

AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WAYS (TO FIND SWEDENBORG RESOURCES)

This article aims to help you find information about Emanuel Swedenborg, his ideas and his writings, so that you might tap their relevance for dealing with spiritual life in this modern world. Many readers may already be familiar with much of the material, but hopefully you will still find something here of use. Even experts don't find it easy to map a useful path through the forest of material available about the man and his work (his was possibly the best documented life of his century). This piece is roughly designed as a globetrotter's guide to a few key destinations rather than pretending to be comprehensive. There are many works which go into great detail should you need that. We will mention some useful websites, interested communities and reading materials. As a way to expand this introductory list of resources, we would love for you to share with us your favourite sites and resources so that we might all enjoy their benefits.



A complete and up-to-date version of this resource article is available online for your enjoyment and use from the Swedenborg Association of Australia's website at www.swedenborg.com.au/Websites/saa/images/pdf/Around-the-World-in-80-Ways---Swedenborg-resources.pdf which contains clickable links to the mentioned Swedenborg websites and recent updates of the resources. If you find new sources or broken links in the ones referred to below please send your feedback, updates and ideas to the Swedenborg Centre by calling +61 2 9888 1066 or emailing info@swedenborg.com.au or drop in at the Centre.

WHY THE INTEREST IN SWEDENBORG?

The writings of Emanuel Swedenborg result from his efforts to document his unique experiences and insights as a use to future seekers and readers. Since his death in 1772, these writings have been regarded by many social influencers like Goethe, Carl Jung, William James and numerous others as a valuable set of insights on details of spiritual life and spiritual realities. A big benefit of Swedenborg's writings is that they reveal the deep and useful sense woven into the language and symbolism employed by the authors of the first books of the Old Testament (Genesis and Exodus) and the last book of the New Testament (Revelation). When this language is understood, sense can be made of our life, of mythological tales and even fairytales as well as archeological and scientific findings. Appreciating this ancient language which Swedenborg called 'correspondences' helps save such precious material from being thrown in frustration onto the intellectual scrap heap of seemingly irrelevant historical and impersonal ideas, and instead gives these ideas a new life as they are once again pressed into practical service for our personal spiritual growth (our "regeneration"). There's no point keeping such a bright light hidden under a bushel, so check out some of the good resources below and see for yourself their immense value.

For a comprehensive list of people whom Swedenborg influenced, see www.swedenborgproject.org/swedenborgs-influence and www.swedenborg.com/emanuel-swedenborg/influence and for the actual quotations from famous people about Swedenborg, see www.swedenborg.com.au/tributestestimonials

WHO WAS SWEDENBORG?

The Swedish nobleman, scientist and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg was born in 1688 and lived in Sweden around the time of Sir Isaac Newton, J.S. Bach and Mozart. Swedenborg died two years after Captain James Cook first visit to New Holland, not long after which the First Fleet brought a set of Swedenborg's writings to the new colony.

Emanuel's cousin was the great botanist Carl Linnaeus, famous as inventor of the scientific classification of species of the natural world. Swedenborg travelled much through Europe as part of his education and would later publish his keen observations of the natural world he loved to study, including everything from metallurgy to mathematics and astronomy, from growing plants to anatomy and metaphysics. About all these things he conversed with great contemporaries.



Swedenborg's life initially saw him become a prolific scientific explorer and researcher of the natural and anatomical worlds, gaining fame among European intelligentsia as a gifted and important author on the

natural world. He was a great discoverer and gifted inventor, as demonstrated by his correct ground-breaking theory on the formation of stars and planets and his design for a workable airplane.

During his working life he served his king and country as a productive member of the Swedish parliament, where he had the job of governing the mining operations of Sweden, but he also contributed to many other affairs of state including a search for ways to solve the problems of navigation at sea and discussing the country's monetary affairs.

