

# Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc

Organisational Details are provided on the next page

DECEMBER 2013

ISSUE 74



## PERSONAL VALUES



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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friend and Reader,

Welcome to this the last edition of the Candela for 2013. What a year it has been! This year's editions of the Candela have covered a range of topics and have been graced with wonderful and sharing contributions. They include poems, images, cartoons, essays and other written pieces. To all contributors "thank you" for the time and effort you have made in preparing your pieces to the Candela community. Special mention must once more be made of Ruth Duckworth's tireless efforts in pulling together the Candela for us all. Thank you Ruth!

As we rapidly move towards the celebration of Christmas we will be caught up, to greater and lesser extents, with the hurly-burly for modern day living. Hopefully you will be able to find some peace and quiet to consider your

personal values and how they relate to or are enriched by Christmas. Christmas is a very important time for sharing and feasting. Swedenborg tells us in different passages that to feast signifies the worship of the Lord from a joyful mind. Feasts also signify the good of charity. So as we all share in the Christmas feast I hope that some of the inner significations resonate within you, those whom you love and the world at large.

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Two copies of this Newsletter are being sent to members as usual, the second for giving away.

**Next Issue – February 2014**

**Theme – Correspondences**

We have a very wide theme for the next issue, correspondences which I hope it will inspire lots of you to write articles, short stories, poems or even do some art work.

To make my December less busy next year I have decided to bring all the issues of Candela forward by one month. So you don't have so long to write an article this time, but hopefully you will have time to relax in January and put pen to paper.

The deadline is **1<sup>st</sup> February**.

Thank you to everyone who wrote for this edition.

Ruth

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Membership of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc. is open to anyone who wishes to pursue an interest in Swedenborg, the man, his science and his spiritual teachings.

For details on how to join, call (02) 9888 1066 or browse [www.swedenborg.com.au](http://www.swedenborg.com.au), go to 'Organisation' in the menu and click on 'Membership.'

**Please Note:** The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the Swedenborg Association of Australia or its Committee.

\* \* continued from page 1 \* \*

Shortly following Christmas we have the New Year which is a time of transition. Hopefully you will all find some time to relax and replenish yourselves for the new year ahead. Even in the roar of summer it is a fine time to sit in the shade under a tree to read and ponder, maybe even with a good wine to imbibe.

So Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all. Wishing you all Peace and Blessings from the Lord for a safe and happy time now and throughout the new year.

With love and best wishes

*Robert*

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In 2014 issues of Candela will be printed in February, May, August and November.

## Secretary's Report

By Jan Primrose

At our AGM the new committee was voted in. We would like to welcome two new members to our committee, Jennifer Danckert and Tracey Glendenning. The full committee is listed to the left.

We look forward to leading the SAA through the coming year; we have already had our first meeting and are working on some new ideas.

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Swedenborg Association.

**Michelle Knight** Mascot NSW,  
**Karen Van der Veen** Avalon NSW,  
**Chris Milligan** Monterey NSW

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## Wrapped in swaddling clothes

By Matthew Genzlinger

The swaddling clothes represent truths of Divine Love. Simply put, these are teachings about loving the neighbour. We cannot have innocence in our lives without love towards the neighbour. The whole of the Word teaches us how to be more loving people. The Lord, who is love itself, wants to share what is His own with others and make them happy. We can connect with the Lord by learning to love as He loves.



The image of the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger illustrates where we can find the Lord. The manger represents the spiritual nourishment the Lord gives us in His Word. Swaddling clothes remind us of the innocence we need in approaching the Lord and the love for the neighbour. This Christmas make room for the Lord in your life by seeking Him in His Word and sharing His love with others.



## God's Care of all infants

*By Christopher V. A. Hasler*

**"I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."**

This is a quote from Psalm 139.14, and no one can disagree with this statement as science is ever making new discoveries about our bodies and how they function. And yet, for thousands (perhaps millions) of years our bodies have functioned in that way, so that in a way, nothing much has changed.

