

Selected Passages from the Heavenly Doctrines Relating to New Church Education

Learning to Connect with God

Without a proper idea of God no communication with the heavens is possible (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 13).

As thought about God is what primarily opens heaven, so thought against God is what primarily closes heaven (*Apocalypse Explained* 1096e).

Divine influx with a person is into the truth in which he has been instructed... (*Arcana Coelestia* 8441).

Every one must prepare the way for God, that is, must prepare himself for reception; and this is done by means of knowledges.... For a person has free will in acquiring knowledge for himself, and as he acquires knowledges from the Word by means of his understanding he prepares the way by which God may descend and raise him up... (*True Christian Religion* 24:1-2).

When a person possessing a heavenly love reads the Word it links him to heaven and through heaven to the Lord, as a result of which he receives enlightenment and instruction (*Arcana Coelestia* 9382:3).

The Word has been given in order to unite heaven and earth, or angels with men; and therefore it has been so written that it may be spiritually apprehended by the angels, when naturally apprehended by people; and that in this way what is holy may flow in through the angels, by which means union is effected (*Arcana Coelestia* 6333:3).

Education for Usefulness

A person, like the earth, can produce nothing good unless the knowledges of faith are first sown in him, whereby he may know what is to be believed and done (*Arcana Coelestia* 44).

A person becomes spiritual by means of the knowledges of truth and good from the Word applied to the uses of life (*Apocalypse Explained* 195:4).

Knowledges must have use as their end, and when they have use, they have life as their end, for all life belongs to uses, because it belongs to ends, and therefore unless knowledges are learned for the sake of a life of uses, they are of no moment, because of no use (*Arcana Coelestia* 1964).

Preparation for Heaven

Every person...forms for himself as it were a soul, and such after death does his life become. Nothing therefore is of more importance to a person than to know what is

true.... What should a person have more at heart than his life to eternity? If in the life of the body he destroys his soul, does he not destroy it to eternity? (*Arcana Coelestia* 794:2).

No one can ever fight against evils and falsities until he has learned to know what evil and falsity are, and therefore not until he has been instructed (*Arcana Coelestia* 1661:2).

No one can be introduced into the church and formed for heaven, except by means of knowledges from the Word. Without these a person does not know the way to heaven, and without these the Lord cannot dwell with him.... It is evident, therefore, that by means of knowledges a person learns the way to heaven. It can also be seen that without the knowledges of truth and good from the Word the Lord cannot be present with a person and lead him, for when a person knows nothing of the Lord, of heaven, of charity and faith, his spiritual mind, which is the higher mind, and is intended to see by the light of heaven, is empty, and has nothing from the Divine in it (*Apocalypse Explained* 112:3).

Education for Civil, Moral and Spiritual Life

The laws of civil and moral life are to be lived as Divine laws from God (*Divine Providence* 322).

Civil and moral life is a receptacle of spiritual life: Live these laws, not only as civil and moral laws, but also as Divine laws, and you will be a spiritual person.... The civil and moral person observes these laws, that he may be, or may seem to be, a good citizen; but if he does not also regard these laws as Divine he is merely a civil and moral natural person; while if he does also regard them as Divine he becomes a civil and moral spiritual person. The difference is that the latter is both a good citizen of the earthly kingdom and a good citizen of the heavenly kingdom; while the former is a good citizen of the earthly kingdom only, and not of the heavenly kingdom (*Divine Providence* 322:2).

The instruction in civil and moral things is the responsibility of parents and teachers, and is part of a proper education (*True Christian Religion* 443).

A person is born natural, but is educated to become civil and moral, and afterwards spiritual, for in such a manner he is reborn (*Apocalypse Revealed* 161e).

In every person there are three degrees of life.... The rational faculty is opened to the first degree by civil truths, to the second degree by moral truths, and to the third degree by spiritual truths. But it ought to be known that the rational that consists of these truths is not formed and opened by a person's knowing them, but by his living according to them... (*Heaven and Hell* 468:2).

A person lives a moral life from a spiritual origin when he lives it from religion; that is, when he thinks, when anything evil, insincere, or unjust presents itself, that this must not be done because it is contrary to the Divine laws (*Apocalypse Explained* 195:2).

