

We read: "Angelic life consists in use.

"Therefore angelic happiness is in use, and from use, and according to use; that is according to the good of love and charity" (A.C. 454).

We frequently read that the Lord's Kingdom is a Kingdom of uses, and this, for the reason that the Lord Himself is Use itself, for His Divine Love and Wisdom, cannot but go forth in use. Wherefore to be in use is to be in the Lord, Who is use Itself. To be in the Holy Spirit is to be in uses from the Lord. Wherefore we read:

"None can see whether the doctrine of their Church is true, except those who are in the affection of truth for the sake of the uses of life. They who have this end are continually enlightened by the Lord." (A.C. 8521)

"A man who is in the affection of use, from use, that is for the sake of use, is a heaven in the least form." (Div. Love XII).

"That in proportion as a man is in the love of use, in the same proportion he loves Him, loves the neighbor and is a man. To love the Lord means to do uses to the Church, our country, human society, and our fellow citizen. To be in the Lord means to be a use. And to be a man means to perform uses to the neighbor from the Lord for the sake of the Lord. For uses which are goods, are from the Lord and consequently are Divine; nay they are the Lord Himself with man. He cannot be conjoined in love with any man except through his own Divine things, for man cannot love the Lord from himself; the Lord Himself must draw him.....and therefore to love the Lord as a person, and not to love uses, is to love Him from self which is not to love Him. The celestial angels are not aware that to love the Lord is anything else than to do goods, which are uses; and they say that uses are the Lord with them. By uses they mean, the uses and goods of ministry, of administration, of functions, as well with priests and magistrates as with traders and working men. The good works which do not flow from their occupation they do not call uses; but alms, benefactions, and gratuities. Thus to love the Lord is to do uses, aquo (or from Him as a source;) and to love the neighbor is to do uses adquem (or to them as an object of uses...) and love thus returns to Him from whom it is.

"The Church and Heaven are from the Lord as one man, whose forms are made up of all who love uses by doing them; and the uses themselves are what compose this man, because it is a spiritual man, which does not consist of persons, but of uses with them. Still all who receive from the Lord the love of uses are there; and these are they who do uses, for the sake of the neighbor, for the sake of use, and for the sake of the Lord. It follows that all these are in the Lord. In the spiritual idea man is not a person, but a use." (Div. Wis. XIII)

From the above the great importance of use and the love of use can be seen. And yet with us is there not a prejudice against emphasizing the importance of use, particularly the importance of natural uses.

What is the cause of this feeling?

The reason is that in the New Church the subject of use has been so much stressed, and even in the world, under the name of service;

But has this feeling of revulsion against the prevailing idea of use any real basis?

Yes, for the word use as generally used, has in it much of the idea of merit.

Merit or reward, frequently dominates, merit either in regard to life in the world or merit or hope of reward in the life after death.

We read: "I asked, How can anyone know whether he does uses from the love of self, or from the love of uses? Every man both good and evil does uses; and he does uses from some love. In a society of mere devils, and one of mere angels, I opine that the devils from the fire of the love of self, and the resplendence of their own glory, would do as many uses as the angels in their society. Who then, can know from what love and what origin uses are? The two angels replied, devils do uses for the sake of self, and reputation, that they may be elevated to honors, or gain wealthwhere as angels do uses for the sake of uses, from the love of them. Man cannot discriminate these uses, but the Lord does so. Every one who believes into the Lord, and shuns evils as sins does uses from the Lord. Whereas every one who does not believe in the Lord, and does not shun evils as sins, does uses from self and for the sake of self. This is the difference between uses done by devils, and uses done by angels." (C.L. 266).

Man however cannot shun evils interiorly, unless he believes that the Lord can be present in him, and unless he acknowledges that the good or use which is from his own human, has self in it, and within self hell; and that no good with him is truly good until the devil has been cast out and the Lord has come to dwell in his internal, where once was the seat of the devil.

Nearly every one thinks he is in the love of use, particularly if he likes his work, but loving one's work is not necessarily a love of use, which alone is saving. One may love one's work for many reasons, as for example, because one finds it enjoyable, because one delights to surpass others as in a game, because it brings one wealth, advancement, and honor or praise in one's community, or simply because one finds it interesting or pleasant, because it drives away tedium, or because one likes the companionship of working with others, who are working at the same thing. One may also enjoy the pride that one is being of service. Such a one imagines he is in the love of use; when yet there is no genuine love of use with him.

