

“ Philosophical Concepts and Religious Concepts ”

Some Problems Illustrated in St. Aurelius Augustine and Professor Paul Tillich

One who has discovered a deep love for the philosophies of his day, and for some of those from previous ages, may attempt to interpret all human experiences within the framework of that love. To the novice in other thought systems, such as the young convert Aurelius Augustine, the ardor for a particular philosophical system may render it difficult for him to grasp some of the implications of an unfamiliar thought system. While Neoplatonism helped rescue him from the despair of a rejected Manicheanism, and assisted his approach to the sermons of Bishop Ambrose of Milan, Neoplatonism also made it somewhat difficult for Augustine to realize the different structure and content of Judaeo-Christian Scriptures and Catholic Church doctrines. To the experienced Christian scholar of Scriptures and of doctrines, such as Professor Tillich, the problem comes in presenting faithfully many orthodox religious views within the limitations of a widely accepted philosophical framework. Although the novice and the apologist operate from different perspectives, in some ways they have to grapple with similar problems. How can they reconcile their useful philosophical concepts with Biblical theology ?

After reading the history of philosophies and of religions, particularly Christianity, the writer is of the opinion that there are some perennial difficulties which are encountered in any attempt to express the insights of the church community within the framework of other philosophies. To illustrate this point, the writer has chosen some areas from the theology of the late Professor Paul Tillich, who was impressed with Existentialism, and some areas from the early writings of the converted Aurelius Augustine, from the period before he was ordained a Presbyter of Hippo in 391 A.D. Although it must be stated clearly that justice cannot be

done to the full system of Professor Tillich or of St. Augustine in such a short space, perhaps the writer can highlight a few points which the readers can then examine in a fuller context at their convenience.

I. SCRIPTURES

The lover of wisdom in the Western tradition has received much of that wisdom through the written word. There is in that tradition a strong respect for manuscripts and bound volumes. And although some giants, such as Plato and Aristotle, have received more reverence than the able Postscript of Soren Kirkegaard or the plays of Sartre, their writings do not make the claim for authority or reverence which the Christian community makes for its Scriptures. So the Christian who is also philosopher or a philosopher who also wants to express Christian ideas in his philosophy has to make some decision about how he will relate the Scriptures of faith to the writings of his favorite philosophers.

Aurelius Augustine's dedication to a love of wisdom in his nineteenth year did not begin to bear fruit until he became a professor of rhetoric in Milan¹. Under the inspiration of Bishop Ambrose's sermons, the suggestions of Simplicianus, and some writings of Plotinus, and possibly Porphyry, Augustine found answers to many of his problems in the thoughts of Neoplatonism². When the Scriptures were interpreted from the standpoint of Neoplatonism they did not repulse the literary sensitivities of the young professor³. Indeed, in the first few months, he may not have been aware of any serious differences between the two kinds of writings. But after his conversion experience, his studies at Cassiciacum, and later at Milan, Rome, and Tagaste helped him see that he had to work out some system of priorities.

Augustine wrote a friend that he found nothing offensive to faith in the writings of the Platonists⁴. However, if he should find anything offensive, he would follow the Scriptures. His decision of faith seemed reasonable to him⁵. He was assisted in his quest for harmony by the time-

1. *Confessiones*, III, IV ; VIII, VII ; VIII, XII.

2. Notes on Neoplatonism include *Confessiones*, VIII, 2, 3. In *De beata vita* I, 4, Paul HENRY, S.J. *Plotin et l'Occident*, pp. 87-94, thinks manuscripts favor « Plotini » rather than « Platonis ». J. O'MEARA, *A Master Motif in St. Augustine in Actes du Premier Congrès de la Fédération Internationale des Associations d'Études Classiques*, pp. 312-317.

3. *Confessiones*, VII, XX. Pierre COURCELLE, *Recherches sur les Confessiones de saint Augustin*. Paris, E. de Boccard, 1950, pp. 122-124.

