

General Church Education



Family Lesson: Mark 15

The Crucifixion

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Family Lesson 31-I

The Crucifixion
Mark 15

Family Talk:
THE CRUCIFIXION
Rev. Donald L. Rose

One of the first things to know about the crucifixion is that it is something the Lord knew would happen. He not only knew it would happen, but He told the disciples several times that it would happen. He told them that He would be taken and treated cruelly and mocked, and finally be put to death, and that He would rise again. This was something the disciples found hard to understand.

Picture them approaching the city of Jerusalem and being told again what would happen. **“Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him”** (*Mark 10: 32*).

He said **“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered...and they will...kill Him. And the third day He will rise again”** (*Mark 10: 33, 34*).

The disciples were told that He would lay down His life. **“No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again”** (*John 10: 18*). The thought of His being killed was so terrible to the disciples that they just could not believe that it would happen. And it was even more terrible when it actually did happen and the Lord suffered those things, being mocked, and cruelly treated and nailed to a cross to die.

The feelings that the Lord experienced are far beyond our imagining, because He was not only suffering as to His body. He was being attached by terrible forces from hell. He fought against and conquered those forces from His love of protecting the human race.

Think most of all of this – His love of the human race – as you consider some of the things He said while He was on the cross. Looking at the true story in all four Gospels, one finds that the Lord spoke seven times while on the cross: (1) - *Luke 23: 34*; (2) - *Luke 23: 43*; (3) - *John 19: 26, 27*; (4) - *Matthew 27: 46*; (5) - *John 19: 28*; (6) - *John 19: 30*; (7) - *Luke 23: 46*.

Listen to some of those words that He spoke, and remember His love. The first words were these: **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”** Isn't it amazing that His concern at that terrible moment was not for Himself, but even for those who were harming Him. The Writings say that **“He prayed on the cross for His enemies, and thus for all in the whole world”** (*Arcana Coelestia 1690*).

His thought was for the whole human race and for each individual, and the next thing He said on the cross was spoken to one man. It was one of the

thieves who was crucified with Him. The thief had said, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” “And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’” Before this He had said, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (*John* 12: 32). The Writings say that the Lord “wills to save everyone and to draw him with mighty power to heaven, that is, to Himself” (*Arcana Coelestia* 1038). (See *True Christian Religion* 652 and *Arcana Coelestia* 8604.)

The third thing the Lord said on the cross showed His concern for Mary, who was His mother. We read:

“When Jesus therefore, saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, *Woman, behold your son!* Then He said to the disciple, *Behold your mother!* And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.”

Another thing the Lord said on the cross was, “*I thirst.*” Although He was truly thirsty, there was more to it than that. In the past He had told His disciples that His food was to do the work He came on earth to accomplish (*John* 4). And when He said, “*I thirst,*” it also meant that He longed for a church that would acknowledge Him.

“Because He came into the world to save mankind, He said, *I thirst,* which means that from Divine love He willed and desired the salvation of the human race” (*Apocalypse Explained* 386: 30).

To accomplish the salvation of the human race was His one task in life. It was as the cup He came on earth to drink, and the part that was very hard was like a bitter cup. It was like a cup so bitter that one would pray not to have to drink it. But the Lord did each and every thing He came on earth to do, and when on the cross He said, “*It is finished,*” that great work of His was done.

The accomplishment of this great work brought a wonderful peace, and that is why when He had risen from the tomb in which His body had been laid, He greeted His disciples with the words, “*Peace be unto you.*”

“When the Lord had united His Human to the Divine Itself, He had peace, for then the combats had ceased, and all things in the heavens and hells had been reduced to order; and thus not only He had peace, but the angels in the heavens and men on earth also had peace and salvation” (*Arcana Coelestia* 10730: 2).

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LEVEL 1 – THE LORD RISES FROM THE TOMB



The little project for this age level was inspired by a number in the chapter on Children in Heaven in the book *Heaven and Hell*. It is number 335, which is enjoyable to read in full.

