

GOOD WILL  
AND  
GOOD ACTIONS

*An Excerpt from*  
TRUE CHRISTIANITY

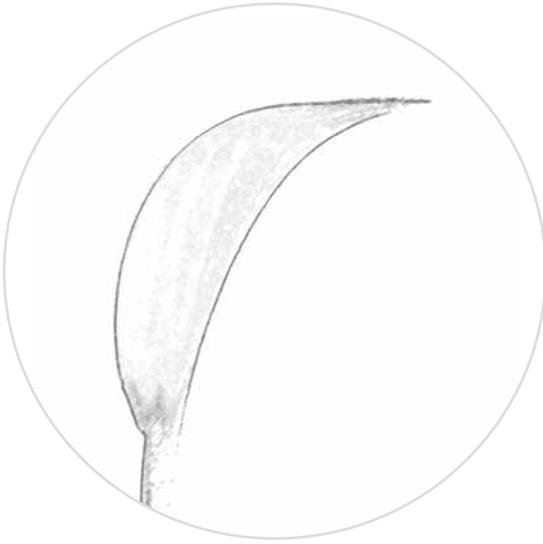


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## ABOUT TRUE CHRISTIANITY

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*True Christianity* (1771) was the last book that Swedenborg published; in the months following its publication, his health went into decline, and he died in 1772. Its Latin subtitle describes the work as “a comprehensive theology of the new church,” which might be misleading. It is not a summary of all Swedenborg’s teachings, or surely it would have included chapters on life after death and marriage; but it is a bold statement of the new church position on fourteen key topics in Protestant (and especially Lutheran) theology of the time.

Note that the “new church” he mentions here does not refer to an earthly institution, although the church founded by followers of Swedenborg later became known as the New Church. Rather, Swedenborg was envisioning a new spiritual era for humanity as a whole, and a completely new kind of Christianity.

Swedenborg probably began work on *True Christianity* in late 1768 while in Amsterdam. In the spring of 1769, he

learned that two good friends of his in Sweden were on trial for heresy for promoting his writings. Although Swedenborg was widely known to be the author of the works in question, he had published them abroad and for the most part anonymously; Sweden's strict censorship laws forbade publishing or teaching anything that contradicted the doctrines of the Lutheran state church.

A comparison of a projected outline of *True Christianity* published in 1769 with the final work as printed in 1771 suggests that Swedenborg substantially revised the work as a response to this attack: he expanded the chapters on the Trinity, retitled a chapter on the Ten Commandments to include a reference to the Catechism, added chapters on repentance and assignment of spiritual credit or blame, and deleted chapters on the nature of heaven and hell. All of these changes were geared very specifically toward addressing the key issues in Protestant thought at that time, particularly in the Lutheran church. *True Christianity*, in other words, was Swedenborg's response to his critics in Sweden and elsewhere—a statement of his inner convictions that in places is defiant.

*True Christianity* covers a wide range of issues, drawing in part from Swedenborg's previous works. The first chapter, on God as Creator, contains material first presented in *Divine Love and Wisdom*; the second, fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters discuss topics first presented in Swedenborg's short works *The Lord*, *Sacred Scripture*, *Life*, and *Faith*. Other portions are a fresh presentation of topics covered in other works, including chapters on freedom of choice, regeneration, and the rites of baptism and Communion.

The following excerpt was taken from a chapter on goodwill, a concept that in some editions is referred to as "charity." This chapter immediately follows the one on faith, and Swedenborg emphasizes that faith and goodwill are mutually dependent—good deeds that are not motivated by a genuine love of others

are empty, while faith in God that is not expressed in actions is not true faith.

*Note that this excerpt was edited for length; a series of asterisks indicates where a section was removed.*





## *Goodwill (or Loving Our Neighbor) and Good Actions*

HAVING addressed faith, we now turn to goodwill, because faith and goodwill are united, just as truth and goodness are united. And truth and goodness are united like light and heat in springtime. I say this because spiritual light, which is the light that emanates from the sun in the spiritual world, is essentially truth. Therefore wherever the truth appears in that world it shines with a brightness that depends on how pure the truth is. The spiritual heat that emanates from that sun is essentially goodness. I state this because the same things apply to goodwill and faith that apply to good and truth. Goodwill is all the forms of good that we do for our neighbor combined. Faith is all the forms of truth that we think about God and about divine things combined.

Since the truth that comes from faith is spiritual light and the goodness that comes from goodwill is spiritual heat, it follows that spiritual heat and light have properties similar to those of physical heat and light. Just as everything on earth blossoms when heat and light are united on earth, so everything in the human mind blossoms when heat and light are united in it. There is a difference, however: on earth the heat and light that cause blossoming are physical, but in the human mind the heat and light that cause blossoming are spiritual. Because the latter is a spiritual blossoming, it leads to wisdom and intelligence.

In addition to a similarity, there is also a correspondence between the two forms of heat and light. Therefore in the Word a human mind that contains goodwill united to faith and faith united to goodwill is compared to a garden. In fact, this is the meaning of the Garden of Eden (the truth of this has been fully shown in *Secrets of Heaven*, published in London).

It is also important to realize that if there were no discussion of goodwill following the discussion of faith, the true nature of faith would be incomprehensible since, as I have said and

shown in the previous chapter, faith without goodwill is not faith; goodwill without faith is not goodwill; and neither of them is living unless it comes from the Lord, §§355–361. Also, the Lord, goodwill, and faith form a unity in the same way our life, our will, and our intellect form a unity; if we separate them, each one crumbles like a pearl that is crushed to powder, §§362–367. And furthermore, goodwill and faith come together in good actions, §§373 and following.

It is an abiding truth that faith and goodwill cannot be separated if we are to have a spiritual life and be saved. The truth of this is understandable to everyone, even people without the refinement of a costly education.

Suppose someone says, “People who live good lives and have proper beliefs are saved.” No one could hear that without seeing it with an inner perception and therefore agreeing to it intellectually. Suppose someone says, “People who believe the right things but do not live good lives are also saved.” Any people who heard this statement would reject it from their intellect as they would remove a piece of dirt that had fallen in their eye. Their inner perception would immediately cause them to think, “People cannot have good beliefs when they do not live good lives. What would those beliefs be except a painted model of faith rather than a living image of it?”

Likewise, if people were to hear, “Those who live good lives but have no beliefs are saved,” they would turn this over a few times and then perceive and think that this does not make sense either. They would think, “Every good thing that is truly and intrinsically good comes from God; therefore living a good life comes from God. A good life without beliefs, then, is like clay in a potter’s hand that can be molded into forms that are only useful in the earthly kingdom, not in the spiritual kingdom.” Besides, there is an obvious contradiction in these statements, especially if you put them side by side: people are saved if they have beliefs but do not live good lives, and people are saved if they live good lives but have no beliefs.

What it is to live well, which is an aspect of goodwill, is partly known, partly unknown these days—people know what it is to live a good earthly life but not what it is to live a good spiritual life. Therefore I need to cover this point, inasmuch as it is an aspect of goodwill. The discussion will be broken into a series of individual topics.

*There Are Three Universal Categories of Love:  
Love for Heaven; Love for the World; and Love for Ourselves*

WE are starting with these three categories of love because they are universal and fundamental to all types of love and because goodwill has something in common with each of the three.

*Love for heaven* means love for the Lord and also love for our neighbor. Love for heaven could be called love for usefulness, because both love for the Lord and love for our neighbor have usefulness as their goal.

*Love for the world* is not only love for wealth and possessions but also love for all the things that the world provides that please our physical senses: beauty pleases our eye, harmony pleases our ear, fragrances please our nose, excellent food pleases our palate, soft touches please our skin. It also includes beautiful clothes, spacious accommodations, and social groups to belong to—all the pleasures that we get from these and many other things.

*Love for ourselves* is not only a love for respect, glory, fame, and status but also a love for seeking and getting high positions and becoming a leader.

Goodwill has something in common with each of these categories of love, because goodwill is by definition a love for usefulness of all kinds. Goodwill wants to do what is good for our neighbor, and *goodness* is the same as *usefulness*. Each of the categories of love just mentioned have usefulness as their goal: love for heaven has the goal of being useful in spiritual ways; love for the world has the goal of being useful in earthly ways, which

could also be called forms of civil service; and love for ourselves has the goal of being useful in physical ways, which could also be labeled benefits at home for ourselves and our loved ones.

The next part of this discussion [§§403–405] will show that these three categories of love are in each one of us from creation and by birth; when they are prioritized in the right way they improve us, but when they are not prioritized in the right way they damage us. At present it is enough to mention that these three loves are prioritized in the right way when our love for heaven plays the part of the head; our love for the world, the part of the chest and abdomen; and our love for ourselves, the part of the lower legs and feet.

As I have mentioned several times before [§§34, 42, 69, 147, 186, 296], the human mind is divided into three regions. From our highest region we focus on God; from our second or middle region we focus on the world; and from our third or lowest region we focus on ourselves. Because our mind has this structure, it can be lifted up or can lift itself up to focus on God and heaven; it can be spread out or spread itself out in every direction to focus on the world and its nature; and it can be lowered down or can lower itself down to focus on the earth and hell. In these respects physical sight emulates mental sight—physical sight too can look up, around, and down.

The human mind is like a three-story house with stairs that provide transitions between levels. There are angels from heaven living on the top floor, people of the world on the middle floor, and demons on the bottom floor. People for whom these three categories of love have been prioritized in the right way can go up or down whenever they want. When they go up to the top floor, they are like angels among the angels there. When they go down to the middle floor, they are like angelic people with the people there. When they go even farther down, they are like worldly people with the demons there—they give the demons instructions, confront them, and tame them.

When these three categories of love are properly prioritized in us, they are also coordinated in such a way that the highest love, our love for heaven, is present in the second love, our love for the world, and through that in the third or lowest love, our love for ourselves. In fact, the love that is inside steers the love that is outside wherever it wants. Therefore if a love for heaven is present in our love for the world and through that in our love for ourselves, with each type of love we accomplish useful things that are inspired by the God of heaven.

In operation these three loves function like the will, the intellect, and action: the will flows into the intellect, where it finds the means of producing action. There will be more on these last points in the next part of the discussion [§§403–405], which shows that if these three loves are prioritized in the right way, they improve us, but if they are not prioritized in the right way, they damage us and turn us upside down.

