

# Our New Church Vocabulary

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## **Introduction**

The New Church has a vocabulary that is entirely its own. Every subject field has its peculiar terminology; and as the Writings were given to convey new truth, ideas never before unfolded to the human mind, and as the communication of ideas requires appropriate language, the Writings contain many distinctive terms. These terms were selected by the Lord with the precision of wisdom. Each one has a very exact meaning, or group of related meanings, and was chosen by the Lord because it, and no other, expressed adequately the idea or ideas to be transmitted.

Evidently, then, it is of great importance that we should understand correctly what is meant by these terms they are employed in the Writings, and that we should be able to use them accurately in our own thinking, speaking and writing. Some are theological terms which occur frequently, here a facile familiarity may blind us to their profundity few are peculiar to the Writings, and therefore presuppose a considerable amount of specialized knowledge. Others, and these may present difficulties, are terms which have a different meaning in the Writings from that assigned to them by current usage.

In this issue we begin an occasional department, under the same title as this editorial, which will offer general definitions of some of the terms that make up our New Church vocabulary. That department will not be rightly understood or properly used, however, if the definitions presented are regarded as all-inclusive and exhaustive, or if it is supposed that no others could be valid. It will fail in its purpose unless it is clearly realized that definitions are not meant to confine man's thinking to themselves, but to provide it with a well marked point of departure, in order that the initial idea may be gradually infilled.

## Affection

This term is defined in two ways. Philosophically, affection is said to be a change of the state of the organic substances of the mind - an idea fundamental to the concept of affection and thought as substantial. Doctrinally it is defined as "what is continuous of love." What that means is simply this. Man does not perceive his love itself because it is present in all that he wills and thinks, does and says; but in every state, and in every situation he meets, he is continually moved by evil and falsity, or by good and truth. He is constantly acted upon by one or other of these; and his own evil and falsity, or good and truth, become reactive as a result. That is why the Writings speak of the affection of truth, not the affection for truth. "Affections," on the other hand, are derivations from man's love. The outermost affections, which belong to the body, are called appetites and pleasures; those which are more interior belong to the animus and are called natural affections; while those which are internal are of the rational mind and are called spiritual affections. (See DLW 209, 291; DP 279. AC 3938. AR 875; AC 3849.)

## Afflux.

This is a rare term, but one which marks an important distinction. Good and truth cannot flow into those who are in a state of hell, but they do flow to them and thus govern them from without. This flowing to, but not into, is what is meant in the Writings by afflux; and the term is used to distinguish clearly between this operation of good and truth and that other whereby they flow into the mind, which is called "influx." The term is therefore used to describe the mode by which the Lord governs the hells; and, under the same general principle, of the flow of evil to the minds of those who are interiorly good but are undergoing vastation. There is another usage which also comes under the same general principle: that which reaches the mind from the natural world is said to do so by an afflux, as distinct from what comes from the spiritual world, which inflows.

A related term, and one which may therefore be noted here, is efflux, which means "to flow out." It is used in two ways. Good and truth from the Lord enter by influx through the internal man, and should then flow out through the external man into the world in the form of the uses of charity. This flowing out is what is meant by efflux, and the universal law is that influx is always according to efflux. The term is used in one passage of what emanates from the hells. (See AC 7955; HH 543; AC 7990. AC 3646. AC 5828; LJ post. 300.)

## Appearance.

This is a term which has in the Writings a meaning different from that which is generally given to it. In common speech, appearance is frequently used to describe an illusion, or that which is other than the reality, but the Writings employ two different usages.

1) The Divine as it is in itself cannot be comprehended by any finite mind. Pure truth never exists with angel or man. Therefore Divine truth is presented in the Word, not as it is in itself, but as it seems to angels and men to be from their different but finite viewpoints; in the case of

man, according to his state and even to the fallacies of the senses, and thus in forms from a sensuous and human origin which induce the idea that Divine things are the same as human ones. These accommodated presentations of Divine truth are what are called "appearances"; and they are so called, not because they are illusions, but because they cause genuine truths to appear. In other words, they are appearings of the truth.

2) In the other world spirits sometimes seem to change their situation and to traverse distances when they do not. These seeming changes are called appearances because they are not real.

Related terms are "real appearances" and "appearances not real." The phenomena of heaven are real appearances because they actually exist, correspond to the states of the angels, and are as constant as those states are; are, in fact, appearings of the real. But the phenomena of hell are "appearances not real" because they are seen to be entirely different when the light of heaven enters. (See AC 3207, 1376, 4623.)

### **Appropriate.**

To appropriate is to make one's own from freedom according to reason. The relation of the term to eating and drinking gives us the essential idea. By these processes man, from appetite, takes in, prepares, absorbs, assimilates, and builds into the structure of his body the nutritious elements in what he swallows. Spiritually, he appropriates whatever he absorbs from love and builds into the structure of his mind and life. Thus whatever he wills, thinks, does and says from love he appropriates, both good and evil, and those things are said to be appropriated by him. However, that only which is appropriated in freedom remains. (See BE 69; DP 138.)

### **As of Self.**

This is one of the most distinctive terms in our New Church vocabulary. It refers to a faculty of willing and acting, not implanted in man but continually adjoined with him, which is Divine in origin, inspiration and power, but human in use. The exercise of this faculty consists in acting entirely as of one's self, but acknowledging that any good and truth resulting are from the Lord. The faculty is given in order that man may not be an automaton, but many have freedom and thus love God; and the disclosure of its existence shows how man can be responsible for his regeneration although he cannot do any good of himself. (See BE 69.)

### **Bonds.**

By these are meant man's affections; not because they are fetters, but because they bind man to what he loves and restrain him from what is contrary, thus keeping him within their bounds. There are said in the Writings to be three kinds of bonds. External bonds are those of civil society - fear of the law and of the loss of reputation, possessions and life; exterior bonds are those which come from knowing the truths of faith; internal bonds, which are called also the

"bonds of conscience," are affections of good and its truth. The celestial alone have no bonds; they enjoy living perceptions. (See AC 3835, 81.)

## **Celestial.**

In its broadest usage, this term embraces all heavenly things as distinct from earthly ones. In all other instances it has reference to love and good as distinct from truth and faith. Thus it refers, according to context, to love to the Lord; to the third heaven, which receives that love; to the highest degree of the human mind, which receives the activity of the third heaven; to that kingdom of heaven which is in love; and to the men of the first church, established before the fall, who were regenerated by the implantation of good in the will. There are many compound forms. (See AC 4286, 1096; DP 32; AC 8945, 3240, 5733.)

## **Charity.**

This is one of the most important and distinctive terms used in the Writings. In the world today, charity is thought of almost entirely in terms of private or organized relief of material want. According to the Writings, however, charity is not an action at all - although it has no reality unless it is ultimated in deeds. Charity is to will well, and to do good works is to do well from willing well. In itself, charity is an internal affection which consists in a man's desiring from the heart, as the delight of his life, to do good to the neighbor, and this without thought of recompense; and its essence is to will well to the neighbor, to be affected with good, and to acknowledge good as the neighbor. The life of charity is to act sincerely, justly and faithfully in one's office. (See TCR 374; F 13; AC 8033; HD 101.)

## **Chastity.**

This term is included as one which has in the Writings a meaning different from that assigned to it in common usage. In that usage, chastity means continence, virginity, or celibacy, and is therefore a quality that is lost by marriage. This definition is unacceptable, both because it implies that the body is depraved and marriage impure and because it refers only to the body, whereas the Writings teach that chastity is essentially a state of the spirit. As the terms are used in the Writings, chastity and unchastity are predicated of marriages and the things that belong to them. Conjugal love is said to be chastity itself, and the term describes the union of one man with one wife when both acknowledge the Lord and each confines their love to the other. Such a union is chaste because inmosty within it there is an aversion to adultery. The distinction between chastity and unchastity is therefore much deeper than one as to bodily acts. Before marriage, chastity is a proper attitude toward marriage which influences the imagination as well as the conduct - one which looks earnestly to a chaste and eternal union and spurns what is opposed to it. (See CL 139ff, 49e.)

## **Church.**

As used by itself in the Writings, this term refers to a spiritual organization, the unit of which is the individual human mind. The man who has the Word and understands it rightly, acknowledges the Divine of the Lord, learns truths out of the Word from Him, and lives a life of love and charity according to them, is a particular church; and the spiritual society formed by all such men is the church specific - a term not actually found in the Writings, but used with good authority. Those who do not have the Word, but worship one God, obey His revealed will as they understand it, and live together in simple charity constitute the church universal; and these, together with the former, make up the church of the Lord or the universal church of the Lord. It is our belief that the church specific is not formed apart from the Writings. (See AC 8152, 10,761; AE 20; HH 328.)

## **Civil.**

This term is used of that part of man's life which comes under regulation by the laws of the state, as distinct from moral and spiritual life, which are subject to higher laws. It occurs also in a few compound forms. Civil good is the good of life in accordance with the laws of the state, which makes man a citizen of the world; civil things are those which belong to the state and are conjoined with the world - those statutes, laws and regulations which bind men together so that a settled and well organized society may be formed; and civil truths are those truths which relate to the things of government and of judgment in the state, and in general to justice and equity. (See AC 8257; Life 12; CL 130; HH 468.)

