

# THE WAY TO HEAVEN

by the Rt. Rev. George de Charms

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).*

If you wanted to go to some place where you had never been before what would you do? You would ask someone to show you the way. Many people have been to distant places and know how to get there. If you cannot find anyone who knows the way, you might be given a road map which you could follow. If you were to drive a car, you would watch the signs along the roads, pointing out the directions in which you should go.

Now suppose you want to do something that adults do, but you do not know how. You may want to play the piano, or ride a horse, or fly an airplane. You have to *learn* how to do these things. Someone who knows the way must show you how.

When we are born we are a very long way from heaven, and we have not the faintest idea how to get there. We may think that happiness lies in doing whatever we please, or following every road that looks attractive to us. We want to play all the time. We think that learning is work, from which we sometimes wish to escape. We want to do the things that grown up people do, but we may not understand why we have to go to school in order to learn how. Yet school, after all, is nothing but a place where teachers can tell us the things we need to know, and how to do the things we want to do. What they tell us is the road, the way, the truth which we could not find without their help.

The way to do anything is what is called the truth. We have to learn that truth, and then we have to practice it, that is, we have to walk along that road if we are to reach the place we want to go.

When the Lord was about to leave this world, and go to His throne above the heavens, He said to His disciples:

*"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2-3).*

The Lord has prepared a special place in heaven for every one, and He has written His Word to show us the way that leads there. He not only tells us the way, but He shows us how we may follow that road, until we come at last into heaven. For the Lord wants to give us the eternal happiness of heaven. That is the reason why He has created us. He alone knows the way, and no one else can show us that way. Since this is the case, the most important thing in all our life is to learn from His Word the truth that leads to heaven. The only reason why we are born is so that we may find this road and make the journey from earth to heaven. That is why the Lord says to all of us:

*“Search the Scriptures [that is, read the Word] for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39).*

This means that we must read the Word if we want to learn the way to heaven. Only the Lord can teach us this way or road to heaven. That is why He has written His Word, in order to teach us what we must do if we are to come into heaven. In heaven, the Lord has created a special place for each one of us. And He has created a special road leading to that place, and He tells us in His Word how to find that road, and how to follow it. There is no other way.

If we learn what the Lord teaches in His Word, we will see that road, and we will be filled with a longing to follow it. But, if we turn away from the Word, and insist upon going our own way, we will see only the road that leads to hell where there is no happiness. For those in hell will never see the wonderful and beautiful things of heaven. They dwell in caves surrounded by waste lands in which they wander, not knowing where to go and feeling utterly lost.

So you see it is very important to learn the way to heaven, and most important of all to follow it. For this reason the Lord says in His Word:

*“If you know these things, happy are you, if you do them” (John 13:17).*

Amen.