

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 3 – Passages from the *Apocalypse Revealed*

General meaning: This chapter treats of those in the Christian world who are in dead worship, which is without charity and faith; who are described by the church in Sardis. Those who are in truths from good from the Lord; who are described by the church in Philadelphia. Those who alternately believe from themselves, and from the Word, and thus profane holy things; who are described by the church in Laodicea. All of these likewise are called to the New Church of the Lord.

Verse 1: "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write," signifies to those and concerning those, who are in dead worship, or in worship which is without the goods of charity, and without the truths of faith. "These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars," signifies the Lord, from whom are all truths, and all the knowledges of good and truth. "I know thy works," signifies that the Lord sees all their interiors and exteriors at once. "That thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead," signifies that it may be seen and believed by themselves and by others, that they are spiritually alive, when yet they are spiritually dead.

“By dead worship is meant worship alone, which is to frequent temples, to hear preachings, to go to the Holy Supper, to read the Word and books of piety, to talk about God, of heaven and hell, of the life after death, especially of piety, to pray morning and evening, and yet they do not desire to know the truths of faith, nor do they will to do the goods of charity, believing that they have salvation by means of worship alone; when yet worship without truths, and without a life according to them, is only the external sign of charity and faith, within which there may lie concealed all kinds of evils and falsities, if charity and faith are not in them; for of these genuine worship consists; or else the worship is like the skin or surface of any kind of fruit, in which there lies concealed putrid and worm-eaten pulp, which fruit is dead. That such worship reigns in the church at this day, is known.” (AR 154)

“Spiritual life, which is properly life, does not consist in worship alone, but is inwardly in worship, and inwardly there ought to be Divine truths from the Word, and when man lives according to them, there is life in the worship; the reason is, because the external derives its quality from internals, and the internals of worship are truths of life. These are they who are meant by these words of the Lord: Then shall ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open unto us; but he shall answer and say, I know you not whence you are. And ye shall begin to say, We have eaten before Thee and drank before Thee and Thou hast taught in our streets; but I will say to you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity (Luke 13:25-27).

I have also been permitted to hear many in the spiritual world say, that they have often gone to the holy communion, and thus have eaten and drunk what is holy, and have as often been absolved from their sins; that every Sabbath day they have hearkened to their teachers; and have devoutly prayed at home morning and evening, besides other things. But when the interiors of their worship were laid open, they appeared full of iniquities and infernal things, therefore they were rejected. And when they asked the

reason of it, they had for answer, that they were not at all solicitous about Divine truths. And yet a life not according to Divine truths, is not life such as they have who are in heaven; and they who are not in the life of heaven, cannot bear the light of heaven, which is the Divine truth proceeding from the Lord as the sun there; still less can they bear the heat of heaven, which is the Divine love. But although they heard and also understood these things, yet when they were let into themselves and their own worship, they said, "What need is there of truths, and what are truths?" But as they were no longer able to receive truths, they were left to their concupiscences, which were within their worship, and these at length rejected from them all their worship of God. For the interiors accommodate the exteriors to themselves, and reject the things which do not agree with themselves; for with all after death the exteriors are rendered analogous to the interiors." (AR 157)

Verse 2: "Be watchful," signifies to be in truths and in a life according to them. "And strengthen the remaining things which are about to die," signifies that the things which pertain to their worship may receive life. "For I have not found thy works full before God," signifies that the interiors of their worship are not conjoined with the Lord.

