

Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Incorporated
Organisational Details are provided on next page

MARCH 2005

ISSUE 39

Life: Be in it!

I had no dreams of being a fireman when I was young. Now I am a fireman in the Rural Bush Fire Brigade as part of a community first response to fire threat. When one lives in the National Park surrounded by 60,000 hectares of virgin bush one must live with nature not in opposition to it. That's life. Being part of the community is also part of life and I think it is rewarding to work beside others for the common good. Perhaps the theme for this Candela "Life, be in it" has something to do with doing what one can for the common good.



The Will and the Emotions have done all the constructive work in human progress; the intellect is only good for deconstruction work. The mind can analyse, it cannot synthesise; it can pull apart but not assemble. The mind is a great judge; the emotions cannot judge fairly.

Throughout history you will find the great doers to be people with large hearts, strong wills and violent desires whilst the business of refining and altering, are done by great brains. Gurdjieff talks about the *Feeling centre*, *Thinking centre* and the *Doing centre* as the three aspects of all completed work; all three go together but are not necessarily found in the same person. You may be a doer; you may be a thinker or you may be a rare breed who is filled with a greater emotion for a task. When it is said "that God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son", it was love and will first, not thinking, that set off the resultant action.

The theme of this issue, *Life; be in it* involves will, thought and action. If we go within and ask the question "what is my usual strength?", is it as a violent initiator or reactionary? Am I proactive or do I refine the idea. Perhaps I follow the lead and put my shoulder to the wheel and provide the necessary push to get the job done.

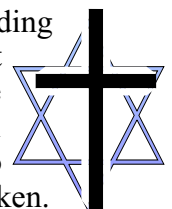
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Two copies of this Newsletter are being sent to members as usual, the second for giving away.

I have recently been preoccupied with the works of Christ. Christ was a Jew with a Jewish heredity and learning. He saw the inequity in human affairs and religion and set about changing what was an entrenched Judaic disciplinary system. Men born into the tribe of Levi, the Sadducees, were destined to be priests from birth. The Pharisees interpreted the Law of Moses. Gentiles were the "unclean" and kept at a low level in the religious hierarchy not initiated into the religion past the level of "water".

Jesus believed every man including Gentiles, could become the highest priest based on merit not birth. He changed the water level of initiation and allowed Gentiles to be elevated to the *agape* meal where wine was taken. Christianity grew out of Judaism and the differences can be easily seen for oneself. Jesus was a "violent" crusader on a mission. He welded the Hellenised Gentiles into a strong all-inclusive religion with the Kingdom of Heaven (within) available to all who "worked on themselves". This is surely a man who was "in life".



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Life: Be in it! (Continued from front page)

Jesus did not work for his own ends but for the greater good and he paid the ultimate price. He worked with a tremendous force of emotion reforming system after system, institution after institution. While reforming the systems and institutions, he had the wisdom to make way for better ones in their place. Christ was acting at all levels of Life; withholding, understanding and action. The more I think about the example that Christ portrayed the more I love this man. His vision from the very first to the last was unwavering. It was methodically carried out with caring but firmness. He pulled no punches with the Pharisees and Sadducees; he courted no favours with the rich or poor, king or pauper. At the end of the day he did not call in the "chips" and ask for favours of others. He stood alone, unique, as guide to all who wished to follow him.

When we think of Life and what it means to us to be involved in it, it is useful to have a symbol of what being in life could be like. The symbol of Christ as all loving, sympathetic, wise and brave is a good model to bring to mind.

Life, be in it.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you a beautiful Easter.

Agape,

John Brogan
President

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Neville Jarvis

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, please refer to page 12.

Candela - June 2005

Our theme will be: **Angels in our lives - When? Where? How? and Why?**

Everyone must surely have something dear to their heart to express on this. Your contributions continue to be very welcome and it will be great to have lots of items and a bumper number of pages to publish!

Again, you might like to think about the following possibilities for submissions (the deadline for copy will be 4th June 2005) but do not feel limited to them:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ an article of up to 1000 words | ✓ a poem, etc. |
| ✓ art work in the form of line drawings | ✓ a question to which you would like an answer |

Books such as Swedenborg's "**Heaven and Hell**" and "**Angels in Action**" by Robert Kirven are ones which would get you thinking. Copies are available from the Swedenborg Centre for purchase or loan.

