

attended Christian services with his parents, and listened so carefully that the claim was ~~made~~ made, by St Augustine, that Anthony, without being ~~able~~ able to read, simply from hearing the Bible knew it all by heart. Now others think that this claim is very extreme. 'And Augustine never knew him, he was a century later. But this certainly is true, ~~that~~ that he knew many Scripture passages, by heart. He evidently had a very good memory and remembered a great deal of the Scripture and meditated a great deal/ on this which he remembered.

He came of a well-to-do family. And he did not have education. In his 18th year the death of his parents involved him in the care of a younger sister and a considerable estate. And he, perhaps, did not like the cares that came in handling the estate, and all the worldly mixups that were necessary to take care of it and working it out, but perhaps rather irritated with all that, six months later, in the church, he heard the Word of the Lord to the rich young ruler read. If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow me. He took his 300 acres of fertile land, and he divided it up among the inhabitants of the village in which he lived. He sold his personal property for the benefit of the poor, except for a moderate reserve for the support of his sister, and thus followed literally and fully the instructions to the rich young ruler.

Soon afterwards, in the church, he heard the passage read, take no thought for the morrow, so he took the rest of what he had and gave it to the poor, left his sister with some friends, and went out a short distance into the desert and began there to live an ascetic life trying to follow the statement pray without ceasing. But also the statement that ~~any~~ any will not work, neither shall he eat. And so he labored and toiled, he raised a small garden and he got together just enough for his bare needs. He visited the neighboring ascetics, there were already a good many others in the area there, living in caves, each one alone, and he claims to have learned from one earnestness in prayer, and watchfulness from another, and excellence in fasting from a third, from a fourth meekness. And from all love for Christ and his fellow men.

And so he went, gradually he moved further and further away from the area where people were. First he lived in a sepulchre. Then for twenty years in a