

Augustine's *Confessions*

Book IV Study Questions

Chapter 1

1. What were the two studies to which Augustine devoted himself from his 18th to his 27th year?
2. What type of friend does Augustine recollect himself being at this time?

Chapters 2

1. What was Augustine's chief occupation at this time?
2. What type of students did Augustine want?
3. What kind of arrangement did Augustine have with the woman mentioned at the end of this chapter? What would we call that type of relationship today?

Chapter 3

1. Why did Augustine reject the soothsayer's offer to help ensure his victory in the poetic contest?
2. What does it mean to "grace a flock of winds"? (Cf. Hosea 12:1)

Chapter 4

1. What does Augustine say about the Christian view of astrology?
2. What did the astrologers point to as the cause of sin?

Chapter 5

1. Why did a physician place a crown on Augustine's head?
2. What advice did this physician give Augustine?

3. How did the physician answer Augustine's argument that there were many things in the works of the astrologers that came true?

Chapter 6

1. What did Augustine admire most about the works of astrology?
2. What non-Christian individuals have helped shape you positively?

Chapter 7

1. Where is Augustine at this time?
2. How does Augustine define true friendship?

Chapter 8

1. Why was Augustine's friend baptized though he was unaware of it?
2. How did Augustine expect his friend to deem the baptism that had been performed on him once he awoke? How did the friend respond?

Chapter 9

1. How did the death of this friend affect Augustine?

Chapter 10

1. Why do we cry and weep?
2. In what way is "sweet fruit picked from life's bitterness" in prayer?

Chapter 11

1. Have you ever had a friend of whom you could say they were the "other half" of your own soul?
2. How did, or would, it feel to lose such a friend?

Chapter 12

1. To what did Augustine turn to find solace during his grief?

2. Did he find relief?
3. Where did Augustine flee in search of relief? Why?

Chapter 13

1. How did the passing of time affect Augustine's grief?
2. What effect did other friends have on his grief?

Chapter 14

1. How does Augustine say that we can never lose anyone dear to us?

Chapter 15

1. What limitation do all created things share?
2. What is the result of fixing our love upon created things?

Chapter 16

1. How does Augustine argue that we can live in such a way as to not lose anything?
2. What is the outcome and effect of that way of living?

Chapter 17

1. Why is perception through physical senses always, to some degree, limited?

Chapter 18

1. How does Augustine recommend we view material things that we enjoy?
2. In what way does humanity take genuinely good things and turn them into bitterness?
3. What does Augustine assume all people are in search of?

Chapter 19

1. What spiritual discipline is Augustine encouraging in this chapter?

Chapter 20

1. What work of contemplation did Augustine write at this time?

Chapter 21

1. Why did Augustine dedicate this work to Hierius?
2. How does one person instill in another love for yet someone else?

Chapter 22

1. Do you ever love in others what you would hate in yourself?
2. Do you ever hate in others what you love in yourself?

Chapter 23

1. How easily are you influenced by the opinions of others?
2. According to Augustine, what is the ground upon which a weak soul lies?
3. What did Augustine want from Hierius?
4. Why do we desire the praise of those we don't even know?

Chapter 24

1. How did Augustine view virtue and vice at this time?

Chapter 25

1. Why must truth come to us from without?
2. What is the essence of truth?

Chapter 26

1. In what way did Augustine view God in human terms?
2. How had Augustine become one of the "idiot confidence men" he spoke of in Book III?

Chapter 27

1. How was Augustine both yearning to listen to God and not listening to Him at the same time?

Chapter 28

1. What was Aristotle's *The Ten Categories* about according to Augustine?
2. Thinking back to our video series on Church History with Dr. Godfrey, what was the primary difference of thought between Plato and Aristotle?

Chapter 29

1. How would Aristotle's approach have gotten in Augustine's way in his search for truth?

Chapter 30

1. What does Augustine mean when he says, "...I had my back to the light and my face to the things lighted up"?
2. How do we benefit from good things?
3. How does Augustine describe his students?

Chapter 31

1. What was Augustine's view of God during this time?
2. Is it better to be wise or simple-minded?

Summary

1. How can Augustine's reflections on friendship better shape your own views?
2. Why is our understanding of God crucial to our understanding of everything else?
3. How many scripture references/allusions does the author identify in this chapter?