Chapter- III

ST. AUGUSTINE ON FREE WILL

1. The Fall of Man and Free-Will

In Christianity the issue of origin of the world is discussed in the context of the fall of first man. God is sovereign good who made man not like a stone or animal. He created man in His own image. Man, accordingly, shares the nature and character of God. Augustine holds that wise souls are made wise and a thing which comes from beauty is beautiful. That is man’s primary resemblance with his creator. Now what is ‘image? The image is an expression of likeness. “An image must be resemblance between a thing produced and the thing which produces it”. It is like when man’s likeness is seen in mirror and is called his true image.

Now God is not only a sovereign creator. He is also believed to be good and rational and intelligent. Man’s likeness to God, therefore, means his having all these qualities which, then, make him a creature distinguished from and superior to all other creatures.

“God, then, made man in His own image. For He created for him a soul endowed with reason and intelligence, so that he might excel all the creatures of earth, air, and sea, which were not so gifted”.1

God gave form to man out of the dust of earth. He, then, breathed in him his spirit. This breathing made man a being with soul. Now the question is,
are we made up both of body and soul? Is, in other words, the man both soul and mind or he is the body only or he is the soul only? Obviously, without both of these two things the man could not be called man. Moreover, neither body would be there without soul, nor the soul without body. Then, what is the being that we called as man. Is man a simple combination of two otherwise disparate entities? Is he like a centaur, the famous mythological figure of half man and half horse?

For Augustine, the body is a being that serves the soul. That means mind and soul are not just added upon each other to make the man just as horse-man does not mean part horse and part man. The horse-man is man who is riding over the horse. In man too, likewise, the soul rules over the body. The body is subject to disintegrations but soul is not. Further, soul is essentially reason or mind and is not subject to change but body is changeable because of its material and biological constitution.

Moreover, he says the soul is better than our body, and it is also that which is greater than our body. The human body is mutable but soul is immutable. That which does not remain in same mode can not be immutable. In the rational soul there is no change or mutation. For example, two and two become four and that remains always in same mode. Four always consists of two and two. Four contains two but two never contains four. So we can say that two is not four. This type of reasoning is immutable. So on the basis of above discussion we can say that reason is immutable.
But even though the rational soul is immutable, it may still have different changing states. It is plain to see that there are many conditions which show that soul may have undergone changes. The soul is moved both internally as well as externally, according to Augustine:

“For the soul is said to be changed either according to passions of the body or according to its own passions. According to the passions of the body, as through age, disease, sorrow, work, hatred, or carnal desires; according to its own passions, however, as by desiring, enjoying, fearing, warrying, striving, or learning”.

All these changing feelings show the different changing states of the soul. The changing states are necessary proof of the changing nature of soul. If the process of change does not take place the soul would die. But we should understand that if subject is changed as a whole, all that is in the subject are also necessarily subject to change. That means, if whatever is in the subject altogether changes or if the whole soul is changed than changes occurs. But if only some part of the subject is changed then subject could not be said to have changed. If, for example, the wax changes into black from white, it remains nevertheless wax. Augustine says that, if some changes occur in the subject, it still remains same subject as it was. But when the subject is changed entirely, it does not remain what it was.

God, being himself rational and also a creator of a rational animal, was entirely free in his creative act. He could have made man exactly in a form in which we find him now had He so desired. But the form in which
He did make man was too superior to his present form and conditions. God originally created Adam without natural imperfections.

"Man’s nature, indeed, was created at first faultless and without any sin; but that nature of man in which every one is born from Adam, now wants the Physician, because it is not sound".3

Man was created as a good and innocent creature. His nature was faultless. He was superior than other creatures because he gave names to other creatures. The act of naming shows the wisdom of man. All the good qualities which make up the life of man such as intellect, senses etc. have come from Creator and Maker. Therefore if some stigma attaches to him along with good qualities, it is not because of blameless Creator. It is only because of the original sin which is committed by Adam through will. Due to stigma of disobedience of man’s nature, he has the need of illumination and healing.

Augustine holds that this world was created by God out of nothing. Man’s nature is corruptible because it is made out of that nothing.

"Because therefore God made all things which He did not beget of Himself, not of those things that already existed, but of those things that did not exist at all, that is, of nothing the Apostle Paul says: “Who calls the things that are not as if they are”."4

God created all things from Him. But “from Him”, does not have same meaning as “of Him”. St Augustine holds that there is a difference between “from Him” and “of Him”. He said that heaven and earth are made from him, not of him. Because they are not his own substance. To give an
example, a man begets a son and also makes a house. From himself is the house and from himself is the son. But we cannot say that both son and house are of him. Son is called of him and house is called from him. Because house is not made of his own substance but made of an external substance, such as wood and earth and so on. Man cannot make any thing out of nothing. He has the need of some external material. But God has no need of any kind of external material.

"But this is so, because as a man he cannot make something even of nothing; but God of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things, had no need of any material which He had not made to assist His omnipotence".\(^5\)

God knew all things. He was not ignorant. He knew that man would commit sin or would fall. This is what we find in the verse, "God made man upright".\(^6\) It means God created man with good will. Augustine says that if He had not good will, then He would not have made man upright. Therefore the good will was in God. He created man with good will. It was the work of God. But the first evil will which is the cause of all evil acts of human being, was not work of Almighty God. But it was the work of first man, who fell away from the work of God. The result of this act was evil. Furthermore, evil will would not be in harmony with the nature, but opposed to the nature. God created everything out of nothing including man's soul. He then joined the soul with the body when he made man. Although God permitted evil to exist in nature, the purpose of this act was
to demonstrate God's goodness. Because though evil cannot live without good, good can live without evil. So the will was truly free when it was not slave of evil or sins. And this was given by Almighty God. It becomes faulty by man's own decision.

Man lived in paradise with earthly animals according to rules. Paradise was not only spiritual, nor only physical. Animal or serpent persuaded to bring down the human being from his superangelic nature. First he tried the woman. He assaulted the weaker part of human being. He thought that man could not easily be enthralled by him. Satan deceived the woman not the man and woman deceived the man. Hence Adam transgressed God's law and commandments after Eve, because there was a relation between them, the relation of husband to the wife and of one human being to another human being.

"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into transgression".7

Woman accepted the truth that the serpent beguiled her, and man could not bear to refrain from her. Even though this involved being in sin as a partner. So Adam was not less sinner.

"By one man sin entered into the world".8

The falling away from the commandments of God was spontaneously. The will towards unchangeable good was not changed. It remained as it was.
“The wicked deed, then - that is to say, the transgression of eating the forbidden fruit — was committed by persons who were already wicked”.9

Now what is origin of evil will? The origin of evil will is nothing but pride. As it is said in scripture: “Pride is the beginning of sin”.10 This pride was more damnable because it gives shelter to the other sins. This pride does not allow to accept the wickedness of the sinner. As woman’s pride made her shift the blame on to the serpent, the man did the same to the woman for the same reason of pride.