We read: "All the goods which are called goods of charity are nothing but works for the neighbor, our country, the Church, and the Lord's Kingdom (A.C. 6073).

Most men's occupation consists in uses to the country and its citizens, that is, to it's economic welfare. Most of these uses have to do with food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. Without these natural uses, spiritual uses would not be possible; wherefore such natural uses are not to be despised. Spiritual use without natural use, would be like a house in the clouds.

We read: "The spiritual man does not regard himself and the world, except in so far as is conducive to promoting uses in the spiritual world" (A.C. 3913)

Uses to the country and its economy are uses in the world. Such uses are truly uses with the man to the extent that he loves his country and its citizens. If a man does his work, it is useful to the country, but if he does not love his country it is not a use with the man who does it, although it may be of use to others. A natural use is therefore of no real value to him unless he does it from a genuine love of country. Nor is the love of country spiritual unless it is a natural use for the sake of a spiritual use.

But how are we to love our country truly, and serve it for the sake of a spiritual use, when our country is opposed to genuine spiritual uses.

We read: "If I had been born in Venice or in Rome, and were a reformed Christian, am I to love my country, or the country where I was born, because of its spiritual good? I cannot. Nor its moral and spiritual good so far as this depends upon its spiritual good. But so far as it does not depend upon it I can, even if the country hates me. Thus, I must not in hatred regard it as an enemy, not as an adversary, but still love it; doing it no injury, but consulting its good, so far as it is good, not consulting it in such a way that I confirm it in its falsity and evil." (Doc. Ch. 86)

While it may not appear that our country hates us, for it is scarcely aware of us; never-the-less, there is present a potential hatred, which would manifest itself, if we were sufficiently numerous to affect its way of life. Still we must love and perform our work or uses towards it from love.

But what is our love to be directed to? Primarily towards those who are of the Church universal. While such may be relatively few they are still numerous. Secondly our use and love of uses must be directed to the uses of all, both good and evil, for the evil and the hells perform good uses, even to the heavens, and the angels love and forward these uses, so we should love to be of use, to all even to the evil.

Our daily occupation should therefore have in it a love for the country and its economic welfare, that is it should be a genuine natural love of use. If this natural love of use is lacking, our spiritual love of use, which is towards the Lord's Church and His Kingdom, lacks a foundation. Yet we must never forget the other words of the numbers we read:

"Am I to love my country, or the country where I was born, because of its spiritual good? I cannot. Nor in respect to its moral and civil good, so far as this depends for its existence upon its spiritual good, But so far as this does not depend upon this I can, even if it hates me I must still love it."

Nearly every one tends to go to the right hand or the left instead of straight forward between two opposites. And here is what is said in regard to country and the love of uses to the country, few have the will and strength to keep to the straight path. A man is apt to fall into the sentimental love of country which prevails in the world, or fail to truly love his country at all; both of which destroy the essence of his love of use to the country, which, in turn, takes away the genuine love of his natural occupation, or use.

In the New Church generally the natural occupation or use is made the primary thing. When this is made the primary, the internal is closed. On the other hand if the teaching of the letter that: "When a man sincerely, justly and faithfully does the work that belongs to his office or employment, from affection and delight, he is continually in the good of use, not only to the community or public, but also to the individuals and private citizens," must never be lost sight of. If this basis of the letter is lost sight of, the spiritual uses become imaginary things; - ghosts.

But while the love of a natural use from the love of the country and its citizens is a most necessary basis; by itself, it does not make a man spiritual. For, as we read: "The spiritual man does not regard himself and the world, except in so far as it is conductive to promotion of uses in the Spiritual World." (A.C. 3913).

We are also told that the Church is the neighbor in a higher degree than the country, and thus that uses to the Church are higher than the uses to the country. We will here not consider the natural uses to the Church, which while important are better known. The natural uses which one performs for the Church like one's natural use in the world is a most necessary basis, but in these uses must be the essential of use which is spiritual.

The first essential is that we love those in the Church not primarily as to person, but as to use. Yet if we do not see the spiritual uses in which those in the Church are, to say we love these uses is a mere abstraction.

The human form of the Church is the form of all the uses of the Church, for the Lord can only be present in use. He cannot conjoin himself with man's person except through his use; wherefore to see the human form of the Church is to see its uses in their true order, as the Bride the Lord's wife adorned for Her husband.

