

A dramatic, low-key photograph of a hand reaching upwards in a gesture of prayer or supplication. The hand is the central focus, with its fingers slightly curled. The background is dark, with a bright, out-of-focus light source on the right side, creating a strong contrast and highlighting the contours of the hand. The overall mood is contemplative and spiritual.

**MARCO GALLI**

# **SAVED BY HIS LIFE**

**A (NOT SO) NEW THEORY OF  
SALVATION IN JESUS CHRIST**

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JESUS CHRIST

## **Saved by His Life**

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Author | Marco Galli

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Contact e-mail: [savedbyhislife.book@gmail.com](mailto:savedbyhislife.book@gmail.com)

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## PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

The idea to write this book arose a few years ago when, during my participation in a previous publishing project, I was faced with the task of explaining how God accomplished salvation in Jesus Christ; I realised, to my surprise, that every attempt at an explanation was based on shaky theories and unconvincing assumptions. The Bible says that *“Christ died for our sins”*, but have you ever wondered why our sins should require his death? Couldn't God just forgive, without the need to shed innocent blood? Or what does it mean that *“He gave his life as a ransom for many”*? These seemed like trivial questions, and I imagined that two thousand years of theological argumentation would provide comprehensive answers, but the more I investigated official theology, the less convinced I became of the validity of what was presented. The explanations given did not always seem to be compatible with what Jesus preached and were often only supported by a handful of biblical verses, the interpretation of which was not harmonised with the rest of the Scriptures.

I, therefore, decided to study the theories of salvation that had marked the history of Christian theology and, surprisingly, I found that there were many theories, extremely different from one another; moreover, especially those accepted by Western theologies are relatively recent and not rooted in the Christian tradition of the first centuries, but in philosophies and doctrines that emerged at the beginning of the second millennium.

I had to understand more, and for this reason I began to examine every possible source: from the texts of the ancient Fathers of the Church, to the most recent authors, dozens of books, hundreds of articles and papers produced and published in every age; and the Bible of course, in its authentic language, however, Hebrew and Greek, in order to trace the origin of the words used and thus reconstruct some of the meanings lost in later translations. The more I researched, the clearer my view of salvation became, so much so that an outline of this preface written a year ago is now trashed as no longer reflecting the startling revelations I came across. In particular, the deeper I delved into the biblical text, the more Jewish concepts emerged that had been lost due to the cultural gap over the centuries. I seemed to see the Holy Scriptures renewed and enlivened, as I was rediscovering their profound meaning before the distortions wrought on Christian thought by Greek philosophy and other pagan ideas. Above all, the words of Jesus, in their simplicity and clarity, now took on a new weight and vigour that turned upside down many of the concepts I had thought unquestionable.

But it was not just research, because this book is also the culmination of 14 years of Christian experience in many countries of the world; in several European countries, in Africa, South America, the Middle East and Asia, where I came into contact and in some cases collaborated

with different Christian churches, as well as getting to know an incredible variety of other religions and cults. My open-minded approach and tendency to explore has led me to become interested in spirituality from a very young age, collecting experiences in different areas, before coming at the personal encounter with Jesus that changed the course of my life. Despite my many experiences, or perhaps because of them, I do not currently adhere to any specific Christian denomination. Consequently, I have no particular interest or theology to defend, no job to preserve, or an exclusive Church to promote; I consider all those who have a heart faithful to Jesus, regardless of their religious label, to be brothers and sisters in Christ.

Because of my freedom of expression, some of the things I have written may not please some people but, as I have said, I have no other intention than to share as much as possible what I have learned and experienced, whether this is successful or not. I hope, however, that the reader may appreciate and benefit from the revelations contained in this book, as I myself have benefited, rediscovering the merciful God who ceaselessly calls us to reconcile with him in order to give us the full life prepared for us.

