

Late Have I Loved Thee

Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunging amid those fair forms which Thou hadst made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Things held me far from Thee, which, unless they were in Thee, were not at all. Thou calledst, and shoutedst, and burstest my deafness. Thou flashedst, shonest, and scatteredst my blindness. Thou breathedst odours, and I drew in breath and panted for Thee. I tasted, and hunger and thirst. Thou touchedst me, and I burned for Thy peace.

St. Augustine, Confessions X.27

Translated by E. B. Pusey, 1838

A meditation addressed to God, not a formal prayer