Yet every child that is born is truly a new being with an entirely new heredity, and even its birth is far more complicated than any animal's. In fact, every child born is immature and there are several reasons for it. Human beings have a larger brain, and this brain is not completed for some time after the birth. If we were to be born with a fully developed brain and skull, our head would have to be much bigger and the mother would have to have a much larger pelvis, and the birth canal would also have to be larger for a fully developed child. In fact, for up to two years the child's brain and skull are developing, and something else - something wonderful - is happening during this time.



While the foetus is developing in the womb, it is in a state of innocence – the only state in which the Lord can be fully present, because He is Divine love and Divine peace itself. Therefore, during this period our brain and our mind are fully under the influence of the Lord and the angels : and there is a deep reason why this state is being maintained. We all receive our human heredity which has been accumulating from the beginning of

time! In other words, we inherit evil inclinations with all their greed and lusts and tendency to lie. Due to this selfish inheritance we are constantly being assaulted by evil (hellish) spirits who wish to encourage our selfish tendencies and so gain control over us.

However, during those early two years of our life, the hellish influences as yet do not have an entry into our developing mind because we are under the influence of the heavens. Perhaps at this point we should be reminded that we do not have any memories of those first two years. Try to see how far back you can go in remembering your childhood! During this time, heavenly influences are being implanted by the Lord and the angels - good experiences which will serve us in later life in fighting our selfishness - but they are being implanted secretly. Once our memory comes into play, and we are beginning to take control of our life, we begin to display the evil influences of greed, selfishness and bad temper, if we cannot get what we want. We could say, "This is where the battle of life begins and will continue until we die." The hells will be exploiting our weaknesses, and we shall give in to some, because this is also what we want! As we mature we shall most likely realise that these are temptations towards selfishness and greed. Perhaps the only consolation is that everyone is going through the same trials, and it is quite important to realise what is going on. Alas, we all carry the burdens of our ancestors – right back to the ancient peoples represented by Adam and Eve and from a spiritual viewpoint it is wise to take that early story in Genesis chapter 3 quite seriously because it is happening to us now! The Word is timeless.

We should learn to appreciate that the Lord (who loves us all whatever we may choose to become) is the only source of positive love in creation; and we may like to remember now and again that the only positive love in creation, including our love for our children and grandchildren, is received by us all from the Divine Source. It is wonderful to realize how close is the presence and love of our Lord in our family life.





The New Church teaches that the Lord is never angry, however badly we may behave; yet the old theology used to delight in presenting God the Father as an angry God who sends evil people into everlasting punishment in hell. But remember this: If the Lord's love were to be withdrawn from anyone, that person would cease to exist. We are all living because of His unchanging love – nothing else sustains our life. Nor did God the Father send His Son to be crucified! The Only God Himself descended to be linked with the human race, and thus to take control of all the influences of hell on every human mind. This is why the Gospels have very little to say about the life of Jesus, except that He was born in Bethlehem and was soon taken to Egypt because King Herod, tipped by the Wise Men that a new king was born in Bethlehem, put the life of Jesus at risk. The family had to take refuge in Egypt but returned after the death of Herod to Nazareth. The next thing we hear about Jesus is when He was 12, and the people of Nazareth made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; Jesus stayed behind in the Temple speaking to the Jewish scholars and rabbis. When rebuked by Mary, Jesus answered rather sharply by saying He was only doing His Father's business. After that we hear nothing for about 18 years when He started His public ministry which lasted just 3 years until His crucifixion. So what was He doing during all those 'unknown years'?

He was engaged in overcoming the power of the hells and moderating it, for mankind had become too weak and found it difficult to resist the constant temptations. This is why the One God had to become incarnate to overcome the constant pressure of the hells against mankind, so that, since then, the hells cannot exceed the heavenly influences upon mankind, and the powers are fairly balanced. The Lord's work of redemption is therefore still active when we are tempted, and it is good for us to bear it in mind when we are going through some difficulties and feel at times that "There is no hope for me!" Always, remember the Lord's love for you and how much He endured to make all things possible! The hells cannot take away our freedom, unless we "hand it to them on a plate!"

