

Quotes from the Word: The Lord Loves Everyone

OLD TESTAMENT

You, O Lord, are our Father; our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.
(Isaiah 63:16)

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy.
The Lord is near to all and His tender mercies are over all His works.

The Lord upholds all who fall, and raises up all those who are bowed down.
The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their food in due season.
You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The Lord is righteous in all His ways, gracious in all His works.
The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.
(Psalm 145:8,9,14-18)

Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You...
I will lift up my hands in Your name.
(Psalm 63:4,5)

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits;
Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
Who satisfies your mouth with good things,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
(Psalm 103:1-5)

And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
(Isaiah 9:6)

NEW TESTAMENT

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word" (John 14:23).

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love.... These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that

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you love one another as I have loved you.... You are My friends if you do whatever I command you” (John 15:14).

“I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son....” And he arose and came to his father. But when He was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.... The father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet, and bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found’” (Luke 15:18, 20, 22-24).

“Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours” (Luke 15:31).

As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name... (John 1:12).

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37-38).

HEAVENLY DOCTRINE

THE LORD OUR GOD

God is one in Person and Essence, and this God is the Lord (*Doctrine of the Lord* 65).

The name “The Lord” is used exclusively to mean the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, and He is called the Lord without the addition of the rest of His names. Throughout heaven He is acknowledged and worshipped as Lord, since He has all power in heaven and on earth. This He also commanded when He said, “You call Me Lord, and you are right, for so I am” (John 13:13). Furthermore after the Resurrection the disciples called Him Lord (*Arcana Coelestia* 14).

The one God, who is invisible, came into the world, and took on a human form, not only so that He might redeem humankind, but also so that He might become visible, and thereby conjunction with people might become possible... (*True Christian Religion* 786:2).

There are many attributes of the Divine essence, such as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, mercy, grace, eternity, and others; and there are attributes proceeding from the Divine essence, which are creation and preservation, salvation and redemption, enlightenment and instruction. Everyone who thinks of God only from person, makes three Gods, saying that one God is the Creator and Preserver, another the Savior and Redeemer, and the third the Enlightener and Instructor. But everyone who thinks of God from essence, makes one God, saying, God created and preserves us, redeems and saves us, enlightens and instructs

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us....[T]hink of God from His essence, and from that of His Person, and not from His Person, and from this of His essence (*Apocalypse Revealed* 611:7-8).

This New Church...is to worship one visible God in whom is the invisible like the soul in the body.... Conjunction with an invisible God is like a conjunction of the eye's vision with the expanse of the universe, the limits of which are invisible; it is also like vision in mid-ocean, which reaches out into the air and upon the sea, and is lost. Conjunction with a visible God, on the other hand, is like beholding a man in the air or on the sea spreading forth his hands and inviting you into his arms. For all conjunction of God with a person must also be a reciprocal conjunction of a person with God; and no such reciprocation is possible except with a visible God (*True Christian Religion* 787).

What reigns universally with a person is that which is present in every idea of his thought and every desire of his will....That which reigns universally within a person should be the Lord....The Lord starts to reign in a person when he not only believes that everything good and everything true comes from Him but also loves it to be so (*Arcana Coelestia* 8865).

The Lord is present with every person, urging and pressing to be received.... [A person receives Him] when he acknowledges Him as his God, Creator, Redeemer and Savior (*True Christian Religion* 766).

THE LORD'S LOVE

The essence of God consists of two things, love and wisdom; while the essence of His love consists of three things, namely, to love others outside of Himself, to desire to be one with them, and from Himself to render them blessed...love desires these three things, and wisdom brings them forth.

The first essential, which is to love others outside of one's self, is recognized in God's love for the whole human race.... The love of God goes forth and extends not only to good people and good things, but also to evil people and evil things; consequently not only to the people and things in heaven but also in hell....

The second essential of the love of God, which is a desire to be one with others, is recognized in His conjunction with the angelic heaven, with the church on earth, with everyone there, and with every thing good and true that enters into and constitutes people and the church.

The third essential of the love of God, which is to render others blessed from Himself, is recognized in eternal life, which is the endless blessedness, happiness, and felicity that God gives to those who receive into themselves His love (*True Christian Religion* 43:1,2).

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The nature of the Lord's love surpasses all human understanding and is unbelievable in the extreme to people who do not know what heavenly love is in which angels abide. To save a soul from hell the angels think nothing of giving their own lives; indeed if it were possible they would suffer hell themselves in place of that soul. Consequently their inmost joy is to transport into heaven someone rising from the dead. They confess however that that love does not originate one little bit in themselves but that every single aspect of it does so in the Lord alone. Indeed they are incensed if anyone thinks anything different (*Arcana Coelestia* 2077:2).

The Lord loves all and so wishes to do good to all and good is service. Since the Lord does good or performs services indirectly through angels, and in the world through people, He gives those who faithfully perform services a love of service and its reward, which is inward blessedness, and this is everlasting happiness (*True Christian Religion* 736:3).

