

## TWO GREAT CHRISTIAN WRITERS

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It is hard to imagine two men who are both so great and yet so very different from each other as St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom, whose writings make up the fourteen volumes of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series. Augustine is widely known all through the Christian Church. Chrysostom is far less known. Yet both of them were men who by their constancy and by their loyalty to Christ established a record which deserves to be known everywhere. Chrysostom was by far the greater preacher of the two, but Augustine was the greater thinker.

Augustine was probably the greatest Christian thinker between the Apostle Paul and John Calvin. One authority has declared that he was the most brilliant man ever to write in the Latin language. Augustine was thoroughly trained as a teacher of rhetoric, and wandered about for a number of years studying various types of beliefs and investigating various philosophies and religions before he finally became a Christian. All this time his mother, Monica, was praying devoutly for him and longing that her son might become a real Christian. How wonderfully Monica's prayers were answered! Her son became one of the outstanding Christians of the ages.

We know more about the struggles of heart of St. Augustine than of almost any other Christian of those early days, because he wrote it down in a book which is called his "Confessions". Few books from ancient times have been reprinted and re-edited as often as this one. In it Augustine bares his heart, and tells of his experiences as he tried one view after another, seeking to find peace of mind and soul. He shows how one group of people after another took his interest and aroused his enthusiasm. But each proved not to have the answer to his question. Finally his doubts were removed, and he found his heart's desire in a thorough acceptance of Christianity.

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<sup>1</sup> Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, reprinted by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 195\_\_.