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Lucifer's disordered love and the first-person perspective: an Augustinian account of primal sin

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Abstract

Augustinian accounts of 'primal sin' face a dilemma: either 'Lucifer's' fall is arbitrary, or it results from God creating a flawed creature. Augustine and others hold that an omnipotent God faces unavoidable limits in creating creatures. In particular, creatures cannot enjoy God's own first-person awareness of God's goods, but must experience them second-personally. The resulting qualitative phenomenological difference between (1) the first-person awareness Lucifer had of the goods of his own being, and (2) his second-person awareness of the goods of God means that self-regarding goods would 'light up' for Lucifer very differently than other-regarding goods. This opens a psychologically resonant and metaphysically potent account of how the pre-Fall Lucifer could have faced a genuine value conflict – a conflict for which God is not culpable – in which Lucifer might come to love the goods presented first-personally (his own) over the goods presented second-personally (God's).

Keywords: Augustine; evil; theodicy Christianity; phenomenology

The Christian conception of creation *ex nihilo* by an omnipotent and perfectly good God creates difficulties for understanding the origin of evil.[1] A creation made by a wholly good, all-powerful God should be free of defects by which evil can arise. Given creation *ex nihilo*, evil cannot come from some Manichean eternal evil or fractious given residing outside creation. So, evil must originate either in creation itself – but that is supposedly good – or must trace back to the Creator after all. But such a 'God' would not seem to be the perfectly good God of Christian Scripture.

Augustine's own approach to the conundrum rests on his subtle and psychologically resonant analysis of pride.[2] While Augustine speaks of pride in different ways, he understands it most basically as a kind of *incurvatus in se* – a love in which the self turns in upon itself as its own primary love.[3] Pride is the disordered love of making idols out of ourselves – a twisted, inward-turned love. Augustine accordingly answers the question 'What made the first bad will bad?' by examining persons and relationships: 'There was no first bad will that was made bad by any other bad will – it was made bad by itself' (Augustine 427/1952, XI,xvii, trans. Walsh and Monahan, 254; hereafter abbreviated as 'CG'). Although a 'bad will' originated in the angel 'Lucifer',[4] Augustine believed that 'God, in his goodness, made the Devil good' (CG, XI,xvii, 213). Lucifer only 'fell from the heavenly Paradise when his pride caused him to turn away from God to his own self and the pleasures and pomp of tyranny, preferring to rule over subjects than to be subject himself' (CG, XIV,xi, 377). Fallen angels were 'good by nature, but perverse by choice' – a prideful choice wherein they turned their

own love in upon themselves (CG, XI,xxxiii, 241). Augustine thus locates evil's origin in an angelic 'primal sin' – a category of 'evil-originating free choices' that temporally precedes other evils and introduces 'something radically new in creation' (MacDonald 1999, 110).

But problems remain. William Babcock poses a dilemma for Augustinian accounts of 'primal sin': '*Unless* there is some recognizable continuity between agent and act, it will appear either that the evil angels' evil will was caused by something other than themselves (some form of compulsion) or that it was completely uncaused (a chance or random outcome)' (Babcock 1988, 45). The notion of a primal sin thus seems to make no progress: Evil is either an inexplicable and arbitrary surd, or something God Himself baked into creation.[5] Robert Brown raises the same issue:

> Satan turned away from God because he was proud, and thereby became a self-centered rebel. But just a minute! Why was he proud? Did God create him proud? Certainly not, for then God would be responsible for his fall. Did he make himself proud by the free exercise of his will? So he must have done, if Augustine's intent to defend the initial freedom and responsibility of the will is to remain intact. If Satan made himself proud, then this act of will is itself the fall, and not a 'cause' of his falling. Pointing to pride therefore cannot constitute an explanation for the fall (an account of why the first evil will willed as it did). It is only the substitution of a synonym for the inexplicable free act of falling itself … by drawing an analogy to the everyday human sin of pride, it makes Satan's act more vivid, more appealing to the imagination, more amenable to dramatization, but it explains nothing, it in no way renders Satan's fall understandable (Brown 1978, 322).[6]

Augustine has simply given us a bad analogy – a red herring that has thrown many people off the real explanatory problem. In reality, the conundrum remains, only in a new, Augustinian register: Either evil is just a completely inexplicable and arbitrary surd in the guise of Lucifer's 'free choice' (a case of horrifically bad luck for Lucifer, see Timpe 2013, 244 and Wood 2016, 225), or else God Himself originates evil – perhaps directly or maybe by withholding some sort of grace that made it inevitable that particular angels would succumb to the fall (a suggestion that Augustine himself entertains; see CG, XII,ix, 261–262). Augustine's gambit of tracing the first 'evil will' back to pride must be judged a failure.

In what follows, I argue that Augustine's analysis of pride as inward-turned love opens up hitherto untapped phenomenological resources that show how – through no fault of God – a genuine and readily comprehensible value conflict could arise for the pre-Fall Lucifer. The central insight is that careful attention to the marked qualitative phenomenological difference between (1) the pre-Fall Lucifer's 'first-person' awareness of the very substantial created goods of his own nature, and (2) his unavoidably 'second-person' awareness of the goods he encountered in God allows us to see how Lucifer might come be poised between goods that 'light up' for him in qualitatively different ways. In such a situation, only Lucifer himself could establish the value scale *he* accepts between two qualitatively different presentations of what is valuable. Will he order his loves toward himself, or will he order his loves toward God? We can see here a readily understandable value conflict that opens space for the first evil choice while (1) preserving creation *ex nihilo* by an omnipotent God, and (2) avoiding implicating God Himself in the origin of that value conflict.

My argument will unfold in three steps, followed by a response to a likely objection. First, I sketch the central lines of an Augustinian analysis of sin as rooted in pride as love of self above God.[7] In connection with the primal sin, Augustine does not make the simplistic error of saying that Lucifer fell because of his pride, but rather *analyses* the first sin as a disordered love of self above God – a disordering which is itself pride.[8] Taking Augustine's analysis

seriously directs us to look for a relational setting where Lucifer as a subject could (apart from created defects or a lack of grace) plausibly misdirect his love toward himself above God. If Augustine is right, identifying such a setting will be crucial if we hope to 'make sense of primal sinners' voluntarily choosing something that is less good than some alternative that is equally open to them' (MacDonald 1999, 119).

Section two contends that God – though omnipotent – cannot avoid setting genuine *creatures* like Lucifer in a situation of substantial limits. One such limit is that creatures cannot have God's own 'first-person awareness' of Himself and the goods of His trinitarian life and being. As a creature, Lucifer would be first-personally aware of himself and his own goods, but only second-personally (or third-personally) aware of God.[9]

Section three goes beyond Augustine, drawing on contemporary phenomenological resources to augment Augustine's insight that the primal sin was Lucifer coming to love himself above God.[10] I sketch some qualitative phenomenological differences between first-person awareness and second-person awareness and show how they are clearly relevant to the question of the fall of Lucifer because the two forms of awareness have a profoundly different 'feel' such that the goods presented in the two standpoints would 'light up' very differently in Lucifer's awareness. By 'light up' I mean just what it seems like qualitatively to have a particular sort of experience – the 'raw feel' or 'what-it-is-like-ness' of this or that happening to a person (or being done by a person). Just as seeing white does not taste like pizza, so there are qualitative differences between what it is like to have a first-person experience of oneself and a second-person experience of another person. Those experiences 'light up' differently in consciousness, as I shall put it. This first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference opens a space where Lucifer might come to value the goods he was first-personally aware of in himself more highly than those he was second-personally aware of in encountering God. In short, we can see a plausible setting of value conflict in which Lucifer as a subject could come to love himself more than God and others. Picking up on a 'crude analogy' William Wood uses to illustrate what he has called the 'harder problem' of primal sin – that is, the problem of 'how the first sin can be subjectively rational' from Lucifer's own point of view (Wood 2016, 224) – we will see how careful attention to first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference affords insight into a potential value conflict that makes primal sin much more subjectively comprehensible. Such a value conflict would owe nothing to a defect that God wove into some creatures and not others (or to some grace God bestows or withholds), but rather can arise in the first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference that unavoidably attends the reality of being a personal *creature* made for relationship with God.

Finally, some may wonder if an Augustinian analysis of the origin of sin like the one advanced here simply fails to address the more basic metaphysical question, and merely ends up impaled on one horn or the other of the Babcock/Brown dilemma. In the final section I respond by showing that – given the nature of the metaphysical case, where what must be understood is *Lucifer's* choice – the phenomenology affords important insights into the metaphysical puzzles driving the dilemma, thus blunting its force. If careful attention to first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference allows us to a see a potential value conflict that renders Lucifer's sin subjectively comprehensible – potentially subjectively rational, we might say, though the nature of the case means *Lucifer's* precise reasons are not available to us – then we have moved much closer to seeing how Lucifer could himself have been the metaphysical point of origin for sin. Primal sin would owe to Lucifer's choice to disorder his loves, just as Augustine believed.

Before proceeding, I want to clarify two limits of my project. First, while the position advanced here seeks to be fundamentally Augustinian, my intent is not to do Augustine exegesis. I make no claim to lay out Augustine's own position, though I do seek to employ insights that I believe are central to Augustine's treatment of primal sin. Second, I have

no interest in shooting down other accounts of primal sin. For example, one reviewer noted that 'the friendly suggestions you have for Augustine would work just as well for (e.g.) Anselm'. That could be right, and I can see several ways in which some of what I say here might help develop an Anselmian line of thought.[11] Scotists, too, might find ways to make common cause.[12] My interest is not to advance Augustine specifically, but to help make a way forward with the problem of primal sin. So, I say 'Welcome, Anselmians! Join in, Scotists, if you find something helpful!' That said, even though I make no claim to be unpacking Augustine's own position, the argument advanced here is broadly Augustinian. For example, someone familiar with attempts to locate the primal sin in Lucifer coming to desire knowledge of God in an illicit way might expect that after I show that Lucifer could not have first-person awareness of what it would be like to be God I would proceed to argue that Lucifer fell by desiring to have God's own first-person perspective. I do nothing like that, however. Instead, I follow Augustine in locating the primal sin in Lucifer becoming prideful – that is, Lucifer came to love *himself* more highly than he loved God. Likewise, along with many others, I read Augustine as advancing a form of a free-will defence.[13] Accordingly, you will find me speaking in terms of 'possibilities' and things that were 'open' to Lucifer – things he 'could' have done. I exercise a certain modesty in identifying precisely which desire(s) came to seem subjectively rational to Lucifer when he chose to love himself above God; indeed, in the final section I argue that the very nature of the case renders such attempts futile. But showing possible motivating reasons the pre-Fall Lucifer could have come to have for loving himself above God is enough to blunt the problem of primal sin. Here, readers familiar with some of the fairly recent literature on the free-will defence will detect the influence of Alvin Plantinga and Eleonore Stump and the idea of a 'defence'. As Stump puts it, 'to be successful, a defense needs only to rebut an attack on a set of religious beliefs' (Stump 2010, 454). One seeks only to show how the beliefs in question could possibly be consistent (Plantinga [1974] 1989, 28). In this spirit, I seek to show a genuine possibility that God bears no guilt for primal sin because we can see how an unfallen Lucifer created with no defects and lacking no grace that was given to others *could* have come to love himself over God – a project that doesn't require us to give the exact reasons why he found loving himself above God to be subjectively rational, but merely to show that the pre-Fall, defect-free Lucifer could well have come to think he had such reasons and to have been in a position to choose freely to act on them. The phenomenological analysis of how first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference could have opened a genuine value conflict for the pre-Fall Lucifer does just that. If so, we can see one possible way in which the existence of a wholly good creation made by a perfectly good and completely powerful God is consistent with evil arising within that creation, quite apart from any defect or lack of grace. Thus, the account of primal sin offered here is an extension of a free-will defence. In these ways and others,[14] the position here is Augustinian, but I hope people outside the Augustinian tradition will also find the phenomenological analysis of Lucifer's disordered loves to be helpful.

