

The History of The Lord's New Church which is Nova Hierosolyma

A Lecture by the Rev. Theodore Pitcairn

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The Lord open our eyes to see Thy Divine Providence in the history of the Church.

This evening I am going to speak of the history of The Lord's New Church, its origin, and something about the history that led up to it. There are three kinds of history: there is the history that you find in the Word and the Three Testaments...the history of the Jews; the history of the Lord's life on earth; and, in the Third Testament, the history of the Christian Church in particular is much treated of. We are told that history, when is seen apart from its internals—the history that is given in the Word—does not differ from the other history of that period, you see the internal in it. The history, [that is] historical things, do not enter into Heaven, but they are representative of the things of Heaven. [In the Word] it speaks sometimes of the internal historical sense that is the internal of the Churches...which is said to be in the spiritual-natural sense, the sense that is in the natural Heaven. Rather it speaks of the internal of the Churches, names of people, not in that sense but names of persons who do not give anything to the filling of the Heavens.

We are told that history is a useful subject and as an ultimate of this world has its importance, therefore it seems right that we should have some idea of the history of the Church. To appreciate a country without knowing its history is difficult. A history should give a real idea of a country, and a history of the Church should give an important natural basis in thinking about the Church. Now, if we just remain in the historical, our historical becomes the essential, [and] then it is misleading. The historical is often not of importance by itself, except as a representative. We are told that nations and their wars in the Old Testament represent things, but also that wars at this day are representative, , and certainly warfare in the New Church is a very significant thing. As you [may] know, in coming into its existence his Church a very violent warfare.

Now, one of the uses of history, the history of a country for instance, is to come to a better understanding, and therefore a love, of that country. We know that the love of one's country is a highest form of love, an external love of the neighbor. There is love of the individual, love of

society, and love of the neighbor, with love of country being a higher love and a higher charity. Above that is the love of the Church, love of the Lord's Kingdom and of the Lord Himself. In history as taught in the world—and maybe at the present time many historians are not doing that duty—part of the [reason for teaching] is to form a love of country.

Now the teaching of history can be done in the right spirit or in the wrong. History should lead to a greater love of country, but if it is not taught in the right way, it can lead to what is called chauvinism, that is, where a person [is led to] vanity and pride in relation to the power of their country. Any genuine teaching of history should lead to humility before those genuine things which the Lord has given to a country.

[It is the same] with a history of a church—genuine historical facts ought to give a natural basis for the love of the church. A history of a church can be taught in such a way as to increase our vanity, or it can be taught so to result in a love of the church, with a humility, which ought to be our objective in teaching history.

In this talk I will describe the good things of the history of our Church. A history of the world often has to do largely with warfare. The church is called a “church militant,” and very much of the important history is also of spiritual warfare. In that warfare which gave birth to this Church I was compared to one of its generals. When generals describe their wars, they are apt to do it from their personal point of view, and it is not always considered reliable history. I hope that I may be free of that danger, and I will try to do as best I can.

Those of you who have read [the booklet] The Beginning and Development of the Doctrine have some idea of the early history of the New Church, of how the idea that the doctrine is the Writings of the Word was first received by some of the early people in Sweden and England in the New Church, how it developed, and how the majority came to oppose that doctrine—that it did not come into an organized form until the forming of the Academy.

Now the early Academy went through warfare too, in relation to the rest of the Church. It was also very violent. Many cruel things were done, and it was a very trying time. Those of you who remember the Second World War clearly—I don't suppose there are many here who remember the First World War so clearly, maybe one or two—you know how in warfare emotions are very much worked up. It is very different from times of peace. When you have a country that enters into a major war, and you have a major victory, and all the trials you go through in warfare, or when you're in danger of losing a war, what a tremendous effect it has on everyone in the country. In spiritual warfare, spiritual-natural warfare, internal warfare, it is always man against his proprium.

But in warfare in the external church it is just as violent on its own plane as warfare of a country in military combat.

Now in the early Academy the emphasis was on the Lord speaking to the Church in the Third Testament. There was a feeling that the Lord was present in the Second Coming in the Third Testament, [that] He was speaking to the Church. Therefore the Writings had Divine authority, and the Church to submit itself to the presence of the Lord in the Third Testament. That was a wonderful state, [that] early state, where they were all very deeply moved by that, and they had violent opposition to it [also]. But at that time there was little thought given to how the Writings were the Word.

Now, in general, the argument was that if the Writings were the internal sense of the Word—this was the prevalent idea, that the Writings were the internal sense of the Word—therefore the Writings were the Word. But as to the idea that the Writings were the Word in first and last, that was... I don't know whether anyone saw that clearly in the early days. That only came with the writings of Hyatt, an Englishman who came to America and who was for a good many years the pastor in the New Church in Toronto, Canada. He came to the idea that [what is said in] The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture applied to the Writings, as they were then called. He published a magazine called *The New Church Tidings* in Toronto, which was a little mimeographed magazine that may have been printed, but in any case, it was a small publication. It had various articles, mostly by Mr. Hyatt, and it had sermons by Mr. Hyatt. There were fifteen sermons in which he showed the application of The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture to the Writings, as they were then called. He sometimes called them the "New Evangel." I think that in one place in the Third Testament they are referred to... as a "new evangel." That was the term Mr. Hyatt used.

