



## Lesson Overview

### 1. Discussion Starter

How and why does God lead us?

### 2. Read

Discover how angels actually lead our thoughts. pp.1-2

### 3. True or False

Read statements about how angels lead and decide if they are true or not. Discuss. p. 2.

### 4. Optional Video

Watch *How Angels Talk with Us* (43min) at [bit.ly.com/HowAngelsTalk](http://bit.ly.com/HowAngelsTalk).

This longer video is right on topic. Designed with adults in mind, it may be of interest depending on your group. p. 2.

## New Church Concept Peace

Peace has in it confidence in the Lord, that He directs all things, and provides all things, and that He leads towards an end that is good. When a person believes these things about Him he is at peace, since he fears nothing and no anxiety about things to come disturbs him. How far a person attains this state depends on how far he attains love to the Lord. Everything bad, especially trust in self, takes away the state of peace.

*Arcana Coelestia* 8455.1,2



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# How Does God Lead?

FaithBuilder 2 | Lesson 15 | Divine Providence

## Discussion Starter

1. If God created us and wants us to go to heaven, why doesn't He make certain that people know about it? Couldn't He set it up so they will go there?
2. If I am free to choose what I do, how can God be leading me?
3. God knows everything—so He must know if I am going to choose heaven or hell. What is the point of Him leading me if He already knows what I will choose?

## Read

The Writings for the New Church give an amazing picture of exactly how the Lord leads. While we live in the natural world our minds are influenced by unseen angels and evil spirits who are the source of the thoughts that constantly flow into our minds. The angels with us constantly look out for our spiritual welfare.

The angels through whom the Lord leads and also protects a person are near the head.

The angels:

- Impart charity and faith
- Notice the direction in which the person's delights turn
- Modify and bend those delights towards what is good, so far as they can do so while keeping a person in freedom.

The angels activate good and truth with a person to balance evils and falsities activated by the evil spirits. As a result the person is in the middle and is not conscious of the evil or of the good. The person is in freedom to turn towards one or towards the other.

Angels from the Lord use these methods to lead and protect a person, doing so every instant and fraction of an instant.

If the angels were to let up merely for a single moment the person would be plunged into evil from which after that he cannot possibly be brought out.

The angels are motivated to do all this by a love they receive from the Lord, for nothing gives them greater delight and happiness than to remove evils from a person and lead him or her to heaven.

Hardly anyone believes the Lord has that kind of concern for a person, a constant concern lasting from the very beginning of a person's existence to the final moment of his or her life, and for evermore after that.

Adapted from *Arcana Coelestia* 5992

## True or False?

Circle T or F. Discuss your answers with the group.

- Angels want to lead us toward what is good and protect us from what is evil. T F
- Nothing gives the angels greater happiness than removing evils from people and leading them to heaven. T F
- The Lord takes care of us when the angels can no longer help us. T F
- Angels try to lead us toward what is good, "bending" our delights. T F
- Angels want to "win us over" to being good, and our freedom is not important to them. T F
- The angels help keep us in equilibrium, a balance between good and evil, so that we are free to choose between good and evil. T F
- Even if the angels did not care for us constantly, we would be fine, because we don't need their help—we need the Lord. T F
- Angels lead us through what we find delightful. They make the most of every preference we make towards good. T F
- Freedom is being able to choose between what is evil and what is good. T F
- People are aware of the angels' efforts to lead them toward good and of evil spirits' efforts to lead us toward evil. T F

## Optional Video

If there is time, watch the beginning of How Angels Talk with Us (43min) online at [bitly.com/HowAngelsTalk](http://bitly.com/HowAngelsTalk). (Enter the bitly link in the web browser bar at the top of your screen.) The video was designed with adults in mind but may be of interest to students.

## New Church Concept

### Protection

Every person and every spirit is under the Lord's protection, the evil equally as the good. No evil can happen to a person who is under the Lord's protection, for it is the Lord's will that no one should perish or be punished. Every one is under the protection of the Lord so far as he abstains from doing evil, but in the measure that he does not abstain, so far does he remove himself from the protection of the Lord. And in the measure that he thus removes himself, so far he is hurt by evil spirits from hell. *Apocalypse Explained* 643.2

### Trust

Those who trust in the Lord are constantly receiving good from Him. For whatever happens to them, whether it seems to be advantageous or not advantageous, is nevertheless good, for it serves as a means contributing to their eternal happiness. But those who trust in themselves are constantly bringing evil on themselves, for whatever happens to them, even if it seems to be advantageous and fortunate, is nevertheless bad, and consequently acts as a means contributing to their eternal unhappiness. *Arcana Coelestia*