An Augustinian analysis of pride as the primordial disordering of love

Augustine grounds his account of the origin of evil in his understanding of evil as a privation of the good. As Augustine puts it in *City of God*, 'absolutely no natural reality is evil and the only meaning of the word "evil" is the privation of good' (XI,xxii, 220). Or, again: 'Evil has no positive nature; what we call evil is merely the lack of something that is good' (CG, XI,ix, 201). Augustine sought to be faithful to Genesis 1–2, which taught (1) 'In the beginning, God …' (not 'God and …'), (2) that God alone is the Creator, and (3) that God is good. 'Hence I saw and it was clear to me that you made all things good, and there are absolutely no substances which you did not make … For our God has made "all things very good" (Gen.

1:31)' (Augustine 400/1991, VII,xii,18, 125). If so, then evil must originate downstream from the good by twisting or corrupting it.

To call evil a 'privation of the good', however, doesn't fully capture Augustine's point. It can sound merely passive, like something simply dropped out or went missing. Karl Barth sets matters straight: 'For Augustine privation is *corruptio* or *conversio boni*. It is not only the absence of what really is, but the assault upon it. Evil is related to good in such a way that it attacks and harms it' (1950/2004, III/3, 318). Thus, Augustine speaks of a 'perversion' of natures, a 'blemish' that mars created beings, and a 'desertion that damaged their nature like a disease' (CG, XII,i, 247, 248). So, 'what is good in their nature is wounded', and 'it is not their nature, but the wound in their nature, that is opposed to God' (CG, XII, iii, 249). Some created natures have been 'vitiated' or 'corrupted' (CG, XII, iii, 250). Far from downplaying evil's ugliness, Augustine's analysis captures the revulsion of spoiled goods. Imagine letting a half-used gallon of milk sit through an Arizona summer and then popping the cap and taking a swig. How much more monstrous is a spoiled relational being? A glance at the world provides the answer. Horrors attend the perversion of a good thing.

As Augustine sees it, the primordial sin corrupted something lofty and beautiful. God designed the angels for relationship; like us, they're made for love. Thus Augustine opens the *Confessions* by addressing God: 'You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you' (Augustine [400] 1991, I,i,1, 3). So, too, 'the happiness of all angels consists in union with God', and their nature is such that 'it can attain beatitude by adhering to the immutable and supreme Good, which is God' (CG, XII,i, 246, 247). Creatures like us and the angels can only flourish in the right relationship with others. To thrive we must love well, and so 'the best brief definition of virtue is to say it is the ordering of love' (CG, XV,xxii, 469). Without the right relationship with God and others, we and the angels will wither. Turning our love in upon ourselves above God and others is an unmitigated disaster.

Two passages in *City of God* display how pride – the disordered love of oneself above God and others – introduced evil into God's good creation. First, in Book XII, Augustine connects pride to the undoing of the fallen angels: 'If we seek the cause of the bad angels' misery, we are right in finding it in this, that they abandoned Him whose Being is absolute and turned to themselves whose being is relative – a sin that can have no better name than pride. 'For pride is the beginning of all sin' (Eccli. 10:15)' (CG, XII,vi, 253). Sin here is directional ('turned') and relational ('abandoned'), much like biblical imagery connecting idolatry and adultery (e.g., Hosea). A man adulterously *turning* from his wife and *abandoning* her for another woman dimly reflects the far deeper problem of idolatry. Augustine holds that the 'the first defect, the first lack, the first perversion' of the created order came when an angel abandoned God by turning from God to himself (CG, XII,vi, 253). The problem here is not in the natures to which one turns – in this case, the lofty good of the angel's own being. Rather, the problem is that 'when the will, abandoning what is above it, turns itself to something lower, it becomes evil because *the very turning itself and not the thing to which it turns is evil*' (CG, XII,vi, 255; emphasis added). The evil resides not in the objects of love, but in *ordering* them wrongly. The disastrous angelic error comes not from loving the angel's own being, but in loving it above God.

Second, in Book XIV of *City of God*, Augustine again depicts how evil originates in pride. What Augustine says about the first human sin also applies to Lucifer:

> The root of their bad will was nothing else than pride. For, 'pride is the beginning of all sin' (Eccli. 10:15). And what is pride but an appetite for inordinate exaltation? Now, exaltation is inordinate when the soul cuts itself off from the very Source to which it should keep close and somehow makes itself – and becomes – an end to itself.

> This takes place when the soul becomes inordinately pleased with itself, and such self-pleasing occurs when the soul falls away from the unchangeable good which ought to please the soul far more than the soul can please itself. Now, this falling away is the soul's own doing (CG, XIV,xiii, 380).[15]

Augustine believes pride comprises the first 'bad will'. This prideful will involves (1) a turning or reorientation away from God ('cuts itself off from the very Source', 'falls away from the unchangeable good'), that (2) is an intentional act ('the *soul* cuts *itself* off … and somehow *makes itself* … an end to itself'). This turning (3) owes to an excessive or disordered happiness or pleasure ('inordinate exaltation' or being 'inordinately pleased'), that (4) takes the self as its own object of inordinate desire or pleasure ('makes *itself* – and becomes – an end to *itself*', 'inordinately pleased *with itself*', '*self*-pleasing'). All this originates with the creature ('is the soul's own doing'). Evil entered creation when Lucifer elevated the real goods of his created nature above God, making himself his own chief object of desire and pleasure and (disordered) love.

But, of course, one key word in the passage above carries massive weight, a word at the heart of the puzzle explored in this paper: 'The soul cuts itself off from the very Source to which it should keep close and *somehow* makes itself – and becomes – an end to itself.' This 'somehow' is precisely where the Babcock/Brown dilemma enters in. In saying that the will *somehow* turns in on itself, hasn't Augustine merely relocated the pressing worry? How did this turning of the will happen? Did Lucifer's pride (1) arise from his nature, apparently owing its origin to God (since He created *ex nihilo*), or (2) was it completely arbitrary, something that 'just happened'?

Creatureliness and limits

Importantly, if God creates relational beings other than Himself – genuine *creatures* – that choice itself requires limits. Such creatures will be limited at least by the fact of not being God. Of course, other limits are immediately consequent. The creature – *simply as a creature* – will not enjoy what theologians have called God's 'incommunicable attributes'. That creature will not be omnipotent or omniscient, for example. In particular, note that no creature could enjoy God's own 'first-person' awareness of His own life and being, but could only know God by 'second-person' encounter. A chasm yawns between the Creator and the creature, such that the creature cannot have first-person access to God's goodness – not just because they are two different subjects (though that is also true),[16] but also because a mere creature cannot have first-person awareness of being omnipotent or of being omniscient or of the eternal joy of the *perichorēsis* of the one, triune God.[17] Such limits, however, do not reflect God withholding grace or making defective creatures; instead, they are endemic to creatureliness.

Augustine stresses the God/creature distinction in ways that open crucial insights. Here again, some passages in Books XII and XIV of *City of God* prove very helpful, and it is noteworthy that the relevant passages stand in close proximity to the two definitions of pride that (as seen in the previous section) analyse it as a fundamental turning of the self in upon the self in a disordered love. In Book XII, Augustine observes that 'there can be no unchangeable good except our one, true and blessed God. All things which He has made are good because made by Him, but they are subject to change because they were made, not out of Him, but out of nothing' (CG, XII,1, 246). Or again, in the *Confessions*, 'all things were made not of the very substance of God but out of nothing' (Augustine [400] 1991, XII,xvii,25, 258). A creature's nature differs fundamentally from God. Augustine emphasizes the point in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*: 'We are not him, I mean to say, like his substance, in the way it is

said that he has life in himself (Jn 5:26) … we are something different from Him' (Augustine 416/2002, IV, xxiv [12], 254). Augustine's point is straightforward. If God would create *creatures*, rather than mere extensions or manifestations of Himself, those creatures must be different in kind from Himself. Genuine creatures cannot be, if one can put it this way, just God, God, God, and more God. That would not be a world with *creatures*; it would be a world where only God exists.

Augustine's sharp Creator/creature distinction opens up an important move similar to one in Alvin Plantinga's now classic book *God, Freedom, and Evil.* Plantinga observes that, while 'God can create free creatures':

> He can't *cause* or *determine* them to do only what is right. For if He does so, then they aren't significantly free after all; they do not do what is right *freely*. To create creatures capable of *moral good*, therefore, He must create creatures capable of moral evil; and He can't give these creatures the freedom to perform evil and at the same time prevent them from doing so (Plantinga [1974] 1989, 30).

Plantinga shows a clear sense for 'the claim that God, though omnipotent, could not have actualized just any possible world He pleased' (Plantinga [1974] 1989, 34).[18] Plantinga argues convincingly that an omnipotent God can't do just anything at all, but that certain choices God may make require Him to limit Himself. For example, a creature who is free with respect to whether or not to love God cannot be *forced* to love God and still be left *genuinely free* with respect to loving God. As Plantinga puts it, God – though omnipotent – 'can't give these creatures the freedom to perform evil and at the same time prevent them from doing so', for the very simple reason that precisely in that they would not be refraining from evil *freely*. By creating free creatures, God does one sort of thing rather than another, thereby ruling out anything incompatible with what He has done.

