

**Volume 9**

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**Augustine I**

**Lead: One of the most influential thinkers in the history of Christianity was Aurelius Augustinus. He became a bishop, but his lifestyle was not always that of a devout believer.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: The future Bishop of Hippo was born in the city of Thagaste or Souk Ahas, in Numidia, an ancient North African kingdom covering what is now Algeria. His family was socially prominent, but not particularly wealthy. From the**

**beginning Augustine was a handful, a troublesome boy, given to cheating and physical combat, bright, but not very interested in his studies. He was the pride and the heartbreak of his young mother Monica, who's Christianity held little appeal to Augustine or his elderly father Patricius.**

**Shipped off to boarding school, Augustine slipped deeper into the pagan behavior that surrounded him. Patricius died when the boy was sixteen, but a generous neighbor Romanian informally adopted him, and furthered his education by sending Augustine to Carthage. By A.D. 300, the great port had recovered from its destruction by the**

**Roman Republic and was a brilliant city of commerce and learning. There he was attracted to the philosophy of the Persian prophet, Mani. Manichees believed the universe was locked in an eternal battle between good and evil, but though claiming to be Christian, insisted that Christ never really became a human. As he gained prominence as a teacher, Augustine clung to Manichee system, but his sensually charged lifestyle and the death of young friend hammered at his convictions and laid the groundwork for his eventual conversion to his mother's faith. In 383 he went to Rome for study and three years later accepted an appointment as teacher of rhetoric in the Imperial Capital of Milan.**

**Next time: The battle for  
orthodoxy.**

**At the University of Richmond,  
this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

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**Matthews, Gareth B. *The Augustinian Tradition*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.**

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**<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/augustine.html>**

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