

Confessions - Book Xiii - Chapter Xxii

by St. Augustine

Transcript

32. Thus, O Lord, our God, our Creator, when our affections have been turned from the love of the world, in which we died by living ill; and when we began to be "a living soul" by living well; and when the word, "Be not conformed to this world," which thou didst speak through thy apostle, has been fulfilled in us, then will follow what thou didst immediately add when thou saidst, "But be transformed by the renewing of your mind." [621] This will not now be "after their kind," as if we were following the neighbor who went before us, or as if we were living after the example of a better man--for thou didst not say, "Let man be made after his kind," but rather, "Let us make man in our own image and our own likeness," [622] so that then we may be able to prove what thy will is.

This is why thy minister--begetting children by the gospel so that he might not always have them babes whom he would have to feed with milk and nurse as children--this is why he said, "Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." [623] Therefore thou didst not say, "Let man be made," but rather, "Let us make man." And thou didst not say, "After his kind," but after "our image" and "likeness." Indeed, it is only when man has been renewed in his mind, and comes to behold and apprehend thy truth, that he does not need another man as his director, to show him how to imitate human examples. Instead, by thy guidance, he proves what is thy good and acceptable and perfect will. And thou dost teach him, now that he is able to understand, to see the trinity of the Unity and the unity of the Trinity.

This is why the statement in the plural, "Let us make man," is also connected with the statement in the singular, "And God made man." Thus it is said in the plural, "After our likeness," and then in the singular, "After the image of God." Man is thus transformed in the knowledge of God, according to the image of Him who created him. And now, having been made spiritual, he judges all things--that is, all things that are appropriate to be judged--and he himself is judged of no man. [624]

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