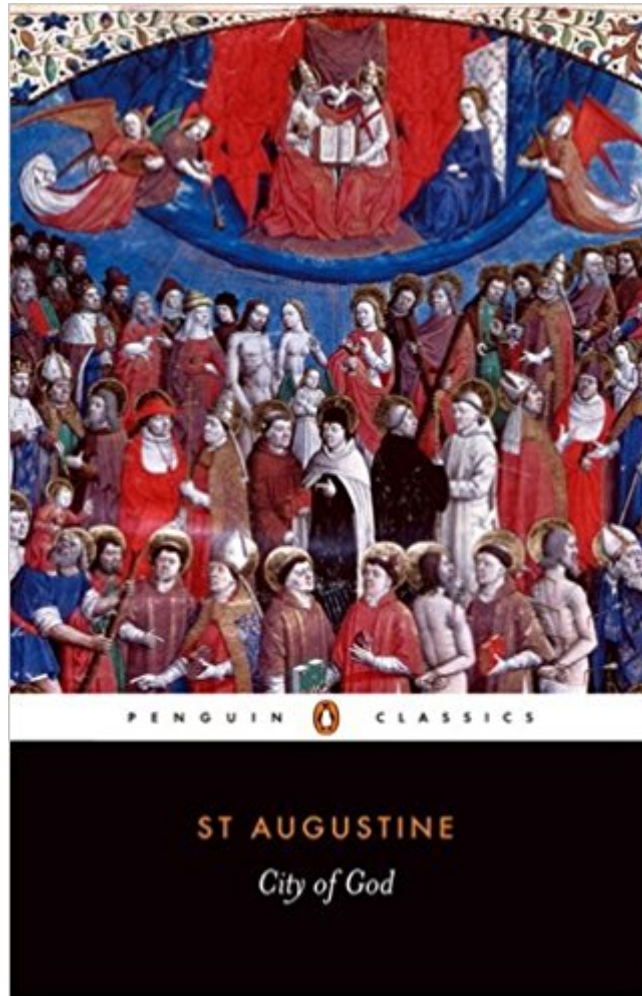




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# City Of God (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

St Augustine, bishop of Hippo, was one of the central figures in the history of Christianity, and *City of God* is one of his greatest theological works. Written as an eloquent defence of the faith at a time when the Roman Empire was on the brink of collapse, it examines the ancient pagan religions of Rome, the arguments of the Greek philosophers and the revelations of the Bible. Pointing the way forward to a citizenship that transcends the best political experiences of the world and offers citizenship that will last for eternity, *City of God* is one of the most influential documents in the development of Christianity. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Augustine's *City of God*, a monumental work of religious lore, philosophy, and history, was written as a kind of literary tombstone for Roman culture. After the sack of Rome, Augustine wrote this book to anatomize the corruption of Romans' pursuit of earthly pleasures: "grasping for praise, open-handed with their money; honest in the pursuit of wealth, they wanted to hoard glory."

Augustine contrasts his condemnation of Rome with an exaltation of Christian culture. The glory that Rome failed to attain will only be realized by citizens of the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem foreseen in Revelation. Because City of God was written for men of classical learning--custodians of the culture Augustine sought to condemn--it is thick with Ciceronian circumlocutions, and makes many stark contrasts between "Your Virgil" and "Our Scriptures." Even if Augustine's prose strikes modern ears as a bit bombastic, and if his polarized Christian/pagan world is more binary than the one we live in today, his arguments against utopianism and his defense of the richness of Christian culture remain useful and strong. City of God is, as its final words proclaim itself to be, "a giant of a book." --Michael Joseph Gross --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"The human mind can understand truth only by thinking, as is clear from Augustine."--Saint Thomas Aquinas  
From the Trade Paperback edition. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