"He who learns truths and lives according to them, is like one who is awakened out of sleep and becomes watchful. But he who is not in truths, but only in worship, is like one who sleeps and dreams. Natural life, considered in itself, or without spiritual life, is nothing else but sleep; but natural life, in which there is spiritual life, is watchfulness; and this cannot be acquired otherwise than by truths, which are in their own light and in their own day, when man is in the life according to them." (AR 158)

"Dead worship is altogether similar to living worship in its external form, because they who are in truths do the same things, for they hear preachings, go to the Holy Supper, pray on their knees morning and evening, besides other things which are common and customary in worship; therefore they who are in dead worship, have need of nothing more than to learn truths and live according to them; so that "the remaining things which are ready to die" may be confirmed." (AR 159)

"It must be known, that dead worship or worship which is only external, causes the Lord's presence, but not conjunction; but external worship, in which the interiors live, causes both presence and conjunction. For the conjunction of the Lord is with the things with man which are from the Lord, which are truths from good, and unless these are in worship, the works are not full before God, but are empty." (AR 160)

Verse 3: "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard," signifies that they should consider that all worship in the beginning is natural, and afterwards by truths becomes spiritual, besides many other things. "And observe and repent," signifies that they should attend to these things, and give life to their dead worship. "If therefore thou shalt not watch," signifies here the same as above. "I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know in what hour I will come upon thee," signifies that the things which are of worship shall be taken from them, and that they shall not know when and how this is done.

“Is it not at this day a matter of indifference what truths a man knows, provided he is in worship? And because few search the Word for the purpose of learning truths and living according to them, therefore nothing is known concerning worship, whether it be dead or living, and yet according to the quality of worship man himself is either dead or living. Otherwise of what use would the Word be, and doctrine thence, or what would be the use of sabbaths and preachings, as well as of books of instruction, yea to what purpose would the church and religion be? That all worship in its beginning is natural, and afterwards by truths from the Word, and a life according to them, becomes spiritual, is known; for man is born natural, but is educated in order that he may become civil and moral, and afterwards spiritual, for thus he is born again.” (AR 161)

“From the man, who is in dead worship, the external good of worship is taken away. For there is something of good in dead worship, because they think of God and of eternal life; but still good without its truths is not good, but meritorious or hypocritical, and evils and falsities take it away like a thief. This is done successively in the world, and after death fully, and also the man not knowing when and how. It is attributed to the Lord that "He will come like a thief," but, in the spiritual sense, it is meant that hell will take away and steal it. This is similar to its being said in the Word, that God does evil to man, vastates him, avenges, is wrathful, and leads into temptation; when yet hell does them, for it is so said from the appearance before man....

The reason why man must watch, and not know the hour in which the Lord cometh, is, that man may think and act as from himself, thus in freedom according to his reason, and lest any fear intrude; for everyone, if he knew, would be in fear; and what man does from himself in freedom remains to eternity; but what he does from fear, does not remain.” (AR 164)

Verse 4: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis," signifies that among them there are also some who have life in their worship. "Which have not defiled their garments," signifies who are in truths, and have not defiled worship by evils of life and falsities thence derived. "And they shall walk with Me in white," signifies that they shall live with the Lord, because they are in truths from Him.

“It is said that they will live with the Lord in the spiritual kingdom, because the whole heaven is divided in two kingdoms, the celestial and the spiritual, and they are in the celestial kingdom who are in the good of love from the Lord, and they are in the spiritual kingdom who are in the truths of wisdom from the Lord; and the latter are said "to walk with the Lord in white;" and they are also clothed in white garments.” (AR 167)

Verse 5: "He that overcometh shall be clothed in white garments," signifies that he who is reformed becomes spiritual. "And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life," signifies that he shall be saved. "And I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels," signifies that they will be received who are in Divine truths from the Lord.

“In the Word of the evangelist "the Father" is often mentioned by the Lord, by whom is everywhere meant Jehovah, from Whom and in Whom He was, and Who was in Him, and never any Divine separate from Him: this is abundantly proved indeed in The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord; and also in The Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Providence (n. 262, 263); that the Lord Himself is the Father, may be seen (n. 21, 960). The Lord made mention of the Father, because by "Father" in the spiritual sense is signified good, and by "God the Father" the Divine good of Divine love; the angels never understand anything else by "Father" when it is read in the Word, nor can they understand anything else, because no one in the heavens knows any Father, of whom they are said to be born, and whose sons and heirs they are called, except the Lord; this is meant by the Lord's words (Matt. 23:9). Hence it is evident that by "confessing His name before the Father," is signified that they will be received among those who are in Divine good from Him. The reason why by "angels" are meant those who are in Divine truths from the Lord, and, abstractly, Divine truths, is because angels are the recipients of Divine good in the Divine truths which are with them from the Lord.” (AR 170)

Verse 6: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," signifies here, as before.