Swedenborg turned into a well-rounded individual. Besides being a useful and valued statesman, he was a clear and rational creative thinker and author. He was a practical man who mastered many crafts and was skilled at making the things his scientific appetite required to conduct a thorough investigation of everything. He was an empiricist, meaning he sought to confirm ideas by personal experiment, experience, deduction and insight. He had a good feeling for languages and was an accomplished linguist. He had a rich feeling life because he took an interest in playing music, wrote poetry, had romantic interests in his youth, and was considered good company in his extensive social circles. He also showed a great deal of kindness toward people of all walks of life.

In the last decades of his life, Swedenborg's enquiring nature and keen observation had prepared him well to be chosen to undergo a second education in matters of the human spirit and psychology of the human mind. During this period of revelation, Swedenborg underwent some very unique and remarkable personal mystical experiences, all of which he faithfully documented and explained. It is for his penned works on spiritual matters and the rich ideas in them that he is now still remembered and admired. These works are what many people commonly refer to as 'the writings'.

We not only still have Swedenborg's own writings, but also what others wrote about him, his work and ideas. What others have written is commonly referred to as the 'explanations' or 'collateral works'.

Our interest here is primarily Swedenborg's publications on spiritual matters, those which relate to aspects of spiritual growth and the nature of spiritual life.

A good list with notes of Swedenborg's writings can be found in a reference work from the **Swedenborg Foundation** called **Swedenborg Explorer's Guidebook** (revised 2nd edition of 2008 – more details in research section below).

To order books mentioned in this article, please contact the *Swedenborg Centre* in North Ryde, Australia or order online at www.swedenborg.com.au Other locations for purchasing books can be found online, e.g. the *Swedenborg Foundation*, USA at www.swedenborg.com and the *Swedenborg Society*, UK at www.swedenborg.org.uk (or check Amazon, etc).

A good 8-minute video on who Swedenborg was and what should be read of his can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEa0e8AcS78

THE WRITINGS

Some key themes in Swedenborg's writings are as follows (original titles in brackets, more recent titles in bold).

To read about the form and dynamics of the spiritual world and what life is like there, and about the continuity of our life experience after death, see his most famous work **Heaven and Hell**.



On the existence of the spirit world alongside the physical, and how spirit flows into our physical mind and body, see his work **Soul-Body Interaction**.

For details of the Divine's creative process, see his book **Divine Love and Wisdom**.

On the Divine Creator's means of perpetual maintenance of all creation, see **Divine Providence**.

For the language of correspondences which reveals the personal instruction woven into Genesis, Exodus and Revelation, see the works **Heavenly Secrets** (*Arcana Celestial*) and **Revelation Unveiled** (*Apocalypse Revealed*) and also **The White Horse**.



On the nature of love, on relationship between the sexes, and on the means and necessity of bringing them together into a harmonious unity, see his work **Love in Marriage** (*Conjugial Love*) – the recent David Gladish translation is excellent.

On some important steps of our spiritual regeneration, read a small but significant practical work called **Charity** (*Doctrine of Charity*).

Many aspects of our spiritual life are covered in a small book called **The Heavenly City** (*The New Jerusalem*). It covers our inner makeup: goodness and truth, motivation and understanding, inner and outer self. And our affections: selfishness, materialism, kindness to others. It mentions our spiritual life: faith, conscience, freedom, seeking reward; spiritual development: regretting and distancing ourselves from our mistakes, our rebirth and struggles. And it talks of rising from death, of the Bible, of Divine providence for us, of who Christ is, and of the government of human affairs.

For steps of the process of our regeneration, see his last completed work **True Christianity** (*True Christian Religion*) in two volumes, especially chapters 9 and 10, also reproduced as an extract in a practical book called **Regeneration**. *True Christianity* covers several key matters of faith, charity, free will, spiritual awakening, the nature of God, purpose, the second coming of the Lord, etc in more detail than in **The Heavenly City**.



A significance event in the spiritual realm which took place during Swedenborg's lifetime was the reshaping of the spiritual realm so that we might retain our freedom in spiritual matters, see his work **The Last Judgment**.