We learn there that children in heaven are taught by representatives suited to their understanding. Beautiful representations are used, one being mentioned of the Lord's rising from the sepulchre. It is said at one point that "in adaptation to the infantile mind they let down little cords almost invisible, very soft and tender, by which they lightened the Lord's ascent, always with holy care...."

DIRECTIONS FOR PROJECT:

Color the angel picture.

Cut out the angel picture (*cutting around the frame would be easiest*)

Using a 24" piece of white thread, "sew" the thread from the back to the front of the angel picture through one of the holes by the angels' hands, then down from the front to the back through the other hole.

Knot the ends in back, creating a large loop.

Color the picture of the Lord on page 3 if you wish.

Cut out just the picture of the Lord (*you don't need the tomb part*).

Tape the loop now hanging from the angels' hands to the back of the cut-out picture of the Lord.

When the thread is pulled from the back, the Lord rises, illustrating *Heaven and Hell* 335.





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LEVEL 2 – ASCENSION PICTURE

to show how the world went black when the Lord was crucified and then rejoiced when He rose on Easter morning.

You are going to make a wax-resist picture. First you make the picture using crayons or craypas, then you put a wash of yellow and black paint over it. The wax drawing shows through the wash.

Materials Needed:

White paper

Colored paper for mounting

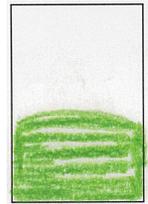
Crayons or craypas

Black and yellow watercolor paints, brush, and water

Directions:

- 1) Place your paper vertically.

With a light-colored crayon, draw a hill on the bottom of the page. (You have to press heavily with the crayons so they will show through the watercolors.)



- 2) On the top of the hill, draw 3 crosses.

- 3) In the sky, draw many flowers and bright colors.

Add some butterflies, birds, rainbows—anything that looks like heaven.



- 4) To show the world turning black:

Take your black paint and mix with a little water.

With your paintbrush, lightly wash this watery black over the bottom half of your picture. The crayon and water will not mix, so your drawing will gradually show through the paint!



- 5) To show the brightness of the Lord rising on Easter morning:

Rinse your paintbrush, and change your water.

Now, using your yellow paint, mix with a little water and lightly wash the yellow down from the top of your page.

This will show the darkness of the Crucifixion merging and changing to the light of heaven.



- 6) Leave your picture flat to dry.

When it is dry you could press the picture under a pile of books to flatten it.

- 7) Mount your picture on the colored background piece of paper and display it.

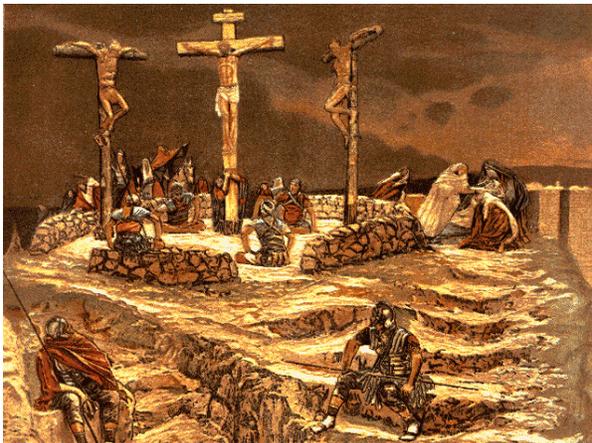
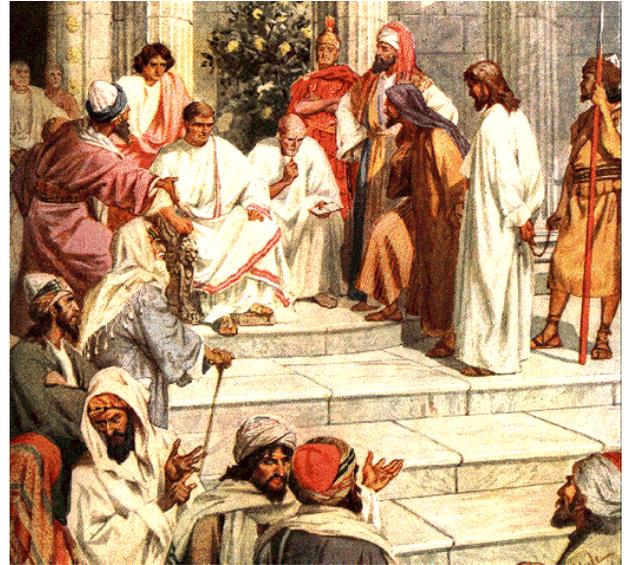


