

Questions and Comments

1. In what ways might New Church people feel that they are “rescued” or given a pass “to steal, murder, and commit adultery, and promise falsely”? In what ways might we make the Lord's house a den of robbers?
2. If the Lord *could* fix one thing about you apart from the rest, what would you wish for? Why wouldn't that work?
3. Isn't it amazing that the Lord sets some outmost things “under man's control” and “in the scope of his freedom,” and that everything else the Lord does for us rests on our free choices? All of this is so that our life's love can be radically changed, in our freedom.
4. “For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.” “So far as a man shuns evils as sins, so far he does what is good, not from himself but from the Lord” (Life 18). What is an evil you would really like to be done with and free from? What is an opposite good that you would love to be able to do from the heart?
5. There are 19 more quotes in DP 128, showing that “a life after death is allotted to everyone according to his deeds.” What is one of your favorites on this subject?

The Laws of the Divine Providence



You shall know them by their fruits. (Matthew 7:20)

Put away evils in the external man

It is a law of the Divine Providence that man should, as if from himself, put away evils in the external man; and the Lord is able in this way and in no other to put away evils in the internal man and simultaneously in the external.

Week 2

Outline of the Chapter

DP 102. As it has not been known that man ought as of himself to remove the evils in the external man, and that unless man does so as of himself the Lord cannot remove the evils that are in his internal man, therefore these propositions will be presented to reason in its own light in the following order:

I. <i>Every man has an external and an internal of thought.</i>	Day 1
II. <i>The external of man's thought is in itself of the same nature as its internal.</i>	Day 2
III. <i>The internal cannot be purified from the lusts of evil as long as the evils in the external man are not removed, because they form an obstruction.</i>	Day 3
IV. <i>Evils in the external man cannot be removed by the Lord except through man's instrumentality.</i>	Day 3-4
V. <i>Therefore man ought as of himself to remove evils from the external man.</i>	Day 4
VI. <i>The Lord then purifies man from the lusts of evil in the internal man, and from the evils themselves in the external.</i>	Day 5
VII. <i>It is the continual endeavor of the Divine Providence of the Lord to unite man to Himself and Himself to man in order that He may be able to bestow upon man the felicities of eternal life; and this can be done only so far as evils with their lusts are removed.</i>	Day 6

from inmosts to ultimates are totally unknown to man, and man is therefore quite unaware of how the Lord operates and what He accomplishes there. But as those things are linked together as one with the ultimates, man does not need to know more than that he should shun evils as sins and look to the Lord. In this and in no other way can his life's love, which by birth is infernal, be removed by the Lord and a heavenly life's love be implanted in its place.

DP 126. When the Lord has implanted a heavenly life's love in place of the infernal one, then affections of good and truth are implanted in place of the lusts of evil and falsity; and delights of the affections of good are implanted in place of the delights of the lusts of evil and falsity; and the goods of heavenly love are implanted in place of the evils of infernal love. Then also prudence is implanted instead of cunning, and thoughts of wisdom instead of thoughts of malice. Thus man is born again and becomes a new man....

DP 128. Everyone knows from the Word that the life allotted to each after death is according to his deeds. If you open the Word and read it you will see this clearly; but while doing so take the thoughts away from faith and justification by faith alone. The few passages that follow testify that the Lord teaches this everywhere in His Word:

Every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you shall know them. Matt. 7:19, 20

Many will say to me in that day, Lord ... have we not prophesied in thy name ... and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you that work iniquity. Matt. 7:22, 23....

Stand in the gate of the house of Jehovah, and proclaim there this word.... Thus says Jehovah of Armies, the God of Israel: Make your ways and your actions good... Do not trust in lying words, saying, The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these. Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and promise falsely... and come and stand before Me in this house, upon which My name is called, and say, We are rescued, while you do all these abominations? ...Behold, I, even I, have seen it, says Jehovah.

Jeremiah 7:2-4, 9-11

DP 125. These angelic secrets [*that the Lord acts on all things simultaneously, and that He acts from inmosts and outmosts simultaneously*] are stated here in order that it may be understood how the Lord's Divine Providence operates to unite man to Himself and Himself to man. This operation does not act upon any particular of man separately but upon all things at the same time, and is effected from the inmost of man and from his ultimates at the same time.

The inmost of man is his life's love, his ultimates are what reside in the external of his thought, and intermediates are what reside in the internal of his thought. It has been shown in the preceding numbers what the nature of these is in a wicked man.

From these considerations it is again made clear that the Lord cannot act from inmost things and ultimates at the same time except together with man, for in ultimates man and the Lord are together. Therefore as man acts in ultimates that are matters of his choice, because they are within the scope of his freedom, so the Lord acts from his inmost things and in the things ranging in series to his ultimates.

