

All uses are Church uses.

1

Uses in General



And there shall be no night there, and they have no need of a lamp and the light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light.

Revelation 22:5

With those who are in the delight of uses from genuine love towards the neighbor, their natural light is also rational light, within which there is spiritual light from the Lord. The glory with them is from the brightness of the inflowing light from heaven, where all things are splendid and harmonious, for all uses in heaven are resplendent.

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1. *In the Lord, there is Love, Wisdom and Use.*

Matthew 17:1-3. And after six days, Jesus takes Peter, and James, and John his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain by themselves, and was transformed before them; and His face shone as the sun, and His garments became white as the light. And, behold, there was seen by them Moses and Elijah, speaking with Him.

DLW 296. THERE ARE IN THE LORD THREE THINGS, WHICH ARE THE LORD: THE DIVINE OF LOVE, THE DIVINE OF WISDOM, AND THE DIVINE OF USE. AND THESE THREE ARE PRESENTED IN APPEARANCE OUTSIDE THE SUN OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD. THE DIVINE OF LOVE IS PRESENTED BY HEAT, THE DIVINE OF WISDOM BY LIGHT, AND THE DIVINE OF USE BY THE ATMOSPHERE, WHICH IS THEIR CONTAINANT....

DLW 297. Everyone who thinks with some enlightenment can see that love has use for an end, and intends it, and produces it by means of wisdom. For love by itself can produce no use, but it can do so by means of wisdom as a means. Indeed, what is love unless there is something that is loved? This something is use, and because use is what is loved, and is produced by means of wisdom, it follows that use is the containant of wisdom and love....

From these facts it can be established that these three, the Divine of Love, the Divine of Wisdom, and the Divine of Use, are in the Lord, and in essence they are the Lord.

Love, wisdom and use are inseparable:

TCR 387:3. An angel said... "Love and wisdom without the good of use are not anything; they are merely entities of the mind, and they do not become real until they come forth in use. For love, wisdom, and use are three things that cannot be separated. If they are separated, none of them is anything. There is not any

love without wisdom, but in wisdom it is formed for something, and the thing for which it takes form is use. Therefore, when love, by means of wisdom, is in use, then it really *is*, because it actually comes into existence....”

TCR 387:5. “Geometry also teaches that nothing is complete and perfect unless it is a trine. For a line is nothing unless it becomes an area, and an area is nothing unless it becomes a solid.

Therefore, one must pass into the other in order that they may come into existence, and in the third they exist together.... And it is from this that the number “three” in the Word signifies what is complete and whole. This being so, I could not but be surprised that some professed to believe in faith alone, some in charity alone, and some in works alone, when yet one apart from the second, or both together apart from the third, are nothing.”

TCR 387:6. But then I asked, “Is it not possible for a man to have charity and faith, and yet not works? Can’t a man have a fondness for something, and give thought to it, and yet not be in the performance of it?”

The angel answered me, “He cannot really, but only mentally. Even then he will be in the effort or will to do it, and the will or effort is the act in essence, because it is a continual striving to act, which becomes an act in externals in approaching its object. Therefore, effort and will, as an internal act, is accepted by every wise man, because it is accepted by God, precisely as the external act, provided there is no failure to act when the opportunity arises.”

Questions and Comments

1. "In the Lord is the Divine of Use." What uses do you think of the Lord performing? Is the Divine of Use like the Holy Spirit? Is one of the Lord's uses to inspire and guide us in the performance of uses?
2. What would be an example of love seeking wisdom so that it can perform a use?
3. Can you think of an example of a love without wisdom, and so without use? Can you think of an example of wisdom without love, and so without use? How about an example of a task or work done without much love or wisdom, so that it is not useful?
4. What happens to a love or intention that is never fulfilled in act?
5. How does the principle that effort and will is accepted as the external act (provided there is no failure to act when there is an opportunity) apply to the way we view a friend, or a child?

2. There are three kinds of uses: for the body, for the rational [mind], and for the soul.

Luke 12:42-44. And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and prudent steward, whom the lord shall appoint over his household, to apportion the measure of wheat in due time? Happy is that servant whom his lord at his coming shall find so doing. Truly I say to you that he will appoint him over all his belongings.

DLW 327. ALL THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN CREATED BY THE LORD ARE USES. THEY ARE USES IN THE ORDER, DEGREE AND RESPECT IN WHICH THEY HAVE RELATION TO MAN, AND THROUGH MAN TO THE LORD, FROM WHOM THEY ARE.