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LEVEL 3 – EVENTS OF THE CRUCIFIXION

Exactly what happened at the time when the Lord was crucified? When you have completed your project you should have a clearer idea of the sequence of events than most people do.



On the next page are fourteen events taken from *Mark* 14:30 all the way to *Mark* 16:4. They are given in the wrong order. Your assignment is to put them in the right order.

Application

- 1) *Cut the strips apart.*
- 2) *Lay them on a table and try to put them in the right order.*
- 3) *Then check yourself by looking up the references on pages 3, which are in the right order.*
- 4) *When you are sure everything is in the right order, glue the strips next to the correct references from the Word on page 3.*

Peter denies the Lord and hears the rooster crow, and weeps.

In the dark of the night Jesus is taken and led away from the Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus tells Peter that he will three times deny he knows Him.

Jesus goes into the Garden of Gethsemane and prays that if it is possible, the hour might pass from Him.

The Lord's body is wrapped in linen, laid in a tomb, and a stone rolled against the door.

Jesus is brought to Golgath, the place of the skull, where He is crucified between two thieves.

Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate if he can take the body of Jesus.

In the morning Jesus is led to Pilate, the governor.

The centurion officer is amazed and says, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

Judas betrays the Lord with a kiss.

Jesus cries out with a loud voice.

They find the stone rolled away and an angel sitting there.

The veil of the temple is torn in two.

The man Barabbas is released to the people.

Here are the verses of the events in the right order:

1) Mark 14:30	
2) Mark 14:32-35	
3) Mark 14:43-46	
4) Mark 14:53	
5) Mark 14:69-72	
6) Mark 15:1,2	
7) Mark 15:15	
8) Mark 15:22-27	
9) Mark 15:37	
10) Mark 15:38	
11) Mark 15:39	
12) Mark 15:43-45	
13) Mark 15:46,47	
14) Mark 16:4	



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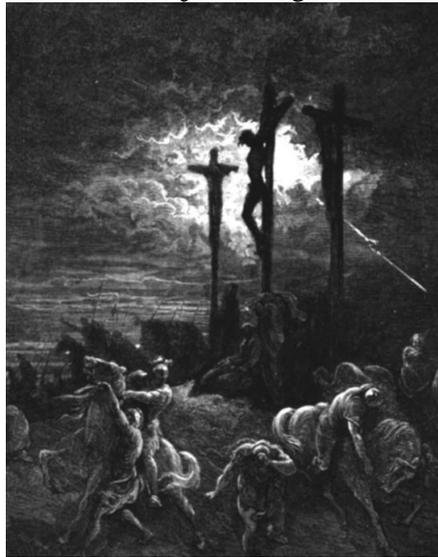
LEVEL 4 – THE FINAL TRIAL

Do you think the Lord could have prevented His crucifixion? _____

Why? _____



Read the chapter in Mark which tells of the final trial of the Lord and His crucifixion. It is certainly not a beautiful story.



There are many horrible things which the people did to the Lord.

Perhaps by answering the questions which follow each passage, you can begin to understand why the Lord permitted men to do such awful things to His body.

MARK 15: 1-5

Who put Jesus in chains and handed him over to Pilate? _____

What did Pilate ask Him? _____

MARK 15: 6-15

What was the custom at this Passover festival season? _____

What office did Pilate hold? _____

Did Pilate think the Lord was guilty? _____

Who insisted on crucifying the Lord? _____

Why did Pilate go along with killing someone he knew was innocent?

