

DO YOU WISH TO RISE

“Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility.”

- Saint Augustine

In my writing of Augustine (of Hippo), now comes the opportunity to go back to his young life – however brief the description of his roots.

According to accounts and, as drawn from the recent publication of “Christianity Today”, **Augustine grew up in a dysfunctional family.** According to the source:

He suffered from a childhood of unhappiness, was prone to theft and dishonesty, abhorred study and formal education, was addicted to sex and food...His life was questionably disordered.

In his transformation, **this young man viewed sin as a life of “disordered love”**; whereby we pursue happiness and satisfaction of things in life that cannot possibly do so. In somewhat of the Ecclesiastical view – where all is vanity – this view may have come to the realization that such pursuits are a “chasing after the wind” – or, as described, futile.

His starting place for this transformation was a developing self-knowledge that the heart (the figurative representation of the soul) *is deceitful above all things...who can cure it* He recognized that this corrupt or depraved heart causes man to wander “blindly” toward misery; but in this direction and destination comes the opportunity to allow God to reorder our loves and draw us unto Him.

In this transformation came a man with inspiration to the present day; yet not without the understanding that to rise (toward God), **the disorder of our lives must be re-ordered** through God’s power to take the corrupted heart and purify it by forgiveness through grace.

I have grossly simplified the transformation of Augustine – using a single source as cited above. **The purpose however is to describe how God chooses his children from the depths of disorder** – whether only in the heart or extending to behavior of self and family – to “rise” by His power. In choosing his children, God looks at the heart (or soul) of the man and maps out the purpose, the plan for his life.

Humility is recognizing this power and purpose to a disordered, undeserving heart...

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