## **Cognitions.**

Although this term is loosely translated "knowledges," it should be retained; it has a very exact meaning and it indicates an important distinction. Cognitions are intermediate between scientifics and truths. In this context, scientifics are the facts of the Word in the Old and New Testaments and the Writings. Cognitions are those facts organized into ideas. When those ideas are acknowledged in the understanding - when man confirms himself in them and lives according to them - they become truths. Cognitions, then, are all the ideas that we have formed from the Word but have not yet appropriated by bringing them into life. (See AC 5276.)

## **Collateral Good.**

In ordinary usage, "collateral" refers to something which has descended from the same stock, but not in the direct line, and is thus connected but in a subordinate way. This idea is carried over into the Writings, in which it is used to describe a good that is intermediate between spiritual and natural good. Spiritual good inflows directly from the Lord and is therefore in direct line of descent. This intermediate good, although not natural, derives much from worldly things which appear to be good but are not, and it is therefore called "collateral good," which may be thought of most simply as a natural love of spiritual things. To distinguish it from the spiritual

good in which are those of the church specific, the good in which those of the church universal are called "collateral good of a common stock." (See AC 3778, 4189, 4145.)

### **Common Good.**

This term, which occurs frequently in the Writings, means the general good of society - the good expressed in such words as commonweal and commonwealth. It consists in the presence of the Divine; in justice, morality, industry, knowledge and uprightness; the necessities of life, for occupations, and for protection, and in a sufficiency of wealth. (See Char. 130.)

### **Conatus.**

This word means "endeavor" and is often so rendered in English translations of the Writings. In every affection and thought, indeed in every natural thing, there is something spiritual - a constant effort inflowing from the spiritual world to come forth and subsist by ultimating itself in forms of use; one which seeks to do so by setting in action the necessary active and reactive forces. This effort is what is meant by "conatus." It is not force or motion, but that which animates force and through it initiates motion; and if it fails, activity and motion cease. In man, conatus is the will united with the understanding; living forces are the motor fibers; and motion is action. The spiritual world is therefore the world of conatus and the natural the world of motion. (See AC 5173: 2, 3, 8911; DLW 218, 219.)

### **Concupiscence.**

Here we have another term which should be retained as marking an important distinction, even though it may fall strangely on the unfamiliar ear. Concupiscence is voluntary evil; yet not so much the evil of the will itself as the continuous lust of evil, and therefore the life that is breathed into it by the loves of self and the world and that sustains it. The various and distinct evils that make up man's ruling evil are called concupiscences; and the derivations of infernal love, which are affections of evil and falsity, are called concupiscences, the term "affection" being reserved properly for good and truth. (See AC 10,283:12; DP 296, 106.)

### **Confession.**

This term has two usages-confession of the Lord and confession of sin. In the first of these it can mean simply a declaration of one's faith before the Lord, but interior confession involves humiliation and the affection of good. Confession of sins is to know evils, to see them in one's self, to acknowledge them, to make one's self guilty, and to condemn one's self on account of them-this as contrasted with the idea of a general confession. (See AC 2329, 3880, 8388.)

## **Conjugal.**

One of the most important terms in our New Church vocabulary, "conjugal" is to be distinguished carefully from "conjugal." The conjugal is said to be that truth which is capable of being conjoined with good, and that good which is capable of being conjoined with truth; and conjugal love is described as the affection of good in truth and the affection of truth from good, which descends from the marriage of good and truth in heaven. Conjugal love may therefore be defined as the love of wisdom in the mind of a husband for good in the mind of his wife, and the reciprocal love of this good for that wisdom.

Thus it is not a love of the proprium of the other from what is proprial in self, but the love of that which is from the Lord in the mind of each for that which is for Him in the other. It is not achieved by the husband and wife looking to each other, but by both looking together to the Lord; for which reason it is said to go hand in hand with religion, with regeneration, and with the interior development of the church in the mind. By the marriage of conjugal love is meant the union of two in thought and will, in good and truth, in mind and life; which union causes them to love to will and think each as the other, and to dwell together in all things of life. (See AC 3942, 3081, 9961, 10,169.)

## **Conjunction.**

Only in the Writings do we find the expression, conjunction with the Lord; and find it used, not of a mystical state, but of one that may be understood rationally. A common love, thought and purpose are what bring men together; and by conjunction with the Lord is meant a state in which man, from the Lord's love received as good in the will, and His wisdom received as truth in the understanding, is engaged finitely in the same uses as the Lord performs infinitely. It is a state in which the Lord is in man as the source of the good he wills, the truth he thinks and the uses he does, and man is in the Lord because in good and truth which are the Lord and are from Him.

It may be useful to note the distinctions among the terms, union, conjunction and consociation. Union is used of two things which together make one, and is therefore reserved for the relation of the Divine and the Human in the Lord after glorification, and for the conjugal marriage in which the minds of husband and wife make one mind. Conjunction is used to describe the regenerate man's relation with the Lord, in which man becomes a vessel receptive of life, whereas the Lord by union with the Divine became life itself in the Human. Consociation describes the regenerated man's relation with the angels as with brethren. (See TCR 725: AR 819; AC 2021; AR 818: EU 64.)

## **Connate Good.**

The word, connate, means "existing from birth"; and the term, connate good, is therefore used in the Writings to describe the natural good that is born with man and which in itself is a mere animal good, existing also with beasts and with nations of the worst faith and life. Connate good

is characterized by the fact that it is interiorly evil. By this it is distinguished from spiritual good in the natural, which is not inborn but is acquired through regeneration, and which is said to be real natural human good. or the good of the natural. It is this connate good that has been mistaken for genuine good by certain theories of psychology and education; theories which hold that man is inherently good and will become such fully if there is no interference with his development. (See AC 3408.)

## **Conscience.**

Here is another instance of a term being used with a meaning strikingly different from that given to it in ordinary speech. Conscience is generally thought of as an inner voice which warns us when we are about to do wrong, or reproaches when we have already done so, and which is originally possessed by everyone-although it may be stifled. In the Writings, however, this term means, in its highest sense, the new will received by regeneration.

As used in the Writings, this term means, in the highest sense, the new will received from the Lord by regeneration. This is conscience in its essence, which is to do evil to none and good to all. As thus defined, conscience is possessed only by the good; the evil have none, and the idea that the torments of hell are the stings of conscience is merely a pious fancy. As a perception of what is and what is not to be done, conscience can be possessed by all; but as it is formed with a man from the particular religion in which he is, and only according to internal reception thereof, it is not uniform and is not true of necessity. Thus there is a spurious conscience in those Gentiles who are in simple good, and what is called a false conscience with those in natural good, the latter being so called because natural good is inwardly selfish, worldly and evil. It is this that has been often mistaken for conscience itself, and its existence that has led men to postulate a norm of conscience. But conscience is a relative thing, the bad conscience of a good man being the good conscience of a bad one; and the true idea of spiritual conscience is to be found in the teaching that it is to act according to religion and faith.

(See AC 1033, 1076, 1077, 2144, 2831; TCR 666.)

## **Consummation.**

This term refers generally to the state that exists when evil reaches its height; specifically to the end of a religious dispensation, which comes when there is no longer any charity or faith because the church has turned away from the Lord entirely. Note that this end is spiritual, that the church itself is unaware of it, and that it may continue as an organized body although it has come to an end as far as performing the use of the church is concerned. (AC 2243, 2905)

## **Corporeal.**

This term does not refer to the body itself but to the ultimate plan of the mind. Thus it is not applied to the bodily senses, but to that ultimate plane of mental life which operates through

them, and also to the cupidities, pleasures and appetites of the body. A man who lives only on the plane of these ultimate things, immersing the mind in the body, is called a corporeal man. (AC 911, 4038; AE 496)

## **Correspondence.**

As this term covers a fundamental doctrine which is found only in the Writings, its meaning should be clearly understood. The basic idea can be expressed very simply. Correspondence is both a causal and a functional relation between the Divine and the spiritual or between a spiritual and a natural thing. When a natural object, activity or phenomenon is the effect of which a spiritual thing is the cause, and when the two perform analogous uses to the body and the mind, respectively, they are said to be in correspondence; and the natural thing is said to correspond to the spiritual, or to be a correspondent. Correspondence is therefore also the law or mode of influx. In another usage, the term means agreement that makes influx possible, as where it is said that man's external mind must be reduced to correspondence with the internal mind. (See AC 3225; AE 1080; HH 89, 107.)

As the terms, representative and significative, are related, it may be useful to note them here and observe the distinctions involved. When a natural thing re-presents its cause on another plane and in another form, it is said to be a representative. Note, however, that a representative is, by definition, not the thing that is represented. In general, things have a correspondence; persons and their actions, in the Word, represent; and the actual words of the Scripture which are the symbols for things, persons and actions, signify. (See AC 3225, 2988.)

