

THE ANALOGY OF A HOUSE

Here are three of the ways that the analogy of a house is used in the Heavenly Doctrines:

- 1) Heaven and the church are compared to a house:
the church is like its foundation and substructure
heaven is like its superstructure and roof
(see *5 Memorable Relations* 39:11-12).
- 2) A person is also compared to a house:
his body to the foundation
rational faculty to the superstructure
spiritual character like the furnishings of the home
conjunction with the Lord like his inhabiting the home
(see *Divine Love and Wisdom* 330).
- 3) The way that Divine truth in heaven (the internal sense of the Lord's Word) rests on the "foundation" of the Divine truth on earth (the literal sense of the Word) is compared to a house resting on its foundation and to heaven resting on the church. For there is a continuous connection from the Lord through heaven down to a person by means of the Word.
(see *Arcana Coelestia* 9430)

Make a Diagram of a House

- a. Make a large diagram of a house seen from the side (cut away so that you can see inside), showing the basement below ground as well as the rooms above ground and the roof.
- b. Use one color pen or pencil to label which parts are like heaven and the church.
- c. Use another color of pen or pencil to label which parts of the house are like a person (adding furniture and showing yourself "inhabiting the home.")
- d. Use another color of pen or pencil (perhaps red) to label which part of the house is like the internal sense of the Word and which is like the literal sense of the Word—which we have here on earth.
- e. How much attention do we give to the basement of a house or its foundation? In most homes, the living space is concentrated in the areas above ground—in the superstructure. Yet without the foundation and other parts of the substructure, the house would not be structurally sound.

Building Your Spiritual Home

- a. The Lord gives people spiritual homes, furniture, and clothing that matches their spiritual character. In *Divine Love and Wisdom* 330, one's spiritual character is compared to the furnishings of the home.
- b. Just for fun, design your "dream house" or one room in this house.
- c. Think about qualities and attitudes that you would like to develop. Reflect on how spiritual growth and development "designs" and "builds" our spiritual dwelling place.