Swedenborg's spirituality is as universal as it is personal, and its benefits are not dispensed to a limited set of people in any single organisation. Nor is his spirituality one of doom and gloom and outward piety. It is very much founded on a practical life and on inner personal states. A happy (heavenly) life is to be gained through doing useful things as part of the expression of our love of higher things such as goodness, useful service, others and our benevolent Divine Creator. The personal, inner, practical and universal nature of Swedenborg's spirituality is borne out by the definitions of some special terms used in Swedenborg's works which differ in subtle but significant ways from our conventional interpretation of them. So we should consider these terms very carefully and clarify our understanding of them to make the most of his writings, for example the terms and nature of 'neighbour,' 'faith,' 'charity,' and 'church'. To look up these and other such special terms in Swedenborg's own words, either see www.eswedenborg.com/writings/topics or visit the other search sites mentioned below.

Another good list of words used by Swedenborg with their one-line meaning can be found at www.swedenborgstudy.com/articles/Word/wordsintro.htm or if you really wish to go the whole hog and look up Swedenborg's own words in his original Latin, this is nowadays made fairly easy by finding it online, for example search for something in Swedenborg's writings at <http://newchristianbiblestudy.org> then choose *Latin* as the 'translation' selection.

There are a lot of ways to enjoy Swedenborg's writings and ideas. Although Swedenborg originally wrote in Latin which was the international language of his day, most people today approach Swedenborg's own work by accessing one of the excellent translations available in English or in many of the world's other modern languages. One recommended English translation is from an ongoing project known as *New Century Editions* (NCE). Many of Swedenborg's works are available online for download (including NCE), much of it generously made available for free reading online or perhaps for a small fee to download it to your Kindle or similar electronic reading device. Check out the Swedenborg Foundation bookshop at www.swedenborg.com. The beauty of the online material is that it often is searchable. For recommended sites to look up Swedenborg material see further below.

For a complete list of spiritual works in chronological order, see www.swedenborg.com/emanuel-swedenborg/writings/#complete

On Swedenborg's period of science writing, see www.swedenborg.com/emanuel-swedenborg/scientific-writings

COLLATERAL AND EXPLANATIONS

If you're unsure where to start reading, you could try the **Swedenborg Roadmap** to help find a starting point that may interest you. See www.swedenborg.com.au/Websites/saa/images/books/presentingswedenborg.pdf

There are many people's interpretations, summaries, applications and insights of Swedenborg's material. There are also biographical books and audio-visual material, as well as popular recent online YouTube clips hosted by Curtis Childs in which Swedenborg ideas are explored, see www.youtube.com/offthelefteye

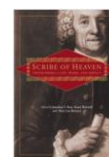
BIOGRAPHIES

A Scientist Explores Spirit – short introduction to Swedenborg's life by George Dole and Robert Kirven, includes key concepts.

Emanuel Swedenborg: Visionary Savant in the Age of Reason – by Ernst Benz, a classic early Swedenborg biography.

Scribe of Heaven – contains short essays on Swedenborg, including a short biography.

The Swedenborg Epic – by Cyriel Sigstedt. A good biography of Swedenborg. Read it online at www.swedenborgdigitallibrary.org/ES/epictc



SEARCHING THE WRITINGS

... across several platforms at once:

www.eswedenborg.com

To search, browse, read Swedenborg's own words presented on the same page as the Bible verses he references in his work:

www.kemptonproject.org or <http://newchristianbiblestudy.org>

www.biblemeanings.info – maintained by Ian J Thompson.

www.swedenborgstudy.com – excellent list of useful books, blog links, online material, etc maintained by Ian J Thompson.

www.theisticscience.org – excellent resource site by Ian J Thompson, on Theistic Science (a branch of theoretical science which derives general principles from laws transmitted through scientific revelations from God).

www.theisticscience.org/books – list and links for books associated with the above Theistic Science site, containing links to online editions of some of Swedenborg's own writings as well as to related subject material like 'discreet degrees' and 'correspondences'.

www.theisticpsychology.org – excellent resource site by Dr Leon James, professor of Psychology at the University of Hawaii (Theistic Psychology is the scientific discovery of spiritual laws given in rational scientific revelations).