So let us end by remembering what we are told about those first two mysterious years of our life! Unlike any other creatures, we are subjected to a powerful heavenly influence from the Lord and the angels: a place is being provided for the Lord to be with us intimately in adult life when we are attacked by the hells, so that our freedom to choose between life and death is always preserved. Nothing can wipe away those experiences as if they never existed.

Indeed, we are all 'fearfully and wonderfully made' - within and without.



Editor's granddaughter enjoying playing Jesus in the Nativity Play. Photo by Eva Iken

**A note about this article.** *The major material has been gathered from Swedenborg's Spiritual Diary. Swedenborg had many visions which he described in his diary. Two translations of the Spiritual Diary have been printed but it is not easy to gather and relate material from the first edition (5 volumes) and the second (3 rather hefty volumes), and the headings of each experience appear to vary; so I have not included any numbers for reference. But if you do happen to have a copy see if you can find articles relating to angels and children – both on earth and in heaven. Remember that for the first two years of your life, you were one of those children!*



## ILLNESS - IS THERE A MORAL DIMENSION?

by John Maitland **PART TWO**

Continuation of a talk given to the North Ryde Group of the S.A.A. by John Maitland on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2007.

We are publishing this in acknowledgement of John who passed into the spiritual world last year.

*Heaven, which is the Grand Man, holds all things together in connection and safety; hell, being opposite, destroys and severs all things. (Arcana 5713)*

Second, how do the spirits in Hell actually bring about disease?

*There once appeared a great quadrangular opening that slanted downward to a considerable depth. In the deep was seen a round opening, which presently was closed. From it exhaled a dangerous heat, collected from various hells, and arising from lusts of various kinds, namely, arrogance, lewdness, adultery, hatred, revenge, quarrels, and strife; for from these arise in the hells such heat as was then exhaled. When it acted upon my body it instantly brought on disease like that of a burning fever; but when it ceased to flow in, this semblance of disease at once ceased. When a man contracts a disease by his manner of life, an unclean sphere corresponding to the disease forthwith attaches itself, and is present as a fomenting cause. That I might be certain of this, there have been spirits with me from a number of hells, through whom the sphere of exhalations thence was communicated; and according as it was allowed to act upon the solid parts of my body, I was seized with oppression, pain, even with the corresponding disease, which ceased in an instant when those spirits were driven away; and that no room for doubt might be left, this has been done a thousand times. (Arcana 5715)*

Third, Swedenborg also uses the concept of 'inundation' and links it to the right and left sides of the brain:

*... an inundation is twofold, one of lusts, and the other of falsities. That of lusts belongs to the will part, and is on the right side of the brain; but that of falsities belongs to the intellectual part, and is on the left side of the brain. When a man who has lived in good is remitted into selfhood, thus into the*

*sphere of his own life, there then appears as it were an inundation; and when he is in this inundation he is indignant and angry, thinks restlessly and desires impetuously. This takes place in one way when the left side of the brain where there are falsities is inundated, and in another when the right side where there are evils is inundated. But when the man is kept in the sphere of life which he had received from the Lord by regeneration, he is then entirely out of such an inundation, and is as it were in a serene and sunny, cheerful and happy state, thus far away from indignation, anger, unrest, lusts, and the like. (Arcana 5725)*