The book is organised in three sections. In the first section I will set out the historical research on theories of salvation; I imagine that not everyone is interested in the history of theology, but I urge the reader not to overlook this section, as it provides an indispensable framework for understanding how the theory has evolved, taking different forms over the centuries until the present day. In the second section we will deal with some essential theological foundations, bringing to light interesting revelations regarding the incarnation, forgiveness, grace, sin, faith, the new covenant, the meaning of the Jewish sacrifices, and the idea of eternal life. In the third and final section, we will finally deepen the reality of the Trinity and come up with a (not so) new theory of salvation, which we will call Vital Identification, explaining why God's love is the origin, foundation and ultimate goal of the work of salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ.

## SECTION I

### *SALVATION THEORIES*

*For God so loved the world  
that He gave His only begotten Son,  
that whoever believes in Him should not perish  
but have everlasting life.*

**Gospel of John 3:16**

What do the expressions “*Christ died for our sins*” and “*Christ died for us*” mean?<sup>1</sup> The answer is not as obvious as we imagine, and it has occupied theologians for almost two thousand years without a universally accepted interpretation; although this is one of the cornerstones of faith, we are not yet able to give an unequivocal explanation. We have always held the doctrine of salvation accepted by our Church to be the one and only universally recognised and irrefutable truth. However, if we delve into the history of theology, we will realise that this is not the case, and that over the centuries various theories have followed one another, finding moments of great acceptance only to be forgotten; so much so that different Christian denominations have very different theories. We will also discover that the most popular theories today are relatively recent, and very different ideas were in use by the first Christian communities and throughout the first millennium A.D.

Although redemption through Christ has always been the basis of Christian faith, no final and universally accepted definition of the manner of its achievement has ever been formulated.<sup>2</sup>

Some modern theologians, noting the multiplicity of existing theories, have gone so far as to say that in the end it is not important to establish which theory is the most correct, since it is the way the Bible represents reality using different images and metaphors:

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<sup>1</sup> **1 Corinthians 15:3** *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.* **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

<sup>2</sup> J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (Prince Press, 2003), p. 163.



Amongst many scholars today, there is a preference not to insist that any one theory is central, dominant or “right”, needing to “win out” over others. This reflects the variety of ways offered by scripture for understanding how Christ’s life and death is efficacious in the salvation of fallen humanity.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps, but if the theories are incompatible with each other, one must be right and the others wrong, or they are all wrong, but it cannot be that they are all equally right. For this reason, in the first section of the book, we will analyse in detail all the various theories that have followed one another over the centuries, to show how there is no unanimity of views and to acquire various opinions that will be useful to outline a comprehensive theory of salvation.

It is essential to underline the centrality of the study we are about to undertake, because from it descend an infinity of implications that touch every aspect of faith and consequently of our life; because “wrong ideas about God create wrong ideas about everything else too.”<sup>4</sup> Understanding the dynamics of salvation is vitally important, as it enables us to understand who we are, who God is, what relationship exists between us and him, and how Jesus affected this relationship.

### *1. Salvation theories*<sup>5</sup>

In this first part of the book, we will examine all the main theories of salvation, according to the chronological order in which they were adopted:

1. Moral Transformation theory (1<sup>st</sup> century)
2. Recapitulation theory (2<sup>nd</sup> century)
3. Union with Christ theory (2<sup>nd</sup> century)
4. Ransom theory (3<sup>rd</sup> century)
5. *Christus Victor* theory (3<sup>rd</sup> century)
6. Satisfaction theory (11<sup>th</sup> century)
7. Moral Influence theory (12<sup>th</sup> century)
8. Acceptance theory (14<sup>th</sup> century)
9. Penal Substitution theory (16<sup>th</sup> century)
10. Governmental theory (17<sup>th</sup> century)

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<sup>3</sup> Stephen J. Burnhope, “Beyond the kaleidoscope: towards a synthesis of views on the atonement”, *Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. LXXXIV No. 4, October 2012, p. 345.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Rohr, *Eager to Love – The alternative Way of Francis of Assisi* (Franciscan Media, 2014), p. 190.

<sup>5</sup> In English, the expression normally used is atonement theories, but I have preferred to use salvation theories here.

