

Confessions - Book Xiii - Chapter I

by St. Augustine

Transcript

1. I call on thee, my God, my Mercy, who madest me and didst not forget me, though I was forgetful of thee. I call thee into my soul, which thou didst prepare for thy reception by the desire which thou inspirest in it. Do not forsake me when I call on thee, who didst anticipate me before I called and who didst repeatedly urge with manifold calling that I should hear thee afar off and be turned and call upon thee, who callest me. For thou, O Lord, hast blotted out all my evil deserts, not punishing me for what my hands have done; and thou hast anticipated all my good deserts so as to recompense me for what thy hands have done--the hands which made me. Before I was, thou wast, and I was not anything at all that thou shouldst grant me being. Yet, see how I exist by reason of thy goodness, which made provision for all that thou madest me to be and all that thou madest me from. For thou didst not stand in need of me, nor am I the kind of good entity which could be a help to thee, my Lord and my God. It is not that I may serve thee as if thou wert fatigued in working, or as if thy power would be the less if it lacked my assistance. Nor is the service I pay thee like the cultivation of a field, so that thou wouldst go untended if I did not tend thee.[506] Instead, it is that I may serve and worship thee to the end that I may have my well-being from thee, from whom comes my capacity for well-being.

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