

## TEST YOURSELF

*Adapted from an editorial in New Church Life in April 1983*

“Test-yourself features can stir the interest of magazine readers. People seem to enjoy tests which measure vocabulary, knowledge, personality, aptitude. There are tests to indicate how much stress and worry you have or how much contentment.... The results of the tests are supposed to tell you something about where you are.

“There are what might be called test-yourself passages in the Heavenly Doctrines. The exercise to which they invite us is not difficult, unless overcoming our natural reluctance may be called difficult. The intended result is a new awareness. The value can be in making us more aware of our spiritual need—perhaps a sobering warning to us—or it can be to promote gratitude and encouragement, as when the Lord said to one who responded well, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God’ (Mark 12:34).”

Read the following two passages about loving the neighbor and see where you think you stand!

*A person may know whom he is among, whether among those from hell or those who are angelic, from this: If he intends evil to his neighbor, thinks nothing but evil regarding him, and when possible actually does it, and takes delight in this, he is among spirits from hell and also becomes one himself in the next life. The person however who intends good to his neighbor, thinks nothing but good regarding him, and when possible actually does it, is among angelic spirits, and also becomes an angel in the next life. This is how one spirit is to be distinguished from another; so let the individual examine himself in this way to discover what he himself is really like (Arcana Coelestia 1680:2).*

*All of the Lord’s commandments have relation to love toward the neighbor, and in a word they are not doing evil to the neighbor, but doing good to him. That those who do this love God and God loves them, is in accordance with these words of the Lord. Because such is the conjunction of these two loves, John says: He that keeps the commandments of Jesus Christ abides in Him and He in him. If a man say, I love God, but hates his brother, he is a liar; for he that loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loves God should love his brother also (1 John 3:24; 4:20, 21) (True Christian Religion 458).*