To present the points that follow in this chapter in such a way that they can be seen clearly (not to mention the points in chapters to follow on free choice [§§463–508], reformation and regeneration [§§571–625], and so on), I first need to present some points on *the will and the intellect; goodness and truth; love in general; love for the world and love for ourselves in specific; our outer and inner selves; and people who are merely earthly and sense-oriented.*

These points will be brought to light so that when readers see the things that come later, their rational sight will not feel as if it were in a fog, rushing along city streets until it had no idea of the way home. What is theology without understanding or with an intellect that remains unenlightened while we read the Word? It is like having a lamp in our hand but not lighting the candle inside it, like the lamps held by the five foolish young women who had no oil. Therefore these individual topics will be taken up in sequence.

1. *The will and the intellect.*

(a) There are two faculties that constitute our life. One is called the will, the other the intellect. They are distinct from each other, yet they were created to be one. When they are one, they are called “the mind.” Therefore they are the human mind, where all of our life has its first beginnings, from which life then comes into our body.

(b) Just as everything in the universe—everything that is in the divine design—relates to goodness and truth, so everything in us relates to our will and our intellect. Goodness in us belongs to our will and truth in us belongs to our intellect. In fact, these two faculties or “lives” within us are vessels and abodes for goodness and truth. Our will is the vessel and abode for all things related to goodness, and our intellect is the vessel and abode for all things related to truth. Forms of good and truth exist nowhere else inside us. And since forms of good and truth exist nowhere else, love and faith do not exist anywhere else either, since love relates to goodness and goodness relates to love, and faith relates to truth and truth relates to faith.

(c) The will and the intellect also constitute our spirit. That is where our wisdom and intelligence, our love and goodwill, and our life in general reside. The body is merely an obedient servant.

(d) Nothing is more important to know than how the will and the intellect become a single mind. They become a single mind the way goodness and truth become one. The marriage between the will and the intellect is in fact similar to the marriage between goodness and truth. As will be shown in the next passage, which concerns goodness and truth, the nature of this marriage is that goodness is the underlying reality of a thing and truth is the resulting manifestation of the thing. Therefore in us our will is the underlying reality of our life and our intellect is the resulting manifestation of our life, because the goodness in our will takes shape and presents itself to be seen in our intellect.

## 2. *Goodness and truth.*

(a) Everything in the universe that is in the divine design relates to goodness and truth. Nothing that exists in heaven or on earth does not relate to these two. The reason is that both goodness and truth emanate from God, the source of all things.

(b) Clearly then it is necessary for people to know what goodness is, what truth is, how they relate to each other, and how the one is united to the other. This is especially necessary for the people of the church. As everything in heaven relates to goodness and truth, so does everything in the church, since the goodness and truth of heaven are also the goodness and truth of the church.

(c) The divine design is that goodness and truth are to be united, not separated. They are to be one thing, not two. They are united when they emanate from God, and they are united in heaven. Therefore they should be united in the church. In heaven the union of goodness and truth is called “the heavenly marriage.” All who are in heaven have this marriage. This is why heaven is compared to a marriage in the Word, and the Lord is called Bridegroom and Husband while heaven is called Bride and Wife, as is the church. Heaven and the church are called this because the people in heaven and in the church receive divine goodness in their truths.

(d) All the intelligence and wisdom that angels have comes from this marriage. None of it comes from goodness that is separate from truth or truth that is separate from goodness. The same is true for people of the church as well.

(e) Since the union of goodness and truth is like a marriage, goodness clearly loves truth and truth loves goodness in return. Each one desires to be united to the other. People of the church who do not have this love or desire do not have the heavenly marriage. The church is not yet in them, since a union of goodness and truth constitutes the church.

(f) There are many kinds of goodness. In general there is goodness that is spiritual and goodness that is earthly. Both

types come together in goodness that is genuinely moral. Just as there are different types of goodness, there are different types of truth, since truth belongs to goodness and is the form of goodness.

(g) The situation with goodness and truth has an opposite in evil and falsity. As everything in the universe that is in the divine design relates to goodness and truth, so everything that is against the divine design relates to evil and falsity. As goodness loves to be united to truth, so evil loves to be united to falsity and the reverse. As the union of goodness and truth gives birth to all intelligence and wisdom, the union of evil and falsity gives birth to all insanity and foolishness. If you look deeply at the union of evil and falsity, you will see that it is not a marriage but an act of adultery.

(h) The fact that evil and falsity are the opposite of goodness and truth makes it clear that truth cannot be joined to evil and that goodness cannot be joined to the falsity that comes from evil. If truth is joined to evil it becomes false and no longer true because it has been falsified. If goodness is joined to the falsity that comes from evil the goodness becomes evil and no longer good because it has been contaminated. Falsity that does not come from evil, however, can be joined to goodness.

(i) No people who are focused on evil and falsity as a result of their convictions and their lives are able to know what goodness and truth are, because they believe that their evil is good and their falsity is true. On the other hand, all who are focused on goodness and truth as a result of their convictions and their lives are able to know what evil and falsity are, because all goodness and truth are essentially heavenly, but all evil and falsity are essentially hellish; and everything heavenly is in the light but everything hellish is in the dark.

### 3. *Love in general.*

(a) Our love is our very life itself. The nature of our love determines the nature of our life and in fact our entire nature as

a human being. Our dominant or leading love, however, is the love that constitutes us.

Our dominant or leading love has many other loves; they are derived from it in a hierarchy beneath it. No matter how these other loves may look or seem, each one of them is part of our leading love. With it they make one government, so to speak. Our dominant love is like the monarch and leader of the rest: it guides our other loves and uses them as intermediate purposes through which it focuses on and aims for its goal. Both directly and indirectly, this goal is the primary and ultimate objective for them all.

(b) The focus of our dominant love is what we love above all else. What we love above all else is constantly present in our thinking, because it is in our will and ultimately constitutes our life.

For example, if we love wealth above everything else, whether that means money or property, we are constantly contemplating how to get more. When we do get more we are profoundly overjoyed. When we lose wealth we are profoundly grief-stricken. Our heart is in it.

If we love ourselves above all else, we keep ourselves in mind at all times. We think about ourselves, talk about ourselves, and act for our own benefit, because our life is a life of self.

(c) Our purpose is what we love above all else. We focus on it in each and every thing we do. It exists in our will like a hidden current in a river that moves and carries things along, even when we are doing something else, because it is what motivates us. It is the factor that people look for and identify in others; then they use it either to influence the others or to cooperate with them.

(d) Our nature is completely shaped by the dominant force in our lives. That force is what differentiates us from other people. If we are good, our heaven is created to accord with it. If we are evil, our hell is created to accord with it. It is our will,

our self, and our nature. It is the underlying reality of our life. It cannot be changed after we die, because it is our true self.

(e) For each of us, all our pleasure, joy, and happiness comes from our dominant love and depends on it. This is because whatever we love we say is enjoyable, since we feel it that way. What we think about but we do not love we are also capable of calling enjoyable, but it is not the central enjoyment of our life. What our love enjoys we experience as good, and what our love does not enjoy we experience as evil.

(f) There are two types of love that act as a source for all forms of goodness and truth. There are two types of love that act as a source for all forms of evil and falsity. The two loves that originate all forms of goodness and truth are love for the Lord and love for our neighbor. The two loves that originate all forms of evil and falsity are love for ourselves and love for the world. When the latter two loves are dominant, they are completely opposite to the former two loves.

(g) Love for the Lord and love for our neighbor are the two loves that constitute heaven in us, as I said. They are the dominant types of love in heaven. Since they constitute heaven in us, they also constitute the church in us.

The two loves that originate all forms of evil and falsity, which as I said are love for ourselves and love for the world, constitute hell in us, since they are the dominant types of love in hell. Therefore they also destroy the church in us.

(h) The two types of love that originate all forms of goodness and truth, which are the types of love in heaven, open and form our inner spiritual self, because that is where these loves reside. The two types of love that originate all forms of evil and falsity, which as I have said are the types of love in hell, close and destroy our inner spiritual self when they are dominant. They make us earthly and sense-oriented, depending on how extensively and powerfully dominant they are.

4. *Love for ourselves and love for the world in specific.*

(a) Love for ourselves is wanting good things for ourselves

alone and not wanting good things for others unless we benefit—not even if the others are the church, our country, any human community, or other people who live in the area. Love for ourselves also entails doing something good for others only if it benefits our own reputation, honor, and glory. If we do not see these benefits in the good things we are doing for others, we say at heart, “What’s the point? Why should I do this? What’s in it for me?” and we no longer bother to do them. Clearly then, if we are wrapped up in loving ourselves we do not love the church, our country, our community, other people in our area, or anything else that is truly good. We love only ourselves and our own things.

(b) When we are not focusing on our neighbor or the public in the things that we think about and do, let alone the Lord, we are wrapped up in loving ourselves. We are thinking only about ourselves and our own people. To put it another way, this is our nature when everything we do is for ourselves and our own people; if we do anything for the public, we do it only to look good; if we do anything for our neighbors, we do it only so they will like us.

(c) I say “for ourselves *and our own people*” because if we love ourselves we also love our own people—specifically our own children and grandchildren, and generally all the people around us whom we call our own. Loving them is the same as loving ourselves, because we look at them as if we were looking at ourselves and we see them in relation to ourselves. “Our own people” also includes all the people who praise us, respect us, and look up to us. The rest may look human to our physical eyes, but with the eyes of our spirit we more or less see them as phantoms.

(d) Love for ourselves is what we have if we despise our neighbors in comparison with ourselves. It is what we have if we think of people as our enemies because they do not favor, revere, or adore us. We are deeper in this love if we hate and persecute our neighbors for feeling that way. And we are deeper

still in this love if we have a burning desire for revenge against our neighbors and long for their destruction. If we have this nature, we eventually love to be savage.

(e) We can see the nature of love for ourselves by comparing it with heavenly love. Heavenly love is a love for usefulness because it is useful; it is a love for the good things that we do for our church, our country, human society, and people in our area because they are good things to do. If, however, it is for our own sake that we love usefulness and good actions, we love them only as our drudges, because they serve us. Therefore if we love ourselves, we want our church, our country, human communities, and the people around us to serve us; we do not want to serve them. We place ourselves above them; we put them beneath ourselves.

(f) Furthermore, the more we have a heavenly kind of love (we love actions that are useful and good and are moved with heartfelt pleasure when we do them), the more we are led by the Lord. This heavenly kind of love is the kind of love the Lord has; it is the kind of love that comes from him.

The more we love ourselves, the more we are led by ourselves and by our own self-centeredness. Our self-centeredness is nothing but evil. It is our hereditary evil. It is loving ourselves more than God and loving the world more than heaven.