4. *Contra Academicos*, III, XX, 43. *PL* 32, 957 : «...apud Platonicos me interim quod sacris nostris non repugnet reperturum esse confido.» KAVENAGH, *Fathers of the Church*, Citta, translates « Sacred Scriptures. »

5. *De vera religione*, XXIV, 45 ; *Contra Academicos*, III, XX, 43.

honored allegorical method⁶. Philo, Clement, and Ambrose had used it already to adjust Jewish Scriptures to Platonic concepts ; nevertheless, it must be said that even prior to his ordination Augustine did not use allegorical method to escape all Scriptures which were difficult to place in a Neoplatonic structure. For example, he was driven back to *Genesis* several times to deal with the Creation story, and every time he, perhaps reluctantly, remained faithful to the account in Scriptures instead of allegorizing away the difficulties in maintaining his Neoplatonism⁷.

Professor Tillich, of course, had available more effective methods than allegory for reconciling Scriptures with philosophy. He formulated the questions he used in the method of correlation in the language of Existentialism⁸. The answers were given in ontological philosophy, which he did not view as doing violence to the Scriptures. Yet he relied on the results of literary historical criticism which had accumulated since the middle of the nineteenth century. He was particularly attracted to the method of 'demythologizing' used by Professor Rudolf Bultmann⁹. These combined methods of modern exegesis enabled Professor Tillich to escape some of the limitations of a literal interpretation of Scriptures and to see the thoughts behind the words as being compatible with existential and ontological philosophy.

Some method of escaping a literal interpretation of Scriptures is highly desirable for one who seeks to accommodate 'true ideas' found there with the 'truths' of philosophy. The Jews and the gospel writers wrote in a framework of Jewish religious philosophy, which scholars have long since concluded is quite different from the tradition of the Greek, European, and Anglo-American philosophers.

2. SITUATION IN THE WORLD

While Augustine cannot well be called the first Existentialist Christian, some writers have found in his writings many concerns which appear in Existentialist philosophers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries¹⁰. His writings at Cassiciacum, unlike his abortive literary efforts of earlier years, were particularly directed at his personal situation in

6. *De Genesi contra manichaeos*, II, II, 3. Later, *Sermo*, LXXXIX, 4-7.

7. *Ibid.*, II, VII, 9.

8. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, Introduction, D, 12. Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 60. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, Part III, XII, London : James Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1957, pp. 30-31.

9. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, part III, II, XVII, The Research for the Historical Jesus and Its Failure, p. 118. (Nisbet).

10. D.D. WILLIAMS, *The Significance of St. Augustine Today*, in BATTENHOUSE, *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, p. 13. Aimé SOLIGNAC, *L'existentialisme de saint Augustin*, in *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* 70, 1948, pp. 3-19.

the world¹¹. Anxiety over his lust for fleshly pleasures and disappointment with prizes and fame in the academic world had brought him in 386 A.D. to the point of painful physical symptoms in the lungs to match the pain in his heart and mind¹². His first writings in the rural retreat outside Milan were aimed at establishing faith and knowledge as possible for man ; he was not resigned to a realm of scepticism or the demi world of the truthlike. Instead, he pressed forward to know how he could obtain the happy life and escape the problem of evil. His nightly exploration of his stream of consciousness focused upon his personal need for answers and directions¹³. While his polished manuscripts were directed to friends for their edification and were sometimes dialogues against other groups, such as the Academics, the enterprise was definitely for his own benefit and that of his immediate family and students.

Augustine drew upon the resources he knew in Neoplatonism, the Scriptures, and the Catholic Church. But the suffering and driven man himself was the primary measure of what was useful or good, and not some logically consistent system he was learning or constructing.