[When writing] these first fifteen sermons, Mr. Hyatt didn't see that the Third Testament was The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture applied entirely fully to the Writings. He gave indications of certain reservations as to the application of The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture to the Writings. His little publication had influence on the Church. There were some that came strongly under the impression of Mr. Hyatt's sermons, and there was some opposition, but it did not become a controversial matter to any extent in the Church.

The one who may have been most strongly influenced by his sermons Rev. Carl Theophilus Odhner, the father of Rev. Philip N. Odhner (later Bishop Odhner). Dr. Alfred Acton (later Bishop Acton) and Dr. Iungerich, and others, especially Mr. Cranch (Dr. Cranch) my father [John Pitcairn], were influenced by these things. It became common to refer to "the Writings as the Word" as being a distinctive doctrine of the General Church.

Mr. Hyatt died when he was relatively middle-aged, and while there are some articles by Carl Theophilus Odhner in *The New Church Life* which somewhat carried on his ideas, there were also certain articles [that appeared] around 1904...Mr. Hyatt's publication [appeared] around 1901 or 1902 [and continued] to around 1906 or 1908, I've forgotten exactly. Dr. Cranch in 1904 wrote an article in New Church Life in which he spoke of the Writings as the Word and having a letter, and the Letter of the Writings was the Word in its holiness. So there was holiness and power: the doctrine must be drawn from them.

Mr. Hyatt wrote thirty-two sermons in his first series on the Word, and later on, two or three years afterward, he started another series on the application of The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture to the Writings, which was another series of thirty-two sermons. These sermons were not well known in the Church. They were not published, and no-one in general in the Church, outside of Toronto, knew anything about them. The sixteenth sermon, the first one that was not published, was on John the Baptist. In this sermon, the central point is that the literal sense of the Writings [is represented by] John the Baptist, and that when one first approaches, one is in the literal sense, the state of John the Baptist, calling to repentance and preparing the way for coming to their internals, and that the internal was the presence of the Lord. The expression he often used was that when you're in the spirit state you see them in natural light or the light of the world. Later on you have to come to see them in their own light. Of course "their own light" means the same as the light of Heaven from the Lord. Now if that sermon had been published, it probably would have caused a big controversy to arise in the Church. But it was never known, so didn't. It might have [caused] a similar violent reaction to what [occurred] forty years later if that sermon had been published, but it was not known, except to the people in Toronto.

Now after Dr. Cranch's article [was published], a lady known as Miss Beekman—she was called Miss, came to Bryn Athyn, and she was a very learned woman. She had a greater knowledge of science and philosophy of the world than anyone in Bryn Athyn, and she was much more learned. She started to make a very intensive study of the scientific works of Swedenborg, the philosophic scientific works. At that time, the Third Testament had been read maybe a thousand times, and as the general things were well-known, they didn't look, for the most part, to open it up to further internals as it was fairly well-known as to the obvious things of the Letter. This was something new, this opening up of the philosophic scientific works, and it fascinated the Church. So the center of the Church, the active thinking, was for quite awhile trying to correlate the scientific philosophic

works with the Third Testament, and then, later on, trying to correlate the science of the world with the scientific philosophic works of Swedenborg.

They [established] what they called the Swedenborg Scientific Association. They were very optimistic that they were going to solve all these relationships, and there was enthusiasm for that, for something very new, you see. That took their minds off of really entering spiritually more deeply into the Third Testament.

Then there followed the big controversy on the nature of the Spiritual World, which Miss Beekman also started. That was an attempt to come to a scientific philosophic explanation of the nature of the Spiritual World which was above the external appearances of the Spiritual World. That led to a very intense fight in the Church over the matter. That is just a little introduction to the subject of our Church.

Now in 1917 Mr. Ernst Pfeiffer came to this country. [He was] Swiss, but he had been in Holland. He came to the Church in Holland through Mr. Barger and he came to study in the theological school here. At the time I was also a theological student, and at the same time the Rev. Carl Theophilus Odhner was a professor, his subject being the Doctrine of the Word. In his theological course he told us he had gotten his ideas largely from Mr. Hyatt. Although he didn't know of the further development of the doctrine that Mr. Hyatt had [written] in his later sermons, Mr. Odhner's teaching [was based] on what had appeared in *The New Church Tidings*. He spoke of *The New Church Tidings* when I was a theological student, but I never looked them up, although I knew that my idea of the Writings had come from Mr. Hyatt through Rev. Odhner.

Mr. Pfeiffer was also under Carl Theophilus Odhner, for about three months before Mr. Odhner died. So the general ideas that Mr. Pfeiffer got were from Carl Theophilus Odhner, indirectly from Mr. Hyatt. You see there is always this line of history, of Divine Providence working through history, leading to something. Mr. Pfeiffer went back to Holland in 1921, and started to build a society. There was only a circle there before, gathered together by Mr. Barger. [Mr. Pfeiffer] was very successful in getting new members first, and he built it up from a number of ten or twelve to about eighty in a rather short time.