""The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat; and man said, “The woman whom thou cravest to be with me she gave me of the tree and I did eat””.11

This means sinner does not accept his or her sin. But this does not make their sin less.

“For the fact that the woman sinned on the serpent’s persuasion, and the man at the woman’s offer, did not make the transgression less, as if there were any one whom we ought rather to believe or yield to than God”.12

Man sinned and therefore and he became a primordially sinner. Yet his original nature was good. “Every creature of God is good”.13

Whatever is created by God is good, even the forbidden tree. So the tree of paradise was not the tree of evil. It was good and man was also good. If he touched the forbidden tree it was not because of his evil nature but because of his striving to get better. But it was forbidden to him. God created man with free will, but he lost the free will after touching the forbidden tree. Due to Adam’s sin the whole human community became
sinful. Augustine is critical of any view that does not accept the original sinfulness of man or the view that there were no effects upon human community of Adam’s sin. In this connection, he mentioned Coelestius who is credited with the opinion that

“That Adam’s sin injured only Adam himself, and not to the human race; and that infants at their birth are in the same state that Adam was in before his transgression”.

That means there is no effect of Adam’s sin upon society or human race.

St Augustine, on the contrary, holds that although man was free from any kind of stigma of sin before his transgression, his nature became corrupt after he ate the forbidden fruit. Certainly, due to this disobedience on the part of first man the whole humanity became sinful.

In St Augustine’s own time there was Pelagius who was a monk and who held a similar view as Coelestius. St Augustine states that there are three errors in the Pelagian heresy that are as follows.

1. They deny original sin.
2. They say that “the grace of God whereby we are justified is not given freely but according to our merit.
3. Forgiveness of sin is not necessary to him.

Concerning original sin Pelagius held that we are born without sin. Sin is not transmitted to the whole human race by Adam’s fall. If it remains or if it exists it exists by imitation, i.e. by imitating Adam’s act of disobedience of God’s command. He therefore said that infants are free from original
sin. Since the actual sin has not transmitted from the first man to other persons by natural descent there was no question that infant’s original sin could only be remitted through baptisms. Pelagius firmly said that no original sin exists at all in people by their birth.

The second error which St. Augustine finds in Pelagius view is about his claim that there were three possibilities for justifying baptism. Firstly that infants are baptized for sin committed since their birth. Second, baptism confers on us a higher stage of salvation. Third, baptism remits sin committed in some previous existence. But all these possibilities are impossible to accept. Hence Pelagius does not agree to the view of original sin and he rejects the baptism for infants. But Augustine does not accept his view. He gives many scriptural proofs to show human beings are all involved in original sin.

“Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act, the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life”.15

For St Augustine, it is clear that we have all taken part in Adam’s sin of which death is one of the results. He also uses infant’s baptism as a proof of original sin. The second error in Pelagius thinking is that he denied the need of God’s grace for salvation. Pelagius holds that we get salvation by our own merit. St Augustine proves from St. Paul that grace is not given to us according to merit. He says that it is only by the grace of God that I am what I am i.e. a being endowed with reason and free will.
Augustine points out that this free will was not taken away as man chose to work for the glory of God. Thus St Augustine will claim, we have to be careful of not maintaining grace by denying free will or vice versa. St Augustine agrees with Pelagious that freewill is inherent in man’s nature, that our free will is so enslaved by sin that only grace can free it.

Augustine had thought that although all things are from Him, and through Him, and in Him, it only means that things of nature naturally exist. But it should not be understood that sin has come from Him. Sin is that which vitiates the things of nature. Sin is not from the God, but from the will of sinning. That is why sin was result of man’s freedom of choice. It is clear that God has done nothing but good. But disobeying act was turning away from God. It was man’s decision. God is not ignorant and He knew that man would commit sin. So man could not disturb the divine counsel. In The City of God Augustine says that God has foreknowledge of what is going to happen. He also knew that a good thing will become evil by man. When scripture said: “God made man upright”\textsuperscript{16}, it means that man was created with good will. So man had good will. Man’s good nature, good will, was the work of God, which was good. But the first evil will was a kind of falling away from the work of God, which preceded all man’s evil acts.

Therefore, the resulting evil acts are not work of God, but of will itself or the man himself. Man’s evil was bad. So evil tree would bring
only evil fruits. Evil will though is not consistent with nature but opposed to the nature.

In other words, the author of this universe was not corrupt. He was good and created man upright. Man became corrupted through his own will.

“For God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright, but man, being of his own will corrupted”.17

The other peoples also become sinner from the first man’s sin. In the case of latter, it was certainly the result of freedom of choice.

“And thus, from the bad use of free will there originated the whole train of evil, which, with its concatenation of miseries, conveys the human race from its depraved origin, as from a corrupt root, on to the destruction of the second death, which has no end, those only being excepted who are freed by the grace of God”.18

Augustine emphasizes the essential goodness of both creator and creatures but says that the two are not identical in all aspects. If the creature would be identical with creator, he will not remain creature. God created things out of nothingness. He constitutes the nature into three things namely measure form and order. If all these three are perfect in a thing it will possess high degree of perfection. The creature would in that case possess great good. If these three are mediocre the creature will be only a mediocre good. If none of them are sufficiently present the creature will be no good at all.

“For all things in proportion as they are better measured, formed, and ordered, are assuredly good in a higher degree;
but in proportion as they are measured, formed, and ordered in an inferior degree, are they the less good". 19

Further,

"These three things, where they are great, are great goods, where they are small, are small goods; where they are absent, there is no good". 20

That means things that have higher measure, form and order possess a higher nature, while things of lower measure, form and order possess lower nature and those with no measure, form and order at all possess no nature at all. That means every thing whether spiritual or corporeal, is created by God through all these perfections.

But if everything is good wherefrom comes the evil. To this, Augustine's answer is that evil can exist only by the corruption of one or the other of these three perfections.

"When accordingly ...which is nothing else than corruption, either of the measure, or the form, or the order, that belong to nature. Nature therefore which has been corrupted, is called evil, for assuredly when incorrupt it is good; but even when corrupt, so far as it is nature it is good, so far as it is corrupted it is evil". 21

If nature were not corrupted in its order, form and measure it would be good. If is corrupted it would be less good. Evil is only corruption of some good. Evil is privation of good, Augustine defines evil as "Prvitio Boni," i.e. 'privation of good'. Privation of good does not mean according to St Augustine lack of goodness, for example, a tree lacking in spiritual
qualities. Evil indeed means having no positive nature. It is only the other name for the loss of good (amissio boni)

“For evil has no positive nature; but the loss of good has received the name “evil”.”

So evil's nature is negative. It signifies a lack, a loss, a privation.

