



Issue Theme ~ *"Spiritual Growth & Maturity"*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of the subtle and most common forms of SPIRITUAL adultery is where a man forsakes the love of human beings for the love of an abstract idea.

The word *adult* means 'grown up' and when man's spiritual growth is violated or adulterated it becomes corrupted like a withered branch.

Just as *growth* is a *development* characteristic, maturity means fully developed and ripe. Just as a clump of grass will develop and ripen it can, at any time, become infected by disease and not reach maturity. The grass can be useful and eaten up to the point it is diseased but thereafter it ceases to have any nutrient benefit.

The human condition is similar. Spiritual growth of individuals can be very useful to society but man is prone to 'falling' and his growth can be halted by greed etc. and become useless at best and dangerous at worst. To reach spiritual maturity must be one's aim in life and paradoxically the closer one approaches maturity the greater the forces of resistance to maturity become.

Much of the religious intolerance today has come about through an abstract idea or fundamentalist interpretation of doctrine.

When humankind forsakes the love of his fellow man for the sake of an abstract idea he becomes diseased and dies spiritually, prematurely. The progress or maturity of humanity is wholly unconscious. Whatever the force that drives humanity upwards it is not intelligence or will of mankind itself. In the first place men are not all agreed upon the great aim of the universe and secondly they do not work toward the aim they believe in.

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

We have come to adopt the idea that species survive and thrive in accordance with selection of the fittest.

The magpie parents around my home look starved and ragged because they feed the chicks first; they even feed the Channel-billed



Cuckoo chicks!! The wallabies are still suckling the joey while the next foetus grows in the pouch because there is insufficient good food to be had. The mother looks drained.



Each creature follows its own instinct and lives best for its progeny when it lives most perfectly its own life to maturity. The creature is not acting according to an abstract idea like 'If I want my offspring to succeed me I must sacrifice my health or life for them'. It is instinctual not philosophical. The action of giving has all the traits of unconditional love. The same thing is true for human advancement.

**** continued page 2 ****



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (contd)

The Race is pushed forward, not by conscious will of its own but by some dynamic outside of man. Men do not say: "Let's make a democracy". Democracy grows out of needs and overtakes them; being threshed out of them by war and ground out through revolution. Women's Rights, of property and the right to vote, and subsequent emancipation were won after many years of seeing their offspring suffering. How often have we seen parents imposing well-meaning ideas on children only to lose them because their love is submerged by an abstract idea of parental 'control' learnt from a book? With the best of intentions parents adopt a strict course of discipline but often do not relate to their child in the process.

Many men neglect their families for their career and wake up too late, realising the family were not subscribing to the abstract idea of 'making money'. Love is the most powerful force and when it is submerged by an abstract idea like self-interest, greed, notoriety or power, then spiritual adultery is the result.

Spiritual growth is growth of the heart centre. Love is at the centre just as it is with the creatures around us where they survive and thrive.

On the eve of my retirement as your President after nine years, I am filled with many mixed feelings. Overwhelmingly I have appreciated the support and camaraderie of Members who live their beliefs.

Over this time we have seen many changes in the Association aimed at refining the services of the SAA and instituting economies. I will outline these in my report at the AGM at the end of September.

At this time I wish to send out an invitation to all members to consider joining the Committee and to be a part of the SAA's future growth.

You might think "but I can't do that, I don't have the qualifications". There are no qualifications. Where can you work together with people with values similar to yours? Where do you find a group all pulling together without hidden agendas? Each person brings to the table a part of what the members finally see.

There are 4 meetings a year usually from 6pm to 8pm. Interstate committee members are linked by phone and the meeting is held at Ryde where we have the facilities required.

SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION of Australia Incorporated

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Please Note: The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the Swedenborg Association of Australia or its Committee.

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.

You might feel you do not know much about Swedenborg or have not read all his books. Who has? What is more relevant is the fact that something of Swedenborg has brought you this far and that is the kernel, the essence, and that is your contribution.

If you wish to discuss the possibility of nominating for a position on the committee just phone the Secretary, Louise Brogan, on (02) 9974 5492.

