl.* I, 1, 11. "Certe enim ipsum uelle in potestate est, quoniam adiacet nobis; sed quod perficere bonum non est in potestate, ad meritum pertinet originalis peccatis." I, 1, 14. "Hoc enim restat in ista mortali uita libero arbitrio, non ut impleat homo iustitiam cum uoluerit, sed ut se supplici pietate conuertat ad eum cuius dono eam possit implere."

- 40 Ibid., I, 2, 2. "Et primo intentionem apostoli quae per totam epistolam uiget tenebo quam consulam. Haec est autem, ut de operum meritis nemo gloriatur."
- 41 Ibid., "Nihil tamen horum sine gratia misericordiae dei, quia et opera si qua sunt bona consequuntur, ut dictum est, illam gratiam non praecedunt."
- 42 Ibid., "Incipit autem homo percipere gratiam, ex quo incipit deo credere uel interna uel externa admonitione motus ad fidem...nullo modo autem credidisset, nisi uel secretis per uisa mentis aut spiritus uel manifestioribus per sensus corporis admonitionibus uocaretur."
- 43 Ibid., I, 2, 5. "Si igitur electio per praescientiam, praesciuit autem deus fidem Iacob, unde probas quia non etiam ex operibus elegit eum? Si propterea quia nondum nati erant et nondum aliquid egerant bonum seu malum, ita etiam nondum crediderat aliquis eorum. Sed praescientia uidit crediturum. Ita praescientia uidere poterat operaturum, ut quomodo dicitur electus propter fidem futuram, quam praesciebat deus, sic alius possit dicere propter opera futura potius electum, quae nihilo minus praesciebat deus. Quapropter unde ostendit apostolus non ex operibus dictum esse: maior seruiet minori? Si quoniam nondum nati erant, non solum non ex operibus, sed nec ex fide dictum est, quia utrumque deerat nondum natis."
- 44 Ibid., I, 2, 7. "Quaeritur autem, utrum uel fides mereatur hominis iustificationem, an uero nec fidei merita praecedant misericordiam dei, sed et fides ipsa inter dona gratiae numeretur..."
- 45 Ibid., "Nisi ergo uocando praecedat misericordia dei, nec credere quisquam potest, ut ex hoc incipiat iustificari et accipere facultatem bene operandi. Ergo ante omne meritum est gratia. Et enim Christus pro impiis mortuus est."
- 46 *Simpl.* I, 2, 9. "...quia cui misertus erit deus ut eum uocet, miserebitur eius ut credat, et cui misericors fuerit ut credat, misericordiam praestabit, hoc est faciet eum misericordem, ut etiam bene operetur?... Quod si eam credendo se meruisse quis iactat, nouerit eum sibi praestitisse ut crederet, qui miseretur inspirando fidem cuius misertus est, ut adhuc infideli uocationem impertiret."

the grace of calling and the act of faith.<sup>47</sup> Accordingly, *initium fidei* is identified as a gift granted by divine grace. Though Jacob could not believe against his will (*inuitus*), he did not receive the gift of faith because of his will to believe, for otherwise the bestowal of faith would not be a gratuitous gift.<sup>48</sup> Jacob believed willingly (*uolens*),<sup>49</sup> however, this possibility to believe originated from divine providence, as well as the possibility to do right and to live happily.<sup>50</sup> Augustine held that this divine operation on the act of willing does not do away with human agency in the act of faith. “That we will, is in accord with his will and should be both his and ours, his because he calls us, ours because we follow when called.”<sup>51</sup> Here, Augustine seemed to stick to his earlier defense of human agency by stressing our contribution in consenting to the *uocatio*.

The seemingly autonomous decision of the will to follow the call is obviously in conflict with Augustine’s radical rejection of any meritorious contribution of human beings in his earlier responses to Simplicianus. Regarding this, Augustine argued that the efficacy of divine grace is not subject to our consent or dissent.<sup>52</sup> Rather, since the calling is the efficient cause of our good will,<sup>53</sup> our acceptance of faith is in accord with the way in which God calls us.<sup>54</sup> Here, Augustine introduced the well-known theory of “congruous vocation (*uocatio congruens*)” to illustrate the effectiveness of God’s mercy on the will by inspiring faith.

For the effectiveness (*effectus*) of God’s mercy cannot be in the power of man to frustrate, if the man does not will to have it. If God wills to have mercy on men, he can call them in a way that is suited (*aptum*) to them, so that they will be moved (*moueri*) to understand (*intelligere*) and to follow (*sequi*). It is true, therefore, that many are called but few chose. Those are chosen who are congruously (*congruenter*) called. Those who do not correspond to and are unsuitable to their calling are not chosen, for although they were called they did not follow.<sup>55</sup>

It is evident now that in the case of the elect, the free decision at the initial phase of faith is directly influenced by the divine grace of calling.<sup>56</sup> What concerns us here is the actual operation of this divine providence, i.e., how God moves a human will to consent. We notice that in the passage quoted above, Augustine referred this motivational effect of grace first to the faculty of the intellect (*intelligere*). This impression is further confirmed in Augustine’s later discussion in the same work, where he enumerated

47 Ring sharply observes that in Augustine’s earlier account of the effect of divine mercy in *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos*, Augustine prefers the expression *cum crediderit* to stress the active contribution of human agents in the beginning of faith. Cf. Ring, 2004, 192; See also Ogliari 2003, 301.

48 *Simpl.* I, 2, 10. “Si ergo Iacob ideo credidit quia uoluit, non ei deus donauit fidem, sed eam sibi ipse uolendo praestitit et habuit aliquid quod non accepit. An quia nemo potest credere nisi uelit, nemo uelle nisi uocetur, nemo autem sibi potest praestare ut uocetur, uocando deus praestat et fidem, quia sine uocatione non potest quisquam credere, quamuis nullus credat inuitus?”

49 *Ibid.*, “Volentes autem sine dubio crediderunt.”

50 *Ibid.*, “Aliter enim deus praestat ut uelimus, aliter praestat quod uouerimus.”

51 *Ibid.*, “Vt uelimus enim et suum esse uoluit et nostrum, suum uocando nostrum sequendo.” Burleigh translates *Vt uelimus* as “the power to will”, which is not precise because in this context the power, *potestas* or *posse*, refers specially to our ability to perform righteous works. See *ibid.*, “Quod uouerimus solus praestat, id est posse bene agere et semper beate uiuere.”