Much the same point holds here. God does not have to create creatures who are genuinely other than Himself. He needs nothing. But if He does create genuine *creatures*, those creatures must be different in kind than God. They cannot be mere manifestations of God's own self. Such 'creatures' would not be other than God; they would not be creaturely. Augustine makes this point when he says, 'defect is possible only in a nature that has been created out of nothing. In a word, a nature is a nature because it is something made by God, but a nature falls away from That which Is because the nature was made out of nothing' (CG, XIV,xiii, 381). That's just what a created nature *is*, something other than God. Consequently, it has limits and boundaries. It must stand *in relation* to its own proper good. It must 'participate' in that good, standing in right relation to realities outside itself, principally, God (CG, XI,x, 203–204).

Augustine further sharpens the Creator/creature distinction when he contrasts creatures – who are made out of nothing – with the only begotten Son. The nature of creatures is corruptible because 'this nature, of course, is one that God has created out of nothing, and not out of Himself, as was the case when He begot the Word through whom all things have been made' (CG, XIV,xi, 376). Likewise, in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Augustine holds that a created nature like an angel is, 'not begotten of the substance of God, but made by God' (Augustine [416] 2002, VII,xliii [28], 345). Augustine drives home the Creator/creature chasm by drawing on language familiar to us from the old Christmas hymn, *O, Come, All Ye Faithful* – 'God of God, begotten not created' – and, of course, passages like John 3:16: 'God sent his only begotten Son.' The Son is no creature, but is God's only begotten. Creatures thus differs in kind from the only Son of God. 'They were created, I repeat, that is, they were made, not begotten. For what is begotten of the simple good is likewise simple and is what the Begetter is' (CG, XI,x, 202). Quite unlike the only Begotten Son, then, the

creature – precisely *as* creature – 'is part neither of God nor of the divine nature, but merely a creature and, therefore, far from equality with God' (CG, XI,xxii, 221). Creatures thus stand in relationship to God. Since the good of creatures is only in properly ordered relationship with the Creator, creatures necessarily have limits.

Centrally, creatures are limited by not being God. That just is part of what it means to be a creature, and it cannot be otherwise. Such limits are not bad; they simply mean that creatures are creatures, and that our good is fundamentally a good in relation to others.

The point matters. Some limits are not defects. In particular, when God created personal creatures who could love, He was neither withholding grace nor predisposing them to fall. He was doing the only thing He could do in making such creatures: He made them *creatures*, giving them each the grace of a good, unflawed creaturely nature. But doing that required limits – limits inhering in not being God. They were simply and innocently creaturely in not being omnipotent or omniscient. Likewise, mere creatures – no matter how lofty – cannot be first-personally aware of God's own goodness as God is aware of Himself and the unutterable and incommunicable beauty and goodness of what it is like to be the one triune God. But again, such limits of the creature *qua* creature do not represent God weaving defects into the creature that would inevitably lead to a 'bad will', nor something that would tend to unfold as a 'bad will' apart from a grace that God might supply selectively. Rather, the *created* natures are – precisely in their limits – *good* natures, gifted in lofty ways, but ways that are, in fact (and unavoidably), creaturely. The fact that Lucifer's knowledge of God could not be first-personal (unlike his awareness of the goods of his own nature) but only second-personal was no defect in Lucifer, but a limit endemic to Lucifer's creatureliness. If God creates a being like Lucifer, that being will be limited in this way, just because that being is not God Himself.

As we will now see, such creaturely limits – innocent though they are – could nonetheless lead to a genuine value conflict for a being like Lucifer, a value conflict requiring Lucifer to order his loves for himself.

What it's like to be ~~a bat~~ God: Opening phenomenological space for understanding primal sin

We are now ready to dig into the core contention of this article – a simple, intuitive, and (to my mind) clearly relevant and persuasive insight that shows how an Augustinian account of pride as disordered self-love has more explanatory power with regard to 'primal sin' than has been recognized. The central idea unfolds in three points:

(1) that – as we have already seen – a *creature's* awareness of the goods of God's triune life and being *cannot* be first-personal; thus, while the pre-Fall Lucifer would have had first-person awareness of the goods of his own nature, his awareness of the goods of God could only be second-personal;

(2) that an obvious *qualitative difference* separates what it is like to have those two kinds of awareness, with first-personal awareness being more 'inward' and spontaneously accessible, and second-personal awareness being more 'outward', occasional, and grounded in revelations that cannot be controlled – and thus requiring a posture of receptivity, waiting, and reciprocity; and

(3) that because of the qualitative differences between Lucifer's first-person acquaintance with the goods found in himself and his second-person awareness of the goods of God, *an obvious and understandable phenomenological space would be opened up for a genuine value conflict* in which he could begin to value those internal and more spontaneously accessible goods of his own person – goods that would be very familiar and constantly present to himself – more highly than the goods of God that he could

only be aware of in a second-personal way. The goods knowable in his own nature and God's would 'light up' differently in Lucifer's awareness. Lucifer could thus come to value the former over the latter and begin to direct his love inward toward himself (*incurvatus in se*) in exactly the prideful way that worried Augustine – and this *owing simply to the fact of being a creature*, not because God in any way created a fatal defect in Lucifer such that he would be predisposed to fall or could not have avoided falling without some special grace.

The first point (1) has already been advanced in section 2. The *creatureliness* of Lucifer means he *could not* have God's own first-person awareness of God's infinitely good, beautiful, and powerful trinitarian life and being. But such limits do not mean that God created flawed creatures or deprived some creatures of special graces needed to prevent their disintegration. The creatureliness of creatures – including not being first-personally aware of God's own life and being – unavoidably attends God's choice to make personal creatures who are genuinely other than Himself.

Turning now to the second point (2) let's examine the clear *qualitative difference* between Lucifer's first-person awareness of the goods of his own nature, and what it would be like for Lucifer to have a second-person awareness of the goods of God's own triune life and being. To make this point, we will unpack some of the broad similarities and differences marking the first-person, second-person, and third-person standpoints. The resulting sketch will show clear qualitative differences between them – differences that open phenomenological space[19] for a genuine value conflict in which Lucifer could come to value the goods he was (first-personally) aware of in himself over the goods he was (second-personally) aware of in God. This possible value conflict would owe to no defect, but simply to the creaturely limits of creatures.

In his justly famous argument in 'What Is It Like to Be a Bat?' Thomas Nagel notes that believing that bats have experiences means 'that there is something it is like to be a bat', but that *we* can know next to nothing about what that would be like (Nagel 1974, 438). I could think of everything I know about bats, and try to put myself experientially in their place. Yet 'insofar as I can imagine this (which is not very far), it tells me only what it would be like for *me* to behave as a bat behaves. But that is not the question. I want to know what it is like for a *bat* to be a bat' (Nagel 1974, 439). Nagel goes on to make a point that is important for our argument: 'there are facts which *could* not ever be represented or comprehended by human beings, even if the species lasted forever – simply because our structure does not permit us to operate with concepts of the requisite type' (Nagel 1974, 441). It seems clear that beings like us could never come to understand what it's like to be a bat because we simply lack the faculties required. The requisite awareness is quite inaccessible to us. So, Nagel wonders, 'what would be left of what it was like to be a bat if one removed the viewpoint of the bat?' (Nagel 1974, 443). Whatever it is like for a bat to echo-locate a bug, you and I will never be able to know. We lack the faculties needed to do so. Any goods tied to what it is like to echo-locate bugs are wholly unavailable to us. We have no idea what it would be like to be a bat.

A fortiori, the first-person awareness God has of what it is like to be God is utterly alien to us and other created beings. We have only the very dimmest glimmers of what it would be like to be God. Nagel's question thus has clear application here: 'What would be left of what it was like to be God if one removed the viewpoint of God?' Given that no creature can have that viewpoint, God's own, first-personal awareness of Himself is simply unavailable to His creatures. A vast chasm yawns between any awareness creatures have of God's goods and God's own awareness of the goods of His own triune life and being. The knowledge creatures like us and the angels have of God's goods will be second-personal, and an unmeasurable distance away from appreciating them fully.[20]

What, then, will characterize creaturely modes of knowing from first-person, second-person, and third-person standpoints?[21] A helpful point of entry into the important similarities and differences between these three standpoints can be found in Charles Sanders Peirce's notion of 'Secondness' as that relates initially to the *third*-person (*not* – somewhat confusingly – the *second*-person) perspective. According to Peirce, in experiences of 'Secondness' people find that a 'direct consciousness of hitting and of getting hit enters into all cognition and serves to make it mean something real' (Peirce 1958, 41). Peirce argues that external reality stubbornly constrains theory by resisting our constructs, forcing them to heel in the face of a restive reality that continually surprises us, thus breaking off our theorizing with a decisive 'No'. This experience of an in-breaking force that cuts off our expected flow of ideas is Secondness. As Peirce puts it, Secondness 'comes out most fully in the shock of reaction between ego and non-ego. It is there the double consciousness of effort and resistance' (Peirce 1958, 267). In Secondness, Peirce says we have an 'Outward Clash' with something that stands over against us.

The awareness of an 'Outward Clash' characterizes both third-person and second-person experiences. In this they are both set apart from first-person experiences, which lack this outward-oriented dimension. Yet crucial differences separate the outward-regarding elements of third-person and second-person experiences. Unlike first-person experiences, both second-person and third-person experiences involve confronting something independent of oneself. We meet with a kind of resistance and opacity that forces our knowing and willing to conform to constraints imposed by something standing quite apart from us. Yet the character of this resistance and opacity differs markedly in second-person experiences and third-person experiences. On the one hand, third-person experiences involve encountering an external resistance that admits of a kind of inspection. There can be a 'holding in place' that is imposed on that resistance that constrains the 'Outward Clash' in ways that can methodically force a kind of knowing out of it (as sought in various 'hard' sciences). A sort of passivity is potentially present in what is known, where that which stands over against us can be made open to manipulation in which it is passive and systematically investigable. In Bonnie Talbert's words, third-person knowing 'is an asymmetrical epistemological project' where what is known 'has no stake in your coming to any particular conclusion about it' (Talbert 2015, 203). As such, third-person knowing is sometimes controllable.

