Outline of *Confessions*, Installment 2

Book II, continued

5. The things of this world, though beautiful, are of the lowest order of good, and therefore can distract us from eternal goods. No one is satisfied, in seeking to discover the motive of a crime, until he determines which of these lower goods the perpetrator ultimately sought. Even Cataline had as a motive something good.

6. Why did I steal the pears? Not for the pears themselves, for I threw them away. Vices attract us as imitations of your virtues. Such imitation only shows You as the Creator. What of yours was I imitating? Could I have done it simply for its wrongness?

7. I can recall these things without fear only because you have forgiven me. Only by your power have a been forgiven, and only by your power have been prevented from sins I have not committed. Those that have not sinned in a certain way should not feel superior to those that have, because only by your power have they been preserved from doing so.

8. I only derived shame from the theft. What I loved was the act itself and the thrill of having companions in sin, which are not even things. [If this is correctly translated, I think this is a philosophical mistake on Augustine's part.] Attributes or actions are things, even if they are not substances.

9. We are ashamed to hold back when others say “Let's do it!”

10. I long for moral beauty.