52 *Simpl.* I, 2, 12. “Illud autem nescio, quomodo dicatur frustra deum misereri, nisi nos uelimus.”

53 *Ibid.*, I, 2, 13. “Sed si uocatio ista ita est effectrix bonae uoluntatis, ut omnis eam uocatus sequatur...”

54 *Ibid.*, “An forte illi, qui hoc modo uocati non consentiunt, possent alio modo uocati accomodare fidei uoluntatem.”

55 *Ibid.*, “...quoniam non potest effectus misericordiae dei esse in hominis potestate, ut frustra ille misereatur, si homo nolit; quia si uellet etiam ipsorum misereri, posset ita uocare, quomodo illis aptum esset, ut et mouerentur et intellegent et sequerentur. Verum est ergo: *Multi uocati, pauci electi*. Illi enim electi qui congruenter uocati, illi autem qui non congruebant neque contemperabantur uocationi non electi, quia non secuti quamuis uocati.” Translation is modified, especially the last verse.

56 Regarding the case of those who are not chosen, Augustine insists that the hardening of their hearts simply signifies the unwillingness to be merciful, which imposes nothing on such people so that they are made worse. These people should be rightly condemned for their further evildoings because they do so by the free decision of the will. Cf. *ibid.*, I, 2, 15.

various forms of this *uocatio*, such as revealing the truth, preaching sermons, giving miracles etc.<sup>57</sup> As J. Patout Burns argues, “the persuasive call to believe moves the will by giving knowledge.”<sup>58</sup> It was believed that the effect of this congruent call is still external to the crucial decision of the will.

To defend the freedom of the choice, as Burns contends, Augustine avoided identifying *uocatio* as an operative grace.<sup>59</sup> However, this judgment should be qualified. Above all, the freedom of choice, or the ability to resist the divine call does not capture Augustine’s insights into the phenomenon of the will and its essential independence. More importantly, as Burns himself notices, Augustine maintained that the efficacious grace not only prepares the motivations necessary for faith by illumination, but also renders these motivations attractive.<sup>60</sup>

But who can believe unless he is reached by some calling, by some testimony borne to the truth? Who has it in his power to have such a vision (*uisum*) present to his mind that his will shall be moved to believe? Who can welcome (*amplecti*) in his mind something which does not give him delight (*eum delectare*)? But who has it in his power to ensure that something that will delight him will turn up, or that he will take delight in what turns up? If those things delight us which serve our advancement towards God, that is due not to our own whim or industry or meritorious works, but to the inspiration of God and to the grace which he bestows. He attributes and bestows on (us) so that there is voluntary assent (*nutus*), earnest effort, and the power to perform works of fervent charity.<sup>61</sup>

Burns interprets this delight originating from divine calling simply as an outside attraction that affects the environment of choice.<sup>62</sup> We have to concede that in this context, delight in the invitation to faith precedes the explicit assent (*nutus*) of the will to welcome the faith. Nevertheless, as I argued elsewhere, even this initial affective response to the suggestion already involves the implicit approval of the will.<sup>63</sup> In this sense, the congruent call also works directly on the consent of the will. In line with his earlier unawareness of the working of the will in the pre-passions, Augustine did not elaborate on a theory of operative grace on this effect of the *uocatio*. Nevertheless, the interior perspective of divine grace prevails in Augustine’s later account of *initium fidei*.

Before the issue of the beginning of faith was brought to the fore by the Massilians, Augustine had paid little attention to it.<sup>64</sup> In *De spiritu et littera* of 412, he addressed the problem for the first time since *Ad Simplicianum*.<sup>65</sup> Augustine argued that our will to believe is a gift of God, not only because it arises from our free decision that is an essential part of human nature created by divine grace, but more

57 Cf. *ibid.*, I, 2, 14.

58 Burns 1980, 44. For a critique of Burn’s “reduction” of grace to rational cognition, see Drecoll 1999, 231. However, in a recent paper, Josef Lössl criticizes Drecoll’s understanding of *intelligere*. Lössl writes that Drecoll’s interpretation of *ratio* as *auctoritas* is too narrow. See *id.* 2004, 250 note 42.

59 Burns 1980, 44.

60 *Ibid.*, 43.

61 *Simpl.* I, 2, 21. “Sed quis potest credere, nisi aliqua uocatione, hoc est aliqua rerum testificatione, tangatur? Quis habet in potestate tali uiso attingi mentem suam, quo eius uoluntas moueatur ad fidem? Quis autem animo amplectitur aliquid quod eum non delectat? Aut quis habet in potestate, ut uel occurrat quod eum delectare possit, uel delectet cum occurrerit? Cum ergo nos ea delectant quibus proficiamus ad deum, inspiratur hoc et praebetur gratia dei, non nutu nostro et industria aut operum meritis comparatur, quia ut sit nutus uoluntatis, ut sit industria studii, ut sint opera caritate feruentia, ille tribuit, ille largitur.” The translation is modified.

62 Burns 1980, 43. Cf. also Lössl 2004, 254.

63 See my article, “Rethinking Augustine’s Adaptation of ‘First Movements’ of Affection,” forthcoming.

64 Djuth 1999, 448. Ring 2004, 194. Djuth begins her article on *initium fidei* with a discussion on *Confessiones* VIII, 12, 28-IX, 1, 1, where Augustine reveals the significance of grace in his own conversion. Cf. *ea.* 1999, 447. However, as Ring rightly observes, Augustine’s purpose in that context is obviously more than the beginning of faith. Cf. *id.* 2004, 194, note 1.

65 Burns 1980, 127.

primarily because God effectually brings the vision of faith to human souls.<sup>66</sup> Though the enticement or the invitation to faith should be attributed solely to divine calling, the assent to or dissent from the *uocatio* is in the power of the will.<sup>67</sup> Faith is nothing but the assent to eternal truth, which lies essentially in the power of the will.<sup>68</sup> We believe when we actually will, and when we believe, we believe willingly.<sup>69</sup> Here, divine assistance is limited as well to the external admonition and internal images that are beyond the control of the mind.<sup>70</sup> As Burns rightly stresses, Augustine kept away from the problem of predestination and the efficacy of divine grace in this context.<sup>71</sup>

It has been suggested that Augustine came to recognize the interior efficacy of divine grace and attributes the whole process of faith to operative grace in 418, first in *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali* and further advanced in his letter to Sixtus.<sup>72</sup> Before proceeding to Augustine's final words on the issue of *initium fidei*, I shall briefly analyze his position at the end of the first phase of the Pelagian controversy.