Verse 7: "And unto the angel of the church in Philadelphia write," signifies to those and concerning those, who are in truths from good from the Lord. "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true," signifies the Lord as to the Divine truth. "He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no one shutteth, and shutteth and no one openeth," signifies who alone has omnipotence to save.

“"Holy" often occurs in the Word, and everywhere relates to truth, and as all truth, which in itself is truth, is from good, and is from the Lord, it is that truth which is called holy; but good from which the truth is, is called just. Hence it is, that the angels who are in the truths of wisdom, and are called spiritual, are said to be "holy," and the angels who are in the good of love, and are called celestial, are said to be "just;" in like manner men in the church.” (AR 173)

Verse 8: "I know thy works," signifies here, as above. "Behold, I have set before thee an open door," signifies that heaven is open to those who are in truths from good from the Lord. "And no one is able to shut it," signifies that hell cannot prevail against them. "Because thou hast a little power," signifies because they know that they can do nothing from themselves. "And hast kept My Word," signifies because they live according to the Lord's commandments in His Word. "And hast not denied My name," signifies that they are in the worship of the Lord.

“The door is said to be open to those who are of the church in Philadelphia, because by that church are meant those who are in truths from good from the Lord, and to them the Lord opens heaven. But on this subject something not before known shall be declared. The Lord alone is the God of heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18); they therefore who do not directly approach Him, cannot see the way to heaven, nor can they find the door, and if haply they are permitted to approach it, it is shut, and if they knock it is not opened.” (AR 176)

“The Lord alone opens and shuts the doors to heaven, and the door, which He opens, is perpetually open to those who are in truths from good from the Lord, and perpetually shut to those who are in falsities from evil; and since the Lord alone opens and shuts, it follows that hell cannot prevail against them.” (AR 177)

“They who are in truths from good from the Lord, know that they have not any power against evils and falsities, thus against hell, from themselves, and they also know that they cannot, out of any power from themselves, do good and introduce themselves into heaven, but that all power is the Lord's, and thus is in them from the Lord, and in proportion as they are in truths from good, in the same proportion they are in power from the Lord, which yet appears to them as their own.” (AR 178)

Verse 9: "And I will give from the synagogue of Satan," signifies those who are in falsities as to doctrine. "Who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie," signifies who say that the church is with them, and yet it is not. "Behold I will make them to come and adore at thy feet," signifies that many who are in falsities as to doctrine, will receive the truths of the New Church. "And to know that I have loved thee," signifies that they shall see that they are loved and received into heaven by the Lord.

“This is said of those who are of "the synagogue of Satan, and say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie," by whom are meant those who are in falsities as to doctrine, yet not in falsities from evil, but in falsities as to doctrine but in good as to life. The latter, and not the former, receive and acknowledge truths when they hear them. The reason is, that good loves truth, and truth from good rejects what is false. To receive and acknowledge truths is signified by "coming and adoring at thy feet"; not at their feet, but at the feet of the Lord, from whom they have the truths from good.” (AR 183)

Verse 10: "Because thou hast kept the Word of My endurance," signifies because they have fought against evils. "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth," signifies that they will be protected and preserved in the day of the Last Judgment.

