

Confessions - Book VIII - Chapter VII

by St. Augustine

Transcript

16. Such was the story Ponticianus told. But while he was speaking, thou, O Lord, turned me toward myself, taking me from behind my back, where I had put myself while unwilling to exercise self-scrutiny. And now thou didst set me face to face with myself, that I might see how ugly I was, and how crooked and sordid, bespotted and ulcerous. And I looked and I loathed myself; but whither to fly from myself I could not discover. And if I sought to turn my gaze away from myself, he would continue his narrative, and thou wouldst oppose me to myself and thrust me before my own eyes that I might discover my iniquity and hate it. I had known it, but acted as though I knew it not--I winked at it and forgot it.

17. But now, the more ardently I loved those whose wholesome affections I heard reported--that they had given themselves up wholly to thee to be cured--the more did I abhor myself when compared with them. For many of my years--perhaps twelve--had passed away since my nineteenth, when, upon the reading of Cicero\\

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