## SALVATION THEORIES

In the last chapter of this Section, we will finally present some lesser-known modern theories and other interpretations that will be useful for our study. Before we begin, however, it is worth clarifying the fundamental questions that need to be answered if any theory is to be considered sufficiently comprehensive:

- According to this theory, why was Jesus' death necessary for salvation? Could it have been otherwise?
- How do the life, works, preaching, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus fit into the framework of the theory?
- Does the theory under consideration correspond to the entire language of the Bible or only partially? Are there elements that have not been considered?
- Does the theory fit coherently into the broader theological context, e.g., in relation to Trinitarian and Christological doctrine?
- What influences from the historical, social and cultural context may have affected or shaped the theory under consideration?

It is therefore essential to keep these points in mind in our work in order to clarify the capacity of each theory to explain the reality of the facts, which is the only thing that matters to us, namely, to arrive at a synthesis that allows us to know the truth about salvation.

# CHAPTER 1

## *MORAL TRANSFORMATION THEORY*

*And do not be conformed to this world,  
but be transformed  
by the renewing of your mind,  
that you may prove  
what is that good and acceptable  
and perfect will of God.*

**Letter to the Romans 12:2**

Based on some recent studies, which have led to a profound reconsideration of the ancient Jewish cultural context, an ideal of moral transformation of man as a consequence of the life, preaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, seems to have been the predominant interpretation of salvation among the early Christian communities, who believed that Jesus' mission was aimed at producing a radical moral renewal in men and society following the coming of the Kingdom of God. This theory, which its authors have called "Moral Transformation", has recently been elaborated and has the merit of reconsidering the perspective of how the ancient Christian communities, of Jewish tradition, could have understood the message of the Gospel, before the cultural contaminations with which we interpret it in modern times. Therefore, it is not a theory formulated by ancient theologians, as in the case of several theories that we will see later, but it is deduced from an in-depth documentary, historical, social and cultural analysis carried out by some contemporary scholars, on the basis of Christian texts of the first centuries.<sup>6</sup>

### ***1.1. Moral Transformation theory***

According to this theory, the death of Jesus and the subsequent resurrection were regarded, by the early Christian communities, primarily in terms of exemplary martyrdom (testimony) from which they drew inspiration, motivation and confidence. However, the saving work of

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<sup>6</sup> See: A. J. Wallace, R. D. Rusk, *Moral Transformation: The Original Christian Paradigm of Salvation* (Bridgehead Publishing, 2011).

Jesus was not limited to the event of his crucifixion but was manifested in all the words and teachings he preached and the example of life he gave. The cross was therefore the consequence of the revolutionary message Jesus brought, says one scholar: “The cross is merely a ramification of the moral life of Jesus. He is crucified as a martyr due to the radical nature of His moral example.”<sup>7</sup>

They saw Jesus as God’s appointed teacher, prophet, and leader, who died as a martyr in order to teach them a new way of life. Their paradigm of salvation centred upon this way of life taught by Jesus, and on following faithfully his example and teachings.<sup>8</sup>

The resurrection of Jesus was seen as the confirmation of the truth of what he preached and attested to God's acceptance of his doctrine; from this perspective, those who followed his teachings would also achieve the same resurrection and a positive final judgement. In this way, the martyr's death and the subsequent resurrection of Jesus served to instil courage, hope and confidence in the faithful to face persecution.

The exhortation to shun evil (sin) and practise good (righteousness) was predominant in this period, also in the wake of John the Baptist's earlier preaching; each person's final judgement would be determined in the light of the good or evil done in life. Emphasis was placed on the moral teachings and mutual love preached by Jesus, which constituted the new law, completing and replacing the previous Mosaic law, the *Torah*. The accent was no longer on the performance of ritual practices, questioned by Jesus himself, but on the need for a moral transformation of the individual who, by imitating Christ and following his teachings, committed himself with dedication to good works.

The early Christians believed that, at the final judgment, each person would be judged according to his or her life and works;<sup>9</sup> a resurrection of life for those who had done good, a resurrection of condemnation for those who had done evil.<sup>10</sup> The focus of the doctrine of salvation was not on the forgiveness of sins, for which, on the basis of what had already been stated in the Hebrew Bible, sincere repentance and return to God were sufficient conditions for forgiveness; rather, the focus was on the condition of the human heart, which was the foundation for a righteous life. Great emphasis was placed on the moral life, and the exhortation to live uprightly would cover a significant part of the New Testament, at the centre

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen D. Morrison, “7 Theories of the Atonement Summarized” | [www.sdmorrison.org](http://www.sdmorrison.org)

<sup>8</sup> A. J. Wallace, R. D. Rusk, *op. cit.*, from the synopsis of the book.