“That their protection and preservation in the day of the Last Judgment is meant by these words, may be seen from what is written and related concerning The Last Judgment in the work on that subject, and afterwards in The Continuation of the same, from which it is manifest, that they who underwent it were let into temptation, and explored as to their qualities, and that such as were interiorly evil were rejected and such as were interiorly good were saved; and they were interiorly good who were in truths from good from the Lord.” (AR 186)

Verse 11: "Behold I come quickly," signifies the Lord's coming. "Hold fast that thou hast," signifies that in the meantime they should remain in their truths and goods. "That no one take thy crown," signifies lest wisdom should perish, from which is eternal felicity.

“The reason why by these words, "Behold, I come quickly," the New Church is also meant, is, because after the Last Judgment, the church is established by the Lord; that church now is the New Jerusalem, into which those will enter who are in truths from good from the Lord, to whom this is addressed.” (AR 187)

“Wisdom in man is from no other source than good by truths from the Lord. The reason why man has wisdom through these, is, because the Lord conjoins Himself to man, and man to Himself by them, and the Lord is wisdom itself; therefore wisdom perishes with man when he ceases to do truths, that is, to live according to them, for then he ceases to love wisdom, and thus the Lord. By wisdom is meant wisdom in things spiritual, from which, as from a fountain, is derived wisdom in other things, which is called intelligence, and by intelligence, science, which exists from the affection of knowing truths. "A crown" signifies wisdom, because wisdom holds the supreme place with man, and thus crowns him.” (AR 189)

Verse 12: "Him that overcometh," signifies they who persist in truths from good. "Will I make a pillar in the temple of My God," signifies that truths from good from the Lord, with those in whom they abide, sustain the church. "And he shall go no more out," signifies that they shall remain there to eternity. "And I will write upon him the name of My God," signifies that Divine truth shall be inscribed on their hearts. "And the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem," signifies that the doctrine of the New Church shall be inscribed on their hearts. "Which cometh down out of heaven from My God," signifies which will be from the Divine truth of the Lord such as it is in heaven. "And My new name," signifies the worship of the Lord alone, with new things which were not in the former church.

“"The temple" signifies these three, namely the Lord, the church in heaven, and the church in the world, because these three make one, and cannot be separated, consequently one of them cannot be meant without the other. Therefore he who separates the church in the world from the church in heaven, and these from the Lord, is not in the truth. The reason why the church in heaven is here meant by "the temple," is because the church in the world is treated of afterwards.” (AR 191)

“Father, glorify Thy name; then came forth a voice from heaven, I have glorified it, and will glorify it again (John 12:28). The Lord, when He was in the world, made His Human the Divine truth, which also is the Word, and when He went out of the world, He fully united the Divine truth to the Divine good, which was in Him from conception; for the Lord glorified His Human, that is, made it Divine, as He makes man spiritual; for He first introduces into man truths from the Word, and afterwards unites them to good, and by that union man is made spiritual.” (AR 193)

“By "the New Jerusalem" is signified the New Church, and by the same, when it is called "city," is signified the New Church as to doctrine; therefore by "writing upon him the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem," is signified that the doctrine of the New Church will be written in their hearts. That by "Jerusalem" is signified the church, and by it as a city, the church as to doctrine, may be seen below (n. 880, 881). A city signifies doctrine, because "land," and in particular "the land of Canaan," signifies the church in the aggregate, and thence by the inheritances into which the land of Canaan was divided, are signified the various things of the church, and, by the cities in them, doctrinals. It is from this that the angels understand nothing else by cities when they are named in the Word; which has also been testified to me by much experience. Similar is the signification of mountains, hills, valleys, fountains, rivers, all which signify such things as are of the church.” (AR 194)

Verse 13: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," signifies that he who understands, ought to obey what the Divine truth of the Word teaches those who will be of the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, as above

Verse 14: "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write," signifies to those and concerning those, in the church, who alternately believe from themselves, and from the Word, and thus profane things holy. "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness," signifies the Lord as to the Word, which is the Divine truth from Him "The beginning of the work of God," signifies the Word.