In *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali* I, 14, 15, Augustine offered an interior reading of the operation of divine admonition in our will to believe:

And thus, when God teaches (*docere*), not by the letter of the law, but by the grace of the Spirit, he teaches not only so that through knowledge people see what they learn, but so that (*ut*) they desire (*appetere*) it with the will and accomplish it in action. In this divine manner of teaching God helps the willing itself and the acting itself, not merely the natural ability for willing and acting.<sup>73</sup>

Here, divine providence works on the human agent not merely by offering necessary motivation through illumination, but also by assisting the act of willing itself. As noted earlier, this assistance is restricted to initial delight in *Ad Simplicianum*.<sup>74</sup> In this passage, by appealing to the distinction between law and spirit as manifestations of grace, Augustine definitely related this divine working to the explicit decision of the will to believe.<sup>75</sup>

This conception of operative grace was further developed in the letter to Sixtus. Augustine insisted that faith as the beginning of all righteousness is a gratuitous gift of God, which should not be attributed to

66 *spir. et litt.* 34, 60. "...non ideo tantum istam uoluntatem diuino muneri tribuendam, quia ex libero arbitrio est, quod nobis naturaliter concreatum est, uerum etiam quod uisorum suasionibus agit deus, ut uelimus et ut credamus..."

67 *Ibid.*, "...consentire autem uocationi dei uel ab ea dissentire, sicut dixi, propriae uoluntatis est."

68 *Ibid.*, 31, 54. "...quid est enim credere nisi consentire uerum esse quod dicitur? Consensio autem utique uolentis est, profecto fides in potestate est."

69 *Ibid.*, 32, 55. "Cum ergo fides in potestate sit, quoniam cum uult quisque credit et, cum credit, uolens credit..."

70 *Ibid.*, 34, 60. "...siue extrinsecus per euangelicas exhortationes...siue intrinsecus, ubi nemo habet in potestate quid ei ueniat in mentem."

71 Burns 1980, 129-30. Recently, Lamberigts even maintains that the doctrine of predestination is not important in Augustine's controversy with the Pelagians. Cf. Lamberigts 2004, 282-88.

72 *Ibid.*, 134; 141ff. See also Wetzell 1992, 187-90; Ring 2004, 194-5. "Dies ist für Augustin ein beweiskräftiges Argument, dass Gott mit seiner Gnade auf den menschlichen Willen wirkt und diesen zum Glauben lenkt." For criticism of Burns' evaluation of this change in the development of Augustine's theory of grace, see Katayanagi 1991, 645-57.

73 *gr. et pecc. or.* I, 14, 15. "Ac per hoc, quando Deus docet non per legis litteram, sed per Spiritus gratiam ita docet ut quod quisque didicerit non tantum cognoscendo uideat, sed etiam uolendo appetat agendoque perficiat. Et isto diuino docendi modo etiam ipsa uoluntas et ipsa operatio, non sola uolendi et operandi naturalis possibilitas adiuuatur."

74 Cf. note 61.

75 In this treatise, Augustine develops the opposition of law to spirit into an explicit distinction between *scientia* and *caritas*. Cf. *gr. et pecc. or.* I, 26, 27, "Cognitionem et dilectionem, sicut sunt discernenda, discernat, quia scientia inflat, caritas aedificat -- et tunc scientia non inflat, quando caritas aedificat --, et cum sit utrumque donum Dei, sed unum minus, alterum maius, non sic iustitiam nostram super laudem nostri iustificatores extollat, ut horum duorum quod minus est, diuino tribuat adiutorio, quod autem maius est humano usurpet arbitrio..."

a human decision or any preceding merits.<sup>76</sup> In order that we can attain the gift of faith, God not only makes us hear the gospel but also grants us the measure of faith (*mensura fidei*).<sup>77</sup> The faith at issue is revealed to be not a simple belief, which might be out of and accompanied by fear as in the case of the demons, but a Christian faith with the love (*dilectio*) of God that originates from the grace of the Holy Spirit.<sup>78</sup> Augustine referred to *fides*, as well as *dilectio*, as the gift of the third Person of the Trinity.<sup>79</sup> The effect of this grace is not limited to the revelation of truth, for there are those who are not ignorant of truth but persist in their wickedness.<sup>80</sup> These people could not be excused for their evildoings, because they did not obey the truth by their evil will (*pessima uoluntas*).<sup>81</sup> Here it is implied that in the case of the elect who obey the truth by their good will to believe, grace must extend itself to the act of willing, for otherwise, the elect would be able to boast of their decision of the will. But, in this long letter, Augustine did little to clarify the actual function of this interior function of grace other than referring to it as the grace of love that works directly and internally on our faculty of will.<sup>82</sup>

The psychological implications of interior grace in the *initium fidei* were fully unfolded in Augustine's *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*, written in 419-420. In his controversy with Julian, Augustine attained a more severe evaluation of the effect of the original sin, i.e., the *concupiscentia carnis*.<sup>83</sup> This inherited inclination deprives the will of the freedom (*libertas*) to attain a good disposition.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the first good will towards eternal truth should be granted as a gratuitous gift, which restores the *libertas* to those who will to believe.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, this grace should be able to heal the innate weakness of the will by changing its disposition from evil to good. In this context, Augustine offers a vivid description of the operation of divine grace on the psychological faculty of the will by commenting on John 6:44, "*None can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws (trahere) them*"

He did not, after all, say, 'guides (*ducere*),' so that we might by it somehow understand that the will goes first. Are any people drawn, if they are already willing? And yet, none come unless they are willing. They are drawn, then, in marvelous ways to willing by the one who knows how to work interiorly (*intus*) in the hearts of human beings, not so that human beings believe unwillingly—that is impossible—but so that they become people willing to believe from people who were unwilling.<sup>86</sup>

76 Ep. 194, 3, 9. "Restat igitur ut ipsam fidem unde omnis iustitia sumit initium... restat, inquam, ut ipsam fidem non humano, quod isti extollunt, tribuamus arbitrio, nec ullis praecedentibus meritis, quoniam inde incipiunt bona quaecumque sunt merita; sed gratuitum donum Dei esse fateamur, si gratiam ueram, id est sine meritis, cogitamus"

77 Ibid., 3, 10. "...quia nec omnium est fides, qui audiunt uerbum, sed quibus deus partitur mensuram fidei..."

78 Ibid., 3, 11. "Hanc enim fidem Apostolus definiuit, dicens: *Neque circumcisio est aliquid, neque praeputium; sed fides, quae per dilectionem operatur*. Ista quippe fides est Christianorum, non daemoniorum: nam et *daemones credunt et contremiscunt*; sed numquid et diligitur?"