Existentialism is prominent in the writings of Professor Tillich. In his *Systematic Theology*, and particularly in his *The Courage To Be* he focused upon the situation of man in the world¹⁴. Professor Tillich was so widely read that he seldom gave references to sources of his thoughts, but in reading his pages students were often aware of echos from pages of Kierkegaard, Sartre, Heidegger, and Berdyaev¹⁵.

There are strong themes of depth psychology and ontology in the *Courage To Be*, but the central problem is Man in the world anxious about his own being and nonbeing. Much of the anxiety of Man in the world comes through a psychiatric problem ; yet, there is the problem of Man's own finitude which cannot well be escaped¹⁶. The situation of Man in the world is one of anxiety, and his activities are attempts to deal with the anxiety. He seeks to find some way to limit his possibilities of not being and to strengthen the assurances that he will continue to be. Professor Tillich was concerned to replace neurotic adjustments with a courageous affirmation of being¹⁷.

11. *Confessiones*, IV, XIV. Ludwig SCHOPP, *Introduction to 'De beata vita'*, in *The Fathers of the Church*, New York : Cima, 1948, p. 32.

12. *Confessiones*, IX, II. *Contra Academicos*, I, I, 3 ; *De ordine*, I, II, 5. Hans BECKER, *Augustin : Studien su seiner geistigen Entwicklung*, Leipzig, 1908, p. 17.

13. *De Ordine*, I, III, 6. See too John H.S. BURLEIGH, *Introduction to Soliloquia* in *Library of Christian Classics*, Vol. VI, *Augustine : Earlier Writings*, p. 19.

14. *The Courage To Be*, New Haven : Yale University Press, 1952, Chapter 4, part 1, Being, Individualization, and Participation, p. 86.

15. *Ibid.*, Chapter 2, part 1, The Meaning of Non-being, p. 33.

16. *Ibid.*, Chapter 3, part 2, Anxiety, Religion and Medicine, p. 77.

17. *Ibid.*, Chapter 6, part 1, The Courage to Accept Acceptance, p. 155.

God is not absent from the earliest pages of Dr. Tillich's thoughts or from those of the recuperating Aurelius Augustine ; nevertheless, in both writers, Man and his problems in the world are the obvious starting point. If *Genesis* begins with God and moves to man, then it may not be too unfair to say that Tillich and Augustine began with Man's situation in the world and moved to a discussion of God.

This order is reasonable enough in philosophy, and there is nothing about the order in itself which makes it un-Christian. However, a great amount of orthodox literature from the church, even Augustine's *Soliloquia* and his *Confessiones*, give precedence to beginning with God and then moving to a discussion of Man.

3. CONCEPTS OF GOD

Neoplatonism helped Augustine overcome the idea that he had entertained since he first joined the Manicheans, namely, that God is material. The Cassiciacum dialogues make it clear that Augustine rejected any materialism of God. Moreover, as a child he had grown to despise the ' crude ' *Scriptures* so loved by his mother. Platonism and the literary sermons of Ambrose had appealed to his professional interest so that he did not any longer despise the Scriptures¹⁸. However, the terms for God he used at the beginning of the *Soliloquia* may not indicate an acquaintance with the God of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Psalms¹⁹. He meant to worship the Christian God of the Catholic Church made known through Monica and Ambrose. The terms are personal and orthodox. However, they seem to this writer to represent a God whom Augustine sought to know by faith, but whom he had not at that time made his own by either religious experience or reason.

The words he uses in discussing God in one part of *De moribus Manichaeorum* seem to this writer closer to Neoplatonism than they do to the revealed God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God is pictured as unchanging substance, above time. God is being (*esse*). There is no opposite to God, for there can be no opposite to being except non-being (*non esse*)²⁰. Clearly, this understanding of God is directed against the concept of God in the Manicheans. Neoplatonic concepts of *esse* exist in Augustine's early writings along with those concepts more appropriate to Biblical theology. In his thinking at that time they did not seem inconsistent.