## **Delights.**

Those exterior goods which are in the natural, and which are felt as delightful when interior goods flow into that degree of the mind, are called "delights." This is done to distinguish them from the interior goods of love and affection which inflow and produce them. In the singular, however, this term refers to that which is the all of life both with those who are in heaven and with those who are in hell. With the former, this is good and truth; with the latter, it is evil and falsity. What is meant by the all of life may be seen if we consider that in the performance of every necessary action there is a delight, without which the action might be left undone or would be done lifelessly. It is for this reason also that delights are described as means, that is, means by which, though not from which, uses are performed. (See AC 7356; TCR 570; AC 4063.)

## **Desires.**

Here we have another term that is used to make a distinction. The derivations of infernal love are affections of evil and falsity, and these are properly called "concupiscences." To set them apart from these, the derivations of heavenly love, which are affections of good and truth, are called "desires." In ordinary speech, desire often has an evil connotation, but in theological discussion at least the term should be used as it is in the Writings. (See DP 106.)

## **Degrees.**

The doctrine of degrees is peculiar to the Writings and fundamental to an understanding of their philosophy. The gradations from light to shade, fine to gross, rare to dense, loud to quiet, etc., are continuous degrees, which are degrees of one thing-measurable by various types of instrumentation. Discrete degrees are the degrees of the formation or composition of one thing from another. They exist in all things, but each distinctly, although they make a one when taken together. They are related as end, cause and effect, and the only ratio between them is that of correspondence; that is, the higher degrees can flow into the lower ones, but not the lower into the higher.

Lower degrees have qualities not found in higher ones, but these are qualities of limitation. Love, thought and speech are a series of discrete degrees. Thought cannot formulate all that love perceives, and speech cannot express all that man thinks. However, discrete degrees are homogeneous, and it is in the ultimate degree that all the power of a series is exerted. The three heavens and the three degrees of the mind are discrete series.

Yet it should be noted that there are discrete degrees in natural as well as in spiritual things; that the term does not express only a relation between the spiritual and the natural or the infinite and the finite. The natural atmospheres, for example, are discreted from one another. The designations "degrees of height" and "degrees of length" should not be taken too literally. (See AC 10,181; HH 38; Infi. 16; DLW 184, 256; DP 32.)

## **Divine.**

By this term is meant in the Writings the Infinite and Eternal which is called in the Word "Jehovah" and "the Father"; the Divine love and wisdom itself which is the esse of good and truth. Thus it is the source from which all things are. The Divine with man is love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor. The term, Divine, occurs in many compound expressions, but always with reference to the Divine in the Lord or to what is from Him, namely, the good and truth of the rational and the natural. An important compound which may be specially noted is "Divine proceeding," which means Divine truth within which is Divine good flowing from Divine love, as light within which is heat proceeds from the fire of the sun. The Lord's Divine is distinguished into good and truth because these can be received separately by men. (See AC 5134; DP 48, 49; AC 2023, 4696; HH 7; AC 3704.)

## **Divine Endowment.**

The terms which make up our New Church vocabulary are not all taken directly from the Writings. A few have been coined, quite legitimately, to express concepts seen in the Writings, and "Divine endowment" is an example of this type. It was used by Bishop De Charms in *The Growth of the Mind* to express a conclusion drawn from a number of teachings in the Writings: to describe an endowment received from the Lord by every human soul at its creation by virtue of which man is formed into the image and likeness of God, and by virtue of which that image

and likeness is, in its particular formation, individual to him in order that it may be adapted to a specific use.

In other words, the Divine endowment is conceived as that which differentiates human souls. It is the primary cause of individuality and the third factor in determining heredity-the individual life-force derived by influx from the Divine which causes the soul to build the body in adaptation to a particular use, for which use the man was created. The fact that the term is not found in the Writings does not detract from it in any way; but it is useful for us to know that, together with other terms of this class, it is made up and is not a term of the Writings themselves although it expresses something found in them. (See *The Growth of the Mind*, pp. 40-45, 60, 73f, 84; Revised edition, pp. 39-45, 60, 74f, 85.)

### **Divine Human.**

This term holds the central idea in the theology of the New Church. It is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ as He is after glorification-the Divine love in a human form. Note that the Divine Human is not identical with the Supreme Divine, in which case it would have vanished in the Infinite. It is the body of Divine truth which the Lord took on from the Father, and which He united with the Supreme Divine as a body with a soul, between which two there is an infinitely perfect correspondence. The Divine Human is infinite because it is not a recipient of life, but is the esse of life from which life proceeds; but it is as if finite for the sake of reception. It is the sole object of worship in the heavens and in the church on earth. (See AC 2343, 2628, 5256; AE 26; TCR 109.)

### **Doctrine.**

Even in the New Church this term is sometimes associated with abstract theology. Nothing could be further from the truth! Doctrine is all that in the Word which teaches how the Lord is to be worshiped and how men ought to live that they may be withdrawn from hell and introduced into heaven. Doctrine therefore has a vital relation to life and the good of life does not exist without it. (See AC 3445)

[...]It is[...]necessary to distinguish between the "doctrine of genuine truth" and what is known to us as "derived doctrine." By the former is meant that which appears plainly in the letter of Divine revelation, and which can be drawn thence and formulated into systematic teaching by a careful comparison of passages and an arrangement of them into a logical order and series. Derived doctrine, on the other hand, is the formulation in which the church expresses its understanding of what the Writings teach. The difference, and it is a vital one, is that the doctrine of genuine truth has Divine authority; derived doctrine does not, since it consists in human conclusions and is finite and fallible. (See SS 25.)

## **Domestic Good.**

By this is meant the good which man derives hereditarily from his parents, and into which he is therefore born, but which is not saving since interiorly it is evil. It is also called "natural good"; and to make a distinction between it and the spiritual good received from the Lord by regeneration, that good is called the "good of the natural." Domestic good is also called connate good. The mistaking of natural good for the good of the natural has undoubtedly been a major factor in the development of the fallacy that man is born good. (See AC 3518.)

## **End, Cause and Effect.**

These philosophical terms occur frequently in the Writings. End is the love, the purpose or intention of the will; cause is the means in the understanding through which the will achieves its purpose; and effect is the ultimate of speech, action, sensation or production in which the purpose is achieved through those means. (See AC 5608.)

## **Enlightenment.**

When a man who loves truth for its own sake reads the Word for the purpose of understanding truth and doing good, spiritual light inflows from the Lord through heaven into his understanding; casting new light upon the knowledges therein, and enabling him to see truths he did not see before and to acknowledge them from internal conviction. This process is what is meant by enlightenment. Note that enlightenment is not internal revelation. It does not impart new knowledge, but puts the knowledge man has already acquired in a new light and in that way leads him into new truth. (See AC 9424; F. 5; SS 57.)

## **Equilibrium.**

If two forces exert opposite and equal pressures upon a third thing, each cancels the other; and the third, if endowed with the power of action, is free to yield to one or the other as it chooses. Therefore it is said to be in equilibrium. As used in the Writings, the term refers to man's state as being so placed between heaven and hell, and also to the equal balance between heaven and hell which has its plane in the world of spirits. Angels and evil spirits are in the equilibrium they have made their own on earth. (See HH 537, 589, 591.)

## **Esse, Existere, Essence.**

Here we have another series of philosophical terms. Esse is the being of a thing; existere is the manifestation or forthstanding of the esse; and essence is that in which the real character of a thing consists—the attributes which make it to be what it is. These attributes are spoken of individually as essentials.

Thus the Divine esse is the Divine love, the Divine existere is the Divine wisdom, and the Divine essence is the Divine love and wisdom together and related as esse and existere. The Divine love and wisdom may also be spoken of separately as essentials of the Divine. Note that esse is more universal than essence, and that existere should not be rendered as "existence," which refers to the things by which the essence comes forth. (See AC 4985; TCR 36; AC 1096, 1807.)

## **Evil.**

We tend to think of evil in terms of certain words and actions, especially those forbidden in the second table of the Decalogue, or of the lusts from which they come. But these are only the ultimate forms in which evil expresses itself. Evil, regarded in itself, is disjunction from good and disunion from God, and opposition to the Lord and to heaven. It is to desire to be led by self and not by the Lord, and to deny and will to destroy all that the Lord seeks to build. Note that evil is the opposite of truly human good, not of the Divine good; wherefore the Lord has power over evil, although man has none of himself. Note also that evil is not just the absence of good, as cold is the absence of heat; the teaching is that while evil is nothing in comparison with good, it is not nothing in itself. (See AC 4997, 6874; DP 279; CL 444.)

## **Exinanition.**

This term refers to the Lord on earth and to His state of humiliation before the Father when in a state of truth and seemingly separated from the Divine. Thus it was a state of His human consciousness. (See Lord 35; Can. Rd. vi.)

## **Faculty.**

This is a term used of certain things with which man is endowed by the Lord. Thus we read of the faculties of liberty and rationality, of loving and becoming wise. In every instance what is meant is a potential that may or may not be developed, or may be developed in part. Faculties do not become man's own, but are adjoined by the Lord continually, and it is in their right exercise that the Lord dwells with man. (See DLW 30, 240.)