DLW 330. ...The end of creation is an angelic heaven out of the human race, thus the human race. Therefore, all other things that have been created are mediate ends. And because they have relation to man, they have regard to these three things of his, [namely] his body, his rational [mind], and his spiritual [mind], for the sake of conjunction with the Lord. For man cannot be conjoined to the Lord unless he is spiritual, and he cannot be spiritual unless he is rational, and he cannot be rational unless his body is in a sound state. These three are like a house. The body is like the foundation, the rational is like the house built on it, the spiritual like those things which are in the house, and conjunction with the Lord is like dwelling in it....

DLW 331. Uses for sustaining the body relate to its nourishment, clothing, habitation, recreation and enjoyment, protection, and preservation of its state.

The uses created for the nourishment of the body are all things of the vegetable kingdom which are for eating and drinking, such as fruits, grapes, grain, vegetables and herbs; also all things of the animal kingdom which are eaten, as steers, cows, calves, deer, sheep, kids, goats, lambs, and milk from them, as well as fowl and fish of many kinds.

Uses created for the clothing of the body are also many things from these two kingdoms, as well as uses for habitation, recreation, enjoyment, protection and preservation of state....

There are indeed many things which yield nothing of use to man, but what is superfluous does not do away with use, but ensures the continuance of use. Abuse of uses is also possible, but abuse does not do away with use, just as falsification of truth does not do away with truth except with those who falsify it.

DLW 332. Uses for perfecting the rational are all the things which teach the subjects already mentioned, and are called sciences and studies pertaining to natural, economic, civil and moral affairs. These are acquired from parents and teachers, or from books, or from dealings with others, or on one's own by reflection on these subjects. These things perfect the rational so far as they are uses in a higher degree, and they remain so far as they are applied to life....

DLW 333. Uses for receiving what is spiritual from the Lord are all the things which belong to religion and so to worship, thus that teach the acknowledgment and knowledge of God, and the knowledge and acknowledgment of good and truth, and thus eternal life. These are similarly acquired as other learning from parents, teachers, publications and books, and especially by applying what is learned to life. In the Christian world, [they are learned] by doctrines and sermons from the Word, and through the Word from the Lord.

These uses in their whole extent may be described in the same terms as the uses for the body, as nourishment, clothing, habitation, recreation, enjoyment, and protection of state, if only these are applied to the soul: its nourishment [answering] to goods of love, clothing to truths of wisdom, habitation to heaven, recreation and enjoyment to happiness of life and heavenly joy, protection to safety from infesting evils, and preservation of state to eternal life.

All these things are given by the Lord according to the acknowledgment that all bodily things are also from the Lord, and that man is only a servant and domestic steward appointed over the goods of his Lord.

Questions and Comments

1. Have you sometimes felt that it is an honor to be appointed as a steward over some of the Lord's uses?
2. What principles may we draw from the teaching that all uses of the natural world relate to man, and through man to the Lord; and that we are stewards of His house?
3. "The body is like the foundation, the rational like the house built on it, the spiritual like the furnishings...." Why is it necessary to spend so much time caring for the foundation? (How much time do you spend in your basement?)
4. From DLW 331, does it seem there is a useful place for eating certain animals?
5. Notice the distinction between uses for perfecting the rational and uses for receiving what is spiritual. How does this distinction affect the way we think of the school? How do rational things relate to spiritual things?

3. *Loving the Lord is performing uses.*

John 14:21. He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.

AC 7038. *That they may serve Me.* That this signifies elevation into heaven in order to perform uses from there, is evident from the signification of “serving Jehovah” or the Lord, as being to perform uses....

That “to serve the Lord” is to perform uses, is because true worship consists in the performance of uses, thus in the exercises of charity. He who believes that serving the Lord consists solely in frequenting a place of worship, in hearing preaching there, and in praying, and that this is sufficient, is much mistaken. The very worship of the Lord consists in performing uses; and during man’s life in the world, uses consist in everyone’s properly fulfilling his duty in his position, thus from the heart being of service to his country, to societies, and to the neighbor, in dealing sincerely with his fellow, and in performing kind offices with prudence in accordance with each person’s character. These uses are chiefly the works of charity, and are those by which the Lord is chiefly worshiped. Frequenting a place of worship, hearing sermons, and saying prayers, are also necessary; but without the above uses they have no value, because they are not matters of life, but teach what the life must be. The angels in heaven have all happiness from uses, and according to uses, so that to them uses are heaven.