Second-person experiences, on the other hand, involve an 'Outward Clash' that requires coordination and an activity of 'give-and-take' with respect to that which is known. The systematized inspection and manipulation that force a kind of knowing in third-person experiences will distort and even foreclose the sort of knowing appropriate to the 'Outward Clash' characteristic of second-person experiences. Indeed, it would be more fitting to characterize the 'outward' element here as an 'Outward Dance', where drawing out the knowledge available requires a sort of call and response. Overtures are accepted or redirected, and they can be taken up in innumerable ways. Improvisation abounds, making the knowing of the other a matter of waiting and reacting and offering (Vanhoozer 2005, chapters 10–12). Thus, second-person knowing involves *occasions* and cannot simply be called up or dismissed at will. Precisely the creativity and interpersonal nature of the communication means that there are surprises and a need to coordinate one's actions with another in a kind of 'waiting' for the other person. Revelation, receptivity, and the reciprocity of giving and receiving gifts (or challenges) are all of the essence of second-personal knowing. Such knowing does not involve what Paul Moser has called 'spectator evidence', where the available truth about something independent of us makes no demands that the 'recipients yield their wills to (the will of) the source of the evidence' (Moser 2008, 46). Instead, any second-personal knowledge available may be opened and closed and directed according to the aims and purposes of the one who reveals him or herself. There is, for example, a lot of knowledge that I alone have of my wife, Kiersten – but I have this knowledge only by

her choice to make herself known and only because I met a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for that to happen when I chose to treat her with love and respect. In an important insight, Joshua Cockayne observes that 'second-personal knowledge, unlike first- and third-personal knowledge, is essentially reciprocal … second-personal knowledge depends on the individual encountering the other as encountering her. In other words, without reciprocity, all that is really known is one's own experience from the first-personal perspective' (Cockayne 2020, 25). One might add that in such cases the first-personal perspective may well involve treating an occasion calling for second-personal knowing as an instance of third-personal knowing, thereby regarding another person as an 'it' rather than a 'Thou'.[22]

If second-person experience contrasts with third-person experience, it also contrasts with first-person experience. Both first-person awareness and second-person awareness involve knowing a person. But as already noted, a key difference stems from the fact that first-personal awareness does not involve the 'Outward Clash' (or Dance) found in second-personal knowing. Once again, Cockayne touches on a key point: 'The reciprocal nature of the second-personal encounter means that second-personal knowledge is, in a sense, more objective than first-personal knowledge; there is something outside of one's own consciousness that is known through the second-personal perspective' (Cockayne 2020, 26). This outward-turned element essential to second-personal knowing does not characterize first-personal knowing. The first-person standpoint looks inward. 'Such knowledge is irreducibly tied up in one's own perspective of the world' (Cockayne 2020, 12). As Talbert puts it, 'a first-person model where claims about others originate from one's own imagined, first-personal experiences, cannot capture the "back-and-forth" dynamic of real social discourse' (Talbert 2015, 204). Crucially, this means that even more than in the case of third-personal knowledge, first-person knowledge can be had on one's own terms and at the time of one's choosing. In contrast, Stephen Darwall observes that second-personal address can involve a 'summons' whereby one person gives 'second-personal reasons to [another] free and rational (second-personally competent) agent' (Darwall 2006, 256). Such a summons breaks in on a person and presents reasons. There is a kind of availability to the other that characterizes second-personal knowing that is unlike first-personal knowing. As Emmanuel Levinas states: 'When in the presence of the Other, I say "Here I am!," this "Here I am!" is the place through which the Infinite enters into language' (Levinas 1982/1985, 106). Or again, in Eleonore Stump's words, for two people united in love, 'the interweaving of their psyches occurs only with the willingness of each to each' (Stump 2013, 50). Note the contrast with what Levinas understands to be all-too-easy from within the first-person standpoint: 'Reason speaking in the first person is not addressed to the other, conducts a monologue' (Levinas 1961/1969, 72). Levinas's close phenomenological attention to the 'height' and 'teaching' of the Other reveals how first-person temptations toward monologue contrast with second-person knowing: 'In welcoming the Other I welcome the On High to which my freedom is subordinated' (Levinas [1961] 1969, 300). Likewise, 'teaching is a way for truth to be produced in such a way that it is not my work, such that I could not derive it from my own interiority' (Levinas [1961] 1969, 295). Clearly, there's a theme here: second-personal knowledge requires *waiting, responsiveness*, and *reciprocity*, whereas first-person knowledge is *spontaneously accessible at the time of one's choosing* and *needs no coordination* with others. First-person knowing requires no subordination of one's own freedom. On the other hand, no matter how available someone makes second-person knowledge, that knowledge of another will be accessible for us only insofar as we are willing to participate in a sort of improvisational back-and-forth process. The creativity and 'otherness' of the other will show up in the 'offers' they make, and we then choose how to 'take-up' what this other person has given us. Precisely the creativity, spontaneity, and 'otherness' of the other person puts us in a position of waiting. In interpersonal communication, the 'offer' another makes is not under our control. We must 'wait' for the other, not because they

have denied us knowledge of themselves, but precisely because they have genuinely offered themselves to us.[23] First-person knowing, on the other hand, gives at least an appearance of much greater control and more transparency. First-person knowledge may be had on our own terms, involving no coordination and no reciprocity. Accordingly, second-personal knowing involves trust, where first-person knowing does not. The two standpoints differ markedly and involve quite distinct kinds of awareness. In them we become acquainted with very different realities through very different activities in modes of awareness that feel very different indeed.

The first-person/second-person/third-person contrast emerges even more clearly when we put it into a theological register. As Michael Horton helpfully notes, 'speech surprises … we are put on the receiving end of knowledge' (Horton 2011, 89). This is unlike idolatry, in which 'the worshiper is in control'; 'in fact', Horton adds in a very Augustinian vein, 'the idol is the worshiper's self-reflection' (Horton 2011, 89). Genuine theology requires the second-personal address in which

> the stranger does not stand off in the distance but comes near and summons me. I am responsible for what I hear – a command or a promise; I am not a master. I can no longer construct a theology, project my own experience, offer my own speculations about the nature of a perfect being, or present a critical reflection on praxis. Rather, I am *given* a theology (Horton 2011, 90).

Such theology does not involve an eye that gazes on objects third-personally, nor a consciousness of oneself that meets with no external resistance. Employing a passage from Hans Blumenberg, Horton sees a genuine theology as a theology of the ear, not of the eye – and certainly not of frictionless self-awareness – for the ear 'is affected and accosted … That which demands unconditionally is encountered in the ear' (Blumenberg [1957] 1993, 48; quoted in Horton 2011, 92). Theology neither inspects an object, nor frictionlessly selects aspects of its own inwardness; instead it seeks openness to God and realizes that its fundamental posture is hearing God as He chooses to reveal Himself. As John Webster puts it, theology must 'approach its given content as suppliant' (Webster 2003, 16). At root, theological knowing is second-person knowing because God is other than us and makes Himself known personally in His ways and for His purposes. To know God, Lucifer would have needed to coordinate with Him and willingly curtail his freedom in order to receive and respond to the ways God offered Himself. This is true of knowing any person; it is even more true of coming to know God.

Even our brief sketch of some prominent features of first- and second-personal knowing reveals sharp phenomenological differences between the two standpoints. Distinct qualitative differences mark the two standpoints, and we are each familiar with how different they feel in our direct awareness. We know what it's like to wait on the other person in an outward-turned relationship of reciprocity. Likewise, we know how it feels to spontaneously turn inward and call forth any number of ways we are aware of our own selves. We also know that what it's like to be first-personally aware of ourselves feels markedly different than what it's like to be second-personally aware of someone else.

The final element of the main idea of this article (3) simply notes that the clear differences between how first-person awareness feels in comparison to second-person awareness open up phenomenological space for a genuine value conflict in which we can clearly see how Lucifer could first begin to develop a 'bad will' where he valued the goods he was (first-personally) aware of *in himself* more highly than the goods he was (second-personally) aware of in the triune life and being of God – and that this owes to Lucifer's necessarily creaturely first and second-person standpoints, rather than to any defect in Lucifer

(or lack of divine grace). It's clear in our own experience how the first-person awareness we have of ourselves 'lights up' differently than the second-person awareness we have of others. Since Lucifer was creaturely and personal like us, we should expect – *mutatis mutandis* – that his first and second-person awareness would have real similarities to ours.[24] Thus, we would expect a sharp qualitative phenomenological difference between Lucifer's experience within the first- and second-person standpoints.

In thinking about how a 'bad will' originated in Lucifer, the characteristic inwardness of the first-person standpoint is obviously relevant. The self-regarding direction of being first-personally aware of oneself and one's own perspectives could clearly lend itself to an increasing regard for one's own perspectives. What seemed valuable from within that inward-turned awareness could begin to seem more and more vividly valuable. Moreover, that unique acquaintance with oneself in the first-person perspective is particularly immediate and always available on one's own terms. Unlike second-person awareness of another person, no coordination with another is required. One need not remain in a space of open-handed responsiveness to another. Lucifer could have called up many of the goods of his own nature at will, and could have started to linger over them and to cultivate possibilities for the unfolding of his very great capacities and beauties. Lucifer's first-person awareness of his own goodness was spontaneously accessible at his whim; this was under his control. To attain these goods there was no need to wait on another or to coordinate his will with the will of another who was making Himself known in His own ways for His own purposes. In this way the goods Lucifer found in himself could start to be loved for themselves and their own goodness and beauty more than for the relational capacities they gave Lucifer for relationship with God. For example, the very great good of Lucifer's intellect was rightly ordered to God. But, as Augustine emphasizes, such a good does in fact as such have a beauty and a loveliness. It is a lofty, good, and beautiful capacity – and it is *Lucifer's* capacity, even though its right *ordering* is relational, directed toward God. In the first-person perspective, the goodness, beauty, and loveliness Lucifer does in fact see in himself will 'light up' differently than the relational goods he is aware of second-personally. Precisely in that qualitative phenomenological difference, those goods become goods he can aim at and value differently. Again, this is not because those capacities malfunction, but because as real goods in Lucifer himself that 'light up' differently they become subject to assessment and valuation relative to other goods he is aware of in different ways, namely, the goods of God's triune life and being that Lucifer is aware of only second-personally. He must establish the comparative scale for himself, and it could become possible for him to disorder those goods, beginning to assign value to himself above God.[25] This is where Augustine's point is of utmost importance: 'When the will, abandoning what is above it, turns itself to something lower, it becomes evil because *the very turning itself and not the thing to which it turns is evil*' (CG, XII,vi, 255; emphasis added). Here we find real motivational space and metaphysical possibility for the gradual advent of 'internal fragmentation' (Worsley 2016, 91).[26]

It's also clear that the first-person perspective can start to sideline the inherently social dimensions of our being and begin to be experienced as private – a self-enclosed, self-validating world of one's own. We can lose sight of the fact that the inwardness of the first-person perspective must at its inception be opened in relationship with others. 'What is primitive, for Augustine, is never my awareness of myself. What is primitive is the relationship of awareness between me and others, and above all, between me and God' (Chappell 2013, 16; see also Levinas 1961 [1969]). However, within the first-person perspective, one can start to lose sight of the fact that the gift of inward awareness is just that: A gift – one given by God and by others. One can see how Lucifer could have become increasingly insulated from the people who addressed him and the claims others made on him by addressing him and seeking his responsiveness. There would have been calls to be social and invitations to

reciprocity and mutual giving. But joining others in that would involve giving up real measures of control and taking up a dance that others were dancing and working out together. As Talbert notes, in second-person knowing, one 'must consent to be known' and 'relinquish the privacy of the mental states' that are shared (Talbert 2015, 203–204). That dance of giving and receiving the goods available in second-person experience requires coordination. Pulling back from such socially oriented goods in favour of the private and controllable could lead to a first-person world calibrated *only* with itself – and when that happens the goods of that world could come to seem like the preeminent goods and then the only goods really worth pursuing. In such moments, a 'bad will' takes root.