## **Faith.**

Here we have a term to which the Writings give a radically different meaning from that which it has in Christian theology. Faith, they teach, is neither an intellectual, historical acceptance of the passion and merits of Christ nor a blind assent to that which transcends the understanding, and it differs in quality from the commitment (fiducia) which Luther himself preferred to mere assent. Faith is an internal acknowledgment and affection: an internal acknowledgment of truth from sight and understanding of it, and an internal affection of truth from willing the truth because it is true; and it consists in desiring from the heart to know what is good and true for

the sake of life. It is therefore inseparable from life and is one with the good of charity. Indeed we are taught the understanding of good is what is principally called the truth of faith, and that faith is the operation of the Lord alone through the charity in a man. There are various compounds that should be briefly noted. Thus historical faith is that which rests upon human authorities; persuasive faith is belief for the sake of selfish or worldly ends; and spurious faith is that in which falsities are mixed with truths. (See F 1; HD 112; AC 36, 4605, 8034; Life 36; AR 655; AC 2954, 1162).

### **Falsity.**

This term occurs frequently in the Writings, and several distinctions are involved in the different ways it is used. Falsity is everything that is contrary to the truth; and falsities, which are the principles and persuasions of what is false, are scientifics which resemble what is rational and intellectual. In general, there are two kinds of falsity-falsity from evil, and falsity producing evil. By the former is meant all that man thinks while he is in evil, all that favors his evil: by the latter is meant any principle grounded in a man's religion which he wrongly believes to be true and which will lead to evil when applied. Falsities of concupiscence are those which confirm the things of the world and its pleasures. Falsities of ignorance exist with those who are in good as to life but through no fault of their own are without truths. What is contrary to truth is falsity, but truth applied to justify and confirm evil is what has been falsified. Fallacies are falsities with which evils conjoin themselves. (See AC 790, 2243, 9331, 9144; DP 220; AC 6400.)

### **Finite.**

This term is applied without exception to created things. It should be noted, therefore, that the spiritual, though non-material, is finite. The characteristics of the finite are that there is nothing of the Divine in its esse, that it is limited by space and time or their spiritual analogues, that quality and quantity can be predicated of it, and that it is bounded both within and without. Also, the finite has a beginning and an end. Man indeed lives to eternity, but he does so by constant renewal from the Lord. (See DLW 44; DP 52; TCR 27, 29, 33; AE 629.)

### **Foresight.**

This term is applied in the Writings to a particular operation or mode of the Divine Providence. Only that which is good is provided by the Lord; yet He knows all evil before it comes to pass, and provides for it. This pre-knowledge of evils is what is meant by the Divine foresight. It is to the Lord what prudence is to the human race, with the notable difference that it is infinite, infallible, and not cumulative but simultaneous. Divine foresight does not interfere with or qualify human freedom. The Lord does not foresee what will happen because He has predetermined what shall happen; He foresees what man will do in his freedom. The term itself is an accommodation to the finite mind. Because all things are present to Him, and there is no past or future, He does not "look ahead." (See AC 3854.)

## **Form.**

Here we have another philosophical term which occurs frequently. It refers to an organic receptacle in which an essence is so formed as to appear; and it does not relate to shape, but to the order, disposition, arrangement and relation of the parts which make a thing competent to its use. Thus form is said to be the same as function or use. (See TCR 52; AC 4223, 4926; LJ 12: 4; DLW 200, 209.)

## **Freedom.**

Because of the difference between heavenly and infernal freedom, some have had difficulty in framing a comprehensive definition of this term. The Writings overcome this difficulty, however, and supply one which covers every kind of freedom by saying that freedom is to think and will from affection, and to act from liberty according to what seems to be reason. If these are heavenly, the freedom is heavenly, real, and what is called freedom itself; if they are infernal, it is infernal freedom, only apparent, and actually non-freedom. The difference is that in the former man is led gently by the Lord according to his affections; in the latter he is driven roughly by infernal spirits according to their affections. Note that the freedom which is essential for regeneration is spiritual-freedom to will and think; freedom to do evil and speak falsity is rightly limited. Note also that freedom goes hand in hand with rationality, for which reason it cannot exist until man is of the age at which rationality begins. (See TCR 489; AC 4130, 5786).

## **Generals, Particulars and Singulars.**

The use of these terms in the Writings is indicated by the teaching that the body, external sense and action are generals, the natural mind and the things that belong to it are particulars, while the rational mind and all that pertains to it are singulars. It is according to Divine order that there should be generals and particulars, and that both should be together in every single thing; otherwise particulars cannot exist. In the case of man, particulars must be surrounded by generals to subsist. (See AC 4345; TCR 775.)

## **Glorification.**

to glorify is to make Divine. Glorification is therefore the process by which the Lord, on the planes of the rational, natural and sensual minds and of the body, put off by degrees the merely human and put on the Human from the Divine. It includes also the bringing of these planes into an infinitely perfect correspondence with the Supreme Divine, such as that of a Divine mind and body with a Divine soul. Thus the term refers also to the establishment of a Divine consciousness in the Lord's mind, and to the process whereby His Human, from being a receptacle of life, became life itself. As that which is offered to the Lord by man, glorification is praise, exaltation and worship from a sincere heart. (See TCR 104; SS 99; AC 2112.)

## **God.**

By God is meant in the supreme sense the Divine above the heavens, which is the Divine good; in the internal sense the Divine in the heavens, which is the Divine truth, is meant. The distinction made here rests on the fact that Divine truth proceeds from Divine good, makes heaven, and arranges it. It should be noted also that God and the Father do not, in the spiritual sense, mean two persons; God means the Divine as to wisdom, and the Father means the Divine as to love. One of the things most characteristic of New Church terminology is that we rarely speak of "God," but name Him "the Lord" without the addition of other names. (See AC 7268; AR 21; AC 14.)

## **Good.**

Good is defined in the Writings as the affection of thinking and acting according to Divine order. Thus it belongs to love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, is spiritual, consists in willing and doing well unselfishly, and is heaven with man. That which proceeds from man's proprium is never good and may actually be entirely evil. However, what man loves he calls good, whether it be heavenly or infernal, because it is felt by him as such. This is what has given rise to the theory that good is only relative, but the Writings make clear that there is an absolute good. (See AC 4538, 4997, 7255; DP 279; DLW 335; TCR 38; F 14.)

## **Grand Man.**

Here is another term that is found only in the Writings. The angels are organized into societies, and these into groups, each one of which performs a general use to which corresponds the function performed by some member, organ, viscus or membrane of the human body. Every part of the body, even every single cell, has its heavenly counterpart in the field of use. As to their uses the heavens are therefore organized in the form of a man, and it is this heavenly man that is called the Grand Man. Note that heaven is so called from use, not from shape, though we may well suppose that if it could be seen in its entirety it would appear in the human shape. Note also that while the heavens from this earth constitute a grand man, the Grand Man is made up of all the heavens from all the earths.

The Writings present us with three general ideas: 1) heaven as a grand man, with the world of spirits as the alimentary system and hell as the waste excreted from the body; 2) heaven as a grand man and hell as a great monster; 3) heaven, hell and the world of spirits as one man: heaven being the man, the world of spirits being the alimentary system as to the work of the angels in that world, and the hells being those things which are in the body but not of it, yet which serve vile uses, that is, for purification and so on. This last concept is under the teaching that everyone in the spiritual world must be of some use, as well those in the hells as those in the heavens.

The general idea of the Grand Man is that the Lord is within heaven and the church as the soul is in the body-immanent but discretely distinguished; that heaven and the church are the

mind and body; and that they are to the Lord what the spiritual and natural organics are to man. Thus the Lord is the soul and life of the Grand Man; angels, spirits, and the spiritual minds of men on earth are the mind of that man; and men on earth are its body and senses. (See AC 2906, 4219, 4225, 6807; U 9; TCR 119.)

## **Gyres.**

These are mentioned in the Writings as forms into which newly arrived spirits must be inaugurated that they may be initiated into fellowship with others and into the practice of thinking and speaking in concord and unanimity. A gyre is a circular or spiral motion, and the term is used in the Writings to describe a motion that is complete, perfect and perpetual. (See AC 5128.)

## **Heavenly Marriage.**

This term, which is also peculiar to the Writings, is interiorly descriptive of a reciprocal conjunction of good and truth, or of the will and the understanding, which has its origin in the union or marriage of love and wisdom in the Lord. The heavenly marriage is effected in those only who have been regenerated, and it takes place in the rational of the intellectual proprium. Essentially it is a union in which love or good from the Lord received in the new will inspires life into truths in the understanding and directs them to uses, and in which those truths in their turn give form and quality to that love. The details are complicated, but the basic idea is that good from the Lord received from within by the internal way is brought into conjunction with truth received from without, from the Word, by the external way, that is, through the senses. We note that this union, which descends into ultimates in the mind, is preceded by a union entirely internal which initiates conjunction, and to which betrothal corresponds. (See AC 3952, 2803.)

## **Heredity.**

Although this term is used in Christian theology and in biology and psychology, the Writings give to it a new and entirely different meaning. Heredity covers all the characteristics transmitted by parents to their offspring. According to the Writings what are thus transmitted are tendencies-which are not imputed-to the goods or evils in which the parents have confirmed themselves and which have become habitual with them. The lives and loves of parents cannot be inherited, but inclinations to them are passed on, and the sum-total of these is the parental heredity. Thus a state of damnation or of regeneration cannot be inherited; but we are told that the children of regenerating parents receive inclinations to love wisdom and the things that wisdom teaches. In this lies the hope of the human race. The parental heredity is twofold, and the maternal, which is external, is put off by regeneration, while the paternal heredity can never be eradicated. (See AC 1313, 4317, 4563.)

