

# Confessions - Book X - Chapter XL

by St. Augustine

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## Transcript

65. Where hast thou not accompanied me, O Truth, teaching me both what to avoid and what to desire, when I have submitted to thee what I could understand about matters here below, and have sought thy counsel about them?

With my external senses I have viewed the world as I was able and have noticed the life which my body derives from me and from these senses of mine. From that stage I advanced inwardly into the recesses of my memory--the manifold chambers of my mind, marvelously full of unmeasured wealth. And I reflected on this and was afraid, and could understand none of these things without thee and found thee to be none of them. Nor did I myself discover these things--I who went over them all and labored to distinguish and to value everything according to its dignity, accepting some things upon the report of my senses and questioning about others which I thought to be related to my inner self, distinguishing and numbering the reporters themselves; and in that vast storehouse of my memory, investigating some things, depositing other things, taking out still others. Neither was I myself when I did this--that is, that ability of mine by which I did it--nor was it thou, for thou art that never-failing light from which I took counsel about them all; whether they were what they were, and what was their real value. In all this I heard thee teaching and commanding me. And this I often do--and this is a delight to me--and as far as I can get relief from my necessary duties, I resort to this kind of pleasure. But in all these things which I review when I consult thee, I still do not find a secure place for my soul save in thee, in whom my scattered members may be gathered together and nothing of me escape from thee. And sometimes thou introducest me to a most rare and inward feeling, an inexplicable sweetness. If this were to come to perfection in me I do not know to what point life might not then arrive. But still, by these wretched weights of mine, I relapse into these common things, and am sucked in by my old customs and am held. I sorrow much, yet I am still closely held. To this extent, then, the burden of habit presses us down. I can exist in this fashion but I do not wish to do so. In that other way I wish I were, but cannot be--in both ways I am wretched.

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