

**PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM:  
ESSAYS AND REVIEWS**

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**THE ARTHUR J. BANNING PRESS  
MINNEAPOLIS**

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 93-74285

ISBN 938060-44-9

Printed in the United States of America

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CHAPTER TWO  
AUGUSTINE  
ON FREE WILL AND PREDESTINATION:  
A Critique of John M. Rist's Interpretation

Even after all these years John M. Rist's pithy article on St. Augustine's understanding of free will, grace, and predestination continues to receive acclaim.<sup>1</sup> Certain of my colleagues across the way in the History Department speak highly of it; and some of my own students in medieval philosophy report that after reading it, they feel that they have grasped the quintessence of Augustine's position on these recondite themes. Much of the attention that the article still receives is due, practically speaking, to its having been reprinted in R. A. Markus's highly visible (and valuable) anthology *Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays*. But the attention is due also, theoretically speaking, to Rist's recognition "that for Augustine it is impossible to demarcate the boundary between philosophy and theology," so that Rist does not attempt "to discuss 'philosophical' questions, like that of the freedom of the will, without recourse to theological problems like the operations of grace" (p. 219). In other words, Rist undertakes the task of providing us with a philosophico-theological synthesis of Augustine's position on free will, grace, and predestination—a synthesis, he feels, that both negates all the previous ones by other interpreters and harmonizes all the relevant passages from Augustine's works.<sup>2</sup> This is a bold venture. No wonder that it can inspire in students the conviction that here, at last, is to be found a definitive interpretation of the quintessential Augustine.

Somewhat to my students' dismay, however, I maintain that the article by Rist provides us, at best, with only an incoherent exposition of Augustine's views. Accordingly, it does not constitute an acceptable synthesis. Moreover, to the extent that it is at all coherent, it conveys a grossly distorted impression of Augustine's thought.

1. *The nature of voluntas.* In our examination we may commence where Rist does:

Let us begin with the fact that the word *voluntas*, which we are in the habit of translating as will, does not denote for Augustine a part of the human psyche; rather it is the human *psyche* in its role as a moral agent. As in Seneca, the word *voluntas* is in Augustine almost to be translated as 'moral self' or 'moral personality'. Quoting Luke 2:14, Augustine will describe the good [men] as men 'of good will' (*bonae voluntatis*), where it is clear that the goodness of the 'will' is the indication of the goodness of the man. Thus *voluntas* is not a decision-making faculty of the individual, as subsequent philosophy might lead us to suppose, but the individual himself. Hence it can be good or bad (p. 220).

These claims by Rist contain both imprecisions and outright inaccuracies.

1.1. According to Rist the word "*voluntas*" does not designate, for Augustine, a part of the human soul; rather, it *is* the human soul (in its role as a moral agent). What Rist actually says here, imprecisely, is that the word "*voluntas*" is, for Augustine, the human soul. But what he means is that what is designated by "*voluntas*" is the human soul, not a part of the human soul. Yet, even this more precise statement is still far too imprecise. For as Augustine uses "*voluntas*," it sometimes means and denotes one of several things: *the will, an act of willing* (i.e., *a volition*), *a willingness, a wish, a desire, an intent, an inclination*. Moreover, "*voluntas*" does not necessarily signify the *human will*, since Augustine, like Anselm after him, believes that nonhuman animals, as well as angels,<sup>3</sup> have a will. What distinguishes the human being from the beast is that the latter does not have reason; *a fortiori*, then, it does not have a rational will and, hence, does not have a free will. But a brute creature does have a (nonrational) will, just as it also has a (nonrational) soul. In *De Civitate Dei* 5.9.4 Augustine distinguishes *fortuitous* causes from both *natural* causes and *voluntary* causes. These latter, he says, come from God or angels or men or animals; and regarding animals he adds the

qualification "if we are to label as 'wills' those movements of animals devoid of reason—movements by which they do things according to their nature when they desire something or avoid it."<sup>4</sup> Later, Augustine once again alludes to the wills of animals,<sup>5</sup> though thereafter he proceeds to state: "[God] gave to irrational souls memory, sense, and appetite; but to rational [souls He gave], in addition, mind, understanding, and will."<sup>6</sup> Here by "will" he means, of course, *rational will*, which non-human animals do not have.

So, for Augustine, "*voluntas*" neither always means nor always denotes either *will* or *human will*, as Rist alleges.

1.2. Yet, when Augustine does use "*voluntas*" to signify *the human will*, he does so because he considers the human will to be a constituent part of the human soul, just as are memory and understanding. Rist is wrong to deny this point—a point made clearly by Augustine in *De Trinitate* 15.22.42: "By means of all these three [viz., memory, understanding, love (or will)] I remember, I understand, I love—I, who am neither memory nor understanding nor love, but I have these. Therefore, these can be predicated of one person, who has these three [but who] is not these three."<sup>7</sup> Elsewhere in *De Trinitate* Augustine asserts: "... *cum memoriam meam et intellectum et voluntatem nomino, singula quidem nomina ad res singulas referuntur* . . . ." <sup>8</sup> Memory, understanding, and will are *singulae res*, distinct things, referred to by *singula nomina*, distinct names. In the *Confessiones* Augustine distinguishes the power (*vis*) of giving life from the power of perception and from the power of memory.<sup>9</sup> These powers he views as hierarchically arranged, so that in contemplatively ascending, the soul passes first beyond *vis qua vivifico carnem meam*, then beyond *vis qua sensifico carnem meam*, and finally beyond *vis memoriae*. Likewise, in general, he deems the will to be such a power, which he elsewhere speaks of both as *vis voluntatis*<sup>10</sup> and as *facultas voluntatis*.<sup>11</sup>

Memory, understanding, and will are powers that the soul

*has*, not powers that it *is*. As such, they are faculties of the soul, so that Augustine is able just as easily to say "*voluntas vult*"<sup>12</sup> or "[*rationalis*] *anima* . . . *potest* . . . *eligere*"<sup>13</sup> as to say "*homo vult*."<sup>14</sup> Perhaps Rist is thinking along the same lines as is Vernon Bourke, when the latter writes:

Augustine's is not a faculty psychology; there are no distinct operative powers in the Augustinian soul. Unfortunately, many scholars have failed to grasp this, particularly those trained in the traditions of Thomism. When Augustine describes the functions of man's soul in terms of memory, understanding, and will (*memoria, intelligentia, voluntas*), he is not at all thinking of different powers. Rather, . . . the whole soul is memory, the whole soul is intelligence, and the whole soul is will. This is a trinitarian psychology in which the diversity of functions of remembering, knowing, and willing does not entail any real difference within the nature of the soul . . . . Augustine pays little attention to the theory of substance and its accidents; he takes it that the activities of the soul stem directly from its own nature, without any accidental potencies intervening.<sup>15</sup>

But this time Bourke, a perceptive Augustine interpreter who is usually right, misleads us. For Augustine does not maintain that the whole soul is memory, the whole soul understanding (or intelligence), the whole soul will. What Augustine teaches is that memory, understanding, and will belong to the soul and are in the soul as its powers and operations. Accordingly, the whole human soul has will, for the soul is indivisible. (Similarly, the whole soul has memory and understanding.) But it is not the case that the whole soul *is* the will. (Nor is it memory or understanding.) What Augustine declares, in the translation used by Bourke in his anthology, is the following: "Since, then, these three, memory, understanding, will, are not three lives but one life, nor three minds but one mind, it follows certainly that neither are they three substances but one substance."<sup>16</sup> Augustine envisions memory, understanding, and will as being one life and substance because they belong to one and the same mind (*animus*) or soul (*anima*), of which they are inherent powers, or faculties.<sup>17</sup> Because the three are of *the one*

*mind*, the one mind *has* them; the sense in which it *is* them is that they are its powers. Consequently, Augustine recognizes the limitations of this trinitarian analogy.<sup>18</sup> For unlike the relationship between the three faculties of the mind and the mind itself, each of the three persons of God *is* God—just as God is each of the three persons. God does not *have* these persons. So even though in God the Father has a son and the Son has a father, and each of them has a spirit proceeding from Himself, nonetheless God does not have a father or a son or a proceeding spirit.

1.3. A further imprecision occurs when, in the main passage under discussion, Rist switches from stating that the will (according to Augustine) is "the human *psyche* in its role as a moral agent" to stating that it is "the individual himself."<sup>19</sup> The problem here is that the two expressions are not equivalent. In fact, it is not really clear what Rist intends by "the individual himself." Presumably, he does not mean what Augustine refers to by "*totus homo*" ("the whole man"), for the referent of that expression is one's human nature, which includes both body and soul. But, obviously, Augustine does not mean that the will is the individual himself qua both body and soul. So, possibly, Rist intends to indicate *that* reality which Augustine identifies as the self. But if so, then he should rather say that the will, for Augustine, is "the individual himself qua self." And he should allude to expressions such as the ones found in *Confessiones* 10.6.9: "*ego interior [homo]*" and "*ego animus*."<sup>20</sup> But when he does thus allude, he will display his error. For *voluntas* is not *ego animus*, because it is not at all *ego*, or self. Indeed, Augustine consistently considers the self to be that which is referred to by "*mens*," "*ratio*," "*intelligentia*," "*animus*," or "*homo interior*"—expressions sometimes used interchangeably by him to indicate the *imago dei* in man.<sup>21</sup>

1.4. Furthermore, Rist commits a *non sequitur* in conjunction with telling us that when Augustine describes those who are good as "men of good will," goodness of the "will" is the

indication of the goodness of the man (p. 220). In truth, the man is good by virtue of *having* a good will; but Rist infers, in Augustine's name, that the (good) will *is* the (good) man himself. In fact, however, men of good will (*bonae voluntatis*) are men whose *voluntates*—i.e., inclinations, or dispositions—are just. These inclinations are of the will, which itself is of the man, whom at times Augustine equates with man's highest faculty, viz., *mens*, or *animus*.<sup>22</sup>

2. *The cause of an evil will.* Rist proceeds to present us with another set of unclear statements:

Furthermore, it [i.e., *voluntas*] is the basic core of the human person. It makes no sense, Augustine argues against Evodius in the *De Libero Arbitrio*, to ask what is the cause of the will. Man is born with a *voluntas*, but since he is himself *voluntas* he cannot disclaim responsibility for his actions on the ground that he did not 'will' them. For Augustine, if a man does something, he 'wills' it (p. 220).

There are three problems associated with the foregoing passage.

2.1. We have already seen that, contrary to Rist's assertion, *voluntas* (for Augustine) *belongs to* the basic core of the human being, rather than itself by itself constituting the core of the human person. For it *belongs to animus*; and *animus* is *ego animus*, i.e., the *imago dei*, which is the basic core of a human being—if we wish to speak of the self as a "basic core."