“There are in the church those who believe and do not believe; as that there is a God, that the Word is holy, that there is eternal life, and many other things which are of the church and its doctrine; and still they do not believe. They believe them when in their natural sensual, but they do not believe when they are in their natural rational; thus they believe them when they are in externals, therefore when they are in society and discourse with others; but they do not believe them when they are in internals, consequently when they are not in society with others, but are discoursing with themselves; concerning these it is said that "they are neither cold nor hot," and that "they shall be vomited out.”” (AR 198)

“These things are premised to this church, because those in the church are here treated of who both believe from themselves and from the Word; and they who believe from the Word, believe from the Lord.” (AR 199)

Verse 15: "I know thy works," signifies here, as before. "That thou art neither cold nor hot," signifies that they who are such, sometimes deny that the Word is Divine and holy, and at other times acknowledge it. "I would thou wert cold or hot," signifies that it is better for them either from the heart to deny the holy things of the Word and of the church, or from the heart to acknowledge them.

“At one time to deny the holiness of the Word, and at another time to acknowledge it, is "to be neither cold nor hot," for they are against the Word and also for the Word. They are also such concerning God, at one time they deny, and at another time acknowledge Him; in like manner as to all things of the church; for which reason they are sometimes with those who are in hell, and at other times with those who are in heaven. They fly as it were between both, up and down, and wherever they fly, thither they turn the face. They become such who have confirmed with themselves the belief in the existence of God, of heaven and hell, and of life eternal, and afterwards recede from it. When the first confirmation returns, they acknowledge, but when it does not return, they deny. They recede because they afterwards think only of themselves and the world, continually aspiring to preeminence, and thereby they immerse themselves in their proprium; thus hell swallows them up.” (AR 202)

Verse 16: "Therefore because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit thee out of My mouth," signifies profanation and separation from the Lord.

“"To vomit out of My mouth," signifies to be separated from the Lord, and to be so separated from the Lord is to be neither in heaven nor in hell, but in a place apart, deprived of human life, where there are mere phantasies. The reason is, because they have mixed truths with falsities, and goods with evils, thus holy things with profane, even so that they cannot be separated. And since man cannot then be prepared, either to be in heaven or in hell, the whole of his rational life is destroyed, and the ultimates of life alone remain, which, when separated from the interiors of life, are mere phantasies.” (AR 204)

Verse 17: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods," signifies that they believe they possess in all abundance the knowledges of good and truth, which are of heaven and the church. "And have need of nothing," signifies that they have no need of more wisdom. "And knowest not that thou art wretched," signifies that all things which they know concerning them do not at all cohere. "And miserable and poor," signifies that they are without the understanding of truth, and without the will of good.

“They who believe from themselves, and not from the Lord through the Word, also believe that they know and understand all things. The reason is, that their spiritual mind is shut, and their natural mind alone open; and this mind, without spiritual light, sees no otherwise.” (AR 206)

“By "being wretched" is here signified no coherence, thus by "the wretched," those who think incoherently concerning the things of the church; the reason is, because they of whom this is said, at one time deny God, heaven, eternal life, and the sanctity of the Word, and at another time acknowledge them; therefore what they build with one hand they destroy with the other. Thus they are like those that build a house, and presently pull it down; or that clothe themselves in becoming garments, and presently tear them off. Their houses are therefore rubbish, and their garments rags. Such are all things which they think concerning the church and heaven, but they do not know this.” (AR 208)

Verse 18: "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich," signifies an admonition to acquire to themselves the good of love from the Lord by means of the Word, that they may become wise. "And white garments that thou mayest be clothed," signifies that they should acquire to themselves the genuine truths of wisdom. "And that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear," signifies lest the good of celestial love should be profaned and adulterated. "And anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see," signifies that their understanding may be healed.

Verse 19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," signifies that because they are now beloved, they cannot but be admitted into temptations. "Be zealous, therefore, and repent," signifies that this should be done from the affection of truth.