<sup>9</sup> **2 Corinthians 5:10** *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

<sup>10</sup> **John 5:29** *And come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

of which was placed the paradigm of love of neighbour.<sup>11</sup> It should also be remembered that the moral and theological recommendations, to which the first Christian communities could refer, came mainly from the writings of the Prophets and from the Wisdom books of the Bible, where there was a strong and recurrent invitation to do good and to help the oppressed in particular: *“Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow!”*<sup>12</sup> *“Defend the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy.”*<sup>13</sup> What spread in this early period of Christianity could almost be said to be a social gospel strongly focused on helping the poor; as proof of this, when Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to meet James, Peter and John, they received, besides the mandate to go to the foreigners, the only recommendation to remember, i.e., to do something, for the poor.<sup>14</sup> The issue was so deeply felt that Paul worked continuously to raise funds for the poor brothers in Jerusalem,<sup>15</sup> and those who joined the Church sold all their possessions and shared with those in need.<sup>16</sup>

God's grace, according to this theory, consists in having sent Jesus who, through his life and teachings, provided a moral example to motivate people to abandon the ways of sin and lead a righteous life based on love. Man was considered to be endowed with the ability to choose (free will) and there was no idea of original sin, a concept that was not formulated until the 4<sup>th</sup> century by Augustine of Hippo.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the evil that afflicts man was considered to derive either from ignorance in knowing what is good or from a bad conscience in not practising it; thanks to the teachings and testimony of Jesus, men would therefore be touched to the core and exhorted to know what is good, to abandon evil ways and to convert to justice and love of neighbour. The death and subsequent resurrection of Christ would encourage the faithful to work unreservedly, even at the cost of their lives, to do good and to commit themselves to the community. It is an extended concept of salvation, not so much of the individual, as we are used to imagining in our individualistic society, but of the community,

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<sup>11</sup> **Galatians 5:14** *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*  
**James 2:8** *If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well.*

<sup>12</sup> Isaiah 1:17.

<sup>13</sup> Psalms 82:3.

<sup>14</sup> **Galatians 2:9-10** *And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.*

<sup>15</sup> **Romans 15:25-26** *For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.*

<sup>16</sup> **Acts 2:45** *And sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

<sup>17</sup> Aurelius Augustine of Hippo, Doctor of the Church, philosopher and theologian, Bishop of Hippo (Tagaste, Algeria, 354 A.D. - Hippo, Algeria, 430 A.D.). He was one of the great Doctors of the western Church, known as the “Doctor of Grace”. His work marked the history of European religiosity and philosophy.

which was typical of the Jewish culture, where each person was called to work as a coordinated member of a single body, the Church.

In conclusion, salvation was seen as the conversion and repentance of the person towards a new moral dimension, a premise for a final positive judgement by God, which is obtained by doing good in imitation of the example given by Jesus, by remaining faithful to his cause and loyal to the community.

First, there is one spiritual and inexpressibly exalted God, who is Lord and Father of the world. Secondly, he requires a holy life. Thirdly, he will at last sit in judgement, and will reward the good with immortality and punish the wicked with death. The teaching concerning God, virtue, and eternal reward is traced through the prophets and Christ; but the bringing about of a virtuous life (of righteousness) has been necessarily left by God to men themselves; for God has created man free, and virtue can only be acquired by man's efforts. The prophets and Christ are therefore a source of righteousness in so far as they are teachers.<sup>18</sup>

It must be said, however, for the sake of completeness, that the vision of the early Church, hypothesised by this theory as integrally "exemplarist", did not exclude the need for the action of the Holy Spirit in the process of man's transformation, and saw in the union with Christ the way to reach its full realisation, as we shall see later.