2.2. Moreover, the foregoing passage does not set forth a proper context for the utterance "It makes no sense . . . to ask what is the cause of the will." *Prima facie*, this utterance, adapted by Rist from *De Libero Arbitrio* 3.17.49, conflicts with what Augustine writes in *Opus Imperfectum contra Iulianum* 2.105 (PL 45:1185): "Voluntas autem, antequam bonae libertati ad operandam veram iustitiam gratia Dei subveniente reddatur, multis aliis etiam causis, praeter originis vitium, movetur ad peccandum, vel non movetur; unde fit ut ipsi impii quibus vel nondum subvenit, vel nunquam subventura est gratia, quae iustificat impium, alii magis, alii minus peccent."<sup>23</sup> And

the utterance appears to conflict, as well, with common sense. So what is Augustine aiming to say?

From the context three things are clear about the passage in *De Libero Arbitrio*: first, Augustine does not use the expression "It makes no sense . . . ." That is, he does not disqualify as meaningless, nonsensical, or unintelligible the question about whether the will has a cause or what that cause might be. The words "It makes no sense" are Rist's, not Augustine's. Secondly, Augustine is attempting to escape from a suspected infinite regress; and, thirdly, he and Evodius are discussing the "first" cause of sinning (*prima causa peccandi*). Augustine expresses the fear not that the question or some alleged answer thereto would be meaningless but that once he names some extrinsic cause of his or another's actually willing to sin, Evodius will ask what the cause of that cause is—and then the cause of that cause, and so on. However, by locating the cause of sinning within the will itself, Augustine attempts to stop the chain of "because" answers with the answer (which is reached at some point) "Because I just wanted it" or "Because I just wanted to." So the ultimate reason (*prima causa*) that someone chooses evilly is because he wants to. And since this preference involves the choice of a lesser good over a higher and eternal good, no further explanation can be given. For such a choice, contends Augustine, is fundamentally irrational.<sup>24</sup>

However, in another sense, our sinful volitions do have causes. For before we reach the response "Because I just wanted to," we may point to various motives, incentives, and inducements that intervene. Adam ate of the forbidden tree because he was induced by Eve and because (in a certain respect) he willed to be like God. Yet, why he willed to be like God might have been "because he just did." When this end-point in the process of explanation is reached, Augustine ascribes to the will a *deficient*, not an *efficient*, cause.<sup>25</sup> Since the cause of willing evilly is not an efficient cause, Augustine speaks of the cause as being the will itself.

Rist conveys the misimpression that for Augustine it makes no sense to ask what is the cause of the *will*—the will which, on Rist's interpretation, a man himself is and with which that man himself is born. But, in reality, Augustine is talking about evil *volitions*, or evil acts of willing, and about their ultimate cause—which is not God but is the respective human will.

2.3. The third problem in the foregoing quotation has to do with the claim that “if a man does something, he ‘wills’ it.” By itself, without a proper context, this statement is imprecise. For during sleep many individuals cry out or toss-and-turn without really willing to; these are doings, even though they may not be the kind of doings that we are prepared to call actions. Similarly, when someone reactively withdraws his hand from a hot stove that he has touched by accident, he is doing something, though it seems unlikely that he willed to do it. Or a teacher, while lecturing, might be rubbing his fingers together without even realizing it—doing so because he is nervous. Finally, an individual might be doing something without willing *that* thing but willing another thing instead. He might, for example, be trampling on flowers while wanting to get away from a bee. So the utterance “if a man does something, he ‘wills’ it” may or may not be true in a specific context and under a specific description of *doing*. But in its generalized vagueness it cannot properly be called true. Putting the most charitable construal upon Rist's sentence, we may presume that he is speaking only of those doings that are actions, and only of those actions where what is being done is also what is being willed to be done. In this sense, then, it may be the case that (for Augustine) if a man does something, he ‘wills’ it” (p. 220).

If Rist does mean the foregoing, then it does not cohere with what he states subsequently: “Thus in Augustine's view all action is done willingly or unwillingly, and all unwilling action is done after a conscious struggle in which the individual is overborne by external pressure” (p. 221). Here Rist allows that for Augustine a man can do something unwillingly;

but on the previous page he assured us that according to Augustine if a man does something, he wills it. The conjunction of these two assertions cannot be an accurate exposition of Augustine's view, because Augustine maintains that no man ever does something unwillingly while simultaneously willing to do it. Having already considered imprecisions in Rist's interpretation that if a man does something, he wills it, let us focus for a moment upon Rist's interpretive claim that some actions are done unwillingly. For the most part, Augustine holds that our actions are done willingly; for if we were unwilling to do them, we would not do them.<sup>26</sup> (He applies a somewhat similar analysis to the will: if we will, then we will to will, since no one wills unwillingly.)<sup>27</sup> If there were some bodily motions that occurred without our willing them, then these motions would not be *actions*—certainly not *our* actions. This very point is made in *Confessiones* 7.3.5 (PL 32.735): “But what I did against my will I seemed to undergo rather than to do.” Augustine makes this point again in *De Spiritu et Littera* 31.53 (PL 44:234) when he remarks: “Ordinarily, no one is said to have acted by his own power if he did something against his will.” That is, if someone is forced to do something, what he does is usually not said to be in his power and is not called his action, because it does not occur by the willing exercise of his own power, or ability. Indeed, a man “is said to have in his power that which he does if he wills to and does not do if he does not will to.”

However, in speaking more precisely, Augustine introduces a distinction between range-of-choice and act-of-choice. Someone may be forced to choose between alternatives none of which are agreeable to him; in this respect, he is said to choose against his will, because against his will he is beset by these limited alternatives. Nonetheless, his actual choosing is not done against his will; nor is the corresponding action done against his will. On these points Augustine is quite clear. For the passage in *De Spiritu et Littera* 31.53 continues: “If we

consider the matter more precisely: even that which somebody is forced to do against his will, he does willingly, if he does it; but because he would prefer something else, he is said to do it against his will, i.e., unwillingly. Indeed, he is forced by something harmful to do that which he wants to avoid or to eliminate, and he does what he is forced to. For if his will is so strong that he prefers not to do the one thing rather than not to suffer the other thing, then without doubt he resists the pressuring force and does not do [that thing]. And, for this reason, if he does it, [he does it] not with a full and free will; but nevertheless he does it only willingly" (PL 44:234).

Similarly, in indicating that for Augustine an individual can be "overborne" by external pressure, Rist is again guilty of incoherent exposition. For he also reminds us that according to Augustine "it makes no sense . . . to say that a man is 'compelled to will' . . ." (p. 221). But if a man cannot rightly be said to be compelled to will, then how can he rightly be said to be "overborne" by external pressure so that he acts unwillingly? That is, how can he be pressured to act unwillingly if he cannot be pressured to will unwillingly? It would not do for Rist to say that "unwillingly" means *reluctantly*. For just as a man can be pressured to act reluctantly, so he can also be pressured to will reluctantly. Yet, when he wills and acts reluctantly, he nonetheless wills and acts willingly. Here is where Rist, in explicating Augustine's view, should introduce, but does not, the previously mentioned distinction between an act of choice and a range of choice.

3. *Free choice of the will.* So right at the outset of his exposition Rist accosts us with a farrago of imprecisions and incoherences about Augustine's views on *will*, *willing*, and *doing*. And our confusion deepens as he proceeds to explain to us Augustine's thoughts about free choice of the will (*liberum arbitrium voluntatis*)—which Augustine sometimes calls simply free will (*libera voluntas*).

3.1. "When Augustine," observes Rist, "says that fallen man

is free and has free choices, he means that he is free from virtue and [is] the slave of vice . . ." (p. 223). However, Rist's claim is not fully accurate. For although Augustine, following St. Paul,<sup>28</sup> does call fallen men servants of sin, nevertheless their being servants of sin is not part of what he principally *means* when he calls them free; nor are fallen men free exclusively or primarily or essentially insofar as they are *free from virtue*.

When fallen men will what is evil, they are free with respect to their being *able* to will *without constraint* what is willed by them.<sup>29</sup> Their freedom of will consists not in their servitude as such but in this ability which accords with their servitude. By comparison, the redeemed are said to be servants of justice, or righteousness (*iustitia*),<sup>30</sup> because they willingly submit their wills to God's commands; yet, their freedom does not consist in their servitude as such but rather (1) in their ability to will without constraint what is upright and (2) in their uncoerced delight in so willing.<sup>31</sup> It is anti-Augustinian to identify a man's freedom principally with his servitude rather than principally with his uncoerced willingness (inclination, consent, or choice) to serve. One has freedom of choice insofar as one has the power of choice (i.e., insofar as one's choice is in his own power); and one chooses freely whenever he exercises this power. Unredeemed fallen men, teaches Augustine, do not have the power to perform a morally and religiously perfect act (whether of willing or of doing), because even when they will to do that which is right, they are unable to will to do it both *because* it is right and *out of* love for God. Their motives are supposed by Augustine to be contaminated—with selfishness, pride, self-righteousness. These men do not will to obey, in holy servitude, God's commands. Indeed, they are unable so to will—unable apart from the motivating and converting influences of grace. Accordingly, Augustine is prone to view freedom of will, or of choice, as a *media vis*,<sup>32</sup> i.e., as a power intermediate between faith and unbelief—intermediate in the sense that it can be used for the one end or for the other.<sup>33</sup> Yet, it can be used unto the end of faith only



with the assistance of divine persuasion.<sup>34</sup> Accordingly, as Rist recognizes, unbelievers are free in that they are able to sin; they are not free, but servants, in that they are not able altogether to refrain from sinning. By contrast, the redeemed, whose wills are assisted by grace, have the ability to sin and the ability not to sin. Their freedom is therefore more excellent than the freedom of unbelievers. (In the next life the freedom of the redeemed will be even greater since they will have the perfection both of being able not to sin and of not being able to sin).<sup>35</sup> Though in this lifetime the redeemed very frequently sin, nevertheless they also repent, confess, and ask for forgiveness, thereby having righteousness restored to their wills. By thus confessing to God and petitioning for His mercy, they freely make themselves servants of righteousness.

So, for Augustine, the primary sense in which man's will is free has to do with a man's having the ability to will uncoercedly. Because Augustine believes that no one is compelled to will evilly, he believes that an evil will is free, even though it is not as free as is a good will. But in a secondary sense he occasionally calls an evil will free insofar as it is "free of righteousness."<sup>36</sup> That Augustine refers to a deprivation of righteousness in this manner may seem strange, given that being free is usually thought of as a perfection, whereas a deprivation is a sign of an imperfection. But we must remember that being free in this secondary sense is not considered by Augustine to be a perfection and that he draws the expression "*liber iustitiae*" from Romans 6:20.