Finally, Swedenborg provides an account of how he believes illness first manifests itself in the body. Here he focuses on the blood and blood vessels. Swedenborg says that the source of death is sin, and since sin is contrary to Divine order evil closes the very smallest and invisible vessels, of which are composed the next larger ones, these also being invisible; for the vessels which are smallest of all and wholly invisible are continued from man's interiors. Hence comes the first and inmost obstruction, and hence the first and inmost vitiation of the blood. When this vitiation increases, it causes disease, and finally death. If however a man had lived a life of good, his interiors would be open to heaven, and through heaven to the Lord; and so too would the very least and most invisible little vessels (the traces of the first threads may be called little vessels, on account of the correspondence). In consequence man would be without disease, and would merely decline to extreme old age, until he became again a little child, but a wise one; and when the body could no longer minister to his internal man or spirit, he would pass without disease out of his earthly body such as the angels have, thus out of the world directly into heaven. (Arcana 5726)

(Illustration by the painter William Blake)



How helpful are these ideas in understanding illness in the 21st century? A medical researcher to-day would not receive funding for research into diseases based on Swedenborg's account of the nature and source of illness. Yet his own life illustrates his thinking. I do not think that Swedenborg's long life was just chance. Swedenborg, as successfully as any human being, appears to have resolved the polarities of living that we all face. His sanity, his serenity, his grace, his goodness are the marks of health. The manner of his death is that of a man at peace with himself and the world. If one reads his biographers carefully, it is possible to discover some of the tensions that he had to resolve during his life. The absence of anger and fear in his writings is remarkable.

However, his accounts of the nature of disease in various parts of the body as emanating from a variety of spirits in hell is unusual and certainly controversial. From our perspective in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, I think that we can say that Swedenborg's attempt to identify the causes of symptoms mixed philosophical understanding with physiological descriptions and thus led to what we consider to be strange statements. Given his belief that the source of life is The Lord (who is Love and Wisdom), that heaven and spirit find expression in matter and the body, his account of disease is logically valid. In *Heaven and Hell* he wrote that "For the mind which is spirit, acts, and the body, which is matter, is acted upon." (128) If we accept these accounts of the nature of sickness it seems valid to say that illness has a moral dimension.

It is important to remember how Swedenborg came to his conclusions. His religious upbringing, his scientific education, his first visit to England and his work as Mines Assessor, all combined to stimulate his imagination and led him to seek the chain of causes behind the visible world. He sought to account for the origin and structure of matter. These studies led to his formulation of the Doctrine and Series of Degrees and to the conclusion that living matter could only assume its multitudinous forms as a result of a positive directing force. This was the soul. He quoted Grotius with approval:

*As well might we believe that stones and timbers come together by chance into the form*

*of a house or that an accidental concourse of letters produce a poem.*

(Toksvig, p.103 )

Toksvig's summary of the issue is both succinct and striking:

*It [the body] is something that is fabricated by the soul for its own purposes. Once the body is made it has a certain reciprocal relationship with the soul, but the latter, besides being the manufacturer, is the maintainer and repairer of the body as long as the thing is repairable.* (Toksvig, p.104)

Swedenborg reached these conclusions after exhaustive studies of the blood, the brain, and the heart with leading anatomists of his day and after detailed study of the embryo of the chicken. He concluded that the directing force of the body's development was within the embryo itself.

It is interesting to speculate, if he were alive to-day with the far greater understanding of how the body functions, whether he would account for the origins of disease in terms of spirits in hell which destroy and sever all things in contrast with the Grand Man who holds all things together in connection and safety.

If we were suffering severe oppression and pain in the abdomen or numbness in the joints, how helpful is the following account in relieving the condition?

*There were spirits with me who induced so severe an oppression in the abdomen that I felt as if I were dying. The oppression was so great that with others It would have brought on a swoon. But they were removed, and then it at once ceased. I was told that these spirits in the life of the body had been devoted to no serious pursuit, even a domestic one, but solely to pleasure, and besides had lived in foul idleness and sloth, and had not cared anything for others. Moreover, they had despised their faith. In short, they had been animals, not men. Their sphere produces numbness in the members and joints of the sick. (Arcana 5723)*

When we are slothful, joints and muscles atrophy but do they necessarily go numb and why do such spirits cause severe abdominal discomfort? However, Swedenborg's central idea, that physical symptoms have their origin at the spiritual level, has very strong support from many sources both medical and non-medical.





