

Food for Thought

The Life of Faith

Love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor are the life of faith.
(see *Arcana Coelestia* 2343:6)

Charity toward the neighbor is a key aspect of the life of faith. Read quotes below to help you reflect on what is meant by the word “charity”.

By charity is meant the good that a person does to the neighbor (*Doctrine of Charity* 202).

The works of charity consist in each person doing what is right and fair in his employment, from a love of what is good and true (see *Arcana Coelestia* 4783:5).

Charity is a person's spiritual life (*Last Judgment* 39:12).

Real charity is dealing fairly and faithfully in whatever position, business or work one is in, because everything a person so does is of use to the community (*True Christian Religion* 422).

Use the chart below to summarize a few key ideas about charity. Notice that in the Heavenly Doctrine, what is meant by “charity” is much more than giving to the poor, *etc.*

Charity is...

Questions

1. How can charity be the life of faith? Isn't faith something in your mind, something intellectual? How can charity help us express our faith?
2. In Jeremiah 17:10 the Lord tells us: **“I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”** The Lord not only looks at what we do but at what is in our hearts and our minds. The goal is to have our actions truly express our love to the Lord and toward our neighbor.