In short, Rist—instead of alleging that by the expression "fallen man is free" Augustine means that fallen man is "free from virtue and [is] a slave of vice"—should say the following: by "fallen man is free" Augustine means that fallen man is able unconstrainedly to choose evil and that he delights in doing so; in addition, Augustine occasionally terms fallen man "free of righteousness," though this expression plays only a secondary role and plays no role at all in the quasi-definition of "fallen man's freedom."

3.2. Rist now goes from bad to worse. For having mistakenly tried to convince us that according to Augustine "fallen man is free" means that fallen man "is free from virtue and [is] the slave of vice," he switches suddenly to Augustine's alleged view that our wills and choices are free "in the sense that we alone are responsible for them" (p. 223). But does Augustine really claim that man's choices are free *in the sense that* he is responsible for them? For even if Augustine held that a choice is free if and only if the agent of that choice is responsible for it, it would not follow that "the choice's being free" means "the agent's being responsible." Rist is using philosophical terminology in an undisciplined and careless manner. This fact is further evidenced in the following statement of his: "The fear [regarding Augustine's understanding of human autonomy] would seem to be that once caught up in sin, as all of us are, we can only escape by being completely impassive and by being moulded willy-nilly in accordance with God's purposes. This would make us little more than living puppets." (p. 223). Here Rist worries that perhaps Augustine's view of freedom is such that fallen men can escape from sin only "by being completely impassive and by being moulded *willy-nilly* in accordance with God's purposes" (my emphasis). But this exegetical suggestion does not cohere with Rist's previous exposition. For previously he expounded Augustine as arguing that "it makes no sense to say that a man is 'compelled to will' . . ." (p. 221). But now he worries that, on Augustine's view, a man can be molded—even if he is unwilling to be—in accordance with God's purposes. But if Augustine holds that a man's will is not compelled, then in what sense can he likewise consistently hold that a man, who "is himself *voluntas*" (p. 220), can be molded even when unwilling to be? And how can this molding be so extensive that it makes men little more than living puppets,<sup>37</sup> in whom no vestige of Adam's free choice remains?<sup>38</sup> Either Rist's exposition of Augustine's theory is incoherent, or Augustine's theory itself is incoherent. But if the latter alternative is true, then Rist will have to retract his

own earlier boast of having been able to furnish us with a synthesis that harmonizes all of the relevant passages (on this topic) from Augustine's works (p. 220).

Obviously, Rist believes that the incoherence is Augustine's. In truth, however, it resides not in Augustine's account of freedom but only in Rist's interpretation. For Rist, partly because of his many imprecisions, insists throughout his article that Augustine's theory makes of fallen men puppets (or a kind of puppet or puppetlike, as he also says),<sup>39</sup> and he judges this puppetlike status to conflict with Augustine's claims that "whatever one wills one wills freely" and that "*cogit velle*" is "a contradiction in terms" (p. 235). Yet, Augustine himself never ascribes puppetlike status to fallen men. And Rist does not succeed in showing that certain of Augustine's other statements imply the proposition that not even a vestige of Adam's freedom remains in fallen men—an implication that flies in the face of Augustine's explicitly affirming that such a vestige does remain.<sup>40</sup>

3.3. Even when Rist seeks to elucidate Augustine's distinction between *free* and *freed*, he does so confusedly:

We have seen that, although our wills and choices are free, we still need freeing from sin. Although we are *liberi*, we are not *liberati*. And if we are *liberati*, that is, if we enjoy freedom, we are *servi Dei*. But just as 'free' must be understood as 'free from', as in 'free from sin', 'free from virtue', so 'freed' must be understood as 'freed by God'. Although, therefore, we are 'free' agents in the sense that we are responsible for our acts, we are unfree, until God intervenes, in that we are in bondage to sin. Hence, it is more accurate to say that *liber* in the phrases *libera voluntas*, *liberum arbitrium* means 'responsible', and it will often be translated that way in the remainder of this discussion (pp. 223f.).

Here the incoherence is glaring: "free" (*liber*) must be understood as *free from* (as when agents are free, they are free from sin); yet, it must be understood, and translated, as *responsible* (as when agents are free, they are responsible). But, indeed, *free* in the sense of free-from-sin is not the same as *free* in the sense of responsible. And Rist never explains how the two different senses are related to each other. Moreover, he takes "responsi-

ble" to have to do with being held responsible by God: "But if we are responsible beings, in the sense of beings held responsible for our acts by God . . ." (p. 224). But it seems both conceivable and more plausible that God might hold us responsible *because* we are free, rather than that His holding us responsible is what is *meant* by our being free. And, in fact, Augustine never makes the latter claim.

According to Augustine a man may become freed (*liberatus*) from the bondage of sin through repentance, confession, acceptance of divine grace, and conversion. Of course, he is freed by God—freed from bondage. So when Rist states that " 'freed' must be understood as 'freed by God'," he should add that it likewise must be understood as "freed from the binding power of sin," or "freed from sin."<sup>41</sup> And he should also add that in being thus *freed*, one is also *free*,<sup>42</sup> so that as applied to a redeemed man, *freed* and *free* are not competing notions. Finally, Rist's manner of explicating Augustine's concept of freedom is cryptic: "if we are *liberati*, that is, if we enjoy freedom . . ." Being freed, he seems to be saying, is possessing freedom (*libertas*). And freedom, he noted earlier, "is obedience to God, the choice and performance of good works under the guidance of God's grace" (p. 223).<sup>43</sup> But it makes no sense to call freedom *obedience* (and Augustine does not do so), even though the state of man's obedience to God might well coincide with the state of man's true freedom (as Augustine believes) and even though freedom was bestowed by God for the sake of obedience.<sup>44</sup>

4. *Adam's choice*. Still more incoherence arises in conjunction with Rist's exposition of Adam's choice. Rist starts out correctly by telling us, on Augustine's behalf, that before the Fall Adam was free, though in a quite different sense from the way in which fallen man is free (p. 222). Adam, Rist later rightly explains, was free from moral evil and was *able not to sin*, though he did not have the perfection of being *not able to sin* (p. 234). But in proceeding further, Rist falls into confusion. On the

one hand, he alludes to "Adam's original free choice" and raises the question of whether or not some vestige thereof remains for those of his descendants who are not among the elect (p. 234). But on the other hand, he unabashedly claims the following: "The alternatives facing Augustine were either indeterminacy (nonbeing) or God as the basic 'cause' of salvation. As he saw it, even Adam had no real choice; the elements of nothingness in his nature made his fall an inexplicable and (for him and all others who would fall similarly) irresistible phenomenon" (p. 243). Once again, we must conclude that either Rist's exposition of Augustine is incoherent or Augustine's position itself is inconsistent. And, once again, we can see that the problem is Rist's, not Augustine's. For Augustine nowhere and never regards Adam as being without a real choice or regards Adam's fall as involving irresistibility.<sup>45</sup>

4.1. Moreover, Rist errs in his exposition of Augustine's understanding of the relationship between Adam and Adam's descendants. Adam's seed, Rist writes, "is not merely the bearer of weakness and potentiality of sin; it is also the bearer of actual sin. All seed is Adam; hence all those who grow from seed are Adams, and thus guilty of the original sin of Adam" (p. 231). On this same page Rist states both that "we are in fact Adam" and that "in a sense we are Adam," as if he did not himself know exactly what view he meant to ascribe to Augustine. And, as usual, his interpretation is almost entirely wrongheaded. First of all, Augustine's considered view, as expressed in *Retractationes* 1.15.2 (PL 32:608), declares that sin is present only in a man's will (i.e., not in his flesh or in his seed).<sup>46</sup> Augustine does not withdraw this statement but examines certain problems about its interpretation. For example, since infants' wills are without personal sin<sup>47</sup> and since infants have original sin, it seems that original sin cannot reside in their wills. Augustine holds that the first sin was present in the will of Adam, who committed it; but the guilt and the penalty of Adam's sin is passed down to infants, so that their wills are sinful even though

Adam's sin is not present therein.<sup>48</sup> In general, Augustine maintains that even after the Fall Adam's semen itself is not sinful, though it may be *vitiatum*, i.e., marred,<sup>49</sup> if it is true that original sin is somehow *propagated* from Adam. Moreover, sin is also not present in concupiscence. For sin consists in consenting to concupiscence, not in feeling its motions.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, Augustine does not teach, à la Rist, that "all [human] seed is Adam" or that "all those who grow from seed are Adams" (p. 231).<sup>51</sup> Those who are propagated from Adam have an Adamic nature; they are of Adam but are not Adam. In accordance with Romans 5:12 ("Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned") Augustine is prepared to say that the human race sinned in Adam, so that when Adam fell, human nature fell. For the human race was present in the power of Adam's nature, as what comes from a seed is present in the potency of the seed. In this sense it is true that *in Adam* all of Adam's future descendants *were* Adam. But as they exist both personally and as Adam's offspring, they are neither Adam nor Adams.<sup>52</sup> Even Christ, whom Augustine, following Scripture,<sup>53</sup> calls the *second* Adam, is not the *first* Adam. And though Christ is the second Adam, there are no third, fourth, fifth, and more Adams.

4.2. In the present context Rist misconstrues Augustine's use of Scripture: "Augustine repeatedly misquotes St. Paul to the effect that we all sinned in Adam (*in quo omnes peccaverunt*), where the Greek text reads ἐφ' ᾧ (Rom. 5:12), but although this text supports Augustine's position it does not dictate it" (p. 230). Strangely, Rist fails to recognize that if the Greek text *supports* Augustine's position, in the sense that "*in quo*" is a proper translation of ἐφ' ᾧ, then Augustine cannot be *misquoting* the Greek text (in translation)—especially since no text *dictates* (i.e., necessitates) one and only one translation of itself. In fact, Augustine is quoting from a standard Latin translation of Romans 5:12. Rist might want to quarrel with this translation.

But then he should do so, instead of alleging that Augustine is misquoting.

4.3. Elsewhere Rist accuses Augustine of perversely interpreting Scripture: "Augustine's perverse reading of the text 'God wills all men to be saved' [I Tim. 2:4] is not limited to the *Encheiridion* [*sic*] and thus cannot be explained away as a slip. On the contrary, . . . it accords with some of his most deeply held views" (p. 238). But, in reality, it is Rist who is perversely interpreting Augustine as teaching, generally, that

salvation is independent of man's fallen will . . . . When God wills that a man be saved, the matter is settled. The man is saved; his evil will is turned to good . . . . If God wishes a man's salvation, salvation follows of necessity. The last phrase is particularly important as an emphasis on the puppet-like status of fallen man (p. 238).