The things that are in man's inmosts and in the series

DP 100. ...Evil is the opposite of good, and falsity is the opposite of truth; and two opposites can in no way mingle together, but when one approaches the other a combat takes place, which lasts till one gives way to the other....

DP 100:2. This opposition is meant by Abraham's words from heaven to the rich man in hell (Luke 16:26):

Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they who would pass from here to you cannot; neither can they pass to us who want to come from there.

DP 101. Many, however, especially those who have confirmed themselves in a faith separated from charity, do not know that they are in hell when they are in evils.... They say, moreover, that because they cannot contribute anything to their salvation, they cannot remove any evil from themselves; and, further, that they cannot do any good from themselves. They neglect to give any thought to evil, and [so]... they are in evil continually.

DP 101:2. For those who give no thought to the evils in themselves, that is, who do not examine themselves and afterwards refrain from evils, cannot but be ignorant of what evil is and then love it because of its delight. For he who does not know evil loves it, and he who neglects to think about it is continually in it.... If such people abstain from doing evils they do not abstain because these are sins against God, but because they are afraid of the laws and of their reputation. They still do evils in their spirit, for it is man's spirit that thinks and wills; and therefore what a man thinks in his spirit in the world, he does when he becomes a spirit after his departure from the world.

DP 101:3. In the spiritual world, into which every man comes after death, the question that is asked is not, What

was your faith, or what was your doctrine? but, What was the nature of your life? Was it of this or that quality? Thus the inquiry is concerning the nature and quality of the life; for it is known that such as one's life is, such is his faith and also his doctrine, because the life fashions doctrine and faith for itself....

DP 103. *I. Every man has an external and an internal of thought....*

DP 104. ...This is clear to anyone who observes carefully the thoughts and intentions of another as exhibited in his speech and actions, and who observes also his own thoughts and intentions when he is in company and when he is alone. For anyone can talk with another in a friendly way from external thought, and yet be at enmity with him in internal thought.... Those do so who are in the lusts of evil and who yet wish it to appear before the world that they are not in them.

DP 104:2. ...That both exterior and interior thought are given to man is clearly evident from this fact, that from his interior thought he can view his exterior thought, reflect upon it and pass judgment on it, deciding whether it is evil or not evil.... Unless man had... an external and an internal of thought he would not be able to perceive and view any evil in himself and be reformed; in fact, he would not be able to speak, but only to utter sounds like a beast.

DP 105. The internal of thought is from the life's love and its affections and consequent perceptions; while the external of thought is from the contents of the memory, which minister to the life's love as confirmations and as means to further its end....

Questions and Comments

1. Why is "condemns himself" a necessary part of repentance? What does it mean, and what does it not mean?
2. Why is it insufficient to pray to God the Father and not to the Lord?
3. How does the Holy Supper keep us looking to the Lord alone?
4. Isn't it amazing and wonderful that the Lord's continual effort is to bestow on us the felicities of eternal life? What does this teach us about how we treat each other?
5. Why can't the Lord just give eternal happiness to everyone? What does this teach us about how we are to love each other?
6. The Lord never "fixes" just one thing about us but always treats us holistically. Yet He does work with us on even our smallest traits. "The Lord's providence is universal because it is in particulars, and it is particular because it is universal" (DP 124:3e). But we, since we do not see our whole nature and how everything is interconnected are encouraged to pick out one or two evils to focus on.
7. It is wonderful to think of the Lord being with us here in ultimates, ruling or guiding all things in us from highest loves to lowest deeds and habits.

Supper, everyone is kept looking to the Lord alone.

DP 123. VII. *It is the continual endeavor of the Lord's Divine Providence to unite man to Himself and Himself to man in order that He may be able to bestow upon man the felicities of eternal life, and this can be done only so far as evils with their lusts are removed....*

DP 123:4. This is because the Lord is not only Divine Love but also Divine Wisdom, and Divine Love does nothing except from its own Divine Wisdom and according to it. Moreover, it is according to His Divine Wisdom that man cannot be united to the Lord and thus reformed, regenerated and saved unless he is permitted to act from freedom according to reason, for by this man is man....

DP 124. Two interior arcana of angelic wisdom, from which the nature of the Divine Providence may be seen:

1. *The Lord in no way acts upon any particular thing in man separately but upon all things at the same time.* The reason is that all things of man are linked together in such a connected series and through this connection in such a form that they act not as many but as one....