In 1928 I had a paper [published] in *New Church Life* which spoke of ... on the nature of the Writings, in which I spoke of them having all degrees of truth, from first to last, and that there was a correspondence between the degree with a higher degree, which was the main subject of that [article]. I said there in that paper that the [the Writings] had an internal sense that couldn't be expressed in any way, it couldn't find a natural form or a new expression. I [it was] in about 1927

they published what was called The Handbook in Holland. That was a book for the society which had the main essential ideas of the Academy and the General Church...the general doctrine of the Academy and the General Church. It [consisted of] The Principles of the Academy and various [other] papers by Bishop W. F. Pendleton, and some other articles,. I don't remember exactly what. In any case, they formed what was called the Swedenborg Gezelschap, the Swedenborg Society, for the purpose of studying the doctrine of the development of the Church, especially in relation to the Academy and the General Church. There was a meeting of the men to go into the doctrine of the Academy and the General Church and to study that. They were concentrated on that. Also, Mr. Harrie Groeneveld had written various articles in a publication they called *The True Christian Religion*, a magazine. Those articles were also felt to be of great importance. Then at the end of 1928, or in the beginning of 1929, Mr. Pfeiffer came to see that the doctrine of the Church was involved in what is said in the twentieth chapter of Genesis. This didn't just come "out of the blue," [rather] it was a subject they were considering, and which they were very intensely studying, and very much impressed with. So this was not just a thing that they happened to be reading that came out of the blue. It was a very essential thing in their thinking in their life in that society.

We are told that doctrine is spiritual from a celestial origin. While we are all very familiar with those words, and they are repeated many times in the stories in the *Arcana Coelestia* in relation to the doctrine, you can speak words like that and not have much idea as to what is involved. What is the celestial origin of doctrine? You may remember and know that the word "celestial" has to do with love into the Lord. The doctrine of the love into the Word was the doctrine which was spiritual from a celestial origin. That celestial origin was the love of the Lord in the Second Coming in the Third Testament and the humiliation and the submitting of everything to the presence of the Lord in the Third Testament. The doctrine of the Word did not come from reasoning about various passages. It is not of rational origin: it came out of an attitude of mind, of humiliation before the Lord and love for His presence in the Third Testament. That was the celestial origin, and was therefore spiritual from a celestial origin. In its descent it was about nature.

In later generations if a person took up the doctrine that the Writings were the Word, maybe confirmed it and argued about it, it would not necessarily be spiritual from a celestial origin with them. But it was in its origin. Now in the same way the doctrine that De Hemelsche Leer was from a feeling of the presence of the Lord in the doctrine of the Church. In the Divine Providence, the power of the Lord working in the Church and the presence of the Lord in the Church, and a love for that, that was the celestial origin of what is known and often called "De Hemelsche Leer," or the celestial doctrine. That came as a very powerful thing in the society in Holland.

In the summer of 1929, I went to Holland with Bishop N. D. Pendleton. At that time, they were just coming to center their thoughts in the things that De Hemelsche Leer developed later, and they got into quite an argument, Bishop N. D. Pendleton and Mr. Pfeiffer. We went to a Gezelschap meeting, and we got into quite a discussion there. The Bishop and the others there were not in agreement, you see, so it started there. At that time I listened, and was not so certain about some of the points, but in general I tended to [agree], from the very fact of my background and education at the school and Mr. Odhner ... I was in many things in agreement in relation to the nature of the Writings as they called it. But at that time the whole discussion centered round what was the nature of the Writings. The nature of the doctrine of the Church, I don't remember that that came up at those meetings. But there was a great difference between Bishop N. D. Pendleton and that society as to the nature of the Writings, not the idea that the doctrine of the Church didn't become a central thing of discussion in those meetings.

Later on Mr. Pfeiffer came to France to baptize one of my children, Eshowe. I was spending some time in France as I had a leave of absence. He came to baptize a baby, and that was the first time I came to have an idea of what the development concerning the idea of the doctrine of the Church [was], and that was February, 1929. Mr. Pfeiffer was there for only a day or two, but in any case I got the idea, the leading idea. I had some arguments with him at the time... So I started to study the Third Testament to see whether I agreed with it or not. For a month or so I felt swirled around violently, I couldn't make up my mind, one line I would see it one way and the next day see it another way...it was very violent. There was a month or so in which I was in great turmoil before I came to see it clearly and saw the truth of it. You know, I often was charged...it was often said that I came under the spell of the hypnotism of Mr. Pfeiffer, but this is all nonsense because Mr. Pfeiffer wasn't there! We didn't even have any contact...but it was an unfortunate misrepresentation at that time.

In 1930, when I had said I had come to agree with him, Mr. Pfeiffer wrote and asked if I would help him publish De Hemelsche Leer, and he came out with the numbers. To begin with they were in typewritten form, and as such they sent one or two copies to Bryn Athyn, and one was in the library. It became a general subject of discussion in Bryn Athyn in the spring of 1930. They had an Assembly in June of 1930 in Bryn Athyn, and I went to that Assembly. At that time they were all really very much excited about what had taken place in Holland, and it was already quite intense, and when I got to Bryn Athyn I found everybody opposed to these new ideas except . Robert Caldwell. He was the grandfather of Beryl [Mrs. Philip Odhner]. He [Mr. Caldwell] had been under Mr. Hyatt as a young man, when Mr. Hyatt was giving these sermons [in Toronto], so he had that

background. He was rather sympathetic, but everybody else was pretty violently opposed. Mr. Hyatt and Mr. Caldwell told me that the Bishop had been at a house where leading ministers and laymen of the Church were, and he had said this was the worst heresy that had arisen in the New Church. N. D. Pendleton said that, you see. That naturally aroused peoples' feelings. So that was part of the cause of the very intense feeling that I entered into when I arrived here in Bryn Athyn. When Mr. Caldwell heard he [Bishop Pendleton] had made this statement, he said, "I am an old man, eighty years old. I have been active in the church for sixty years," he said, "I've never seen a church unanimous in that way about something good... I must look into this!" So one of the ministers, when I arrived, found out the Bishop had been very nice to me and put me on his consistory, and it was up to me to support the Bishop and not *** these things, on a personal basis, you see.