All of the foregoing serves only to caricature Augustine's views. For Augustine does not maintain that, in general, salvation is *independent* of man's fallen will or that the matter of salvation can be settled apart from a man's doing anything or that fallen man is puppetlike. Surely for Augustine there is no sense in which salvation occurs independently of man's will except in the case of baptized infants, who do not yet have a rational will. Rist is wrong to generalize from the case of infants to the cases of those who have reached the age of accountability. In the cases of these non-infants there is no salvation independently of their wills. Nor are their wills converted to God by some quasi-mechanical or quasi-automatic process that renders them puppetlike. We will return to this theme later; but for now it is important to become alert to the tone that Rist's interpretation is setting.

Rist perversely interprets Augustine's discussion of I Timothy 2:4 ("Who [viz., God] will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"): "God, argues Augustine,<sup>54</sup> makes us (that is, those who preach his Gospel) wish all men to be saved. The only conclusion from this extraordinary passage is that the Christian preacher is made by God to be more merciful

than God himself" (p. 239). This judgment of Rist's upon Augustine is based upon misrepresentations of the text. For what Augustine says is that God commands us to will that *all to whom we preach* may be saved, that God works in our hearts to help bring about this loving will, and that God, in helping us to will this, may be said to cause this will in us, so that His willing all men to be saved is His causing us to will that all to whom we preach may be saved.<sup>55</sup> Obviously, there is a difference between what Augustine says (viz., that God causes preachers to will that all to whom they preach may be saved) and what Rist interprets Augustine as saying (viz., that God causes preachers to will that all men may be saved). Moreover, Rist neglects to mention that God the Holy Spirit is said to diffuse this love within the preacher's heart (Romans 5:5) and that God's "causing" preachers thus to will is not tantamount to his "implanting" in them this willingness, as if they were puppets. Finally, the reason the preachers can will as they do, indicates Augustine, is that (unlike God) they do not know which individuals are to be saved. Rist may be scandalized by the doctrine of predestination and election; but this doctrine, as Augustine holds it, provides no basis for drawing the blasphemous conclusion that God makes preachers of the gospel to be more merciful than is He Himself.

4.4. How highhandedly Rist deals with Augustine's system of thought is seen in the insouciance with which he asserts that Augustine is willing to abandon certain verses of Scripture: "Augustine has got himself into the difficulties about justice through an unwillingness to take scriptural texts about the desire for universal salvation seriously. Because he has been unable to relate these texts to a theory about the divine 'will', he is prepared to abandon the texts" (p. 241). This claim by Rist shows how bankrupt his understanding of Augustine's thought is. For Augustine regards Scripture as the authoritative and infallible word of God.<sup>56</sup> This view of Scripture leads him to take the following approach: ". . . I see that we must adhere to those

things that are most lucid in Scripture so that from them the unclear matters may be revealed. Or if the mind is not yet able to discern these matters if evident or to investigate them if abstruse, let them be believed without any reservation."<sup>57</sup> Elsewhere Augustine writes: "For the authority of the Divine Scriptures is evident. From this authority our minds ought not to veer; nor having cast aside the steadfastness of the divine wording, ought our minds to be cast downward, through the descending pathways of their own conjectures, to where neither the bodily senses guide nor the clear rationale of truth illuminates."<sup>58</sup> In his *Epistola* 82.2.5 (*PL* 33:278) Augustine accuses the Manichees of rejecting certain parts of Scripture, the whole of which he himself regards as "erected upon the supreme and celestial summit of [divine] authority" and which he will read as one who is "certain, and confident, of its truth." Augustine neither rejects nor suspends his belief in any portion of the canonical biblical texts.

5. *God's preparation of the will.* Rist raises the issue of God's preparation of the human will before the Fall. According to his interpretation of Augustine "Adam did not need to be 'prepared' to rely on God by God himself; he himself could take the initiative" (p. 230). Later Rist adds:

God could have created beings incapable of sin.<sup>59</sup> Even though all beings are *ex nihilo*, that does not entail their necessary sinfulness. However, it appears to be Augustine's view that the free choice given to Adam and to Satan is incompatible with the impossibility of sinning except in the case of God himself. All created beings which are endowed with the power of choice will be liable to sin, and therefore it is likely that some of them will sin in fact (p. 233).

5.1. Rist's first two sentences are accurate. However, the remainder of what he asserts is misguided. The third sentence does not even make sense: "... the free choice given to Adam and to Satan is incompatible with the impossibility of sinning except in the case of God himself." Perhaps what Rist, whose native language is English, aims to say is the following: except in

the case of God Himself, free choice—including that given to Satan and to Adam—is incompatible with the impossibility of sinning. But if that is what he means, then he is ascribing to Augustine a view that Augustine nowhere propounds—indeed, a view that runs counter to what Augustine does propound. For according to Augustine, Satan and Adam were created *posse peccare et posse non peccare*.<sup>60</sup> And God created them "not in order that they would sin but in order that they would be adornments to the universe whether they willed to sin or willed not to sin."<sup>61</sup> Both Satan and Adam were created with their wills inclined toward righteousness; and both were given the opportunity to merit, through the exercise of their free choice, a state-of-grace in which, while still being free, they would no longer be able to sin.<sup>62</sup> But both fell—not inevitably or by necessity but only through the free choice of their respective wills. The good angels, who retain free will, have already received the gift of being unable to sin; and the redeemed, including Adam, will receive it in the next life. Accordingly, in the case of both men and angels, the impossibility of sinning does not detract from freedom; in fact, it renders the freedom more excellent.<sup>63</sup>

5.2. In the paragraph in question Rist's last sentence is, in part, a *non sequitur* (viz., the sentence which states that because all created beings who are endowed with the power of choice are *liable* to sin, it is therefore *likely* that some of them will, in fact, sin). For Satan and Adam and all of the angels were *liable* to sin, without its having been antecedently *likely* that they *would* actually do what they *could* do. However, once Adam sinned, it became not merely likely but, rather, certain that his descendants also would sin, because of their inherited sinful nature. Accordingly, the likelihood that any given fallen man will sin does not result from the liability-to-sin that accompanies that man's freedom of choice; rather, it results from the presence of the liability in combination with the presence of original sin's guilt and penalty.

5.3. Furthermore, Rist's claim at the very outset of 5 above is

likewise untrue. For Augustine teaches that Adam's will did need to be prepared by God's grace and that only with the assistance of grace did Adam take initiative with respect to the good: Adam originally had grace "in which if he willed to remain he would never be evil and without which he could not be good even with free choice but which, nevertheless, he could abandon through free choice. Therefore, God did not will him to be without His grace, which He left in his free choice. For free choice is sufficient for evil but is not sufficient for the good unless it is aided by the Omnipotent Good."<sup>64</sup> Of course, the first man "did not need grace in order to receive the good, because he had not yet lost it. But he did need the aid of grace in order to remain in the good; without this aid he could not at all do it."<sup>65</sup>

5.4. Finally, Rist faults Augustine for not mentioning, and not availing himself of, the following alternative: viz., "that grace enables man to accept or reject faith."<sup>66</sup> But what Rist wants Augustine to adopt is a view that is theologically perverse (though unrecognized by Rist to be such). For it is perverse to suppose—as Augustine never would—that grace might enable a man to reject faith.<sup>67</sup> Rist does not really understand the Augustinian doctrine of grace. For otherwise he would not switch from speaking, correctly, of the *infusion* of grace (p. 225) to speaking, perversely, of the *pressure* of grace (p. 225).<sup>68</sup> And otherwise he would not have raised the following objection: "Augustine seems to have been worried that if he allowed anyone, even with God's help, to reach a state of achieved perfection in this life, the help [of grace] would become unnecessary" (p. 225). Once again, Rist's interpretation ascribes to Augustine a theological perversity. For how could Augustine be possessed of the alleged worry, when he holds the view (1) that even in Heaven redeemed men will require the aid of grace in order to abide in the state of *non posse peccare*<sup>69</sup> and (2) that even now the good angels, who are in this state, receive the continual assistance of grace.<sup>70</sup>

6. *Irresistible grace.* In discussing Augustine's view that *voluntas a deo preparatur*, Rist takes up the theme of irresistible grace:

Far more interesting and important philosophically is whether those who *are* offered the grace of baptism and the grace of perseverance are bound to accept them, whether in fact any vestige of Adam's original freedom is left to them, whether in the case of the 'elect' grace is irresistible and the individual has no choice but to be 'free' to act rightly in all matters of ultimate significance for his soul. In brief, does Augustine teach moral determinism for the elect? Is it in fact the case that at least as far as fatal sins are concerned *non posse peccare*, inability to sin, is *in practice* the rule even in this life, since on every occasion of sin God will present circumstances in such a way that the 'will' will certainly choose the correct course of action . . . ? Are the elect simply responding to the appropriate stimulus from God in the same inevitable fashion as iron is drawn to a magnet? (pp. 228f.)

Imprecisions attend the very way in which the foregoing questions are posed.

6.1. In one sense the grace of baptism may be said to be offered to those infants to whom it is available; presumably, Rist does not mean to question whether infants are obliged to accept it, since, being without the use of reason,<sup>71</sup> they can neither accept it nor reject it. In another sense, this grace may be said to be extended to the parents who choose baptism for their infant children. It would be strange to think of the parents as not being able (in some sense) to refuse it, at least for a time—even as Monica declined baptism for the infant Augustine, preferring, as she did, a later period. Rist will need to be clearer about the contexts and the meanings of expressions such as "bound to accept" before his question about the grace of baptism can be given a proper answer.

6.2. Likewise, when Rist asks whether for elect men "grace is irresistible and the individual has no choice but to be 'free' to act rightly in all matters of ultimate significance for his soul," his query is imprecise. He needs to make clear the sense of "has no choice but to be 'free' to act rightly . . . ." For, ordinarily, to say

that someone is free to act rightly is tantamount to saying that he has the choice to act rightly. However, as Rist uses the expression "has no choice but to . . .," he seems to mean not that the individual has only that choice but rather that the individual has no choice at all because his alleged "choice" has no real alternative. That is, Rist seems to suppose that someone who is more strongly motivated to choose one thing rather than another—and therefore does so choose—has no real choice in the matter. Rist assumes, gratuitously, that expressions such as "has no choice in the matter" are sufficiently clear, whereas, in truth, they cry out for philosophical analysis. He seems here to be misconceiving Augustine's position in the same way that he misconceived it when he wrote: "salvation is independent of man's fallen will; it is a matter of God's omnipotence" (p. 238).

6.3. We need to learn from Rist more about what "moral determinism" means. If the expression implies that the wills of elect men are drawn to the good "as iron is drawn to a magnet," then we may be sure that Augustine does not subscribe to moral determinism. Whatever a moral determinist is, Rist, without saying so categorically, seems to think of Augustine as being one.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps moral determinism is understood to be the view that "man is not even able to accept or reject whatever graces may or may not be offered to him. But he is still free" (p. 239). "If rejection were possible," notes Rist, then "acceptance would also be possible" (p. 234). But Augustine, he concludes, has no room for either possibility—whether for fallen men who are redeemed or for those who are unredeemed.

