

Confessions - Book XI - Chapter Xxxi

by St. Augustine

Transcript

41. O Lord my God, what a chasm there is in thy deep secret! How far short of it have the consequences of my sins cast me? Heal my eyes, that I may enjoy thy light. Surely, if there is a mind that so greatly abounds in knowledge and foreknowledge, to which all things past and future are as well known as one psalm is well known to me, that mind would be an exceeding marvel and altogether astonishing. For whatever is past and whatever is yet to come would be no more concealed from him than the past and future of that psalm were hidden from me when I was chanting it: how much of it had been sung from the beginning and what and how much still remained till the end. But far be it from thee, O Creator of the universe, and Creator of our souls and bodies--far be it from thee that thou shouldst merely know all things past and future. Far, far more wonderfully, and far more mysteriously thou knowest them. For it is not as the feelings of one singing familiar songs, or hearing a familiar song in which, because of his expectation of words still to come and his remembrance of those that are past, his feelings are varied and his senses are divided. This is not the way that anything happens to thee, who art unchangeably eternal, that is, the truly eternal Creator of minds. As in the beginning thou knewest both the heaven and the earth without any change in thy knowledge, so thou didst make heaven and earth in their beginnings without any division in thy action.[453] Let him who understands this confess to thee; and let him who does not understand also confess to thee! Oh, exalted as thou art, still the humble in heart are thy dwelling place! For thou liftest them who are cast down and they fall not for whom thou art the Most High.[454]

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