Professor Tillich's formulation of the problem of Man's situation in the world in terms of being and non-being helped indicate the way he would present the concept of God in his discussion. Even less than St. Augustine

18. *Confessiones*, VI, IV.

19. *Soliloquia*, I, III, 8-9. A.W. MATTHEWS, *On Augustine's Early Concept of God*, in *Studia Patristica*, VI. Berlin : Akademie-Verlag, 1962, pp. 480-483.

20. *De moribus Manichaeorum*, I, I, P.L. 32, 1346.

does Professor Tillich use the traditional language of the Scriptures in a discussion of God. Far more than does St. Augustine he speaks in terms of being. For Professor Tillich God is the ground of being²¹. The usual images of God held by Men are presented as somewhat useful as long as they are not regarded as ultimate — in that situation they would function as idols²². Whatever functions as the object of a Man's ultimate concern becomes a god for him. However, the ultimate of concerns for Man is his own being or non-being. So God is being or the ground of being from which creation stands forth and upon which even non-being is dependent²³.

It would be easier to establish that Augustine's admittedly Christian view of God in his earlier writings was influenced by his Neoplatonist readings than it would be to show that Professor Tillich borrowed from Plotinus. Professor Tillich was a deep scholar of Christian theologians and could hardly have escaped Augustine's influence.

But the problems these apologists faced were similar. How does one reconcile the unchanging, above time, Being with the warm, compassionate, angry, just, and involved God of history described in the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures? Both Professor Tillich and St. Augustine, in his early writings, tried to be true to both Christian revelation and the insights of philosophy. The writer is of the opinion that St. Augustine did the better job of being faithful to the language of the Scriptures, while Professor Tillich was more faithful to the ontological philosophies.

4. MAN

St. Augustine's earliest views of Man still carried the lingering influence of his years with the Manicheans, who had indicated that Man's body of material is evil. Neoplatonism was not of much assistance in escaping that doctrine. In as much as human body had being, it was to be considered as a good, although a lesser good than Being itself. Augustine's early writings, though admitting the body is not a positive evil, and even a lesser good, regarded it as a kind of prison for the soul²⁴. The soul, which he conceived of as immaterial and functioning as the rational dimension of Man, was the essential nature of Man, and immortal²⁵. Nevertheless, when he used the book of *Genesis* to write against the Manicheans, Augustine was faithful to the Scriptures in arguing that

21. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, part. II, B, 3, God as Being, p. 237.

22. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, part II, A, 1, b, p. 216.

23. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, part II, C, 6, pp. 186-189. *The Courage To Be*, 2, The Meaning of Non-being, p. 32.

24. *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*, XXII, 40, P.L. 32, 1328 : « ...inter omnia quae in hac vita possidentur, corpus homini gravissimum vinculum est... »

25. *Soliloquia*, II, XIX, 33 ; *De immortalitate animae*, IX, 16 ; *De quantitate animae*, II, 3, P.L. 32, 1037 : « videtur mihi esse similis Deo. »

Man was created good²⁶. The mud of the earth was appropriate in the purpose, for Man bore the image of God.

The rational function was a primary interest in Man for Augustine in his *Cassiciacum* writings. Reason was the measure of human activity and meaning, and although one might accept a religion on faith, as Augustine had accepted the religion of the Catholic Church, his goal should be to know, in time, through a rational understanding²⁷.

The *Cassiciacum* writings of Augustine were many years prior to the controversy he engaged in with Pelagius, so it is not surprising that they make much more of human freedom and responsibility and much less of Divine Providence and Predestination than do the Pelagian writings. Augustine had known in his own life the evils of the flesh which only a Christian conversion experience had been able to erase from his life. But he also respected the goodness of Man in his reason and in his freedom of will²⁸.