Doctrine of Life 1. ALL RELIGION IS OF THE LIFE, AND THE LIFE OF RELIGION IS TO DO THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

Divine Love 13. SO FAR AS MAN IS IN THE LOVE OF USE, SO FAR HE IS IN THE LORD, SO FAR HE LOVES THE LORD AND LOVES THE NEIGHBOR, AND SO FAR HE IS A HUMAN BEING.

From the love of uses we are taught what is meant by loving the Lord and loving the neighbor, also what is meant by being in the Lord and being a human being. To love the Lord means to do uses from Him and for His sake. To love the neighbor means to do uses to the church, to one's country, to human society, and to the fellow-citizen. To be in the Lord means to be a use. And to be a human being means to perform uses to the neighbor from the Lord for the Lord's sake.

To love the Lord means to do uses from Him and for His sake, for the reason that all the good uses that man does are from the Lord. Good uses are goods, and it is well known that goods are from the Lord. Loving these is doing them, for what a man loves he does. No one can love the Lord in any other way, for uses, which are goods, are from the Lord, and consequently are Divine; indeed, they are the Lord Himself with man.

These [uses] are the things that the Lord can love. The Lord cannot be conjoined by love to any man, and consequently cannot enable man to love Him, except through His own Divine things. For man from himself cannot love the Lord; the Lord Himself must draw him and conjoin him to Himself. And therefore, loving the Lord as a Person, and not loving uses, is loving the Lord from oneself, which is not loving. He who performs uses or goods from the Lord performs them also for the Lord's sake.

D. Love 19. IN THE WORD, TO LOVE MEANS TO PERFORM USES.

D. Love 19:2. Since the will and the act are a one, and will is the endeavor of love, it follows that in the Word "to love" has no other meaning than to do; thus that "to love the Lord and to love the neighbor" means to perform uses to the neighbor from love which is from the Lord.

Questions and Comments

1. Have you sometimes felt loved by the Lord, and that the Lord was manifesting Himself to you (in subtle ways), when you were engaged in a use?
2. How does AC 7038 expand our definition of “church uses”? How cool is it that all of our daily work, even very mundane necessities, can be done in service to the Lord?
3. If most Americans were New Church people, how would that help our understanding and application of the First Amendment, which says, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof....”?
4. Does Divine Love 13 help you feel closer to the Lord by explaining how you can love Him? Is it saying that we should *not* love Him as a Person?
5. Is it true also of love toward the neighbor that truly loving the neighbor is performing uses, and not just loving someone’s personality?

4. *Loving the neighbor is performing uses.*

Jeremiah 31:33. But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says Jehovah, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

TCR 422. CHARITY ITSELF IS ACTING JUSTLY AND FAITHFULLY IN THE OFFICE, BUSINESS, AND EMPLOYMENT IN WHICH A MAN IS ENGAGED, AND WITH THOSE WITH WHOM HE HAS ANY DEALINGS.

Charity itself is acting justly and faithfully in the office, business, and employment in which a man is engaged, because all that such a man does is of use to society, and use is good; and good in a sense abstracted from person is the neighbor. It was shown above that man not only individually, but also as a society of men, and one's country itself, are the neighbor.

Take, for example, a king who sets his subjects an example of well-doing, who wishes them to live according to the laws of justice, rewards those who so live, regards everyone according to his merits, protects his subjects against injury and invasion, acts the part of a father to his kingdom, and consults the general prosperity of his people; in his heart there is charity, and his deeds are good works. The priest who teaches truth from the Word, and thereby leads to good of life, and so to heaven, because he cares for the good of the souls of those of his church, is eminently in the exercise of charity. The judge who judges according to law and justice, and not for reward, friendship and relationship, cares for the good of society and of each individual; of society because it is thereby kept in obedience to law and in the fear of transgressing it; and of the individual because justice thereby triumphs over injustice. The merchant who acts from honesty and not from deceit, cares for the good of his neighbor with whom he has business. It is the same with a common or skilled workman, if he does his work rightly and honestly, and not

fraudulently and deceitfully. It is the same with all others, as with captains and sailors, with farmers and servants.

TCR 423. This is charity itself, because charity may be defined as doing good to the neighbor daily and continually, not only to the neighbor individually, but also to the neighbor collectively; and this can be done only through what is good and just in the office, business, and employment in which a man is engaged, and with those with whom he has any dealings. For this is one's daily work, and when he is not doing it, it still occupies his mind continually, and he has it in thought and intention.