“For what is that which we call evil but the absence of good? In the bodies of animals, disease and wounds mean nothing but the absence of health; for when a cure is effected, that does not mean that the evils which were present — namely, the diseases and wounds — go away from the body and dwell elsewhere: they altogether cease to exist; for the wound or disease is not substance, but a defect in the fleshly substance — the flesh itself being a substance, and therefore something good, of which those evils — that is, privations of the good which we call health are — accidents”.

As disease is nothing but only absence of health, in the same way vices are nothing in the soul but the privation or absence of some natural good qualities. An evil exists in the soul until the good in the soul is not realized. When the soul realizes its essential good the evil cease to exist in the soul.

Manichees were thus wrong to suppose that evil has an independent and separate existence. They thought that evil is being. But the fact of matter is that it is purely an absence of being. Evil has no separate existence apart from good. Whenever we speak about evil we also assume some good. Evil is merely a privation of good. No evil exists without good, but a good exists without evil and is called perfect good.

“Therefore, there is nothing of what we call evil, if there be nothing good. But a good which is wholly without evil is a
perfect good. A good on the other hand, which contains evils is a faulty or imperfect good; and there can be no evil where there is no good.\textsuperscript{24}

As St. Augustine holds that every nature consists of measure, order and form, he does not include in ‘nature’ only material things. He also wants to apply the idea in the domain of man’s voluntary action or voluntary evil that is called sin. He compares, man’s voluntary act with any other substance. He maintains that an action of man is said to be perfect if it is found in perfect measure, order and form. If an action is not perfect in measure, order and form and is a determined act, then this action is not perfect. Moreover, as in other things where evil is nothing but only the privation of good, in voluntary free act where we also find evil, this evil is nothing but the privation or dispossession of the good act.

So, as a corollary, we can say that evil will is good as will. But as dispossession of being it appears as evil. In other words, in voluntary action, as in any other case, evil cannot exist apart from good. For St. Augustine, then, the possibility of the presence of the evil in the world is real. But the private nature of the evil is also obvious. Privative nature of the evil exempts the good from creating evil in this world, because whatever thing is nothing, it is not created.

2. Arguments for Free-Will

St. Augustine holds that all the things of the world whether corporeal or temporal, consist of a hierarchy of lower and higher realities.
This hierarchy is called order. He says that nature is also governed by this order. God imposed this order as a force. In as much as human beings are part of nature, they are also subject to the divine order. There is no escape for him from this order of nature. But human being, as part of nature, is also ruled by divine law. St. Augustine maintains an important difference between human being and all the rest of things. The difference which distinguishes man from any other thing is that his action depends upon his will. Man's voluntary action which depends upon his will is not subject to divine compulsion. Man's voluntary action has a purpose. This purpose is nothing other than to realize the divine order.

"With them it is not a matter of being subject to the law but of willing it and collaborating in its fulfillment".25

St. Augustine accepts that man knows the law. To the further question, does man will it ?, St. Augustine answers that every decision depends upon will. In other words, it is will that allows or does not allow man to follow order. Man often sees this order as a thing which is imposed by God on him. But St. Augustine holds that the power which takes important decisions is man's own 'will'. This power does not take part only in taking decision in the practical affairs, but covers almost every conative decision. Being based on reason in its theoretical aspect, it controls empirical as well as rational faculty. In respect to will, the division of empirical and rational does not matter at all.
“It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that as the will is, so is the man, so much so, in fact, that a will divided against itself is a man divided against himself”.26

Augustine accepts domination of the will over all the faculties. In order to clarify this he gives a psychological analysis of the will. He maintains that the movement of the soul may be reduced into four basic mental passions which are desire (cupiditas), joy (lactitia), fear (metus) and sorrow (tristitia). He says:

“To desire is to consent to the movement whereby the will moves towards a thing; to rejoice is to take delight in the possession of a thing obtained; to fear is to yield to the will’s movement in shrinking from a thing and turning away from it; to experience sorrow is to refuse consent to an evil actually being endured”.27

The soul inclines either toward acquiring good things or to keep away from evil things. Its free movement to either acquire or possess a thing is due to the will itself. Hence, Augustine holds that every movement of the soul depends upon man’s will.

Further, St. Augustine said that it is not easy to prove whether will is the master in the case where knowledge is concerned. He says that if we choose any cognitive operation of the soul, it appears as subject to the will. If, for example, we take sensation, which is known as lowest of these, that too turns out to be the will itself. Because it is only so long as our will involved in a sense organ makes it focussed on its object, that its action will continue. So, on the basis of this, we can say that in every sensation ‘will’ plays its role as an active force. He says that without will no
sensation can take place. Because without will no sense organ would be applied to the sense object. He says that sometimes it happens our sense organ is fixed on a particular object and the object gives information to mind in the form of its image. But sense organ does not receive the image and the object seems as if it was not present there. It is indeed a common observation that in our daily life a number of things are present before us. But we do not take them into notice. But if our will inclines towards object, then the sensation would take place. All the feelings, even whole body may be affected by it. Therefore, it can fairly be said that all depends on will.

"If a person says something in our hearing while we are thinking of something else, we claim that we have not heard a thing. But this is not exactly the case. We have heard, but we do not remember anything because our will was distracted and did not fix the sound in memory as they struck our ear".28

The role of the will in the case of unperceived impressions is more complicated. He says that will fixes on a particular sense organ or particular sense object. The will involved here functions into two ways. Firstly, our sense organ comes in the contact of the object and secondly, will impresses the recollection of the sensation upon memory. This happens only because of second operation of the will. Through this sensation becomes something conscious.

From this we can conclude that sensation comes under control of the will. Further, St. Augustine describes the will's dominion over the memory. He says that memory is equally attached to all the internal senses,
including the imagination. Our will possesses sensations and recollections. In spite of this, will also joins both together and separates the images. Hence, says St. Augustine, it receives and stores away and it uses them again as it likes in the most diversified combinations.

"Thus, it combines as it likes elements borrowed from the knowledge of the sensible world to create an imaginary world according to its own fancy".29

Now the question is, does will have domination over those matters which are beyond the sensible order, and these matters are subject to pure understanding? St. Augustine’s answer is that there is no doubt about it. He maintains that will is the active force which is known as fourth sensation. Further, he says that will is the force that is known as cause of rational knowledge. We observe it in our daily life that man’s rational truth lies within and its arousal requires the force of will. We have to desire before having the knowledge either rational or empirical.

“But before we produce knowledge in ourselves, we have to desire it; we know because we want to know, and we only seek knowledge because we want to find it. If the desire for knowledge becomes strong, we call it research, the word itself denoting precisely that passion for knowledge which leads to science” 30

Whatever kind of knowledge we gain, it originates from the will. So we can say that every operation of the soul depends upon the voluntary decision. To say, indeed, that the will is ‘man himself’, will be no exaggeration. Now the question before St. Augustine was what is the principle of the will. He maintains that, according to Greek physics,
specially Aristotle’s, every body in the universe has a kind of natural
weight through which it moves from one place to other. St. Augustine
thinks about will in the same manner. He says that the ‘weight’ of the soul
is love which moves it to its place of rest.