CONJUNCTION WITH THE LORD

The Lord loves everyone, and wills to be conjoined to him, but He cannot be conjoined as long as the person is in the delight of evil...for everyone who is in these is in companionship with the devils who are in hell. The Lord indeed loves them even there; but He cannot be conjoined with them, unless the delights of those evils are removed. And these cannot be removed by the Lord, unless the person examines himself that he may know his evils, acknowledges and confesses them before the Lord, and wills to desist from them, and thus perform repentance.

This the person must do as of himself, because he does not feel that he does anything from the Lord; and this is given to a person, because conjunction, that it may be conjunction, must be reciprocal, of a person with the Lord, and of the Lord with a person. As far therefore as evils with their delights are thus removed, so far the Lord's love enters, which, as was said, is universal towards all; and a person is then led away from hell, and is led into heaven (*Apocalypse Revealed* 937:3).

The Lord loves everyone, and does good to everyone from love; consequently where that life is received the Lord is present and is conjoined to the person, and thus flows into his higher mind which is called the spiritual mind, and by light from himself opens it (*Apocalypse Explained* 392:4).

THE PRODIGAL SON AND FORGIVENESS

By "the prodigal son" is meant those who are prodigal of spiritual riches, which are the knowledges of truth and good. "His returning to his father, and his confession that he was not worthy to be called his son," means penitence of heart and humiliation. "The first robe with which he was clothed," means general and primary truths. "The ring on the hand" means the conjunction of truth and good in the internal or spiritual person. "The shoes on the feet" signify the same in the external or natural man, and both signify regeneration. "The fatted calf"

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signifies the good of love and charity. And “to eat and be glad” signifies consociation and heavenly joy (*Apocalypse Explained* 279:6).

The Lord forgives to everyone his sins, and never punishes him for them or imputes them to him, because He is love itself and good itself. Nevertheless the sins are not thereby washed away, for this can be done only by repentance (*True Christian Religion* 409).

The Lord forgives everyone his sins, because He is mercy itself. Nevertheless they are not thereby forgiven unless the person performs serious repentance, and desists from evils, and afterward lives a life of faith and charity, and this even to the end of his life. When this is done, the person receives from the Lord spiritual life, which is called new life.... From this it is plain what is the forgiveness of sins, and that it cannot be granted within an hour, nor within a year (*Arcana Coelestia* 9014:3).

THE LORD’S MERCY

The essence of mercy is love. Love itself is converted into mercy and becomes mercy when anyone in need of help is regarded with love or charity. Consequently mercy is the expression of love towards those who are needy... (*Arcana Coelestia* 3063).

The Lord’s mercy remains constantly with every individual person; for the Lord wishes to save all the people there are. But that mercy cannot flow into them until evils have been removed; for evils, and falsities arising from them, stand in the way and hinder it. As soon as evils are removed however, mercy flows in, that is, good flowing from the Lord out of His mercy; and that good is charity and faith. From this it becomes clear that the Lord's mercy is universal, that is, is directed towards all people, and is also particular towards those who refrain from evils. [2] Refraining from evils is something a person can do by himself, but receiving good is not something he can do by himself. The reason why a person can refrain from evils by himself is that the Lord flows constantly into a person's will with the endeavor to do so, thereby giving him the freedom to desist from evils and also to devote himself to good. The Lord also gives him the ability to understand truth, and if he does not understand, it is because he has no wish to. He has no wish to understand it because of the evil in his life; for falsity defends evil, whereas truth condemns it. So it is that a person cannot be endowed with spiritual good from the Lord, thus cannot be led by mercy, unless he desists from evils (*Arcana Coelestia* 8307).

A person of himself is nothing but evil, and what is within him, if this has its origin in himself. Yet the Lord beholds him with Divine Love, and therefore the raising up of him from the hell in which of himself he dwells and his deliverance from it is called mercy—an attribute of Divine Love (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3875).

LOVING THE LORD

Anyone who supposes that he can love the Lord without leading a life in keeping with His commandments is very much mistaken; for leading a life in keeping with them is what constitutes loving the Lord. Those commandments are truths received from the Lord, and so

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are such as have the Lord within them. To the extent therefore that those commandments are loved, that is, to the extent that a person is inspired by love to lead a life in keeping with them, the Lord is loved.... But loving the Lord without leading a life in keeping with His commandments does not constitute loving Him, for then the person has nothing within him into which the Lord can flow and raise him to Himself. He is like an empty vessel, in that there is no life at all in his faith, nor any life at all in his love (*Arcana Coelestia* 10578:3).

In heaven loving the Lord does not mean loving Him in respect to His person, but it means loving the good that is from Him; and to love good is to will and do good from love... (*Heaven and Hell* 15).

The Ten Commandments contain everything to do with love for God and everything to do with love towards the neighbor.... In general, they prescribe that evil is not to be willed, thought or done, either against God or against the neighbor. The reason why we are not commanded to do what is directly the work of love and charity, but only to avoid doing their opposites, is that in so far as a person shuns evils as sins, so far does he will the good actions of love and charity (*True Christian Religion* 329).

The Lord's presence is unceasing with every person, both the evil and the good, for without His presence no one lives; but His coming is only to those who receive Him, who are those who believe in Him and keep His commandments (*True Christian Religion* 774).