Looking further ahead, the theme for September 2005 will be **Prayer in modern life**.



The Measure you give out is the Measure of what you receive

by Ian Arnold

For me, it is one of the key teachings of Scripture, highlighted, clarified and given new emphasis in Swedenborg's Writings, that life is not inherent in ourselves. It *seems* to be. But the way it seems is not how it actually is. Job captures the point in one of his early speeches when, talking about God, he declares, "*In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.*" (Chapter 12:10). Centuries later the apostle Paul reminded his listeners, in Athens, of what their very own poets kne and wrote about, that "*in (God) we live and move and have our being.*" (Acts Chapter 17:28).

"*The Lord alone has life in Himself*", Swedenborg wrote, "*and everyone has life from Him*". (Apocalypse Explained 186:9). "*Who cannot see*" he asked, "*that life is not creatable? For life is nothing else than the inmost activity of love and wisdom, which are in God and which are God; and this life may be called the living force itself.*" (True Christian Religion" 471). It is crucial we get hold of this: "*A man is not life in himself but is an organ receiving life.*" (Apocalypse Revealed 875:10)

Life, then, flows in. What an astonishing thing this at first seems to be! It flows in directly, or immediately, from God, but it is *also* mediated to us by companion angels and spirits.

There are fascinating sections in the eighth volume of Swedenborg's Arcana Caelestia about this, beginning at paragraph 5846. Read them if you can! "*There is only one life, the Lord's*", we read there. "*It flows into everyone but is received in varying ways.*" And now note this: "*its reception is determined by the character a person has given his soul by the life he leads.*" (Paragraph 5847)

What comes to my mind as I read and think about this teaching is a picture of two levers both of which we operate and both opening doors to influences

pressing in on us. We operate the levers according to the choices we make. We can draw down into ourselves life that is positive, uplifting, bright, beautiful, encouraging of others, optimistic and hopeful or we can draw into ourselves life that is negative, degrading, dark, ugly, inconsiderate of others, pessimistic and despairing.

Repeat: we operate the levers that open the respective doors.

This is all amazingly life changing and, hopefully life enriching! The thing is we make of life what it is for us. The Lord offers us life of the best quality and kind. We need to get in there and be part of it.

And this brings me to two of my favourite passages in the Scriptures, one from the Gospels and one from the Minor Prophets.

"Give" Jesus said "and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." (Luke Chapter 6:38).

And then in the prophecy of Malachi there is this wonderful challenge:

"Prove me now in this" says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessings that there will not be room enough to receive." (Chapter 3:10)

- ◆ If we want to see changes, we need to start making them and the effort will attract a surge of energy and support.
- ◆ If we would like to be more restrained then again, we only need to make the initial effort and there will be a surge of energy and support.
- ◆ If we are finding it difficult in a given situation to be positive and encouraging, just try and, yet again, the effort will attract a surge of energy and support.



We can't sit back; we've got to be in it!

“With someone who does good with all his heart good is flowing in from heaven on every side into his heart and soul and inspiring him greatly to act as he does. At the same time love and affection for the neighbour to whom he does the good is increasing, and with this love and affection a delight that is heavenly delight, beyond description. The reasons why all this happens is that the good of love from the Lord reigns everywhere in heaven, flowing in increasingly in the same measure as it is given out to another.”

(Arcana Caelestia 9049)

One of the very first statements I picked up from Swedenborg in my early days of acquaintance with his Writings was that “influx is into effort”. I discovered subsequently that this is a fair enough translation though it's more about what you give out. “Life flows in according to what you give out”.

Forty-five years on I still find this amongst the most exhilarating and promise filled teachings of all.

Ian Arnold lives in Brisbane and ministers to a congregation there. He is also the Principal of the Australian New Church (Swedenborgian) College. A member of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc., Ian co-ordinates the monthly meetings in Southern Queensland.

An Ordinary Man

by **Dorothy Ainsworth**, Queensland

I am supposed to write about an ordinary man. The world is jam packed full of ordinary men, how can I pick one.

If I was asked to write about an extraordinary man, I would have picked Ghandi, Martin Luther King, or Nelson Mandela. There would have been something to work with, but an ordinary man?

