

Confessions - Book VI - Chapter Xvi

by St. Augustine

Transcript

26. Thine be the praise; unto thee be the glory, O Fountain of mercies. I became more wretched and thou didst come nearer. Thy right hand was ever ready to pluck me out of the mire and to cleanse me, but I did not know it. Nor did anything call me back from a still deeper plunge into carnal pleasure except the fear of death and of thy future judgment, which, amid all the waverings of my opinions, never faded from my breast. And I discussed with my friends, Alypius and Nebridius, the nature of good and evil, maintaining that, in my judgment, Epicurus would have carried off the palm if I had not believed what Epicurus would not believe: that after death there remains a life for the soul, and places of recompense. And I demanded of them: "Suppose we are immortal and live in the enjoyment of perpetual bodily pleasure, and that without any fear of losing it--why, then, should we not be happy, or why should we search for anything else?" I did not know that this was in fact the root of my misery: that I was so fallen and blinded that I could not discern the light of virtue and of beauty which must be embraced for its own sake, which the eye of flesh cannot see, and only the inner vision can see. Nor did I, alas, consider the reason why I found delight in discussing these very perplexities, shameful as they were, with my friends. For I could not be happy without friends, even according to the notions of happiness I had then, and no matter how rich the store of my carnal pleasures might be. Yet of a truth I loved my friends for their own sakes, and felt that they in turn loved me for my own sake.

O crooked ways! Woe to the audacious soul which hoped that by forsaking thee it would find some better thing! It tossed and turned, upon back and side and belly--but the bed is hard, and thou alone givest it rest.[174] And lo, thou art near, and thou deliverest us from our wretched wanderings and establishest us in thy way, and thou comfortest us and sayest, "Run, I will carry you; yea, I will lead you home and then I will set you free." [175]

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

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