(g) The nature of love for ourselves is that the more the reins are let out—that is, the more its external constraints are removed, which are a fear of the law and its penalties and a fear of losing our reputation, respect, advantage, position, and life—the more our love for ourselves rushes on, until it wants to control not only the entire planet but also heaven and even God himself. It never has a limit or an end.

This limitless desire for control lies hidden within all people who are in love with themselves, although it is not visible to the world as long as the reins and constraints just mentioned hold them back. The nature of all people like this is that whenever

further progress upward becomes impossible for them, they stay where they are until moving up becomes possible again. This explains why people who love themselves like this are unaware that there is an insane and limitless obsession hiding inside them.

No one can avoid seeing the truth of this, however, when looking at powerful people and monarchs—people who lack reins, constraints, and impossibilities. They rush on and overpower whole provinces and countries as long as they keep succeeding. They aspire to power and glory beyond all limits. This is particularly the case with people who extend their domain into heaven and transfer all the Lord's divine power to themselves. They always crave more.

(h) There are two kinds of ruling power: one comes from love for our neighbor; the other comes from love for ourselves. They are opposite to each other. If we have ruling power because we love our neighbors, we want what is good for all. We love nothing more than being useful and serving others. Serving others is doing good and useful things for them because we wish them well. This is what we love to do and what gives pleasure to our heart. In this case, the more we are promoted to high positions, the happier we are, not because of the high positions but because of the useful things we can then do with a wider scope and greater magnitude. This is the nature of ruling power in the heavens.

On the other hand, if we have ruling power because we love ourselves, we want what is good for no one except ourselves and our own. The useful things we do are for our own honor and glory. As far as we are concerned, honor and glory are the only really useful things. If we serve others, it is for the purpose of being served and honored and having power. We pursue high positions not for the good things we could do but to have importance and glory and the heartfelt pleasure they bring us.

(i) The particular love for ruling power that people have had stays with them after their life in the world. People who

had power because they loved their neighbor are entrusted with power in the heavens. In that situation, they do not have the power: the good and useful causes they love have the power. And when good and useful causes have the power, the Lord has the power.

People who had ruling power in the world because they loved themselves are thrown out of office after their life in the world comes to an end. They are then forced into slavery.

The points above make it now possible to recognize which people have love for themselves. It does not matter how they seem in outer form, whether haughty or obsequious. The attributes discussed above are in their inner selves, and the inner self is hidden from most other people. Their outer selves are taught to pretend to love the public and their neighbors—the opposite of what they feel. This too they do for their own sake. They are aware that loving the public and their neighbors deeply affects people and increases people’s respect for them. This strategy works because heaven flows into a love for the public and for one’s neighbor.

(j) The evil qualities generally found in people who love themselves are contempt for others, jealousy, unfriendliness toward people who do not favor them; a resulting hostility; and various kinds of hatred, vengefulness, guile, deceit, ruthlessness, and cruelty. Where you find evils like this, you also find contempt for God and for the divine things that are the true insights and good actions taught by the church. If such people honor these things, their respect is only verbal, not heartfelt. Because evils like these are present, related falsities are also present, since falsities come from evils.

(k) *Love for the world*, on the other hand, is wanting to redirect other people’s wealth to ourselves with whatever skill we have. It is putting our heart in riches and letting the world distract us and steer us away from spiritual love (love for our neighbor) and heaven. We have a love for the world if we long

to redirect other people's possessions to ourselves by various methods, especially if we use trickery and deception, and have no concern for how our neighbor is doing. If we have this type of love, we have a strong and growing craving for good things other people have. Provided we do not fear the law or losing our reputation, we take people's things away, and in fact rob people blind.

(l) Yet love for the world is not as opposite to heavenly love as love for ourselves is—the evils hidden in it are not as enormous.

(m) Love for the world takes many forms. It can be a love we have for wealth in order to be promoted to higher positions. It can be a love for honor and high position for the sake of increasing our wealth. It can be a love for wealth for the sake of various benefits that gratify us in the world. It can be a love for wealth for the sake of wealth itself: this kind is miserly. And so on. Our purpose in gaining the wealth is the use we hope to get out of it. This purpose or use determines the quality of the love. The nature of any love is the nature of the purpose it has; everything else about it serves as a means.

(n) To summarize, love for ourselves and love for the world are completely opposite to love for the Lord and love for our neighbor. Therefore love for ourselves and love for the world, as I have just described them, are hellish loves. In fact, they rule in hell. They also create a hell in us.

Love for the Lord, however, and love for our neighbor are heavenly loves. In fact, they rule in heaven. They also create a heaven in us.

##### 5. *Our inner and outer selves.*

(a) We have been created to be in the spiritual world and the physical world at the same time. The spiritual world is where angels are. The physical world is where people are. Because we have been created that way, we have been given an inner and an outer level: an inner level so we can be in the spiritual world

and an outer level so we can be in the physical world. The inner level is called our inner self, and the outer level is called our outer self.

(b) Everyone has an inner and an outer self, but they are different in good people than in evil people. The inner level of good people is in heaven and its light. Their outer level is in the world and its light; and the light of heaven within them illumines the light of the world. Their inner and outer levels are united like cause and effect or like something prior and something subsequent. With evil people, however, their inner level is in hell and its light. Compared to heaven's light, the light of hell is pitch darkness. The outer level of evil people can be in the same light that good people are in. Therefore they are upside-down. This explains how evil people are capable of speaking and teaching *about* faith, goodwill, and God, but not *from* faith, goodwill, and God the way good people can.

(c) Our inner self is called our spiritual self because it is in the light of heaven, a light that is spiritual. Our outer self is called our earthly self because it is in the light of the world, a light that is earthly. People whose inner level is in the light of heaven and whose outer level is in the light of the world are spiritual on both levels, since spiritual light from within enlightens their earthly light and makes it its own. The reverse is true for evil people.

(d) The inner self that is spiritual is actually an angel of heaven. Even while it is alive in our body, it is in a community with angels, although it does not realize that. After it is released from the body, it comes to live among those angels. The inner self among evil people, however, is a satan. Even while it is living in our body, it is in a community with satans. After it is released from the body, it comes to live among those satans.

(e) In people who are spiritual, the inner parts of their mind are actually raised up toward heaven, because heaven is their predominant focus. In people who are merely earthly, however, the inner parts of their mind are turned away from

heaven toward the world, because the world is their predominant focus.

(f) People who have only a general concept of the inner and outer self believe that the inner self is the part that thinks and wills while the outer self is the part that speaks and acts, since thinking and willing are internal while speaking and acting are external. One thing is important to realize, however. When we are thinking and willing good things in relation to the Lord and all that is the Lord's, and when we are thinking and willing them in relation to our neighbor and all that is our neighbor's, then our thinking and willing are coming from an inner self that is spiritual. This is so because they are coming from true faith and a love for what is good. On the other hand, when we have evil thoughts about the Lord and our neighbor and evil intentions toward them, then our thinking and willing are coming from an inner self that is hellish, because they are coming from a false faith and a love for what is evil. Briefly put, the more we focus on loving the Lord and our neighbor, the more spiritual our inner self is. From that inner self we think and will, and from it we even speak and act as well. On the other hand, the more we focus on loving ourselves and the world, the more our thinking and willing come from hell, although we speak and act otherwise.

(g) The Lord has provided and arranged that the more our thinking and willing come from heaven, the more our spiritual self opens and adapts. This opening is an opening to heaven, all the way to the Lord; and this adaptation is an adaptation to things that are in heaven.

On the other hand, the more our thinking and willing come from the world, not heaven, the more our inner spiritual self closes and our outer self opens and adapts. This opening is an opening to the world and this adaptation is an adaptation to the things that are in hell.

(h) People whose inner spiritual selves have opened to heaven and the Lord are in the light of heaven. They have

enlightenment from the Lord and a resulting intelligence and wisdom. They see truth from the light of truth. They sense what is good from a love for what is good.

People whose inner spiritual selves have closed, however, do not know what the inner self is. They do not believe in the Word, life after death, or anything related to heaven or the church. Because they have a light that is merely earthly, they believe that nature arises from itself, not from God. They see what is false as true and sense what is evil as good.

(i) The inner and outer levels discussed here are the inner and outer levels of our spirit. Our body is only an element added on the outside as a container for all the above. Our body does nothing on its own—it acts on behalf of the spirit that is inside it.

It is important to know that after our spirit parts company with our body, it still thinks, wills, speaks, and acts. Thinking and willing remain our inner level and speaking and acting then become our outer level.

6. *People who are merely earthly and sense-oriented.*

Only a few know what “sense-oriented people” are and what they are like, even though it is an important thing to know. Therefore I will describe them.

(a) “Sense-oriented people” are people who judge everything on the basis of their physical senses—people who will not believe anything unless they can see it with their eyes and touch it with their hands. What they can see and touch they call “something.” Everything else they reject. Sense-oriented people, then, are earthly in the lowest way.

(b) The inner levels of their mind, levels that see in heaven’s light, are closed inside people like this to the point where they see nothing true related to heaven or the church. This is because their thinking occurs on an outermost level and not inside, where the light is spiritual.

(c) Since the light they have is dense and earthly, people like this are inwardly opposed to things related to heaven and

the church, although they are outwardly able to speak in favor of them. If things related to heaven and the church give these people ruling power, they are even capable of speaking ardently in favor of them.

(d) Sense-oriented people are able to reason sharply and skillfully, because their thinking is so close to their speech as to be practically in it—almost inside their lips; and because they attribute all intelligence solely to the ability to speak from memory.

(e) Some of them can defend whatever they want. They have great skill at defending things that are false. After they have defended falsities convincingly, they themselves believe those falsities are true. They base their reasoning and defense on mistaken impressions from the senses that the public finds captivating and convincing.

(f) Sense-oriented people are more deceptive and ill-intentioned than others.

(g) The inner areas of their mind are foul and filthy because they use them to communicate with the hells.

(h) The inhabitants of hell are sense-oriented. The deeper in hell they are, the more sense-oriented they are. The sphere of hellish spirits is connected to our sense impressions through a kind of back door.

(i) Sense-oriented people do not see anything that is genuinely true in the light. Instead, on every topic they debate and argue whether it is so. From a distance their arguments sound like the grinding of teeth. The sounds of teeth grinding are actually the result of falsities colliding with each other, and falsity and truth in collision as well. This makes it clear what “the grinding” or “gnashing of teeth” means in the Word. Teeth correspond to reasoning based on mistaken impressions from our senses.

(j) The educated and the scholarly who are deeply convinced of falsities—especially people who oppose the truths in the Word—are more sense-oriented than others, although

that is not how they seem to the world. People who are sense-oriented are the foremost developers of heresies.