DP 124:3. The Lord also acts upon every particular thing in man singly, even most singly, but at the same time through all things of his form, yet without changing the state of any part, or of anything in particular, unless in accord with the form as a whole....

DP 124:4. 2. *The Lord acts from inmost things and from ultimates at the same time.* In this way all things in general and in particular are held together in a connected series... [for] all are in ultimates at the same time.... For this reason also the Lord from eternity or Jehovah came into the world and there put on the Human in ultimates... so that from first things by means of ultimates He might rule the whole world and thus save men....

Questions and Comments

1. The first point is that good and evil are **opposites**, so evil must be removed before good can flow in. This is very inconvenient to the unregenerate natural man. No wonder there is such a tendency to blur the difference between good and evil. Can you think of examples of blurring the "great gulf" between good and evil?
2. Evil must be "removed." This does not mean completely eradicated, but moved out of the center of our life to the circumferences. Another phrase is "put away," or put out of the way.
3. What are some keys to reflecting on the evils in our attitudes and habits in a healthy way, so as to remove them, rather than feeling hopeless?
4. "In the spiritual world... it is not asked what your belief has been... but what your life has been." What does this imply about the way we treat fellow New Churchmen or fellow Christians with different beliefs?
5. What an amazing gift, that we can reflect on our own thoughts and judge whether they are good or bad! What are some helpful questions to ask ourselves in order to discern the quality of our external thoughts?
6. The way we live determines our life's love. Our ruling love determines our internal thought, and this in turn draws agreeable things out of the memory to serve our life's love.

What king, going to wage war with another king, does not sit down first and consult whether it be possible with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Otherwise, while he is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and beseeches conditions of peace. So, therefore, everyone of you who does not renounce all things that belong to him cannot be My disciple.

Luke 14:31-33

DP 106. II. *The external of man's thought is in itself of the same nature as its internal....* Man from head to foot is of the same character as his life's love.... Loves are manifold; but two of them, heavenly love and infernal love, are like lords and kings. Heavenly love is love to the Lord and towards the neighbor, and infernal love is love of self and of the world.... He who is in the love of self and of the world has goodwill to none but himself, while he who is in love to the Lord and love towards the neighbor has goodwill to all men....

DP 106:2. ...The derivations of infernal love are affections of evil and falsity, properly called lusts, and the derivations of heavenly love are affections of good and truth, properly called ardent desires.... Love dwells in its affections as a lord in his domain or as a king in his kingdom.... Man's life's love, by means of its affections and their consequent perceptions, and by means of its delights and their consequent thoughts, rules the entire man....

DP 107. ...Heavenly love... may be compared to a tree distinguished for its branches, leaves and fruits. The life's love is the tree, the branches with their leaves are the affections of good and truth with their perceptions, and the fruits are the delights of the affections with their

Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a prudent man who built his house on the rock.... And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them shall be likened to a foolish man who built a house on the earth without a foundation.

Matthew 7:24, 26; Luke 6:46-49

DP 121. Many believe that man is purified from evils by merely believing what the Church teaches; some, that man is purified by doing good... others, by attending churches, listening to sermons, and especially by approaching the Holy Supper... and so on. Yet none of these cleanse man in the least unless he examines himself, recognizes his sins, acknowledges them, condemns himself for them and does the work of repentance by desisting from them; and unless he does all these things as of himself but still in acknowledgment from the heart that he does them from the Lord.

DP 121:2. Until he does these things, the actions just mentioned do not help at all, for they are merit-seeking or hypocritical.... But when evils have been put away the actions mentioned above are acts of their love, and they appear in heaven in the sight of angels as beautiful human beings, and as partners and companions of angels.

DP 122. But it should be fully understood that a man in doing the work of repentance ought to look to the Lord alone. If he looks to God the Father only, he cannot be purified; nor if he looks to the Father for the sake of the Son; nor if he looks to the Son as only a man. For there is one God, and He is the Lord.... In order that everyone in the work of repentance might look to the Lord alone, He instituted the Holy Supper, which confirms the remission of sins with those who repent. It does so because in that

Questions and Comments

1. What amazing love and respect for human freedom and life as of ourselves the Lord has! What does this imply about how we treat one another?
2. Have you had an experience of suddenly or gradually realizing that you were in some evil, or had a certain weakness, that you had been completely unaware of before? What brought it to your attention?
3. DP 117:2 says that "natural moralists," i.e., agnostic humanists, "believe that civil and moral life with its prudence accomplishes everything and Divine Providence nothing." This is probably the prevailing view among the elite. They believe that mankind can be good by following rational laws apart from religion. Why are they wrong?
4. DP 118 refers us to the last 3 chapters of *Doctrine of Life*. One is titled, "No one can shun evils as sins, so as to turn away from them interiorly, except by combats against them." Why is combat necessary? What is it like?
5. An illustration of the Lord's secret operation in our interiors is the involuntary or autonomic systems of our body: our heartbeat, digestion, the endocrine system, the immune system, all the ways the body repairs itself when injured, etc. We are hardly aware of any of these unless something goes wrong, usually because we have abused our bodies in some way.

