

Confessions - Book Xiii - Chapter Xxi

by St. Augustine

Transcript

29. And thus, in thy Word, it was not the depth of the sea but \"the earth,\"[611] separated from the brackishness of the water, that brought forth, not \"the creeping and the flying creature that has life,\" but \"the living soul\" itself![612]

And now this soul no longer has need of baptism, as the heathen had, or as it did when it was covered with the waters--and there can be no other entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, since thou hast appointed that baptism should be the entrance. Nor does it seek great, miraculous works by which to buttress faith. For such a soul does not refuse to believe unless it sees signs and marvels, now that \"the faithful earth\" is separated from \"the waters\" of the sea, which have been made bitter by infidelity. Thus, for them, \"tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to those who do not believe.\"[613]

And the earth which thou hast founded above the waters does not stand in need of those flying creatures which the waters brought forth at thy word. Send forth thy word into it by the agency of thy messengers. For we only tell of their works, but it is thou who dost the works in them, so that they may bring forth \"a living soul\" in the earth.

The earth brings forth \"the living soul\" because \"the earth\" is the cause of such things being done by thy messengers, just as the sea was the cause of the production of the creeping creatures having life and the flying fowl under the firmament of heaven. \"The earth\" no longer needs them, although it feeds on the Fish which was taken out of the deep,[614] set out on that table which thou preparest in the presence of those who believe. To this end he was raised from the deep: that he might feed \"the dry land.\" And \"the fowl,\" even though they were bred in the sea, will yet be multiplied on the earth. The preaching of the first evangelists was called forth by reason of man\\

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