“Such as are here treated of, could not but be admitted into temptations, because, without them, negations and confirmations against Divine truth could not be extirpated. Temptations are spiritual combats against the falsities and evils in one's self, thus against one's self.” (AR 215)

Verse 20: "Behold I stand at the door, and knock," signifies that the Lord is present to everyone in the Word, and is there pressing to be received, and He teaches how. "If anyone hear My voice, and open the door," signifies he who believes in the Word and lives according to it. "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me," signifies that the Lord conjoins Himself with them and they with Him.

“That man ought to open the door as from himself, by shunning evils as sins, and doing goods, is shown in The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem; and that this is the case, is also evident from the Lord's words here, "If anyone open"; as also from His words in Luke 12:36.” (AR 218)

“"To come in and sup with him," signifies to join Himself to him, and, since there must be a reciprocal that there may be conjunction, it is also said, "and he with Me." That to be conjoined is signified by "coming in and supping," appears from the Holy Supper instituted by the Lord, by means of which the Lord's presence is effected with those who hear His voice, that is, who believe in the Word, but there is conjunction with those who live according to the Word; to live according to the Word is to do the work of repentance, and to believe in the Lord.” (AR 219)

Verse 21: "To him that overcometh," signifies such as are in conjunction with the Lord by a life according to His precepts in the Word. "Will I give to sit with Me in My throne," signifies that they will have conjunction with the Lord in heaven. "As I overcame, and sit with the Father in His throne," signifies as He and the Father are one and are heaven.

“That the Father and the Lord are one is fully shown in Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord, and elsewhere. That heaven is not heaven from anything proper to the angels, but from the Divine of the Lord, which is in the angels and with them; therefore by these words, "as I sit with the Father in His throne," is signified as He and the Father are one, and are heaven; "throne" is heaven (n. 14, 221). "As I also overcame" signifies that by temptations admitted into His Human, and by the last of them, which was the passion of the cross, as also by the fulfilling of all things of the Word, He overcame the hells and glorified His Human, that is, he united it to his Divine which was in Him from conception, and is called Jehovah the Father, on which subject see the above-mentioned Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord (n. 8-11, 12-14, 29-36), and also above (n. 67).

The reason why the Lord says, "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in my throne, as I overcame and sit with the Father in His throne," is because the union of the Lord with the Father, that is, with His Divine within Himself, took place, to the end that it might be possible for man to be conjoined to the Divine which is called the Father in the Lord; because it is impossible for man to be conjoined with the Divine of the Father immediately, but mediately through His Divine Human, which is the Divine natural; therefore the Lord says: No one hath seen God at any time; the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath manifested Him (John 1:18). I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one cometh to the Father, but by Me (John 14:6).

The Lord's conjunction with man is by His Divine truth, and this in man is of the Lord, thus the Lord, and by no means man's, consequently is not man. Man, indeed, feels it as his own, but still it is not his, for it is not united to him, but adjoined; not so the Divine of the Father, this is not adjoined but united to the Lord's Human, as the soul to its body. He who understands these things may understand the following words of the Lord: He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing (John 15:5). In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you (John 14:20). Sanctify them in Thy truth; Thy Word is truth; for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified in the truth: that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; I in them and thou in me (John 17:17, 19, 21, 23).” (AR 222)

Verse 22: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," signifies here, as before.

Apocalypse Revealed 224

Memorable Relation from the end of chapter 3

“To this I will add this Relation. I saw an assembly of spirits, all upon their knees, praying to God to send angels to them, that they might converse with them face to face, and open to them the thoughts of their hearts. And when they arose, there appeared three angels in fine linen, standing before them, and they said, "The Lord Jesus Christ has heard your prayers, and has therefore sent us to you; open unto us the thoughts of your hearts."

