

DOCTRINE FOR THE YOUNG

THE LORD'S MOST IMPORTANT WORK ON EARTH

by the Rev. Kurt Horigan Asplundh

What do you think was the most important work that the Lord Jesus Christ did while he was in the world? His miracles? Feeding thousands with a little bread, healing incurable diseases, actually bringing men back to life again after they had died? Perhaps you would say that the most important thing He did was teaching truth to His disciples, and others, and thus starting a new church on earth that we call the "Christian Church." Another thing He did was hidden from men's eyes while He did it. That was fighting against the spirits of hell and conquering them so that men were protected from their evil power. If the Lord had not conquered these spirits, they would have destroyed us all.

All of these things were wonderful and important works which the Lord accomplished during the short span of His life on earth, from the time He was born in Bethlehem, to the day that we now call Easter Sunday when He rose from the sepulchre where He had been buried after His crucifixion. But, wonderful as the Lord's miracles were, and His teachings, and His victory over the power of evil, there is something more wonderful and important than all of these things.

The Lord called this the "Glorification." What is the Glorification? Let us look first at the word itself. The first part of it is the same as the word, "glory." We are familiar with that word. Sometimes we use it to describe what has been made very beautiful, the glory of a sunrise, or sunset: that a "glorious" sight, we say. It is beautiful, or glorious, because the light of the sun has made the sky and the clouds, and the landscape bright and colorful.

We also use the word glory to describe times when our life has been made especially bright and happy, as when our team has won a victory and "gains all the glory." The glory here is the great honor and admiration won by doing some thing important and valuable. We can only accomplish what is important and valuable when we receive the knowledge and strength to do it from the Lord. Just as there would be no glory in the sunrise apart from the light of the sun which gives the glory to the sky, so there would be no glory in man's life apart from the knowledge and strength that man receives from the Lord to do important and valuable work.

The word "glorification" means to "make something have glory." It means the getting of glory. Now what does this have to do with the Lord? Why is the Glorification the most important accomplishment of the Lord's life on earth?

To answer this, we must know what the Lord glorified. What did He make more beautiful? What did He do that would bring great honor and admiration? We are taught in the New Church that the Lord glorified His Human.

Have you ever realized that there is a connection between the Lord's birth and His rising from the sepulchre? That the work that the Lord began at His birth into the world, at Christmas time was completed 33 years later when He rose from the tomb at Easter time?

What was the remarkable thing about Easter Sunday? When the women came to the tomb and looked for the Lord's dead body it was not there! He had risen from the tomb with His body. It was not in the grave where they expected to find it, where any other man's body would remain until it would gradually become dust.

At His birth, the Lord came into the world in a body. This body was from Mary, his mother, just like our bodies were from our mothers. The Lord was born so that He could be in this world just as we are in the world. During the years the Lord lived on the earth in the body from Mary, He grew, and grew wise. He learned the truth in the Word. As the Lord learned from the Word He built up something in Himself that was more important than His body. It was His mind. The Writings of the New Church teach us this by saying that while the Lord was in the world He "put on a Human." This may be confusing to us. He was a human being when He was born. We all are. But remember, if we never learn anything, we remain more ignorant than animals. To become a real human being, we must acquire knowledges and the ability to think and recognize the truth. As we do this we can be said to be putting on a "human form." Our minds are becoming human minds, superior to animal minds.

The Human of the Lord, or the Human form that the Lord took on while on earth, was infinitely superior to the human qualities that we can build up. He learned all the truth there is to know, and learned it perfectly. We can learn *only* a little.

If we understand now what the Lord's Human was, when He was on earth, we are ready to understand what is meant by the "Glorification of the Human." The Human of the Lord was not the body He had from Mary, but all the truth He was able to learn by means of His earthly body. This is what the Lord glorified.

During the whole of the Lord's life, He made that truth glorious. He made it to be such that we can admire and honor it, and give it glory.

The glory of the sunrise is from the light of the sun. The glory of the Lord's Human is from the Divine life that is in Him. Deep within the Lord's soul is the Infinite love that is the origin of all life. The Glorification was making the Human of the Lord perfect and Divine in itself by adding or joining the love that He had with the truth of His Human.

This may be hard for you to understand, but it is the most important work that the Lord ever did. He made His Human to be Divine, The Lord, on earth, was joined with and became one with, and now is the God of heaven and earth.

On Easter, when He rose from the tomb, His work was finished. He was perfected, glorified. Nothing remained of the body He had from Mary. It could not be found in the tomb. But the glorified body, the Divine Human, as it is called in the Writings, was risen from the tomb. So it is that Mary and the disciples saw the Lord alive. So it is that the Lord now had "all power in

heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:8). He could now do all the miracles He had ever done before, He could teach all the truths He had ever taught before, and He could keep all evil under His control, forever.

In the New Church we worship the Lord in His Glorified Human. We know Him and can love Him even more perfectly than His disciples did. He, and He alone, is God almighty, because He put on a Human in the world and glorified it.

Texts: Matthew 28