79 Ibid., 3, 15. "ita non haberet fidem nisi accepisset Spiritum fidei" Cf. TeSelle 1970, 334; Burns 1980, 149.

80 Ep. 194, 6, 24. "...quos non latet ueritas et in eis perseuerat iniquitas..."

81 Ibid., "Vnde non obediēt, nisi sua pessima uoluntate?"

82 Burns argues that the contribution of this letter lies in its clear assignation of the whole process of conversion, from the recognition of truth to the wholehearted love of God, to the work of the Holy Spirit that works internally on the disposition of our soul. Cf. id. 1980, 149. Nevertheless, we have to concede that regarding the psychological perspective of operative grace, the progress Augustine achieves in this account is quite limited.

83 See Wu 2007.

84 *c. ep. Pel. I*, 2, 5, "Quis autem nostrum dicat quod primi hominis peccato perierit liberum arbitrium de genere humano? Libertas quidem perit per peccatum, sed illa, quae in paradiso fuit, habendi plenam cum immortalitate iustitiam. Propter quod natura humana diuina indiget gratia, dicente Domino: *Si uos Filii liberauerit, tunc uere liberi eritis*, utique liberi ad bene iusteque uiuendum: nam liberum arbitrium usque adeo in peccatore non perit..."

85 As Burns accurately observes, "He (sc. Augustine) introduced an existential consideration: a person cannot begin the process of salvation because prior to faith he is actually opposed to God, finding all his delight in evil. To convert him, God must change the orientation of an individual's freedom." See id. 1980, 150.

86 *c. ep. Pel. I*, 19, 37. "Non enim ait 'duxerit', ut illic aliquo modo intellegamus praecedere uoluntatem. Quis trahitur, si iam uolebat? Et tamen nemo uenit, nisi uelit. Trahitur ergo miris modis, ut uelit, ab illo qui nouit intus in ipsis hominum cordibus operari, non ut

The subtle distinction between *ducere* and *trahere*, the addition of the adverb *intus*, the identification of *cor* as the subject of this operative grace, all point unequivocally to the direct effect of divine grace on the act of willing.

In a later discussion, Augustine related this initial phase of good will to the desire for the good (*cupiditas boni*). Divine agency not only makes sinners think about (*cogitare*) what is good but also to desire (*cupere*) it actually. “To think of something is less than to desire it.” If we ascribe the greater ability of desiring to human agents, it will follow that the gift of faith as a good will is nothing but a repayment of debt for this preceding merit.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, unlike his earlier mention of delight as an effect of the *uocatio* in *Ad Simplicianum*, here Augustine granted the disposition of desire as an explicit manifestation of willing.

To sum up, the good intention of the will itself is identified as a direct result of divine providence in human hearts. It is obvious that this point of view distinguishes Augustine’s later position from his earlier interpretation of divine assistance as an external and internal calling. This advancement in Augustine’s theory of operative grace is further consolidated in his polemic works against Julian, which we cannot examine in more details here.<sup>88</sup>

Now, I advance to Augustine’s final treatment of the issue of *initium fidei*. In *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, Augustine defined the act of believing (*credere*) as “to think with assent.”<sup>89</sup> Here, thought (*cogitatio*) is explicitly identified as the beginning of faith.<sup>90</sup> In this context, Augustine admitted without the slightest reluctance that he had mistakenly ascribed assent to human agency exclusively in his earlier commentaries on Romans written before the *Ad Simplicianum* of 396.<sup>91</sup> Now, Augustine expressly acknowledged this assent as a gift from God, who works in a hidden way on our hearts by changing wills from evil to good.<sup>92</sup>

From a theological point of view, Augustine’s final account of the *initium fidei* simply summarizes his earlier analyses of the interior operation of divine grace, especially after the end of the first period of the Pelagian controversy in 418.<sup>93</sup> Yet, in response to the worries of the so-called Semi-Pelagians about human agency under a supreme grace, Augustine addressed the role of the will in the beginning of faith. He argued that both faith and good works are ours as well as being divine gifts.

Both of these (sc. to believe and to do good), then, are ours on account of the decision of the will, and both, nonetheless, are given through the Spirit of faith and of love.... Both are due to him (sc. Holy Spirit) because he prepares the will, and both are due to us because they are not done unless we are willing.<sup>94</sup>

homines, quod fieri non potest, nolentes credant, sed ut uolentes ex nolentibus fiant.”

87 Ibid., II, 8, 18. “minus est autem cogitare quam cupere. Cogitamus quippe omne quod cupimus, nec tamen cupimus omne quod cogitamus, quoniam nonnumquam et quod non cupimus cogitamus ... quomodo ad id quod minus est, id est ad cogitandum aliquid boni, non sumus idonei tamquam ex nobismet ipsis, sed sufficientia nostra ex deo est, et ad id quod est amplius, id est ad cupidendum aliquid boni, sine diuino adiutorio idonei sumus ex libero arbitrio?”

88 For references to this issue in the context of original sin in his controversy with Julian, cf. Burns 1980, 150ff; For more recent discussions on this issue, see note 2.

89 *praed. sanct.* 2, 5. “Quamquam et ipsum credere, nihil aliud est, quam cum assensione cogitare.”

90 Ibid., “...quoniam fides si non cogitetur, nulla est.”

91 Ibid., 3, 7. “...ut autem praedicato nobis Euangelio consentiremus, nostrum esse proprium, et nobis ex nobis esse arbitrabar.” As noted earlier, Augustine insists that he corrected this error in his responses to Simplicianus. Cf note 21. Here Augustine fails to mention that even in *De spiritu et littera* of 412, he still attributes assent or dissent to the faculty of will. See note 68.

92 Cf. Ibid., 7, 12; 8, 15. *persen.* 6, 12; 14, 37.

93 Cf. Burns, 167. Some scholars follow Augustine’s own suggestion maintaining that his final position on the *initium fidei* is quite close to that he attained in *Ad Simplicianum*, see most recently Lössl 2002; Ring 2004; Drecoll 2004, esp. 224.