www.swedenborgdigitallibrary.org – online library of digital material associated with Swedenborg and the New Church which others based on his writings. Managed at Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, USA. It holds a very large number of digitised periodical and other historical material of the New Church. Some good books summarising the ideas contained in Swedenborg's writings, eg online is **A Compendium of the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg (revised)**, see <http://swedenborgdigitallibrary.org/comp/compendtc.htm>

SEARCHING THE BIBLE

<http://biblehub.com> – online Bible study, search by book, verse or word in many translations. Compare various English translations in parallel, or the original language with English translation in interlinear form. Also provides commentaries and links to concordances (e.g. Strong's) to explain word meanings in the original language.

www.biblegateway.com – read the Bible in just about any foreign language you want.

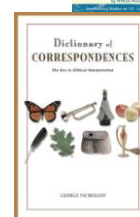
STUDY AND RESEARCH

Some significant research and study reference books are:

Swedenborg Explorer's Guidebook, A Research Manual – by William Ross Woofenden, edited by Jonathan S. Rose. Look for the revised 2nd edition of 2008 (blue cover). A great reference tool for anyone interested in researching Swedenborg. Includes complete bibliography of Swedenborg's writings, published and unpublished; extensive bibliography of books about him or his thought; overview of key concepts; listing of major documentary collections of Swedenborg's works; chronology of Swedenborg's life and works.



Dictionary of Correspondences, The Key to Biblical Interpretation – by George Nicholson. Most comprehensive reference of Swedenborg's system of correspondences (symbolic key to interpreting the inner meaning of the Bible by relating the spiritual and the physical worlds in symbolic terms).



Correspondences of the Bible: The Animals / The Plants / The Human Body – 3 works by John Worcester which discusses the spiritual associations of animals, plants and the human body.

The Natural Basis of Spiritual Reality – by Norman J Berridge. The human body is the natural object which corresponding most closely to heaven, so has the greatest relevance to the truly human form. Therefore human anatomy and physiology facilitate our understanding of the Grand Human.

Bible Study Notes (6 volumes) – by Anita S. Dole, edited by William Ross Woofenden. Contain multiyear courses of Bible study from Swedenborgian viewpoint. Originally written for Sunday school teachers, the course is divided into five age groups: primary (ages 6-8), junior (ages 9-11), intermediate (ages 12-14), senior (ages 15-17) and adult. The lessons from each Bible story are geared toward the life experience and level of understanding of that particular age group, and Dole gives practical advice in each lesson for helping children—and adults!—relate to the Bible.



A Book About Us, The Bible and Stages of Our Lives – by George F. Dole who presents another way of interpreting the Bible: as a narrative about the moral and ethical development of human life.

The Hidden Levels of the Mind, Swedenborg's Theory of Consciousness – by Douglas Taylor, introduced by Reuben P. Bell. Straightforward commentary giving insight into Swedenborg's philosophy of the mind and how it relates to spiritual growth.

The Human Mind – (1969) by Hugo Lj. Odhner. See www.swedenborgstudy.com/books/H.Lj.Odhner_Human-Mind. This is a good study of Swedenborg's psychology, memory and its relation to imagination and rational thought. Odhner concisely examines the human mental constitution, including its state after death. Explaining Swedenborg's concept of the relation between the physical and spiritual realms.

The Swedenborg Concordance (6 volumes) – by John Faulkner Potts. Complete Work of Reference of the writings of Swedenborg is one of the most comprehensive reference tools ever produced.

The Five Ages, Swedenborg's View of Spiritual History – by Swedenborg and P.L. Johnson. This view of spiritual history presents a compelling spiritual and psychological history of human evolution, plus informative commentary that places the ideas within the context of modern historical and archaeological knowledge.

FREE OR LOW COST TEXTS, LINKS AND AUDIO

www.swedenborg.com.au/learningresources – SAA list of free resources, including:

Video material

Talking books and audio talks – some excellent works by Dr Wilson van Dusen, Ian Arnold, Thomas King, Ursula Groll

Brochures introducing Swedenborg and a selection of his ideas

Brochures introducing a selection of Swedenborg's spiritual works

Brochures introducing practices and guidance to spiritual growth.

