

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE NEW CHURCH

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You all know what a birthday is! When it is someone's birthday it is a very special day. When it is your birthday, people give you presents, and you perhaps have a party with a special birthday cake. Perhaps you also know why you have a birthday once a year. It is because on your birthday it is an exact number of years since you were born. Your birthday is special because on that day you celebrate the day on which you began your life in this world. A birthday is for celebrating the beginning of someone's life.

But birthdays are not only for people. A country can have a birthday. For example, the United States has a birthday on July 4th. On that day of the year, in 1776, the United States began. Because of this, on the Fourth of July, every year, Americans celebrate the birthday of their country—they celebrate the beginning of their country. It's a very important day.

Now when someone has a birthday, it is an important day. When a country has a birthday, it is even more important. But today I would like to tell you about a birthday that's even more important than this—the birthday of the New Church. This birthday is on the Nineteenth of June. It was on the Nineteenth of June, over two hundred years ago in 1770, that the New Church began. For this reason, on the Nineteenth of June, New Church people all over the world stop to think about the beginning of the New Church.

The New Church did not begin in this world. It began in heaven, where the angels live. What happened was that the Lord called together His twelve disciples. These men had followed the Lord while He was in the world. Because they had been good men, they had gone to heaven when they died and they were now angels.

After the Lord had called together these twelve disciples, these twelve angels, He sent them out to tell everyone in the spiritual world about Himself. These twelve disciples then went out and told everyone that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns. They told everyone that the Lord is the king who rules everybody. This was the beginning of the New Church.

So on the birthday of the New Church, on the Nineteenth of June, it is good for you to set aside a few moments to say thank you to the Lord for sending out His disciples, and for giving people the New Church.

Amen.

Readings: Revelation 11:15-19; *True Christian Religion* 791