In 1933, Mr. Pfeiffer came to the ministers' meetings in Bryn Athyn where he presented articles, and I presented an article, and that's when the most intense warfare started, and it became...if a person hasn't been through a warfare they don't know what it's like and can't really imagine the intensity of what takes place in such a thing. It was really quite unbelievably violent, which was quite a surprise to me because I had always thought of Bryn Athyn as being rather broad-minded and charitable, and not being in any way fanatical...so that when they got us in that atmosphere, in which we felt that they'd like to burn us at the stake, it was hard to believe, you know. It is hard now, looking back at it, to believe that such an atmosphere could have existed. We don't have that sort of atmosphere in Bryn Athyn now, and it's hard to imagine that atmosphere could exist.

Now there are reasons for this. One was that they had a prejudice against Mr. Pfeiffer. As a theological student Mr. Pfeiffer was very much an admirer of [the philosopher] Kant, and then became very enthusiastic about the idealism of Berkeley. I had long arguments trying to combat that idea when he was a theological student, and so they had that strong prejudice. In fact, later on they claimed that De Hemelsche Leer was a result of this Berkelian idealism. This was not at all true; there is nothing in De Hemelsche Leer that looks like Berkelian idealism. But that was their idea. Also, there were certain personal things that they criticized. The main thing was that in the Church, the Academy had a big fight with what was called "the celestial heresy." You had two forms of that, one that was [put forth] by a man by the name of Thomas Lake Harris. Thomas Lake Harris said that Swedenborg had given the spiritual sense of the Word and he was giving the celestial sense of the Word. Then you have what was called "the New England heresy," that was mainly by ministers of the Worcester family—there were two, or maybe three [of them]. Their idea was that a minister wasn't to teach primarily from the Writings, but he was to teach truth from his own goodness. If a

minister didn't speak out of love and his own love and his own goodness...that was the most important thing. They didn't believe in the Divinity of the Writings. That, of course, was a very serious heresy.

Now the [General Church] saw in De Hemelsche Leer an apparent similarity. There wasn't. They saw it as being a revival of the celestial heresy, which by tradition they had been combating very violently, and very strongly, for many years, and, because doctrine was spiritual from a celestial origin, that was truth from good... Now there are thousands of passages that speak of truth from good in the Writings, but it's always as truth is the internal true of the Word from the internal good of the Word, not from a person's personal goodness. So internally there was no similarity, but because they had been fighting these passages of truth from good which were perverted in the Church, they had a strong feeling any time someone talked about truth from good, they [should be] very wary of it. We could understand that, because it had a certain external appearance of similarity, and certainly it was a very grievous heresy, so this apparent similarity made them take that stand. It was partly also that they had been ex-students and ministers who had been studying the Word, and the idea that a little society that was only a few years old, six or seven years old, in Holland, could have something that they didn't have, and which tended to [lead?] the Church, that seemed to them rather fantastic.

Now when you have warfare between two sides, you...because a person is defending his truth doesn't mean that they're necessarily going to heaven. Because they oppose it, doesn't necessarily mean they're going to hell. For instance, if you're talking to a person from the Protestant or Catholic Churches, you may be defending the truth and he may be defending the church he has been brought up in, and loves, and he may be in a better state than you are. Some of the things that you...ways that you are arguing...he may be...his spirit may be better than yours, and not better because you're defending the truth or because you, from inability to see it due to past loves you can't see.... We must never judge a person on the grounds as to whether they're defending a true position or opposing it.

Now a person is representative. We know that all the persons in the Word represent something. We are told that nations now in warfare represent something, but certainly in the Church warfare is representative, and everyone who is keeping active in the Church is representative. At one time you may represent something good and another day you may represent something opposite, just like people in the Word. Sometimes they represent a genuine thing and the same person could at times represent its opposite. But the important thing is not the person but what they represent. If we concentrate on a person and not what they represent in the history of the Church, then we get misled.

A person who doesn't represent something important—just in ordinary discourse, we call it insignificant—a person who doesn't represent something in the Church is insignificant.

[This is a recording of a Doctrinal Class given by the Rev. Theodore Pitcairn at the Hall of The Lord's New Church, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, on March 25, 1971]

During the seven years 1930 to 1937, a violent atmosphere prevailed in Bryn Athyn. Sometimes this was very intense violence and other times relatively mild. Now when there is such an atmosphere, you consider the causes of why there should be such intense feelings aroused. As I mentioned before, one was fear: fear of their young people being taken away from them and joining [us], and not looking to them. It was said that we were perverting the young. Two, there were statements in De Hemelsche Leer which aroused feelings, such as the statement that not seeing that the Third Testament had an internal sense be manifested in the doctrine of the Church had kept the Church as a whole in a purely natural state, and thus the Lord had remained unthroned in the Church. Now these things were taken personally but not intended to mean that anyone...not those in the Church who were relatively internal...but it was a doctrinal statement that if one remains in the literal sense of the Word, one remains in the natural state...the Church remains in the natural state. It was not a personal judgment but was taken as such, the same in regard to the Lord remaining unthroned in the Church. You see that the internal sense which makes Heaven is the Lord's throne is not...if the internal sense is not perceived in the Third Testament, then that throne is lacking. These things, as I said, were taken as personal attacks on the Church in a way that they were not meant. Back when these statements were made in Holland they weren't thinking of Bryn Athyn particularly, or the heads of the Church, it was just a doctrinal statement.