A few examples were given at the beginning of this paper. We may reject his detailed accounts of how symptoms manifest in the various bodily systems while accepting the core insights which he provides on the subject.

Philip Groves provides some examples of how the emotions manifest in physical symptoms. In his paper "The Diagnosis of Health" he writes:

*Emotional life is rooted in the visceral organs and is regulated by the autonomic nervous system, the limbic system, the hypothalamus and the endocrine glands. ... Many chronic ailments arise from the chronic action of powerful emotions upon various organs and body segments.*

#### Here are some examples:

Throat trouble, pharyngitis and stricture of the throat are often the result of anxiety. The very word 'anxiety' means 'to clutch at the throat'. It is also the outcome of long-lasting, unresolved grief. In some people the pharyngeal plexus is repressed by emotional forces which try to prevent a person talking about various things which are supposedly forbidden.

Gall Stones quite often are associated with states of jealousy or resentment and especially chronic feelings of being imposed upon.

Rheumatism is commonly associated with a number of long standing emotional states. There is often chronic setting of muscles, tendons, and ligaments to acts of resentment which, for reasons of moral conviction, or fear, are never performed. There is also cynicism, criticism and antagonism. Not infrequently these are repressed states that do not show up in consciousness. Indeed, many of these patients are mild-mannered, quiet and inoffensive people, but they are victims of unresolved emotion. (In *Philosophy of Natural Healing*, pp.83-84)

I will give one further modern example. Two modern authors, Thorwald Dethlefsen and Rudiger Dahlke in the Foreword to their stimulating book *The Healing Power of Illness*, write that (This book) deprives people of illness as an alibi for their unresolved problems. We propose to show that the patient is not the innocent victim of some quirk of nature, but actually the author of his or her own sickness ... . From this viewpoint symptoms are seen to be bodily expressions of psychological conflicts, able through their symbolism to reveal the patient's current problems. (p.vii)

Their discussion of high blood pressure illustrates their claim. Blood has several important characteristics: it symbolizes life, it is both the physical vehicle of life and is the

expression of our individuality. Every drop of blood contains the whole person.

Blood pressure is an expression of our dynamism and involves two elements in tension – the flow of the blood and the resistance it meets in the walls of the blood vessels. Hence the resistance provided by the walls of the blood vessels symbolise the limits we may set ourselves in the flow of our lives.

In hypertonia (high blood pressure) we have a phenomenon in which thinking about an issue can raise our BP as well as the increase in pressure caused by physical activity.

*The raised blood-pressure has its physiological justification precisely in temporarily supplying more energy so that the tasks and conflicts facing us can be dealt with more efficiently and energetically. If this happens, the applied solution uses up then excess energy, and the pressure sinks back to its normal value. But those with hypertonia fail to resolve their conflicts, and the result is that the excess pressure is not used up. Rather do they take refuge in superficial 'busyness', attempting through great external activity to divert both themselves and others from the challenge actually to get to grips with the conflict. (The Healing Power of Illness, p.197)*



Hypertonia is a sign of frustrated aggression. It is more common in men. The real hostility is stuck at the conceptual level and the extra energy is not appropriately discharged. People with high blood-pressure are often people who place great emphasis on self-restraint. The aggressive impulse raises the pressure but the blood vessels contract to keep the pressure under control if the extra energy is not discharged. Swedenborg would have understood this account of the meaning of



hypertonia. In fact, he would probably have provided the explanation!

These descriptions of how emotion and physical symptoms are related to one another give both meaning to our illnesses and demonstrate the primacy of mental and emotional states over their physical manifestations. They also point to the presence of a moral dimension to much of illness. We may not follow Swedenborg uncritically in his account of the mind/body relationship, especially with regard to illness, but his wonderful analysis of that relationship provides us with a pathway to the discovery of meaning in our illness. If we discover that meaning early enough, it may enable us to attain healing and not just change in physical symptoms.