6.4. The puzzling over whether, for Augustine, "inability to sin" might, in practice, be "the rule even in this life" is gratuitous. For Augustine nowhere implies that the elect, while in this life, will be kept free from all mortal sins. Rather, he teaches that these sins will be forgiven before the deaths of these individual adults—forgiven because they will have been repented of and confessed. So it is difficult to see why Rist raises the question of whether Augustine teaches that for the elect in this life

"on every occasion of [fatal] sin God will present circumstances in such a way that the 'will' will certainly choose the correct course of action."<sup>73</sup> And it is even more difficult to comprehend how Rist could find this question "far more interesting and important philosophically" (p. 228). For not only does Augustine, together with the whole of Christian orthodoxy, clearly reject this doctrine of sinlessness but the doctrine also runs patently counter to human experience. Finally, Rist wrongfully associates this doctrine with Gilson (p. 229).

7. *More on the character of grace.* In pursuing his interpretation of Augustine's theory of grace and the question of whether grace is irresistible, Rist does not know what to make of Augustine's statement in *De Correptione et Gratia* 12.38 (PL 44:940): "Subventum est igitur infirmitati voluntatis humanae, ut divina gratia indeclinabiliter et insuperabiliter<sup>74</sup> ageretur." "According to this passage," says Rist,

Augustine may be arguing not that grace is irresistible or transforming, but that it is unswerving and all-conquering. The emphasis is not on grace's effects on the soul but on its nature. Perhaps Augustine does not mean that its dominion is absolutely guaranteed in every case, but that it is by nature sovereign; theoretically it cannot be overcome (p. 236).

7.1. "So the [previous] passage from *De Correptione et Gratia*," adds Rist, "may be taken to say either that grace transforms the will so that we will 'freely' (i.e. from ourselves) whatever God leads us to will, or that it merely enables the will to accept or reject an offer of salvation" (pp. 236f.). We have already seen, in Section 5.4 above, that for Augustine grace cannot properly be said to enable anyone to reject salvation; therefore, it also cannot rightly be said to enable anyone to accept-or-reject salvation (if that is what Rist means). Now, if we delete from Rist's conclusion the words "or reject" and "merely," we are left with a false dichotomy. It is false because *both* alternatives may correctly be asserted: viz., that grace transforms the will so that we will freely whatever God leads us to will and that grace enables the will to accept an offer of salva-

tion. For by the disputed passage Augustine means: "Therefore, the weakness of the human will was assisted, so that by divine grace [the willing] would be done resolutely and unconquerably." That is, the will was assisted by grace so that temptation could not conquer it. Here Augustine notes that grace enables the will to resist temptation; he says nothing about whether grace itself is irresistible or not.

7.2. Rist is confused, as well, about another point—one related this time not to the weakness of the human will but rather to the weakness of human nature: "Augustine [maintains] that the souls of all created beings, both men and angels, have an inherent weakness. This weakness is *superbia* [i.e., pride]" (p. 241). Here Rist makes two mistakes. First, he attributes souls to angels—whereas Augustine denies that angels have souls.<sup>75</sup> And, secondly, he speaks of pride as being an *inherent* weakness. Now, an inherent weakness is a weakness that belongs to the nature and a weakness with which the nature is created—just as an inherent perfection (such as the perfection of reason or of freedom) is one that belongs to the nature and is one with which the nature is created. But human nature was not created already having pride; nor does pride (a moral evil) belong to man's nature, since, in itself, everything that belongs to the nature is a good, according to Augustine. And pride is a fault that is *contrary* to human nature, indicates Augustine. For it is a desire for an unnatural elevation (*perversae celsitudinis appetitus*); as such, it arises in the *will*, subsequently to creation.<sup>76</sup>

7.3. Furthermore, Rist is not clear about the character of grace. Earlier<sup>77</sup> we witnessed his theologically unsound substitution of "pressure of grace" for "infusion of grace." And now, in Augustine's name, he presumably regards as a matter of God's grace God's arranging the circumstances of a redeemed man's life so as to motivate his will (p. 237). However, at the same time, he interprets Augustine as calling fallen man free "in the sense only of being arranged to act in a way which is not subject to external pressures" (p. 241). But is grace, then, supposed

by Rist to be *internal* pressure? And if so, how can God's arranging the *circumstances* of the elects' lives be attributable to grace? Rist will have to provide a more penetrating and more coherent account of grace if he is to do justice to the richness of Augustine's theory.

8. *More on the character of free choice.* Rist concludes that grace—as Augustine understands it to work in the lives of the elect so that they persevere—is irresistible, even though Augustine does not use the word "irresistible": the redeemed have no possibility of refusing this grace.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, Rist continues, "in the *De Correptione*, as in all others [*sic*] of Augustine's later works, man is not even able to accept or reject whatever graces may or may not be offered to him. But he is still free" (p. 239). Being free in this manner is considered by Rist to obtain at the sacrifice of human autonomy. For were the redeemed autonomous, as was Adam, they would share with Adam the possibility of rejecting God-given grace. But since this saving grace is irresistible, it cannot be refused. Accordingly, for Augustine, autonomy no longer exists,<sup>79</sup> laments Rist, and in this lifetime the redeemed are little more than puppets.

8.1. The immediately foregoing interpretation of Augustine by Rist amounts to a travesty of Augustine's teachings on grace and free will. To be sure, Augustine does teach that the gift of perseverance—accompanied, as it is, by God's predestination and calling—is efficacious,<sup>80</sup> so that those to whom it comes will not want to refuse it. And, to be sure, Augustine teaches that God so arranges the circumstances of the lives of the elect that they will turn in repentance, faith, and love to accept the gift of His mercy and grace. For in the words of Jesus: "all that the Father giveth to me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will not cast out."<sup>81</sup> Or as personalized by Augustine: "Unknowingly I was led by You to him [Ambrose] so that knowingly I might be led by him to You."<sup>82</sup> Augustine believed that God had so arranged the pathway of his life—e.g., through his Christian mother, Monica; his benefactor, Romanianus; his



encounter with Faustus the Manichee; his meeting of Ambrose—that his thoughts would become clarified, and his heart would become softened, to the point of his praying the prayer “Convert me, O God.”<sup>83</sup> Indeed, the elect are such that during their lifetimes they will not only accept salvation but will also, with divine assistance, stand steadfastly in faith.<sup>84</sup>

God’s salvific, inducing influence on the will Rist describes in a way totally foreign to Augustine’s theory. For Rist describes God as molding, or manipulating, a man’s will whether the man is willing thus to be molded or not.<sup>85</sup> But not only is the latter view not Augustine’s: it is not even coherent, as we saw earlier.<sup>86</sup> On Augustine’s theory, the will cannot be molded unless it consents to be. And if God, through grace, patiently and persistently and lovingly induces a man to willingly make himself “a servant of righteousness,”<sup>87</sup> then no violence is done either to the will or to the man. On the other hand, manipulation and puppetry are something different. For their names suggest that the influence on the will is like a man’s being hypnotized or drugged, so that his rational preferences are not operative; furthermore, use of those names raises the suspicion that any advantage that accrues as the outcome is more likely to accrue to the agent-who-manipulates than to the subject-who-is-manipulated. But when a man is induced to choose and to do that which coincides with his rational preference, as well as with his objective advantage, then he is not being manipulated, even if he is not at all reluctant not to refuse the offer. In a sense, he “cannot” refuse the offer as long as he prefers and wills to accept it; for he cannot both will to accept and will to refuse at the same time and in the same respect.

8.2. In thus conceiving of the distinctive freedom of the elect, Augustine conceives it as an ability to choose, in accordance with one’s preferences, that which conforms to God’s will for the elect. God assists an elect man in the exercise of this ability. He does so by influencing the man and his will in such way as to motivate the man’s asking for divine forgiveness and mercy.

At the same time, the man’s will is aided to will that which is good and to will it *because* it is good. And the intellect is assisted to overcome the noetic effect of sin, so that the man may discern that to choose the good because it is good is nonetheless advantageous to him. Thus, the choice accords with the man’s rational preference. Of course, since the elect are not perfect, they often lapse into sinning—and need to be restored to justice, or righteousness. In choosing sinfully, an elect man, at that moment, resembles an unredeemed man, whom Augustine calls free in a different sense.

The freedom of the unredeemed consists in an ability to will, in accordance with their preferences, that which God permits them to will. Sometimes they will that which is the morally right thing, though they do so (Augustine thinks) for reasons contaminated by self-aggrandizement and self-justification. At other times, they will that which is morally wrong. By nature even fallen men have power-to-will, and God permits them to will even the evil things that they prefer. Yet, He does not specially assist them in so willing. They are free because they are able to will as they are motivated to will. Although such an individual may have strong preferences, it does not follow that when he chooses in accordance with them, he is unfree. On the contrary, as long as the preferences are not so strong that they render inoperative his judgment, thereby robbing him of rational consent, that individual (according to Augustine) may rightly be said to be choosing freely in choosing in conformity with these preferences. Since Augustine teaches that anyone-who-wills wills to will, he denies that a man wills without consenting to. In making this denial, Augustine is thinking of deliberate willing—the kind that is referred to as deciding or choosing, where some judgment is involved.<sup>88</sup> Where no judgment is involved, human willing is a kind of desiring<sup>89</sup> and, as such, is similar to an animal’s volition, which is not free.

To put the matter in somewhat different words: Being free (as fallen man is) in the sense of being able to will in accordance

with one's preferences (no matter how one gets these preferences) is tantamount to being free insofar as one wills the thing he prefers and, therefore, prefers to will the thing that he wills. Preferring-to-will is not unlike consenting-to-will, or willing-to-will. Accordingly, Augustine, when discussing the virtue of continence,<sup>90</sup> concedes that concupiscence may beset a man against his will and without his being able to prevent it. But a man need not consent to—yield to—the lust that he experiences. For the truth of Scripture assures us that no temptation betakes a man except that which he is able to resist by not consenting to it.<sup>91</sup> But when the man does yield, he both consents to the temptation (by willing what it prompts) and consents to the willing (by willing to will). Though, on Augustine's view, it is impossible that a man deliberately will without willing to will, and impossible that the elect refuse saving grace, these impossibilities do not result from constraint upon the will. For when a man exercises his will, he does so willingly; and when he responds to the influences of saving grace, he likewise does so willingly. Augustine's problem is not that he ends up treating men as puppets but, rather, that in his exuberance to assign to fallen man a vestige of Adam's free choice, he does not know how to give a proper analysis of "constrained act of choice." For, like Anselm after him, he considers constraint to apply always to the range of choice, never to the act of choice.

