



Teaching Augustine with Dr. Junius Johnson

Lecture 7: Augustine's
City of God, Part II

Augustine's *City of God*

Part II: The City of God and the City of Man in Books XI-XXII.

Introduction

- **Context:**
 - Augustine's *City of God* transitions to sacred history in Books XI-XV, focusing on the intertwined destinies of the *City of God* and the *Earthly City*.
 - Augustine traces the origins, development, and eventual end of both cities, showing how they coexist and contrast in the present world.
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Book XI: The Foundations of the Two Cities

- **Sacred History of Both Cities:**
 - Augustine explores the origins of both the *City of God* and the *Earthly City*.
 - He emphasizes that the earthly city stems from a defection from the heavenly city, tracing its roots back to the fall of the angels.
- **Angels and Free Will:**
 - In Books XI and XII, Augustine discusses how angels exercised free will, with some choosing to follow God and others falling away.



- This sets up the theological foundation that evil is not original but a falling away from the good.
 - **Intertwined Destinies:**
 - The two cities are interwoven throughout history, coexisting in this world but destined for separate ends.
 - Augustine stresses that you cannot tell the story of the earthly city without also telling the story of the heavenly city.
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Book XII: The Nature of Good and Evil

- **Good and Evil:**
 - Augustine argues that good can exist without evil, but evil is always a corruption of the good.
 - The earthly city, in this sense, is a twisted reflection of the heavenly city, dependent on it for its citizens.
 - **Angelic Rebellion:**
 - Evil originates from the rebellion of some angels against God's will.
 - This rebellion lays the foundation for the earthly city, as its citizens reject God's love in favor of self-love.
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Book XIII: The Fall of Man and the Role of Death

- **The Universality of the Fall:**
 - Augustine discusses the fall of humanity and the introduction of death and sin into the world.
 - The fall is not original to creation but a result of turning away from God.
 - **Dual Citizenship:**
 - Humans are born into the earthly city, but some also become citizens of the *City of God* through faith and redemption.
 - During their earthly lives, saints have dual citizenship, belonging to both the earthly city and the heavenly city.
 - **Death as a Result of Sin:**
 - Augustine emphasizes that death is a consequence of sin, not something natural to human existence before the fall.
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Book XIV: The Role of Sin and the Legacy of the First Sin

- **Self-Love and Contempt for God:**
 - Augustine contrasts the love that defines the two cities:
 - The *City of God* is built on the love of God and contempt for self.
 - The *Earthly City* is built on self-love and contempt for God.
 - **The Earthly City's Attachment to Temporal Goods:**
 - Citizens of the earthly city seek their goods from this world, while citizens of the City of God look for their reward in the afterlife.
 - Augustine highlights the futility of placing hope in the transient world, urging readers to seek eternal life.
 - **Original Sin and Lust:**
 - Augustine's discussion on original sin and the transmission of sin through sexual union plays a key role in his theology.
 - This section is important background for medieval discussions on topics like the Immaculate Conception.
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Book XV: Cain, Seth, and the Progress of the Two Cities

- **Context:**
 - In Book XV, Augustine contrasts the origins and characteristics of the Earthly City and the Heavenly City through the stories of Cain and Seth.
 - He uses the biblical accounts to illustrate the deeper spiritual realities of human existence and identity.
- **Cain and Seth:**
 - Augustine uses the story of Cain and Seth to illustrate the development of the two cities.
 - Cain becomes the father of Enoch and founds a city in his name (meaning, "possession"), representing the Earthly City.
 - Enoch, meaning "dedication," represents the Earthly City's devotion to its earthly, temporal existence, with no aspirations beyond the present life.
 - Seth, whose name means "resurrection," represents the founder of the Heavenly City.



- His son Enos means "man," symbolizing the resurrected, spiritual man who is no longer bound by earthly concerns. In the resurrection, marriage and generation cease, as regeneration in the afterlife replaces them.
 - **The Earthly City's Temporal Focus:**
 - Augustine stresses that citizens of the earthly city are not pilgrims but at home in this world, focusing on immediate pleasures and achievements.
 - This leads to a frantic pursuit of worldly goals, as they have no hope for anything beyond this life.
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Conclusion of Books XVI-XXII

- **Progress of the Two Cities:**
 - Augustine traces the historical development of the *City of God* and the Earthly City, exploring their intertwined progress through history.
 - This section provides key theological insights but may not require deep focus unless exploring the theology of history in detail.
- **Jewish Dispersion and Witness to the Messiah:**
 - Augustine argues that the Jewish people were dispersed throughout the nations before Christ's incarnation to bear witness to the coming Messiah.
 - Their presence across the world allowed for God's message to spread, preparing the nations for the arrival of the Savior.
 - Later Christian missiology suggests that each culture has its own historical relationship with God, with myths and religions containing "Old Testaments" or precursors to Christianity.
 - Augustine, however, believes the Jews were the primary witnesses to God's plan, essential for pointing the way to the Messiah.
- **Final Judgment and the Parable of the Wheat and Tares:**
 - Augustine's ideas are paralleled in C.S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce*, where both heaven and hell are seen as retroactive.
 - The redeemed will look back and see even the hardships of life as part of heaven, while the damned will view their entire existence as a part of hell.



- Augustine uses the parable of the wheat and the tares to explain how the City of God and the Earthly City grow together in this world.
- The wheat represents the citizens of the City of God, destined for salvation, while the tares represent the citizens of the Earthly City, destined for destruction.
- On Judgment Day, the two cities will finally be separated—wheat for the banquet, tares for the fire.
- Augustine emphasizes that the experiences of this life (both good and bad) will be fully realized in the afterlife.
- For the redeemed, all suffering and evil will be swallowed up in eternal joy, while for the damned, all good will be swallowed up in eternal torment.
- Hell is not a place where individuals are sent, but rather the full manifestation of the Earthly City and its rebellion against God.
- Likewise, the City of God manifests fully in heaven, realized through the worship and community of the saints.
- Augustine's discussion of the final judgment has significant ties to Dante's *Inferno* and *Paradiso*.