Swedenborg understood the universe as the expression of Love and Wisdom emanating from The Lord. He taught that when we seek to express Love and find Wisdom for their own sakes we are healthy. When we pursue them, not for their own sakes but for other uses, we are ill.

Psalm 139 reminds us that the One from whom we have our being knows us in the greatest intimacy. We cannot hide from him. To seek the Lord above all else is the first step towards health.

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## Christmas Word Search

J K V L H J N O S R D G N I R A H S G Z  
A J C Q H F O T W E Z T N C E P O H A O  
T Z S E M A F K H G M X I Y L I M A F J  
H G D V L I R A I N I R Y T I R A H C Y  
A A R E G E P M L A E M M E G P G Z U V  
I L E D N P B C O M P A S S I O N T G Z  
S P H H I T N R E N N D V I O H I R Q J  
S S P N V P S M A G Y E I A N J R A O J  
E H E V O G B G E T U M R R U Y A D D B  
M S H N L E N L F O I C G P T T C I S V  
S V S E R I M D Z D F O I I Z N G T R V  
C M E I S E L F L E S S N E S S A I E B  
P H N S T Y H I Y N A A B E E R Z O D E  
H G E E L K H T V T I R I P S U Z N E S  
L L F E E C D Q E T S I R H C S U S E J  
B U L V R R H S S G B E T H L E H E M Q  
N S A L V A T I O N O Y H M T M O E E Z  
L T B O W O R S H I P T Z S A V I O R Y  
Y C S P I H S D N E I R F G F R D O K R  
J O D E C I F I R C A S I K K L Y W S U

## Swedenborg's words and terms

### Being [esse]

Swedenborg uses the Latin word *esse* to mean the essential quality of a thing, reality itself, God's fundamental essence, i.e. divine love.

### Divine Human

The central idea in the theology of the New Church, this term applies to the Lord Jesus Christ after glorification of his human, thus divine love in human form – "all the fullness of Deity living in bodily form." (Colossians 2:9)



### Ruling Love

The strongest love in a person that dominates his or her life. Four possible ruling loves are named: love of (1) God, (2) neighbour. (3) self, (4) world.

Only (1) and (2) are considered acceptable ruling loves for a regenerating person.

**LOVE  
GOD  
AND  
LOVE YOUR  
NEIGHBOUR**

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ANGEL	BETHLEHEM
BLESSING	BORN
CARING	CELEBRATION
CHARITY	CHEER
CHILD	CHRISTIANITY
COMPASSION	FAMILY
FRIENDSHIPS	GIFTS
GLEE	HAPPINESS
HARMONY	HOPE
INN	JESUS CHRIST
LOVING	MAGI
MANGER	MARY
MESSIAH	PRAISE
REDEEMER	RELIGION
REMEMBERING	SACRIFICE
SALVATION	SAVIOR
SELFLESSNESS	SHARING
SHEPHERDS	SON
SPIRIT	STAR
TOGETHERNESS	TRADITIONS
TREE	VIRGIN BIRTH
WORSHIP	

by Charles Timmerman





## ALL RELIGION IS ABOUT LIFE, AND RELIGIOUS LIFE IS ABOUT DOING GOOD

By Julian Duckworth

This is the opening to one of Swedenborg's books called 'Doctrine of Life' in which he uses the Ten Commandments in quite an original way. A bit later in the same book, he writes that so far as we shun bad actions as sins against God, so far we will start to love what is true and good. Then he says that the Ten Commandments show us what are the bad actions, and then he lists them. And then he takes the main ones and puts them as a kind of equation, like this –

When you shun all kinds of murder as sins, then you'll love your neighbour.

When you shun all kinds of adultery as sins, then you'll love pure feelings.

When you shun all kinds of theft as sins, then you'll love sincerity.

And so on.