MARK 15: 16-20

The people, aroused by the priests, had insisted that the Lord be killed. Who now treated Him badly? _____

List four evil things they did to Him.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

MARK 15: 21-28

What does Golgotha mean? _____

They valued the Lord so little that they wanted to kill Him.

What did they value enough to draw lots over? _____

What was written on the cross, and what did they mean by it? _____

What was being shown about their attitude toward the Lord by the company in which He was placed?

MARK 15: 29-39

List three kinds of people who taunted the Lord while He was on the cross.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

At what time was the Lord crucified? _____

When did darkness fall? _____

At what time did the Lord die? _____

Here is the Hebrew phrase the Lord cried:

אל' אל' למה עזבת'

Write the English version of the Hebrew and its translation under it.

Why might the curtain in the temple have been torn in two?

What direction was the curtain torn? _____

MARK 15: 40-47

Which women were present at the Lord's crucifixion?

What do we know about Joseph of Arimathea? _____

What did he do for the Lord's body? _____

What can *we* learn from reading about so much evil?:

The Lord tells us that we must learn to SHUN EVILS AS SINS AGAINST THE LORD.

We all know what evil is, but we may often wonder what it means to shun it as a sin "against the Lord." Surely we would not do anything against the Lord.

But we sometimes **do** behave the way the people in this story did:



We might often do as the multitude did and follow an angry crowd to condemn someone else just because people around us do.

We might even be like Pilate when we think, "Well, this is wrong, but it really doesn't matter."



We might ridicule someone, or taunt someone when he's down, or hit someone or spit on him.

Why did the Lord let the people do these things to Him?

Let's think about the **why** of all this:

Surely the Lord could have prevented it. He must have **allowed** it, both because it was an essential part of His mission on earth, and because all mankind could learn from reading about it.

He wanted all mankind to see how awful evil is, and learn to shun it.

If we do not do evil to another person because we would not do it to the Lord—because we would not go against the teachings which He has give us—we have learned to “shun evils as sins against the Lord.”



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LEVEL 5 – QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CRUCIFIXION

In the final hours of His life on earth, the Lord endured excruciating pain. He was whipped by Pilate. He was mistreated by the Roman soldiers. He was crucified at the Jews' request. Not only was His body tortured, but His mind was also put through humiliation and anxiety. The Roman soldiers and the crowds made fun of Him. We do not even know the extent of the mental torture He endured. It was so terrible that He cried out from the cross, **“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”** (*Mark 15: 34*).

Why did the Lord allow Himself to be crucified?

Why did an all-powerful God permit men to inflict this agony on Him?

Why didn't He respond to the jeering of the crowd and come down off the cross to show He was God?

How can His crucifixion help us with our lives today?

The Lord allowed this because it was the final step in conquering the hells. Without this last step, He could not have said, **“It is finished”** (*John 19: 30*).

The Lord explains this in the Writings in a book called *The Canons of the New Church (Section II, Chapter VII)*. “Canons” mean main teachings, and the following is a quoted list of some of them:

1. **“The Lord in the world, admitted into Himself and underwent grievous and dreadful temptations from the hells, and at length the last of them, which was the passion of the cross.”**
2. **“The Lord in temptations combated with the hells and overcame and subjugated [conquered] them.”**
3. **“By this means He reduced the hells to order, and then at the same time the heavens where the angels are, and the church where men are; since the state of one continually depends upon the state of the other.”**
4. **“The Lord also by temptations and rejections, and lastly by the passion of the cross, represented the state of the church, such as it then was, as the Divine Truth, thus as to the Word.”**
5. **“The Lord, by fulfilling the Word, and by temptations, and fully by the last of them, which was the passion of the cross, glorified the Human.”**

How does the Lord's Crucifixion help us in our lives today?

Because the Lord was able to put the hells in order through His final temptation, the Crucifixion, He made it possible for us to fight—with His help—against our evils, and have our goods defeat our evils.