“In every soul, as in every body, there is a weight drawing it
constantly, moving it always to find its natural place of rest;
and this weight we call love”.

“My weight is my love; by it am I borne whithersover I am
borne”.

The ‘love’ in this way becomes the defining principle of man himself:

“It is obvious that, if love is the inner force which moves the
will and the will denotes the man, we can say that man is
essentially moved by his love”.

Love is not an additional quality of man but is his essence. Love is the
natural tendency towards good. Its aim is to reach its goal. Its struggle to
reach its goal continues till it finally attains it. St. Augustine asked the
question if it is possible to think of love as lazy and idle? He replies, it is
myth. Man’s love is movable. It can never take rest. It always does
something that is either good or evil. He holds that crime, adultery,
homicide, lust, etc. occurs through love. Love is also, similarly, cause of
pure charity and heroism. Love is indeed an inexhaustible source of action.

“For good or ill, its capacity is unfailing; for the man it
derives, it is an inexhaustible source of action”. 
St. Augustine holds that it is worthless task of anyone if he stops someone from his love or tries to keep him away from making use of love. For this would amount to deny man his humanity itself.

“This would mean separating him from himself and forbidding him to be what he is: take from a man the love which leads him from one thing to another towards some goal vaguely conceived and he will be worthless than a material body, which at least yields to the pull of its own weight”.

Moreover, St. Augustine says that moral problem is not whether we should love or not love, but what we should love. He says that if you do not love anything, then you will be lifeless, dead, abominable, and miserable. One must love, but should be careful about what he loves. According to him:

“Virtue, then, means to will what we should will, i.e. to love what we should love”.

He says that the will is determined by love. Value of the will determines the value of the action which occurs by our will. It is said that, man’s action occurs according to his passion. In other words, it can be said that it is direct manifestation of his love.

“Therefore, if his love is good, his passions and his will be equally good; if it is evil, they also will be evil”.

Hence we can say that the quality of the action depends upon the quality of will and the quality of will depends upon the quality of love.

According to St. Augustine there is no doubt about man’s freedom of will. He believes in the reality of freedom of will in human being.
He holds that man has capacity to choose his actions freely. He also says that divine commandments are proof of freedom of will. There are many scriptural verses which testify to man’s freedom of will. To quote Augustine here:

"Then again, there are so many commandments which in some way are expressly adapted to the human will; for instance, there is, “Be not overcome of evil”, and others of similar import, such as, “Be not like a horse or a mule, which have no understanding,” and, “Reject not the counsels of thy mother;” and, “Be not wise in thine own conceit;” and, “Despise not the chastening of this Lord;” and, “Forget not my law;” and, “Forbear not to do good to the poor;” and, “Devise not evil against thy friend;” and, “Give no heed to a worthless woman;” and, “He is not inclined to understand how to do good;” and, “They refused to attend to my counsel;” with numberless other passages of the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament”.

These verses show man’s freedom of will. Indeed, only where there is free will, there can be the command of do this or do not do this. To ask to perform or to refrain from any action is by itself a sufficient proof of free will. When a man commits sin, he cannot blame God for it. He has to realize it as his own fault. St Augustine holds that a work is called good when it is done willingly and then alone it becomes worthy of reward. “He shall reward every man according to his work”, says Matt. 16:27.

Will, according to St. Augustine means ability to decide or act with intention and also to be responsible for the same. According to St Augustine, there is no doubt that man is author of his decisions and actions.
"That is precisely why I said that the reality of free will is our to own our intentions, to be the author of our actions, to be responsible for what we do, so that we can be praised or blamed, rewarded or punished for what we do".39

If man is a creation of God, then free will is indeed the gift of God for man. Free will is given by God to man to enable him to have the capacity to choose between good and bad freely. From this gift of God man leads a moral life. In situations where there are many options before him, a man can choose right course of action in the light of his moral conviction. It is though also possible that one chooses evil instead of good under the influence of some or other temptations. Man has thus capacity to do both good as well as evil using his freedom of choice.

“So with of the gift of free will God has given man the capacity not only to do good but also evil”.40

Now, the question is whether or not, God is also responsible for human evil? Because, if God has not bestowed free will to man, he would not have chosen evil. This problem of moral evil is very difficult to solve. A related question is why good and perfect God gave us freedom of choice with capability to choose evil? St Augustine says that free will is good as a number of other things, too, are good in this world. There are many things in the world which are good and necessary but through their bad use they becomes evil. So there is no reason for saying that God should not give us those things which could be turned into evil. Suppose, if one is deprived of his hand, this will no doubt be a serious loss to the person. This is so
because hands are good and necessary organ of the body. But if one has his hands and through his hand he commits crime, then it would be bad use of his hands. Similarly, a person without feet will be called imperfect. But if he has feet and by his feet he injures others, then again it would be bad use of a good and useful things.

For same reasons, will is good, but through bad uses of it, it becomes bad or evil.

"In itself, the will is good, because without it no one could lead an upright life. It comes to us, therefore, from God, and we should find fault with those who use it badly, not with Him Who gives it to us".  

Will itself is good but its goodness depends upon its using. If doubt is raised whether or not by giving a capability of choosing evil deeds God has not given us a dangerous thing, Augustine's answer is that it is true that liberty is dangerous yet, he says, it is a necessary condition for attaining the highest good.

"In itself, free will cannot be an evil; nor is it an absolute good like fortitude, temperance or justice, things we can not use for evil without destroying them in the process. Free will is an intermediate good: its nature is good, but its effect can be good or bad according to the way man uses it".  

Free will is, thus, according to Augustine, an intermediate good. Goodness and badness of man depends upon its use. Freedom of choice is under control of free will. Just as reason is the source of all kinds of knowledge and knows by itself and memory is the source of all
recollections and remembers itself, the free will is master of everything else as well as itself. It is our will that inclines us towards immutable and universal ideas in order to attain joy possess happy life, which is the supreme end of human life. But this happiness is not identical with universal happiness. It is the possession of only one individual. Because the happiness of one person cannot make another person happy. That is why every man must have a will, which is personal and free. One has freedom of will and is free to turn towards absolute good and get happiness and also free to turn away from God and turn towards lower good. These two acts of turning towards good and turning away from good are two free acts.

But here the question is why does the will choose sin? God is the cause of everything. So He is also the cause of this act of choosing evil or turning away from God. Is He, then, the real cause of sin? If God is not cause of sin then wherefrom does the evil come? All good things come from God. Every thing has some good in nature. So good comes from God. When we see a being in proper measure and order without hesitation we accept God is its author. But if we bare it of its proper measure and order, nothing could remain. But still a seed of goodness would remain through which we can bring it to its perfection step by step.

