



New Church Faith

FaithBuilder 4 | Lesson 30 | New Church Day

Lesson Overview

1. Video

Watch & discuss *How to be Spiritual* (1min 33sec) online at bitly.com/HowToBeSpiritual at bitly.com/HowToBeSpiritual

2. Read

The Writings for the New Church contain many new ideas. Read a summary and discover how summaries like this are used in church services pp.1-2

3. Discuss

The New Church is small. Do we have a responsibility to help it grow? do p.2

New Church Concept Faith

There are many who declare that people are saved through faith, or if they merely have faith. But the majority of people like this do not know what faith is. Faith however is not mere thought; nor is it the acknowledgement of something that ought to be believed; nor is it a knowledge of all that constitutes the doctrine of faith. Thought does not save anyone, but the life which he acquires in the world through the knowledge of faith. Such life remains, but all thought that is not in keeping with his life dies away, even to the point of becoming none at all. See *Secrets of Heaven* 2228.2,3



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Video

Watch *How to be Spiritual* (1min 33sec) online at bitly.com/HowToBeSpiritual. (Enter bitly link in browser bar at the top of your screen.)

Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. According to the narrator, what is a person's most important quality? (kindness)
 2. What does the speaker suggest kindness determines? (religious devotion)
 3. What five things did the speaker suggest as foundations of a religious life? (kindness, thinking well of others, wishing others well, acting in integrity, being nice)
 4. What is the proper "order of operations?" (*energy and thought* come before kindness)
 5. Why must energy and thought come before kindness? (motives are key; we can be kind so we will get something out of an interaction, or because we have another person's best interests in mind)
 6. The Writings use the word "faith" instead of energy and thought. Which of the following agree with a New Church definition of faith?*
- A strong or unshakable belief in something, even when there is no evidence.
 - Love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor.
 - System of belief (Jewish, Christian, etc.).
 - A belief in truth joined with a good life.
 - Trust in God and His actions and promises.

Read

Like other ideas revealed in the Writings, the New Church idea of faith is new! Some think faith is a matter of believing something is true, and that a person can go to heaven simply by saying he or she accepts Christ, regardless of how they act. Good works are encouraged, but not essential for going to heaven. But the New Church teaches that faith is both a matter of believing in the Lord and living a life of integrity.

So what other Christian concepts have been renewed through the birth of the New Church? The Writings give us new understandings about God, marriage, life after death, salvation, true charity, creation, and so much more. Let's look at a summary of essential New Church teachings given in the Writings.

* 2nd and 4th are from the Writings

The Lord from eternity, who is Jehovah, came into the world to gain control over the hells and to glorify his own human nature. If he had not done this, not one mortal could have been saved; those who believe in him are saved.

There is one God, the divine Trinity exists within him, and he is the Lord God the Savior Jesus Christ.

To believe in him is to have confidence that he saves; and because only those who live good lives can have such confidence, this too is meant by believing in him.

We must not do things that are evil—they belong to the Devil and come from the Devil. We must do things that are good—they belong to God and come from God.

We must do these things as if we ourselves were doing them, but we must believe that they come from the Lord working with us and through us. See *True Christianity* 2,3 (parts)

A variety of essential New Church teachings are wrapped up in this passage, and they are quite simple. At times when we might feel the New Church has so many complicated teachings it can help to remember that everything we need to know grow closer to the Lord is right here!

Occasionally this passage or others like it are read by a congregation during a church service as a “confession of faith.” They are also read when people who have been baptized as babies choose to acknowledge their *own* belief in the New Church by having a confirmation service. An individual may read a passage like this to testify what he or she taking as their own belief.

It can also be useful to memorize a summary like this because it makes it easy to remember key New Church teachings.

Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. Which New Church teachings have had a positive impact on your life?
2. Which New Church ideas might be appealing to friends who belong to other faiths? (e.g. that all can go to heaven regardless of their faith)
3. The New Church has sometimes been called a “spirituality that makes sense.” In what ways do New Church teachings make sense to you?
4. Which New Church teachings are easiest for you to share with people who are new to the New Church? Which are difficult for you to share? Why?
5. The New Church is relatively new in the world, and still quite small. What might you do to help it grow?
6. Do people who believe New Church ideas have a responsibility to help the New Church grow? If so, what might be some ways you would like to help it grow?
7. What are the most effective tools for helping the New Church grow? Websites, videos, books, person-to-person sharing, workshops, classes?

New Church Concept Summary of Faith

Jehovah God Himself came into the world to deliver people and angels from the assault and violence of hell, and thus from damnation. He did this by means of combats against hell and victories over it, whereby He subjugated it, reduced it to order, and brought it under obedience to Himself. He also formed a new heaven, and through this established a new church. By this means Jehovah God put Himself into the power of saving all who believe in Him and who do His precepts. Thus he redeemed all in the whole world, and all in the whole heaven.

From Canons: Redemption VI

Confession of Faith

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: the almighty and everlasting God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Redeemer and Savior of the world.

I believe in the Sacred Scripture: the Word of God, the Fountain of wisdom, the Source of life, and the Way to heaven.

I believe in the Second Coming of the Lord, in the spiritual sense of the Word and in the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem.

I believe in the new angelic heaven, the New Christian Church, in the communion of angels and people, in repentance from sin, in the life of charity, in human resurrection, in the judgment after death, and in the life everlasting.