

Confessions - Book VIII - Chapter IV

by St. Augustine

Transcript

9. Go on, O Lord, and act: stir us up and call us back; inflame us and draw us to thee; stir us up and grow sweet to us; let us now love thee, let us run to thee. Are there not many men who, out of a deeper pit of darkness than that of Victorinus, return to thee--who draw near to thee and are illuminated by that light which gives those who receive it power from thee to become thy sons? But if they are less well-known, even those who know them rejoice less for them. For when many rejoice together the joy of each one is fuller, in that they warm one another, catch fire from each other; moreover, those who are well-known influence many toward salvation and take the lead with many to follow them. Therefore, even those who took the way before them rejoice over them greatly, because they do not rejoice over them alone. But it ought never to be that in thy tabernacle the persons of the rich should be welcome before the poor, or the nobly born before the rest--since "thou hast rather chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong; and hast chosen the base things of the world and things that are despised, and the things that are not, in order to bring to nought the things that are."^[245] It was even "the least of the apostles" by whose tongue thou didst sound forth these words. And when Paulus the proconsul had his pride overcome by the onslaught of the apostle and he was made to pass under the easy yoke of thy Christ and became an officer of the great King, he also desired to be called Paul instead of Saul, his former name, in testimony to such a great victory.^[246] For the enemy is more overcome in one on whom he has a greater hold, and whom he has hold of more completely. But the proud he controls more readily through their concern about their rank and, through them, he controls more by means of their influence. The more, therefore, the world prized the heart of Victorinus (which the devil had held in an impregnable stronghold) and the tongue of Victorinus (that sharp, strong weapon with which the devil had slain so many), all the more exultingly should Thy sons rejoice because our King hath bound the strong man, and they saw his vessels taken from him and cleansed, and made fit for thy honor and "profitable to the Lord for every good work."^[247]

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

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