

**Grace Episcopal Church, Georgetown**  
**Adult Forum; December '09 through January '10**  
*"The Restless Human Heart: Augustine of Hippo"*

Augustine

354-430 A.D. (C.E.); born in Hippo (present-day Algeria) and Bishop of Hippo, 395-430; author of *Confessions*; *On the Trinity*; *City of God*; many other works. Key early influences:

- Monica, his mother;
- his nameless companion of 15 years, the mother of his son –
- Adeodatus;
- Ambrose of Milan, who baptized him
- Manicheans and neo-Platonists

The human person

Word(s) and love(s):

**"Who am I?"**

THE SOUL'S WEIGHT: LOVES AND DELIGHTS

- "A body finds its own place by entrusting itself to its own weight, which carries it not to the place that is lowest but to the place that is its own. A flame rises and a stone falls. They are moved by their weights and seek their own proper places...My weight is my love. By love I am drawn to wherever I am drawn."  
*Confessions 13.*
- "Every love has its own force; and it cannot lie idle in the soul of the lover. Love must draw the soul on. Do you, then, wish to know the character of a love? See where it leads."  
*Expositions on the Psalms, 121.1*
- "Delight is, as it were, the weight of the soul. For delight orders the soul...where the soul's delight is, there is its treasure. Where the heart is, there is either blessedness or misery."  
*On Music, 6.11.29*

WORDS, LOVES AND HABITS

- "We do nothing through the members of our body, whether in our deeds or words, to approve or to disapprove of human conduct, which we do not anticipate with a word uttered within us. No one, then, willingly does anything which one has not first spoken in one's heart."  
*On the Trinity, 9.7.12*
- "So great is the force of love that, once the mind has long thought of things with love and has cleaved to them, held fast by its care, the mind drags those things with it even when it

somehow returns to think of itself."

*On the Trinity, 10.5.7*

- "The mind, moreover, loses its way, when to those images (*of what it loves*) it conjoins itself with such love that it considers even itself to be something of the same sort. And so it is somehow conformed to them, not by being this but by supposing it."

*On the Trinity, 10.6.8*

- "For today in our actions, before we are tangled in any habit, we have a will free to do something or not to do it. But when we have exercised that freedom and done something, and the pernicious sweetness and pleasure of that deed have seized the mind, the mind is so entangled by its own habit that it cannot afterwards overcome what it fashioned for itself by its own sinning."

*Argument against Fortunatus, 22*

PERSON (WHO I AM, THE SELF I CREATE) AND NATURE (WHAT I AM, WHAT GOD CREATED ME TO BE)

- "When a human being lives unto itself...it surely lives out a lie. This does not mean that human being is itself a lie; for its author and creator is God, who is certainly not the author and creator of a lie. Rather, human being has been made upright so that it might live not unto itself but in accordance with its maker...Not to live in this way, as one was made to live, this is a lie..."

*The City of God, 14.4*

- "...[I]f all natures would observe their own proper measure, form and order, there would be no evil."

*On the Nature of the Good, 37*

- "In childhood, the more tenacious and facile one's memory, the keener one's understanding, and the more ardent one's study, all the more is one praised as talented. But when it is a question of learning, one is not asked how surely and easily one remembers or how keenly one understands. Rather, one is asked what one remembers and what one understands. And since the soul is praised not only for how learned it is but also for how good it is, attention is given not only to what one remembers and understands, but also to what one wills. What matters is not how enthusiastically one wills but first what one wills and only then how much one wills it. For a soul is to be praised for the vehemence of its love only when what it loves deserves to be loved vehemently."

*On the Trinity, 10.11.17*