In his pre-ordination period Augustine seemed to think of Man's sin more in Neoplatonic concepts than those of *Genesis*, except when he was actually expounding upon that book. Man had turned away from highest Being and had sought instead those things of lesser being. Although only non-being would be the absence of all good, there are lesser beings with good which Man has loved instead of the Creator²⁹. In this misplaced love Man has degraded himself on the scale of being. His problem is how to rise again to the rightful position near the top of the order of being.

Professor Tillich, of course, thinks of Man in terms of the *Genesis* account of Creation and fall. However, since he regards the *Genesis* account as an interesting myth, he is not as limited as Augustine was by that story³⁰. Certainly Professor Tillich has a high opinion of Man and his achievements in culture. He respects, as did St. Augustine, Man's freedom and rational powers. But Dr. Tillich's formulation of the theological question in terms of being leads him to express his concept of Man in terms of being and non-being.

For Dr. Tillich Man can only exist when he is grounded in being³¹. Nevertheless, Man cannot be absorbed in Being and still exist *qua* Man, any more than a Hindu maintains identity when absorbed into Brahman. Man can only be Man when he stands forth in that which is other than being, or non-being. Thus, Man has a very anxiety producing position. He must be rooted in being and he must thrust forth into non-being. His

26. *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, I, xvii, 27 ; II, vii, 8.

27. *Contra Academicos*, III, xx, 43, P.L. 32, 957 : « Nulli autem dubium est gemino pondere nos impelli ad discendum, auctoritatis atque rationis. »

28. *De libero arbitrio*, I, xvi, 34.

29. *Ibid.*, I, xvi, 35. *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, II, xxi, 31.

30. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, part III, I, xiii, p. 33 (Nisbet).

31. *The Courage To Be*, 2, Types of Anxiety, pp. 40-54.

dreadful freedom, of which some Existentialists speak, is one term in which Dr. Tillich describes Man's longing for salvation³².

Man, in Professor Tillich's thought, is in a 'fallen' state. However, as one reads, one may wonder whether that fall occurred through some quite unnecessary rebellion against God's sovereignty, as *Genesis* and traditional Catholic doctrine hold, or whether Professor Tillich makes the fall identical with the very existence of Man³³.

The idea of the nature of Man in *Genesis* and the fallen state of Man described in the letters of Paul of Tarsus seem to this writer to be considerably different from the scale of being in the Neoplatonists or the situation of dreadful freedom in the Existentialists. While Augustine and Tillich do find common elements between Scriptures and their philosophies on the doctrine of Man, the present writer believes that Augustine did more relinquishing of his philosophical concepts in favor of the Biblical account.

5. SALVATION

Augustine's attraction to the Catholic Christianity presented by Bishop Ambrose came during the same period when Neoplatonism was being embraced by him to overcome the unsatisfactory doctrines of the Manicheans. Indeed, the pre-ordination writings of Augustine show much concern with forming a group of friends to study philosophy³⁴. It is not surprising, then, that his early ideas of Man's salvation should incorporate many of those ideas which have parallels in philosophy and Scriptures. Augustine saw no essential conflict in this approach at that time³⁵.

At Cassiciacum, Augustine often spoke of Christ as the Wisdom of God and as Truth³⁶. In *De Magistro* he applied the concept of John's Gospel that the Son of God enlightens Man in the World³⁷. Christ illuminates the inner man so that he can know truth. Christ is also seen as a teacher who approaches Man in two ways. Sometimes he teaches by precepts, giving

32. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, part III, XVI, pp. 91-92 ; *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, part II, I, c, 7, The Finite and The Infinite, p. 191 (Chicago).

33. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, part III, XIII, Creation and Fall, p. 45. (Nisbet) : « The actual state is the existence in which man finds himself along with the whole universe, and there is no time in which this was otherwise. The notion of a moment *in* time in which man and nature were changed from good to evil is absurd, and it has no foundation in experience or revelation. »

34. The Dialogues of Cassiciacum, and particularly the letters of Nebridius. See also the *De vera religione* for Romanianus.

35. *Contra Academicos*, III, XX, 43.