And they answered, "We have been told by our priests, that in matters of a theological nature the understanding avails nothing, but only faith, and that in such things intellectual faith is of no service to anyone, because it is derived from man. We are Englishmen, and have heard many things from our sacred ministry, which we believed; but when we have conversed with others, who also called themselves the Reformed, and with others who called themselves the Roman Catholics, and likewise with sectaries, they all appeared to us learned, and yet, in many things, one did not agree with another, and still they all said, 'Believe us;' and some of them, 'We are God's ministers, and know.' But as we know that the Divine truths, which are called truths of faith, and which appertain to the church, are not derived to anyone from his native soil, nor by inheritance, but out of heaven from God; and as these show the way to heaven, and enter into the life together with the good of charity, and so lead to eternal life, we became anxious, and prayed to God upon our knees."

Then the angels answered, "Read the Word, and believe in the Lord, and you will see the truths which should constitute your faith and life; for all in the Christian world draw their doctrinals from the Word as from the only fountain." But two of the company said, "We have read, but did not understand."

And the angels replied, "You did not approach the Lord, and you have also confirmed yourselves in falsities"; and the angels said further, "What is faith without light, and what signifies thinking without understanding? This is not human; even magpies and ravens can learn to speak without understanding. We can affirm to you, that every man whose soul desires it is capable of seeing the truths of the Word in the light; there does not exist an animal that does not know the food proper to its life when it sees it, and man is a rational and spiritual animal, who sees the food of his life, not that of his body, but of his soul, which is the truth of faith, provided indeed he hungers after it, and seeks it from the Lord; whatsoever is not received also in the understanding is not fixed in the memory in reality, but only verbally; therefore, when we have looked down out of heaven into the world, we have not seen anything, but have only heard sounds, that are for the most part dissonant.

"But we will enumerate some things which the learned among the clergy have removed from the understanding, not knowing that there are two ways to the understanding, one from the world, and the other from heaven, and that the Lord withdraws the understanding from the world when He enlightens it; but if the understanding be closed by religion, the way into it from heaven is closed, and then man sees no more in the Word than a blind person. We have seen many such fall into pits, out of which they have never risen again. Examples must serve for illustration: are you not able to understand what charity is, and what faith is; that charity consists in doing well by your neighbor, and that faith consists in thinking well of God and of the essentials of the church, and therefore that he who does well and thinks well, that is, who lives well and believes well, is saved?" They replied, that they understood these things.

The angels said further, "Do you not understand, that repentance from sins is to be performed, in order that man may be saved, and that, unless a man actually repents, he abides in the sins into which he was born, and that the work of repentance consists in not willing evils because they are against God, and in examining himself once or twice a year, in seeing his evils, in confessing them before the Lord, imploring assistance, desisting from them, and leading a new life, and as far as he does this, and believes in the Lord, so far his sins are remitted?" Then some of the company replied, "This we understand, and thence also what remission of sins is."

And then they solicited the angels to give them further information, and especially concerning God, the immortality of the soul, regeneration and baptism. To this the angels replied, "We will not say anything but what you can understand, otherwise our discourse will fall like rain upon sand, and upon seeds therein, which although watered from heaven, still wither and perish." Concerning God they said, "All who come into heaven have their place allotted them there, and thence eternal joy, according to their idea of God, because this idea reigns universally in every particular of worship. The idea of an invisible God is not determined to anyone, nor does it terminate in any, therefore it ceases and perishes. The idea of God as Spirit, when a spirit is believed to be like ether or wind, is an empty idea; but the idea of God as Man is a just idea, for God is the Divine love and the Divine wisdom, with every quality belonging thereto, and the subject of these is man, and not ether or wind. The idea of God in heaven is the idea of the Lord. He is the God of heaven and earth, as He Himself taught. Let your idea of God be like unto ours, and we shall be consociated together." On saying these words, their faces became resplendent.

Concerning the Immortality of the Soul, they said, "Man lives to eternity, because he can be conjoined with God by love and faith, this indeed is possible with everyone. That this possibility constitutes the immortality of the soul you may understand, if you think of it a little more deeply."

