

# Confessions - Book X - Chapter Xxxiii

by St. Augustine

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## Transcript

49. The delights of the ear drew and held me much more powerfully, but thou didst unbind and liberate me. In those melodies which thy words inspire when sung with a sweet and trained voice, I still find repose; yet not so as to cling to them, but always so as to be able to free myself as I wish. But it is because of the words which are their life that they gain entry into me and strive for a place of proper honor in my heart; and I can hardly assign them a fitting one. Sometimes, I seem to myself to give them more respect than is fitting, when I see that our minds are more devoutly and earnestly inflamed in piety by the holy words when they are sung than when they are not. And I recognize that all the diverse affections of our spirits have their appropriate measures in the voice and song, to which they are stimulated by I know not what secret correlation. But the pleasures of my flesh--to which the mind ought never to be surrendered nor by them enervated--often beguile me while physical sense does not attend on reason, to follow her patiently, but having once gained entry to help the reason, it strives to run on before her and be her leader. Thus in these things I sin unknowingly, but I come to know it afterward.

50. On the other hand, when I avoid very earnestly this kind of deception, I err out of too great austerity. Sometimes I go to the point of wishing that all the melodies of the pleasant songs to which David\

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