Agape,

John Brogan



The True Nature of Spiritual Growth

by Wayne Kasmar

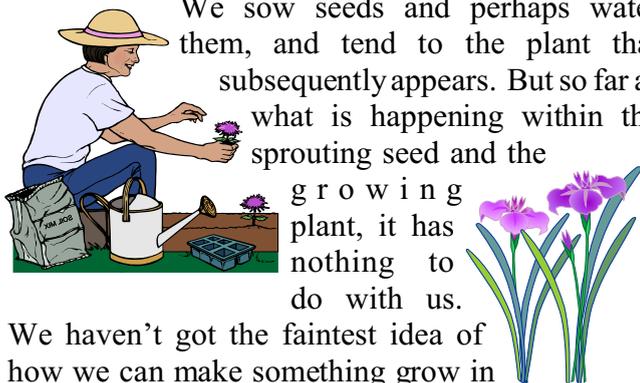
At first sight subjects like spiritual growth and maturity can seem to be less than fascinating. But when we look closely at what Swedenborg said about them, they become rather more interesting and instructive.

In our culture we imagine that the work of spiritual growth is something that we can achieve by our own toil and efforts. If growth is defined as development in individual living organisms, then the idea of growth that we tend to have seems to be that of the body builder. It is a self-development where if we work strenuously enough upon ourselves then we can successfully improve ourselves. But we also think of spiritual growth in terms of progress of another kind, in terms of a journey, and we like to imagine ourselves on a pathway that leads to enlightenment. This also requires real exertion on our part. Both versions of these ideas of progress - development and journey - require an investment of our own energy.

In his spiritual writings Swedenborg gives a different, more organic idea of growth. When we talk about us growing plants, it in fact is not really us who grows them. We just facilitate their growth.

We sow seeds and perhaps water them, and tend to the plant that subsequently appears. But so far as what is happening within the sprouting seed and the growing plant, it has nothing to do with us.

We haven't got the faintest idea of how we can make something grow in that sense. Even though we tend to take it for granted it is a miracle of nature. Occasionally though we find seeds in a piece of fruit that we might be eating. We could then find ourselves contemplating that if we were to plant just one of these small seeds, it sprouts and grows remarkably into bush or tree laden with abundant fruit, inside each piece of which are numerous more seeds.



Swedenborg tells us that if we are to be abundantly blessed with spiritual growth we need to facilitate it by ordering our outward lives along the lines that God gives us - his commandments. We prepare, as it were, the soil for the growth that within us is achieved by the Divine. But we can not directly effect our spiritual growth. We can do only external things. No internal work is ever done by us. Only God can effect that.

So when both the natural world and Swedenborg tell us that the true work of growth is beyond our direct control, how is it we come to demonstrate such a strong conviction that the opposite is true? It seems to be almost a basic urge in our culture to change ourselves for the better and/or to alter where we are so that we improve our position in life. This is true not just on the spiritual level of life but also right through to the outer, natural one. Many devote themselves to developing the body beautiful or work extraordinarily long hours to improve their position on their career path.

Where does this strange thinking come from? Why is it that we don't find ourselves acceptable simply as we are - just the way God made us. And why do we have such trouble feeling at home and comfortable with where we happen to find ourselves, but are somehow compelled to make life into some kind of restless journey?

It shapes up to being an enormous mystery unless we see that certain factors have been supremely influential in moulding Western thinking. The one with the deepest effect of all has been the Christian religion, and in particular the Bible. Even though today few of us in our society give much thought to the Bible, it has had such a profound influence on generations after generations of our ancestors that basic ways of seeing which we have inherited from them are based on it.

And the early chapters of the Bible shed light on the matters here under discussion. We read that Adam and Eve, named there as the first man and woman, deliberately and wilfully disobeyed God and thereby lost their innocence. They were consequently banished from the paradise of innocence that was the Garden of Eden, sentenced to



labour and struggle in a harsh natural world of toil and hardship. From this the Church taught that all their descendants would be marred by this 'original sin' and their place in life affected by it.