“If an adumbration of being is a certain good, the complete deprivation of good is by definition equivalent to an utter destruction of being. Consequently, it becomes quite
inconsistent to imagine a positive cause like God at the origin of the act whereby free will turns away from Him”.

God created will as master of everything and will has capacity to turning towards absolute good and turning away from Him. Will is certainly created by God with power to separate itself from God. But it is his duty not to do so. The fall of Adam or first man was not same as the fall of stone which is necessary and natural and mechanical. The fall of man, on the other hand, was free. So the sin was a deficiency or a lack of order that came as a result of a lack of being. The source of original fall was nothing but nothingness.

For example, silence is merely absence of sound, and darkness is merely absence of light. Similarly, we can say that sin in our will is merely an absence of love for God. St Augustine holds that our will is changeable because God created it out of nothingness. That is why it is also imperfect. Without help of God man cannot relieve himself from sin. God helps us is order do make us a being with perfect order and measure.

“But, let us add, God helps us bring order out of the disorder for which He is in no way responsible; He extends his hand to fallen man to raise him from his fall and, through grace, restores the original order destroyed by sin”.

Augustine holds that human beings have freedom to choose between good and evil and are therefore responsible for their good deeds and wicked actions. Their action deserves praise and blame and reward and punishment for same reasons. But in spite of this, they cannot and do not
choose always right action. This is because even the choice of right action requires help of God. God’s help is a necessary factor in choosing right action and in avoiding evil action. This is as the scripture says:

“Without Me ye can do nothing”.\textsuperscript{45}

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast”.\textsuperscript{46}

From this the possibility arises that the good works are not necessary to those who believe, as the faith alone suffices for them for attaining salvation. But, then, does it mean God’s grace debases man or man’s freedom of will and free will and God’s grace are incompatible? St Augustine’s answer is no. He says that evil deeds like lust, greed, avarice, pride, and hates, compel man to lead evil life. But all these kinds of feelings are slave of will. So how they are free in their choice of evil. St Augustine proves compatibility of God’s grace and man’s freedom of will in terms of God’s foreknowledge. He says God is omniscient and he knows everything. He knows things which are in people’s heart, i.e. all their desires and their intentions. He knows also all that has happened and is happening and will happen. But if it is so, there would be no logical room to free will. So how is free will compatible with divine foreknowledge. Augustine says that although God’s foreknowledge and man’s freedom of will at first sight seem incompatible, this incompatibility is merely in appearance not in reality
First of all, we should ask what is meant by God's foreknowledge?

This problem is stated by Evodius. He asked how can it be possible that God has foreknowledge of all events and yet we do not commit sin by necessity? For, after all, God must have known that man would commit sin. He knew sin would happen although sin by its very nature should be committed not by necessity but by free choice. How can free will remain when such type of necessity is found? St. Augustine's answer is that of all things that happen and do not happen some happened by necessity and some by will. God knows what I shall will before I have willed it. But His foreknowledge occurs when my will comes to pass itself.

"God equally knows what we shall will, before we have willed it. Yet when what He foreknows comes to pass what comes to pass is my willing itself. His foreknowledge of what I shall do does not by-pass my willing it - my agency or authorship".47

That means God's foreknowledge is about what and when I shall will. That means my authorship in my action is necessary. He said that God knows in advance what I shall freely choose. For example, I know about someone very well that this person is going to commit sin. But my knowledge does not itself necessitate that sin. My knowledge cannot force him to committing sin, although he was going to commit sin. St. Augustine says that even if we predict that a person will do such and such a thing, that does not mean he is bound to do it or that he is forced to do it. My prediction will not affect his power of choice. According to St. Augustine,
God does not have knowledge of my doing a certain action but only of what would I like to do in that particular situation. In other words, He does not foreknow what I shall do, but merely what I shall will. For example, 'what I decide' when I decide, God and other person knows what I have decided. But then I cannot decide any thing else. Augustine compares foreknowledge with memory. He says that foreknowledge does not necessitate what is foreseen. Furthermore, he says that my recollection of an event that happened in the past is no constraint to what happens or occurs now or in future. Similarly, God's foreknowledge of the future does not compel for an occurrence to take place.

For example, my knowledge about you that you will keep promise is merely inductive although it comes with large amount of trust in you. But your promise to me that you will come to my house for tea is not inductive. Because only you know about your will or intention to do it. In this case, a possibility remains that in future and in certain circumstances you might have to change your mind. This change of intention will prevent you from doing that which you have earlier fully intended to do. Similar is the case with God's foreknowledge. When it is said that God sees into your heart what is meant is that you cannot deceive Him as you deceive your friends. But it does not mean that God knows telepathy. The statement 'God knows what is in your heart', means you may have evil thoughts towards peoples but you hide your feelings from them. But you cannot hide that from God.
Peoples may have thought that you are a good person. But there is no escape of reward and punishment on account of your evil thought. You deserve a certain judgment. This judgment would be automatic. Here again God knows you deserve such a judgment Hence St. Augustine holds that he knows every thing and yet He does not force an action on you.

3. God's Grace and Free-Will

The next issue to discuss is the importance of God's grace in order to attain salvation and its relation to free will. God is the sovereign good. God is free in His creative act. He has created man in the form as we have him now. But He originally created man in a much superior state. God created man in a state of nature. It was indeed His divine grace through which God constitutes the original condition of nature. God created man with a changeable nature and in a state of complete subordination of body to soul. Augustine always insists that man was made good and that the original sin was a result of man's act of choice. God himself played no role in man's fall, but man fell by his own free will. He also said that if first man has not fallen then there would be no sin in this world.

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned".

It was the personal decision of Adam that led to his voluntarily turning away from God. He disobeyed the will of God. St Augustine mentions two consequences that resulted after Adam's original sin. One is concupiscence
and the other, ignorance. Man’s nature that was good was changed by the first man’s evil will. Adam disobeyed only one time, but the evil permanently became nature of man through propagation. But we should not think that man’s original nature is evil. Or that it was the result of God’s will. It was for sure the result of Adam’s will to disobey God. But it should be remembered that after his fall God did not leave man in dark. He desired the human nature to regain its pristine purity and attain salvation. Man can regain his original goodness only if God grants help, in other words, bestows Grace. It is a special gift whereby God restores to fallen man what he has lost by his will.