94 *praed. sanct.* 3, 7. “Utrumque (sc. credere et bonum operari) ergo nostrum est propter arbitrium uoluntatis, et utrumque tamen datum est per Spiritum fidei et charitatis... et utrumque ipsius est, quia ipse praeparat uoluntatem; et utrumque nostrum, quia non fit nisi uolentibus nobis.”

Nevertheless, in his treatises sent to the monks of Provence, Augustine did not work out this compatibility between divine and human agency, that is, how interior grace operates on our will and determines its consent to believe without destroying our ownership of the act of willing.<sup>95</sup> It seems as if the decision of the will and human agency in question are nothing more than a name. In contrast, Augustine's earlier model of "congruous calling" seems more plausible. By attributing the consent (*consensio, nutus*) to the free decision of the will, Augustine at least established the human contribution at the most crucial moment of the initial step to salvation, even though the basic motivation to believe originates and derives its attractiveness from the prevailing *uocatio* of God.

However, the foregoing reconstruction of Augustine's positions on the *initium fidei* has revealed that the emphasis on the interior dimension of operative grace in his final years not only agrees with his growing concern about the sovereignty of divine grace, but also corresponds to his deepening understanding of the will. In Augustine's mature thought, the psychological faculty of will is no longer treated as an absolute and mysterious power which is free to choose among various alternatives in any circumstances. On the contrary, Augustine attained a more realistic conception of the will, which is conditioned by our existential state, and in its Christian context primarily limited by our original difficulty in willing the good. The original sin is an innate disease to our power of willing, therefore its corresponding treatment should also be internal to the decision of the will. In other words, if Augustine's final reflections on the will are sound, his insistence upon the absolute sovereignty of divine grace will be tenable. In the subsequent discussion, I will appeal to some significant aspects of the will in Augustine's later thought to argue that Augustine's final position on divine agency and human freedom is theoretically defensible within a basic theistic context. If we can accept an omnipotent Being as the creator and administrator of this world, it follows that the freedom of the will can merely be established when it is actually prepared by an operative grace.

### ***Potestas et uoluntas: Further Theoretical Reflections on Augustine's final view on *initium fidei****

I shall start with a closer look at the concept of power (*potestas*) in Augustine's moral psychology, for what is at the center of this issue of *initium fidei* is precisely whether the will to believe is in our power (*potestate*) or not.

In his earlier philosophical dialogues, Augustine claims without any hesitation, "there is nothing so much in our power as the will itself. For as soon as we will immediately will is there."<sup>96</sup> It is believed that the power to will under any circumstances is never lacking in an agent. On the other hand, the will is not enticed to do anything except by mental images or thoughts. However, the mind cannot control the things that occur to it of their own accord. For this reason, the power to will in question is identified as the ability to accept or reject the suggestion issuing from such preceding thoughts. Meanwhile, the assent or dissent of the will is recognized as the foundation of our moral agency.<sup>97</sup> In his early comments on the psychological process of committing a sin in heart, Augustine divided the completion of sin into three steps: suggestion, pleasure or appetite, and consent. If the reason or the

95 Cf. for instance, Wetzel 1992, 167 "He (sc. Augustine) establishes there only that he has grounds in apostolic testimony for believing that God never waits on human willingness to be redeemed before working redemption. Faith itself is worked. But the implications of having to give up the beginning of faith as a human initiative are left largely to the reader to work out."

96 *lib. arb.* III, 3, 7. "...nihil tamen in nostra potestate, quam ipsa uoluntas est." Ea enim prosus nullo intervallo, mox ut uoluntas praesto est."

97 *Ibid.*, III, 25, 74. "Sed quia uoluntatem non allicit ad faciendum quodlibet, nisi aliquid uisum; quid autem quisque uel sumat uel respuat, est in potestate, sed quo uiso tangatur, nulla potestas est: fatendum est ex superioribus et ex inferioribus uisis animum tangi ut rationalis substantia ex utroque sumat quod uoluerit, et ex merito sumendi uel miseria uel beatitas subsequatur."

will does not consent to what appetite or lust is urging, we do not slide into sin and therefore will not be blamed for the occurrence of the sinful suggestion and its subsequent pleasure.<sup>98</sup>

As noted earlier, even at the beginning of the Pelagian controversy, Augustine still maintained that the ability to assent or dissent always lies in the power of the will, though the will is prepared by God in the sense that it has been informed and urged by divine invitation before making its final decision.<sup>99</sup> Certainly, in this context, Augustine already noticed that this will to believe is quite weak and therefore should be healed and strengthened by God so that it can attain the freedom or the ability to love and live a righteous life. On this account, he drew a distinction between *uoluntas* and *potestas*.<sup>100</sup> The former is evidently an act of someone who wills, while the latter denotes the ability to carry out the intention of the will, which is ascribed to the grace of God.<sup>101</sup> Here, Augustine stresses that the bestowal of *potestas* imposes no necessity on the decision of the will.<sup>102</sup> To summarize, the will to assent is ours, however, the power to act or to perform is from God. Accordingly, in the *initium fidei*, what a human agent lacks is simply the power to carry out one's intention to believe.

However, Augustine becomes unsatisfied with this understanding of will and power during his controversy with Julian. First, he comes to realize that the *concupiscentia carnis*, as an inherent evil inclination of the soul, is not alien to the faculty of the will.<sup>103</sup> Its presence and its actuality both restrict the freedom of the will. Right from the start, the will is not an absolute power that can bring about its own disposition from without. On the contrary, the decision of the will at a particular moment is always conditioned by its earlier dispositions, based on either an explicit or implicit consent of the will. This is especially true for post-lapsarian human agents, who are born into moral ignorance and difficulty. In other words, the will of a post-lapsarian agent is essentially involuntary.<sup>104</sup>

Taking the asymmetrical structure of the will into consideration, Augustine insisted that because of the first voluntary sin committed by Adam, we lost the ability to attain a good disposition of the will by our own efforts.<sup>105</sup> In other words, what we are short of is not only the power to act in accordance with a good will, but more importantly the good will itself. It is evident that the aforementioned distinction of will and power failed to recognize that the will itself is also an ability. Moreover, this ability can be damaged due to the previous decision of the will itself and should be restored by some transcendent power. For instance, what an addict lost by his voluntary acceptance of drugs is not only his capacity to free himself of such an addiction, but also the ability to attain a *wholehearted* love of an alternative life; otherwise, this unreserved love or will itself will suffice for breaking this bad habit. In short, since the