Little wonder then that we should have such a strong, deep-seated desire to somehow fundamentally change ourselves, and also to alter our location from where we currently find ourselves to be. And as we humans messed things up in the beginning, why should it not be possible for us by our own efforts to set things right?

Of course, this reading of such formative stories in the Bible is what you get when you take a literal approach to them. It is only once we learn of their deeper meaning as revealed in the spiritual writings of Swedenborg that we can properly understand what they are telling us. And then we can be freed from the wrong ideas that surround them. But since they have so deeply affected us, often it isn't until this is clearly explained and we become consciously aware of it that we can have the chance to completely shake ourselves free of its hold.

Attaining spiritual growth therefore does not mean becoming some kind of super-hero equipped with massive overdeveloped spiritual muscles, or some weathered traveller with a bag full of hard-won wisdoms that have been gathered along the way.

It's about simply realising that in and of ourselves we have nothing that is truly of value, that everything good and true is freely given to us by the Divine, and without limit. A spiritually mature person realises this and they don't seek to take credit for the profusion of love and wisdom that manifests in their lives. They understand it comes from God.

Still, if we are to get touch a state, we have to play our part. It's just not going to be the wondrous and glorious process of regeneration that we can effect. Only God can perform that. It's the far more ordinary and mundane matter of setting our outer lives in order that is our lot. Much like gardening or farming, it's basically simple although not always easy. But without this reformation of our conduct, regeneration - when God makes within us a new heart - is simply not possible. It is this inner change which is the real miracle of spiritual growth, not some outer development or outward movement.

Wayne Kasmar (Sydney, NSW) is a founding member of the Swedenborg Association of Australia and currently a Committee member. He has been an avid reader of Swedenborg's spiritual writings for over 30 years. He has also used his artistic talents in displays for the Swedenborg Centre at Festivals for Mind, Body, Spirit.

*Actual repentance consists in examining ourselves,
recognising and acknowledging our sins,
appealing to the Lord, and beginning a new life.*

Swedenborg: True Christian Religion paragraph 528

Swedenborg Centres Around Australia

There are a number of Swedenborg Centres in operation around Australia offering books and other items for sale and for free borrowing. Some also run regular meetings which may be of interest to you. Their location and contact details are given below. Except where noted, opening hours are irregular so please phone first.

ADELAIDE	287 Oaklands Road, MARION 8277 1891	MELBOURNE	426 High Street Road, MT. WAVERLEY 9432 0322
BALLARAT	318 Fussell Street, BALLARAT 5331 5638	PERTH	281 Albany Highway, VICTORIA PARK 9470 9775
BRISBANE	21 Agars Street, ROSALIE 3369 0054	SYDNEY	1 Avon Road, NORTH RYDE 9888 1066 - Open Tues., Wed. & Thurs. from 10 am to 4 pm
CANBERRA	33 Allchin Circuit, KAMBAH 6296 1053		



ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

This is my last report as Secretary. Yes, I am hanging up my pen, and moving aside to allow a freshness in to the Secretary's position. Thank you all for the opportunity to be of service. There is so much going for this Association, and so much it can offer - to members and the larger community. I look forward to remaining a part of it, and, as a member, supporting the Committee in their plans for the future.

Membership:

A big welcome to our new Members:
Caroline Neave (NSW) - welcome back
Caroline!

Maggie Whitby (NSW)
Christine Holzauer (Qld)
Pauline Hale (WA)

As always, the Committee really hopes all of you will get much from your membership.

Business Items:

There is a Five Step Starter Kit being put together. This will be available soon, so those of you wishing to start a group will have a wonderful support. Thanks to Julian for all his work in putting this together - I had the privilege of working with him on this project.

Celebration of Spring 07

The last Friday in August saw our annual Celebration of Spring Festival in Sydney. It was an evening filled with music, singing, poetry, art, sharing, and, a touch of the mystical as you will read in Ruth Duckworth's account of the event on page 6. I always look forward to this Festival; meeting up with friends not seen for a while, sharing discoveries and experiences, not to forget a delicious supper (fellow foodies will understand my enthusiasm!), and a chance to reflect on the inner re-awakenings that Spring can offer us. I left feeling renewed, reinvigorated!