8.3. With regard to divine election and the divine gift of perseverance, Augustine clearly teaches that God's grace is ever efficacious: those to whom it is offered will not want to refuse it. However, when not dealing with these topics, Augustine also makes clear that some grace is enabling and assisting without being efficacious. For with regard to the actions of the redeemed he writes: "before we are entangled in some habit, we have a free choice of doing something or of not doing it. But after we have done something by means of that freedom and after the pernicious sweetness and pleasure of the deed grips the soul, the soul is so entangled in its habit that, afterwards, it cannot overcome

what it fashioned for itself by sinning."<sup>92</sup> Augustine is well aware of the power of habits and of cravings, whether the problem be swearing<sup>93</sup> or winebibbery<sup>94</sup> or lusting after the gladiatorial spectacles, as did Alypius.<sup>95</sup> In his *Confessiones* Augustine calls his own past self a slave of sexual lust. And yet, he seems to regard such servitude as leaving room for some measure of freedom, since "he serves freely who performs the will of his master with pleasure. And on this account, a man who is a servant of sin is free to sin."<sup>96</sup> This way of looking at the matter leaves open the possibility that someone who does not take pleasure in his servitude is not free. Accordingly, Augustine has available to himself a strategy for analyzing addiction and compulsion—for analyzing the notion of "constrained act of choice" as being one effectively motivated by a very strong preference that one neither rationally consents to having nor, upon reflection, delights in having. But he does not avail himself of this strategy; nor does he recognize the need to give an account of compulsion. Instead, he goes the route of not calling cravings and habits *compulsions*<sup>97</sup>—for fear of contradicting Scripture, which regards no temptation as besetting the redeemed insuperably.<sup>98</sup> So, in the end, he maintains that our acting upon the urging of such a preference, or craving, is evidence of our having consented to what is being urged.

9. *Predestination*. Because Rist has imprecisely—and, at times, precisely but wrongly—interpreted Augustine's notions of will, freewill, and grace, he has no hope of satisfactorily explicating Augustine's theory of predestination as it bears upon these notions. As if having some premonition of this fact, Rist says little about predestination, and even less about foreknowledge. In fact, we may be glad that he does not discuss these issues at length. For although he does discerningly and accurately reproduce Augustine's definition of "predestination," he does not accurately grasp Augustine's theory. The definition comes from *De Dono Perseverantiae* 14.35 (PL 45:1014), where Augustine declares (in Rist's indirect quotation) that predestination is "a

foreknowledge and 'preparation' by God of those acts of kindness (*beneficia*) by which those who are saved are saved" (p. 226).<sup>99</sup> But, as we have seen, Rist understands this definition to imply that "salvation is independent of man's fallen will . . . . When God wills that a man be saved, the matter is settled. The man is saved; his evil will is turned to good" (p. 238).

In a similar way, Rist misunderstands Calvin's theory of predestination. "There are those," he observes, "who attribute to Augustine the full-blown Calvinist position that each man has no say in his ultimate destiny, since that destiny is predetermined before the creation of the world . . ." (p. 218). Though Rist himself does not endorse this attribution,<sup>100</sup> he shares in its incomprehension. For he accepts the characterization of Calvinism. Yet, no Calvinist, whether a full-blown one or a super-full-blown one, would ever claim that a man "has no say in his ultimate destiny . . . ." Accordingly, just as Rist misconstrues medieval theology (since much of it echoes Augustine, whom he misconstrues), so he also misrepresents Reformation theology (since much of it centers around the issues raised by Calvinism, which he misconceives).

*Summary and conclusion.* We have noted various incoherences and imprecisions in Rist's interpretation of Augustine's theory of will, free will, preparation-of-will, and predestination. Along the way, we have also observed various theological aberrations. Rist thinks that for Augustine *voluntas* is not a faculty of the mind but is the "moral personality" (p. 232) or "moral self" (p. 220) or "moral will" (p. 232) or the "basic core of the human person" (p. 220) or the "human *psyche* in its role as a moral agent" (p. 220). Somehow, a man not only has a *voluntas* (with which he is born) but is himself *voluntas* (p. 220). And although, for Augustine, a man's *voluntas* cannot be compelled (p. 221), man is nonetheless little more than an animated puppet who can be molded (in accordance with God's purposes) even when he is unwilling to be (pp. 223 & 241). "*Liber*" in the expressions "*liber voluntas*" and "*liberum arbi-*

*trium*" means "responsible" (p. 224). And angels, we are told, have souls (p. 241). Salvation is not only independent of man's fallen will (p. 238), but even Adam had no real choice, his fall having been irresistible (p. 243). Each human being is Adam (p. 231), and Adam's seed is the bearer of actual sin (p. 231). Adam's will needed no preparation in order to rely upon God (p. 230). Because all angelic beings had free choice, they were all *liable* to sin; therefore, it was *likely* that some of them would actually sin (p. 233). Both Satan's and Adam's God-given free choice was incompatible with the impossibility of sinning, because of a metaphysical weakness of their nature (p. 233). Indeed, pride belongs to man inherently, as a weakness of nature (p. 241). Augustine ought to allow that grace enables a man to *reject* faith, as well as to accept it (p. 240). Because Augustine has difficulty making certain verses of Scripture fit with his theory about the divine will, he is prepared to abandon these verses (p. 241).

Rist began his article by denouncing those interpreters who seek to expound Augustine's theory of free will while bracketing out any discussion of the theological context in which Augustine's philosophy of freedom is embedded. Rist led us to expect that his own keener look at Augustine's theology would properly elucidate the philosophy of freedom, thereby providing us with a decisive interpretive synthesis of this Augustinian set of issues—a synthesis that would replace all other such syntheses (p. 220). But instead of that definitive account, we found only a grotesquely distorted theological vision—one unrecognizable as Augustine's.

If this astonishing outcome is symptomatic of what to expect when historians of philosophy turn into would-be theologians, then dare we blame the theologians for praying their own prayer of freedom?: "*A talibus philosophis libera nos, Domine.*"

## **PRAENOTANDA**

1. References to the Bible are given in terms of the Douay version. (References to chapters and verses of the Psalms include, in parentheses, the King James' locations.)
2. Where, for purposes of clarification, words from a Latin text are inserted into an English translation therefrom, the following rule is employed: when the Latin term is repeated exactly as it appears in the Latin text, parentheses are used; when the case endings of nouns are transformed to the nominative, brackets are used.
3. American-style punctuation is used, except where clarity occasionally requires placing a comma or a period outside of quotation marks.
4. As a general rule, longer foreign-language expressions are not italicized.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- BN* Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel Barnes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956.
- CD* Aurelius Augustinus, *De Civitate Dei* (PL 41).
- DT* Aurelius Augustinus, *De Trinitate* (PL 42).
- HE* Rudolf Bultmann, *History and Eschatology*. New York: Harper Torchbook, 1962; first published in 1957.
- IH* R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1946.
- PL* *Patrologia Latina*. Edited by J.-P. Migne. Series published in Paris.
- S* F. S. Schmitt, editor. *Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia*. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: F. Frommann Verlag, 1968.

## NOTES TO RIST ON AUGUSTINE

1. John M. Rist, "Augustine on Free Will and Predestination," *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S. 20 (1969), 420-447. Reprinted in R. A. Markus, editor, *Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972), 218-252. I take all quotations from the Markus anthology.

2. "It is my contention," writes Rist, "that the synthesis I shall attempt to present, if correct, negates other syntheses, and that all Augustinian texts which are relevant to the subject matter are in harmony with it" (p. 220). The tone of the entire article attests that Rist does, indeed, regard his synthesis as correct.

3. *De Civitate Dei* 5.9.4 (PL 41:151). "*De Civitate Dei*" will hereafter be abbreviated as *CD*. "*PL*" indicates "*Patrologia Latina*," edited by J.-P. Migne. I refer to the Migne edition as a matter of standardized reference. I have

checked the Latin against the more reliable volumes in *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, where they exist.

4. Augustine, CD 5.9.4 (PL 41:151). Cf. Anselm, *De Veritate* 12: "Discipulus: Dicemus ergo iustum esse equum cum vult pascere, quia volens facit quod debet? Magister: Non dixi iustum esse illum qui facit volens quod debet; sed dixi non esse iustum qui non facit volens quod debet." *Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia*, edited by F. S. Schmitt (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann Verlag, 1968), Vol. I, p. 192. Where Latin quotations stand alone or where they are long, I do not italicize them.

5. Augustine, CD 5.9.4 (PL 41:151).

6. Augustine, CD 5.11 (PL 41:154).

7. "Ego per omnia illa tria memini, ego intelligo, ego diligo, qui nec memoria sum, nec intelligentia, nec dilectio, sed haec habeo. Ista ergo dici possunt ab una persona, quae habet haec tria, non ipsa est haec tria." *De Trinitate* 15.22.42 (PL 42:1090, with a correction by me). "*De Trinitate*" will hereafter be abbreviated as *DT*.

*Memoria*, for Augustine, includes what we would call the imagination. See *Confessiones* 10.8.14 (PL 32:785).

8. *DT* 4.21.30 (PL 42:909-910).

9. *Confessiones* 10.7.11 and 10.17.26 (PL 32:784 and 790).

10. *De Spiritu et Littera* 2.4 (PL 44:202).

11. *DT* 10.11.17 (PL 42:982).

12. E.g., *De Libero Arbitrio* 2.19.53 (PL 32:1269): *Voluntas . . . peccat; voluntas vult*.

13. *De Genesi ad Litteram* 10.14.24 (PL 34:418).

14. *De Libero Arbitrio* 1.14.30 (PL 32:1237). Similarly, of the faculty of reason Augustine writes: "*ratio aestimat*" [*De Libero Arbitrio* 3.5.17 (PL 32:1279)]; but since this faculty is some man's, he also elsewhere ascribes *aestimare* to the man [e.g., *Confessiones* 10.5.7 (PL 32:782)].

15. Vernon J. Bourke, editor. *The Essential Augustine* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1974), p. 68.

16. Bourke, *The Essential Augustine*, p. 77. Bourke uses Arthur Had-den's translation of *DT* 10.11.18, as found in Marcus Dods' *The Works of Aurelius Augustinus*.

17. According to Augustine the mind is the rational "part" of the soul. [See *DT* 15.7.11 (PL 42:1065).] Because memory, understanding, and will belong to the mind, they also belong to the soul.

18. See the end of *DT* 15.22.42 (PL 42:1090) and the end of *DT* 5.7.11 (PL 42:1065). Cf. *Epistola* 169.2.6 (PL 33:745): "In the first place, then, this likeness [between the human mind and God] is found to be dissimilar in the following respect: [viz.,] that these three—memory, understanding, will—are

present in the soul; they are not the soul. But that [divine] trinity is not present [in God] but *is* God. Concerning God, the marvelous simplicity is commended because in God it is not the case that being is one thing and understanding (or whatever else might be said of His nature) another thing. But because the soul continues to exist even [at those moments] when it does not understand, its being is other than its understanding."