So I've decided to write about an ordinary woman. As Jane Austin would say they are more complex, and come in greater variety.

Love in Work

And what is it to work with love?

It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart, even as if your beloved were to wear that cloth.

It is to build a house with affection, even as if your beloved were to dwell in that house.

It is to sow seed with tenderness and reap the harvest with joy, even as if your beloved were to eat the fruit.

It is to charge all things you fashion with a breath of your own spirit,

And to know that all the blessed dead are standing about you and watching.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

When I came to live on the Gold Coast in late 1999 I joined the U3A, mainly because I found that the “U” meant University and the 3A was third age, and I was that. I'd always wanted to go to University, having three children who went there and listening to what they got up to, I was sure I had missed out.

I joined the creative writing class and the poetry group. One day the teacher of the creative writing class asked us to write about how we would have changed our lives if we could.

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Membership Subscriptions



Renewal notices have now been despatched to all members of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc. whose subscriptions expired on 31st

December 2004. We have been pleased to receive a good number of responses already. If you received one of these notices but you have not yet acted upon it, we would be most grateful if you could do so as soon as possible. That would avoid the necessity of sending a reminder follow-up. It is quite a painless task!

Thank you.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

New Members

We are very pleased to warmly welcome the following new Members to the Association:

Alexander Benjko (WA)
 Raymond Biernet (NSW)
 Michael Delbridge (SA)
 Maggie Docherty (NSW)
 Geoff Forster (VIC)
 Ian Maidment (SA)
 Christel Rush (QLD)

Congratulations!



Whilst somewhat belated, and having been inadvertently omitted from the previous issue, we do extend our very best wishes to Kirk Holst (SAA Hon. Treasurer) and his bride, Rachel, on their marriage last November. Congratulations and blessings for your future life together.

True marriage love is the precious jewel of human life.

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Business Items

At its meeting in February, one of the main issues discussed by the Committee was the extent to which there can be assurance the Association is of relevance to its scattered membership. One method to explore this was through occasional direct contact with each member. So it was decided to endeavour to speak with every member by phone over the months ahead but in an unobtrusive way as possible. No long questionnaire. Just an opportunity to say hello and allow each member to say whatever they wish about the Association and how it might be able to help their needs better. Louise Brogan (Sydney) and Chris Skinner (Melbourne) are the two Committee members who have offered to take on the task, both having personalities which will make the contact easy and enjoyable. However, the Committee is very sensitive to not wanting to intrude into the privacy of its members. **Should you wish not to receive a call, please simply drop a note to the Secretarial Office (see page 2) and steps will be taken to have this recorded on our membership database. Alternatively, should you get a call and would prefer it not to continue, please just say so to Louise or Chris; they are very sensitive to everyone's wishes in this area.**

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Committee to consider at its next meeting on Thursday 19th May 2005, do send them to the Registered Office in good time.

Neville Jarvis (Executive Manager)

PACIFISM

People with no ill intent

Always mindful life's just lent

Careful use of words they say

Imply that force is not the way

Forever turn the other cheek

Idealism is what they seek

Serenity that's in their hearts

Mitigates aggression, and it departs

Dorothy Ainsworth, QLD



GROUP'S NEWS

Brisbane:

Here in Brisbane we continue to be in awe of people who travel long distances to attend meetings. The talks by **Paul Eldar** are always followed by a time of animated round table discussion. We recognise we are all on a journey and there is always a sincere and generous willingness to listen to the thoughts, understanding and experiences of others.

Our challenge just now is to make the meetings more widely known and to encourage more people to attend. All the talks are recorded and copies often sent to people who because of work and other commitments are prevented from attending.

Our first meeting for 2005 was at the end of February when Paul's talk was titled, *Swedenborg's Theory of Incarnation*. There were just six present. It was a special joy though to again have Ken Cross all the way from Tweed Heads and two new faces present, one of whom was Rolf Zeltins who has been in touch with the Swedenborg movement in NSW for many years. He has now come to live in Queensland and we welcome him. As always, there was plenty of interesting debate after Paul had concluded his talk.

For March (Wednesday 23rd), Paul's talk is titled *Swedenborg's Vibrant Future*.

