

The Doctrine of Charity

Overview

This practical book of the Writings was found among Swedenborg's manuscripts after his death. The first part of it was published in London in 1840. Following that, a full Latin text was published in 1878 and then translated and printed. Several pages were missing from the original manuscript and it is clear that some parts of the manuscript contained outlines and revisions of parts of the work.

In teaching this work to teens (ages 12-16), we chose to use an edition that was translated by William Wunsch and edited by William Ross Woofenden. This clearly laid out book uses simple wording and is easy to follow. I would highly recommend using this edition. (ISBN 0-87785-145-X) Lessons given here follow Woofenden's chapters and paragraph numbers.

The simple message of this work communicates how we ought to live our daily lives. It answers questions about what we need to do first, what good is, who the neighbor is, what the different types of the neighbor are, and how charity should be used in various occupations and life situations.

The notes given in the Oak Arbor Sunday School lessons are brief comments on ideas presented in the readings with suggestions for focal points and hands-on activities. Chapters in the book were copied and sent out to Sunday School teachers along with the outlines for each class.

Sarah Odhner
April 2004