## **Heresy.**

Because this term is used so loosely, it is important that we have a clear definition of it. Such a definition is contained in the statement that heresy is doctrine separated from the church, for the essentials of the church are the acknowledgment of the Lord and of the Word and the life of charity. Only doctrines which would separate from these may rightly be called heresies, therefore; others, even if they conflict with our views, are only differences of opinion or of interpretation. It is to be noted that heresy condemns no one; what condemns is confirmation of the falsity in the heresy from an evil love. Those who are in heresy as to the understanding, therefore, can be reformed and saved if they do not thus confirm it. (See AC 324, 6400, 3488; SS 92; DP 259.)

## **Holy.**

This term is properly predicated of that which flows into man through heaven from the Lord. Strictly speaking, therefore, the Lord Himself is not holy but Divine, and the holy is that which proceeds from Him. The Lord Himself is above the heavens, for He is the Divine Man in the midst of the spiritual sun; the Divine which proceeds out of that sun from Him in the angelic heavens is what is called the holy. (See AC 9956, 10472.)

## **Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit is, of course, identical with the one God, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the proceeding Divine which instructs, enlightens, reforms and regenerates man, and is therefore the Divine truth from which is man's spiritual life. As the Writings point out, therefore, it is not a God by itself, but the operation of the one God in performing these uses. Note that by the Holy Spirit is meant a Divine operation that could not take place before the glorification. (See AC 9818; DLW 149; Can. HS i.)

## **Human Essence.**

Here we have another important term which occurs in the doctrine of the glorification. It refers to something which the Lord put on by birth of Mary, but which was neither from her nor yet Divine when assumed: a truly human accession from which the Lord could conquer the hells and which He could make Divine. This was an as-of-Himself reception of the Divine love and wisdom, manifested in the desire to be led by the Divine and to learn truth. These formed in the Lord a plane of human consciousness on which, when in the state of humiliation, He could feel entirely separate from the Divine, and of Himself could fight against and conquer the hells. This is what is meant by the Human essence, and it was this that was glorified, so that, from being a receptacle of life, the Lord became life itself in the Human. (See AC 1675.)

## **Human Internal.**

This rare but important term occurs in the phrase "the heaven of human internals." It refers to the soul-to the two superior degrees of the mind which are in the order of heaven, above consciousness, incapable of being modified or changed by man's own life, and the Lord's dwelling place in him. It is the activities imparted to these degrees by the Lord that, in reception, make the angelic heavens. For this reason, and because they are in themselves above the consciousness of the highest angels, they belong to the Lord alone. They form a very heaven which is nearest to the Lord, and this is what is meant by the heaven of human internals. (See AC 1999.)

## **Indications of Providence.**

Here we have another term which is firmly established in our vocabulary but is nowhere to be found in the Writings, although it expresses an idea derived from them. The phrase has been taken to mean that the limits imposed by a situation, what seems possible at any given time, are indications of Providence as to what should be done, and much has been said in the church about seeking and following the indications of Providence. It is our belief that this idea should be approached with great caution, and in the light of the teaching that the Lord never shows or tells men directly what to do; for the dictate of men's loves may cause them to see different indications in the exigencies of the same situation. There are indications of Providence; but these, we believe, are the teachings of the Word.

## **Infestation.**

This term is used only in connection with spirits who are being vastated in the lower earth. These are said to be infested by evils and falsities injected by the hells which are round about, to the end that their own evils and falsities may be removed, goods and truths be insinuated, and they be brought into the state of being capable of elevation into heaven.

Thus the term refers to a special process which is so called because it is like an incessant attack from which there is no escape and which appears to be almost overwhelming. (See AC 7147.)

Infinite. The Infinite in itself is said to be the Divine itself or the Lord Himself, but the Infinite from itself is the Divine proceeding or the Lord in others created from Himself, thus in men and angels, and this Divine is the same as the Divine Providence. It is said that of the Infinite nothing can be predicated except that it is. However, if we think of those things which are characteristic of the finite-beginning and end, inner and outer limitations, spatial qualities, depreciation in time, and so on-and then abstract them, we can enlarge our idea. (See DP 55.)

## **Influx.**

With this term is related one of the most fundamental doctrines given in the Writings. It denotes the successive operation of what is higher into and through what is discretely lower, as of

thought into speech, will into action, and so on. The essential idea is that nothing under God acts of itself, but through the operation into it of something higher, and this all the way back through the scale of degrees to the Lord Himself. Influx should not be thought of in terms of water being poured into a cup, but rather of a wave motion impinging upon a substance which reacts and is thus a receptacle. This is important because it shows that the inflowing force and the receptacle are not merged. The Divine does not become finite in proceeding; yet neither does man become Divine in receiving Divine influx.

Two pairs of related terms should be noted, first, general and particular influx. General influx, which is from the Lord through the order of the heavens, is into those things which are in the order of their life, such as animals; particular influx, which is from the Lord through angels and spirits, is into those things which are not in order, that is, the minds of men. Note that man's body is under general influx.

The second pair, immediate and mediate influx, are readily distinguished. Influx through heaven or through the Word is mediate; influx from the Lord into the human soul, which is above the angelic heavens, is immediate. (See AC 6128, 5850, 5854, 5862, 6058, 6495).

### **Innocence.**

By this term is meant willingness to be led by a power not one's own. Spiritual innocence, or the innocence of wisdom, consists in an interior willingness to be led by the Lord rather than by self. It is adjoined with man and is the Divine good proceeding and leading man to heaven. (See AC 7902, 9938; HH 280.)

### **Inspiration.**

By this term, we are told, is not meant dictation but inspiration from the Divine. The distinction is that whatever inflows from the Divine is Divine in itself, but passes through heaven, in which it becomes celestial and spiritual, and then enters the world, where it becomes worldly, but with the Divine and what is heavenly within it. This definition shows what is the nature of the inspiration of the Word and enables us to distinguish between it and what is commonly called the inspiration of secular writers. Inspiration is also defined as insertion into angelic societies, which has the same general implication, namely, insertion into the spheres through which the Divine proceeds. (See AC 9094; TCR 140.)

### **Intellectual, The.**

The intellectual is the truth of faith. In general it is the sight of the internal man, which sees from the light of heaven that is from the Lord. What it sees is heavenly. The term is used also of the understanding. (See AC 863, 5114, 8458.)

## **Intellectual of the Church.**

The intellectual of the church, we are taught, is that when a man reads the Word, and carefully compares one passage with another, he perceives thence what is to be believed and done. It exists with those only who are enlightened, that is, who desire to know truths only for the sake of life and use. Thus the term should not be confused with what is usually called intellectualism; the emphasis here is on the search for truth as a means to the good of life. (See AC 6222.)

## **Intellectual Truth.**

By this term is meant truth conjoined with a perception that it is so, that is, truth adjoined to good. This truth is distinguished from scientific truth, which is a matter of knowledge, and from rational truth, which is said to be scientific truth confirmed by reason. (See AC 1895, 1496.)

## **Intelligence.**

According to the Writings, intelligence is from the light of the world illumined by the light of heaven. It consists in knowing, understanding and believing Divine truths; in perceiving inwardly whether what is presented is true or not; and in understanding the causes of things. Intelligence, therefore, does not require great learning, and in varying degree it is given by the Lord to all regenerating men. (See AC 9943; AE 198, 408.) Wisdom will be defined later, but we may note that it is distinguished from intelligence by two things. It is from the light of heaven; and it consists in willing, loving and doing the truths which intelligence sees and understands. (See AC 9943; AE 408.)

## **Internal and External Man.**

These are not terms for the mind and the body, respectively. Both refer to the mind, and they are descriptive of the two minds by which man is in company with angels and with men. The internal man is the ruling love and its perceptions from which man mediates when alone, and by which he does uses in the spiritual world; the external man consists of the affections and thoughts which are displayed by a man when he is in company, and by which he performs uses in this world. An important corollary is that these two minds, distinct from each other, are also distinct from the body. (See AC 8742; AR 641.)

## **Internal Sense.**

The internal sense of the Word lies concealed within the letter and should not be confused with the genuine sense of the letter. It is characterized by the entire absence of the elements of person, place and time, and it contains two elements, namely, affection and thought. This sense is threefold. The inmost, supreme or celestial sense, which treats of the Lord, is for the third heaven; the spiritual sense, or internal sense proper, in which the subject is the Lord's kingdom, is for the second heaven; and the internal-historical, spiritual-moral, or proximate internal

sense, which describes the state as to morals and doctrine of the nation mentioned in the letter, is for the first heaven. (See AC 1405, 7233, 4279).

## **Law.**

The nature of Divine law will be better understood if we think of it as being represented by the laws of aerodynamics, physics or chemistry rather than by laws enacted by legislative bodies and then turned over to the judicial branch for enforcement; for the former cannot be broken, but the latter can.