.... and now, enjoy the September Candela. May your Spring be filled with awakenings, and bring a freshness and aliveness to each and every day.

Love, Light and Laughter.

Your Secretary,

Louise Brogan.

GROUP'S NEWS

Brisbane:

Whilst it is not proving possible to hold our mid week meetings in Brisbane itself this year, a new meeting is being held monthly at Redland Bay, about an hour's drive from the city, convened by SAA member Rolf Zeltins. Rolf and his wife Carmen are most active with an AI-Anon Group in Redland Bay and our arrangement is to meet over lunch, each 2nd Wednesday, after which I give a talk and lead a discussion. It is a joy to report enthusiasm and appreciation from those who stay on from their morning meeting and attend.

Ian Arnold



Melbourne:

Over the last three months we have had presentations on a wide variety of topics which have been enjoyed by those who were present

In June our speaker was **Julian Duckworth** who spoke on the general subject of *Greek and Roman Mythology*. He gave backgrounds to some of the myths and then used examples to show how each of us can work with them to bring out spiritual lessons for our life. In one sense the myths provide an avenue for us to explore matters of the spirit and indeed God used them in the past to maintain a link with people's lives.

Our speaker in July was **Dr Elena Nefedova** who specialises in Naturopathy and Homeopathy but who trained as a Medical Doctor in Russia. She provided a very interesting talk on *Iridology* - the physiological principles and methods behind it and also how it helps as a diagnostic tool. The writer provided a brief overview of the principle of discrete degrees and the 'Universal Human' from Swedenborg's spiritual writing to show how holistically our book of life and the sum total of humanity is woven together. It was explained by Dr Nefedova that the same principles can be applied to other areas of the body but the eye is the most suitable for this work

Continuing the theme of alternative therapies we were treated to a very stimulating presentation by **John Maitland** from Sydney. A practising homeopath, John provided some background on the principles of his profession but his talk focussed on how Swedenborg's spiritual writings underpin the discipline and explained the link between mind and body. He explained that a Homeopath treated and looked at the whole person when looking for a



diagnosis and remedies. John indicated that the founders of Homeopathy were very much influenced by Swedenborg's writings.

Some of the members of the group assisted at the June Festival of Mind, Body Spirit in Melbourne where we shared a stand with two other spiritual organisations

Chris Skinner



North Ryde, Sydney:

In June, we were treated to a really delightful hour and a half of meditation, wonderful screen-projected images and a message which came right from the heart. The subject was *Desert Dreaming* and we were led through a dreaming state by **Maggie Hamilton**, well-known Sydney author, publisher and student/teacher of the sacred. After an opening and calming meditation, Maggie gently explained something of her life's journey, focussing on how it dramatically changed on taking her first soul journey into a wilderness of sand, silence and light which became a beautiful experience for her. From that point, the way she saw herself and the world was transformed. Using a good selection of her photos, many from areas in the Nevada desert, Maggie was able to share aspects of her own experiences - the gifts and blessings - and pass on concepts we can all work with here and now. It was certainly an uplifting message and the powerpoint presentation was very powerful in more ways than one! A DVD of this session is available from the Swedenborg Centre.

It had been decided that no meeting would be held in July due to a number of factors. The event in August was our annual Celebration of Spring and this has been reported on elsewhere in this issue.

2007 AGM -Friday 28th September

Registered Office, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde

Prior to the Business Meeting, **David Moffat**, Canberra, will present a session on:
Spiritual Growth - Tips & Approaches

All necessary Reports and Papers for members, including voting slips and proxy forms, are being sent with this issue of *Candela*. The Committee hopes for good interest in the meeting either by physical attendance or by communication of support. Members are also reminded to give thought to Executive and Committee vacancies.

Celebrating Spring 2007

What a amazing evening we had at the Swedenborg Centre at North Ryde on 31st August, to see in the spring time. The annual art competition was the initial focus, and this year the theme was "Behind the Veil" the mystical experience.