We call this struggle between good and evil *temptations*. This is also explained in the Writings, as well as how we are to fight evils:

“In temptations, the dominion of good over evil, or of evil over good, is contended for. Evil which wills to have dominion is in the natural or external man, and good is in the spiritual or internal man. If evil conquers, the natural man has dominion; if good conquers, the spiritual has dominion.”

“These combats are carried on by the truths of faith which are from the Word. From these men must combat against evils and falsities; for if he combats from any other principles, he cannot conquer, because in these alone the Lord is present...”

Application

Although you will not have spiritual temptations until you are more mature, the Lord's truth can help you fight against the disorders you are tempted to be part of now. Imagine someone your age.

Look at the activity on page 6

Think of some things that this person might be tempted to do: shoplift; gossip about or cut up a friend; do drugs; get drunk; destroy or harm someone's possessions; lie; cheat on a test; tell a dirty joke.

Now think of something which the evil spirits with a person (or even “friends”) might say to try to persuade him to do each of those disorderly things. You are going to fill in the boxes in the first column with these examples of what a “tempter” might say. (*The first three are filled in to get you started.*)

* Then, in the second column, write down some of the Lord's truths which the good spirits might be able to use to fight against the false reasoning. (*Two boxes have been filled in as examples*)

* *On pages 3 and 4 are a few of the Lord's truths which you could use. These are only a few. You may use any of the Lord's truths which you think would fit your person's temptation.*



THE TRUTHS FROM THE WORD ARE OUR PROTECTION

From the Old Testament:

The Ten Commandments (*Exodus 20: 1-17; Deuteronomy 5: 6-21*):

“And God spoke all these words, saying:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall not do any work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not committ adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor’s house;

you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife; nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

From the New Testament:

“Therefore whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them...”
(*Matthew 7: 12 - The Golden Rule*)

“But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man...”
(*Matthew 15: 18-20*)

From the Writings:

“By murders of every kind are meant also every kind of enmity, hatred, and revenge...”
(*Doctrine of Life 67*)

“By stealing...is meant not only to commit theft and robbery, but also to defraud, and under any pretense to take away from another his goods (possessions).”
(*Life 80*)

“In the natural sense the commandment against adultery refers also to willing and doing obscene things and thinking and speaking about lascivious things.”
(*True Christian Religion 313*)