In light of such qualitative phenomenological differences, Augustine's relational analysis of pride provides key insights into the origin of the first 'bad will'. For example, Augustine notes that there came a time when Lucifer 'took an arrogant joy in his own private sovereignty' (CG, XI,xiii, 209). A 'private sovereignty' seems like exactly the sort of thing that could emerge in Lucifer's choice to attend to aspects of his own first-person awareness of himself that differed from his second-person awareness of God. Such 'private sovereignty' need not arise from any inherent defect in Lucifer, but only from the qualitatively different awareness attending a creaturely first-person perspective of himself and his own goods over against a second-person awareness of the goods of God. No defect here traces to God. Instead, a creature has been created precisely as a creature, and that necessarily opens phenomenological space between the first- and second-person standpoints that deeply structure the creature's experience. That phenomenological space helps us understand a *genuine value conflict* where Lucifer could begin – in Augustine's psychologically apt description – to take an 'arrogant joy' over his private first-personal fiefdom. Similarly, in *The Trinity*, Augustine sees sin as involving a turn from the social to the private:

> What happens is that the soul, loving its own power, slides away from the whole which is common to all into the part which is its own private property. By following God's directions and being perfectly governed by his laws it could enjoy the whole universe of creation; but by the apostasy of pride which is called the beginning of sin it strives to grab something more than the whole and to govern it by its own laws (Augustine [420] 1991, XII,iii,14, 333).

Here again, attending to the qualitative phenomenological difference that sets creaturely second-person awareness of others apart from creaturely first-person awareness of the self allows us to *comprehend and even feel the phenomenological space for a genuine value conflict in which Lucifer could himself begin to bend his love away from others toward himself.* The psychologically resonant notion of sliding away from others seems fitting. Together with others is what is in common, that which requires coordination and response in order to attain goods which – in a sense – always stand over against oneself. In service of himself, Lucifier could begin to retreat into the private and individual, with creeping isolation increasingly draining the vibrancy and joys out of second-personal experiences. Contrasted with a lively, direct, and always accessible awareness of his own very great goods – the real facts of his own loveliness – the whole second-personal business of coordinating with others might come to seem shabby or inconvenient. How much easier and gratifying to manipulate others as foils for one's own loveliness? In this way, Lucifer might become deprived of 'holy companions', turning in on himself and seeking to satisfy needs that he had come to find in an inward-turned first-personal world of his own making (Augustine [416] 2002, XI,xix,[15], 439). Projects of his own would consume more time, becoming more and more precious to him. Turning from an increasingly pallid second-personal reality and retreating into a controllable inward world, such a being would have come to have an indwelling tyrant love of

himself (to paraphrase Plato in the *Republic*) goading him and enslaving him – to his utter ruin. In the end, Lucifer pridefully desired to displace God in an act of 'radical rebellion' or 'countercreation' (Pini 2013, 79).[27]

We have now seen how first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference makes possible a value conflict that opens a space where the pre-Fall Lucifer could have disordered his loves along the lines laid out by Augustine – a fact that opens significant insight into the problem of primal sin. To see more of the significance, consider a 'crude analogy' William Wood uses to illustrate the 'harder problem' of understanding how it could be subjectively rational for the pre-Fall Lucifer to choose to sin. 'Suppose a wealthy benefactor offers you the following "dilemma." You must either accept a huge sum of money with no strings attached, or else throw yourself out of a twenty-story window' (Wood 2016, 226). The analogy clearly pushes us to think about desires one could understand to be worth pursuing. Even if you were genuinely, metaphysically free to choose either option, it's unfathomable that you as a subject would find defenestrating yourself to be desirable. Given those options, not choosing the huge sum of money is not subjectively rational. Of course, the point is that Lucifer fittingly loving God and eternally enjoying the innumerable goods found in Him is like the huge sum of money in Wood's analogy. In the end, there should be no real conflict of values for anyone with a modicum of rationality, let alone an unfallen being of so great an order as Lucifer.

But given our analysis of first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference, we can see how the analogy might not fit the case of the value conflict Lucifer's actually faced. Because of the qualitatively different 'feel' of the first and second-person standpoints and the very different ways in which the goods presented in those modes of awareness would 'light up' for a subject, Lucifer's situation might come to be *experienced by him* as not nearly so stark. Perhaps he might have come to find it closer to a choice between (1) preparing and enjoying a great meal with some good friends, or (2) kicking back alone on the couch with whatever movie you want and a great pizza delivered to your door. Or, perhaps better, maybe it could have come to feel (subjectively, to Lucifer) more like a choice between (1) practising and then singing Bach's *Mass in B Minor* together with your closest, most musically gifted friends in Europe's finest cathedral for a genuinely noble king before enjoying the best food and the sweetest rest, and (2) going on a private tour of the Grand Canyon, the Alps, and Victoria Falls at your own pace on your own itinerary with a host of hired hands ready to cater to your every desire. Close attention to first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference reveals a plausible way in which the goods available in the two standpoints could come 'light up' for the pre-Fall Lucifer in a way where his choice would not be subjectively incomprehensible – where, indeed, it (sadly) has a kind of plausibility, or potential subjective rationality. Given the nature of the case (I will argue shortly), we cannot know Lucifer's exact motivations; the choice was (and had to be) Lucifer's in a way that lit up with features subjectively attractive *for him*. But first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference could give rise to a value conflict in which the choice is subjectively comprehensible, and that's enough to make a plausible case that the pre-Fall Lucifer could have made the choice to love himself above God – a choice that would make him the metaphysical origin of evil.

Qualitative phenomenological difference and the metaphysical problem: responding to objections

We can readily understand – almost from the inside, tragically – what it might be like for a created nature with creaturely modes of awareness to 'slide' away from others into a little 'private sovereignty' marked with lots of little arrogant pleasures. Such a value conflict potentially arising from first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological

difference would be genuine, and I have argued that it cannot rightly be laid at God's feet because creatures cannot have God's own first-person awareness of Himself and His goods. But does this really address the metaphysical problem at the heart of the Babcock/Brown dilemma? Yes it does – when we keep in mind the nature of the metaphysical reply being advanced here. Insight into a space of clearly available and plausible subjective motivation where the pre-Fall Lucifer could begin to love himself over God and others (progress on what Wood called 'the harder problem') allows us to see a metaphysical point of origin for sin. It's *Lucifer himself* who makes the decision from within a *genuine value conflict* that is possible, given the nature of what it is to be a creature. Metaphysically, the pre-Fall Lucifer disordered his love, so a phenomenological analysis that reveals a possible value conflict where Lucifer could value himself over God is directly relevant to the metaphysical issue. Responding to two types of objections might help us see this, and see how our Augustinian account advances the explanatory discussion.

One type of objection will argue that we're still impaled on the first horn of the dilemma: metaphysically, God is still on the hook for weaving defects into creation. Maybe it's argued that on our Augustinian account Lucifer was subject to ignorance – an ignorance that seems like a flaw or defect imposed on the creature *by God*. There is, to be sure, a sort of 'ignorance' here that opens space for a genuine value conflict, but the ignorance in view is not a *defect* in a creature, but simply the *creaturely* limit of not having God's own first-personal awareness of Himself and His goods. God could only foreclose the phenomenological space for the value conflict by refusing altogether to create personal creatures capable of love. Metaphysically, God is not to blame. The space for a genuine value conflict does not culpably originate with God – and we can understand the metaphysical situation in which some creature who is not God could come to be conflicted. The new and different approach I am taking here to the possibility of such genuine value conflict apart from God making defective creatures is, I believe, genuine progress in the literature wrestling with the metaphysical problem about the origin of evil – one with real advantages of other contemporary attempts to introduce the necessary value conflict.[28]

The other type of objection will then argue that we only avoid the first horn at the cost of being impaled on the second horn: Metaphysically, evil is arbitrary and Lucifer looks like a patsy to whom evil 'just happened'. Not only would this be unsatisfying, it would also make us question the goodness and/or omnipotence of a God who would leave Lucifer vulnerable to such randomness. The first thing to notice in response is that we have now arrived at much larger discussions about libertarian free will[29] – and, as has frequently been shown in the literature, those who would deny libertarian free will must pay steep metaphysical and moral costs of their own. Given a person with libertarian freedom, however, we have seen how such a person could be in a genuine value conflict opened by creaturely first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference and not by God making that creaturely person defective. In short, given libertarian freedom, the argument in this article works as a metaphysical account of the origin of evil, giving both (1) a metaphysical setting of a genuine value conflict that the pre-Fall Lucifer could have experienced (quite independently of defects or a lack of grace), and (2) a metaphysical state of the pre-Fall Lucifer himself where we can comprehend how he could have thought himself to be subjectively rational in choosing to love himself above God. Second, the pre-Fall Lucifer's situation seems like an eminently plausible place for libertarian freedom, subjecting him neither to obvious determining external forces or overpowering motives. The way in which the goods would light up differently for Lucifer in his situation of first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference could leave Lucifer poised between incommensurable (but plausibly subjectively rational) goods where he would need to establish the value scale for himself, thus inaugurating motives for the sort of person he would thereby choose to be (which, importantly, is also something that would also be true for any other angels in

a relevantly similar value conflict arising from the different ways in which various goods 'lit up' for them).[30] Third, while some will dismiss this out of hand, it seems relevant to an orthodox Christian like myself that God is omnipotent and will have reasons and abilities that radically outstrip our explanatory capacities. In particular, not seeing any contradiction in the notion of a person who is libertarianly free, saying that an omnipotent God could not create such a being seems strange. I may not be able to explain the motivational structure precisely, but that's neither here nor there.

Fourth, our phenomenological approach to primal sin further circumscribes the need to appeal to mystery. It does this by helping us see 'continuity' between Lucifer as a subject and his eventual act of primal sin, thus extending our understanding of how Lucifer could come to be in a situation where he could take there to be real subjective rationality *both* in continuing to love God above himself (thereby rightly ordering a proper love for himself within his overarching love for God) *and* in loving some good in himself above God. As we will see shortly, the very nature of the case leaves an unavoidable mysterious remainder: *which* of the subjectively comprehensible reasons will he elevate above the other and *precisely why* does he choose to endorse the one over the other? But by establishing 'psychological continuity between primal sinner and primal sin' (MacDonald 1999, 113), we draw better boundaries for mystery, limiting the places where we need to appeal to it by getting a clearer picture of the subject who actually makes the choice. Babcock puts his finger on why real continuity must be established:

> Augustine … needed to supply some indication that and how the first evil will is, in some sense, continuous with the character of an agent who he now construed as unambiguously good. Otherwise the act (in this case, the first willing of evil) will appear to be only randomly associated with the agent, and the first instance of evil will seem a matter of mere chance rather than an action that can be construed as genuinely the agent's own' (Babcock 1988, 41).

