

CONFESSIONS - BOOK X - CHAPTER XXXVIII

~Other Speakers A-F: St. Augustine:

63. "I am needy and poor." [389] Still, I am better when in secret groanings I displease myself and seek thy mercy until what is lacking in me is renewed and made complete for that peace which the eye of the proud does not know. The reports that come from the mouth and from actions known to men have in them a most perilous temptation to the love of praise. This love builds up a certain complacency in one's own excellency, and then goes around collecting solicited compliments. It tempts me, even when I inwardly reprove myself for it, and this precisely because it is reproved. For a man may often glory vainly in the very scorn of vainglory--and in this case it is not any longer the scorn of vainglory in which he glories, for he does not truly despise it when he inwardly glories in it.