We are told that heaven is in the human form because the Lord is in a human form, and each society is in the human form because heaven is in the human form, and each angel is in the human form because a society is in the human form, and the same is true of a Church. A man is in a human shape as to his body, but he is not in the human form proper, unless out of a society which is in a human form, nor is a society in a human form except out of the Church, and the Church is not in a human form except out of the Lord. The essential human form of man, of society, of the Church, yea of the Lord Himself is nothing; but Divine use, wherefore to regard

man from person and not from use, is to see an external without any internal, thus not to see the human. If we do not see the true human which is nothing but the spiritual use, of a man, of society, of the Church, of heaven, there can be no seeing of the Divine Human of the Lord.

We read: "In the spiritual sense, good is the neighbor, and as use is good, use in this sense is the neighbor." (Doc. T. 20)

"By love to the neighbor is meant the love of uses; and by love into the Lord is meant the love of doing uses." (D.L.W. 426)

"A life of the love of use is a Divine Spiritual life; therefore every one who loves good uses, and from the love of it does it, is loved by the Lord." (A.E. 1226)

Further: "In the heavens those things which are of the general good, are under the custody of the wiser angels. They are subordinated, just as in Divine order, uses are subordinated; and therefore dignity is adjoined to every function according to the use; but still the angel does not claim the dignity to himself, but gives it all to the use; and as the use is the good which he performs, and as all good is from the Lord, he gives it all to Him. When use is mentioned the Lord also is understood, because use is good and good is from the Lord."

"This shows the nature of the subordinations in the Heavens; namely, that in proportion as any one loves, esteems, and honors a use, so does he love, esteem and honor the person to whom that use has been adjoined, and also, that person is loved, esteemed and honored in proportion as he does not ascribe the use to himself, but to the Lord; for in the same proportion he is wise." (H.H. 389, 390).

Do we see the uses of the Church in a wonderful human form from the Lord some appertaining to the head, some to the heart, lungs and other organs, some to the hands and feet, and do we perceive who are in these uses. If we do not we have no spiritual vision of the Church, in its human form, and if we do not see the Church in the human form, it is impossible to see the Divine Human of the Lord. For the Divine Human of the Lord is manifested solely in the Church and not outside it.

The Lord is indeed present with those outside of the Church, but He is only seen by them representatively and not in His Own Divine Human.

The Divine uses of the Church in their order are at present only in their beginnings or initiaments. But still these initiaments are in the Human form from the Lord. Many in the Church are not yet in this order, but the beginning of the Divine order of the Church is present, - the initiament of use.

We are brought slowly, more and more, into this order just to the extent that we love and view others in the Church not primarily as to their person, but as to their use, which is the Lord's with them.

It may be said that the difference between heaven and hell is that in hell, all desire to be loved and esteemed as to their person, and thence to love and esteem others as to their person. While in heaven, all desire to love and esteem the uses of others, which they perceive to be from the Lord, and thence desire to be loved in return as to their use which they also ascribe wholly to the Lord. In heaven the love is from use, to use for the sake of use. In hell it is from person to person for the sake of self. Particularly is this true between married partners; but we will treat of conjugal love and use in another class.

To love the use primarily and not the person appears to the natural man as cold and inhuman. While yet in loving the use and thence the person, are all the blessedness, joys, and delights of heaven; while in loving the person in the first place are all the miseries of hell.

Listen how we speak about others in the Church, how we praise or criticize; listen to what judgments of others we make; how we are attracted to one by natural sympathies and turn ourselves from others from a feeling of natural aversion or personal feelings. How we praise one who has said or done something which pleases us, and criticize one who has said or done some thing which has annoyed us; and you will observe how most conversation is worthless or worse than worthless, for the reason that the mind is directed to the person and not to the use.

We read: "In the Lord's view, the whole human race is as one man... It is not the men themselves who so appear; but the uses with them. Those who do good uses, that is those who do uses from the Lord, appear as a perfect and beautiful man. But they who do uses solely for the sake of self and the world as an imperfect and ugly man." (D. Love IV).

Every man from his proprium naturally feels an aversion towards the Doctrine of use, such a doctrine appears hard and cold to him as we read:

"The statement that the joy which the angels have exists when they are in the use of performing the things of love and charity sounds hard to those who are in joy solely from the love of self and the world..... Yet the joy of heaven first begins in man when his regard for self in the uses he performs expires." (A.C. 5511)

Let us come to believe that in the uses which we perform from the Lord, there is such great joy, and in loving others from use and according to use there is a happiness of life that is inexpressible.

AMEN