What can I say? This is a classic. I am so glad I read this before my 30th birthday and before the 2016 US presidential election. It really puts things into perspective. No matter how great I think America is and how much of a superpower it is it does not compare to how long and how great the Roman Empire was. I cannot even begin to imagine how the citizens of Rome must have felt when they heard the news that the barbarian tribes from the north took over Rome in 410AD. This apologetic work from Augustine of Hippo does not only argue that the City of God will overcome the City of Man one day but also teaches one how to engage critics and persuasively convince the reader. Augustine was a Roman through and through but His love for the true Eternal City was always more important. This book gave me an appreciation for how God always has a 'pilgrim people' that He has predestined to fight the good fight. If you are looking for a biblical theology of the City of God throughout all of Scripture then this is a great read for you. It will also give you an appreciation for how the current trend of 'gospel-centered' is not anything new but really old and Augustine was a master at making Christ-centered connections from the OT. For example, on page 971 Augustine skillfully writes, "This is why, as the Lord carried his cross, so Isaac himself carried to the place of sacrifice the wood on which he too was to be placed. Moreover, after the father had been prevented from striking his son, since it was not right that Isaac should be slain, who was the ram whose immolation completed the sacrifice by blood of symbolic significance? Bear in mind that when Abraham saw the ram it was caught by the horns in a thicket. Who, then, was symbolized by that ram but Jesus, crowned with Jewish thorns 1500 years before he was offered in sacrifice? The book is

filled with little nuggets all throughout. Couldn't recommend it more!

The City of God is a classic with very detailed theological thoughts and developments throughout the very long book. Augustine develops the two cities theme with vast information. It was difficult for me to sustain the level of attention for this monumental work throughout. There were ideas from Augustine that I had never heard of in theology or divinity school. For example he ponders and goes through Biblical verses to support his view on the origin of angels in the creation scheme. I am glad that I read through this book in a quick way but admit it would be difficult to carefully read this huge book. Augustine is a remarkable church father. I would suggest reading his confessions or his book on teachings as a starter to Augustine, however.

Now I understand why the writings of Augustine are so popular. Here he paints a clear inspired picture of early days in the Church, and what it meant to be a Christian in those days. He explained in a way I really enjoyed, the thoughts of notable philosophers like Plato, Varro etc & outlining what wisdom was given to them, where some erred with their disjointed acceptance of the plethora of gods, and finally making the comparison and rightful case for the one true God and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you think you deserve to be talking-about anything-get this book. Augustine is one of the most distinguished men of letters. Just reading his essays shall make you a more studied, disciplined, tried writer and speaker. The objectivity of the author is astounding. He gave his party lifestyle -comparable to contemporary university freshman-for a life of pain, predictability, and ink pens. City of Gods reminds me why it is obvious that this book is a definitive article from the most famous catholic.

Augustine was genuinely interested in every aspect of reality, and his inquiring spirit leads him into many difficult and important issues. In this book, he offers a theological understanding of history. He responds to the criticism that abandoning the worship of the traditional deities of Rome and turning to Christianity had contributed to the fall of Rome. His criticism of traditional Roman religion is powerful and at times amusing. As is well known, he writes about two cities which are in continual conflict, developing alongside one another: the city of God, based on the love of God even to the point of despising self; and the city of man, built on love for self even to the point of despising God. An interesting detail is that we do not know in our present life who belongs to each city. People who

today are externally following God's law may one day abandon that way, and be separated from him forever. Others may seem far from him, but they may eventually find their way close to him, as happened to Augustine himself.

I've done considerable reading in what would be classed as "Great Christian Literature" but thought Augustine would turn out to be boring. Absolutely Not Boring. He's funny, razor sharp, and has allegorical insights which are wonderful. His analyses of the progress of the City of God and the City of Earth are splendid...how come churches don't talk about this stuff? For instance... did you know that when the visigoths sacked Rome, they spared the lives of all who claimed to be Christians and took refuge in a Christian place of worship? I didn't. Do you know why? I didn't... the visigoths were Christians (of the Arian sect). Now I'll bet they never told you that. Now, you've got to like reading, it's 2 inches thick with no "pop-ups" ... I loved reading this.

This book dives into so much theology from a 5th century theology which is the father of early Christian thought that just gives of himself to make sure that his legacy and thoughts were kept and preserved. This book is transformational and will give insight into what many of us believe today and why. Answers to questions that we typically just don't know where to find. It is tough, but well worth it. Much like vegetables in your diet!

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