

## *Editorial*

### **A CELEBRATION OF SPIRITUAL FREEDOM**

This year marks the 250th anniversary of the Last Judgment of 1757. What did this great judgment accomplish? As history shows, the world continues much as it has before.

The great change is an internal one. The Last Judgment has released people's thought from the grip of false doctrine. It has brought about a new state of spiritual freedom.

This is far-reaching!

Spiritual freedom involves being free from false ideas, seductive theories, and perverted thinking. It involves the ability to identify evil affections, destructive loves, and selfish motives. To discern and identify these allows us the freedom to decide whether or not we will be swept up by them and carried away to certain unhappiness and slavery.

In the world today, there is little recognition of the importance of spiritual truth. Few realize that wisdom in life is from a spiritual origin, not a natural one. Few realize how vulnerable to worldly opinions and emotional impulses rational thought can be. Reflect on the current issues and controversies about civil, moral, and natural matters that fill the pages of our papers and find a ready audience in front of our TV screens. What kind of reasoning do we find? Are justice and morality prevalent? And what ideas do we use to guide our own lives? Where do we turn to find direction and to make right decisions that affect our marriages, our jobs, our children?

Someone once said that the Writings of the church do not teach us about education. We may smile at that. Do they speak of any of our natural concerns? Do they tell us how to conduct a business? Do they provide legal guidance? Do they instruct us about mental depression? Yes, the Writings speak to all of these areas of life—though not directly. What they provide is a

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spiritual perspective on every aspect of natural life. With this perspective, the New Church person is able to reflect on natural life with rational wisdom to identify what is false and worthless and to see what is good and useful. Without such a perspective, a person is awash in a sea of natural emotion and opinion, adrift from the basic principles that grant true freedom.

We live so much of our life indiscriminately, without reflection or rational thought. Or else, we respond to it with customary reactions based on previous training or prejudice. In either case, we are not free. We are either spontaneously moved by a natural affection of questionable origin or bound by a rigid traditional response. We have not made a choice, much less a truly rational choice. What could be more important to our life in this world than being able to think freely from the knowledge of spiritual principles of faith? These are not simply theological abstractions. They are the insights that give us true rationality and true freedom.

The New Church has been established by the Lord that we might be free! What greater use could we perform in the world and for ourselves than to guard and use our opportunities for spiritual freedom? This is a clear and urgent need. It can be fulfilled only by the wisdom that the Lord has given for the New Church at His second coming.