(k) For the most part, hypocrites, deceitful people, hedonists, adulterers, and misers are sense-oriented.

(l) The ancients had a term for people who debate on the basis of sense impressions alone and speak against genuine truths in the Word and the church: they called them serpents of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Sense impressions mean things that impinge on our physical senses and are experienced by those senses. This point leads to a number of others:

(m) We are in touch with the world by means of sense impressions and with heaven by means of impressions on our rationality, which transcend sense impressions.

(n) Sense impressions supply things from the physical world that serve the inner realms of the mind in the spiritual world.

(o) There are sense impressions that feed the intellect: they are various earthly objects that are labeled “material.” There are sense impressions that feed the will: they are called the pleasures of the senses and the body.

(p) Unless our thought is lifted above the level of our sense impressions, we have very little wisdom. Wise people think above the level of sense impressions. When our thinking rises above sense impressions, it enters a clearer light and eventually comes into the light of heaven. From this light we get the awareness of truth that constitutes real intelligence.

(q) The ancients knew how to lift their minds above sense impressions and take their minds away from them.

(r) If sense impressions have the lowest priority, they help open a pathway for the intellect. We then extrapolate truths by a method of extraction. On the other hand, if sense impressions have the highest priority, that pathway is closed and truths are not visible to us except as if they were in a fog or in the dark of night.

(s) For wise people, sense impressions have the lowest priority and are subservient to things that are deep inside. For unwise people, sense impressions have the highest priority and are in control. This type of person can truly be called sense-oriented.

(t) There are sense impressions that we have in common with animals and sense impressions that we do not have in common with animals. The more we lift our thinking above sense impressions, the more human we are. Without acknowledging God and living by his commandments, however, none of us can lift our thinking above sense impressions and see the truths that relate to the church. It is God who lifts and enlightens us.

*When the Three Universal Categories of Love Are  
Prioritized in the Right Way They Improve Us;  
When They Are Not Prioritized in the Right Way  
They Damage Us and Turn Us Upside Down*

FIRST I will say something about the prioritization of the three universal categories of love: love for heaven, love for the world, and love for ourselves. Then I will talk about the inflow and integration of one into the other. Finally I will discuss the effect of their prioritization on our state.

These three loves relate to each other as do the three areas of the body: the highest is the head; the middle is the chest and abdomen; and our thighs, lower legs, and feet make up the third. When our love for heaven constitutes the head, our love for the world constitutes the chest and abdomen, and our love for ourselves constitutes the lower legs and feet, then we are in the perfect state we were created to be in. In this state the two lower categories of love serve the higher category the way the body and everything in it serves the head.

Therefore when a love for heaven constitutes the head, this love flows into our love for the world, which is chiefly a love for

wealth, and takes advantage of that wealth to do useful things; our love for heaven also flows through our love for the world into our love for ourselves, which is chiefly a love for having a high position, and takes advantage of that high position to do useful things. Therefore an inflow from one love into the next allows the three categories of love to join forces in order to do useful things.

Surely everyone realizes that when people intend to do useful things because they are moved by spiritual love coming from the Lord (which is what “love for heaven” means), their earthly self uses its wealth and other goods to achieve those useful things, and their sense-oriented self carries them out as part of its position and derives honor from so doing.

Surely everyone also realizes that all the things we do with our body we do from the state of mind in our head. If our mind has a love for acts of service, our body uses its limbs to perform acts of service. Our body will do this because our will and intellect have their primary structures in our head and the derivations of those primary structures in our body, so that our will is present in what we do and our thinking is present in what we say.

Likewise the reproductive impetus in a seed affects each and every part of a tree and uses those parts to produce pieces of fruit as its acts of service. Or for another example, fire and light inside a clear container make the container hot and bright. In people whose three categories of love have been prioritized in the right and proper way, their mind’s spiritual sight and their body’s physical sight are translucent to the light that flows in through heaven from the Lord, just as a pomegranate is translucent all the way through to the center where the seeds are stored.

Something comparable is meant by the following words of the Lord: “Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is whole, that is, good, your entire body is full of light” (Matthew 6:22; Luke 11:34).

No one whose reason is sound could condemn wealth. Wealth in the general body politic is like blood in us. No one whose reason is sound could condemn the levels of status that go with different jobs—they are the monarch's hands and the pillars of society, provided a spiritual love for status takes priority over an earthly and sense-oriented love for it. In fact, there are government positions in heaven and there is status that goes with them; but because the people who fill these positions are spiritual, the thing they love the most is to be useful.

We take on a completely different condition if love for the world or for wealth constitutes the head, meaning that this is our dominant love. Then love for heaven leaves the head and goes into exile in the body. People who are in this state prefer the world to heaven. They do indeed worship God, but they do so from a love that is merely earthly, a love that leads them to take credit for all their acts of worship. They also do good things for their neighbor, but they do them to get something back in return.

In the case of people like this, heavenly things are like the clothes in which they strut about, garments that we see as shining but angels see as drab. When love for the world inhabits our inner self and love for heaven inhabits our outer self, then love for the world dims all things related to the church and hides them as if they were behind a piece of cloth.

Love for the world or for wealth comes in many forms, however. It gets worse the closer it approaches to miserliness. At the point of miserliness the love for heaven becomes dark. This love also gets worse the closer it approaches to arrogance and a sense of superiority over others based on love for oneself. It is not as detrimental when it tends toward wasteful indulgence. It is even less damaging if its goal is to have the finest things the world has to offer, like a mansion, fine furniture, fashionable clothing, servants, horses and carriages in grand style, and things like that. With any love, its quality depends on the goal that it focuses on and intends to reach.

Love for the world and for wealth is like a dark crystal that suffocates light and breaks it only into colors that are dull and faded. It is like fog or cloudiness that blocks the rays of the sun. It is also like wine in its first stages—the liquid tastes sweet, but it upsets your stomach.

From heaven's point of view, people like this look hunch-backed, walking with their head bent down looking at the ground. When they lift their head toward the sky, they strain their muscles and quickly go back to looking downward. The ancient people who were part of the church called people of this kind "Mammons." The Greeks called them "Plutos."

If, however, love for ourselves or love of power constitutes the head, then love for heaven goes down the body to the lower legs. The more this love grows, the more love for heaven moves through the ankles into the feet. If love for ourselves grows even more, love for heaven passes through the shoes and is trampled.

There is a love for power that comes from loving our neighbor and a love for power that comes from loving ourselves. People who have a love for power that comes from loving their neighbor are ambitious for power for the purpose of benefiting both the general public and individual citizens. In the heavens, in fact, power is entrusted to people like this. [2] If emperors, monarchs, and generals who were born and raised to be leaders humble themselves before God, they sometimes have less self-love than people who come from a lowly family and whose pride makes them long for superior status over others.

On the other hand, people who have a love for power that comes from loving themselves use love for heaven as their footstool. They put their feet on it in view of the crowd. If there is no crowd in sight, they either toss it in the corner or throw it out the door. Why? Because they love only themselves. As a result, they plunge the willing and thinking of their minds into

self-absorption. Self-absorption is in fact a hereditary evil; it is the polar opposite of love for heaven.

If we have a love for power that comes from loving ourselves, we also have evils that accompany that love. They are generally the following: despising others, jealousy, viewing people as our enemies if they do not show us special favor, hostility, hatred, vengefulness, mercilessness, savagery, and cruelty. Despising God is another such evil, as is despising the divine things that are the true insights and good actions taught by the church. If we give these things any honor, we only pay them lip service to prevent the church hierarchy from attacking our reputation and to stave off verbal abuse from everyone else.

Love for power is different for the clergy than it is for the laity. In the clergy this love surges upward, as long as it is given the reins, until they want to be gods. Lay people, on the other hand, want to be monarchs. That is how far the imagination of that love takes their minds.

In spiritually well-developed people, love for heaven occupies the highest place and constitutes the head of what follows it; love for the world is beneath it and is like the torso below the head; love for themselves is below this love in the role of the lower legs. It follows then that if love for ourselves constitutes the head, we are completely upside-down. In that case we look to the angels like people sleeping with their heads on the ground and their rear ends up in the air. When people like this are worshipping, they look as if they are frolicking on all fours like panther cubs. Furthermore, they look like various kinds of two-headed creatures—the head on top has the face of a wild animal, while the other below it has a human face that is continually pushed down from above and forced to kiss the ground.

All people of this type are sense-oriented. They are like the people described above in §402.

*All Individual Members of Humankind Are the Neighbor  
We Are to Love, but [in Different Ways] Depending  
on the Type of Goodness They Have*

WE are not born for our own sake; we are born for the sake of others. That is, we are not born to live for ourselves alone; we are born to live for others. Otherwise society would not be cohesive and there would be no good in it.

There is a common saying that we are all neighbor to ourselves. The body of teaching on goodwill, however, shows how we should understand this. We are all supposed to provide ourselves with the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, a place to live, and many other things that are required by the civic life in which we participate. And we provide these things not only for ourselves but also for our loved ones, not only for the present but also for the future. If we do not provide ourselves with the necessities of life, we are in no state to practice goodwill, because we lack everything.

How we are to be neighbors to ourselves, however, can be shown through the following analogy: We should all provide our bodies with food. This has to come first, but the goal is to have a sound mind in a sound body. We also ought to provide our mind with its food, that is, things that build intelligence and judgment; but the goal is to be in a state in which we can serve our fellow citizens, our community, our country, the church, and therefore the Lord. People who pursue this goal are providing well for themselves to eternity.

These points make clear what is primary from the standpoint of time and what is primary from the standpoint of purpose. What is primary from the standpoint of purpose is the true overall goal.

This situation is like people building a house. They have to lay the foundation first, but the foundation is for the house, and the house is for living in. People who hold being neighbors to

themselves as their first and foremost objective are like people whose main purpose is building the foundation rather than living in the house. Yet living in the house is the primary and ultimate purpose overall; the house and its foundation are only a means to an end.

Now I need to say what it is to love our neighbor. Loving our neighbor is intending and doing good not only to neighbors, friends, and good people but also to strangers, enemies, and evil people. But we exercise goodwill in our dealings with the latter in different ways than we do in our dealings with the former. We exercise goodwill in our dealings with our neighbors and friends by benefiting them directly. We exercise goodwill in our dealings with our enemies and evil people by benefiting them indirectly through our warnings, corrective action, punishments, and therefore efforts to improve them.

This could be illustrated as follows. Judges who punish wrongdoers because it is the just and legal thing to do have love for their neighbor. By so doing the judges are straightening out the wrongdoers and are caring for people in the area by preventing the wrongdoers from doing them harm.