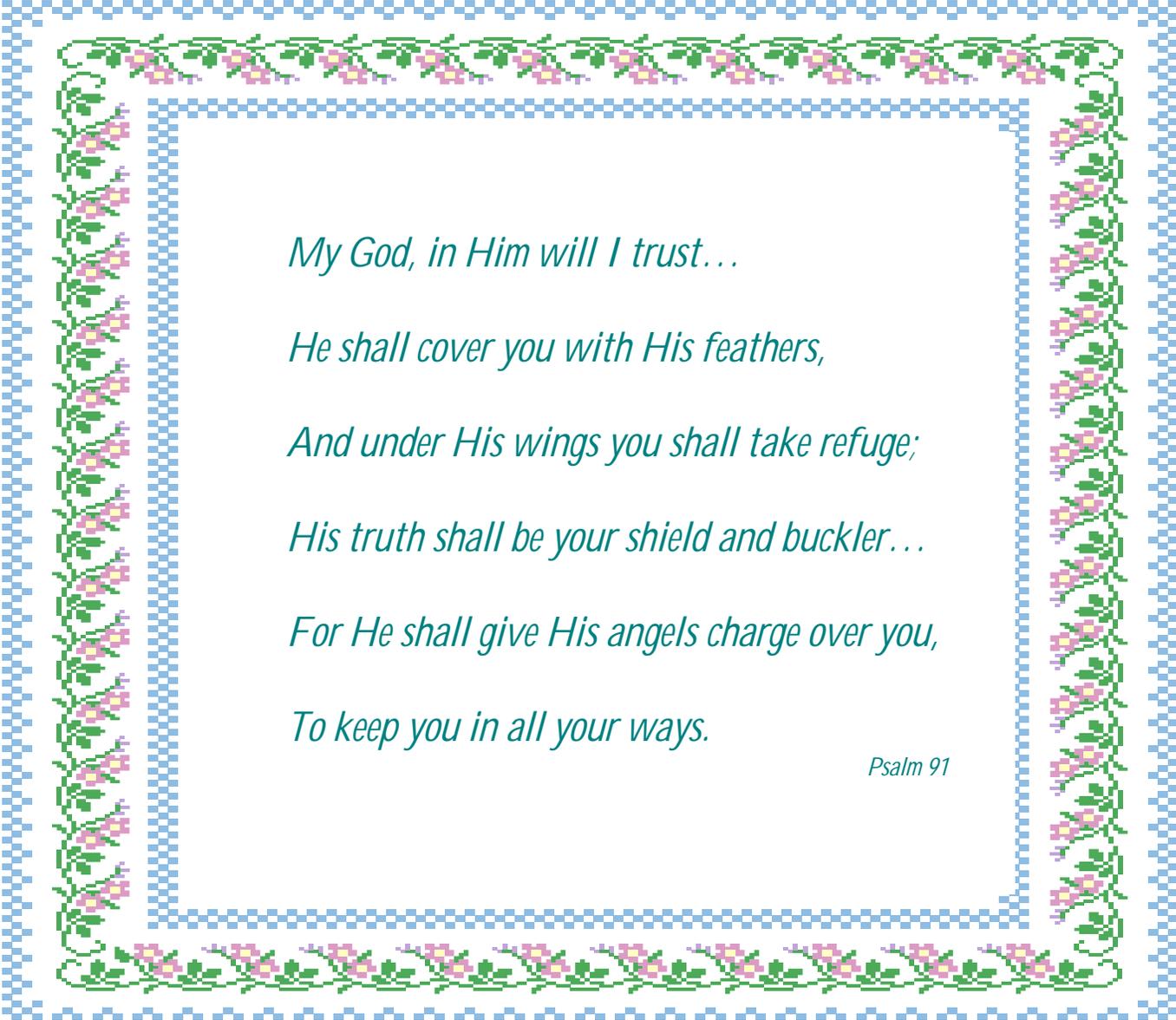
“That during the time of betrothal it is not permissible to be bodily conjoined. For thus the order which is inscribed upon conjugal love perishes...”
(*Conjugal Love 305*)

“I [Swedenborg] spoke with spirits concerning drunkenness, and it was confirmed by them that it is an enormous sin, as well as that man becomes a brute [animal], no longer a man; because that man is a man lies in his intellectual faculty, thus he becomes a brute [animal], besides which he brings damage on his body, and so hastens his death, besides wasting in extravagance what might be of use to many.”
(*Spiritual Diary 2422*)

The Lord is With Us

The Lord does not want people to be depressed about fighting their evils. He gives us these words of encouragement:

“This combat is not grievous, except for those who have relaxed all restraints upon their evil desires, and have deliberately indulged them; and also for those who have obstinately rejected the holy things of the Word and the Church. **To others, however, it is not grievous; let them resist evils in intention only once in a week, or twice in a month, and they will perceive a change.”**



My God, in Him will I trust...

He shall cover you with His feathers,

And under His wings you shall take refuge;

His truth shall be your shield and buckler...

For He shall give His angels charge over you,

To keep you in all your ways.

Psalm 91

	EXAMPLE OF WHAT A TEMPTER MIGHT SAY	AN ANSWER FROM THE WORD
1)	“Come on, look at his test and get the answer. Who will ever know?”	“You shall not bear false witness.” “You shall not steal.”
2)	“Come on, man, be cool. Have a drink. Who will it hurt? It’s your body.”	
3)	“Go ahead, call him a jerk. Make fun of him like everyone else is doing. Be part of the gang.”	The Golden Rule.
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		