Lots of people have said that the whole question was a personal one. A lot of personal feelings came into it, but essentially it was not in any sense a personal thing. With some a sincere belief that this was a heresy which would destroy the Church. Now to understand that you have to realize that there were heresies in the New Church, which were really destructive, and which ed, [or] superficially to have some similarity to De Hemelsche Leer. There was in the Church what was called the "celestial heresy." This heresy was sometimes called the "New England heresy," an idea

taught by the Worcesters in New England. Their idea was that a minister was to preach from his own love and goodness and the truth was to be from that. They did not accept the Divine authority of the Writings, so their personal good was from that which they were to preach, and from which the truth of the Church came. On account of that...they quoted many things in the Writings about truth from good...there are thousands of [places] in the Writings [where it speaks] of truth from good or faith from charity, the Academy fought that heresy.

There was also another heresy, taught by Thomas Lake Harris, who said that Swedenborg had given the internal sense, the spiritual sense of the Word, and that he was giving the celestial sense of the Word. [It was] due to these things which the Academy had fought [that] they had come to have maybe a prejudice against the teaching of truth from good, which we so often find in the Word. They couldn't separate it from their thinking because they put the emphasis on the Divine authority of the Writings, as they called them, and this seemed to do away with that. So when [it was said that] the doctrine of the Church was spiritual from a celestial origin, it is the same as truth from good, it was connected in their minds with these former heresies that had been so destructive of the Church. In that way we can understand how there were those who could sincerely feel that this was a very dangerous heresy. Fourth, there was with many of the simple a feeling of loyalty to the Church as they knew it. You see, a loyalty to the Church is a very important thing...a love and loyalty to the Church. Where that is lacking, then the spirit of the Church fails. Now there is only one reason for leaving a church, and that is when one's first loyalty should be to the Word. When a person feels that one's Church is not loyal to the Word, to the teaching of the Word, then their loyalty has to be to the Word and not to the Church.

In what we have to say, let's be clear that we are describing what took place, and that this does not involve any judgment as to the internal itself of others, because we do not know the internal of others. There are those who may fight for the truth and yet their internal may be mixed with motives that really may not be good, while there are those who fight against the truth and who may have a mixed motive internally that may excuse them. Therefore we must regard this spiritual warfare as representative of the things in the spiritual world, and not think of it primarily from person.

There was a warfare that went on in the spiritual world and was represented by what took place in the Church. The birth of the doctrine of the Church is described in the *Apocalypse* as the birth of the man-child. And the opposition to it is represented by the dragon and its angels. This does not mean that those who defended the truth were necessarily, as to their person, Michaels, nor that those who opposed it were dragons. Still, in the warfare they represented it. A person may defend

the truth for various reasons. We are told that devils, when they are taken up into the World of Spirits and certain light is given them from Heaven, as long as their will is not active, they can see the truth just as well as anyone else. Therefore, [when] the things of the will are not active, or not in opposition, even anyone who has a normal mind can see the truth and that it's usually things of the will which prevent it. But sometimes those things of the will may have a certain innocence: people are loyal to the Church...they feel a loyalty to the Church they're in what prevents them from seeing it. Sometimes [there are] those who do not have a good will, or who may be of a rebellious nature, who opposed to authority from reasons that are not good in themselves, they are in a state where they are glad to see it come to a truth which criticizes the church they're in. As a matter of fact, you see, of those who left the Church later on, over half did not remain faithful to this Church but left it, and therefore it is questionable whether, in fighting for the truth—and some of them were very active in the fight—if they did it out of a genuine motive. We may never think of ourselves as being good because we see the truth and defend it, because, as I say, the motives may be good, or they may not be good, and therefore we must not despise others because they don't see the truth, and we must not feel proud and vain of ourselves because we see the truth and defend it.

We read, "The Holy Spirit which is meant the...the "holy" which is meant by the Holy Spirit does not inhere neither does it remain, except so long as the man who receives it both believes in the Lord and at the same time in the doctrine of the truth from the Word, and in the light according to it." [**cite reference] We have seen how some who even gave very valuable things to the Church, later on went away from them. For example, one of the very valuable things given to the Church by the Holy Spirit was the name of the Church. It was first seen by Hendrik Boeuf, who later on left the Church and went into very foolish things.

At this time I was the assistant pastor in the Cathedral and on the Consistory of Bishop N. D. Pendleton. Very often in these consistory meetings there was a very...rather a violent atmosphere there. And in fact my wife used to say that when I went to these she compared it to Daniel in the lion's den. There was a correspondence that went on between Mr. Groeneveld and Bishop De Charms. Whenever a letter came from Holland, that correspondence acted like a violent bomb that caused an intense explosion in those meetings. The meetings were so intense that I had to take tranquilizers...the doctor gave me tranquilizers to be able to stand them. They were often quite intense. Finally the Bishop took pity on me and told me I didn't have to come to all the meetings. To illustrate something of the nature of these meetings the Bishop one time gave a long speech. He got rather dramatic on the vanity and pride and self-conceit in thinking that a man was in the Divine truth from the Word and that was what De Hemelsche Leer stood for. After the meeting ,after his

speech, I said that my experience was rather the opposite. I had read the Third Testament many times, and had thought I knew it all pretty well. But with De Hemelsche Leer I came to realize that what I understood was very, very little, I felt more or less back in kindergarten, and it was a very humiliating experience when you think you know so much and then find that you are only in the things of the letter and you know hardly anything of the internal. The Bishop replied, “Well, we’re not going to get into an argument as to who is the humbler, you or me.” In other words, that was one of the problems; they always took it to a personal plane when the question was not a question of person but of the doctrine.

