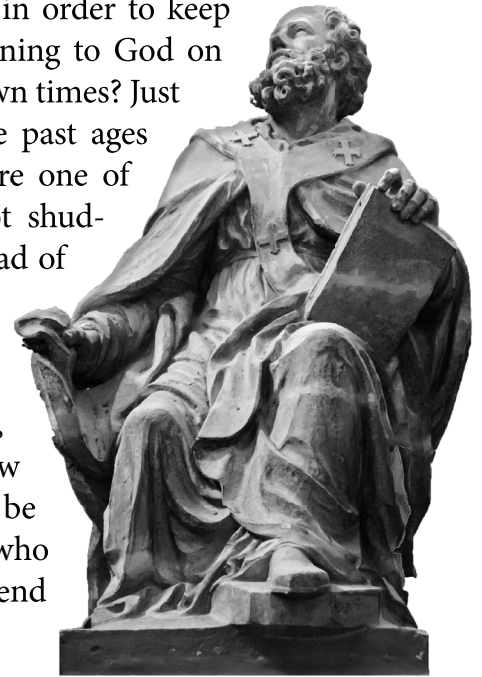


St. Augustine's Perspective of History

FROM A SERMON BY SAINT AUGUSTINE, BISHOP

IT amazes me that you who have now been freed from the curse, who have believed in the son of God, who have been instructed in the holy Scriptures—that you can think the days of Adam were good. And your ancestors bore the curse of Adam, of that Adam to whom the words were addressed: “With sweat on your brow you shall eat your bread; you shall till the earth from which you were taken, and it will yield you thorns and thistles.” This is what he deserved and what he had to suffer; this is the punishment meted out to him by the just judgment of God. How then can you think that past ages were better than your own? From the time of that first Adam to the time of his descendants today, man’s lot has been labor and sweat, thorns and thistles. Have we forgotten the flood and the calamitous times of famine and war whose history has been re-

corded precisely in order to keep us from complaining to God on account of our own times? Just think what those past ages were like! Is there one of us who does not shudder to hear or read of them? Far from justifying complaints about our own time, they teach us how much we have to be thankful for. He who perseveres to the end will be saved.



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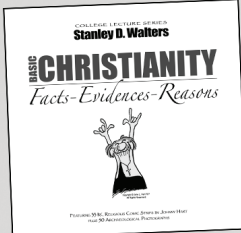
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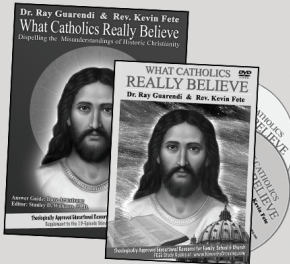
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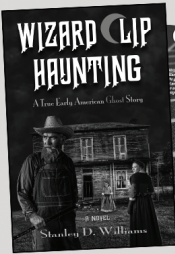
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