As is well known, a law of physics is not the statement in the textbooks but the order or relation of phenomena noted and described in the statement. Divine laws are unchangeable and unbreakable operations of Divine order, and the revelation of them in the Word is not the law itself but the statement of the law. Thus when we are told that it is a law of the Divine Providence that a certain thing should be done, the teaching does not only prescribe a mode of conduct; it states an unalterable order with which man must co-operate if he wishes to achieve the end. Note that there are no laws of nature; Divine laws in nature. (See AC 7186, 10119, 7206.)

## **Limbus.**

The limbus is a border, drawn from the finest things of nature, which man retains after death to give fixation, stability and permanence to his life in the spiritual world. Because it is natural, even though formed from the purest things of nature, the limbus does not enter the spiritual world, but remains within nature as a basis for man's immortality; and as his character is impressed upon it, it is the basis for his survival as an individual. The limbus is also referred to as the cutaneous envelope or border, and the substances which constitute it are the natural substances of the mind. (See AC 3293, TCR 103; DLW 257, 388e; Wis. viii:7.)

## **Love of Self.**

In the form in which it is usually spoken of, this love consists in wishing well to oneself alone, and not to others except for the sake of self, and it is a corporeal love of exercising dominion over others. It was not evil in the beginning, however, but one of the three universal loves into which man was created; and when it has been purified and subordinated by regeneration it becomes the proper love of self care and preservation for the sake of uses, and one of the loves which makes man to be truly a man. (See HD 65; TCR 507.)

## **Love of the World.**

This term denotes a material love of desiring to appropriate to oneself by every artifice the wealth and possessions of others; one which causes a man to set his heart on riches and suffer the world to lead him away from heaven. However, there is also a proper love of the world, but

by regeneration it is subordinated to the love of heaven This is an important teaching because, as the Writings emphasize, it is not necessary for man to renounce the world in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. The spiritual man continues to love the world, as he continues to love himself, but as a master loves a servant. Love of the world is less deadly than love of self, but these two loves are the origins of all evils. (See HD 76; TCR 507.)

### **Love to the Lord.**

Here we have another term which expresses a concept peculiar to the Writings and strikingly at variance with the one held in the world. It does not mean love of the Lord's person on account of His example, sufferings, and death on the cross, but love of the Divine things that are in Him and from Him. Thus the term does not refer to a personal affection such as is implicit in the evangelical Christian idea of the Lord as Companion, Elder Brother and Friend, but to a love that is spiritual in origin and extension-believing in and loving the Lord's precepts and loving and doing in sincerity what is good. (See AR 903; HH 278.)

### **Love to the Neighbor.**

This also denotes an impersonal affection, that is, not love of the proprium of others and what proceeds from it, but love of good from the Lord in its subjects, which are men and women. It therefore refers to love of uses, which are goods. This does not mean that love toward the neighbor is cold and abstract, for what we love in others anyway is quality of mind and achievement, but that love is given to those qualities which seem to be good. The concept implies wise discrimination. (See DLW 426; HH 278.)

### **Masculine and Feminine.**

Although the world may suspect that the distinction between man and woman is more than biological, it is not known what the real distinction is or that it lies so deep as to be indelibly impressed on the soul itself. According to the Writings, the inmost of the male is love and its covering is wisdom; the inmost in the female is the wisdom of the male, and its covering is love thence derived. The masculine consists in perceiving from the understanding and the feminine in perceiving from the will. These are ideal definitions, but the distinction holds good in all conditions. (See CL 32, 168.)

### **Media.**

Reference is often made in the Writings to media, or means. This term is always applied to an intermediate which derives something from each of the entities between which it stands, and which has the effect that as man draws near to the one, the other becomes subordinate to it. A good example is the rational, which stands between the spiritual and the natural minds. It

receives from both of these, and as man draws near to the spiritual or the natural the other becomes subordinate to it. (See AC 3913.)

## **Meditation.**

As used in the Writings, this is not a synonym for reflection but a term with a distinct meaning. Meditation is a state of the interior thought of the understanding, which is the ruling love thinking, into which man comes when he is alone or in his own home and thus in freedom. It is that mental activity in which the understanding contemplates, intends and plans the ends of the ruling love, and ponders and seeks means to their attainment; and it is characterized by the fact that in it man wills and thinks what he really loves. Meditation should be cultivated as a means of becoming acquainted with the internal man and of discovering those evils which will remain hidden even from ourselves if we are never alone. (See DLW 404; DP 61, 296.)

## **Mercy.**

The universal definition of this term given in the Writings is that mercy is that into which love is turned when it looks upon those who are in need and grieves for their misery. Thus the Lord's mercy is His love toward the human race since the fall: the love behind His Providence and all its operations, and the salvation resulting from them. It is universal and equal, and it consists in withdrawing man from evil, leading him into good, and keeping him in good-if, and as, it is received by him. (See AC 5816.)

## **Merit.**

Here we have a striking example of a term being used in the Writings with a meaning radically different from that which it has in common usage. Ordinarily, "merit" has a positive connotation. It stands for goodness and worth, and conduct which is deserving of honor and praise is described as meritorious. In the Writings, however, they are said to seek merit who suppose that they can do good from themselves, and would demand heaven as a reward which they have earned and to which they are therefore entitled, and their works are described as merit-seeking or meritorious. (See AR 86.)

## **Mind.**

The mind (ntens) consists of the understanding and will, which two faculties constitute the life of man. They are distinct from each other, but so created as to form one; and when they do so, they are called the mind. This mind is what is called the internal man, and it is within the external man. Note that the mind is spiritual and that the brain is not the mind but its organ. It is indeed said that the mind consists of both spiritual and natural substances; but the latter, from which the limbus is drawn, are the substances of that organ, and affection and thought do not

take place in them but in the spiritual substances, and this by changes and variations in their form and state. (See LJ 12; HD 28; TCR 156; DLW 257.)

### **Moral.**

This is a term which has far wider and deeper extension in the Writings than in common usage, in which it is frequently restricted to sexual behavior. As used by them, it is inclusive of the entire life of man with the neighbor in societies. Thus moral truths relate to the things of every man's life in regard to companionship and social relations - to what is sincere and right, and to virtues of every kind. Moral good, which is human good itself, is the rational good according to which man lives with other men as a brother and companion. Moral life is to act well, sincerely and justly in all things; and moral wisdom consists in the practice of all the virtues which look to life and enter into it. (See AE 182; HH 468; Char. 57; CL 164.)

### **Mutual Love.**

Here we have a term which is used in various ways. It refers to the love of the neighbor more than oneself which is characteristic of the celestial kingdom. Elsewhere it is taken for charity, or spiritual love; and in other places it is contrasted with friendship in the teaching that mutual love regards the good in man, and being directed to good is given to him who is in good, whereas friendship regards the man for the sake of self. (See AC 2057; AR 353; AC 3875.) A related term is the good of mutual love: the good characteristic of the external of the celestial kingdom, the celestial-natural heaven. This is said to be the affection of good for its own sake and the external good of innocence. (See AC 9741, 9912.)

### **Natural.**

This particular term refers to the ultimate in every series. Thus it is descriptive of the first or lowest heaven, of the sense of the Word in the letter, and of the ultimate degree of the human mind and of this and other worlds in which creation subsists and terminates. The life of the lowest degree of the mind, which is from the world, is called natural, and the man who lives only on the plane of that life is called a natural man. (See HH 31; AC 3293.)

### **Neighbor.**

The general and distinctive meaning given to this term in the Writings is quite well known. The universal idea is that good from the Lord is the neighbor, and as the subject of that good is man, man is the neighbor in the degree in which he receives it. The Lord, His kingdom, the church, one's country, the human race, society, the individual, and self are the descending degrees of the neighbor; and when a choice must be made, the higher degree is always to be preferred. The good derive the degrees of the neighbor in this order; the evil, from self. The concept of the

neighbor found in the Writings calls for the exercise of wise discrimination. (See AC 9783; F 20; HH 390; HD 88.)

## **Order.**

Order itself is the Divine truth that proceeds from the Lord, for it is this that makes order on every plane. Order is defined as the nature of the disposition, determination and activity of the parts, substances or entities which constitute the form of a thing, from whence is its state. Thus when the substances of the mind are so disposed, determined, and activated as to receive life from the Lord, the mind is in the order of its life. When this is not the case, we say that the mind is in inverted order. So is it also with other created things as to the order of their life. (See AC 8700; TCR 52.)

## **Perception.**

Perception is said to be a certain internal sensation which is communicated by the Lord alone as a means of knowing whether anything is good and true. It is defined also as an internal dictate, with full confirmation by influx from the Lord, as to the intrinsic quality of good and truth, evil and falsity. Thus the perception of the church, like that of the angels, consists in seeing from the Lord what is good and true, not so much in regard to civil society as to love and faith toward the Lord. Note that perception is not given as a mode of internal or immediate revelation; it is not granted apart from the Word. The Writings speak also of "common perception," so called because it is universal in the spiritual world, though not given on earth, whereby the quality of newcomers is discerned instantly from the sphere they carry about with them, no speech or action being needed. (See AC 104, 1822, 5937, 7680; AE 307.)