There were thirteen entries, some on the mystical experience and some focussing on spring. This year it was a peoples' choice award, so we started by enjoying the art work and voting for our three favourites. There were beautiful paintings, a photograph, woodblock print and collage. Each had some words to help guide us in understanding the thought behind the picture. We have some wonderful artists in our midst. The winning body of work was not a single painting but years of work by Rosemarie Lorenz, consisting of three meticulously produced and bound books containing many wonderful miniatures:

- Book One *Book of Life's Merits – Virtues by Hildegard von Bingen* with reflections by Rosemarie
- Book Two *Book of Life's Merits – Vices by Hildegard von Bingen* with reflections by Rosemarie
- Book Three *Love and Wisdom: Mystical Vision and Experiences of Hildegard von Bingen and Emanuel Swedenborg.*

[Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1178) & Swedenborg (1688-1772) were two of the world's greatest mystics. Rosemarie has studied and worked with both for many years and this certainly showed up in this work. Book-like, they are very expensive to publish but there was a strong feeling among the participants that it would be excellent if they could be published in some way, either as books or cards.]

After feasting our eyes on the art works, our ears were then given a treat with a very cohesive group of presentations on the theme of mysticism.

Our MC for the evening, Joe Vandermeer, kept us engaged with his wonderful humour and stories, filling spaces and making changes with practised ease. The Sydney Lyre Ensemble performed an



amazing piece for lyres, cello and voice. This was a composition by Colin Tanser only written last year called *Everyman*. It was based on the fifteenth century morality play about the journey of the spirit. It was in three parts, and Evan Sanders recited and sang, and the gentle mystical music set the mood.

We also had poetry by Wilson Van Dusen, a talk by **Dr Andrew Heslop** of insights on the mystical experience, a reading from *Reason and Passion* by Kahlil Gibran, and the beautiful film from the Swedenborg Foundation called *Images of Knowing* which fitted in very well with the mystical theme. We finished with a short meditation for Renewal which beautifully led into the announcement of the winning art prize.

We then feasted our other senses of taste and smell by enjoying a wonderful Vietnamese supper.

Thank you so much to all the organisers and participants for giving us such a beautiful introduction to spring, on a balmy evening. It all came together wonderfully.

Ruth Duckworth

GOD

I feel obliged to posit this question to readers of Candela "Did GOD create man in GOD'S image" or did "Man create GOD in man's image?" This is a question which I believe to be worthy of serious consideration.

What is GOD? God is LOVE, COMPASSION, FORGIVENESS etc. etc.

YES, all of the above, but this is NOT GOD; these are attributes of GOD but are not GOD.

What is GOD? I have no idea, suffice to say "GOD IS" and carry on with "THE WORK", and work there is, for all of us.

Organised Religion presents GOD as a seperate entity that must be obeyed, worshipped, suffering to be endured in GOD'S name, in the hope of some reward or salvation at time of passing. I do not accept this as GOD and believe it smacks of Super ego and as GOD has NO EGO, it presents as a contradiction. Carry on the good work, You are needed.

From,

Ken Cross, Qld

Why not respond to Ken with your own thoughts through the pages of *Candela*? He would like to know what you have to say as would all readers.

*Please speak no ill, a kindly word can
never leave a sting behind
And to repeat each tale we've heard, is
far beneath a noble mind
A better seed is often shown, should we
persue a kinder plan
if very little good be known, then let us
speak the best we can*

*Please speak no ill and lenient be, of
others failings as our own
If you're the first a fault to see, don't be
the first to make it known
For life is but a passing day, no way to
know how brief its span
Then for the little time we have, let's
speak of all the best we can.*

Adapted from an old Mormon Hymn

December 2007 Issue - *An Open Forum*

Our aim is to present a smorgasbord of items for readers to enjoy. Naturally Christmas will be in the air but that can be just a start. We need your contribution for inclusion. Have your say!

Send it to the Newsletter Co-ordinator at the registered office (see page 2). It can be an article, letter, poem, a picture etc. Alternatively, submit some relevant piece you have read elsewhere.

To be a lively Newsletter, your contributions are needed.