thoughts. On the other hand, infernal love... may be compared to a spider and its surrounding web. The love is the spider, the lusts of evil and falsity with their inner subtleties are the net-like threads nearest the den of the spider; and the delights of these lusts with their crafty devices are the remoter threads, where flies are caught on the wing, entangled and eaten.

DP 109. It sometimes appears as if the external of man's thought in itself were not of the same character as the internal. This happens, however, because the life's love with its surrounding internals places beneath itself a deputy, called the love of means, and commands it to take heed and guard lest anything from its lusts should show itself. This deputy, therefore, from the cunning of its chief, the life's love, talks and acts in accordance with the civil institutions of the state, the moral principles of reason and the spiritual things of the Church. In the case of some people this is done with such craft and skill that no one sees that they are not such as their speech and actions seem to indicate, and at length from the habit of concealment, they scarcely know otherwise themselves....

DP 110. With those, however, who are in heavenly love, the internal and the external... act as one when they speak, nor do they know any difference between them.... If they are... merchants they trade from sincerity itself; if married they love their wives from chastity itself; and so on. The life's love of such also has the love of means as its deputy, which it teaches and leads to act from prudence, and which it clothes with the garments of zeal for the truths of doctrine and also for the goods of life.

Questions and Comments

1. What are some clues as to the nature of our life's love?
2. In the image of the fruit tree illustrating our life's love, with its affections of good and truth and their perceptions, and the enjoyments of affections with their thoughts, where do you think "emotions" might fit in?
3. The life's love rules the entire man. How then do we choose our life's love? How can our love be reformed and regenerated?
4. Since the life's love with its affections rules the entire man, we can see that we are not driven by bodily passions. Rather we *choose* to be driven by them because we love them—or else we choose to control them.
5. If in our thinking we make certain evils allowable, then we do them in spirit even if we don't do them physically for fear of the consequences (see DP 108). What difference does it make, then, whether or not we do evils, instead of just wish to do them?
6. Do you recall a time that you said one thing to one person and something quite different to a close friend? Can there be good reasons for hiding your real thoughts, as well as hypocrisy?
7. Can you think of someone who is especially good at always being 100% sincere?
8. One of the main points of this section is that we are all of one piece from inmost to outmost. We can't be good on the inside while being corrupt on the outside, though good people continue to battle their weaknesses in this life.

DP 118. V. *Therefore man ought as of himself to remove evils from the external man. This has already been proved....*

DP 119. VI. *The Lord then purifies man from the lusts in the internal man, and from the evils themselves in the external. The Lord then purifies man from the lusts of evil when the man as of himself removes the evils, because the Lord cannot purify him before this is done. For the evils are in the external man and the lusts of evil are in the internal man, and these are united like the roots and trunk of a tree. Therefore, unless the evils are removed no exit for the lusts is opened up, for the evils stand in the way and close the door, which cannot be opened by the Lord except by means of man, as was shown above. When, therefore, man as of himself opens the door, then the Lord roots out the lusts and the evils together.*

DP 120. Man knows nothing whatever about the interior state of his mind... and yet there are infinite things there.... For... his internal man is his spirit itself, and in it there are things as infinite or innumerable as there are in his body, and indeed more innumerable, for man's spirit is in its form a man, and all things belonging to it correspond to all things of man in his body. Now just as man has no knowledge from any sensation how his mind or soul operates on all things of his body jointly and singly, so neither does he know how the Lord operates on all things of his mind or soul, that is, on all things of his spirit. This operation is continual, and man has no part in it; but still the Lord cannot purify man from any lust of evil in his spirit or internal man so long as man keeps his external closed. Man keeps his external closed by means of evils, each of which seems to him as but one single evil, although there are infinite things in each; and when man removes one such evil the Lord removes the infinity of things in it....

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will have supper with him, and he with Me. Rev. 3:20

DP 116. Evils in the external man cannot be removed except by means of man, because it is of the Lord's Divine Providence that whatever a man hears, sees, thinks, wills, says and does should appear to be entirely as his own.... Without this appearance there would be with man no reception of Divine Truth, no determination to do good, no appropriation of love and wisdom... and so no conjunction with the Lord... and thus no salvation....