Ian Arnold



Melbourne:

Our year started on 25th February with a talk by the Convenor of the group **Chris Skinner** on the topic *Synchronicity, Providence, Prediction and God*. This talk centred around the different forms of coincidences that occur either as a natural event or a natural event happening after a dream and similar experiences. Chris showed that these are glimpses into the all embracing Divine Providence. Biblical Prophecy and other predictions are part of the way God provides insights to try and lead people in the right direction but in the end freedom of choice prevails. The talk also looked at the Laws of providence contained in Swedenborg's book *Divine Providence*.

We were pleased to have around 20 people in attendance with one new attendee who said she enjoyed the meeting. Some of our regular attendees for all sorts of reasons were unable to be with us.

The final touches are being made to the program for the first half of the year but topics in the next few months will include: Recent Trends in Consciousness Studies, Creative Thought, and Eros and Psyche.

Later in the year we will have a forum on other faiths and an evening on meditation. The varied program we hope will appeal to the varied interests of the people that attend the group.

Chris Skinner



North Ryde, Sydney:

Kirk Holst presented "*The Ego Mind*" on February 25th. As Kirk was growing up, he reflected on "What is the matter with human beings?". His talk is the fruit of this reflection and is rich in insights. He used the following quote in presenting a picture of the ego mind:

Proprium out of control is the greatest evil and is the source of all evil. All of us have a proprium and this is the factor which is the source of discontent, strife, and the errors and evils into which we fall. The Work helps us to see the proprium and to strive to rise above its dominating influence. Every person should come to realize that we humans have a dual nature: the self-centred proprium which separates us from God, and the eternal, internal, angelic nature which is not ours but belongs to the Divine. . . .

So long as a person is identified with his proprium and believes in its illusory interpretations of himself and reality, he is separated from God, is out of alignment with cosmic order, and is in a state of evil. He appears to live from himself. Now it has always been taught from Above that the proprium is not to be destroyed, but seek to undergo transformation. This, indeed, is the theme of many myths. A person's sense of individuality is to be preserved otherwise there is no experience and enjoyment of existence in any world.

Mythology: The Dynamics behind Myths
Dr Philip Groves

A digest of his talk is given in this Candela (page 9). A lot of effort went into preparing this talk, working on the focus, keeping it as simple as possible and conveying it effectively. For those wishing to follow up on this vital area I highly recommend borrowing the video of the talk as it will assist them in understanding themselves so much more.

Michael Chester



USES

A Way of Personal
and spiritual Growth
by Wilson Van Dusen, Ph.D.



Living Life as a way of Personal and Spiritual Growth

The book *Uses: A way of Personal and Spiritual Growth* by **Wilson Van Dusen** has been a particular favourite of mine for many years. It is just so very practical in its approach to everyday living in a way which helps me to see the very simple yet profound essence of spirituality.

It is a book which I have felt able to freely hand on to others to read, or to buy them their own copy. If you have not yet read it, I highly recommend that you do so without delay. If you have, I can assure you that reading it again will be very beneficial. Like me, you might also find it worthy of handing on to friends and acquaintances to introduce them to concepts in Swedenborg's writings in an easy to read and down-to-earth way.

Below are some extracts from the book which I have selected for you to think about.

The simplest and most powerful method for personal spiritual development in Swedenborg's theology lies in the idea of uses. Part of its beauty is its simplicity which permits carrying it out in the midst of ordinary duties and labour, indeed, in any human act. It can be applied anywhere, anytime, by anyone. Part of its power lies in its wonderful concreteness. (Page 7)

Swedenborg's use means essentially spiritual function. (10)

God designed the universe as a use and even series within series of uses. Our bodily form is an example of this and, hence, we are an image of the whole. Swedenborg uses man or Grand Man or the Divine Human as the form of all uses. (21)

For, by creation there is nothing on the Earth that is not made of use. (24)

By taking care of yourself with rest, proper diet, etc., so that you might remain a useful instrument. (34)

Uses, devotion to the task at hand, leads necessarily to skill and quality in workmanship. (38)

Keep your eye on uses if you want your work to survive. (48)

Try uses in manual labour for months or years and then tell us what you discovered. I don't know how to say this emphatically enough. The doctrine of uses is not a thing to learn and speculate on. It can only be really understood in useful acts. (52)

As long as you are seeking, you need not be too concerned whether you are being given the right level of answers. (64)

I would also emphasize that the amount found is in direct relation to the seeking. Seek little, find little. Look for everything in the sweeping and, by golly, it is there. (80)

So this is uses, a simple method for both personal and spiritual development. It applies to all human acts in which you attempt to reach outside yourself. It includes caring for yourself as an instrument to be kept in order. It includes one's occupation or calling used as a way of doing good. It is, at its heart, the same as charity, the doing good for the neighbour. (88)

It begins simply by looking around at what needs doing and doing it. (90)

Carl Sarelius, Sydney

See page 11 for ordering your copy.

