

Quotes from the Word: I Will Build My Church

OLD TESTAMENT

Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool.
Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest?
(Isaiah 66:1).

"I propose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God" (1 Kings 5:5).

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it (Psalm 127:1).

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations (Matthew 56:7).

Truly my soul silently waits for God; from Him comes my salvation.
He only is my rock and my salvation.
He is my defense; I shall not be moved.
In God is my salvation and my glory;
The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.
(Psalm 62:1,6-7).

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight,
O Lord, my Rock and my redeemer.
(Psalm 19:14)

Blessed is the man You choose, and cause to approach You,
That he may dwell in Your courts.
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, of Your holy temple.
(Psalm 65:4).

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I (Psalm 61:2).

Who is God, except the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God? (2 Samuel 22:32).

He shall set me high upon a rock (Psalm 27:5).

NEW TESTAMENT

"Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

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Now everyone hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall” (Matthew 7: 24-27).

“You are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18).

HEAVENLY DOCTRINE

THE CHURCH WITH PEOPLE

The Lord’s church is with all in the whole world who live in good according to their religious principles. All who live in good—wherever they are—and acknowledge one God, are accepted by the Lord and come into heaven; for all who are in good acknowledge the Lord, because good is from the Lord, and the Lord is in good (*New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 246).

The communion called the church consists of all people in whom the church is, and the church enters into a person when he is becoming regenerate, and everyone becomes regenerate by abstaining from the evils of sin (*True Christian Religion* 510).

For whether you use the expression spiritual person or spiritual church, it amounts to the same thing because any spiritual person in particular is the church, even as many are in general. If the individual person in particular were not the church, no church in general could exist. The expression church is used in everyday language to describe a congregation in general; but each member of the congregation must be a church if that greater church is to exist (*Arcana Coelestia* 4292).

The church of the Lord is spread over all the globe, and is thus universal. All those are in it who have lived in the good of charity in accordance with their religious belief. The church, where the Word is and by means of it the Lord is known, is in relation to those who are outside the church like the heart and lungs in a person (*Heaven and Hell* 328).

All are initiated into the church by knowing evil and not doing it, because it is against God (*The Doctrine of Charity* 27).

The church depends on the Word, and what the church is like in the case of each person depends on how he understands the Word (*True Christian Religion* 243).

The Lord’s church will differ everywhere, and this not only according to communities, but sometimes according to the individuals in a community (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3452:2, 8152).

THE CHURCH AND HEAVEN

The church, like heaven, is in a person (*New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 246)

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The church is the Lord's Heaven on earth (*Heaven and Hell* 57).

The church is the foundation of heaven (*New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 246).

Heaven and the church are like a single containing house. The church is the foundation and substructure, and heaven is its superstructure and roof; and the inhabitants are consociated like members of a family with household help (*5 Memorable Relations* 15).

KNOWING, UNDERSTANDING, AND DOING DIVINE TRUTHS

That knowing and understanding Divine truths does not make the church and form heaven with a person, but knowing, understanding, and doing (*Apocalypse Explained* 108:2).

The church, like heaven, is in a person, and thus the church in general consists of the people in whom the church is. The church is not with a person unless the truths of doctrine are implanted in the good of charity with him, thus in the life. There is no church with a person, if he is only in the truths, which are called the truths of faith (see *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 246).

The church is internal and external. The internal of the church is love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor. To know truth and good, and to act from thence, is the external of the church, but to will and love truth and good, and to act from thence, is the internal of the church. The internal of the church is according to truths and their quality, and according to their implantation in good by life (*New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 246).

The church and religion make one like truth and good. The church is a church from its doctrine; and religion is religion from life according to doctrine. And the doctrine must be of truths, and the life must be of goods (*The Doctrine of Charity* 212).

FAITH

What is a church without faith, and what is faith without charity, consequently what is a church without the marriage of faith and charity? This marriage is the church itself (see *Brief Exposition* 68).