### *1.2. Pelagius and Augustine*

An interpretation quite like the theory of Moral Transformation became widespread in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, through the works of a monk named Pelagius,<sup>19</sup> who advocated a return to the origins of Christianity by proposing an exemplarist model based on the life of Jesus. This model was strongly opposed by part of the Church and in particular by Augustine of Hippo, and led to his condemnation for heresy in 418 A.D. It is important to open a brief digression on the clash between these two eminent scholars, since it was an event that marked the course of Christian theology.

Specifically, Pelagius denied the existence of any original sin inherited from Adam and Eve, as instead assumed by Augustine, except in terms of the bad example they had passed on; humanity would be neither corrupt nor incapable of doing good, and even less guilty of anything by birth, it would only be badly educated and accustomed to vices:

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<sup>18</sup> Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma*, by Neil Buchnan (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2020. First publication 1894), Vol II, pp. 203-204.

<sup>19</sup> Pelagius, latinized name of Morgan, (British Isles, c. 354 A.D. - Alexandria, c. 427 A.D.). He was a Christian monk, theologian and orator from Britany or Ireland who was condemned for heresy by the Church in 418 A.D.

For no other cause occasions for us the difficulty of doing good than the long custom of vices, which has infected us from childhood, and gradually, through many years, corrupted us, and thus holds us afterward bound and addicted to itself, so that it seems in some way to have the force of nature.<sup>20</sup>

He believed that man does not need redemption and that he was created with the capacity and freedom to act righteously according to his own choices, albeit aided by the example of Christ:

In the person of Jesus Christ, the inner spiritual law is made fully manifest for us. His words explain the spiritual law, and his life and death exemplify it. Through him we are reborn as new men and women, because we can see clearly how we should live. We no longer need outer written laws, because in Christ we understand fully the inner spiritual law.<sup>21</sup>

Augustine, on the other hand, saw man as totally enslaved to sin and incapable of doing good, since, although still endowed with free will, he would find himself in “chains” and only able to fulfil sinful desires (which he identified with sexual concupiscence).<sup>22</sup> Man would therefore be free, but free solely to do evil; only the grace of God can bring true liberation and confer the ability to do good, for there would be nothing good in man. Humanity, according to Augustine, if not redeemed, is a doomed mass (*massa perditionis*).

The key points of the dispute gave rise to two diametrically opposed visions, called Augustinianism and Pelagianism, which can be summarised as follows:

**Augustinianism:** only the grace of God can transform a man's heart from evil to good. It is grace that frees the free will and makes man capable of choosing the good. God's grace is granted only to those who are predestined and is irresistible. Salvation is God's decision.

**Pelagianism:** grace is understood as help in terms of good education, moral example and exhortation from God. Rejection of any notion of an inner strengthening of the soul or the will of the individual by God, and denial of predestination. Salvation is a man's choice.

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<sup>20</sup> Pelagius, *Epistle To Demetrias*, from *The Letters of Pelagius*, edited by Robert Van de Weyer (Little Giddings Books, 1997).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> The origin of this idea can probably be traced back to Manichaeism. Manichaeism was an eastern religion founded by the Iranian prophet Mani (216-277 A.D.) that spread widely in Europe, the Middle East and Asia from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. According to the Manichees, to whom Augustine belonged from 373 to 384 A.D., the material world was completely corrupt, and matter was considered evil because it lacked divine light. Augustine was often accused by his detractors of Manichaeism because he maintained a catastrophic view of humanity, according to which sexual desire (concupiscence), which he considered sinful, constituted a demonic force. These assumptions gave rise to the idea of original sin, which for many centuries would be considered the sexual act.

Basically, Pelagius' preaching placed great emphasis on ethics, virtue and a strict way of following the example of Christ to achieve moral purity: "If I must, then I can." On the contrary, for Augustine, only divine grace could give man the ability to overcome sinful desires and enable him to live in justice.

For the purposes of our study, in order to achieve a reconciliation between the two visions, we could assume that man is born with the capacity to do both good and evil (this is what we would expect to find among Christians and non-Christians) and that in this area of choice he often ends up, perhaps also conditioned by bad examples or a hostile environment, making wrong choices (and this is what we actually find and call evil). God's grace, in various ways and at different times of life, would be offered to all men,<sup>23</sup> although not always received, so that they, under the action of the Spirit of God, might be persuaded to turn away from evil and pursue good. But this is only a proposition for the moment, which we will try to explore further in the remainder of this book.