Concerning Regeneration;" "Who does not see that everyone is at liberty to think of God, or not to think of Him, provided he be instructed that there is a God; so that everyone has liberty in spiritual things, equally as in things civil and moral; the Lord gives this liberty to all continually; for which reason he becomes guilty, if he does not think of God. Man is man from this ability; but a beast is a beast from not having this ability; therefore man can reform and regenerate himself as from himself, provided he acknowledges in heart that it is from the Lord. Everyone who does the work of repentance, and believes in the Lord, is reformed and regenerated. Man must do both as from himself, but this 'as from himself' is from the Lord. It is true that man cannot contribute anything thereto, no not in the least, nevertheless you were not created statues, but you were created men, that you might do that from the Lord as from yourselves. This is the only reciprocal of love and faith, that it is altogether the Lord's will that it should be done by man unto Him. In a word, do it from yourselves, and believe that you do it from the Lord, thus do it as from yourselves."

But then the Englishmen inquired, Whether to act as from oneself, is a faculty implanted in man from creation? The angel answered, "It is not implanted, because to act from Himself is the Lord's alone, but it is communicated continually, that is, adjoined continually, and then so far as man does good and believes what is true, as from himself, so far he is an angel of heaven; but so far as he does evil and thence believes what is false, which is done also as from himself, so far he is an angel of hell. That this also is as from himself surprises you, but still you see that it is so, when you pray that you may be preserved from the devil, lest he should seduce you, and enter into you, as he did into

Judas, fill you with all iniquity, and destroy you, soul and body. But everyone incurs guilt who believes that he acts from himself, whether it be good, or whether it be evil; but he does not incur guilt, who believes that he acts as from himself."

Concerning Baptism, they said, "That it is spiritual washing, which is reformation and regeneration; and that an infant is reformed and regenerated, when, on becoming an adult, he does the things which his sponsors promised for him, which are two, repentance and faith in God; for they promise first that he shall renounce the devil and all his works; and second, that he shall believe in God. All infants in heaven are initiated into these two, but to them the devil is hell, and God is the Lord. Moreover baptism is a sign before the angels that a man is of the church.

On hearing these things, some of the assembly said, "This we understand." But a voice was heard from one side, exclaiming, "We do not understand;" and another voice, "We will not understand;" and inquiry was made from whence these voices proceeded, and it was found that they came from those who had confirmed themselves in falsities of faith, and who wished to be believed as oracles, and thus to be adored. The angels said, "Be not surprised: there are very many such at this day; they appear to us from heaven like graven images, made with such art as to be able to move the lips, and utter sounds like organs, but without knowing whether the breath, by means of which they utter these sounds, comes from hell or from heaven, because they do not know whether a thing be false or true. They reason and reason; they confirm and confirm, nor do they ever see whether it is so. But know, that human ingenuity can confirm whatsoever one wishes, even until it appears to be so; therefore heretics and impious persons, yea atheists can confirm that there is no God, but nature only."

Afterwards the assembly of Englishmen, enkindled with the desire of being wise, said to the angels, "So many various opinions are spoken of the Holy Supper, tell us what is the truth." The angels replied, "The truth is that the man who looks to the Lord and performs repentance, is conjoined with the Lord by means of that most holy sacrament, and is introduced into heaven." But some of the company said, "This is a mystery." To which the angels replied, "It is a mystery, but still such that it can be understood. The bread and wine do not produce this effect, for there is nothing holy in them, but material bread and heavenly bread correspond mutually to each other, and so do material wine and heavenly wine; and heavenly bread is the holy of love, and heavenly wine is the holy of faith, both from the Lord, and both the Lord. Thence there is a conjunction of the Lord with man, and of man with the Lord, not with the bread and wine, but with the love and faith of the man who had done the work of repentance; and conjunction with the Lord is also introduction into heaven." And after the angels had taught them something concerning correspondence and its effect, some of the company said, "Now for the first time we understand." And when they said, "We understand," behold a flame with light descending from heaven, consociated them with the angels, and they loved one another."