It is the good and truth of faith itself which makes the church, nay, is the church, for in the good and truth of faith there is the Lord, and where the Lord is there is the church (*Arcana Coelestia* 3379).

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Faith is formed by a person's going to the Lord, learning truths from the Word, and living according to them. ***Faith is formed by person's going to the Lord***, because faith that is a saving faith, is from the Lord and in the Lord. ***Faith is formed by a person's learning truths from the Word***, because faith in its essence is truth. Consequently faith is nothing but a complex of truths shining in the mind of a person. For truths teach not only that a person ought to believe, but also in whom he ought to believe, and what he ought to believe. Truths ought to be taken from the Word, because all truths that conduce to salvation are in the Word, and there is efficacy in them because they are given by the Lord. When a person learns truths from the Word, he comes into communion and consociation with angels beyond what he knows.

Faith is formed by a person's living according to truths, because spiritual life is life according to truths, and truths do not actually live until they are in deeds. Truths abstracted from deeds are merely matters of thought, unless they become of the will also. For the will is the person himself, and the thought is the person as it adjoins the will to itself (see *True Christian Religion* 347:1-3).

The church exists specifically where the Word is, and where the Lord is thereby known, and thus where Divine truths are revealed. Still they who are born where the Word is, and where the Lord is thereby known, are not of the church, but they who are regenerated by the Lord by the truths of the Word, that is, they who live the life of charity (*New Jerusalem and the Heavenly Doctrines* 246).

BUILT ON A ROCK

That works are what make a person of the church, and that he is saved according to them, is also taught by the Lord in the parables (*Doctrine of Life* 2).

A person who hears the Word and does not do it is one who claims to believe, but he does not live according to it. Such a person separates hearing and doing, and splits his mind in two directions; and by the Lord he is called "*a foolish man*" (*Arcana Coelestia* 44).

From (*Apocalypse Explained* 411:11):

"*Rock*" means Divine truth from the Lord and the Lord Himself.

"*The house founded upon a rock*" means the church and the person of the church who has founded his doctrine and life upon the Divine truth, which is from the Lord, thus upon those things that are in the Word.

"*Doing the Lord's words*" is the good of life, for truth, when a person does it, becomes good because it then enters the will and love, and whatever becomes of the will and love is called good.

Temptations, in which such a person of the church does not fall but conquers, are symbolized by "*the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon the house, and yet it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.*"

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In the Word, “rain” symbolizes influx of the Divine truth from the Lord, from which a person has spiritual life.... But “waters” in the contrary sense, symbolize the falsities of doctrine and of faith, so “shower” and “flood” symbolizes not only falsities destroying truths, but also temptations in which a person either yields or conquers....

The “house” they beat upon symbolizes a person—strictly his mind, which consists of understanding or thought and of will or affection. He that receives the words of the Lord, that is, Divine truths, in one part of the mind only, which is that of the thought or understanding, and not at the same time in the other part, which is that of the affection or will, yields in temptations, and falls into grievous falsities. But he who receives Divine truths in both parts—both in the understanding and in the will—conquers in temptations.

The “rock” upon which that house is founded signifies the Lord as to Divine truth, or Divine truth received by the soul and heart, by faith and love, or...by the understanding and will. The “sand” symbolizes Divine truth received only in the memory (see *Apocalypse Explained* 644:24).

ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

Because truth from good, which is from the Lord, is the first thing of the church, Peter was the first to be called and he was also named by the Lord “Cephas,” which means petra [a rock]. In the highest sense “rock” [Petra] symbolizes the Lord in relation to Divine truth, or Divine truth proceeding from the Lord. In a relative sense “rock” signifies truth from good, which is from the Lord, the like is meant by Peter (see *Apocalypse Explained* 820:2).

In the following words in Matthew which the Lord addressed to Peter, “rock” is used to mean the Lord in respect of faith, and also faith received from the Lord: “You Are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church” (Matt. 16:18). The Lord's Church has not been built on some person, thus not on Peter, but on the Lord Himself, that is, on faith in Him (*Arcana Coelestia* 8581:3).