

ONE LORD

by the Rev. Philip B. Schnarr

In the New Church, “the name *the Lord* is used exclusively to mean the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, and He is called the Lord without the addition of the rest of His names” (*Arcana Coelestia* 14). Jesus proclaimed this when He said to His disciple John, “You call me Lord, and you are right, for so I am” (John 13:13). And later in the Gospel of John, the disciple Thomas exclaimed after his doubts were removed, “My Lord and my God!” (20: 28). There can be no doubt that we have one Lord as He said so clearly, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30).

It is true that there is a multitude of names for God that have Scriptural support. He is Jehovah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the “I AM,” the King of Kings, the Son of God and the Son of Man as well as many other names. And in each of these names a special quality of God is revealed. So why is it that the angels of heaven and people on earth call Him “Lord?”

The Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church consistently emphasizes how critical our concept of God is. God is at the center of all religion, and our religion impacts our lives on many levels. On the more external plane there are religious activities like going to church or worshiping in our homes, saying prayers, the sacraments and rites of the church and the celebration of religious holidays. On a more internal level, the way we relate to family, our friends and even our coworkers is shaped by our belief system. And then, on an even more internal level, our idea of God governs our world view and the important principles which guide our choices in life. In short, our idea of God affects us completely.

If this is true, then we understand why the name “The Lord” is so fitting. In this term there is a complete connection to our Divinely Human Creator. His transcendent qualities—the Divine—and His immanent qualities—the Human—come together in the Divine Human—the Lord. Therefore He is One in essence and in person.

From *True Christian Religion*—one of the books of the Heavenly Doctrine—we learn that in the Lord we “worship one visible God, in whom is the invisible God as the soul is in the body” (787). When we conceive of God in this way we can embrace the Lord in fullness as “at once Creator, Redeemer and Regenerator, and so Savior” (*ibid.*, 296:4).

With such a complete idea of the Lord, our minds become formed to receive a very powerful inflowing spiritual light. And as our faith and our life become ordered around this idea, we truly can become images and likenesses of Him. This is the highest purpose of all creation, for it brings with it the most complete conjunctive bond of love that is possible.