98 See *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos* II, 14, 21 “Etiam nunc in unoquoque nostrum nihil aliud agitur, cum ad peccatum quisque delabitur, quam tunc actum est in illis tribus, serpente, muliere, et uiro. Nam primo fit suggestio siue per cogitationem, siue per sensus corporis, uel uidendo, uel tangendo, uel audiendo, uel gustando, uel olfaciendo: quae suggestio cum facta fuerit, si cupiditas nostra non mouebitur ad peccandum, excludetur serpentis astutia; si autem mota fuerit, quasi mulieri iam persuasum erit. Sed aliquando ratio uiriliter etiam commotam cupiditatem refrenat atque compescit. Quod cum fit, non labimur in peccatum, sed cum aliquanta luctatione coronamur. Si autem ratio consentiat, et quod libido commouerit, faciendum esse decernat, ab omni uita beata tamquam de paradiso expellitur homo. Iam enim peccatum imputatur, etiamsi non subsequatur factum; quoniam rea tenetur in consensione conscientia.” This analysis of sinful movements of the soul is also adopted, with slight modifications, in Augustine's treatise *De sermone domini in monte* of 394. See *De sermone domini in monte* I, 12, 34. However, Augustine radically changed his position in his reflections on the formation of sin in *De trinitate* XII, 12, 17. For comments on these three passages, see my article, “Rethinking Augustine's Adaptation of ‘First Movements’ of Affection,” (forthcoming).

99 *Spir. et litt.* 34, 60. see note 70.

100 *Ibid.*, 31, 53. “Cum enim duo quaedam sint uelle et posse – unde nec qui uult continuo potest nec qui potest continuo uult.”

101 Cf. *Ibid.*, “...quidem hanc dicimus potestatem, ubi uoluntati adiacet facultas faciendi.”

102 *Ibid.*, 31, 54. “Sed cum potestas datur, non necessitas utique imponitur.”

103 See for instance, *c. Iul.* VI, 19, 60; *c. Iul. imp.* II, 221, (1); see also *ciu. Dei*, XIV, 16. For a critical study of Augustine's conception of *Concupiscentia carnis*, see Wu 2007, 18-21.

104 For a detailed discussion of the moral agency in our involuntary doings under the inborn conditions, i.e., ignorance and moral difficulty (or *concupiscentia carnis* in his later polemic works), see Wu 2009.

105 Cf. for instance, *c. ep. Pel.* I, 2, 5; cited in note 84.

faculty of the will does have its own history and operates in the shadow of this history, the particular dispositions or acts of will (*uoluntates* in plural) are not always under the control of the faculty of the will (*uoluntas* in single).

This point is also evident in Augustine's lively account of two wills (*duae uoluntates*) at war before his conversion.<sup>106</sup> As is well-known, Augustine's self-divided will is reunified in the well-known scene of the garden. Prior to the account of the critical moment of his life, Augustine addresses a monstrous fact relating to the mind: the mind is unable to command (*imperare*) itself to obtain a wholehearted will.<sup>107</sup>

Augustine's account is grounded on his insights into the nature and strength of the will. He clarifies first and foremost that when the mind commands itself to have a will, it is actually the will of the mind that is commanding itself. To command is certainly a disposition of the mind that can be classified under the plural form of *uoluntates*. It is inconceivable that one is to command what one does not want (*uelle*) at all.

Second, the mind does not possess the absolute power to make such a command. On the contrary, the strength of the command is determined by the willing mind itself. More plainly, it is constrained by the pre-existing dispositions of the will (*uoluntates*) that qualify the situation of the mind.

Third, when the will commands itself this order shall undoubtedly not be performed. For either this command is unnecessary, if the commanding will is complete and wholehearted; or the commanding will does not have the power to perform its own command because of its inherent incompleteness. It is impossible for a half-wounded will to command itself wholeheartedly to be wholehearted. For if it can do so, it must already have unreservedly accepted the thing that is commanded. In this case, the power to act is precisely the willing itself. In view of this, the will that commands in such a thorough way should be a wholehearted will already.

In Augustine's own case, his will to enjoy God freely is incomplete or defective in the sense that it is accompanied by the resistance of his old will in the form of *consuetudo*.<sup>108</sup> This defective or half-wounded will is unable to command Augustine's mind to abandon his established habits and to will new life unreservedly. For that reason, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that the will cannot command itself to bring forth or eliminate an established will simply by virtue of commanding. Furthermore, the will does not have the power to make a half-wounded will wholehearted.

In his response to the monks of Hadremetum, Augustine also addressed the will and power in the case of Adam to confirm the necessity of grace for the act of willing after the Fall. Adam did receive the power to live a righteous life whenever he wills to, however, he did not have the will to do what he had the ability to do. Therefore, in the case of Adam, the divine grace for preserving his original goodness followed on his own decision of the will.<sup>109</sup> We, however, lost the ability to will the good in this life. Therefore, the grace that we need for our salvation should be more powerful so that it can make one will (*uelle*) and be able to (*posse*) accomplish what one wills.<sup>110</sup>

Moreover, in his later years, Augustine comes to emphasize the unity of will and power, which can be

<sup>106</sup> See *conf.* VIII, 5, 10; VIII, 8, 20-10, 22. See also note 7.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. *conf.* VIII, 8, 20 – 9, 22.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *conf.* VIII, 5, 10.

<sup>109</sup> *Corrept.* 11, 32. "ut autem in eo permaneret, egebat adiutorio gratiae, sine quo id omnino non posset; et acceperat posse si uellet, sed non habuit uelle quod posset..."

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 31. "...ergo plus potest (sc. gratia), qua etiam fit ut uelit, et tantum uelit, tantoque ardore diligit, ut carnis uoluntatem contraria concupiscentem uoluntate spiritus uincat."

confirmed in our everyday experience. He sharply observes that the lack of ability to obey divine commands is simply a sign of the will's impotence to obey, for the act of obeying divine commands is primarily a disposition of the will.

For the words of scripture, If you will to, *you will observe the commandments, amount to this*, namely, that someone who wills to observe them and cannot should recognize that he does not yet fully (*plene*) will to observe the commandments and that he should pray that he may have a will great enough to observe the commandments. In that way he is, of course, helped to do what he is commanded. For it is useful to will when we are able, and our ability is useful when we will. For what good does it do if we will what we cannot do or do not will what we can do.<sup>111</sup>

It is evident that a disposition of the will without a corresponding ability to carry it out is merely an empty will or wish, which has little to do with our moral behavior.