## **Passive.**

This term is applied in the Writings to things which are dead, that is, things which cannot act of themselves but can be activated by the influx of life from the Lord. Passives are therefore both recipients and reagents. Both of these ideas are necessary, and the relation of passives to actives is indicated in the teaching that the eyes and the ears are passive while the ether and the air are active. Thus "passive" does not mean inert; that which is inert is called the merely passive and is said to dissipate influx. By derivation the word means, to suffer. It is also connected with the word, patient; and reflection on what that involves can throw further light on the meaning of this term. (See DLW 178; TCR 110, 607; AE 616.)

## **Permission.**

This is one of four related terms which make vital contributions to our theology and involve important distinctions. All the power of acting is from the Lord; but what is done by angels, spirits and men is nearer to or more remote from the Lord in the degree that they intend to

conform with His will or purpose to act contrary to it. Thus there are four distinct qualities of action. What is done from love to the Lord and toward the neighbor is from will. All that is done from the same love, but qualified as yet by still active states of the proprium, is from good pleasure. That which is done by those who are interiorly evil, but from an end of natural good, is from leave. But what is done by the evil from a deliberate purpose of evil is done from permission. Note, however, that a permission always involves two things. The Lord permits only the evil which He can bend to an end of good that could not be achieved in any other way; and He neither wills nor concurs in the evil. This is peculiar to the Lord. He alone can permit and not will in the least degree, or even acquiesce in, the evil permitted. (See HD 272; DP 296.)

### **Profanation.**

To profane is to deny the Lord, the Word and eternal life after they have once been interiorly acknowledged, or to believe in them and still live contrary to them. The essential condition of profanation is that it causes good and evil, truth and falsity, to become so inextricably intermingled in the interiors of the mind that they cannot be separated, with the result that the man can go neither to heaven nor to hell. The regenerating man has both good and evil, truth and falsity, in his mind; but they are separated, the good and truth being in the internal mind and the evil and falsity in the external. It is those only who know the truth who can profane it, and among them those only do so who first acknowledge and then deny. (See AC 10287, 9818.)

### **Proprium.**

Like conjugal, this term is best left untranslated. It has been rendered as "own" and "ownhood," "self" and "selfhood"; but it has no true equivalent in English, and these attempts to find one are not only clumsy but also inaccurate, since man has nothing of his own. Perhaps the simplest way to define it is to say that man's proprium is the life that seems to be his and no other's - the life that distinguishes him from every other man and makes him a unique individual. If this life inflows from hell, it makes an infernal proprium; if it comes from the Lord by influx through heaven, it makes a heavenly proprium. In each instance the life inflows, but the fact that it is sensed as if self-derived makes it a proprium. (See AC 3812; CL 194; SS 60; AR 558.)

### **Providence.**

The term, the Divine Providence, is inclusive of all that is done by the Lord, which is infinite and eternal. The Divine Providence is therefore the government of the Divine love and wisdom in the spiritual world and on earth, and it consists in the preservation of creation for the sake of uses to man and in every Divine work which has to do with human salvation. It is predicted of the provision of good, and is a leading to good and guarding from evil; but as good operates through truth, it is also the Divine wisdom. In proceeding, it is the Lord's influx, both through heaven and immediately from Himself, effecting the production of uses through the spheres of procreating and of protecting what is procreated. In reception, it is the Divine operation in the man who has

removed the love of self. In general, Providence conserves what is in order and strives to restore to order that which is not. (See HD 267; AC 5195; AE 25.)

### **Rational.**

The essential idea in this term is that of an intermediate between the spiritual and the natural - a mental plane on which light from heaven illuminates what is in the light of the world. Thus rational truth is the spiritual truth about natural things, and rational thought is thought from understanding of the spiritual uses of things. The rational is the highest plane of the natural degree, intermediate between the soul and the natural mind; and rationality is the faculty of receiving light from the Lord, and of thus perceiving the relations of things to one another and to the Lord. The terms "natural rational" and "spiritual rational" refer to the rational before and after regeneration. (See AC 3314, 5150, 1944; AE 569; HH 468.)

### **Ratiocination.**

More often translated "reasoning," this term describes the process of arguing whether Divine and spiritual things exist in which those indulge who inwardly doubt and deny, and who approach such things from sensuous and scientific ones. Ratiocination, which always favors man's principles, takes the place of understanding with the unregenerate. (See AC 7352; HH 464.)

### **Receptacle.**

By receptacles are meant the very essential forms of men. Men are forms receptive of life from the Lord, and the human mind therefore consists of receiving vessels. Note, however, that by this term the Writings do not mean inert vessels to be infilled but vessels which react, freely and responsibly, to the influx of life. (See AC 6138, 5531.)

### **Reciprocal.**

This term relates to the reaction of truth to good. Truth from the Lord enters the mind from without through the Word; good from the Lord inflows by an inner way. When man makes the truth his own, or as if his own, by obedience to it, it reacts with the good that inflows from within, and this reaction is what is meant by reciprocation. It should be noted that both the action and the reaction are of the Lord, but that the latter is effected through man as if of himself. (See AC 2954; DLW 115.)

### **Redemption.**

Here is a theological term which has an entirely different meaning in our doctrine from that which is given to it in Christendom. To redeem is to buy back, and the Christian Church teaches that the Lord bought back the souls of the elect with the blood shed on the cross. The Writings

teach, however, that redemption itself was the subjugation of the hells and the arrangement of the heavens into order, and thus preparation for a new, spiritual church. So the passion of the cross was not redemption, though, as the last of the Lord's temptations, it was a means of redemption because of glorification. (See TCR 84.)

## **Reflection.**

We should be careful to distinguish this term from "meditation," which is the ruling love thinking. It may be defined in three ways. In act, reflection is a mental operation in which the mind considers, as from above, its external acts and processes and the, functioning of the body. In effect, it is a mental view of the things that impinge upon the mind through the senses of the body, and of what their quality is. In essence, it is consciousness, and thus the essential of thought and sensation. It is, therefore, the faculty through which everything human comes to man, and without which he would not be man at all. (See SD 733-739.)

## **Reformation.**

This is one of the major theological terms used in the Writings. Reformation is predicated of the understanding and is a state of thought, formed by the truth of faith, in which man looks with longing to the spiritual life. During it he is led by truth to good and is in a state of obedience in which truth predominates. Man is in a state of reformation when he sees and acknowledges that good is good and evil is evil, and thinks that good should be chosen; and the process itself is a reforming of the existing content of the understanding - a reorganization effected through temptations by which knowledges of truth are centered in the Lord and heaven instead of in self and the world, and are thus prepared to receive a new will from the Lord. (See TCR 571.)

## **Regeneration.**

In its wider meaning, this term refers to the entire process of man's rebirth, but in a more restricted sense it relates to that part of the process which follows reformation. As distinct therefrom, regeneration is predicated of the will and is a state of love, formed by the good of charity, in which man becomes spiritual-natural. During it man has a perceptive understanding of truth from good, and is in a state of affection in which good has the dominion. He comes into it when he begins to shun evils and do goods, and the process consists in the establishment of a new will in the reformed understanding. This will, which is an entirely new structure, consists in the goods of remains, which are then appropriated by the natural. (See TCR 571.)

## **Religion.**

Religion is frequently thought of in the world as a system of belief, which may be held without being practised. It is often implied that which system is embraced does not matter as long as it satisfies and one lives well, and the idea persists that religion was invented by men out of

necessity from wonder or fear. The essential idea, however, is that true religion is revealed and is of the life, but a life according to genuine doctrine. Belief and life cannot be separated, the Writings teach, since a man cannot live differently than he really believes or believe differently than he loves and lives. (See AE 805.)

### **Religiosity.**

This term, found only occasionally outside of the Writings, is used by them to describe an organized external worship which has no internal whatsoever. Thus they always speak of the "Roman Catholic religiosity" rather than "church" because Rome does not worship the Lord. (See AC 4440.)

### **Remains.**

Here we have another term around which is constructed an important doctrine. By "remains" are meant all the goods and truths, together with their attendant states, which the Lord lays down in every human mind without exception from first infancy to adult life as a basis for regeneration. They are so called because they actually are remains of all the goods and truths which have been impressed on the mind from infancy; of the states of charity, innocence, love and mercy associated with them; and also of the states of attendant angels. It should be noted that all remains are implanted by the Lord and that the remains essential for regeneration are given to all. We can provide experiences in which remains may be implanted, but we do not do the implanting, and much that has been thought of as the instilling of remains is really the upbuilding of habits and attitudes. (See AC 561, 1060, 1738.)

### **Repentance.**

As this term is used in the Writings, it has a very different meaning from that which is attached to it elsewhere. In ordinary usage it is associated with regret for and contrition over the sins of the past. However, the Writings define repentance as confessing one's sins before God, praying humbly that they may be forgiven, and then desisting from them by leading a new life according to the precepts of charity and faith: a process which, to be effective, must be preceded by self-examination which includes the intentions and thoughts as they appear in the imagination as well as words and deeds. Ceasing from the evils confessed is the very essence of repentance, and the teaching makes clear that the evils of which man truly repents are those which he shuns when they present themselves with delight and when he is free to commit them. (See AR 531.)