Let anyone who is willing consult his reason as to whether it does not appear that a man thinks from himself about good and truth, spiritual as well as moral and civil. Let him then accept this tenet of doctrine that everything that is good and true is from the Lord and nothing from man. Must he not then acknowledge this consequence: that a man ought to do good and think truth as of himself, but yet should acknowledge that he does these things from the Lord? And further that a man should remove evils as of himself but yet should acknowledge that he does so from the Lord?

DP 117. Many are not aware that they are in evils because they do not commit them outwardly, for they fear the civil laws and also the loss of reputation. And so from custom and the habit thus acquired they learn to shun evils as detrimental to their honor and interest. But if men do not shun evils from a principle of religion, because they are sins and against God, the lusts of evil with their delights still remain like polluted waters dammed up or stagnant. Let them examine their thoughts and intentions and they will find these lusts, provided they know what sin is.

Whoever looks on the wife of another to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. Matthew 5:28

DP 111. *III. The internal cannot be purified from the lusts of evil as long as the evils in the external man are not removed, because they stand in the way....*

DP 111:2. ...Lusts through their own delights produce evils; but when evils are believed to be allowable, which comes from consent of the will and the understanding, then the delights and the evils make one. It is well known that consent is deed; and this is what the Lord says [in Matthew 5 above]. It is the same with all other evils.

DP 112. ...For man to be purified from the lusts of evil, evils must be completely removed from the external man. For until this is done the lusts have no exit; and if there is no exit the lusts remain within and breathe out delights from themselves, and so urge man on to the consent and thus to the deed itself. Lusts enter the body through the external of thought; and therefore when there is consent in the external of thought, the lusts are at once in the body, the delight which is felt being there....

DP 112:2. ...Lusts with their delights may be compared to fire: the more fire is fed the more fiercely it burns, and the freer the course given to it the wider it spreads until, if in a city, it consumes the houses and, if in a forest, the trees. Lusts of evil are compared in the Word to fire, and their evils to the conflagration. The lusts of evil with their delights also appear in the spiritual world as fires, hell fire being nothing else....

DP 112:3. ...It is clearly evident that if evils in the external man are not removed, lusts with their delights grow and multiply. The more a thief steals the more he lusts to steal

till at length he cannot refrain.... It is well known that the love of ruling stemming from love of self increases in proportion as restraints are relaxed.... So far as evils in the external man are not removed their lusts multiply, and lusts increase in the degree that restraints are relaxed.

DP 113. A man is not able to perceive the lusts of his own evil. He does indeed perceive their delights, but he reflects little upon them; for delights captivate the thoughts and banish reflection. Therefore unless he knew from some other source that they are evil he would call them good, and from freedom according to the reason of his thought he would commit them; and when he does this he appropriates them to himself. So far as he confirms them as allowable he enlarges the court of his ruling love, which is his life's love.... Such a state in man cannot be changed except by the removal of evils in the external man, and in this way the lusts that cling to the evils are removed....

DP 114. *IV. Evils in the external man cannot be removed by the Lord except by means of man.* In all Christian Churches this tenet of doctrine has been accepted, that before a man approaches the Holy Communion he shall examine himself, see and acknowledge his sins, and do the work of repentance by desisting from them and rejecting them because they are from the devil; and that otherwise his sins are not forgiven, and he is condemned.... [In] the English Church... in the exhortation to the Holy Communion they openly teach self-examination, the acknowledgment and confession of sins, repentance and newness of life, threatening those who do not comply... that "the devil will... fill them with all iniquity and destroy both body and soul."

Questions and Comments

1. One thing this section shows is that it's not enough for us to pay attention to what we say and do. We also have to watch out for what our intentions are, and what we fantasize about. Internal consent to evil—it's OK for me to imagine doing this—makes one with the deed itself, even if we don't dare to actually do it.
2. Likewise, if we are habitually doing bad things in some areas of our life, we cannot claim to be good in other areas of life. The Lord cannot pull up the roots unless we are willing to cut down the bad trees.
3. The enjoyment of lusts is felt in the body (and also the enjoyment of good affections). The body is the organ of sensation, so it often seems as though the body is the *origin* of the lusts we feel, when actually lusts come from hell. The body needs to be re-programmed to enjoy good things.
4. A thief can get to the point that "he cannot refrain"! How does this fit with the doctrine of repentance? What does it say about addictions?
5. "Delights captivate thought and banish reflection." This shows how important it is to get into a habit of self-examination, before delights get too entrenched. Can we help older children make a good start?
6. DP 114 makes the point that all Christians are taught to examine themselves and repent, even those in faith alone. Is this still true today, do you think?