However, if we follow Augustine's early account of *initium fidei* and attribute the crucial decision to a human agent, then this initial good inclination would be such an empty will: As shown earlier, the necessary ability to perform is left up to the decision of the divine will. However, to attain this power to perform good works or to observe the divine commandments, one should first of all have a full or wholehearted will to believe in God and His omnipotence. Nevertheless, Augustine's own experience of conversion and his controversy with the Pelagians have shown that due to its essential weakness, the human will cannot realize the wholehearted will to believe. It follows necessarily that if the human agent is the only author of his or her own will, he or she will never attain such a wholehearted will that can initiate his or her salvation. However, if we follow Augustine's later account and grant that this assent of the will is also prepared by divine providence and that divine grace will never fail, then it will be possible for a post-lapsarian agent to attain an unconditional disposition to faith.

To justify the aforementioned argument, I shall advance to the second reconsideration of Augustine's final words on *initium fidei*. This is concerned with the strength and degree of the will.

First, I want to underline that the will to believe under consideration is acknowledged by Augustine to be a wholehearted love. Even in *De spiritu et littera*, Augustine claims, "this is the faith which works through love (*dilectio*), not through fear, not fearing punishment, but loving righteousness."<sup>112</sup> However, in Augustine's earlier model, the will to believe cannot be the wholehearted love of God. For it is undeniable that a happy life (*beata vita*) is the ultimate end of one's will.<sup>113</sup> In order to obtain happiness (*beatitudo*), one should live a righteous life. However, in a theological text, the ability to live such a good life can only be attained from God. Furthermore, the bestowal of this ability is preceded by the will to believe in God. On this account, if the decisive assent in the beginning of faith lies in human agents who will to attain beatitude absolutely, their belief in God is more likely an instrumental belief for the sake of one's own beatitude. It is not out of love, but out of utilitarian considerations or out of the fear of punishment.

Moreover, as has been convincingly demonstrated in Augustine's account of *duae uoluntates* in *Confessiones*, the essential independence of the will determines that the will cannot solve its inherent

111 *gr. et lib. arb.* 15, 31. "Ad hoc enim ualet quod scriptum est: *Si uolueris, seruabis mandata*: ut homo qui uoluerit et non potuerit, nondum se plene uelle cognoscat, et oret ut habeat tantam uoluntatem, quanta sufficit ad implenda mandata. Sic quippe adiuuatur, ut faciat quod iubetur. Tunc enim utile est uelle, cum possumus; et tunc utile est posse, cum uolumus: nam quid prodest, si quod non possumus uolumus, aut quod possumus nolimus."

112 *spir. et litt.* 32, 56. "...haec est fides, quae per dilectionem operatur, non per timorem, non formidando poenam, sed amando iustitiam." Cf. also *ep.* 194, 3, 11, cited in note 78.

113 See for instance, *conf.* X, 20, 29. "Cum enim te, deum meum, quaero, uitam beatam quaero." For the eudaimonistic feature of Augustine's thought, see Gilson 1949, 1-10. See also Holte 1962; Rist 1994, 48-53.

conflict and thereby attain a wholehearted love of God by its own efforts. Augustine's theory of original sin, especially as developed in his controversy with Julian, confirms that this conflict is a universal fact due to the presence of *concupiscentia carnis*. Therefore, to overcome this inborn difficulty of the will, one needs divine grace to attain an absolute love of the good.

In the above analyses, I emphasized the necessity of grace for our willing to believe from a psychological point of view. At the end of this chapter, I shall argue from the same perspective that this divine working on human willing does not destroy our agency.

The crucial key is Augustine's emphasis on the inscrutable feature of divine judgment, which is often dismissed as an appeal to mystery and an intellectual failure.<sup>114</sup> Augustine maintains that divine election or rejection is based on divine judgment, which is undoubtedly just but remains inscrutable to us.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, human agents do not know who belongs and who does not to the number of the predestined.<sup>116</sup> Accordingly, in the beginning of faith, when we make the final decision to believe, we are not sure if we belong to the elect. That is, though divine grace works on us, it does so in such a manner that we are not conscious of its effect before actually willing. Without the actual assent of the will, the knowledge of divine grace cannot be transformed into a living knowledge that actually contributes to the decision of the will. Here, the decision remains a free decision of the will not because we can choose otherwise, but because it issues spontaneously from the faculty of the will. If God predestines us to believe, we will believe. However, the divine agency works on the will but does not force the will; otherwise, the consequential act of will would not be a will at all. Therefore, our decision to believe is both prepared for by divine providence and determined by our own assent.

The situation seems like a competition we all take part in. We all *bear* that there is an omnipotent agent, who created and administrates this competition. We *bear* as well that the number of winners has been determined by this transcendent agent before the competition. However, his decision is inaccessible to us as the participants in this competition. The only thing we are certain of is that if we grant that he is an omnipotent being, we will have to concede logically that he is the Supreme Good and his judgment cannot be unjust. It follows that only those who have performed well in the competition will be awarded as winners as predetermined by the omnipotent administrator. As highlighted earlier, our cognition of this predetermination is definitely restricted to a belief, not justified knowledge. It follows that the decision of our will, which underlies our performance in the competition, will not be necessitated by our own cognition of the omnipotent overseer. For we cannot justify this cognition concerning a supernatural power simply by our own efforts. In other words, we cannot know this atemporal truth in this temporal world. As Augustine commented on one's effort to attain the virtue of charity,

[...] a person whom God predestined to be chaste, although the individual himself is *not certain* (*incertum habere*) about this, does not cease to strive to be chaste because he *bears* (*audire*) that he will be what he will be because of God's gift.<sup>117</sup>

Therefore, the belief in eternal truth simply confirms that only the good performers will win the competition. It will not forcefully impose anything on our decision in our struggle to win.

Still, this example only justifies the compatibility of divine predestination and human agency in the

114 See for instance, Rist 1969, 437, 439-40; id. 1994, 133. Flash 1990, 65-71. For a brief account of the attitude of contemporary commentators on this issue, see Rigby 2002, 213-5. Rigby offers an excellent account of the positive contribution of God's inscrutable judgment to justifying Augustine's theory of predestination.

115 See for instance, *Simpl.* I, 2, 18; *corrupt.* 8, 18; *Praed. Sanct.* 8, 16; *persen.* 11, 25.

116 *corrupt.* 15, 46. "Nescientes enim quis pertineat ad praedestinatorum numerum, quis non pertineat..."