The atmosphere became the most intense in the ministers’ meetings of 1933, when Mr. Pfeiffer came over in the spring of 1933. The reports of these meetings in *The New Church Life* and the report of the 1933 and 1934 meetings are quite accurate because they were taken down by a stenographer. A Mr. Cranch took stenographic notes, and they were sent out to each of the persons, to the ministers, and they were given the privilege of going over and making corrections, and so forth. There may have been slight changes, but in any case it is a pretty accurate account of the meetings of 1933 and 1934. At the meeting of 1937, which was the third of those meetings, when I requested that we have a stenographic report of it, the Bishop refused. The notes were taken by the secretary, Mr. Whitehead, and they showed a good deal of prejudice. It is not an accurate account of those meetings of 1937. Now in the formal meetings there was a certain restraint, due to the fact that when you have a formal meeting you have a good deal of restraint, due to the formality of the meeting. It became much more violent in between the meetings, just after or just before, and during those meetings of 1933, a kind of madness came over the whole atmosphere, a kind of insanity. Between the meetings there was shouting, and it was almost like a madhouse. When you get that atmosphere, people are not entirely responsible, sometimes that sphere...there’s a saying, “All hell breaks loose.” Well, I think that was literally true then, because hell did break loose at that meeting, particularly in 1933.

Now that meeting was opened by a paper by Bishop N. D. Pendleton. He read it quite dramatically and finally he closed in a stentorian voice, bringing his fist violently into his other palm and saying, “This is intolerable, this cannot be borne!” Well that set the atmosphere for the meetings, you see. After that statement by the Bishop, I arose and said I didn’t understand how the Bishop had gotten the idea that we believed an idea such as he had expressed in his paper. I said I was against many of the things he said we believed just as strongly as he was, and I thought he had quite misunderstood De Hemelsche Leer. I couldn’t understand how he had gotten the ideas he did,

but he had taken certain passages which he drew his ideas from, and it was still difficult for me to see how he thought we held the ideas such as he expressed them.

The next day he announced that he would read his paper to the whole society. That came as quite a shock, after we had said we thought he had misunderstood it and we ought to go into it further, but his expectation was that this thing was being talked about by everybody in Bryn Athyn and they ought to hear what had actually been said in his paper. In this society meeting many people thought there was a very tense and heated atmosphere, but relative to the ministers' meetings it was very quiet. Mr. Paul Synnestvedt, during the meeting, got up and said what we needed was more light and less heat. Well, that tended to calm the atmosphere somewhat. The Bishop, in reading the paper—had read it slowly and dramatically in the ministers' meetings, but in the society meeting he read it very quietly and quickly, and without any emphasis, and he finally ended up by saying, "This is intolerable, it can't be borne," so the atmosphere was quite different there.

Seven to eight months later, Christmas of 1933, the atmosphere, and really the whole feeling, was again intense, and there was talk that we would have to be separated. Many of us thought we would be forced out at that time. It just happened that there were about seven in the Christmas Tableaux who were in agreement with De Hemelsche Leer, and most of them were teachers, Rev. Elmo Acton [for example],...and wives of ministers, and it was a very tragic Christmas celebration...many tears were shed because that group had a love for the Academy and a love for the Church. I'd say that when it came to the separation, I was the only one of that group that left the General Church.

Now in the meetings of 1934, Mr. Bjork was [present] at some of those meetings, but I don't think he was at the last. It was at that time that the doctrine of human good and truth was the center of the talk...the goods and truths of the Church were just human goods and truths. Rev. Karl Alden got up and said he thought the worst thing about De Hemelsche Leer was that it made the General Church formulate the doctrine of human good and truths. He never believed in human doctrine before. At the end of this meeting I was sitting at one end of the Chancel Hall and... was at the other, I said that I thought that the council had made doctrine in the council in a way that the Writings said was not to be done, and that I considered it a very serious matter that most of the time they had made this doctrine the doctrine of the General Church. It was about time for the meeting to stop and no-one said a word, there was dead silence for about five minutes. Finally I got up and walked out and left the others there. So you can see that these things were quite dramatic at that time.

In this connection, you might say that the essential difference between the Academy and the General Church [and The Lord's New Church?] is that we believe that the Divine goods and truths can be in man, thus that the Lord can be in man, while the General Church took the position, particularly at that time, that the Divine, the goods and truths when they entered man, were only human. In this connection I'd like to read a number: "The Lord is present in man according to the reception of Him. Other things man does not acknowledge but rejects. For in order that the Lord may operate anything with man by faith, the Lord's Divine must be present in man and not outside of him" *Apocalypse Explained* 915, paragraph 8. The Lord's Divine must be present in man and not outside of him. Now in that connection, think about the Word. , the Word, of course, is a book that has words that represent the Divine things of Heaven and of the Church and of the Lord Himself. But if you take a book, just as a book, paper and ink, with letters in certain shapes and curves and lines, and that s all there s to it, if no one read it, it would not be...there would be nothing Divine in the world. Or supposing you had the Three Testaments in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and you had them in a shrine and worshipped them, but there was nobody who could read Hebrew, Greek, or Latin in the world, you would still have nothing of the Divine. You can't speak of the Divine of the Word apart from angels and men, because the Word...this is a book: paper and ink isn't Divine.

