

Confessions - Book VII - Chapter XVII

by St. Augustine

Transcript

23. And I marveled that I now loved thee, and no fantasm in thy stead, and yet I was not stable enough to enjoy my God steadily. Instead I was transported to thee by thy beauty, and then presently torn away from thee by my own weight, sinking with grief into these lower things. This weight was carnal habit. But thy memory dwelt with me, and I never doubted in the least that there was One for me to cleave to; but I was not yet ready to cleave to thee firmly. For the body which is corrupted presses down the soul, and the earthly dwelling weighs down the mind, which muses upon many things.[211] My greatest certainty was that "the invisible things of thine from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even thy eternal power and Godhead." [212] For when I inquired how it was that I could appreciate the beauty of bodies, both celestial and terrestrial; and what it was that supported me in making correct judgments about things mutable; and when I concluded, "This ought to be thus; this ought not"--then when I inquired how it was that I could make such judgments (since I did, in fact, make them), I realized that I had found the unchangeable and true eternity of truth above my changeable mind.

And thus by degrees I was led upward from bodies to the soul which perceives them by means of the bodily senses, and from there on to the soul

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