Isn't that good! Notice what's happening. Turning away from the bad will bring in the good because there isn't a spiritual vacuum. It makes a lot of sense. Usually we do our best to try and be good, and better than we might have been, and we do this because we can see the good things we want to be like, and so we try and get there by ourselves. But Swedenborg would say, 'Hang on a minute. You can't just start being good like that. It's not going to work. You've got to deal with a lot of things you feel and want and think about because these are our lower nature, these are what we are like, all of us at times. Deal with them by turning from them as wrong, and you will set the scene for the beginning of the very things you're trying to be like and not succeeding that well.'

I think Swedenborg is saying that we can often paint over the cracks. I can see, for example, that reacting to someone being critical of me – or just being very honest with me – is not a good thing. I get upset and hurt and the memory of the words said can linger on for ages in my mind. So I try and stay calm and level-headed because that feels a good thing to be like and I tell myself that this is me from now on. I might add to this the thought that anyone who is being critical of me doesn't understand me or has a problem in handling things, or that they should start putting their

own house in order. I now feel well-equipped and starting to get somewhere...

And then fairly soon, someone criticises me and I immediately react, just like before. Up come the same old feelings. I feel bad, useless, a failure, and hostile. The one thing I haven't done is to acknowledge that I do react and I haven't really made any decision about its place in me apart from vainly telling myself I won't react in the future.

Reacting is very human and we all do it to some extent. Realising this should take away a lot of the guilt about it, knowing we share this with most other people. Reacting – saying things back or sulking – is not a sin. It's perfectly normal even though it's a real nuisance and it isn't good. What is a sin in it is that we start thinking terrible things about the person who criticised us – we hate them, we could murder them maybe, and we wish they would go to hell. Why are such feelings a sin? Well, look at them... we are simply condemning this other person because they touched a raw nerve in us and pointed out a truth about us. The truth hurts.



So we have now discovered something important, that we are capable of anger and resentment; not only that but that we can direct it at someone in violent seething ways. We've identified the sin and if we are going to break the vicious circle we need to shun such a sin as being against God. 'Shunning' is a very strong word; it is not about messing around or playing games. It is about declaring that that hatred or that wish to murder someone is totally unacceptable. This has ....



been recognised and now we wish to not have it as part of us. We have made this big decision. We're not denying our feelings or that we're quite capable of having them.

This, though, is not the end of the story. We will still react – which as I said is perfectly normal – and in all probability we will still feel bad feelings. But – and it's a big but – we now understand it much more, and why it happens, and we accept the reality. And we've made our decision to shun the sudden rage as no longer acceptable for us. We are starting to break its hold on us.

It's at this point that several new thoughts and feelings will begin to show themselves to us. We will see other people more realistically as people who struggle like we do. And that is okay. We may start thinking that everybody has things to cope with and contend with, and that that's okay too. We may begin to find that we don't get so worked up about things that get said, and that's obviously more okay. We might even laugh at such moments in life or at least smile about them, without rancour. And we might concede that yes, this person has a point! And we love them for being who they are. And that is the real okay in it.

And while all this is only an illustration, it describes the equation we began with, that so far as we turn from things as sins against God, so far we will come to love the opposite of them. Another way of putting it is to say that it is the way God heals us, but it involves us in turning ourselves around to be able to receive the healing. This is so different from our perennial trying to be good, get it right, keep on going, hope it works, that does not get us anywhere. I believe Swedenborg is on the right track with his version.

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## Correspondences

### INNS

Inns are places where a weary traveller can rest and find refreshment after a day's journey. They are welcome stops for us now and they were also common in ancient times where they were given the names 'khan' or 'caravanserai'. Water, feeding boxes for animals and a roofed place to sleep were provided. Spiritually, an 'inn' stands for a truth or a new realisation which provides help, comfort and rest for people in their search for



life's meaning within their own experience of life which may be difficult for them. Such a truth becomes a support for people from then on in their next period of travelling through life. People who want to reach out to others with refreshing truths are like innkeepers. In the gospels, the Christmas story says that Jesus was born and laid in a manger because there was no room in the inn, and the Good Samaritan first helps the wounded man and then takes him to an inn for more care.