Later the Bishop stopped me preaching in the Cathedral for a number of years. Sometimes I went to France, where there was a congregation of about twenty-eight persons, about twenty children, and twelve—maybe not quite that many children—but about twelve adults. They weren't all members of the Church, most of them were Dutch and there were three English. So I was busy there, and it was a relief for me to be there and also probably a relief for those in Bryn Athyn to have me out of there. I don't remember just when, but finally, I think it was in 1936, the Bishop said that the atmosphere had quieted down and I could preach and give classes again, provided I did not do it to teach De Hemelsche Leer. I said I would not pick any text for that purpose, but when I would write a sermon on the text, I could only preach what I saw in the text. If he felt that would agree with De Hemelsche Leer I couldn't help that. I couldn't preach anything but what I saw in the text. I would neither try to bring it in nor could I try to keep it out. I would have to preach what I saw in the text. He accepted that, so I was given a chance to preach. He also gave me permission to hold classes in my house for those who wished to come. There were sometimes as many as thirty-five at those classes, and they all were very interested, and there I felt free to speak more directly about what we believed. But then, finally, I gave doctrinal classes and sermons to the whole congregation. Those four sermons which I gave were published and also six doctrinal classes* [cite these in a footnote]. You may have read those, or you may know about them. [After] the last sermon I gave in

the Cathedral, when I came off the chancel and before I disrobed, Bishop De Charms said I would never be allowed to preach again in the Cathedral. Now you can read that sermon, and I think you will see that the things that he objected to were really the quotations in the sermon, because I don't think there was much else he could object to. But in any case, he felt that way. When I started giving these doctrinal classes... they seemed to arouse interest, and they grew to be about two or three times as large, and I think this also disturbed some people.

In the spring of 1937, Mr. Bjork criticized Bishop N. D. Pendleton and leaders of the Church. Bishop Pendleton called a meeting to consider disciplining and maybe expelling Mr. Bjork. Now Dr. Iungerich had written a poem, a very profane poem, about De Hemelsche Leer, in which he compared us to a description of a demon in the other world, who came and took the caps off these people that were talking, and the devils had come and taken our hats away. That upset my brother Raymond, so when the Bishop spoke of disciplining Mr. Bjork, my brother Raymond said he thought that Dr. Iungerich should also be disciplined for this poem he had written. Now that got the meeting in entire confusion, with the result that they didn't do anything, and three days later Bishop Pendleton resigned as bishop of the General Church. Then George De Charms was chosen as bishop of the General Church.

In relation to Mr. Bjork and the Bishop and myself, the Bishop at one time said to me that of all the ministers in the General Church, he was the fondest of Mr. Bjork. He was also...the Bishop and I were also very close...I used to go to his house and have coffee three or four times a week, and take automobile rides. He always took me when he went on trips, episcopal trips in this country and to Europe. We were very close. I think that he sort of felt that Mr. Bjork and I were betraying his friendship by not being loyal to him in relation to the problems of the Church. He didn't realize that we were viewing things above the plane of person, and that it was not a question of...the question of personal loyalty should not rule. In one of these very disturbed states, I wrote a letter to Mr. Bjork and one to Bishop De Charms...I put them in the wrong envelopes...and that caused problems of which I was rather critical, although I didn't say very much in the letter that I hadn't said at meetings and things. But George De Charms said if I came he would give the letter back. So I went, but he had changed his mind and said he couldn't return the letter because it belonged to the Church and it wasn't his personal letter. I didn't at first realize why he didn't want to give that back. I think I came to the idea that the probable reason was this: in that letter I described the conversation I had with Bishop Acton. Now Bishop Acton was taking a somewhat moderated position, attitude, and he didn't agree with the Bishop calling it a heresy. He said it should not be called a heresy and he was somewhat critical of George De Charms. In fact, I think I said something about the Bishop

being critical of George De Charms in this letter. I said of course we English can't quite understand these French people. George De Charms was French, you see. Now I think that the reason why George wanted that letter was to hold up a sort of club over Bishop Acton, because after that Acton never said anything to moderate, he didn't say another word.

Well, by the time Mr. Groeneveld and Mr. Pfeiffer came in 1937 for the meetings, it was generally felt that separation might be forced at that time. A group of the leading laymen in Bryn Athyn asked to meet with me. My brother Raymond took one of the leading parts in that. They were very much opposed to any separation. They said they wouldn't let the ministers make a separation, they would fight it, that they didn't want a separation at all. Now I think that subject would come up again. When Mr. Pfeiffer and Mr. Groeneveld arrived, we had a meeting with the Bishop and his Consistory. We requested that since Mr. Groeneveld had come over [from Holland] that he be at that meeting. They refused to permit Mr. Groeneveld to attend that meeting because he was a layman, so during all those meetings Mr. Groeneveld was not [present]. Now the question was what was to be done. You see, earlier in these years we'd been fighting very hard to prevent a separation, and the idea of a separation distressed us very much. But after so many years of trial, we had resigned ourselves that having a separation was necessary. So we met to consider what was to be done. Mr. Pfeiffer, was at his best, even when things were most violent, he was the calmest man of all. Especially in the 1933 meeting, he behaved himself with such wisdom, even those who were most drawn against him couldn't help admiring the way he conducted himself.