“Although man was created by God in His image and likeness, he lost these superlative gifts through his own fault”. 49

God’s creation of man in His own image was already a gift and he lost this gift through His will. It was his voluntary decision. But if he wants to regain salvation or to regain the state of purity that was there before original sin, that would not depend merely on his will. Man cannot get salvation merely through his will. He is in need of God’s assistance or God’s grace. Furthermore, St Augustine holds free will is always identical with act of will. Voluntary action can never be without motive. For example: a falling stone does not fall without cause but it falls without motive. A falling stone has a cause but not motive. But ‘will’ cannot be without motive. A ‘will’ without motive would be impossible. We cannot
choose to do away with free choice without destroying will. This is so because free choice is identical with will. Augustine does not ask the question whether we have will or not. Because he knows we have will. What he wants to know is whether we have free choice or not. We for example that love of God is our free choice, so he does not want to know this. He wants to know whether love of God is in our power or not. He holds that the power to do what we choose is something more than free choice. This power to do what we choose is liberty. There is no contradiction between grace and free choice but there is problem in regard to relation between grace and liberty. To understand this problem, we have to understand or recall the Pelagius teachings. Pelagius doctrine was that sin is merely evil use of free choice. Sin does not debase either liberty of free choice or its natural goodness, or its ability to do good. Evil will does not vitiate the good nature of man.

According to Pelagius man is in no need of God's grace. God does not give grace to make evil will good. So the free will remains as it was before fall. Every man comes in the world with the nature of Adam as it was before the fall. Pelagious also said that God does not pardon until sin is not committed. Pardoning is only remission of sin. Pelagious held that Christ's sacrifice was only demonstration of God's infinite goodness. So the conclusion from Pelagious' thinking was that grace was not required before committing sin; it was required only afterwards of committing the
sin. It was needed to wipe out the sin. The ‘will’ is free in order to follow or not follow the laws.

For St. Augustine, on the other hand, many people may have desire to do good but they are unable to carry out their desire in practice. In many other cases people know the law but have no will to observe the law.

St. Augustine says that this kind of two fold omission goes along with liberty. He holds that we receive God’s grace not according to our own merit as Pelagius had thought. Whether a man can receive grace depends entirely upon God’s will. Inspite of this, we receive God’s grace according to our own merit. And it begins at the time when we have received the grace. He further says that without grace our free will does nothing. It rather goes from one fall to other. The question that arises here is when everything depends upon God’s grace, what is the role of human being? Augustine’s answer to this is “it retains its free choice, and gains liberty”. The retaining of free choice means man has free will although grace is granted by God. Free choice means man is free to receive grace or not. “What hast thou that thou hast not received”. Meaning thereby if our free will does not want to receive grace, who would receive grace. Receiving grace means to accept, to consent, to act.

“For receiving means accepting, consenting, acting; it means acting by willing, i.e. as a will should act, and following its own nature. But a will which acts like a will thereby bears witness to its free choice. Hence the well known words, ... do not deny free choice, but imply it”.
Augustine says that God makes our will to will and grants the grace it needs to do what He orders. It is also will which wills and does what He commands. God helps the man to activate the will through which he acts. He helps the man not to make him dispense with but to make him able to act. So free choice is always there. To the question, whether free choice remains with us even though God always grants grace only to those who He wants, St. Augustine replies that for the reason of psychology of human will, there is no doubt about it. According to him, will is essentially love or, in other words, it is delight. Will is a kind of inner weight just like physical things have weight. The movement of this kind of inner weight towards different sights or ends is its liberty.

"Therefore, no matter what the object may be in which the will takes delight, it takes delight in it freely, and whatever the source of the attraction it feels for one end rather than another, the attraction cannot endanger its liberty because the attraction is the choice itself in which that liberty finds expression." 

Now again question is what is the role of grace in one’s exercise of liberty? The answer to this question is grace substitutes delight in human being i.e. delight in good for the delight in evil.

Furthermore, the law or command which is not otherwise observed by a fallen man, is realized by him after having grace. Like grace charity, too, is nothing other than love of God. Through this love or charity he finds joy and delight in those things or laws in which he feels no attraction or feels these are the opposite of his nature. So, grace does not prevent man’s work and does no harm to the liberty. When man does not have grace he
hates the law and falls into the sin. But how man can feel joy or delight in law through grace? Augustine answers:

"He hears the call of grace; it even appears to him as a good which would be desirable to some extent; concupiscence, however, gives him greater delight and since delight is merely the will's movement towards its object, the man in whom passion holds sway infailingly prefers sin to grace". 54

Hence, on the basis of this, we can say that man performs those actions in which he finds greater delight. But it should be remembered that this predominant delight does not abolish our free choice. It does not finish our free choice, but it is manifestation of it. The sinful delight, or good delight is not that which is added to my will. But it is only will's spontaneous movement.

"Man is truly free when he sees to it that the object of his delight is precisely liberty". 55

In Augustinian system, liberty is not identical with animal volition. It is rather identified with free choice or, in other words, it is identified with a kind of volition which always supposes known object. A known object seeks his enjoyment in good or bad. St. Augustine says that we should clearly understand that God's grace works upon will and it confers liberty, not free choice.

"Indeed, liberty (libertas) is merely the good use of free choice (liberum arbitrium). Now if the will always remains free - in the sense of free choice - it is not always good, and consequently not always free - in the sense of liberty". 56

Further he says that if our will is good and remains good, then we find our will in both states i.e., the state of liberty and state of free choice. Now, sometimes it happens that our will falls into evil or it also happens
that our will is good but cannot continue long in this state. Then the
question is what is the reason of this lack of liberty in free choice? St. Paul
answered that it is sin, which is a fundamental failure of our will. So,
whenever we raise the question, is it our free choice which has power or
which carries for long our love of God, what we are asking actually is if it
is human will which is equal to the task of restoring the order created by
the divine omnipotence. Pelagius had said that human beings can do those
things which would otherwise require divine power to create.

"We can always fall without help, but we cannot always get
up again without it. We can never get up again when our fall
is an infinite one unless, of course, God Himself extends His
hand and lifts us up again".57

So it is God's grace that He bestows on us that sets us free. This
grace rules over body and saves the will from destruction. It also makes
will more good and more liberated.

To sum up, according to Augustine, liberty is identified with the
capability of free choice oriented towards good. This means liberty and
grace though distinct from each other, are yet linked by the fact that grace
enhances man's liberty.

"Hence, the more the will is subject to grace, the healthier it
is; and the healthier it is, the freer it is also".58

Moreover, if we understand free choice as subject to God's will
alone, this would be greatest possible liberty of free choice. St. Augustine
maintains that true liberty lies in the service of Christ.

"For when you were the servants of sin, you were free men to
justice. But now being made free from sin you become
servants to God".59
St. Augustine describes this in words: “you will be free if you are a slave: free of sin, slave of justice”.60

“Therefore, my dearly beloved, as we have now proved by our former testimonies from Holy Scripture that there is in man a free determination of will for living rightly and acting rightly; so now let us see what are the divine testimonies concerning the grace of God, without which we are not able to do any good thing”.61

Hence, although will is good but man is unable to carry out his good will. St Augustine says that there is difference between those who are graced and those who are not graced. Those who do not have grace, cannot use this will in doing good although they have desire to do so.

