

CONTENTMENT

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Lessons: Psalm 139:1-18, Luke 12:22-34

Can you think of two things about the Lord our lessons were telling us about? Those two things are the Lord's providence and His omniscience. What that means is that the Lord knows all things about us. He knows everything there is to know about us. And He provides everything good that we need for our lives. Everything about us? Can He really know *everything* about us? Even those deepest, darkest thoughts we want to keep quiet? Yes, He knows even those things. Sometimes people think they can hide things from the Lord.

Swedenborg tells us in the book *Heaven and Hell* that some people who go to the other world have done some pretty bad things, and they did them secretly. Nobody knew about them (they thought!), but when they get to the other world and try to hide these bad things they once did, those deeds come out into the open. They can see them right before their eyes—maybe as if on television or in a movie. Other people can see them too.

There was one case where a man had secretly killed somebody. Nobody had known about it in this world, but it came out into the open in the other world. Every secret that we have—everything we do—is known by the Lord. It can't be *kept* secret from Him. As it says in the Psalm, "Even if I make my bed in hell, behold You are there." The Lord is *everywhere*.

Why does He know every little thing about us? The reason is that He loves us. He really loves us and He wants to know all things about us. He even wants to see the hidden things of our heart.

If you love somebody, you want to know about that person. If there's somebody you don't know very well or don't like very much, you don't want to know so much about him. But if there's somebody you love, then you want to know as much as you can about that person. Perhaps you have a doll and you like it, and you like to pretend you know all about that doll. You make up stories about it. Or if you have a toy army, you like to know all the things about it. What we love we also want to know about. This is why the Lord knows all the things of our heart—because He loves us so much.

So there is nothing we can really hide from the Lord. There is nothing really important that He will not give to us. Maybe we will not get it all at once, but if it's good for us He will help us if we look to Him and ask Him for it.

This is the reason the Ten Commandments teach us we should not covet anything that is our neighbor's, such as our neighbor's house, or wife, or his servants. To covet means to want it for your own. This doesn't mean you shouldn't see something you want and work for it. Maybe you can earn some money and work to get it; that would be good to do. But to want for yourself what other people have without working for it is coveting, and that's what the Lord said we shouldn't do. He knows all about us. He knows the things we need and the things that are really good for us. Those things He will bring to us in time.

You know, it's not in heaven that people are greedy. The angels love the life they have. They are happy with the many good things the Lord gives them. They could not covet, or want things that belong to other people. They are very content and are satisfied with all the good things they have. It's not in heaven that people are dissatisfied. It's in hell that people are greedy. In hell they never have what they want; they never get quite enough. Even if you give them a little bit more, they are never happy with it. They are always coveting, always wanting more.

We can be content with those things the Lord gives us. Remember—no two people are alike; everyone is a little bit different. Everybody has some things nobody else has. Your friends have things nobody else has, and you have some things they don't have. You also have some talents they don't have. What the Lord wants us to do is to take those good things we have and make the best of them. We can learn to use those good things for the best purpose we possibly can. We should enjoy them. They're not the same as anybody else's—they can't be. But they can be the things that make us happy. We need to accept those good things and be happy and make the best use of those things we do have. If we are going to become like the angels who are happy and content, then we should be happy and satisfied with what we have. And remember the Lord sees all things about us and knows all things we need.

The Lord is the only one who can give us good. There is no real good thing of the spirit we can ever have unless it comes from the Lord. So we look to Him and pray to Him and He will grant us blessings in His time. May we learn to be happy and content with the blessings He gives us!