Books, booklets, papers and leaflets

The Swedenborg radio program (transcripts of excellent explanations of Swedenborg ideas presented on radio by Ian Arnold)

www.swedenborgdigitallibrary.org – an online digital library of out-of-print Swedenborgian classics. They also have a good page of links to Swedenborg-related online resources at www.swedenborgproject.org/links-to-other-resources

www.sacred-texts.com/swd

www.newchurchaudio.org

www.swedenborg.com/bookstore/e-books

BOOKS, NEWS, MAGAZINES

Please note that the name 'Swedenborg' is here intended to mean the 'works and teachings of Swedenborg'.

The **Swedenborg Association of Australia** (SAA) is located at the *Swedenborg Centre* situated upstairs at 1 Avon Road, North Ryde in New South Wales. Here, the Centre offers:



- A library of printed books and DVDs for loan and sale.
- A library of special rare printed reference books on Swedenborg, his life, his work, his ideas, along with related material. These rare books can be viewed at North Ryde with the assistance of friendly staff – contact the Swedenborg Centre by phone on +61 2 9888 1066 or by email at info@swedenborg.com.au or ring to arrange a visit in person. A list of these rare books can be viewed or downloaded at www.swedenborg.com.au/Websites/saa/images/pdf/reference.pdf
- A telephone, post and email service through which its friendly staff can guide and advise you on any Swedenborg related material or subject you are searching for.
- A website with useful information around Swedenborg, the ideas found in his work and other related material. Below are some of the important resource sections of this website.
- An obligation-free monthly online e-news bulletin with updates on the latest Swedenborg materials and events

www.swedenborg.com.au/newsletter – *Candela* – quarterly magazine of the *Swedenborg Association of Australia* (SAA), in which this article appears.

www.swedenborg.com.au/bookstore – online bookshop. Can either use the Search field at the top right of each screen to find what you are looking for, or you can use the navigation on the left to browse book by some of these categories:

Introductory Books & Booklets
Swedenborg's Spiritual Writings
Swedenborg and Spirituality
Afterlife
Angels
Bible Study
Biography and Legacy
CDs, DVDs and Audio Books

Dr Philip W Groves
Reference and Study Aids
Spirituality and Science
Spiritual Practice
Spirituality and Psychology
Swedenborg's Scientific and Philosophical Writings
Dr Wilson van Dusen

www.newchurchlife.org – *New Church Life* – monthly magazine since 1881 produced in USA devoted to Swedenborg.

<http://swedenborg-philosophy.org/the-new-philosophy/swedenborg-publishers-international-spi> – *Swedenborg Publishers International (SPI)* – newsletter of an informal organization of publishers around the world specializing in Swedenborg, hosted from Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania USA.

<http://swedenborg-philosophy.org/books> – books from Swedenborg Scientific Association (Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania USA)

<http://swedenborg-philosophy.org/the-new-philosophy> – *The New Philosophy* – magazine of articles on philosophical questions and topics relating to Swedenborg and the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

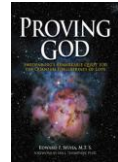
www.swedenborg.org/library/collateralliterature/libraryperiodicals/messenger.aspx – *The Messenger* – periodical of the North American Swedenborgian Church.



www.swedenborg.com/bookstore/chrysalis-readers – *The Chrysalis Reader* – contemporary journal of spiritual discovery published in honor of Swedenborg, each issue with a special meaningful theme (final volume published in 2013).

<http://parabola.org> – magazine on spirituality topics (senior editor is Lee van Laer)

<https://thegodguy.wordpress.com> – practical spirituality ideas blog by philosopher-theologian Edward F. Sylvia, author of *Sermon From the Compost Pile* and *Proving God*.



