

Confessions - Book IX - Chapter Xiii

by St. Augustine

Transcript

34. Now that my heart is healed of that wound--so far as it can be charged against me as a carnal affection--I pour out to thee, O our God, on behalf of thy handmaid, tears of a very different sort: those which flow from a spirit broken by the thoughts of the dangers of every soul that dies in Adam. And while she had been "made alive" in Christ[309] even before she was freed from the flesh, and had so lived as to praise thy name both by her faith and by her life, yet I would not dare say that from the time thou didst regenerate her by baptism no word came out of her mouth against thy precepts. But it has been declared by thy Son, the Truth, that "whosoever shall say to his brother, You fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire." [310] And there would be doom even for the life of a praiseworthy man if thou judgedst it with thy mercy set aside. But since thou dost not so stringently inquire after our sins, we hope with confidence to find some place in thy presence. But whoever recounts his actual and true merits to thee, what is he doing but recounting to thee thy own gifts? Oh, if only men would know themselves as men, then "he that glories" would "glory in the Lord" [311]!

35. Thus now, O my Praise and my Life, O God of my heart, forgetting for a little her good deeds for which I give joyful thanks to thee, I now beseech thee for the sins of my mother. Hearken unto me, through that Medicine of our wounds, who didst hang upon the tree and who sittest at thy right hand "making intercession for us." [312] I know that she acted in mercy, and from the heart forgave her debtors their debts. [313] I beseech thee also to forgive her debts, whatever she contracted during so many years since the water of salvation. Forgive her, O Lord, forgive her, I beseech thee; "enter not into judgment" with her. [314] Let thy mercy be exalted above thy justice, for thy words are true and thou hast promised mercy to the merciful, that the merciful shall obtain mercy. [315] This is thy gift, who hast mercy on whom thou wilt and who wilt have compassion on whom thou dost have compassion on. [316]

36. Indeed, I believe thou hast already done what I ask of thee, but "accept the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord." [317] For when the day of her dissolution was so close, she took no thought to have her body sumptuously wrapped or embalmed with spices. Nor did she covet a handsome monument, or even care to be buried in her own country. About these things she gave no commands at all, but only desired to have her name remembered at thy altar, where she had served without the omission of a single day, and where she knew that the holy sacrifice was dispensed by which that handwriting that was against us is blotted out; and that enemy vanquished who, when he summed up our offenses and searched for something to bring against us, could find nothing in Him, in whom we conquer.

Who will restore to him the innocent blood? Who will repay him the price with which he bought us, so as to take us from him? Thus to the sacrament of our redemption did thy hand maid bind her soul by the bond of faith. Let none separate her from thy protection. Let not the \"lion\" and \"dragon\" bar her way by force or fraud. For she will not reply that she owes nothing, lest she be convicted and duped by that cunning deceiver. Rather, she will answer that her sins are forgiven by Him to whom no one is able to repay the price which he, who owed us nothing, laid down for us all.

37. Therefore, let her rest in peace with her husband, before and after whom she was married to no other man; whom she obeyed with patience, bringing fruit to thee that she might also win him for thee. And inspire, O my Lord my God, inspire thy servants, my brothers; thy sons, my masters, who with voice and heart and writings I serve, that as many of them as shall read these confessions may also at thy altar remember Monica, thy handmaid, together with Patricius, once her husband; by whose flesh thou didst bring me into this life, in a manner I know not. May they with pious affection remember my parents in this transitory life, and remember my brothers under thee our Father in our Catholic mother; and remember my fellow citizens in the eternal Jerusalem, for which thy people sigh in their pilgrimage from birth until their return. So be fulfilled what my mother desired of me--more richly in the prayers of so many gained for her through these confessions of mine than by my prayers alone.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/st-augustine/confessions-book-ix-chapter-xiii/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net