“The difference between the man who has grace and the man who does not lies not in the possession or lack of free choice, but in its efficacy. Those who do not have grace are recognized from the fact that their free choice is not used to will the good; or if do will it, they are unable to carry it out. On the contrary, those who have grace want to do good and succeed in doing it”.62

So grace confirms the will to do good or the ability to carry it out. Now the question is does the grace abolish man’s freedom of will? St Augustine proves through scripture that grace does not debase man’s freedom of will; it rather enhances or reinforces man’s freedom of will.

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law”.63

He holds that no law is fulfilled without free will. Further, through law we can gain knowledge of sin but only through faith do we acquire grace to ward off sin. Through grace we cure soul from the disease of sin, through
health of soul we gain freedom of will, through free will we get love for
righteousness and through righteousness we make and establish the law. So
grace does not debase man's freedom of will, but it helps in making laws.

"Accordingly, as the law is not made void, but is established
through faith, since faith procures grace whereby the law is
fulfilled; so free will is not made void through grace, but is
established, since grace cures the will whereby righteousness
is freely loved".  

St Augustine said that we always have free will. But it is not always good.
It may be good or bad. But God's grace is always good. And through
God's grace man's will becomes good which, before grace, was evil.

"There is, however, always within us a free will — but it is not
always good; for it is either free from righteousness when it
serves sin — and then it is evil — or else it is free from sin
when it serves righteousness — and then it is good. But the
grace of God is always good; and by it comes to pass that a
man is of a good will, though he was before of an evil one".

So, according to St Augustine, man's evil will becomes good, when God's
grace comes to pass. Moreover, St. Augustine says, when a man does not
come under the grace of God, then sin dominates over him, although he
were under the law. So man is not freed by the law but by the grace.

"For sin shall have dominion over you; because you are not
under law, but under grace".

But it does not mean the law is evil. By grace man becomes able to
follow the law. Without grace he becomes merely a hearer of the laws.

"It is by grace that any one is a doer of the law; and without
this grace, he who is placed under the law will be only a
hearer of the law".
As we saw before, St. Augustine accepted man's will in the face of God's fore knowledge. He says that God has fore knowledge. But He does not have foreknowledge about what I shall do. He has foreknowledge only of what I shall will. Further he said that without God's grace man cannot choose right action although he has the right desire to do it. So God's grace is a necessary factor in our doing good.

On account of preceding discussion, it may be concluded that we are saved by the grace of God from the faith. Now the question is whether faith is in our self or it is gift of God. St. Augustine confesses that earlier he thought faith is not a gift of God, but it is in our self. But then he says he was in error and actually faith from which we believe God is gift of God, and it is not in our self.

"I was in a similar error, thinking that faith whereby we believe on God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from our selves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that faith was preceded by God's grace, so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not believe if the proclamation of the truth did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourself".68

That faith is not in ourself but is a gift from God is seen from the following quote from scripture:

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of ourself; it is gift of God".69
Some philosophers like Pelagius hold that faith is given by God to us according to our merits. But St Augustine does not accept this view. He holds that scripture shows to us that God directs not only man’s good will which He turns good from bad but also directs those whose wills follow God’s commands. He turns man’s will whenever He wants. God himself judges righteous way by the counsel to Himself. But it should be remembered that His judgments are always righteous.

“...it shows us that not only men’s good wills, which God himself converts from bad ones, and, when converted by Him, directs to good actions and to eternal life, but also those which follow the world are so entirely at the disposal of God, that He turns them withersoever He wills, and wheresoever He wills – to bestow kindness on some, and to heap punishment on others, as He Himself judges right by a counsel most secret to Himself, indeed, but beyond all doubt most righteous."70

In scripture the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun,

“The children of Israel shall not be able to stand before the face of their enemies”.71

What is meant by of this? Why the people of Israel were not able to stand before their enemies? Was it not of their own will that the enemies of the children of Israel fought against the people of God? St Paul says that it was the will of God that the children of Israel did not face the people of God.

“It was of the lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle that, they might be determinated”.72
Does the above not mean that God has the lordship over men’s will? St Augustine holds that God operates men’s hearts. The work of God in heart of man inclines his will wheresoever He wants. Sometimes He inclines man’s heart towards good and sometimes towards evil. His judgment is sometimes manifest, and sometimes hidden, but it is always righteous.

“From these statements...I think, it is sufficiently clear that God works in the hearts of men to incline their wills whithersoever He wills, whether to good deeds according to His mercy, or to evil after their own deserts; his own judgment being sometimes manifest, sometimes secret, but always righteous”.

So we should have firm belief in our heart that there is no unrighteousness attached with God. St. Augustine holds that we should not think that we gain grace according to our merit. If it was so, it would not be the grace.

“Grace, however, is not bestowed according to men’s deserts; otherwise grace would no longer be grace”.

Further he says that if faith is simply free will and if it is in man’s hand, not given by God, why do we pray for those who do not believe. This is absolutely absurd if God does not have ability to turn our belief and also the ability of removing hardness from our heart. Did he not say to prophet:

“I will take from them their heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh”.
Further God says to prophet Ezekiel;

"I will give another heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and, I will be their God, saith the Lord". 76

So these verses of Scripture show that God has ability to turn our ability. He has command over our will. But He is always righteous. When we read in the scripture that men's hearts are blunted and hardened by God, does not that mean that some ill deserts have been done by men, so, they justly suffer all these things. We cannot find grace according to our own merit. It has been given us by grace. For, otherwise, the grace would be no longer the grace. Sometimes it happens that this grace is bestowed upon the children of unbelievers while on the other hand the children of believers fail to obtain this grace. It happens through the secret providence of God. But the judgments of God are good and unsearchable.

"For as ye, in time past, have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy; for God has concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all". 77

We have seen that God's grace may be obtained by unbelievers and those persons who do evil deeds. It is however astonishing that God might have mercy upon unbelievers, 'as if doing evil that good might come'. The reason behind this thinking is that grace or commandment comes in this
world at the time when disorder or sin spreads out in this world in abundance.

"Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound". 

But ignorant persons are unable to understand, and they said 'let us do evil, that good may come'. But God forbid those who concluded that do evil and good may come. But the purpose of grace is that the peoples who did evil previously do not continue the previous acts in the present life. But perverse men do not understand that, and misinterpreted it;

"Let us do us evil, that good may come;" but: "We have done evil, and good has come; let us henceforth do good, that in the future world we may receive good, for good who in the present life are receiving good for evil".

So after receiving grace man should stop evil deeds. We should not think that if we commit sin in abundance the grace would also come in abundance.