Every properly educated person is rational and moral; but there are two ways to rationality, one leading from the world and the other from heaven. He who becomes rational and moral from the world, and not also from heaven, is only rational and moral in outward speech and behavior, but inwardly he is a beast, in fact a wild beast, because he acts in unison with those who are in hell, where all are of this character. On the other hand, he who is rational and moral from both the world and heaven, is truly rational and moral, because he is so in spirit, speech and behavior.... Such a person also acts in unison with those who are in heaven (*True Christian Religion* 564:2).

Natural and Spiritual Education

From the things that exist in the natural world the things of the spiritual world can be seen as in a mirror (*Heaven and Hell* 56e).

Sensuous truth consists in seeing all earthly and worldly things as being created by God, and each and everything for a purpose, and in all things whatsoever a certain image of God's kingdom (*Arcana Coelestia* 1434).

In respect to those that have acquired intelligence and wisdom through knowledge and science, who are such as have applied all things to the use of life, and have also acknowledged the Divine, loved the Word, and lived a spiritual moral life, to such the sciences have served as a means of becoming wise, and also of corroborating the things pertaining to faith.... All this makes clear that it is by means of knowledges and sciences that a person is made spiritual, also that these are the means of becoming wise, but only with those who have acknowledged the Divine in faith and life. Such also before others are accepted in heaven and are among those there who are at the center...because they are in light more than others (*Heaven and Hell* 356:1,3).

All memory-knowledges...belong solely to the external person; for they are procured from earthly and worldly things by means of sensuous impressions, in order that they may serve the interior or rational person, and thus the spiritual person, thus the celestial, and thus the Lord (*Arcana Coelestia* 1486).

[When knowledges from the Word are lacking] a person remains only in the atmospheres and material forms of nature to which his senses of sight, hearing and smell are restricted, and from which he derives no other ideas of heaven and of the Being and Essence of God than those that are atmospherical and material. Thinking from such ideas he can form no conclusions about God, as to whether He exists or not, or whether He is one or many; still less what He is in respect to His Being and Essence (*True Christian Religion* 24:2).

The Means of Education

Truths are first implanted in the mind through instruction received from parents and teachers, then from the Word of the Lord, and after that from personal reflection on them (*Arcana Coelestia* 3762.2).

Truths, that relate to charity toward the neighbor and to love to the Lord, must be learned before it is possible for a person to be regenerated; and must also be acknowledged and believed; and, in so far as they are acknowledged, believed, and ingrafted in the life, so far the person is regenerated, and in so far they are at the same time implanted in the person's natural, in which they are as in their own ground. They are first implanted therein through instruction by parents and teachers; next from the Word of the Lord; and afterwards through the person's own reflection about them... (*Arcana Coelestia* 3762:2).

As a person advances in age, good and truth are given him by the Lord. At first he is led into a knowledge of them, then from knowledge into intelligence, and finally from intelligence into wisdom, always accompanied by innocence.... Without this faith and a perception of it no one can receive anything of heaven (*Heaven and Hell* 279).

Priests are to teach truths, and by these lead to good, and thus to the Lord (*Apocalypse Revealed* 854).

No one is ever instructed by means of truths, but by means of the affections of truth; for truths apart from affection do indeed come to the ear as sound, but do not enter into the memory. What causes them to enter into the memory, and to remain therein, is affection (*Arcana Coelestia* 3066).

That by means of doctrine the Word not only becomes intelligible, but also as it were shines with light, is because without doctrine it is not understood, and is like a lampstand without a lamp... By means of doctrine therefore the Word is understood, and is like a lampstand with a lighted lamp. The person then sees more things than he had seen before, and also understands those things which before he had not understood (*Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture* 54).

The Word must needs be taught mediately through parents, teachers, books, and especially the reading of it. Nevertheless it is not taught by these, but by the Lord through them (*Divine Providence* 172:6).

Let a person read the Word every day, one or two chapters, and learn from a teacher and from preachings the dogmas of his religion; and especially let him learn that God is one, and that the Lord is the God of heaven and earth...that the Word is holy, that there is a heaven and a hell, and that there is a life after death (*Apocalypse Explained* 803).