36. *De beata vita*, IV, 34, P.L. 32, 975 : « ...Dei Filium nihil esse aliud quam Dei Sapientiam (I Cor. 24) et est Dei Filius profecto Deus... sed quid putatis esse Sapientiam, nisi veritatem ? Etiam hoc enim dictum est : « Ego sum veritas » (Ioh. 14, 6). »

37. *De magistro*, 40, 46.

laws, and at other times he teaches by example in his own life³⁸. In the earlier Cassiciacum dialogues Christ appears more as a principle or a concept. In the later writings of the pre-ordination period Augustine was obviously familiar with the historical personality of the gospels³⁹. While some of his terms have Neoplatonic overtones, as Augustine grew in his understanding of the Scriptures and of the doctrines of the Catholic church, he incorporated that new understanding in his writings.

The concept of salvation in Professor Tillich reflects the questions raised by Existential philosophy. Since Man's predicament is one about being and nonbeing, his salvation must be in terms of being. Professor Tillich puts heavy weight upon the phrase in Paul's writings to the Corinthians, 'If any man be in Christ he is a new being⁴⁰.' Christ is the New Being in Tillich's theology, and a man who receives the New Being participates in the New Being⁴¹. Thus the concept of Dr. Tillich is both philosophical and Scriptural, although he seems to make little use of the examples and teachings of the Jesus of history in the process of salvation⁴².

One prominent idea in Catholic Christianity is Substitutionary Atonement — Christ died for Man's sins. Yet, this idea, which grows out of the Hebrew worship through offering of sacrifices, has little place in Western philosophy. It is repugnant to Neoplatonism and is not a dominant theme of Existentialism. It is not surprising, then, that the early writings of Augustine and the system of Dr. Tillich do not depend on this doctrine which has meant so much to some Christian communities⁴³. The writer believes that one has an example here of conflict between philosophical concepts and Biblical theology. Both Augustine and Tillich intend to be faithful to Christian doctrine, but their philosophies help them avoid this particular Scriptural view of atonement in their writings.

6. CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

It is at the point of the Christian Community or the Church that both Augustine and Tillich show the least influence of their frames of reference in philosophy and rely most upon their personal experiences.

38. *De vera religione*, XVI, 32f. Prosper ALFARIC, *L'évolution intellectuelle de saint Augustin*, Vol. I. Paris : Émile Nourry, 1918.

39. *De vera religione*, XVI, 30 — XVII, 33.

40. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, part III, II, XVIII, pp. 136-137. II Cor. 5, 17 : «

41. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, part III, II, XVIII and XXI, p. 191 (Nisbet).

42. *Ibid.*, part III, II, XVII, The Research for the Historical Jesus and Its Failure. Also, Faith and Historical Scepticism, p. 132 (Nisbet).

43. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, part III, II, XXI, Doctrines of Atonement, p. 197. (Nisbet).

Augustine had been under influence of the Catholic Church since his childhood, and only a rapid recovery from a serious illness had prevented his receiving baptism⁴⁴. Monica had been a continuous influence as a representative of her church. But Augustine, prior to his instruction as a catechumen in the spring of 387 A.D., had not enjoyed deep involvement in the sacraments of the church. Even then, he resisted getting too involved with the affairs of the institution, especially the role of a priest⁴⁵.

Given his love for philosophy and his attraction to the intellectual rhetoric of Bishop Ambrose, one can see how Augustine would best understand, in his early years as a convert, the church as an institution of teaching. As he compared the practices of the Catholic Church with the claims of the Manicheans, he pointed out to them the marvelous educational program of the Church reaching from childhood to old age⁴⁶. He respected the priests as courageous counselors and teachers⁴⁷. And it was a high compliment to the institution when he spoke of it as the institution which had actually executed the work of Plato's Academy⁴⁸. For Christ and His Church had actually accomplished what Plato had only dreamed of doing with his Academy. He was also impressed with the houses of men devoted to study and prayer⁴⁹. However, it was many years later that Augustine came to know fully the community of love and the sacraments so that he could write convincingly against heretics within and sceptics outside the Catholic Church.