Without useful activity, love and wisdom are merely abstract ideas of thought. After staying a while in the mind, they pass away like the wind. But in useful activity the two are brought together and become one, and then are called real. Love cannot rest until it is doing something; for love is the very activity of life. Neither can wisdom exist and subsist until it is doing something from love and with love. Doing means service. Therefore, useful service is doing good from love by means of wisdom. Useful activity is goodness itself.

Swedenborg: Conjugal Love 183⁸



Quiz Section

Quiz 1 ~ Spend as little or as much time as you like considering the answers.

- ★ Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
- ★ Name the last five Brownlow medalists.
- ★ Name the last five winners of the Miss Universe contest
- ★ Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
- ★ Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress
- ★ Name all the Ministers for Tourism in successive Australian Governments over the past 20 years.

How did you do?

We will not be providing the answers but make the point that few of us remember the headlines of yesterday. There are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Quiz 2 ~ Now see how you do with this one.

- ★ List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
- ★ Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
- ★ Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
- ★ Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
- ★ Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.
- ★ Name half a dozen heroes whose stories have inspired you.

A much easier quiz and no one would have the same answers as you.

The lesson is simple. The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that care, a trait everyone needs to develop.

From the philosophy of Charles Schultz (USA), the creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip, who once said:
 "Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia!"

An Ordinary Man (continued from page 4)

There was a lady in the class and I can't remember her name today, but I will never forget her story. She looked like your ordinary every day woman. She said her life had started out well; she had a very happy childhood with loving parents. Then she met the man of her dreams; they married and had a family. Her cup was full to overflowing. She worked hard and so did her husband. Her family were growing like weeds, life was good.

Her husband became ill and they found he had a degenerative illness. He was never going to be well again. Her life changed, she found her workload had doubled; she now had a sick man to care for besides her children. She battled on for years, her happiness was gone, and she felt resentful, bitter and angry. There was no time left for her. "Where has my life gone", she would ask herself. Her future looked bleak and now her children were teenagers they needed her more and more. From morning to night she was at

everybody's beck and call. She was miserable, unhappy and she was tired.

One night she decided she had had enough, she ran outside and screamed to the night sky, "Why me God? Why me?" choking sobs coming from deep within her. When she stopped sobbing, a voice came into her head; it was a strong male voice saying "What you do you do for me", and then again "What you do you do for me".

At first she was awe struck, and then she was filled with such happiness and delight. She felt light and free. She wanted to laugh and cry. From that day on her life was different. Nothing in her surroundings had changed; but she had; now she was working hand in hand with God.

She looked up and smiled at the class. A few were blinking back tears here and there. I leaned over to her, for there was an empty chair between us. I told her I loved her story. She put her arm along the back of the empty chair and wiggled her fingers at me. I took her hand, we smiled at each other. I'll never forget this story from an ordinary woman.



LIFE AND THE TWO MINDS IN WHICH WE LIVE IT

by **Kirk Holst**

Our life is a Jekyll and Hyde affair, a life where we constantly have to choose our action or reaction to the world around us. But what is the choice we are making? I describe it as between two minds:

- ◆ the mind of God within us (our conscience)
- ◆ the mind of our ego or as Swedenborg named it ~ our Proprium.

My aim in what follows is to promote a universal understanding that is common to us all. An understanding that can break down the barriers between peoples, hence allowing us to come together as a unified body of humanity; a unified body of humanity with a common purpose, which is to create only from love and truth for the common good so as to usher in peace and harmony. I believe at some level that is what we all want to feel: accepted, and to be a part of something grand and worthwhile.

