

FOCUSING ON SPIRITUAL AND MORAL VALUES

Ideas from the Heavenly Doctrine

Suggestions on Ways to Use These Ideas from the Word

- Choose a passage to use as a tagline to your email messages to tweens, teens, and their parents.
- Create stationery for your group and incorporate one of these.
- Display one or more in the room where you gather with tweens and teens.
- Let your tweens or teens choose which passage to put on a bulletin board.

General Teachings About Moral and Spiritual Life

The universe was created for the sake of the human race, in order that from it an angelic heaven might be formed. Religion promotes and accomplishes this end, and religion is walking with God (see *Coronis* 40).

Moral virtues relate to the way people live. They also include spiritual virtues which spring from love toward God and love for the neighbor, and which flow together into those loves (see *Conjugal Love* 164).

Every one learns from parents and teachers to live morally, that is, to act the part of a good citizen, and to perform those honorable duties, pertaining to the various virtues, which are the essentials of honorable conduct. He learns to give outward expression to these essentials in what are called the proprieties of life; and as he grows in years, to add a rational appreciation to these, and so perfect his moral character (*True Christian Religion* 443).

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Our Relationship to the Lord

innocence humility faith love of religion trust

- A person lives a truly moral and civil life only when he lives it from a spiritual origin, that is, from religion (*Apocalypse Explained* 195).
- People who have genuine innocence attribute nothing of good to themselves, but to the Lord. Also, they wish to be led by Him (see *Heaven and Hell* 278).
- The laws of civil and moral life are to be lived as Divine laws from God (*Divine Providence* 322).

Our Relationship to the Neighbor

charity friendship kindness courtesy respect compassion

- The life of charity consists in thinking kindly of another and in wishing him well (*Arcana Coelestia* 2284:5).
- Good will is acting justly and faithfully with the people with whom we interact and in all that we do (see *True Christian Religion* 422).
- Mercy (or compassion) is the expression of love towards those who need help or are unhappy (*Arcana Coelestia* 3063).
- Reward for people who have charity is being able to do good, being allowed to do it, and the recipient's willing acceptance of it (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3956).

Being Helpful to Others

useful service diligence prudence responsibility

- Being useful means serving others so that we can express love for them and love for the Lord, rather than for our own purposes (see Luke 6:35; *True Christian Religion* 67).
- To perform useful services is to act honestly, justly, and faithfully in the work of one's occupation (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 431).
- When people who are perceptive have feelings of compassion they know that they are being alerted by the Lord to offer help (*Arcana Coelestia* 6737).

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Having a Good Attitude

courage *generosity* *gratitude* *hope* *patience* *self-control*

- Courage is the ability to stand alone to resist evil, yet knowing that the Lord is there giving the power to resist.
- Gratitude means acknowledging that everything good you have comes from outside of yourself, from God and by means of other people.
- Peace holds within itself trust in the Lord, the trust that He governs all things and provides all things, and that He leads towards an end that is good (*Arcana Coelestia* 8455:1,2).
- “Blessed are the meek...” (Matthew 5:5). Meekness toward the neighbor means exercising self-control, even when provoked.

Standing Up for Truth

honesty *sincerity* *reliability* *justice* *fairness* *having conscience*

- Loving the neighbor is doing what is good and just, and acting honestly from the heart, in every function and in every work (*Heaven and Hell* 481).
- Integrity consists in the heartfelt desire for another person's good within everyday life, and propriety is acting with integrity in what you say and do (see *Arcana Coelestia* 4574:3).
- Conscience formed by the truths of faith a person learns from the Word, depending upon how he receives them in his heart (see *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 131).

Morality in Relation to Marriage

modesty *respect* *chastity* *humility*

- Truly conjugal love with its delights comes only from the Lord and is given to those who live according to His commandments (*Conjugal Love* 534).