

Lesson 5: THE EMBODIMENT OF CHARITY

Doctrine of Charity, chapter 5

Introductory Ideas for the Fifth Lesson

This chapter of the Doctrine of Charity touches the very heart of the nature of people who are in charity— or not in charity. It opens with the statement that "The human being was created to be an embodiment of love and wisdom." In fact, we are created into the image and likeness of God himself! How do we become "charity embodied?" and what are we if we do not become charity embodied? Here are a few questions:

1. What is the purpose of our life on earth?
2. What are we supposed to be working on while we are in the natural world?
3. In the New Church we use the word regeneration to describe the process of becoming a heavenly person. How do we regenerate?

Some Key Points in Chapter 5:

Charity 96 "By charity embodied of "in form" is meant that charity is a person's life, for the form comes from the life." This section continues on to say that it is our minds that are an embodiment of charity in the physical world. After death, it is also our bodies that will reflect our charity— and that people will be able to see it when they look at us.

Charity 98 warns us that people can feign charity. However, after death, the angels will not be fooled by this. (Remember, we are not to judge others, but we can examine the fruits of others to see if their actions match their words.)

Charity 100 if we are not embodiments of charity, then we are embodiments of evil! There is no "in between" state. Discuss the New Church concept that there is no continuum from good to evil.

Charity 102 we are *containers* of charity— the charity itself is the Lord's alone. A good illustration here might be to get some water glasses, and use them to illustrate the human mind. It is empty –until the Lord inflows with His life. (Pour water into the glasses.) Does the water belong to the glasses? Without our building any vessels in our minds, the Lord's life will simply pour out and not be received. If we turn away from the Lord, it's like turning our glasses upside down, and they are no longer capable of receiving **any** life from the Lord.

Charity 107 a person becomes a container of charity when the good of the will and the truths of the understanding are **united in the person**. Good is of the will, and truth is of the understanding. There is an interesting treatment here about light and heat.

Charity 114 may be the answer to why we love to be around some people— especially older people. Our lives give out the sphere of our inner person. So someone who is an embodiment of charity will have a loveliness about them that shines from the inside. "By their fruits shall you know them."