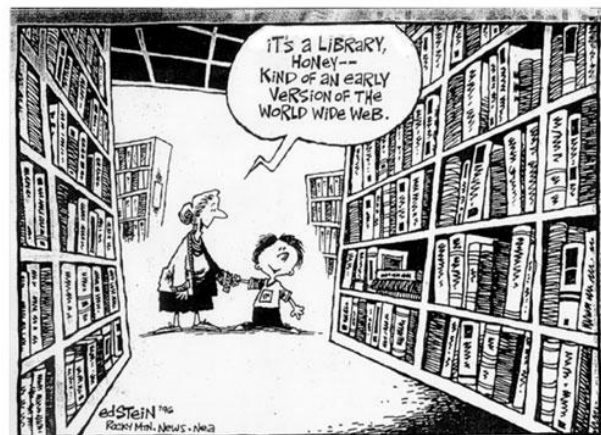
ORGANISATIONS, PUBLISHERS

www.swedenborg.com.au – *Swedenborg Association of Australia (SAA)* – already mentioned above.

www.swedenborg.org.uk – *Swedenborg Society* – since 1810, UK based, oldest Swedenborg publisher.

www.swedenborg.com – *Swedenborg Foundation* – USA based. Excellent site full of resources, free, cheap and downloadable books and information.

<http://swedenborg-philosophy.org> – *Swedenborg Scientific Association (SSA)* – US organisation that makes scientific and philosophical works of Swedenborg available (including translating).



SOCIAL MEDIA, BLOGS, GROUPS

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SwedenborgScientificAssociation

www.facebook.com/Swedenborg-Association-of-Australia-104862382911851

www.facebook.com/HeavenAndHellSwedenborg



Blogs:

<http://spiritualquestions.org.uk> – Stephen Russell-Lacy’s blog throws light on human happiness and the meaning of life by reflecting on important questions and issues and exploring links between Swedenborg’s Writings, psychology and spiritual healing.

<http://zenyogagurdjieff.blogspot.com.au> – interesting blog on practical spirituality by Lee van Laer (Senior Editor at Parabola Magazine) containing a nice blend of Swedenborg, Gurdjieff and Zen Buddhism practices.

<http://anccollege.org> – *Australian New Church College* – has a lot of good resource pages, seminars and reference links, including **Logopraxis** – an effective personal spiritual practice based on applying Swedenborg’s writings and the Word, online community coordinated by David Millar, Australia – if interested, contact enquire@logopraxis.com.au – also see <http://spiritandlife.net/church> for more Logopraxis resources, presentations and event info

<https://soundcloud.com/lovelearnserve> - audio presentations by David Moffat, Canberra, Australia

To locate other Swedenborg groups around the world and their websites, see

<http://newchristianbiblestudy.org/new-church-map>

ADDENDUM – LATEST RESOURCE INFO

An excellent ‘distillation’ (essence) of what Swedenborg actually says can be found in ***The Path of Life*** compiled by John Curtis Ager, an American Swedenborgian, done in 1913, in 27 distilled chapters, each with about a dozen sub-sections, covering all the essentials and not wasting an unnecessary word. Passages are taken directly from Swedenborg’s writings and are well chosen. Find, read or download it in several formats including Kindle from the *Internet Archive* online at <https://archive.org/details/cu31924029468232> (the PDF Adobe imaged version is recommended for easiest reading although it’s a large download file, while the TXT file is the smallest but due to the automated scanning process contains a lot of spelling errors and lacks clean formatting).

Another good summary of what Swedenborg actually says can be found in the ***Swedenborg Explorer’s Guidebook, A Research Manual*** by Rev. William Woofenden (blue cover, revised 2nd edition of 2008, mentioned further above). The same summary is already present in an older edition of the same work called ***Swedenborg Researcher’s Manual*** by the same author, available either for loan from the Swedenborg Centre library or to purchase from the online bookshop at www.swedenborg.com.au/swedenborg-researchers-manual Near the end of the book is that summary section, called ‘*Key concepts unique to Swedenborg’s theological writings*’. What Bill Woofenden has expertly done is to distil out the essence of what Swedenborg actually says about four major areas, probably the four real key ones: God, the Spiritual World, God’s Word, and Ourselves and our intended destiny. Nothing has been further explained or added to by Bill Woofenden (always a temptation to a writer) but the idea has simply been summarised and rephrased in clear statements which catch the very essence of what Swedenborg actually says.