If this is what we really want deep down, then, what could possibly stop us from achieving it? I believe it is our proprium, the Latin word used by Emanuel Swedenborg, to describe the self-manifestation of ourselves and our world. Also, called ego. As Emanuel wrote (*Arcana Caelestia* 987), our proprium is our most vile possibility, our worst option, our gateway to hell. It is what forms a barrier between ourselves and our Creator. At its inception, the proprium caused the fall of man ~ the separation of man and God and man from man. It was Cain's proprium that caused him to kill his brother, caused Eve to tempt Adam and Adam to hide from God. In short, it is our proprium that is causing all our human ills to this day. It is our proprium that is preventing us from joining as a unified body of humanity. It is our proprium that is preventing us from experiencing true peace and harmony. So then, the final aim of this talk is to expose the proprium for what it is – the devil within – the barrier between man and God – the cause of mankind's fall.

WHAT IS THE PROPRIUM?

The proprium could be seen as a cocoon or membrane that is growing around our mind and is taking over our mind's function, like a parasite living off an organ. On closer inspection, this membrane could appear as a matrix of tightly woven ideas, beliefs, fear and values. Mostly, the proprium harbours false conclusions that we have accepted as truths during our formative years. It consists of our personal beliefs - real, limiting or false - our fears and concerns as well as our personal value system, e.g. our political views, our religion, what we admire and what we dislike in

ourselves and others, and what we like and dislike about our world.

IN ESSENCE THE PROPRIUM DEFINES WHO WE ARE

Our proprium is our view of the world:

- ◆ It is the house in which we live – our mind.
- ◆ It is what we promote to ourselves and others as real.
- ◆ It is what we defend at all cost.
- ◆ It is what we want those closest to us to share and agree with.

In short, we spend much of our time and energy, promoting our proprium – self-image so that we are acceptable and respectable to others. You might ask: “What is so wrong or bad about all this?” We all do it. This is life. Where is the problem? The problem is very subtle. It requires us to be able to see the distinction between:

1. Personal truth, and
2. Absolute truth.

Personal truth and absolute truth can also be seen as illusionary truth and reality. Please keep in mind how on the day of His crucifixion, Pontius Pilate questioned Jesus Christ as to who he was. His answer was: “. . . I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.” (John 18:37) In asking “What is truth”, Pontius Pilate didn't know the distinction between personal truth and absolute truth; he was bewildered by Christ's answer.

We must be able to distinguish between our personal, illusionary truth and reality if we are going to move from our proprium (or outer mind) to our inner mind of God where true happiness resides. It is only when our mind is in total agreement with the mind of our Creator that we will be living in the world of reality. Until then we must all live in our separate worlds of illusion, pretending that our worldview is reality.

To understand our proprium, we must realise that we have two minds and that they are in opposition to each other. Our inner or higher mind is our link to the mind of God. It is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. We experience it as the voice of our conscience, if we listen, it will speak to us. It is what makes us sons of God. It is within our possibility to do even greater miracles than Christ did. (John 14: 12-13). That is an awesome potential. It is our peace of mind and joy of life.



On the contrary, our proprium or lower mind is man-made. It is a self-image, i.e. it is an imagination of who we think we are. Subtly, underneath it is saying we are unworthy. It is intent on running the show. It thrives on drama as a way of keeping our attention. Our proprium knows if we choose our inner mind, it will be finished. We would be born again into a new world. I feel it was this outer mind of man that King Solomon was referring to when he wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. Solomon summed it up as vanity of vanities. I also feel that the crucifixion of Christ is symbolic of our need to crucify our lower mind so that we can return home to the Kingdom of God. It is my opinion that our proprium is nothing for us to feel guilty about – we formed it in our youth as a protection.

Surely, it is a part of the big picture and a part of our training here on earth. Without something to test us, how could we grow strong and have free will?

CONCLUSION

The good news is we do have an inner mind, the mind of God within us, where the Holy Spirit resides. We are true sons of God made in His image. We can be Christ-like – healers of humanity just as Christ was. All we need to do is listen and be guided by the voice of our Holy Spirit and reject the voice of our ego. In essence, we need to be bold enough to remove our outer garments of image and walk naked amongst each other as Adam and Eve had originally done in the Garden of Eden.

At the level of inner mind, we are all equal partakers of the Kingdom of God. We are all worthy, valuable and beautiful, simply because we are created by God and He cannot create otherwise. Only our proprium can fool us into believing any different.



