

Lesson 3: THE NEIGHBOR TO BE LOVED

Doctrine of Charity, chapter 3

Introductory Ideas for the Third Lesson

This chapter tells us what it is that we are to love as our neighbor. It also prompts some questions about humankind:

1. What is it that makes us human?
2. Why are humans different than other animal species?
3. What is it that we are to love in our neighbor?
4. What is it that makes people our "neighbor"?
5. Are all people our neighbors to the same extent?

(A fun way to present this lesson might be to talk about the movie "Planet of the Apes." In this movie, the apes are truly "human" and the humans are "Apes". What makes it so? Perhaps show a clip or two if this is available.)

Some Key Points in Chapter 3:

Charity 42 uses the term the good and true. This seems abstract, but try to lead the students to think of the Lord (and His love and truth) being what it is that we are to love. Far from being abstract, the Lord is the only thing that is real.

Charity 43 presents some interesting pictures of people who are not very human. Why are they so strange-looking? What is it that makes us human? Only what is genuinely good and true with us from the Lord makes us truly human.

Charity 46 is important because it touches on what it is we are supposed to be loving in other people. You may want to introduce the idea of choosing our friends here. What is it that we are to make friends with in other people? Sometimes the people who look popular and cool may not be the best choice as our friends.

Charity 50 tells us that people are not all equally our neighbor. In **Charity 52** people who indiscriminately love everyone are described as naive. Why?

Charity 54 tells us that we should use our understanding as well as our will to act in a charitable and prudent way. Can you think of an example of charity that is only from the will?

Charity 55 begins a section that describes three types of good: civil, moral and spiritual. Try to help the students get a clear idea of what these three things mean. Use a large piece of paper or board to write down the characteristics of each.

Charity 62 describes two kinds of wills.

Charity 63 seems to be comparing two fundamental loves: Love to the Lord and love the world or self. To be the loved as the neighbor, these have to be in their proper order.