

The idea of free will and predestination in the readings of st. augustine

[Religion](#), [God](#)



In the readings of St. Augustine, Augustine discusses free will and predestination; he teaches that God orders all things while preserving human freedom. He proposes the idea of a slave killing his master because he is afraid of being tortured. A slave killing his master is not justified with using self-defense because killing someone is morally wrong and there are other ways in life of seeking justice, regardless of a person being afraid or other circumstances.

Creon, St. Augustine, and Chris McCandless go through life changing experiences that lead them to question what is right or wrong, how to differentiate between good or evil, and if the choices they made were correct. The slave or for this matter any one in the world does not have the right to take someone's life and it can never be morally justified. Of course, it is one's moral responsibility to take care of oneself and one should do everything to protect and defend himself. However, it is most important to take shelter under God and pray as he shows the way to justice and freedom. Everyone in the world has gone through moments in their lives where they were faced to question the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior.

In "Antigone, a Play by Sophocles", Creon must decide on the life of his niece Antigone. He wants to punish her because she has violated the law. Antigone has disobeyed Creon due to her faithfulness to the proper burial of her brother and the gods. Creon believes that killing Antigone will be justified and "right" because she has disobeyed the law and their state, so she deserves punishment. It is shown that Creon's power has made him arrogant

and cold. “ This girl was already versed in insolence when she transgressed the laws that had been set forth...” Creon would disagree that killing someone is morally wrong. He would propose that a slave, who were to disobey his master and the law at that time, would deserve to be killed. However, Creon would also state that the slave has every right to kill his master because the slave was born a free man and has reason behind his desire to kill his master.

Chris McCandless a twenty-four-year-old man, was raised on luxury and materialism. He felt as if he were a slave, held captive and trapped in his own body; swimming in his unhappiness and sorrow. Chris McCandless decided to embark alone on a journey into the wild, to find peace within himself. Throughout “ Into the Wild”, McCandless attempts to make the “ right” decisions that will help him to survive in the wilderness. Readers can say that he makes several “ stupid” or wrong decisions. Take for example, he burns all his good possessions before leaving and takes his family for granted, without even saying good bye to them. Readers will never know if McCandless regretted his choice of going into the wild or if he wanted to die in the wilderness all along. McCandless would argue against the claim that killing someone is morally wrong. He would propose that the slave has every right to kill his master if the slave is afraid of torture or death. The slave is in search of freedom and McCandless was in search of freedom throughout “ Into the Wild”. “ McCandless was thrilled to be on his way north, and he was relieved as well — relieved that he had again evaded the impending threat of human intimacy, of friendship, and all the messy emotional baggage that

comes with it. He had fled the claustrophobic confines of his family. He'd successfully kept Jan Burres and Wayne Westerberg at arm's length, flitting out of their lives before anything was expected of him."

McCandless would sympathize with the slave and both would agree on terms of seeking freedom. McCandless would seek freedom in a dangerous or gentle way, if the outcome brought him justice. " So many people live within unhappy circumstances and yet will not take the initiative to change their situation because they are conditioned to a life of security, conformity, and conservatism...". McCandless would persuade the slave to kill his master, if it meant that the slave would receive freedom and happiness. McCandless would understand that the slave does not have the option of choosing a different life or having different experiences under the ruling of his master. However, if the slave were to kill his master then there are no limits to where the slave can go and what choices the slave can make.

Plato and McCandless would agree on the fact that human beings are ignorant to experiencing new things and coming out of their comfort zones. For the life of the slave, he has no choice than to stay in an uncomfortable zone. It was easier for McCandless to leave an uncomfortable place, find peace, meet new people and experience new things than it would be for a slave. St. Augustine discusses how the mind, free will, and passion work together in humans. " It is not in control, for they are foolish, and, as we know, the mind is in control only in wise men."

St. Augustine continues to talk about how the mind is in control of our passions and that our passion can cloud our judgements or trusting intuitions. St. Augustine would describe the slave as having a strong passion and desire to achieve freedom and escape from his master. He would agree that the slave is morally wrong for killing his master. He would characterize the slave as foolish and that the slave chose to do the wrong thing because of passion. Augustine would add in the topics of sin, stating that sin can be taking things wrongfully away from people. Augustine might look from the master's perspective and explain that the master too had pleasures and passions that were stripped from him when he was killed by the slave. Although the slave does not have freedom, the slave can make his own decisions in his head, and either attempt to act on them or not. Augustine might say that the slave "did wrong through the free choice of will".

In Augustine's perspective, even if there is passion or "blameworthy desire" behind acting on something, it doesn't make it right. Augustine tells the readers that they choose what is right or wrong, God doesn't make someone do good or evil. God would not be the cause for the slave to kill his master. One could discover if their choice was correct if they were given good or bad consequences following their actions. "He both rewards the good and punishes the bad."