19. Rist, p. 220.

20. "I, the inner man"; "I, the mind." See *PL* 32:783. Cf. *Confessiones* 10.7.11: "*unus ego animus*" (PL 32:784). Note also *De Vera Religione* 46.89 (PL 34:162): "*Corpora vero non sunt quod nos sumus*."

21. Augustine uses "*intellectus*" and "*intelligentia*" at times to indicate a faculty of the mind and at times to indicate the self. In the latter case, "*intellectus*" and "*intelligentia*" are interchangeable with "*animus*" and "*ratio*". (Augustine sometimes distinguishes *ratio* from *intellectus* [as in *Sermo* 43.2.3 (PL 38:255)] and sometimes does not.) "*Voluntas*" is not thus interchangeable.

On the image of God in man, see *DT* 12.7.10 (PL 42:1003). *DT* 15.7.11 (PL 42:1065).

22. Two additional points are worth mentioning: (1) When Augustine defines "*voluntas*" as "*animi motus, cogente nullo, ad aliquid vel non amittendum vel adipiscendum*" [*Retractationes* 1.15.3 (PL 32:609)], "*voluntas*" refers to an act of willing. Augustine also alludes to our *affectiones* (emotions, feelings) as movements of our minds, or souls (*motus animorum*) [*In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus* 46.8 (PL 35:1732)]. (2) In *De Concordia* III, 11 Anselm, true to the spirit of Augustine, distinguishes explicitly between the will as *instrument* (*instrumentum volendi*), the inclinations of this instrument (*affectio instrumenti*), and the use of the instrument (*usus instrumenti*). These distinctions capture the differences between the faculty of will, the inclinations of that faculty, and the faculty's volitions. Augustine has the same distinctions, though less visibly. For example, he mentions *use* in *De Libero Arbitrio* 2.19.51 (PL 32:1268), where he writes: "Do not be amazed, then, that if we use other things by means of free will, we can also use free will itself by means of itself . . . ." Moreover, in 3.17.48 (PL 32:1295) he maintains that "*cupiditas . . . improba voluntas est*," thereby exhibiting his affinity with Anselm, who stated that "*et concupiscentia et desiderium voluntas est*" (*De Casu Diaboli* 7). In the same vein, Augustine intimates that a good will is nothing other than love [*De Gratia Christi* 21.22 (PL 44:371)]. Similarly, he uses the expression "*voluntate diligimus*" [*DT* 14.3.5 (PL 42:1039)].

Other places where Augustine mentions *using* the will or its choice are *Retractationes* 1.15.2 (PL 32:608) and 1.13.5 (PL 32:604); *Enchiridion* 9.30 (PL 40:246); *Disputatio contra Fortunatum* 25 (PL 42:127); *De Spiritu et Littera* 33.58 (PL 44:238).

23. "But the will—before being restored, by God's assisting grace, to good freedom in order to will true justice—is moved or not moved toward sinning by many other causes besides the fault-of-origin. Hence, it happens that of the wicked—who either have not yet been assisted, or who will never be assisted, by the grace that justifies the wicked—some sin more and others sin less" (PL 45:1185). Rist does not mention this passage.

24. See *De Libero Arbitrio* 2.19.53 through 2.20.54 (PL 32:1269-1270) as well as 3.1.1 (PL 32:1269-1271). According to Augustine "the will that has been turned away from the unchangeable and common good and turned toward its own individual good or [turned] outwardly or downwardly, sins. It is turned toward its own individual [good] when it wills to be in its own power, turned outwardly when it seeks to know others' affairs and whatever does not concern it, turned downwardly when it loves bodily pleasure" [*De Libero Arbitrio* 2.19.53 (PL 32:1269)]. Augustine later adds: "Therefore, since that movement of turning away [from the good]—something which we admit to be a sin—is a defective movement and since every defect is *ex nihilo*, see whereto it pertains, and do not doubt that it does not pertain to God" [*De Libero Arbitrio* 2.20.54 (PL 32:1270)].

25. Augustine, CD 12.6; 12.7; 12.9.1 (PL 41:353-356). See n. 24 above.

26. See n. 29 below.

27. *De Libero Arbitrio* 2.14.37 (PL 32:1261). See also n. 29 below. Cf. Anselm of Canterbury, *De Libertate Arbitrii* 5.

28. Romans 6:16-18.

29. "For if we are to label as our necessity that which is not in our power but which causes what it can even if we are unwilling (e.g., the necessity of death), then it is evident that our willings, by which we live rightly or wrongly, are not under such a necessity. For we do many things which, if we were unwilling, we surely would not do. To these things belongs foremostly *willing*. For if we will, there is willing; if we do not will, there is no willing. For we would not will if we were unwilling to." Augustine, CD 5.10.1 (PL 41:152).

30. Romans 6:18. The English translations of Scripture are taken from the Douay version unless indicated otherwise.

31. "He serves freely who performs the will of his master with pleasure. And on this account a man who is a servant of sin is free to sin. Hence, he will be free to do what is upright only if, after having been freed from sin, he becomes a servant of righteousness. This latter [servitude] is both true freedom, because of the delight in the upright deed, and holy servitude, because of obedience to [God's] command." *Enchiridion* 9.30 (PL 40:247). See n. 96 below.

32. The expression "*media vis*" is not rightly understood, or translated,

as "neutral power" or "indifferent power."

33. *De Spiritu et Littera* 33.58 (PL 44:238).

34. *De Spiritu et Littera* 34.60 (PL 44:240): "His ergo modis quando Deus agit cum anima rationali ut ei credat (neque enim credere potest quodlibet libero arbitrio, si nulla sit suasio vel vocatio cui credat), profecto et ipsum velle credere Deus operatur in homine, et in omnibus misericordia ejus praevenit nos; consentire autem vocationi Dei vel ab ea dissentire, sicut dixi, propriae voluntatis est" (punctuation emended by me).

35. Augustine, CD 22.30.3 (PL 41:802).

36. *De Correptione et Gratia* 13.42 (PL 44:942). *Opus Imperfectum contra Julianum* 1.107 (PL 45:1121) and 1.109 (PL 45:1122).

37. On pp. 229, 232, 235, 238, and 242 Rist repeats the worry that Augustine's view of freedom makes of us but puppets. And on p. 241 he blurts right out that for Augustine "man is a puppet, free in the sense only of being arranged to act in a way which is not subject to external pressures."

38. Rist, p. 238.

39. See n. 37 above. At times Rist, as if glimpsing the incoherence of his own exposition, seems to want to push any and all incoherence off onto Augustine. But the fact remains that Rist crudely misunderstands Augustine and interpretively imposes incoherence onto his theory.

40. *Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum* 1.2.5 (PL 44:552).

41. Augustine, CD 13.3 (PL 41:379). *Enchiridion* 9.30 (PL 40:247).

42. "Si vos Filius liberaverit, . . . tunc vere liberi eritis." John 8:36. Augustine, *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* 2.3.8 (PL 44:440).

43. Rist should point out that, in the case of Adam, Augustine also speaks of "*anima libertate in perversum propria delectata . . .*" ("the soul, perversely delighting in its freedom . . .") [CD 1.13 (PL 41:386)]. So Augustine has more than one sense of "freedom" (for he alludes to both freedom from bondage and freedom to sin), just as he has more than one sense of "free".

44. "Qui facit igitur oves homines [Ps. 94:6-7], ipse ad obedientiam pietatis humanas liberat voluntates." *Contra Duas Epistolas Pelagianorum* 4.6.15 (PL 44:620).

45. ". . . sed ex originali peccato, quod commissum est libero arbitrio." *De Natura et Gratia* 3.3 (PL 44:249). See also *De Correptione et Gratia* 10.28 (PL 44:933).

46. See also *De Duabus Animabus* 10.12 (PL 42:103): ". . . nusquam scilicet nisi in voluntate esse peccatum . . ." (a misprint corrected by me).

47. *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* 1.17.22 (PL 44:121); 1.35.65 (PL 44:147); 3.4.7 (PL 44:189).

48. Cf. Anselm, *De Conceptu Virginali* 23.



49. However, the *nature* of the human seed has God as its author and so is not marred. *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* 2.8.20 (PL 44:447).

50. "Perfectio quippe boni est, ut nec ipsa concupiscentia peccati sit in homine, cui quidem quando bene vivitur, non consentit voluntas . . ." *Retractiones* 1.15.2 (PL 32:608f.). Note also *Retractiones* 1.13.5: "Et illud quod in parvulis dicitur originale peccatum, cum adhuc non utantur arbitrio voluntatis, non absurde vocatur etiam voluntarium, quia ex prima hominis mala voluntate contractum, factum est quodammodo haereditarium. Non itaque falsum est quod dixi, *Usque adeo peccatum voluntarium malum est, ut nullo modo sit peccatum, si non sit voluntarium*" (PL 32:604). See also *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* 2.28.48 (PL 44:464): "Cito respondeo, Ex voluntate peccatum est. Quaerit forte, utrum et originale peccatum. Respondeo, Prorsus et originale peccatum: quia et hoc ex voluntate primi hominis seminatum est, ut et in illo esset, et in omnes transiret."

51. On p. 230 Rist states: "All men, Augustine argues, are identical with Adam." After making this unqualified statement, he qualifies it somewhat. But then he writes: "In *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia* [II.15] we read that through Adam's sin all men are sinners, since all are that one man; and in the *City of God* [13.14] the same argument occurs." However, in neither of these two works does Augustine mean what Rist imputes to him. Augustine's point is decidedly not that *all men are identical with Adam*. Instead, he is saying that *in Adam all are Adam*, insofar as they exist in the potency of his seminal nature. It is simply not the same thing to say "As an effect exists in the power of its cause it is the cause" and to say "An effect is identical with its cause."

52. Augustine, *CD* 13.14 (PL 41:386).

53. I Corinthians 15:45-47. Augustine, *De Dono Perseverantiae* 7.14 (PL 45:1001). *Opus Imperfectum contra Julianum* 6.22 (PL 45:1553). *De Correptione et Gratia* 7.12 (PL 44:923).

54. Rist (p. 239) mentions *De Correptione et Gratia* 15.47 (PL 44:945), which he deems to be Augustine's "most pathetic passage on this subject."

55. In another context Augustine does quote *Ezechiel* 36:27 (" . . . I will cause you to walk in my commandments and to keep my judgments and do them") and *Philippians* 2:13 ("For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish . . ."). And he says: "It is certain that we will, when we do will; but He causes that we will the good . . . It is certain that we act, when we do act; but He causes that we act, by furnishing to the will most efficacious powers . . ." *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* 16.32 (PL 44:900f.). However, God "causes" us to will and to act, explains Augustine, by giving us an obedient heart—i.e., a heart able and motivated to choose and do what is good.