First-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference allows us to see how an unfallen angel like Lucifer could – *as an unfallen, defect-free subject* – come to inhabit a value conflict where he could have come to find subjective rationality *both* in elevating the real goods found in himself to primacy *and* in continuing to subordinate his entirely appropriate valuing of the real goods found in himself to the far greater goods he was (second-personally) aware of in God. We can understand how Lucifer could have come to face such a choice without postulating some bizarre psychological 'break' in him because we can understand how the relevant goods would 'light up' differently for him because of his creaturely first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference, quite possibly leaving him within the space of a genuine value conflict. This is exactly the kind of 'continuity' Babcock rightly sees is needed in giving an account of primal sin. Babcock charges Augustine with failing in this regard: 'What he could not find was that continuity with the dispositions, inclinations, motivations, aims and intentions of the agent that must be present if an act is to count as the agent's own and therefore as an instance of moral agency' (Babcock 1988, 49). Our argument, however, allows us to see definite and understandable continuity running through Lucifer's possible dispositions, inclinations, motivations, aims, and intentions into Lucifer's actions in primal sin; thus, the action does count as his own, even if we cannot – in the very nature of the case – specify just why he finally endorsed one way of ordering the relevant goods than the other. Nevertheless, we can readily understand how Lucifer could come to be in such a situation – a situation where both ways of ordering his loves had come to seem subjectively rational to him.

We can briefly illustrate how establishing an appropriate level of continuity circumscribes mystery by considering how the 'teacher' in Anselm's *On the Fall of the Devil* might

be able use the phenomenological insights we have been unpacking to go a little further in his response to the questions the 'student' was asking. Anselm's 'student' is looking for continuity when he asks: 'I would like to hear what sort of advantageous thing this was that the good angels justly spurned and thereby advanced, and the evil angels unjustly desired and thereby fell away' (Anselm 2002, 66). The 'teacher's' reply is fair, if somewhat disappointing: 'I don't know what it was.' We can now go deeper, however. Drawing attention to how the goods Lucifer found in himself (first-personally) lit up differently than the goods Lucifer found in God (second-personally), the 'teacher' could show how Lucifer could find subjectively rational motivation in both kinds of goods and how either choice is comprehensible (unlike a choice to jump out of a window on the twentieth floor rather than receive a fortune with no strings attached). In short, the 'teacher' can now say,

> Here are some possible goods Lucifer could well have come to love above God, and we can see how his choice for any of them could have come to seem subjectively rational to him – as could the choice to continue loving God rightly. I can't tell you *exactly* what it was that Lucifer came to see as more advantageous than adhering to God, or *precisely* why Lucifer elected to order those very real goods in just the way he did. But we can see that a number of comprehensible options were available to him.

Is there still a measure of mystery in the teacher's response? Yes. But it is far less stark and is now set against a backdrop of subjective comprehensibility.

For all the importance of continuity, however, we can also overextend our attempts to find it. When that happens, one turns important explorations of psychological continuity between Lucifer and the primal sin (MacDonald 1999, 113) into demands for Humean 'explanation' that would remove Lucifer's own efficacy as a person from our attempts to understand primal sin. Such Humean explanation would leave Lucifer a mere link in an inescapable causal series whose 'actions can be traced up, by a necessary chain, to the Deity' (Hume 1739–1740 [1975]), 871, in Chappell 1994, 871). Overreaching with respect to continuity thus leaves one very clearly impaled on the first horn of the Babcock/Brown dilemma, leaving God responsible for the first sin because Lucifer did exactly what God caused him to do. To avoid this, it does seem like some sort of libertarian free will is necessary, and with it will come some measure of mystery. How worried should we be about this unavoidable remainder of mystery?

Though I can't develop the idea fully here, I'd like to suggest a *principled reason* why the frequent demands to explain exactly 'why' Lucifer fell may be out of place. If so, we can see why pining for Hume-type explanation is out of place, and that a measure of mystery attends the very nature of the motivational explorations required by questions about primal sin. My suggestion is this: perhaps the creaturely first-person/second-person phenomenological difference in the ways goods 'lit up' for Lucifer put him in a space of what we might call 'phenomenological incommensurability' – a space where no standard of measure could be given for Lucifer, who had to establish *de novo* measures that could not exist before he brought them into being *for himself*. The fact that such measures are inherently related to a *particular* person opens a connection to an insight from Gabriel Marcel. When Marcel defined a mystery as 'a problem that encroaches on its own data', he gave a *principled reason why* some explanatory demands cannot be met (Marcel 1995, 19). Brian Teanor and Brendan Sweetman get this right. A mystery

> is a question in which the identity of the questioner becomes an issue itself – where, in fact, the questioner is involved in the question he or she is asking. On the level of the mysterious, the identity of the questioner is tied to the question and, therefore,

the questioner is not interchangeable. To change the questioner would be to alter the question.

They go on to note that Marcel applied this idea to 'the "problem" of *evil* and – perhaps the archetypal examples of mystery – *freedom* and *love*' (Teanor and Sweetman 2021). Evil, freedom, and love. Our Augustinian picture of evil originating in the pre-Fall Lucifer's free choice to love himself over God and others perfectly fits Marcel's category of 'mystery'. Lucifer cannot be swapped out for an explanatory construct of some generic 'subject' accoutered with motives *we* assign or reasons comprehensible *to a purportedly generic 'rational subject'*. In such attempts, we seek to make ourselves interchangeable with Lucifer by imposing motives or reasons we might hypothetically accept if we were stand-ins for Lucifer in his situation of phenomenological incommensurability. The demand for explanation is thus a demand for interchangeability. But in the nature of the case, an evaluative measure for the incommensurable must be established first-personally *for* and *by* Lucifer alone. Lucifer-related reasons are assigned and values created for and by Lucifer in a kind of indexical moment of elevating one value over another as they are offered in his awareness: 'I now *hereby* measure it *thus!*' In that moment – a moment where only Lucifer can set value *for himself* – we encounter a place where attempts to calculate the incalculable by seeking to assign motives that function as tacit standards being given to Lucifer are badly out of place. Such attempts demand a sort of interchangeability ruled out by the very nature of the question – a question only Lucifer could answer for himself. Poised at the threshold of different *kinds* of awareness related to his own subjectivity, Lucifer alone could establish their relative value for himself. The inherently person-involved nature of Lucifer's situation gives it the structure of a mystery, as Marcel saw. Perhaps what is needed, then, is a sort of quasi-Wittgensteinian 'therapy'. Maybe we should ask whether our penchant for asking a question a certain way – a way that finally doesn't make sense – actually *creates* what then seems to us to be an intractable puzzle within the problem of primal sin. The demand for Hume-type explanation in matters of understanding a subject's action may be badly out of place. Maybe Marcel is right, and the very nature of the case means that we have principled grounds for rejecting misguided attempts to explain exactly *why* Lucifer elevated one good over another in his awareness of them. In an inherently subject-related situation of phenomenological incommensurability, Lucifer brought his reasons into being himself, and his reasons can *only* be *his* reasons, established for and by himself.

Conclusion

In Augustine's powerful analysis, evil first entered God's wholly good, defect-free creation in the primal sin of disordered love: 'They abandoned Him whose Being is absolute and turned to themselves whose being is relative – a sin that can have no better name than pride' (CG, XII,vi, 253). What is highest and best in all creation – personal beings, limited but created in the freedom of real love – took a path that was open to them as relational beings. Lucifer was one such being, and he chose to love himself above God. *Incurvatus in se* is the metaphysical inception of pride, the primal sin.

I have attempted to defend an Augustinian account of primal sin from a powerful dilemma that goes back to Augustine himself by giving careful attention to the phenomenology involved in being a pre-Fall relational creature made to love God and others and oneself. Being genuine creatures ('made from nothing', as Augustine rightly insists), such creatures cannot be God. Precisely in that limit, they are good. They stand in relationship with God. But, of course, these creaturely limits profoundly shape what it is like to be such creatures. They cannot have God's own awareness of the goods of His own triune

life and being. As personal and relational creatures, they will be aware of many goods in God; but that awareness can only ever be second-personal knowledge, not the first-personal knowledge they have of themselves. These different forms of awareness quite clearly 'light up' differently for personal beings such as Lucifer. I have argued that this qualitative difference between first-person and second-person awareness of goods opens space for a potential pre-Fall value conflict in a personal, relational creature like Lucifer – a conflict arising neither from created defects nor lack of grace, but simply from the qualitative phenomenological difference in how a being like Lucifer would have been aware of the goods of God (second-person awareness) and his own goods (first-person awareness). In this indexical moment of conflict, there was an opening for the shapely and fitting ordering of love – or its hideous and misshapen disordering.

If the argument I have advanced here works, we have a fresh way of drawing a significant conclusion about a Christian understanding of the origin of evil: metaphysically, the pre-Fall, defect-free Lucifer could very well have disordered his own loves, thus introducing evil into a creation that God rightly had pronounced 'very good'. In the words of a passage that many in the early Church took to be about the fall of Lucifer, 'Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor' (Ezekiel 28:17).[31] In a value-conflict opened by qualitative phenomenological difference, a pre-Fall, relational creature could have done just that. Perhaps Lucifer did. If so, then Augustine got it right: Lucifer, 'by loving himself more than God, refused to be subject to him, and thus swollen with pride he deserted the supreme Being and fell' (Augustine 390 [2005], 13:26). That damnable moment of Lucifer loving himself above God first opened the horrific pattern of *incurvatus in se* – a sick distortion amply displayed in history. One we each find in our own hearts in turn.

Notes

1. This article addresses only questions of 'moral evil'. For a suggestion that 'moral evil' births 'natural evil', see Plantinga ([2004] 2017).

2. Karl Barth argues that falsehood and sloth are no less fundamental for analysing sin than pride (see Jenson 2006, chapter 4). Though I offer no rebuttal here, falsehood and sloth seem readily analysable in terms of pride as disordered self-love.

3. Although Augustine never uses the phrase '*incurvatus in se*', it captures the essence of Augustine's understanding of pride. While for Augustine 'being *incurvatus in se* and being prideful are not identical conditions' (Jenson 2006, 99, note 1), Augustine nonetheless analyses pride as an inward-turned love.

4. Though Scripture never names humanity's adversary, the appellation 'Lucifer' stems from the 'Morning Star' language of Isaiah 14:12.