Augustine says that so many people hear the word of truth but only some of them are believers while others are not. We know this. No one can deny this. It is the will through which an individual's beliefs is repaired by the Lord while in others it is not repaired. We must be capable of distinguishing between God's mercy and His judgment or, in other words, what come from His mercy what from His judgment. In the context of the election apostle say that man cannot obtain God's grace but can obtain it if God elects man for His grace. God's grace is not common to all. Some are elected by God while some are not.
"What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Just as it is written: ‘God has given them spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear to this very day’. And David says: ‘Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense to them. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down their back always’.80

The difference between mercy and judgment is that mercy is the election of the God. God elects those persons whom He wants, but judgment of God is for the rest of people. They become blind by the judgment of God. So the mercy and judgment both depend on His will. Grace is given to us according to His will, not according to our own merit.

"Even so then, at this present time there is remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work".81

So man is saved by God’s mercy or by His will, not by any other things. By His will all paths are full of mercy and truth.

"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth".82

But no one can know His ways. His ways are unsearchable.

"Therefore the mercy by which He freely delivers, and the truth by which He righteously judges, are equally unsearchable".83

Now, Apostle said that we are justified by faith and not by work. He says that we cannot obtain grace through works. Apostle distinguishes faith from work.
"And he says that a man is justified by faith and not by works, because faith itself is first given, from which may be obtained other things which are specially characterized as works, in which a man may live righteously". 

St Paul himself says in Eph:

"By grace ye are saved through faith, and this not of yourself; but it is gift of God". 

He said that man cannot be lifted up through his faith. It is God's grace which especially distinguishes one man from another. If some one holds that faith is in his hand he is absolutely wrong. St Paul rebukes those who take pride in the faith as of their own achievement or think that they are distinguished by their faith. He said it should be understood that man should not glory in man, but in God. The primary nature of man is bestowed to him by God, and is common to all. But one man is distinguished from another man by what they receive or not receive.

"For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"

The first question is how do you differ? If one say, my faith makes me different from the others, the next question would be what is the thing that you have received or not received and also from whom you received that things to make you differ. Obviously, it is from God who makes you differ from another and it is He who bestowed on you that thing and to no others so that you differ. If you say, yes, I have received that thing by which I differ from God, then why you are boasting that faith is in yourself
and you have not achieved it by God's grace. It is grace by which you are
distinguished from one another. It is grace which makes good persons
differ from the wicked. It is not common to all persons. It is grace by
which we are living as a rational creature, and are distinguished from the
cattle in nature. It is grace by which handsome differ from ill-formed or
ugly or intelligent from the stupid. St Paul does not make any difference in
the primary nature of creatures. But he makes differences in saintly life.
Such life is good through gift of God. He rebukes the saint, and holy man,
saying that he should not pride for being a distinguished man. When he is
puffed up against the other he deserved to hear the rebuke. Although all
men have capacity to have faith by the primary nature, which is also given
by God, every man does not have not faith. "For all men have no faith".37

St Paul says that the capacity to have faith, as the capacity to have
love, belongs to man's nature. But to have love, and to have faith both
belongs to God's grace. Thus the capacity to having faith is common to all
men, which is given by God. And this capacity to having faith does not
distinguish one person from another. But having faith itself distinguishes
one as believer from being unbeliever. Therefore, if it is asked, who makes
you differ? And what do you have that you did not receive, if one's answer
is, 'I have faith by myself', which I did not receive, he directly contradicts
with truth. Man can not obtain God's grace, not because he has choice of
will to believe or not believe, but because he is not elected by God.
In this context, the question also arises as to what is the difference between grace and predestination. St Augustine holds that in Christianity worthy person cannot remain without salvation and those who will remain, are not worthy of salvation. If it is asked, how can a man be worthy for salvation the answer is man can become worthy for salvation not by his own will but only by divine grace or predestination.

"Moreover... "That the salvation of this religion has never been lacking to him who was worthy of it, and that he to whom it was lacking was not worthy"— if it be discussed and it be asked whence any man can be worthy, there are not wanting those who say — by human will. But we say, by divine grace or predestination".88

The difference between predestination and grace is that predestination is the preparation for grace. And grace is the destination itself. Predestination cannot exist without foreknowledge, although foreknowledge may exist without predestination. God knows about those things which he is going to do. "He made those things that shall be".89

Further, it is said that He has foreknowledge even of those things which He does not Himself do. God knows not many of those things that are not done by Him but by man. Such as sin, corruption, pride and so on. Although sometimes it happens that God gives to man such type of mind through which he would commit sin.

"God gave them over to reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient".90
But it should not be understood in such a case that the sin is God’s. Sin is not of God but its judgement is. So predestination of God is good and is a preparation of the grace. We can say that grace is the effect of the predestination. Therefore when God promised to Abraham “I have established thee a father of many nations”⁹¹, and St Paul says,

“Therefore it is of faith, that the promise, according to grace, might be established to all the seed”⁹²

God did not promise from the power of our will, but his own predestination. He promised what He Himself would do, not what man would do. Although men do those things which pertain to His worship, God makes them what He has commanded. It is not in man’s power to fulfill the God’s promise. If fulfillment of God’s promise is in man’s hand rather than God’s then what was promised by God to Abraham would be given to Abraham by men themselves. But Abraham believed in God’s promise that he is able to do what he did. He has no doubt about God’s promise.

“He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what he had promised He was also able to perform”⁹³

When he says “He is able to do,” then, he is not saying doings of others but he is speaking of his own.
Going back to the question of election by God, He does not elect those who believed, but in order that they may believe. God himself says that they have not chosen me but I chose them.

"you have not chosen me, I have chosen you".94

If it is so, did He elect on the basis of one's faith or because one has believed. Then every one certainly is first chosen by Him on the basis of his effort or his belief. It should be remembered that it is on the basis of their effort that they deserve to be elected. But this position is not possible when God says, "you have not chosen me," but, "I have chosen you". It is obvious that they themselves are chosen by Him when they believed in Him. There can be no other reason for saying, "you have not chosen me", "I have chosen you".

"Whence it is not for any other reason..."Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," than because they did not choose Him that He should choose them, but He chose them that they might choose Him; because His mercy preceded then according to grace, not according to debt".95

His mercy precedes the event of election. He chose out of the world those who were already chosen by Him before the beginning of the world. This is ultimate or changeless truth pertaining to predestination and grace.

"As He has chosen us in himself before the foundation of the world".96
God elected them before the creation of the world, and He then called them with the special calling. God called them and fulfilled what He had predestined.

“For whom He predestinated, them He also called, with that calling, to wit, which is according to the purpose. Not others, therefore, but those whom He predestinated, them He also called; nor others, but those whom He so called, them He also justified; nor others, but those whom He predestinated, called, and justified, them He also glorified; assuredly to that end which has no end” 97

So God Himself elected the believers. But He does not choose them, because they have believed, but because they might believe. God chooses them and makes them rich in faith as heirs of His kingdom. The Apostle James says:

“Has not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him” 98