### STAR



The clear night sky is bejewelled with clusters of stars which to us make curious patterns we give names to, or constellations. Each star may be at an incredible distance from others and be a massive sphere, but to us it is a pinpoint of light. This pinpoint gives it its correspondence which is about a guiding even twinkling truth. One star in an otherwise dark sky is enough to provide sure direction for our journey. Such a guiding truth may be that all that happens in life has a purpose, and, like stars covering the sky, there are many other such truths to guide us.

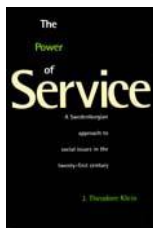
The Christmas story tells of the wise men seeking the new birth, who followed a star which led them until it stopped over Bethlehem, where they came to Jesus and worshipped him. The star transformed into a living being, into God born into this world, our world.



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## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- **Brisbane:** Ian Arnold on (07) 3841 2552;
- **Gold Coast:** Kevin Attwater on (07) 55452401 and Jack Benson on (07) 55454115;
- **Melbourne:** Chris Skinner on (03) 94320322; email: cskinner9@optusnet.com.au;
- **Sydney region:** Michael Chester on (02) 98881066; email: michael@swedenborg.com.au;

It would be good to establish Groups in other areas. If you can help, please contact Michael Chester.

Our website is updated regularly. Go to meetings on [www.swedenborg.com.au](http://www.swedenborg.com.au) for more details. Please let us know if you would like to be informed via email.

**Brisbane:** New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie.

**Melbourne:** New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley.  
Last Fridays commencing 8pm.

**Sydney:** Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde.

## I Believe

I believe that the sun shines after the rain  
I believe if you don't get hurt you'll never gain  
I believe in not doing things the easy way  
I believe that being selfish doesn't pay

I believe in a second chance  
I believe in a life long romance  
I believe there is life after death  
And standing up to a life of mess

I believe in love at first sight  
I believe that revenge isn't right  
I believe that first impressions last  
And there is nothing better then a good laugh

I believe that dreams do come true  
I believe there's destiny for me and you  
I believe that good things come to those who wait  
I believe love never arrives too late

I believe something good comes from something bad  
I believe that for tears of happiness there are tears of sad  
I believe everyone has a guardian angel  
And the good you do will be rewarded well

I believe sometimes there is no explanation  
I believe money can't buy people's affection  
I believe you don't know what you've got until it's gone  
I believe a new day arrives with every dawn

I believe a smile can be contagious  
I believe in being very outrageous  
I believe in living with no regrets  
I believe that life is as good as it gets

I believe that God watches over us  
I believe the little things are worth the fuss  
I believe you have each friend for a reason  
I believe you will get punished for treason

I believe that what comes first is family  
I believe we should all live in harmony  
I believe in making the most of a beautiful day  
And it's not the end until everything's okay

I believe absence makes the heart grow fonder  
I believe you will lose if you sit and wonder  
I believe every experience teaches you a lesson  
And nothing cures better then a drinking session

I believe everyone has one true love  
I believe sometimes we need a little shove  
I believe the whole world is a stage  
I believe we only get better with age

I believe that to learn you have to live  
I believe that to love someone you have to give  
I believe one moment can change your life  
And there's still help when you're in strife

I believe everyone has one true friend  
I believe love helps a broken heart mend  
I believe in the power of a song  
And things will change before too long

I believe living is the best experience  
I believe in not laughing at other people's expense  
I believe it's hard to watch a lover leave  
And when they're gone all you can do is breathe

I believe to always look on the bright side  
I believe that life is just one big ride  
I believe when I die people will grieve  
But it's ok because I believe

**Kayla Neil**