Everyone knows that parents who punish their children for doing what is wrong are showing them love; and on the other hand, parents who do not punish their children for doing what is wrong are showing love for evil traits in their children, which has nothing to do with goodwill.

For another example, suppose someone under the attack of an enemy repels the attacker and either strikes in self-defense or turns the attacker over to a judge to avoid being harmed. Say the victor maintains an intention nonetheless of becoming the attacker's friend. Then the victor is acting on the strength of goodwill. Even wars for the purpose of keeping the country and the church safe are not against goodwill. The ultimate purpose shows whether a given act is an expression of goodwill or not.

Fundamentally speaking, goodwill is wanting what is best for others. This desire resides in the inner self. When people of goodwill resist an enemy, punish a guilty person, or discipline evil people, clearly they do so through the medium of their outer selves. Therefore after the situation comes to an end, they go back to the goodwill that is in their inner selves. As much and as usefully as they can, they then wish the others well and benefit those others in a spirit of goodwill.

People who have genuine goodwill have a passion for what is good. In their outer selves that passion can look like rage and blazing anger, but it dies away and becomes calm as soon as their opponents come back to their senses. It is very different for people who have no goodwill. Their passion is a rage and a hatred that heat and ignite their *inner* selves.

Before the Lord came into the world, almost no one knew what the inner self was or what goodwill was. That is why in so many passages the Lord teaches love and goodwill. This is a distinguishing feature between the Old Testament or Covenant and the New.

In Matthew the Lord teaches that we are to do good to our adversaries and enemies and have goodwill toward them:

You have heard the statement made to the ancients,  
“You are to love your neighbor and hate your enemy.”  
But I am saying to you, love your enemies, bless the  
people who are cursing you, do good to the people who  
are hating you, and pray for the people who are hurting  
you and persecuting you, so that you may be children  
of your Father who is in the heavens. (Matthew 5:43,  
44, 45)

To Peter, who was asking how many times he should forgive someone who was sinning against him—whether he should give forgiveness as many as seven times—the Lord answered,

I do not say as many as seven times, but as many as seventy times seven. (Matthew 18:21, 22)

I have also heard from heaven that the Lord forgives everyone's sins and never takes revenge or even assigns spiritual credit or blame, because he is love and goodness itself. Yet for all that, our sins are not washed away. Nothing washes our sins away except repentance. Since the Lord told Peter to forgive up to seventy times seven instances of sin, at what point would the Lord stop forgiving us?

Since goodwill resides in the inner self, where benevolence is felt, and then extends into the outer self, where good actions occur, it follows that people's inner selves are what we should love; and we should love their outer selves on the basis of their inner selves. Therefore we are to love people according to the type of goodness they have inside. It is the goodness itself, then, that is actually our neighbor.

The following situations may serve as illustration: When we choose ourselves a household manager out of three or four candidates, or we hire a servant, we investigate that person's inner self. We choose someone who is honest and faithful and prefer that candidate because of those qualities.

The same is true for monarchs or government officials. Out of three or four candidates, they select someone suitable for the job and reject the unsuitable, no matter whose looks they prefer or what the candidates say or do to win them over.

Everyone is our neighbor, and people come in an infinite variety. Since we need to love them all as our neighbor for the type of goodness they possess, clearly there are genera and species of loving our neighbor, as well as higher and lower degrees of that love.

Since the Lord is to be loved above all else, it follows that the degrees of our love for our neighbors depend on their love for the Lord, that is, on the amount of the Lord or the amount

from the Lord that our neighbors possess in themselves. That is also the amount of goodness they possess, since all goodness comes from the Lord.

Nevertheless, since these degrees are within people's inner selves and these are rarely obvious to the world, it is enough to love our neighbor by the degree of goodness that we are aware of.

Now, these degrees are clearly perceived after death, since there the feelings in our will and the thoughts in our intellect form a spiritual sphere around us that others can sense in various ways. In this world, however, this spiritual sphere is absorbed by our physical body and is contained in the physical sphere that pours out around us.

The Lord's parable about the Samaritan shows that there are degrees of love for our neighbor. The Samaritan had mercy on the person who had been wounded by robbers—a person whom both the priest and the Levite had seen and yet passed by. When the Lord asked which of the three seemed to have been a neighbor, the reply was “the one who had mercy” (Luke 10:30–37).

We read that we are to love the Lord God above all things, and our neighbor as ourselves (Luke 10:27). To love our neighbor as ourselves means not despising our neighbors in comparison with ourselves. It means treating them justly and not judging them wrongfully. The law of goodwill pronounced and given by the Lord himself is this:

Whatever you want people to do for you, do likewise for them. This is the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31, 32)

This is how people who love heaven love their neighbor. People who love the world, however, love their neighbor on a worldly basis for a worldly benefit. People who love themselves love their neighbor in a selfish way for a selfish benefit.

*The Neighbor We Are to Love Is Humankind on a  
Wider Scale in the Form of Smaller and  
Larger Communities and Humankind in the  
Aggregate as a Country of Such Communities*

PEOPLE who do not know what “our neighbor” really means think that it simply means an individual human being; benefiting that human being is loving our neighbor. Yet our neighbor, and love for our neighbor, also extends more widely than that—in fact it rises as the number of people increases.

Surely everyone understands that loving many people in a group involves more love for our neighbor than loving an individual member of that group. Therefore smaller and larger communities are also our neighbor, because they are a plurality of people. It follows that someone who loves a community loves the individuals who are part of that community; someone who wishes a community well and gives benefit to it cares for its individuals.

A community is like a person. In fact, the people who make up the community form a single body, in a sense. They are differentiated from each other like the parts of a single body. When the Lord looks at the earth, he sees an entire community as an individual person; the form of that individual person is based on the qualities of the people in the community. The Lord gives this sight to angels as well. In fact, I have been allowed to see a community in heaven completely in the form of an individual person; the person had the same proportions as people in the world.

Love for a community is a fuller form of love for our neighbor than love for a single individual. This is clear from the fact that high positions are given to people according to their previous leadership of large groups. They have a level of status according to the job they do. In the world, in fact, positions in a hierarchy are considered to be higher or lower based on

how wide a governmental responsibility these positions have over other people. The monarch is the person who has the widest government of all. Each person gets pay, glory, and general admiration according to the scope of the position and also the useful functions performed.

But in this day and age, leaders may be useful and care for a community and still not love their neighbor. They perform functions and show concern for the sake of the world or themselves in order to deserve, or look as if they deserve, promotion to higher positions. Although these people may not be identified as such in the world, they are identified as such in heaven. People who have performed useful services out of love for their neighbor are put in leadership positions over a heavenly community as well; there they have splendor and honor. Yet still they do not take that splendor or honor to heart, just the usefulness. The rest, however, who were useful because they loved the world or themselves, are rejected.

Feeling love for our neighbor and acting on that love on an individual basis is one thing. Doing so on a plural or community basis is another. The difference between them is like the difference between the role of a citizen, the role of an official, and the role of a leader. It is also like the difference between the person who traded with two talents and the person who traded with ten (Matthew 25:14–30). It is like the difference between the value of a shekel and the value of a talent. It is like the difference between the product of a grapevine and that of a whole vineyard, the product of an olive tree and that of an olive plantation, the product of a single tree and that of a whole fruit garden. Love for our neighbor also rises higher and higher within us, and as it rises, we love our community more than we love an individual and we love our country more than we love our community.

Now, because goodwill consists of wanting what is best for others and being of benefit to them, it follows that it is to be practiced in very similar ways toward a community as toward an individual person. We are to treat a community of good people differently than we treat a community of evil people. With the latter group, goodwill is to be practiced according to earthly impartiality; toward the former group, according to spiritual impartiality. But I will say more on these two kinds of impartiality elsewhere.

Our country is our neighbor more than our community is, because our country consists of many communities. Love for our country is therefore broader and higher. Loving our country is also loving the well-being of the general public.

Our country is our neighbor because it is like a parent. We were born in it. It has nourished us and continues to nourish us. It has kept us safe from harm and continues to do so.

We are to do good to our country with love according to what it needs. Some of its needs are earthly and some are spiritual. Its earthly needs center on its civic life and order. Its spiritual needs center on its spiritual life and order.

We are to love our country not merely as much as we love ourselves; we are to love it more. There is a law written on the human heart that gives rise to the statement all just people say when they are in imminent danger of dying because of an enemy or some other cause. They say that it is a noble thing to die for their country. They say that it is a glorious thing for soldiers to shed their blood for their country. They say this because that is how much one ought to love one's country.

It is important to know that if people love their country and benefit it because they wish it well, they love the Lord's kingdom after death. The Lord's kingdom is their country at that point. And those who love the Lord's kingdom love the Lord, since the Lord is everything to all his kingdom.

*On an Even Higher Level, the Neighbor We Are  
to Love Is the Church, and on the Highest Level,  
Our Neighbor Is the Lord's Kingdom*

WE are born for eternal life and are introduced into it by the church. Therefore we are to love the church as our neighbor on an even higher level [than we love our country]. The church teaches us the means that lead to eternal life and introduces us into that life. It leads us to eternal life by means of the true things in its body of teaching. It introduces us to that life through good ways to live.

This does not mean that we are to love the priesthood to a special degree or love the church on the priesthood's account. We are to love the church's goodness and truth, and love the priesthood on account of this goodness and truth. The priesthood only serves; it is to be honored according to its service.

We are to love the church as our neighbor on a higher level, even beyond our country, because our country initiates us into civic life but the church initiates us into spiritual life. Spiritual life is what sets us apart from a merely animal life.

What is more, our civic life is temporary. It comes to an end. Once it is over, it is the same as if it had not existed. Our spiritual life, on the other hand, is eternal, because it has no end. Spiritual life has a quality of reality therefore that civic life does not have. The difference between them is like the difference between what is finite and what is infinite—there is no ratio between them. Eternity is an infinity of time.

The Lord's kingdom is the neighbor to which we are to give the highest level of our love, because the Lord's kingdom means the church across the entire world, also known as "the communion of saints." It includes heaven as well.