### **Revelation.**

When revelation is from the Divine, it is identical with the Word. In its ultimate form it is defined as a general vessel receptive of spiritual and celestial things, and therefore the medium

through which the conjunction of heaven and earth is effected. Enlightenment is when the Word is read and perceived. (See AC 8694, 1775.)

### **Scientifics.**

Scientifics are the facts of the Word, of nature and of experience, unorganized into ideas. Thus they are merely vessels which are capable of receiving truths or falsities. Without them we can have no ideas, and therefore neither intelligence nor wisdom. (See AC 9394, 9922, 3052.)

### **Scortatory.**

By this term, which is peculiar to the Writings, is meant the love of adultery when it is such that adultery is not held to be sin, nor to be wrong and against reason, but allowable with reason. This is the opposite of conjugal love, and as that love is the essence of heaven, so is it the essence of hell. (See CL 423.)

### **Sensual.**

The sensual is the ultimate of the life of man's mind and it adheres to, and coheres with, the five bodily senses. It is the lowest of the three planes which constitute the natural degree of the mind, and is the obscure life animating the senses of the body that perishes when man dies. The man who lives only on this plane, believing only what he can see and touch, is sensual. (See TCR 565; AC 10,236; HD 45; AC 7693.)

### **Similitude.**

This term occurs in the doctrine of conjugal love. It refers to likenesses of mind, both internal and external, which originate in connate inclinations modified by education, environment and the persuasions that have been imbibed. For those who properly desire conjugal love the Lord provides similitudes, in the life after death if not in this world. The word has sometimes been thought of in the singular, and it has been supposed that a similitude is, in effect, a substitute partner provided for one whose true conjugal partner has failed to regenerate. This idea is based on the belief that conjugal pairs are created "one for one"; but there is no proof that they are so provided, the term is always used in the plural, and this idea of similitudes seems to be a mistaken one. (See CL 227-229.)

### **Soul.**

Here we have a term to which several meanings are given in the Writings. In one usage, the soul is identical with the spirit of man which lives after death, and is therefore the love of the will and the understanding that is the man himself. In another, the term refers to the celestial and spiritual degrees of the mind, which are in the order and form of heaven and are above

consciousness; and in yet another it is used of man in general and in particular of the truth of his faith and the good of his love. (See AC 6054; DP 199; DLW 395; CL 315. Cf. AC 7021.)

### **Sphere.**

Every human being is encompassed by an emanation from his life's love—a characteristic influence from the things proper to it. This emanation is what is meant in the Writings by a sphere. It is, as it were, an extension of the man himself. Undetectable on earth, spiritual spheres reveal quality in the other world, and are the basis of conjunctions and disjunctions. (See CL 171.)

### **Spiritual.**

This word occurs in many compound terms and phrases, but it always has reference to the love of truth for its own sake or for the sake of the good to which it leads. It is sometimes used as inclusive of everything that is below the Divine and above the natural. In all other instances it relates to faith and truth. According to the context it may refer to love toward the neighbor; the second heaven, which is in that love; the middle degree of the human mind, which receives the activity of the second heaven; or the entire human race after the Fall, which has been regenerated by the influx of truth into the separated understanding and the implantation of a new will in that understanding. The compound term, spiritual-celestial, is used of affections of truth in which is the affection of good; and that part of the natural heaven which is the external of the spiritual kingdom, and which is in obedience or the good of faith, is called the spiritual-natural heaven. (See AC 5639, 5238, 880, 4675.)

### **State.**

State is predicated of life, love, wisdom, affections and joys, and in general of good and truth. These are all substantial, and by states are meant various qualities of those substances. Note that states are always finite, in angels as in men. (See AE 16; TCR 30.)

### **Storge.**

This is a universal love which is neither good nor evil but becomes one or the other. It exists from the love of the Lord as the Father and of the inmost heaven as a mother for all men; inflows by general influx from the Lord; is received by woman and transferred from her to man; and is aroused by the innocence of infancy. Under orderly conditions it ceases as children grow up in order that they may be free, but emerges again with the birth of grandchildren. (See TCR 431.)

## **Substance.**

Meaning literally "to stand under," this term carries as well the idea of that from which there is subsistence. Thus the Divine is substance itself as that from which all things subsist; everything that stands under the spiritual sun and above the natural is spiritual substance; and everything under the sun of nature is natural substance. In essence, Divine substance is love, spiritual substance is conatus, natural substance is motion. Spiritual substance is both organic and an essence, existing by influx from the Lord, yet inflowing into the natural. Spiritual substance is living because its essence is love; natural substance is dead because its essence is pure fire, wherefore it does not originate anything, but reacts. (See TCR 52.)

## **Temptation.**

As used in the Writings, this term does not mean an impulse to do wrong. It refers to an assault upon man's ruling love which tries and tests him-an inner conflict in which his free reaction both shows and builds his character. According to the quality of his love, temptation is celestial, spiritual or natural; in which last instance it is not really temptation, although it may prepare for it. Temptation, also, is as to intellectual and voluntary things, the latter being far more severe.

(See AC 741, 847, 3927, 4249, 8567.)

## **Truth.**

Knowledge and truth are not synonymous. Truth is defined as the form of good and as that which qualifies good. We may think of it also as power or law. All things that are done in both worlds are done by the power of truth. (See AC 2954; AE 136; DLW 411.)

## **Understanding.**

The understanding is defined in the Writings as the sight of the mind. One of the two mental faculties with which man is endowed, it is that in which the will is unfolded and it is formed by the will. Note that the understanding does not lead the will; it only instructs it. Note also that only the spiritual man truly has understanding; in its place the natural man has fantasy. (See AC 9165, 4985.)

## **Use.**

Because of its importance in our vocabulary it is desirable that we free this term from a certain confusion that sometimes surrounds it. We commonly speak of occupations, actions and services rendered as "uses," and indeed use the term as the New Church synonym for a job.

While there is value in this as a recognition that there is more to a job than the work and its rewards, it should be understood that these things are the external means by which uses are ultimated; and that although uses are performed through these ultimates, they are in

themselves interior and distinct. Use is the unique personality, the individuality of thought and will build up by reception of love from the Lord which a man puts into his work and other activities and transfers to others by means of them. It is, therefore, the influence toward good which he exerts through his work, business or profession; which is not personal, but a transfer through him of what is from the Lord. Use is, then, the spiritual effect of the way we do our work. (See Wis. xi; CL 183.)

### **Vastation.**

This is the process, carried out in the world of spirits, whereby the external evils and falsities remaining with the good are separated, so that they may be prepared for heaven, and hypocritical goods and mere knowledges of truth are taken away from the evil in order that they may be made ready for hell. The latter is sometimes called devastation to distinguish it from the former. The church is said to be vastated when nothing of charity and faith remains in it. (See AC 411, 2694, 7474.)

### **Vessel.**

The idea expressed in this term as the Writings use it is fundamental to a true concept of man; for man is said to be a vessel which receives life from the Lord, and the term is therefore applied to the will and the understanding, the rational and the natural, and the forms of which they are composed.

The idea is not that of a glass, a cup or a bowl into which liquid is poured, but that of an organic form which reacts to an influx impinging upon it—reacts with or against the influx, as the eye reacts to light or the ear to sound. When this is known, it can be understood how, although the Divine does not finite itself in proceeding as it does in creating, the reception of influx from the Divine is human and finite. (See AC 3318.)

### **Will.**

Like the understanding, the will, which is the other faculty that constitutes the human mind, is a receptacle and a reactive organ. The will is that individualized reception of, and reaction to, love inflowing from the Lord which makes the ruling love and the man himself. The native will is unsalvable; the new will is created in the reformed understanding by the descent into it of remains, which have been stored up for that purpose. (See AC 7342; DLW 403; TCR 570.)

### **Wisdom.**

Here is a term which is predicated only of the life. Wisdom consists in perceiving, willing and doing truths from love, and it involves an appetite for good in truth. It is therefore distinct from

knowledge and intelligence, though they may lead to wisdom and are necessary for it. (See AC 1555, 10,336.)

### **Word.**

The Word is the Lord as to the Divine truth, the Divine truth proceeding through the heavens, and Divine revelation in the heavens and on earth. What the Divine has revealed is with us the Word. For us, therefore, the term is inclusive of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments and the books written by the Lord through Emanuel Swedenborg which contain the Heavenly Doctrine. (See AC 8200, 10,127; Verbo 35.)

### **Worship.**

Internal worship, which is worship itself, is a perpetual activity of love to the Lord. External worship is the life of charity. Public and private worship is the life of piety, and rituals are the garments of worship. From this it may be seen that the term, which we hold in common with all other churches, has for us a very different meaning. From this it may be seen also that although rituals are necessary they are not the essentials of worship, and that, like garments, they may be changed and need not be the same for all. (See AE 325; AC 7884; AE 684, 696.)

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### **Final Note:**

The above entries bring to a close this series of general definitions, publication of which as an occasional department began in January, 1961. It is emphasized again now, as it was then, that the definitions given are not offered as all-inclusive, exhaustive, or the only ones that could be valid. Definitions are not meant to confine our thinking to themselves, but to serve as a well marked point of departure from which we may proceed to infill the initial ideas they help us to form. Unless these things are realized, this attempt to explain the terms which make up our New Church vocabulary will not have succeeded.