The man who thus practices charity, becomes more and more charity in form; for justice and fidelity form his mind, and the practice of these forms his body. And because of his form, he gradually comes to will and think only such things as pertain to charity. Such at length come to be like those of whom it is said in the Word, that they have the law written on their hearts. Nor do they place merit in their works, because they do not think of merit but of duty—that it becomes a citizen so to act.

But a man can by no means of himself act from spiritual justice and faithfulness, for every man inherits from his parents a disposition to do what is good and just for the sake of himself and the world, but no man inherits a disposition to do it for the sake of what is good and just. Consequently, only he who worships the Lord, and acts from Him when acting from himself, attains to spiritual charity, and becomes imbued with it by the practice of it.

TCR 424. There are many who act justly and faithfully in their occupation, and thus promote works of charity, and yet do not possess any charity in themselves. But in these the love of self and the world predominates, and not the love of heaven; or if, perhaps, the love of heaven is present, it is beneath the former love, like a servant under his master, a common soldier under his officer, or a doorkeeper standing at the door.

Questions and Comments

1. Can you picture having the Lord's law written on your heart, at least in some respect, such that you deeply know it is good and true and would never want to violate it?
2. TCR 422 is a wonderful teaching, showing that all of our life can be a form of charity, not just special good deeds now and then. The work we have to do anyway to take care of ourselves and our family can also be an expression of love toward the neighbor and love to the Lord, if we do it justly and faithfully.
3. Is it fairly clear to you how to do your work justly and faithfully, whether or not you are currently employed, or retired, or a homemaker? Almost all of us have work to do.
4. What might be some examples of "those with whom he has any dealings" apart from one's office, business and employment?
5. Do you have experience with your work occupying your mind even when you are off duty because you care about doing a good job?
6. Can a person truly love the neighbor or any use without loving the Lord?

5. To be useful, the first step is to not do evils.

Matthew 7:16-18. Men do not gather the grape from thorns or figs from thistles.... A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit (as quoted in TCR 435:4).

TCR 746. Man as first created was imbued with wisdom and its love, not for his own sake, but that he might communicate it from himself to others. Therefore, it is written in the wisdom of the wise that no one is wise or lives for himself alone, but for others also. From this comes society, which otherwise could not exist. Living for others is being useful. Uses are the bonds of society; these bonds are as many as there are good uses, and in number uses are infinite. There are spiritual uses, which pertain to love of God and love to the neighbor; there are moral and civil uses, which pertain to love of the society and community in which a man lives, and of the companions and citizens with whom he lives. There are natural uses, which pertain to the love of the world and its necessities; and there are bodily uses, which pertain to the love of self-preservation for the sake of higher uses.

TCR 746:2. ...Those who are in the first mentioned uses, which are spiritual, are also in those that follow, and such are wise. But those who are not in the first, but are in the second and from these in the subsequent ones, are not so wise, but only seem to be so because of their outward morality and right civil life. Those who are not in the first and second, but are in the third and fourth, are anything but wise, for they are satans, loving the world only, and loving themselves because of the world. Those who are only in the fourth class of uses are the least wise of all, for they are devils, since they live for themselves alone, or if for others, it is solely for the sake of themselves.

TCR 435. THE FIRST THING OF CHARITY IS TO PUT AWAY EVILS; AND THE SECOND IS TO DO GOODS THAT ARE OF USE TO THE NEIGHBOR.

In the doctrine of charity this holds the first place, that the first thing of charity is not to do evil to the neighbor; and to do good to him holds the second place. This tenet is like a door to the doctrine of charity.... A man may see from reason itself, that so far as the evil resident in the will is not put away, the good that he does is impregnated with that evil; for evil is then inside the good, like a kernel in its shell or like marrow in a bone. Therefore, although the good that is done by such a man appears to be good, still intrinsically it is not good; for it is like a healthy-looking shell containing a worm-eaten kernel, or like a white almond rotten within, with streaks of rottenness extending even to the surface.

TCR 436. This may be further illustrated by the following comparisons: One cannot visit another who keeps a leopard and a panther shut up in his chamber (living safely with them himself because he feeds them), until these wild beasts have been removed. Who, when invited to the table of a king and queen, does not, before he goes, wash his hands and face? Who does not purify ores by fire and separate the dross before he obtains pure gold and silver? Who does not separate the tares from the wheat before putting the wheat into his granary?