5. I follow the old practice of capitalizing masculine pronouns for God in order to (1) follow Scripture's use of those pronouns, (2) show reverence, and (3) discourage mapping cultural understandings of gendered language onto God.

6. See also, Babcock (1988) 45; MacDonald (1999) 111; Wood (2016) 225–226; Cawdron (2022) 1072; Timpe (2013) 236–237; and Pini (2013) 61–62.

7. While I would be pleased if my analysis reflects or fits well with Augustine's own views, Augustine exegesis is not my aim.

8. As MacDonald rightly observes, Augustine 'does not mean that pride is an antecedent state of the prospective sinner that causes sin to occur. Instead "pride" is a description of the state that constitutes the sin itself' (MacDonald (1999) 138, n. 41). See also King (2012, 267).

9. As one reviewer noted, a creature like Lucifer could clearly have third-person knowledge of God. In other words, he could know God as an 'it' – an object known, perhaps, for intellectual satisfaction or the like. Such third-person knowledge of God might open questions about whether Lucifer could have come to desire mere third-person knowledge of God (e.g., knowing God as an object for Lucifer's intellectual satisfaction) over second-person knowing of God (e.g., genuine friendship with God). For several reasons, however, third-person knowledge of God will not play an important role in the argument below. First, Augustine himself heads in a different direction, identifying the primal sin as Lucifer coming to love himself over God, rather than Lucifer seeking third-person knowledge about God for mere intellectual satisfaction (or some other aim). Second, and more importantly, pursuing questions of Lucifer's third-person knowledge of God would lead away from the central phenomenological insight of this article: The difference in the 'feel' of (1) Lucifer's first-person awareness of himself and the goods of his own nature, and (2) his second-person awareness of God and the goods of God's triune life and being opens a space in which Lucifer as a subject could come to value for himself the (differently accessed and experienced) goods of his own nature more highly than the goods he experienced (only, as it were) second-personally in God. Crucial to this is that Lucifer himself as a subject inhabits the first-person perspective with its unique kind of awareness and 'feel', while his *most intimate* awareness of God must (for him as a creature) be from the second-person (not third-person) perspective. Even that most intimate experience of God – which would clearly be second-personal rather than third-personal – will still 'light up' differently than Lucifer's first-person awareness of himself. That difference is precisely the space in which Lucifer could start to find for himself as a subject more value in the goods he was experiencing first-personally in himself than the goods he was experiencing second-personally in God. Finally, I would not hold out much hope for an approach to primal sin that placed much weight on Lucifer desiring third-person knowledge of God. It's hard to imagine a flawless, unfallen creature of so high an order as Lucifer falling victim to such a massive and precipitous devaluing of God as regarding God as a mere object – an 'it' over a 'Thou' – without some sort of serious antecedent corruption – a corruption very much like Augustine's analysis of pride as disordered love of oneself.

10. An anonymous reviewer helpfully urged further clarification that Augustine did not have the full complement of phenomenological resources used in this article. That is clearly the case, and I want to reemphasize that the argument here makes no claim to be Augustine's own argument, though I do think it is Augusti*nian* in its development of Augustine's analysis of pride and its role in primal sin. At the same time, while acknowledging the reviewer's point, neither would I want to overemphasize the differences. Thus, while Linda Zagzebski has recently argued for the relatively new (and thus post-Augustinian) 'discovery' of subjectivity, she includes an interesting footnote that concedes that many commentators see Augustine as far ahead of his time in the acuity and subtlety of his observations of the inner conscious life (Zagzebski 2021, 210–211, n. 14). It may be that Augustine would have resonated with the kind of phenomenological insights leveraged in this article.

11. For example, there could well be powerful ways of using the value conflict opened by first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference to unpack the 'desire for benefit' (*affectio commodi*) that is so important for Anselm's account of primal sin. Perhaps one could make some progress on the 'student's' question in Anselm's *On the Fall of the Devil*: 'I would like to hear what sort of advantageous thing this was that the good angels justly spurned and thereby advanced, and the evil angels unjustly desired and thereby fell away' (Anselm ([c. 1080–1086] (2002) 66). Anselm's 'teacher' replies (fairly enough) 'I don't know what it was'; but perhaps one could advance the matter by putting forward some plausible candidate 'advantages' that could conceivably motivate the good and the bad angels within the possible value conflict outlined in this article. Indeed, perhaps even more harmony could be found between Augustine and Anselm; after all, as Katherin Rogers notes, Anselm's 'basic metaphysics and epistemology are solidly Augustinian' (Rogers 2008, 31; in Timpe 2013, 240).

12. Giorgio Pini's account of Duns Scotus on primal evil suggests a number of possible points of contact. In particular, Scotus's combination of a 'two-object relation' with his notion of a 'wish' (*velleitas*) might helpfully fit with the potential value conflict owing to first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference to make additional sense of Lucifer's 'act of radical rebellion' in which he came to 'wish that God did not exist' (Pini 2013, 73–76, 79–80).

13. See, for example, Timpe (2013, 236). As Timothy O'Connor notes, 'Scholars divide on whether Augustine was a libertarian or instead a kind of compatibilist with respect to metaphysical freedom' (O'Connor 2002). See O'Connor's bibliography.

14. Since a defence advances merely a possibility, it leaves ample room for the fact that God – being, well, *God* – may have worked something wholly good and just in these matters that is unimagined by us – a possibility I fully and happily acknowledge. Humility is needed in these matters. In this way, too, the position advanced here is Augustinian in spirit.

15. Translation modified. I have added dashes ('– and becomes –') to make clear Augustine's sense that the self, (1) by its own agency and action in choosing an end, (2) starts to aim at itself as its own chief object of (disordered) 'love'.

16. As one reviewer noted, if a subject can have one and only one first-person perspective, then – since God has one first-person perspective and Lucifer another – Lucifer cannot have God's first-person perspective. As I will argue, however, in this section and the next, the divide here goes far deeper.

17. Because of this chasm, the important phenomenon of 'mind reading' – where 'something of the thought, affect, or intention in the mind of one person is in the mind of another' (Stump 2013, 41) – has limited application in the case of a creature 'mind-reading' God. Indeed, Stump herself notes that when Christ 'mind-reads miraculously' there is a kind of 'asymmetry' because 'this kind of mind-reading is unilateral, not mutual' (Stump 2013, 45). Thus, while God does become present to a person who is in 'a relation of mutual love with God' (Stump 2013, 46), the very creatureliness of the creature means that her 'mind-reading' of God will fall far short of her attaining full awareness of what it's like for God to be God in the fullness of His triune life and being.

18. Though not relevant here, Plantinga then introduces his crucial notion of 'transworld depravity' (49–53). For Thomas Aquinas's recognition that in creating creatures even an omnipotent God must limit Himself, see Pini (2013, 70, 80); and Stump (1986, 194–95).

19. By developing the 'space' metaphor in the account of primal sin I'm giving, I don't mean to indicate that the 'space' *causes* anything or of itself *leads to* anything. Rather, it's a way of describing a potential value conflict that could be opened by first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference – a value conflict in which Lucifer himself finds the possibility of loving himself above God. God is not on the hook because it is an unfallen, defect-free Lucifer who comes to be in that space of a possible choice because Lucifer is a creature who (as a creature) cannot have God's own first-person perspective of His own triune life and being, and thus Lucifer finds himself in a situation of first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference. It is this 'space' of a potential real value conflict that requires Lucifer to order the relevant goods for himself as a subject and thus opens the possibility of him disordering his loves, which is the inception of sin.

20. As noted above, because the chasm between the Creator and the creatures means that no creature can have God's own first-person awareness of what it is like to be God, the phenomenon of 'mind reading' will have sharply limited application in the case of a creature 'mind-reading' God. In short, there would still be a sharp phenomenological distinction between what it is like for creatures to experience themselves first-personally and what it is like for them to experience God second-personally. See note 17 above.

21. The points in the next few paragraphs draw on some of my own earlier work; see Seeman (2000).

22. See Martin Buber (1958) and Gabriel Marcel ([[1949] 1965] 1965) on the 'I/Thou' motif.

23. I have further clarified the sense of 'waiting' involved in second-person knowledge in response to a helpful question from an anonymous reviewer who wondered if needing to 'wait' for knowledge of God fell afoul of J.L. Schellenberg's 'divine hiddenness' argument. Does 'waiting' mean that God was 'holding out' on Lucifer, such that God was not really giving Lucifer the chance to know Him when God's love would seem to entail His desire for relationship with all creatures – especially an unfallen creature like Lucifer? Not at all. Rather, the sense of 'waiting' required in second-person knowledge does not owe to someone withholding knowledge, but is precisely the way of making genuine knowledge of themselves available in interpersonal relationship. The other's creativity and their 'otherness' shapes their 'offer' to us – an offer we must receive and to which we must respond. (On the phenomenological import of seeking to allow the Other be genuinely *other* than us (and not a mere placeholder in a totalized schema of our manufacture), see Levinas ([1961] 1969, 50–51, 67, 101, 171–174, *passim*).)

24. In Christian Scriptures and in traditional Christian theology, angels are understood to be firmly on the creature side of the chasm between the Creator and His creatures. Elizabeth Klein rightly summarizes Augustine's own view: 'Above all, he is concerned to show that the status of an angel is unequivocally that of a creature … The angels, just like human beings, come into their own perfection by understanding their created status and their relationship to God, a relationship which is characterized by praise' (Klein 2018, 11). Augustine stands well within the heart of the Christian tradition here. An angel like Lucifer is a creature who shares much more with other personal creatures like human beings than with the Creator. Certainly, it is well within the Christian tradition to hold that angels and humans (as personal and relational creatures) share sufficient similarities to underwrite a move from phenomenological insights into human ways of experiencing ourselves and others within the first and second-person standpoints to some plausible conclusions about the phenomenological contours of angelic awareness within the first- and second-person standpoints. Likewise, it is completely safe within the Christian tradition to hold that even an unfallen angel like Lucifer could not have anything remotely approaching God's own awareness of the goodness and beauty of His own triune life and being.