There is much in Professor Tillich's writings on the churches as representative of the 'Spiritual Community', a term he preferred to the term 'Church'⁵⁰. There is a universal framework to much of Dr. Tillich's discussion which is appropriate to the Existential questions raised by Man and the God above gods in the ground of Being⁵¹. For the Spiritual Community is beyond any particular group or sociological institution, being present wherever a man has been grasped by the New Being and participates in life in the Spirit⁵². Yet, his Reformed background of experience emerges when he criticizes the Roman Church for being willing to judge every human within its ranks but refusing to judge

44. *Confessiones*, I, XI ; VI, I.

45. *Epistola*, XXI. Also A.W. MATTHEWS, *Philosophical Theology in the Parish Ministry : Comments on St. Augustine's Letter XXI to Bishop Valerius 391 A.D.* in *The Hartford Quarterly*, Vol. IV, no. 4, pp. 53-59.

46. *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*, XXX, pp. 62-64.

47. *Ibid.*, XXXII.

48. *De vera religione*, I, I - VIII, 15.

49. *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*, XXXI.

50. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. III, part IV, II, B, 4. The Spiritual Presence and the New Being in the Spiritual Community. Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 149.

51. *The Courage To Be*, 6, The God above God and the Courage to be, p. 186.

52. *Systematic Theology*, Vol. III, part IV, III, A, 3, The Individual in the Church and the Spiritual Presence, p. 217 and p. 222. (Chicago).

the structure of that institution⁵³. And while he admits that there is some reason, for order, why only some Christians ought to serve as priests, he also believes that every one who participates in the new Being and the Spiritual Community is also a priest⁵⁴. In his discussion of the sacraments one finds a theologian of the Reformation, and little to refer back to the initial pages of the *Systematic Theology* where the terminology of Existentialist philosophy was more prevalent than terms of the Biblical theologians or the Christian Community.

Although Augustine and Tillich had some understanding of the Church which could be presented in terms of their respective philosophies, their life in the Church helped them realize that they could not do justice to their understanding of that institution when confined to the frame of reference of a philosophy⁵⁵. The Christian Community had already developed concepts and language of its own, and something important was lost in trying to translate that experience into philosophical concepts.

CONCLUSION

This brief examination of six points in the writings of St. Augustine and Professor Tillich indicates to the present writer that while there may be advantages to expressing Christian experience within the framework of secular philosophies, certain problems also arise. One problem of a philosophical frame of reference is how to reconcile the concepts of philosophy with the concepts of Judaeo-Christian Scriptures.

This is a perennial problem, for no matter what philosophy one may choose, there will probably be major differences between it and the thought forms of cultures which no longer exist except in their legacy of literature, the Scriptures. On the other hand, it would be almost impossible for any person to live exclusively within the thought forms of previous cultures, or even within the thought forms of the Church if he is also involved in secular activities.

Thus, it is not only the apologists, such as Augustine and Tillich, who face problems with philosophical concepts and Biblical theology. These are, in some way, the problems for every Christian, and especially for the Christian who studies as a philosopher.

St. Augustine and Professor Tillich used their philosophies to help them understand and interpret their religion for others. But both of them tried to remain true to the Christian doctrines. History has already

53. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, part IV, III, A, 2, The Functions of the Churches, p. 107, on Papal leadership.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

55. *Ibid.*, Vol. III on the Church. AUGUSTINE, *Epistola*, XXI, XXII.

judged that St. Augustine abandoned his philosophy where it was in conflict with Catholic and Scriptural teachings as he understood them. There are some points where Professor Tillich did the same thing, but it may remain for history to decide whether he relinquished enough of his philosophy.

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