Man himself ought to purify himself from evils.¹ Otherwise he would be like a servant, going to his master, with his face and clothes befouled with soot or dung, and saying, "Master, wash me." Would not his master answer him, "You foolish servant, what are you saying? See, here are water, soap, and a towel; have you not hands of your own and the power to use them? Wash yourself." And so the Lord God will say, "These means of purification are from Me, and your ability to will and do are also from Me. Therefore, use these gifts and endowments of Mine as your own, and you will be purified."

¹ and not wait for the Lord to do this without his cooperation; see n. 331.

Questions and Comments

1. What are some things we can do to foster the ideal of living not for oneself alone but also for others, and strengthening uses as the bonds of society? How can we help children grow up with being useful as their goal?
2. Of the four categories of uses listed in TCR 746:1, which category absorbs most of your time? Which category does KNCS most relate to?
3. “First of all, do no harm.” Is religion primarily about *not* doing evil? Is that a negative, restrictive, depressing approach to life?
4. Do you have the sense that the Lord really is giving you the means of purifying yourself and the ability to will and do it? Is He saying, “Get on with it—you can do it!”?

6. All uses are Church uses.

John 15:4-5. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

What is the Church?

NJHD 242. The Church is said to be where the Lord is acknowledged and where the Word is, for the essentials of the Church are love and faith in the Lord from the Lord; and the Word teaches how man must live that he may receive love and faith from the Lord.

TCR 245. It is known that the Church is in accordance with its doctrine, and that doctrine is from the Word. Nevertheless, it is not doctrine, but wholeness and purity of doctrine, consequently the understanding of the Word, that establishes the Church. Neither is it doctrine, but a faith and life in accordance with doctrine, that establishes and constitutes the special church in the individual man. So too it is not the Word that establishes and constitutes the church in particular in man, but a faith according to the truths, and a life according to the goods, which man derives from the Word, and applies to himself.

TCR 415. THE CHURCH IS THE NEIGHBOR WHO IS TO BE LOVED IN A STILL HIGHER DEGREE, AND THE LORD'S KINGDOM IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE.

Since man was born for eternal life, and is introduced into it by the Church, the Church is to be loved as the neighbor in a higher degree, because it teaches the means which lead to eternal life and introduces man into it, leading to it by the truths of doctrine and introducing into it by goods of life. This does not mean that the priesthood should be loved in a higher degree, and the church because of the priesthood; but it means that the good and truth of the church should be loved, and the priesthood for the sake of

these. The priesthood merely serves and is to be honored so far as it serves.

AC 6637:2. Its being called the church is not from the fact that the Word is there, and that there are doctrinal things from it, nor from the fact that the Lord is known there, and that the sacraments are there. But it is the church from the fact that men live according to the Word, or according to doctrine from the Word, and so that the doctrine is the rule of life.... Be it further known that everyone who lives in the good of charity and of faith is a church and kingdom of the Lord, and from this is called a temple, and also a house, of God. The church in general is constituted of those who are churches in particular, however far apart they may be.

AC 3310. ...Without doctrinal things there is indeed good of life, but not as yet the good of the church, thus not as yet good truly spiritual, except only in the capacity of becoming so; as is the case with the good of life among the Gentiles who do not have the Word, and therefore are ignorant of the Lord.

AC 4984. All uses [*done*] from truths are goods of truth. Truths which are not for use are separated.... In their beginning all uses are truths of doctrine, but in their progression, they become goods. They become goods when the man acts according to these truths. Thus, the very action gives quality to truths, for all action descends from the will, and the will itself makes that become good which before was truth.... For the good of faith affects the very thing which is of man's life, namely, his will, and gives it interior delight or bliss, and in the other life the happiness that is called heavenly joy.

Questions and Comments

1. Is it helpful to picture yourself as a branch in a vineyard, producing grapes and wine along with your fellow branches, and with the Lord being the Vine as well as the One who prunes the vine?
2. What are the essentials of the Church? What is the purpose of the Word in this context?
3. TCR 245 distinguishes the Church as an organization—mainly the priesthood—from the Church with each individual. As an organization, the job of the Church is to promote the wholeness and purity of doctrine, so that people can rightly understand the Word. But the job of each of us is to draw truths and goods from the Word and apply them to ourselves in a useful life. That life is the real Church.
4. In TCR 415, notice that the priesthood is *not* the Church but merely serves the real Church in each of us.
5. What is the strong definition of the Church in AC 6637? How can we be this kind of Church, and help each other be such Churches?
6. All uses begin with truths taught by the Word. These truths are the reasons why we do what we do. They enable us to change our motives and attitudes and look at life from above. It's up to us to gather truths from the Word to inspire and guide our life of uses, and share these truths with our neighbors and our children.