25. Although a full response would require a much longer article, I want to address a topic raised by an anonymous reviewer: 'Lucifer's choice to turn inward and experience pride for himself instead of further venerating God for the things that God has created (Lucifer's goods) might perhaps indicate a flaw in reason, reviving questions

concerning why God would not create a creature not subject to such flaws'. The roles of intellect and will and passions in making a choice have a hoary and contentious history that extends right down to the present. Of course I will not pretend to solve any of those issues here! That said, I find something like Kevin Timpe's description of Anselm's position to be a helpful starting point: 'Anselm, like the majority of the medievals, does not think that anyone wills injustice (or any other evil) for its own sake; rather, they will it under the description of something beneficial' (Timpe 2013, 243). Intellect seems fit to provide such a description, giving real and accurate descriptions of genuine goods involved (thus we avoid going in a Humean direction where reason is basically inert with respect to matters of value). As Scott MacDonald puts it, Augustine thought that 'the sinner's act of will – the choosing of the lesser good – is motivated by the fact that the sinner perceives the goodness of the object he comes to choose' (MacDonald 1999, 118). My tentative suggestion is that reason does not malfunction here, but gives an accurate description of real value in the genuine goods found in Lucifer and in God. But in both cases the intellect's assessment is made with respect to what goods are presented – and how the presentation of those goods makes Lucifer's intellect aware of the relevant goods. I am arguing that this presentation – and the attending shape of Lucifer's awareness of the goods involved – could itself come to be shaped by a creaturely necessary first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference. In the final section of this article, I suggest that the results might be deeply shaped by what we might call 'phenomenological incommensurability', leaving Lucifer in a position where he alone can assess the relative values of two very differently presented sets of goods. Lucifer must himself establish the measure for himself as a subject by endorsing one set of goods over the other, work that the intellect cannot finally do (perhaps because it has already weighed in by presenting a description of the goods as in fact good, or perhaps because that is not its function in the process of making a free decision). But here with the primal sin, as with other acts of the will, there is still 'a straightforward sense in which that act of will is intelligible: it is directed toward an object that is worth choosing' (MacDonald 1999, 119).

26. Thanks to a question from an anonymous reviewer, this paragraph is stronger and clearer than it otherwise would have been.

27. Pini shows that Scotus is worth more attention in discussions of primal sin; particularly interesting are Scotus on (1) the two-object character of volitions of desire, and (2) the possible role of a 'wish' (*velleitas*) in Lucifer's fall. I could envision fruitful ways of combining Scotus with the account given here.

28. For example, one important and instructive attempt to introduce a genuine value conflict into the motivational landscape of the pre-Fall angels is William Wood's 'Anselm of Canterbury of the fall of the devil'. While as I note above, my interest is not in arguing against other approaches to the problem of primal sin, I do think that the approach I present here offers several advantages. In his use of consumer preference theory, Wood accounts for the goodness of creation by portraying all the pre-Fall angels as consuming some genuine good God created them to enjoy. But, of course, it must be shown how any of the angels could have fallen from this flawless and happy state. As Wood rightly notes: 'Absent new information or some shift in their underlying environment that disturbs the initial equilibrium, we would expect that the preferences of the angels would remain stable' (Wood 2016, 239). They would happily continue consuming their proper goods in a fitting way. Here's the place where Wood's account and the account I am giving part ways. In Wood's terms, I have argued basically that the 'new information' or the 'shift' that 'disturbs the initial equilibrium' originates because the creaturely limits of the angels require a first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference in which the real goods the various angels become first-personally aware of in themselves 'light up' differently than the goods those angels find second-personally in God. Wood goes a different direction, suggesting that perhaps God – subsequent to the creation of the angels in their happy state of consuming their proper goods – outlawed the consumption of some good (perhaps as a 'wonderful gift' that gave the angels 'the opportunity to become genuine, self-determining, moral agents, instead of beasts who unreflectively satisfy their desires as they arise' (Wood 2016, 239)). That's the 'shift' or the 'new information' that spurs the primal sin, according to Wood. Perhaps. However, I believe the account offered in this article has some advantages over such an approach. (1) Questions of God's motivation immediately arise in Wood's account, for God is 'moving the goal posts' after the creation to create a new situation – a situation in which (as He would know) some of the angels would fall. The account offered here, on the other hand, needs no divine intervention subsequent to the creation to enable primal sin to occur. If God chooses to create personal and relational creatures, the very nature of creaturely limits themselves give rise to the situation of first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference – a situation necessitated by the nature of God's own decision to create, one which just does in fact mean that the goods those creatures are aware of first-personally and second-personally will present themselves quite differently in the creature's awareness. This means that questions don't arise about why God would choose to change the situation for the angels, knowing that the change He was making would result in the fall of some of the angels. (2) Wood is aware that his account of primal sin runs a risk of having hideous outcomes and very severe punishments result from what could appear to be a mere peccadillo. The consumer preference model looks at 'amounts' or 'rates' of consuming something valued by a subject. Although the details would take us beyond the scope of this paper, Wood argues that at the

point at which Lucifer falls, he actually still prefers to consume more of the good he was created by God to consume; 'in an absolute sense he still prefers justice to benefit' (Wood 2016, 241). In a critique of Wood's article, Michael Barnwell asks whether it is tyrannical for God to punish Lucifer so severely for not slightly decreasing his preference for a good he was actually created to consume, but rather continuing to consume it at the same rate he was (rightly) consuming it before God introduced a new command (see Wood 2016, 239–243), and Barnwell 2017, 529–534 for details). By way of contrast, on the Augustinian account I am offering, the inception of sin *just is* Lucifer turning very directly away from God and to himself. There is a rebellious elevation of himself over God. Far from a mere peccadillo, Lucifer's first sinful inflection sets the heinous idolatrous direction for all subsequent sin. We sinners aim at something else above God, a substitute target, as it were. In pride, that substitute target that is valued above God is simply oneself. When the primal sin occurs, it already has this nature: 'Me over God.' That is a complete subversion of the created order and a tragedy of the highest order for a relational creature. It's not that wrong amounts of competing goods are being consumed, but that there is a *kind* difference in the good that was used to order all other goods. (3) Wood puts the pre-Fall angels in a new situation on the other side of God's giving them a different command about how they should consume a real good that shows how Lucifer could have had a subjectively rational preference to continue consuming that good at the same rate he had consumed it prior to God's command. However, the problem I have been trying to solve in this article will also appear in this new situation: how does one explain how those various goods the angels are consuming (or eschewing) in this new situation could have become attractive (or distasteful) to angels apart from any uneven allotment of created goods or preserving graces? I believe the account of first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference opens a clear path to answering that type of question. Finally (4), as Barnwell has argued, Wood's account may potentially explain the subjective rationality of Lucifer's preferences and consumption only at the cost of rendering the good angels' contrary preferences and consumption subjectively unintelligible. For more on Barnwell's concern and the reasons why the account of primal sin I am advancing does not fall victim to it, see note 30 below. It might be argued that the alternative account I am offering suffers from a kind of problematic arbitrariness in the end and so ends up impaled on the second horn of the Babcock/Brown dilemma. I address this concern below. Here I only note that any account that (like the one I am arguing for) employs a libertarian sense of free will – as any Anselmian account will – is going to face that question in some form.

29. This sort of observation is also made in Willows (2014). For a defence of libertarian free will, see O'Connor (1995) and O'Connor (2000).

30. One anonymous reviewer wondered if the account of primal sin here faces the same problem Michael Barnwell raised for William Wood. Barnwell argued vigorously and (in my estimation) with real force that Wood's use of consumer preference theory to introduce a value conflict where an unfallen angel could find a choice for evil subjectively rational struggles to explain how the good angels avoided falling (without some created good or grace not afforded the bad angels). Basically, Barnwell argues that Wood 'proves too much' because in the same way that the command God introduced to open the possibility of moral agency for the angels (Wood 2016, 239) put Lucifer in a situation where he 'rightly calculates that he can maximize his happiness by disobeying God' (Wood 2016, 240) and continuing to consume the newly constrained (forbidden) good at the same rate, it should have led *all* the angels to the same conclusion as clearly subjectively rational. In effect, the 'harder problem' of subjective rationality reappears in a new form, because it now seems that 'the good angels acted similarly to one who chooses a piece of cake over a fortune' by choosing to consume less of a good than they would have preferred to consume (Barnwell (2017), 535). How then can we understand the good angels' strange decision to choose *against* their overall subjective preference without appealing to some created good God wove into them but not the bad angels or some grace preferentially bestowed on those who did not fall? Wood is aware of the problem and briefly floats some possible motives for the good angels' decision to forego what they (like Lucifer) would have understood to be their own overall benefit, but it's not clear – given Lucifer's place within Wood's picture of the motivational landscape – that 'it is comparatively easy to explain why it is subjectively rational to obey God, the sovereign creator and the source of all goodness' (Wood 2016, 240).

The account of primal sin I am giving does not face the same problem of explaining the good angels' choice. I have sought to show how space could have been opened for Lucifer's choice whether or not to love himself above God. This space opens up because of how Lucifer's own very real goods 'lit up' differently for him than the goods he found in God due to first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference, with the result that Lucifer could have taken himself to have divergent motivating reasons that were subjectively rational. If that account works for Lucifer, it also works for the pre-Fall choices of the other angels, both those who confirm themselves in their good relational design and those who elect to love themselves above God. In each case, the motivational problem is handled in the same way. Neither the good angels nor the bad angels were choosing *against* their overall motivational picture, rather they were establishing a value scale for themselves *within* a space of goods that 'light up' differently due to creaturely first-person/second-person qualitative phenomenological difference. That subjective motivational space need not have been the same for all. Perhaps for Lucifer and some

of the good angels, what 'lit up' to them as particularly attractive about themselves was their intellect. In contrast, perhaps Michael and some of the bad angels found the splendour of their angelic visage particularly lovely, or the beauty with which they could express themselves, or any number of goods they were aware of first-personally. Each of these different possible situations is potentially subjectively rational for an angel, that is, it's a possible situation and we can comprehend how, if a subject were in that situation, that subject could be subjectively rational in making different choices to order their loves as they did during whatever time preceded the Fall. Of course this leaves a remainder of mystery about *exactly* why Lucifer (or any other angel before the Fall) chose what they did, but I argue below that (1) the account of primal sin offered here substantially mitigates the mystery involved, and (2) that there is a principled reason why the kind of demand for complete explanation is misguided in the case of primal sin.

I note in passing that it also seems relevant to a fuller attempt to understand the wider picture of angelic sin (which is not my project) that once one angel fell it would change the motivational picture for all the other angels by introducing new possible motives that the angels could now start to find subjectively rational. For example, there could be new possibilities for temptation by Lucifer's direct efforts or due to his example, and new occasions for recoil and abhorrence as the ugliness of twisted love for oneself above God and others began to manifest itself for the first time. It could thus be that none of the angels who confirmed their goodness would have done so if no other angels fell. (I have wondered if Wood might be able to use the change in the angelic motivational landscape to paint a picture of some counterfactuals that would allow for a reply to Barnwell's worry about the good angels, but that is not my concern here.)

31. For a fascinating exploration of historical readings of Ezekiel 28:11–19 as addressing the fall of 'Lucifer', see Patmore (2012). The argument in this article does not depend on any particular exegesis of this passage. That said, this suggestive passage does exemplify the kind of pattern that is our concern.

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