

Readings from the Word of God

Sunday, 28 July 2024

Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Heaven and Hell §277

Children have no prudence from what is their own, no purpose or deliberation, thus no end that looks to evil; neither have they anything of their own acquired from love of self and the world; they do not attribute anything to themselves, regarding all that they have as received from their parents; they are content with the few and paltry things presented to them, and find delight in them; they have no worry about food and clothing, and none about the future; they do not look to the world and covet many things from it; they love their parents and nurses and their child companions with whom they play in innocence; they allow themselves to be led; they give heed and obey.

John 3:3-8

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Heaven and Hell §278

Those who are in a state of innocence attribute nothing of good to themselves, but regard all things as received and ascribe them to the Lord; that they wish to be led by Him and not by themselves; that they love everything that is good and find delight in everything that is true, because they know and perceive that loving what is good, that is, willing and doing it, is loving the Lord, and loving truth is loving the neighbor; that they live contented with their own, whether it be little or much, because they know that they receive just as much as is good for them—those receiving little for whom a little is useful, and those receiving much for whom much is useful; also that they do not themselves know what is good for them, the Lord alone knowing this, who looks in all things that He provides to what is eternal. [2] Neither are they anxious about the future; anxiety about the future they call care for the morrow, which they define as grief on account of losing or not receiving things that are not necessary for the uses of life. With companions they never act from an evil end but

from what is good, just, and sincere. Acting from an evil end they call cunning, which they shun as the poison of a serpent, since it is wholly antagonistic to innocence. As they love nothing so much as to be led of the Lord, attributing all things they receive to Him, they are kept apart from what is their own [proprium]; and to the extent that they are kept apart from what is their own the Lord flows into them; and in consequence of this whatever they hear from the Lord, whether through the Word or by means of preaching, they do not store up in the memory, but instantly obey it, that is, will it and do it, their will being itself their memory. These for the most part outwardly appear simple, but inwardly they are wise and prudent. These are meant by the Lord in the words,

Be ye prudent as serpents and simple as doves (Matt. 10:16).

Such is the innocence that is called the innocence of wisdom.