People who love the Lord's kingdom love all in the whole world who acknowledge the Lord, have faith in him, and have goodwill toward their neighbor; they also love all who are in heaven. People who love the Lord's kingdom love the Lord

above all else. They have more love for God than others do. This is because the church in the heavens and on earth is the Lord's body. They are in the Lord and the Lord is in them. Loving the Lord's kingdom, then, is fully loving their neighbor. People who love the Lord's kingdom not only love the Lord above all else; they also love their neighbor as themselves. Love for the Lord is a universal love. It affects every aspect of spiritual life and also every aspect of earthly life. This is because love for the Lord dwells in the highest reaches of us, and things at the top flow into things lower down and bring them to life in the same way that our will flows into all our intentions and actions, and our intellect flows into all our thoughts and conversations. Therefore the Lord says,

Seek first the kingdom of the heavens and its justice.  
Then all these things will be added to you. (Matthew  
6:33)

The kingdom of the heavens is the Lord's kingdom, as the following passage in Daniel shows:

Behold, there was someone coming with the clouds of heaven—someone like *the Son of Humankind*. He was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom. All people, nations, and tongues will worship him. His dominion is a dominion of an age that will not pass and his kingdom is one that will not perish. (Daniel 7:13, 14)

***Loving Our Neighbor Is Not in Fact Loving the Person  
but Loving the Goodness That Is inside the Person***

SURELY everyone knows that people are not people because they have a human face and body—they are people because they have wisdom in their intellect and goodness in their will. The higher the quality of this wisdom and goodness, the more human the people are.

When people are born they are more brutish than any animal. They become human through being instructed. If they are responsive to the instruction, a mind forms within them. People are human because of their mind, depending on its particular nature.

There are animals that have faces that are close to human, but they have no faculty for higher understanding or for taking any action on the basis of that understanding. They act on an instinct that is activated by their earthly love. One difference between animals and people is that animals express in sound the feelings belonging to their love, while people speak their feelings as transferred into thought. Animals turn their faces downward and look at the ground, while people look at the sky in all directions, their faces lifted up.

From these points we can draw the following conclusion: the more we base what we say on sound reasoning and the more we focus on the time we will spend in heaven, the more human we are. Conversely, the more we base what we say on twisted reasoning and focus only on the time we are to spend in the world, the less human we are. In the latter case, we are still human, but only potentially rather than actually, since all people have the power to understand things that are true and to intend actions that are good. Even if we have no intention of doing what is good or understanding what is true, we nonetheless retain the ability to ape and mimic human qualities on the outside.

The reason goodness is our neighbor is that goodness belongs to our will and the will is the underlying reality of our life. Truth is our neighbor, too, but only to the extent that it emanates from something good in our will. Goodness that belongs to the will takes shape in our intellect and visibly presents itself there in the light of reason.

All our experience shows that goodness is our neighbor. We love people for the quality of their will and intellect, that is, the goodness and justness in them. For example, we love monarchs, princes, generals, officials, consuls, civic leaders, and judges for

the judgment they show in their words and actions. We love church leaders, ministers, and their assistants for their knowledge, integrity of life, and passion for the well-being of souls. We love army generals and commanders under them for their fortitude and prudence. We love retailers for their honesty. We love workers and servants for their faithfulness. For that matter, we love a given species of tree for its fruit; the soil for its level of fertility; a stone for its preciousness; and so on.

Strange as it may seem, it is not just honest people who love goodness and justness in others. Dishonest people do too, because they do not fear losing reputation, respect, or wealth at the hands of honest people. The love that dishonest people have for goodness is not love for their neighbor, however—dishonest people do not inwardly love any others outside themselves unless those others serve them somehow.

Loving goodness in another person from goodness in ourselves is genuine love for our neighbor. In that situation the two goodnesses embrace and form a partnership.

People who love what is good because it is good and love what is true because it is true have supreme love for their neighbor, because they love the Lord who is goodness itself and truth itself. Love for goodness, love for truth, and love for our neighbor come from nowhere else. Love for our neighbor, then, has a heavenly origin.

It is the same thing whether you say “goodness” or “usefulness.” Therefore doing good things is doing useful things. The amount and quality of usefulness that a given good thing has determines the amount and quality of its goodness.

*Goodwill and Good Actions Are Two Distinct Things:  
Wishing People Well and Treating Them Well*

ALL people have an inner level and an outer level. Their inner level is called the inner self and their outer level is called the outer self. Nevertheless, someone who does not know what the

inner and outer selves are could believe that our inner self is the source of our thinking and willing and our outer self is the source of our speaking and action. These are indeed inner and outer aspects of us, but they do not constitute the essence of our inner and outer selves. The human mind is indeed commonly held to be the inner self, but in actuality the mind is divided into two regions. One of the regions is spiritual; it is higher and farther within. The other is earthly; it is lower and farther outside. Our spiritual mind focuses principally on the spiritual world. It deals with the things in that world, whether they are the kind that exist in heaven or the kind that exist in hell. (Both kinds are in the spiritual world.) The earthly mind, on the other hand, focuses principally on the earthly realm. It deals with the things in this world, whether good or evil.

All our action and speaking emanates from the lower region of our mind through a direct route. Ultimately, however, it comes from the higher region of our mind, although the route is indirect because the lower region is closer to the senses in our body, while the higher region is farther away from them. This division within our mind exists because we have been created to be spiritual and earthly at the same time, and therefore to be human, not animal.

These points make it clear that people who focus primarily on themselves and worldly things are external people. They are earthly not only in body but also in mind. People who focus primarily on things that relate to heaven and the church are internal people. They are spiritual in both mind and body. They are spiritual in body as well because their actions and words come from their higher mind, which is spiritual, through their lower mind, which is earthly. (As people generally know, effects come from our body, while the causes that produce those effects come from our mind; the cause shapes every aspect of the effect.)

It is obvious that the human mind has been divided in this way from the fact that people are able to pretend, to flatter, to

be hypocritical, or to playact. They can agree with what someone else is saying and nevertheless view it as ridiculous. They do the former in their lower mind, the latter in their higher one.

These things enable us to see how we are to understand the statement that goodwill and good works are two distinct things: wishing people well and treating them well. That is, they are formally distinct, like the mind that does the thinking and willing and the body through which the mind speaks and acts. In fact, they are essentially distinct as well, because the mind itself is divided into an inner region that is spiritual and an outer region that is earthly, as I said just above.

Therefore if the things we do come from our spiritual mind, they come from wishing others well, or goodwill. If, however, they come only from our earthly mind, they come from a form of wishing others well that is not genuine goodwill. It can appear to be goodwill in its outer form and yet not be genuine goodwill in its inner form. Goodwill that exists in an outer form alone does indeed present the look of goodwill, but lacks its essence.

This point could be illustrated by an analogy with seeds in the ground. Every type of seed gives rise to a shoot, but those shoots are either useful or useless, depending on their species. The same is true for spiritual seed, that is, for truth in the church that comes from the Word. A body of teaching grows out of this truth—a useful body of teaching if it is made out of genuine truths, a useless one if it is made out of truths that have been falsified. The same thing applies to goodwill that is exercised as the result of wishing our neighbors well, whether we wish them well for our own sake or for a worldly reason or for the sake of our neighbor in a narrower or a broader sense. If we wish our neighbors well for our own sake or for a worldly reason, our goodwill is not genuine. If we wish our neighbors well for their sake, our goodwill is genuine. See many statements that address these topics in the chapter on faith,

especially in the discussion showing that “goodwill” is benevolence toward others; that “good works” are good actions that result from benevolence (§374); and that goodwill and faith are transient and exist only in our minds unless, when an opportunity occurs, they culminate in actions and become embodied in them (§§375–376).

*Goodwill Itself Is Acting Justly and Faithfully  
in Our Position and Our Work  
and with the People with Whom We Interact*

GOODWILL itself is acting justly and faithfully in our position and our work, because all the things we do in this way are useful to the community; and usefulness is goodness, and goodness in an impersonal sense is our neighbor. As I have shown above [§§412–414], our neighbor is not only individual people but also our community and the country as a whole.

For example, if monarchs lead the way for their subjects by setting an example of doing good, if they want their people to live by the laws of justice, if they reward people who live that way, if they give all people the consideration they deserve, if they keep their people safe from harm and invasion, if they act like parents to their countries, and take care for the general prosperity of their people—these monarchs have goodwill in their hearts. The things they do are good actions.

Priests who teach truths from the Word and use truths to lead to a goodness of life, and therefore to heaven, are practicing goodwill in very important ways, because they are caring for the souls of the people in their church.

Judges who make decisions on the basis of justice and the law, and not because of bribery or because someone is their friend or relative, are caring for the community and for the individual—for the community, because their decisions influence it

to stay obedient to the law and fearful of breaking it, and for the individual, because their decisions allow justice to triumph over injustice.

Business people who act with honesty and without fraudulence are caring for the neighbor they do business with. So are workers and craftspeople when they do their work uprightly and honestly rather than falsely or deceptively. The same goes for everyone else—for ship captains and sailors, for farm workers and servants.

This is goodwill itself because it can be defined as follows: goodwill is doing good to our neighbor daily and constantly—not only to our neighbor as an individual but also to our neighbor collectively. The only way to do this is through practicing goodness and justice in our position and work and with the people with whom we have any interaction, because these are things we do every day. When we are not doing them, they still stay in our minds all the time; we think about them and intend to do them.

People who practice goodwill in this way become better and better forms of goodwill. Justice and faithfulness shape their minds and the practice of goodwill shapes their bodies. Over time, because of their form, they get to the point where everything they want and think about relates to goodwill. In the long run, they become like the people mentioned in the Word who have the law written on their hearts [Jeremiah 31:33]. Such people also take no credit for what they are doing since they are not thinking about receiving credit for it; they are thinking about their duty. In their view, acting this way is the right thing for citizens to do.

Nevertheless, we are completely incapable of acting on the basis of spiritual justice and faithfulness *on our own*. We all inherit from our parents the trait of doing what is good and just for our own sake or for worldly reasons. None of us hereditarily does these things for the sake of goodness and justice.

Therefore only when people worship the Lord, and function from the Lord while they seem to be functioning on their own, do they attain spiritual goodwill and become saturated with it as the result of constant practice.

Many people behave justly and faithfully in their jobs, and yet although they are doing works of goodwill in this way, they still have no goodwill in themselves. Their love for themselves and for the world is in control rather than love for heaven. If love for heaven happens to be present at all, it is under their other loves like a slave under a master, like a foot soldier under a commander, like a doorkeeper standing by the door.

*Acts of Kindness Related to Goodwill Consist in Giving to the Poor and Helping the Needy, Although with Prudence*

IT is important to distinguish between work-related acts of goodwill and incidental acts of kindness. “Work-related acts of goodwill” means those practices of goodwill that come straight from goodwill itself, since goodwill itself is a function of the work that we do, as I have shown just above. “Acts of kindness,” however, refers to helpful acts that are done outside of our work.

They are called acts of kindness because we are free to do them as we please, and when we do them, the recipients see them as kindnesses and nothing else. We do them according to the reasons and intentions we have in mind as benefactors.

