

Lesson 11: CHARITY AND RECREATIONS

Doctrine of Charity, chapter 11

Introductory Ideas for the Eleventh Lesson

This chapter speaks of the necessity for relaxing the mind from its daily work so that it can be refreshed. It compares lack of recreation to a bow that is always stretched, or food that loses its saltiness. (A good illustration of this point might be to bring some salt-free food to class and have the students sample it. You could compare it to a salted food and discuss which tastes better (*i.e.* salted and unsalted peanuts, salted and unsalted potato chips, *etc.*) A good visual is a rubber band that has been stretched for a long time so that it no longer has any spring. Here are a few starter questions:

1. What part to “fun” things (recreational activities) play in our spiritual development and lives?
2. Is it important for us to “play?” Why or why not.

You may wish to have a class party this week. Bring some games, snacks, music to listen to, or a funny short movie to watch. If you have an outdoor-loving group, take a walk with the class. Find something that the students will think is relaxing and fun to illustrate the point made here.

Some Key Points in Chapter 11:

Charity 189 gives many examples of activities that are recreations.

Charity 190 discusses the need for diversions of charity. As an illustration of how our minds become focused so much on one thing that they cannot be “unbent,” try doing an experiment with the students. Provide white paper with a strong outline shape on it in one of the primary colors (red, yellow, blue). Stare at that shape for a long time. Then try to look away. What do you see? The students should report seeing the same shape in their vision that is the opposite color on the color wheel (*i.e.* red will see green, yellow will see purple, blue will see orange). It will be everywhere they look for a number of seconds. Compare this experience to what it is like when we are so focused on our work that we see nothing else around us.

Charity 191 makes an important point: A person’s pleasures are in keeping with the character of their mind. What can we find out about the character of our minds when we have free time and are looking for something fun to do?

The remaining numbers in the chapter speak about the different kinds of motivations people have and what they are spiritually like. There are also some graphic pictures of what some of these kinds of people are like after death. Sometimes the people in these illustrations can seem like “other” people, but there are times when we all lapse into states like that. Encourage the students to consider times in their lives when they may have behaved like some of these people. The key is to encourage the students to examine their own motivations.