### *1.3. Criticism of the theory of Moral Transformation*

The main criticisms levelled at the Moral Transformation theory concern in particular the idea of salvation achieved through human effort and the fact that it underestimates the weight of the moral corruption of humanity. According to the critics, the redemptive role of Jesus' death is denied, which in the theory of Moral Transformation would only assume the character of an exemplary testimony. This theory, if pushed towards the extreme meaning of Pelagianism, would make Jesus' death marginal to the salvation process, if not in terms of moral exhortation; man would be able to save himself, as he is perfectly free to choose goodness and justice. In that case, Jesus could only have preached his new ethical model and spared himself the martyrdom of the cross. The idea proposed by Pelagianism is the closest thing, in theological terms, to Greek Stoicism,<sup>24</sup> and although it has been discarded several times by official theology, it is quite widespread, especially in some pseudo-religious circles.

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<sup>23</sup> **Matthew 5:45** *That you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.* **Luke 6:35** *...He is kind to the unthankful and evil.*

<sup>24</sup> Stoicism is a philosophical and spiritual movement of a rationalist bent, founded around 300 B.C. in Athens by Zeno of Citius. The Stoics advocated the virtues of self-control and detachment from worldly things, taken to the extreme, as a means of achieving moral and intellectual integrity. In the stoic ideal it is dominion over the passions or apathy that enables the spirit to attain wisdom. Achieving it is an individual task, and springs from the ability of the wise man to shed the ideas and conditioning that the society in which he lives has imprinted upon him.



### 1.4. Conclusion

The so-called “exemplarist” theories, which claim that Jesus' life, death and resurrection constituted only the perfect moral example to be followed, have been repeatedly rejected throughout the history of theology, often harshly, and labelled as heretical. However, the theory of Moral Transformation has to be credited with highlighting the need for a radical change in man in following Jesus, and with pointing out that good works on behalf of the poor, the oppressed and all those in need are a natural part of a Christian's life; as the Apostle James said “*Faith without works is dead.*”<sup>25</sup> that is to say, a faith that does not produce good works is almost certainly inauthentic. We can therefore say that grace and works are not in antithesis with each other but proceed in parallel in the path of life and salvation of every Christian.

In the context of the debate on grace sparked off by Augustine and Pelagius in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, which is still highly topical, the question arises as to what the role of the individual is in the sphere of salvation (free will? predestination?), what the scope of grace is (irresistible? irreversible?), and what the results generated by grace are. In the version dictated by moral rigorism, there is a real risk of lapsing into stoicism, in which Jesus would have no role, if not a marginal one, in the context of salvation. On the contrary, the Augustinian view, based on predestination and irresistible grace, would make human participation in the event of salvation completely superfluous and irrelevant, leading to fatalism<sup>26</sup> (typical of the culture of ancient Rome, which probably influenced Augustine) and laxity.

It is therefore necessary to find a synthesis between the two approaches, as was already attempted in the sixth century,<sup>27</sup> to reconcile the action of God's grace with a commitment of the faithful to renew and transform his or her own life. In fact, I consider unrealistic a path to salvation that is not initiated by divine grace and supported by the Holy Spirit in various forms and degrees, but equally unfounded is a complete lack of freedom of choice and individual responsibility of man in such a path.

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<sup>25</sup> **James 2:26** *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

<sup>26</sup> Fatalism is a philosophy according to which the world is governed by an inescapable necessity that is completely alien to human will and effort.

<sup>27</sup> Despite Augustine's victory in the dispute over Pelagius, with the consequent excommunication of the latter and his movement, the debate continued until the sixth century to seek a synthesis between the two opposing visions, giving rise to intermediate positions of cooperation in salvation between God and man, which came to be known as Semi-Pelagianism (also condemned as a heretical doctrine in 529 A.D.) and Semi-Augustinianism, which complete the picture of the four major visions of salvation. For more on this subject see David Duncombe, “The Four Major Views of Salvation” | <https://daveduncombe.wordpress.com/>

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