117 *persen.* 17, 41. "...ita ille quem castum futurum praedestinavit, quamvis id *incertum habeat*, non ideo non agit ut castus sit, quoniam dei dono se *audit* futurum esse quod erit." The emphases are mine.

cases where the divine predetermination does not work directly on the act of willing. Now I will adjust it to the cases of *initium fidei*. The ability required to win the competition was revealed to be beyond our reach by our own efforts alone. Meanwhile, we were told that only those who believe wholeheartedly in the existence and omnipotence of the transcendent administrator could receive the ability required to win. Furthermore, we heard that even the belief itself should be brought about by the direct operation of this superior agent. However, once again, we are not certain if we are the ones who have been predetermined to win the competition. When we endeavor to attain that decisive power, we are not certain as well if we have obtained an absolute belief in that superior being. Even when we think and believe that we are the fortunate, we cannot prove this belief to ourselves unless we finally win the competition. What is certain for us is still that victory only belongs to those who have demonstrated their ability by their belief and acts. In light of this, the predetermination of one's willing to believe could be *parallel* to one's own effort to attain such a disposition of the will. If we believe, we assent to what we have heard. Meanwhile, our will to believe demonstrates that God has predestined us to do so. On the other hand, if we do not believe, it signifies that we renunciate what we have heard. Accordingly, this also reveals that we have not been determined to win the competition. In both cases, our ascertainment of divine determination occurs *after* our own decision and therefore cannot effect the process of decision itself.

Moreover, as has been clarified in Augustine's experience of conversion, we cannot determine our own disposition of the will purely by making a decision or commanding it to be so. Although our pre-existing dispositions of the will define the situation of the mind, they cannot necessitate the occurrence of a new intention of the will by commanding. That is, the new tendency of the will occurs of its own accord. This can be applied to our recognition of divine grace as well. Even when we ascribe both our will and the ability to act to divine operation, this attribution cannot destroy the independence of the will and our agency in the act of willing. This ascription is merely a belief that needs to be justified, not a determinate decision of the will. We do so simply because we *believe* that this is a more appropriate understanding of the sovereignty of divine substance. In Augustine's own words, "We, therefore, live more *safely* if we ascribe all to God, and do not attribute to him a part and to us a part."<sup>118</sup> This attribution cannot necessitate a wholehearted belief in the Christian truth. Hence, Augustine insists that his comments on one's striving to be chaste can be applied to the beginning of faith as well.<sup>119</sup> In both cases, due to the inscrutable nature of divine judgment, a human being under the interior operation of God is not an animated puppet at all, but a free agent who makes his or her own decisions spontaneously as he or she wills.

## Bibliography

### 1. Abbreviations

- BA** *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*, Oeuvres de Saint Augustin (Paris: Desclée ; De Brouwer, 1949- ).
- CCL** *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina* (Turnhout:Brepols, 1953- ).
- CSEL** *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna: Tempsky, 1865- ).
- FC** *The Fathers of the Church*, ed. R. J. Deferrari (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1947- ).
- LCC** *Library of Christian Classics*, ed. J. Baillie, J. T. McNeill, and H. P. van Dusen (Philadelphia and London: 1953-66).

<sup>118</sup> *persu.* 6, 12. "*Tutiores* igitur uiuimus, si totum deo damus, non autem nos illi ex parte, et nobis ex parte committimus..." The emphasis is added.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 17, 42. Cf. note 117.

**PL** Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris 1844-64).

**WSA** *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, ed. J. E. Rotelle (New York: New City Press, 1990-).

## 2. Augustine's Works: Abbreviations, Titles, Editions and Translations

- ciu. die* *De civitate Dei*, **CCL 47-48**, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); *City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson, (London: Penguin books, 1984)
- conf.* *Confessiones*, **CCL 27**, Cf. O'Donnell 1992, I; *Confessions*, trans. H. Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991);
- corrept.* *De correptione et gratia*, **PL 44, BA 24**, *Rebuke and Grace*, trans. Roland J. Teske, **WSA I/26**.
- div. qu.* *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, **CCL 44A**, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, trans. David L. Mosher, **FC 70**
- ep.* *Epistulae*, **CSEL 34, 44, 57, 58, 88**, *Letters*, trans. Roland J. Teske, **WSA II/1-4**.  
*c. ep. Pel. Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*, **CSEL 60**, *Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians*, trans. Roland J. Teske, **WSA I/24**.
- Gn. adu. Man* *De Genesi aduersus Manicheos*, **CSEL 91**, *On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees*, trans. Edmund Hill, **WSA I/13**.
- gr. et lib. arb.* *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, **PL 44, BA 24**, *Grace and Free Choice*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/26**.
- gr. et pecc. or.* *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali*, **CSEL 42**, *The Grace of Christ and Original Sin*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/23**.
- c. Iul.* *Contra Iulianum Pelagianum*, **PL 44**, *Answer to Julian*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/24**.
- c. Iul. imp.* *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum*, **CSEL 85.1-2**, *Unfinished Work in Answer to Julian*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/25**.
- lib. arb.* *De libero arbitrio*, **CCL 29**, trans. J.H.S. Burleigh, **LCC 6**; See also *On Free Choice of the Will*, trans. Anna S. Benjamin and L. H. Hachstaff (Indianapolis: The Bobs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1964).
- perseu.* *De dono perseuerantiae*, **PL 45, BA 24**, *The Gift of Perseverance*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/26**.
- praed. sanct.* *De predestinatione sanctorum* **PL 45, BA 24**, *The Predestination of the Saints*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/26**.
- retr.* *Retractiones*, **CCL 57**, *The Retractions*, trans. Mary Inez Bogan, **FC 60**.
- s. dom. mon* *De sermone domini in monte*, **CCL 35**, *Lord's Sermon on the Mount*, trans. Denis J. Kavaragh, **FC 11**.
- Simpl.* *Ad Simplicianum*, **CCL 44**, *To Simplician – On Various Questions, Book I*, trans. J. H. S. Burleigh, **LCC 6**.
- spir. et litt.* *De spiritu et littera*, **CSEL 60**, *The Spirit and the Letter*, trans. Roland Teske, **WSA I/23**.
- trin.* *De trinitate*, **CCL 50/50A**, *On the Trinity Books 8-15*, trans. Stephen McKenna. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, **WSA I/5**.

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