It is a common belief that goodwill consists solely of giving to the poor, helping the needy, caring for widows and orphans, and making contributions to build, enhance, and endow hospices, hospitals, hostels, orphanages, and especially church buildings. Many of these actions, however, are not integral to the exercise of goodwill; they are extraneous to it.

People who consider goodwill to be good deeds of these kinds cannot help taking credit for them. Although people may claim aloud that they do not want any credit for their good

deeds, nevertheless inside them lies the belief that they deserve credit. This is perfectly obvious after death when people like this list the things they have done and demand salvation as their reward. They are then investigated to find out what origin their actions had and what quality their actions possessed as a result. Whatever origin the actions had—whether they came from arrogance, or from a hunger for fame, or from a wish to be seen as generous, or from a desire to win friends, or from some merely earthly tendency, or from hypocrisy—they are judged on the basis of that origin, because the quality of the origin lies within the actions. Genuine goodwill, however, emanates from people who have become steeped in it through doing work based on justice and judgment without the goal of being repaid, in accordance with the Lord's words (Luke 14:12, 13, 14). People of genuine goodwill refer to the donations listed just above [not as goodwill itself but] as acts of kindness and also duties, although they are related to goodwill.

As is generally recognized, there are people who do acts of kindness that seem to the world like the very picture of goodwill, with the result that these people believe they have performed acts of genuine goodwill. They look at their own acts of kindness the way many Catholics look at indulgences that have absolved them of their sins. They believe heaven ought to be granted to them since they are regenerated as a consequence; yet in fact they do not consider acts of adultery, hatred, revenge, fraud, or fleshly craving of whatever kind to be sinful. They indulge in such acts whenever they like. But in that case, their good actions are like paintings of angels and devils at a party together, or like boxes made of lapis lazuli that have poisonous snakes inside them. It is completely different if people do the same acts of kindness but abstain from the evils just listed because these evils are the enemies of goodwill.

Nevertheless, doing kindnesses is enriching in many ways—especially giving to the poor and to people who are begging. By acts like these, young men and women, male and female

servants, and simple people of all kinds are initiated into the exercise of goodwill. These actions are outward habits that help the givers absorb the benefits of goodwill. They are the beginnings of goodwill; they are like fruit not yet ripened. For people who afterward develop proper concepts of goodwill and faith, these habits become like fruit fully ripe. People like this come to regard the things they used to do from simplicity of heart as things they are now obliged to do.

Nowadays, kindnesses like these are seen as the central acts of goodwill that are referred to in the Word as “good works.” The reason for this is that many times in the Word goodwill is characterized as giving to the poor, helping the needy, and taking care of widows and orphans. Up until now people have not known that the letter of the Word mentions only things that are external and are in fact the outermost aspects of worship; people have not realized that these external things have meanings that are spiritual and internal. On this last point, see the chapter above on Sacred Scripture (§§193–209). Those passages make it clear that mentions of the poor, needy, widows, and orphans in the Word do not [literally] refer to such people; they refer to people who are spiritually poor, needy, widowed, or orphaned. For “the poor” meaning people who have no concepts of goodness or truth, see *Revelation Unveiled* 209. For “widows” meaning people who have been separated from truths and yet long for them, see §764 there; and so on.

People who are born compassionate and yet do not make their earthly acts of compassion spiritual by doing them out of genuine goodwill tend to believe that goodwill is giving to any poor person and helping any needy person without first finding out whether the poor or needy person is good or evil. They say this is not necessary, because God notices only the helpful gesture and the act of mercy. After death, however, people like this are identified and completely separated from people who have done prudent kindnesses related to goodwill. The people who have done kindnesses based on a blind idea of goodwill do

just as many kindnesses for the evil as for the good. The evil use the kindnesses to do evil things and harm good people. In that case the benefactors share the responsibility for harming good people.

Doing an act of kindness for an evildoer is like giving bread to a devil; the devil will turn it into poison. All bread that is in the hand of a devil is poison. If it is not, the devil will turn it into poison by diverting the act of kindness to an evil purpose.

It is as if you handed your enemy a sword, and the enemy killed someone with it. It is as if you gave a shepherd's staff to a human wolf to bring the sheep into the pasture; yet the human wolf, staff in hand, drove the sheep away from the pasture into the wilderness and slaughtered them there. It is as if you gave leadership and control to a thief whose sole focus was keeping an eye out for things to steal; the thief would create rules and make decisions based primarily on the abundance and value of the loot.

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*The First Step toward Goodwill Is Removing Evils; the Second Step Is Doing Good Things That Are Useful to Our Neighbor*

AMONG teachings on goodwill the following point is primary: the first step toward goodwill is not to do evil to our neighbor. A secondary point is to do good to our neighbor. This is like a doorway to the teachings on goodwill.

As people generally know, evil dwells in the will of every human being from birth. Because all evil targets someone nearby or far away, including the wider community and the country, it follows that hereditary evil is evil against our neighbor on every scale.

On the basis of reason itself we can all see that the less we remove the evil that dwells in our will, the more the good we do is pregnant with that evil, because then evil exists inside the goodness like a kernel in a shell or the marrow in a bone.

Therefore although good things that someone does in that state appear to be good, they are nevertheless not good inside. They are like a shiny shell containing a nut that has been consumed by worms. They are like a white almond that has rottenness inside it, so that rotten streaks have crept up to the surface.

Intending evil and doing good are two things that are intrinsically opposite to each other. Evil comes from hatred for our neighbor and good comes from love for our neighbor. Or to put it another way, evil is an enemy to our neighbor and goodness is our neighbor's friend. The two cannot exist in a single mind, that is, there cannot be evil in our inner self and goodness in our outer self. If there were, the goodness on the outside would be like a wound that has been superficially treated, beneath which there lies the pus of an infection. We ourselves would then be like a tree whose roots are unsound; it produces pieces of fruit that outwardly look tasty and beneficial, although inwardly they are rotten and useless. Our good deeds would also be like pieces of rejected slag, superficially polished and beautifully colored, which are offered for sale as precious stones. Briefly put, these good deeds would be like the eggs of an owl mistaken for the eggs of a dove.

It is important to know that the good things people accomplish with the body come from the spirit or the inner self. The inner self is their spirit, which lives after death. Therefore when [evil] people cast away the body that formed their outer self, they are made up of nothing but their own evils. They enjoy these evils and steer away from goodness as a threat to the way they live.

The Lord teaches in many passages that we cannot do good things that are intrinsically good before evil has been removed from us:

Do people gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? A rotten tree cannot produce good fruit. (Matthew 7:16, 17, 18)

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees. You clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but the insides are full of plundering and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and the plate, so that the outside may become clean as well. (Matthew 23:25, 26)

And in Isaiah,

Wash yourselves. Remove the evil of your actions. Stop doing evil. Learn to do what is good; seek [good] judgment. Then if your sins had been like scarlet, they will become as white as snow. If they had been red as crimson, they will be like wool. (Isaiah 1:16, 17, 18)

This point can be illustrated further by analogies: Suppose someone keeps a leopard and a panther in an apartment and, as the one who feeds them, is able to live safely with them. No one else can visit unless their owner first removes these wild animals. Guests invited to the table of the king and queen would not forget to wash their faces and hands before attending. Anyone must first purify ore with fire and remove slag before getting pure gold or silver. Everyone separates the tares or weeds from the harvested wheat before taking it into the barn. Everyone cooks some of the juice out of raw meat before it becomes edible and is set on the table. Everyone knocks the grubs and caterpillars off the leaves of a tree in the garden to prevent them from devouring the leaves and causing a loss of fruit. Does any man love a young woman and propose to marry her if she is riddled with malignancies or covered all over with pustules and varicose veins, no matter how much she puts makeup on her face, wears gorgeous clothing, and makes an effort to be attractive by saying nice things and paying compliments?

The need for us to purify ourselves from evils, and not to wait for the Lord to do it without our participation, is like a servant coming in with his face and clothes covered in soot or dung, approaching his master and saying, "Lord, wash me." Surely his master would tell him, "You foolish servant! What

are you saying? Look, there is the water, the soap, and a towel. Don't you have hands? Don't they work? Wash yourself!"

The Lord God is going to say, "The means of being purified come from me. Your willingness and power come from me. Therefore use these gifts and endowments of mine as your own and you will be purified."

There is a belief nowadays that goodwill is just our doing good, and if we do that, we are not doing evil. The idea therefore is that the first step toward goodwill is to do good and the second step is not to do evil. This is completely upside-down, however. The first step toward goodwill is to remove evils and the second step is to do good, because there is a law that is universal to the spiritual world and also therefore to the physical world: The less evil we intend, the more good we intend. Therefore the more we turn away from hell (from which all evil ascends), the more we turn toward heaven (from which all goodness descends). The more we reject the Devil, then, the more we are accepted by the Lord. People cannot stand between the Devil and the Lord with a flexible neck and pray at the same time to each of them. People like this are those whom the Lord meant when he said,

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. It would have been better if you were cold or hot; but since you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot I am about to spew you out my mouth. (Revelation 3:15, 16)

Could anyone leading a troop of soldiers join a battle between two armies and fight on both sides at once? Can we focus on doing evil to our neighbors and also doing good to them? Would our evil not then lie hidden inside our good actions? Although evil that conceals itself does not appear in our actions, it is still obvious from many things when we reflect on it in the right way. The Lord says, "No servant can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and Mammon" (Luke 16:13).

Still, none of us can purify ourselves from evils by our own power and our own force. On the other hand, neither can we purify ourselves without having power and force as if they were our own. If we did not have apparent power, none of us could fight against the flesh and its cravings, although we have all been ordered to do so. In fact, we could not even think about battling them. We would let our mind go into evils of every kind. We would be held back from actually doing evils only by the laws of justice that have been passed in the world and the penalties they prescribe. Inside we would be like tigers, leopards, or snakes that utterly fail to reflect on the cruelty that their hearts enjoy.

Clearly then, because we are rational in a way that animals are not, we have to resist evils using the powers and abilities the Lord gives us, although as far as we can tell, those powers and abilities appear to be our own. The Lord gives us all this illusion in order to regenerate us, attribute goodness to us, forge a partnership with us, and save us.