The above is an extract from material presented by **Kirk Holst** to the North Ryde Group meeting on 25th February 2005. Kirk has been a successful company director for over 27 years. He is a member of the Swedenborg Association Committee holding the office of Treasurer.

A Member's Journey

In response to our requests for members to submit a short article describing something of their spiritual journey, one member, Rolf Zeltins, sent us the following anonymous item which he read in a publication sometime ago and with which he identifies.

My Higher Power is a combination of a whole lot of things that have become part of me and the strength I now have. It is, perhaps, a state of mind. It is the awareness of many incidents that have taken place over which I had no control, when other people or circumstances played a major role in my life, without my awareness.

My Higher Power was in those members who, when I first came to Al-Anon, assured me that I would get help and gave me the incentive to come out of my shell and be less afraid. They gave me the courage to try, and the fear gradually left because I did succeed in some things.

Or, in the case of failure, there were those around me who would tell me that it was not the end of the world, that this, too, would pass. And now my Higher Power is the confidence within me that makes me unafraid, even unafraid to make mistakes.

My Higher Power is the Joy that is sometimes within me when I know that I am glad to be alive and can appreciate what is beautiful. It is that sense of peace that comes to me when I take time to have a quiet time and relax and be at peace with the world.

Or is it that intangible force that helps me say the right thing when someone in need cries out for help and I feel inadequate on my own to give that help?

My Higher Power is the unexpected telephone call when I am feeling blue or full of self-pity, or the sun coming out to brighten the day, or that line in some piece of literature that springs up from the page and is just what I need to help me over a sticky patch. I am not religious, but that does not matter. This is a Spiritual, not a religious program. I still don't understand: it is often "God as I *don't* understand Him."

But I have a Higher Power, and my spirit that was dead is now alive, active and unafraid. It works.

This is a great section to have in the Newsletter. Your story of the spiritual pathway you have trodden, especially finding the writings of Swedenborg, would be well appreciated for publishing.



Books for the Quarter



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See page 7 for more information about this very valuable publication.

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Visionary Consciousness by Antón Pacheco (Professor of Philosophy at the University of Seville, Spain)



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WHAT'S HAPPENING

For Group activities, contact your nearest Group Convenor

- Brisbane (Ian Arnold on (07) 3369 0054; email: iaarnold@ozemail.com.au)
- Gold Coast (Kevin Attwater on (07) 5545 2401 and Jack Benson on (07) 5545 4115);
- Melbourne (Chris Skinner on (03) 9432 0322; email: cskinner9@optusnet.com.au);
- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421; email: mchester@accsoft.com.au);



It would be good to see additional viable Groups established in new areas. If you can help contact Michael Chester.

Brisbane:	New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie. 4 th Wednesdays commencing at 1 pm
2005	23 rd March ~ Swedenborg's Vibrant Future by Paul Eldar
	27 nd April ~ Our Proprium by Paul Eldar
	25 th May ~ The Science of Correspondence by Paul Eldar
Melbourne:	The New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley. Usually last Fridays commencing 8pm
2005	1 st April ~ Recent Developments in Studies in Consciousness by Geoff Forster
	29 th April ~ Creative Thought by Sylvia Eriksson
	27 th November ~ Details being finalised
Sydney:	Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde. Usually 4 th Fridays commencing 7.45pm.
2005	March ~ No meeting. <i>Myths and Meanings</i> session continues on 15th
	April ~ Details to be advised. <i>Myths and Meanings</i> session continues on 19th
	27 th May ~ Eros and Psyche with Julian Duckworth

Life: Be in it! - A final basic yet profound thought.
"People often have the mistaken idea that it is very hard to live the life that leads to heaven. They have heard that one needs to renounce the world. . . . If a person is to receive the life of heaven he has to live in the world and be involved in its affairs and business There is no other way that spiritual life can be formed."
 Swedenborg: from **Heaven and Hell** 528. Read the whole chapter - well worthwhile the time involved.

Why a Swedenborg Association?

- To promote Emanuel Swedenborg, the man and his message, throughout Australia by personal contact, meetings, etc.
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- Ensuring Swedenborg's writings are kept before the community's awareness.

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