56. *Contra Cresconium* 1.33.39 (PL 43:466): " . . . quoniam sancta Scriptura fallere non potest . . ." *De Unitate Ecclesiae* 13.33 (PL 43:416).

Note also *CD* 11.3 (PL 41:318). *Matthew* 24:35, quoted at *Confessiones* 13.15.18 (PL 32:852).

57. *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* 3.4.7 (PL 44:189).

58. Augustine, *DT* 3.11.22 (PL 42:882).

59. *De Continentia* 6.16 (PL 40:359).

60. Augustine, *CD* 12.9.1 (PL 41:356) and 22.30.3 (PL 41:802). *De Correptione et Gratia* 12.33 (PL 44:936). See n. 59 above.

61. *De Libero Arbitrio* 3.11.32 (PL 32:1287).

62. "God by nature cannot sin; but a participant in God receives from God the ability not to sin." Augustine, *CD* 22.30.3 (PL 41:802).

63. Augustine, *CD* 22.30.3 (PL 41:802), regarding the redeemed, in the next life: "Nec ideo liberum arbitrium non habebunt, quia peccata eos delectare non poterunt. Magis quippe erit liberum, a delectatione peccandi usque ad delectationem non peccandi indeclinabilem liberatum." See also *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* 15.30 (PL 44:982), with reference to what is said about Christ.

64. *De Correptione et Gratia* 11.31 (PL 44:935). See also *Enchiridion* 28.106 (PL 40:281-282).

65. *De Correptione et Gratia* 11.32 (PL 44:936).

66. Rist, p. 240. Cf. p. 237, line 2.

67. "Ad peccandum namque non adjuvamus a Deo: justa autem agere vel iustitiae praeceptum omni ex parte implere non possumus nisi adjuvemur a Deo." *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* 2.5.5 (PL 44:153). See Section 6.3 in the text of this present chapter. N.B.: That Adam had the ability to sin was due not to grace but to nature.

68. The expression "*vis gratiae*" [*Sermo* 32.8.8 (PL 38:199)] should be translated as "the power of grace," not as "the pressure of grace." Here is an instance of how theological understanding enters into the process of translating and of how a given translation bears upon the representation or the misrepresentation of a Latin text.

69. See n. 70 below. Of the future freedom of the elect Augustine writes: "The first free choice which was given to man when he was first created upright was able not to sin but was able also to sin. But this last [free choice] will be more potent than the first, because it will not be able to sin. But this [inability will come] also by the gift of God, not from the capability of human nature." *CD* 22.30.3 (PL 41:802).

70. *De Genesi ad Litteram* 8.25.47 (PL 34:391). Cf. *De Correptione et Gratia* 10.27 (PL 44:933): "But although the Devil and his angels were happy before they fell and did not know that they would fall into unhappiness, nevertheless something would still have been added to their happiness if by free choice they had stood steadfast in the truth until they received this fullness of

supreme happiness as a reward for their remaining steadfast—i.e., [until they received] by means of the great abundance-of-a-love-for-God, given by the Holy Spirit, the inability thereafter at all to fall and the most assured knowledge of this fact about themselves.” Redeemed men, who are to be equal to the good angels, will also be given this assisting love. Moreover, the good angels received an increment of grace in order not to fall: “. . . either [the angels who fell] received a lesser grace of love-for-God than did those angels who persisted in the same [willing], or if both groups were created equally good, then the one group, being aided more than the group that fell because of an evil willing, arrived at the fullness of happiness in accordance with which they were made most certain that they would never fall.” *CD* 12.9.2 (*PL* 41:357).

On p. 233 Rist shows his awareness of Augustine’s doctrine that the good angels might fall if not continually supported by grace.

71. *Contra Julianum* 2.4.8 (*PL* 44:679).

72. Although Rist regards Gilson as implicitly attributing to Augustine the doctrine of moral determinism (Rist, pp. 229 and 235), he himself gives every impression of endorsing Gilson’s alleged interpretation.

73. Augustine writes in *Contra Julianum* 6.19.60 (*PL* 44:859): “But the concupiscence of the flesh is something such that it remains in a man who struggles with it by means of continence, even though its guilt [i.e., the guilt of original sin], which was contracted in generation, is now put to an end in regeneration.” Cf. *De Continentia* 11.25 (*PL* 40:366): “For these lusts of the flesh Christ heals in those who are His own [i.e., in Christians] without loving the lusts in any of His own. Hence, as long as the Holy Church has such members, it is not yet without blemish and wrinkle. Hereto are added also those sins for which the daily plea of the entire Church is ‘Forgive us our debts’ . . . .”

74. Here for “*inseparabiliter*” I am reading with Rist “*insuperabiliter*,” with the better mss.

75. Augustine sometimes calls angels “souls”; but he nowhere claims that they have souls. In *Retractationes* 1.11.4 (*PL* 32:602) he withdraws the appellation “souls” on the ground that Scripture nowhere thus designates angels.

76. Augustine, *CD* 14.13.1 (*PL* 41:420).

77. See n. 68 above, as well as the place marked by it in the text.

78. Rist, pp. 236 and 243.

79. Rist, p. 243.

80. According to Augustine saving grace is a special grace that is efficacious. But not all grace to the elect is saving, or justifying grace. Some of it is enabling grace. See *De Correctione et Gratia* 12.34 (*PL* 44:936-937).

81. John 6:37.

82. *Confessiones* 5.13.23 (*PL* 32:717).

83. *Psalms* 84:5 (85:4). *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 84.6 (*PL* 37:1072).

84. The elect will not apostatize, though they may backslide. John 6:37. John 10:28. In *Joannis Evangelium* 25.14-15 (*PL* 35:1603) and 48.7 (*PL* 35:1744).

85. See Section 2.3 in the text above. According to Rist, Augustine must be understood to mean that the man who “accepts” salvation has not genuinely accepted, because he had no option not to accept. But Augustine would never say such a thing. According to Augustine a man accepts salvation because he wants to. Moreover, God both enables and induces this wanting to, by assisting and preparing the man’s will. The fact that the motivation is effective does not mean that the man has no option: it means, rather, that he has no option that he prefers to the option of acceptance. Augustine refuses to view God’s motivating, inducing, and persuading as tantamount to His forcing the will, or overpowering the will. Similarly, he refuses to consider as constraint one man’s being induced by another to choose something evil. Constraint, for Augustine, applies only to the range of choice, never to the act of choice. Someone may be beset by a forced-option situation in which he must either tell a lie or be killed. If he prefers not to be killed, he will tell the lie. If he prefers to tell the truth, he will let himself be killed. His having to make such a choice is constrained. But his actual choosing in accordance with his preference is not. See *De Spiritu et Littera* 31.53 (*PL* 44:234) and Section 2.3 above. Cf. Anselm, *De Libertate Arbitrii* 5.

More generally, Augustine holds that by nature all human beings will to be happy and cannot will to be unhappy. But he insists that the presence of such an inclination is not properly thought of as constraining our choices (*De Natura et Gratia* 46.54 (*PL* 44:273)). Similarly, when God strongly motivates a man’s will to choose uprightly, the fact that the will does not choose other than uprightly is due to its not being strongly motivated to do so. But this fact about the motivation does not mean that the man has no option. For otherwise, a man could not correctly be stated to have an option at any time during which he was effectively motivated toward one end rather than another.

In any event, in Augustine’s language, whenever (other than at the original creation of Adam) God is said to incline a man’s will toward justice, He inclines it only in the sense that He motivates the man to will justly. This motivation does no more violence to the will than does the natural motivation for willing happiness. And in neither case does the motivation render the will unfree.

86. Section 2.3 in the text above.

87. Romans 6:18.

88. Because judgment plays a role in deciding, Augustine can meaning-

fully use the expression "*Si . . . ratio consentiat . . .*" [*De Genesi contra Manichaeos* 2.14.21 (PL 34:207)] as well as indicate that the *will* consents [*Retractiones* 1.15.2 (PL 32:609)] and that the *man* consents [*Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 21.9 (PL 42:394)]. In *De Spiritu et Littera* 34.60 (PL 44:240) Augustine states his usual view: ". . . sed consentire vel dissentire propriae voluntatis est."

89. Augustine, *DT* 11.2.5 (PL 42:988).

90. *De Continentia* 8.20 (PL 40:362).

91. I Corinthians 10:13.

92. *Disputatio contra Fortunatum* 22 (PL 42:124). This chapter is referred to by Rist (p. 222, n. 10).

93. See n. 92 above.

94. *Confessiones* 9.8.18 (PL 32:771-772).

95. *Confessiones* 6.7.11 (PL 32:724-725).

96. *Enchiridion* 9.30 (PL 40:247). The "servant of sin" is free, in a primary sense, insofar as he is *free to sin* (i.e., is unconstrainedly able to sin); he sins freely insofar as he sins willingly (i.e., with consent). He is free in a secondary sense insofar as he is *free from justice*. But this secondary sense of freedom is simply the reverse side of his sinful servitude (i.e., of his not being able altogether to refrain from sinning). Similarly, the "servant of justice" is free, in a primary sense, insofar as he is *free to will and act uprightly* (i.e., is unconstrainedly able to will and act uprightly); he freely wills and acts uprightly insofar as his upright willing and acting are done willingly (i.e., with consent). He is free in a secondary sense insofar as he is *free from sin*. But this secondary sense of freedom is simply the reverse side of his holy servitude (which in the future life will be such that he is not at all able not to refrain from sinning).

In this present lifetime the redeemed, being not fully sanctified, are not fully servants of justice, or righteousness. See the discussion in Section 3.1 above. Regarding servitude to God cf. Romans 1:1 with Exodus 21:5-6. Note *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* 15.31 (PL 44:899): "Semper est autem in nobis voluntas libera, sed non semper est bona. Aut enim a iustitia libera est, quando servit peccato, et tunc est mala: aut a peccato libera est, quando servit iustitiae, et tunc est bona."

97. See Chap. 1 of the present book. In many respects Augustine could have gone a route similar to that of Harry Frankfurt, the author of (1) "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person," *Journal of Philosophy*, 68 (January 14, 1971), 5-20, and (2) "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility," *Journal of Philosophy*, 66 (December 4, 1969), 819-829.

98. See the beginning of Section 7 and the whole of 7.1 in the text of the present chapter. See also I Corinthians 10:13.

99. Cf. *De Dono Perseverantiae* 17.41 (PL 45:1018): "Ista igitur sua dona quibuscumque Deus donat, procul dubio se donaturum esse praescivit, et in sua praescientia praeparavit."

100. Rist appears to see the following point: Augustine says that God predestines men to damnation but maintains that God does so only in the reduced sense of not predestining them to salvation, thereby permitting them to rush headlong toward damnation. Cf. Rist, pp. 227 and 228.