*As Long as We Believe That Everything Good  
Comes from the Lord, We Do Not Take Credit  
for the Things We Do As We Practice Goodwill*

IT is damaging for us to take credit for things we do for the sake of our salvation. Hidden within our credit-taking there are evil attitudes of which we are unaware at the time: denial that God flows in and works in us; confidence in our own power in regard to salvation; faith in ourselves and not in God; [the delusion that] we justify and save ourselves by our own strength; contempt for divine grace and mercy; rejection of reformation and regeneration by divine means; and especially disregard for the merit and justice of the Lord God our Savior, which we then claim as our own. In our taking credit there is also a continual focus on our own reward and perception of it as our first

and last goal, a stifling and an extinction of love for the Lord and love for our neighbor, and total ignorance and unawareness of the pleasure involved in heavenly love (which takes no credit), while all we feel is our love for ourselves.

People who put their own reward as the first priority and salvation as the second, and therefore seek salvation as a reward, turn the proper arrangement upside down. They drown their inner desires in self-absorption and physically pollute them with evils belonging to their flesh. For this reason, goodness that we do to earn merit looks to the angels like a rust-colored plant disease, while goodness that we do not do to earn merit looks a rich purplish-red.

The Lord teaches in Luke that we are not supposed to do good for the purpose of getting a reward:

If you benefit people who benefit you, what grace do you have? Rather, love and benefit your enemies, and lend [to people] expecting nothing back. Then your reward will be large, and you will be children of the Highest, since he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.  
(Luke 6:33–36)

It is also taught in John that we cannot do anything truly good except from the Lord:

Live in me and I [shall live] in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it lives in the vine, neither can you unless you live in me, because without me you cannot do anything. (John 15:4, 5)

We cannot receive anything unless it is given to us from heaven. (John 3:27)

On the other hand, if people think about going to heaven and decide that they should therefore do what is good, this is not the same as making rewards their main goal or taking credit for their good deeds. People who love their neighbor as themselves

and love God above all else have these thoughts because they have faith in the Lord's words that their reward will be great in heaven (Matthew 5:11, 12; 6:1; 10:41, 42; Luke 6:23, 35; 14:12, 13, 14; John 4:36); that people who do good things are going to possess as an inheritance a kingdom prepared since the founding of the world (Matthew 25:34); and that all are paid back for what they have done (Matthew 16:27; John 5:29; Revelation 14:13; 20:12, 13; Jeremiah 25:14; 32:19; Hosea 4:9; Zechariah 1:6; and elsewhere). What these people have is not confidence in a reward because they deserve it; they have faith in the promise of grace.

The pleasure of doing good to their neighbor *is* their reward. The angels in heaven feel this pleasure. It is a spiritual pleasure that is eternal. It immeasurably surpasses every earthly pleasure. People who have this pleasure do not want to hear about getting credit—they love doing good and feel joy in it. It depresses them if someone thinks they are doing it to get something in return. They are like people who benefit their friends for friendship's sake; who benefit their siblings for their siblings' sake; who benefit their spouse and children for their spouse's and children's sake; who benefit their country for their country's sake—people whose actions are based on friendship and love. People who do these good things state with conviction that they did not do it for themselves; they did it for the others.

It is completely different for people who focus on getting a reward as the primary goal of what they do. They are like those who strike up a friendship to get money; they give gifts, do favors, and profess their love as if it were heartfelt, but when they do not get what they were hoping for, they turn their backs, drop the friendship, and join up with the other's enemies and detractors.

They are like wet nurses who breastfeed babies only for the money. While the parents are looking, they kiss the babies and

stroke them, but as soon as they are unsatisfied with the quality of the food they are given or do not get paid whatever they ask, they reject the babies, treat them roughly, beat them, and laugh at their crying.

They are like people who focus on their country because they love themselves and the world. They say they intend the country's well-being and are devoting their lives to it, but if they do not receive promotions and wealth as rewards, they bad-mouth the country and become allies with its enemies.

They are like shepherds who take care of sheep only because of the money. If they do not get their money on time, they take their staffs and drive the sheep off the pasture into the wilderness. Priests who perform their duties only for the stipend involved are like these shepherds. Clearly, they do not care at all about the salvation of the souls that are under their care and guidance.

It is the same with government officials who focus only on the status and the income from their job. When they do something good, it is not for the public good but for the pleasure they take in loving themselves and the world, which they inhale as the only form of good.

The same sort of attitudes are possible in any line of work. The goal or purpose is the determining factor throughout. If the means employed in a given pursuit fail to achieve the goal, they are abandoned.

People who are looking for the reward of salvation that they feel they deserve behave similarly. After death they demand heaven with tremendous confidence. Once it is discovered that they have no love for God or their neighbor, they are sent to teachers who instruct them about faith and goodwill. If they reject what they are taught, they are exiled to be with people like themselves, some of whom are enraged at God because they have not been given their rewards. They call faith a figment of the imagination.

These are the people who are meant in the Word by “hired workers,” who were given extremely menial jobs in the entrances to the Temple. From a distance [in the spiritual world] these people look as if they are splitting logs.

It is extremely important to realize that goodwill is closely linked to faith in the Lord. The quality of the faith determines the quality of the goodwill. For the point that the Lord, goodwill, and faith form a unity in the same way our life, our will, and our intellect form a unity, and that if we separate them, each one crumbles like a pearl that is crushed to powder, see §362 and following above. Also see the point that goodwill and faith come together in good actions, §§373–377. From those teachings it follows that the quality of our faith determines the quality of our goodwill; and the quality of our faith and goodwill combined determines the quality of our actions.

Now, if we believe that everything good that we do as if we are doing it on our own actually comes from the Lord, then we are the instrumental cause of that good and the Lord is its principal cause. These two causes seem to us to be one thing, but in fact the principal cause affects every aspect of the instrumental cause. It follows then that if we believe that everything truly good comes from the Lord, we do not take credit for what we do. The more developed this faith becomes in us, the more the Lord takes away our fantasies about getting credit for what we have done. In this state we can practice goodwill abundantly without a fear of taking credit. Eventually we sense the spiritual pleasure in goodwill. Then we become averse to taking credit because doing so is damaging to our life.

It is easy for the Lord to erase people’s idea that they deserve credit, provided those people attain goodwill primarily through working justly and faithfully in the position, business, or line of work they are in and with the people with whom they interact (see §§422, 423, 424 above). If, however, people believe that they attain goodwill through making charitable donations and

helping the needy, it is difficult to rid them of the idea that they deserve credit, because as they make those contributions their desire for reward and credit, although obvious to them at first, becomes less noticeable [to them] as time goes by.

*A Life of Goodwill Is a Moral Life That Is Also Spiritual*

WE all learn from our parents and teachers to live a moral life, that is, to behave like civil human beings. We learn to discharge the duties of an honorable life, which are related to the various virtues that constitute the essence of being honorable. We also learn to discharge these dutiful acts through the outward forms called manners. As we advance in age, we learn to add the exercise of rationality, and we use that rationality to enhance the morality of our life.

The moral life in youths up to early adulthood is earthly. After that it becomes increasingly rational. People who reflect on the question can see that a moral life is the same thing as a life of goodwill, which is behaving well to our neighbor and regulating our life to keep it from being contaminated with evils (as follows from the points made above in §§435–438). Nevertheless, in the first phase of our lives, our moral life is a life of goodwill on the outermost level, that is, only in the outward, most superficial part of our life, but not deeper within it.

There are four phases to our lives. We pass through them as we go from infancy to old age. The first phase is when our behavior follows other people's instructions. The second is when our behavior is our own, and our intellect restrains us. The third is when our will pushes our intellect and our intellect restrains our will. The fourth is when our behavior is deliberate and purposeful.

These phases of our lives are phases of the life of our spirit, however; they do not necessarily relate to our body. Our body can behave morally and speak rationally, and yet our spirit can

intend and think things that are the opposite of morality and rationality. It is clear from pretenders, flatterers, liars, and hypocrites that this is the nature of our earthly self. Clearly, people like this have a dual mind—their mind can be divided into two parts that do not agree.

It is different for people who have benevolent intentions and think rational thoughts, and as a result do good things and speak rationally. These are the type of people meant by “the simple in spirit” in the Word. They are called simple because they are not dual.

These statements clarify the proper meaning of the outer self and the inner self; they show that we cannot conclude from other people’s morality in their outer self that they have morality in their inner self. Their inner self could be turned in the opposite direction. It could be hiding the way a turtle hides its head in its shell or the way a snake hides its head in its coils. In that case their supposedly moral self is like a robber who spends time both in the city and in the woods; in the city the robber behaves like a moral person, but in the woods, like a thief.

It is completely different for people who are inwardly moral, whose spirit is moral, and who attained that nature by being regenerated by the Lord. Such people constitute the type meant by the phrase “spiritually moral.”

When our moral life is also spiritual, it is a life of goodwill, because the practices involved in a moral life and in a life of goodwill are the same. Goodwill is wishing our neighbors well and therefore treating them well. This is also a moral way of life. The following statement by the Lord is a spiritual law:

All things whatever that you want people to do for you,  
do likewise for them. This is the Law and the Prophets.  
(Matthew 7:12)

This same law is universally applicable to a moral life as well. But listing all the practices related to goodwill and comparing

them with the practices related to a moral life would require many pages. Just take six commandments from the second tablet of the Ten Commandments for an illustration—it is clear to everyone that they are principles for a moral life. (As for their containing all aspects of loving our neighbor, see §§329, 330, and 331 above.)

The following statement in Paul makes it clear that goodwill fulfills all the commandments:

Love each other, for those who love others have fulfilled the law. The commandments that you are not to commit adultery, you are not to kill, you are not to steal, you are not to bear false witness, you are not to covet, and anything else that has been commanded, are included in the following saying: “You are to love your neighbor as yourself.” Goodwill does not do evil to its neighbor. Goodwill is the fullness of the law. (Romans 13:8, 9, 10)

People who think only with their outer selves cannot help being astounded that the seven commandments on the second tablet were proclaimed by Jehovah on Mount Sinai in such a miraculous way, given that these same rules were legal principles of civic justice in all the countries on earth, including Egypt, where the children of Israel had just come from. No country can survive without these rules.

The reason why Jehovah proclaimed them, however, and wrote them with his own finger on tablets of stone was that they are rules not only for all civic communities and therefore rules for a moral earthly life, they are also rules for all heavenly communities and therefore rules for a moral spiritual life. Acting against these rules then is acting not only against other people but also against God.

If we could see what a moral life is in its essence, we would see that it is a life in accordance with human laws and divine

laws at the same time. Therefore people who live by both sets of laws as one law are truly moral and live a life of goodwill.

Anyone who wants to grasp the nature of goodwill is capable of doing so by looking at the nature of outward moral life. Just copy the outward moral life you have in civil interaction into your inner self so that your inner willing and thinking parallel the actions of your outer self, and you will see a model of goodwill.