Now at this meeting of the Consistory, Mr. Pfeiffer said that both sides felt they needed freedom, and the state where they free was no longer possible [no longer tolerable?] He thought that it was very important for the Church that there should not be a complete break and that therefore there should still be a certain unity preserved. It would be harmful to the Church, and also to the Church in relation to the world, to have a complete break. Therefore it was proposed that we should have a Dutch diocese and an American diocese, and a diocese with the rest of the General Church. We had agreed that Mr. Pfeiffer would propose that he should become a bishop. How about a theological school as well? We felt that each diocese should have its own theological school. Well, at the end, would the...Holland not criticize any longer, and Mr. Pfeiffer said he couldn't promise that. Criticism might increase. He may have made a mistake in making that statement, and that broke up the meeting and that was the end of that.

Now in the ministers' meetings, Bishop Pendleton commenced by making a statement that when De Hemelsche Leer first appeared, he had said it was one of the worst heresies that existed in the Church and the time had come that part we must. Now, nearly all of the ministers got up and

supported the Bishop's statement that the time had come that part we must, and it was put on the basis of heresy. Later in the meeting Mr. Pfeiffer said that in making the doctrine of human good and truth and putting the Divine things of the Church outside of the Church, the Church separated itself from the Lord. Of course that was a doctrinal statement, and of course they took it personally, and Bishop De Charms, who was now the Bishop of the Church, said, "You charge me with separating myself from the Lord." Mr. Pfeiffer said he wasn't making any personal judgment of the Bishop, he didn't know the internal of the Bishop, he didn't suppose that he had separated himself from the Lord, he was just making the statement that putting the Divine outside of the Church separated it from the Lord. The Bishop insisted that he was making the charge that he was being separated from the Lord. Then he said that on account of that statement, as he was causing a disturbance in the Church, Mr. Pfeiffer would have to be removed on the grounds of causing a disturbance. Then it was said that it wasn't a matter of doctrine or heresy, it was just a matter of disturbance. The day before, it had been all a matter of heresy. Now it wasn't a matter of heresy, it was a matter of disturbance.

Bishop De Charms was then authorized by the council to take any action he saw fit in regard to Mr. Pfeiffer. No action was taken during the meeting. The Council of the Clergy authorized Bishop De Charms to take any action he saw fit in regard to the disturbance. Then this matter was referred to the Joint Council of the ministers and laymen. I was not present at that meeting, but probably the notes of Mr. Whitehead were read, which I don't believe gave an accurate account of what had taken place in the council meeting.

his action of Bishop De Charms, in changing it from a matter of heresy to a matter of disturbance, was a very astute political move, because there were maybe fifteen persons who, if it had been put on the grounds of heresy, would have been compelled to leave the Church, but who didn't leave the Church on the grounds of disturbance. Also in this meeting that I had with the laymen before—you see, the laymen were opposed to a separation, but there was a general dislike of Mr. Pfeiffer, and to have Mr. Pfeiffer removed, well, they did not take any stand against that. They went along with it. If it had been on the grounds of heresy, thus forcing a separation that way, the laymen may have protested, but due to the fact that it was Mr. Pfeiffer had made a disturbance, they went along with the Council of the Clergy. So Mr. Pfeiffer was not tried properly, nor was there any accurate record of the meeting which led to that decision. Three days later, Bishop De Charms crossed Mr. Pfeiffer's name off the list of the clergy and off the membership of the General Church.

A short time after that I spoke at a doctrinal class and asked them to reconsider the matter and made a plea to the congregation but, as I naturally expected, I got no support and I resigned as

Assistant Pastor at that meeting, and shortly afterwards from the General Church. Now we had a meeting of those who were separating to consider appointing a bishop. So we had to agree to Mr. Pfeiffer being the bishop when we were in the meeting with the Consistory. He took for granted that he was to be bishop. Mr. Groeneveld said we were now free, that there was no haste and that it had to be considered, with the result that there was no action. I think we can see in Providence through this meeting of the Consistory that the Church avoided what would have been a very grievous situation.

The following summer, when Bishop N. D. Pendleton was at his summer place in the mountains, I was told that he was walking up and down like a lion all summer [asking himself], “Have I done right?” and “What have I done wrong?” about that separation. Bishop Pendleton had often said that Bishop Benade had been too sharp in making the separations. He praised his brother, Bishop W. F. Pendleton, who was 20 years older, for preserving unity and not letting controversies get out of hand. So he had gone against his principle, his own principle. He was very much distressed by it I think. He died shortly after that, and I think this meeting may have had a great deal to do with his early death.

Now what is the state of the Church now compared with the Church then, the state of the General Church? We don't have any of that violence, and there's a friendlier attitude with many. But that doesn't necessarily...for some that may be good, but with some it may be just that they've lost interest in doctrinal matters. People don't go to war about things they're not interested in. For instance, at one time there were Crusades and wars between churches because it was something very vital to them. You don't have those wars nowadays, except in Ireland. People will go to war about something they love and care for, but they won't go to war about religion because they're not enough interested in religion to go to war about it. It is easy to be friendly when there's not a very intense love of doctrine, so we can't judge that state either.

As to my talks I've given here, I think it is better if you don't mention them to others because it wouldn't be wise to arouse people's thinking about them at this time, so I think it's better not to talk about them with others.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. Amen.