Copy deadline will be 4th December.

e-News

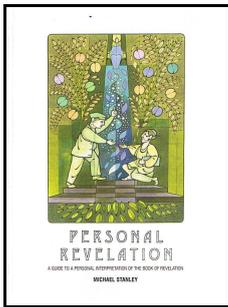


Are you on the Internet? Would you like to receive each month details of activities, book reviews/promotions and snippets of information about what is happening overseas of interest to the Swedenborg movement.

**If you are, why not sign up for our Electronic Newsletter now?
Simply email the Swedenborg Association (see page 2) with your request and details.**



BOOK REVIEWS



PERSONAL REVELATION

by

MICHAEL STANLEY

90 pages, paperback

Publisher: Swedenborg Open Learning Centre,
Manchester, UK

For nearly 30 years I have been a student of both Swedenborg and Esoteric Christianity. For me the elaborate and specific detail of the former and the wonderful method of the latter form a marriage literally 'made in heaven'.

Dr. Michael Stanley, in his new book called *Personal Revelation - A guide to a Personal Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*, manages a similar 'marriage' of truth and method. This study he says is to develop and list a number of key principles for interpreting the apocalyptic *Book of Revelation* in a 'personally applicable way'.

Apocalyptic Revelation takes place so that we may learn, by deeply felt experience, the fundamental spiritual principle that we are of ourselves nothing, says the author. The heart of our own personal revelation should be that we are no more than receptacles of life, with no power to do anything good or true from ourselves.

Any ability to enjoy a truly angelic life, he says, is dependent on repeated and deepening realization and acknowledgement of this reality. To this end material in the book is laid out in sections of twelve principles of personal interpretation or application of the contents of the Book of Revelation.

There are nine illustrations throughout the book which give form to the visions, and which I think we are encouraged to digest, to connect with, and to contemplate and ponder. This indicates that a slow and reflective journey is being advised.

Dr Stanley is showing us a 'way' to work on ourselves. He is showing us a 'method'. We should take the opportunity with both hands.

His approach of 'personal' meaning mirrors the 'work' of Esoteric Christianity.

These are the work methods of self-transformation - discovering our nothingness, enduring the pain of that, and re-ordering the body, mind, soul and God by 'turning' to the Divine as our one true reality and 'Self'. Central to this is the 'observation' needed to witness our negativities, the 'aim' of reorientation to the Lord, and the act of 'self-remembering', and through this, discovering 'Real I' or 'True Self'.

Self-remembering was once a central pillar of the spiritual life of the ancients. In true self-remembering Divine Consciousness becomes present within us. John, it should be noted, is really a higher part of us which is capable of coming into a truly loving relationship with the Lord.



St John of Patmos
by Jean Fouquet
(wikipedia)

The Book of Revelation, which appears at the end of the New Testament, was written down by John when he was in this state of 'self-remembering'. Dr. Stanley offers, in this exciting book, a way to work on ourselves using the images of John's apocalyptic visions.

The seven stars and the seven golden lamps, the messages to the different churches, the throne, and the book sealed with seven seals, the different coloured horses, the mountain full of horses, the chariots of fire, the city of Babylon and its destruction - all have a personal meaning for the individual.

Not all images are beautiful! When we make room for light or influx from above there is a huge revolution and the individual feels as though everything is lost. The visions of negative forces we find in ourselves are things we need to overcome. The Dragon and Babylon lurk and operate deep within each of us as negative aspects of our human ego.

As Dr Stanley observes, "...there is an emergence of some of our own unconscious ego affected states that begin to well up into our consciousness." These formally hidden things should be observed for what they are. In this way we begin, he says, to perceive the gap between our own idea of our spirituality and the inner truth of Divine Love itself.

These images confront us and can frighten us. They are designed to wake us up from our 'sleep state'.



The more beautiful images, however, give us hope and encouragement as we face our stark reality. An example is the wonderful final vision - the Holy City with its light more beautiful than sunlight, its structure of beautiful stone, and the river which runs through the city with the tree of life growing on its banks, bringing great hope and wonder during our personal trials.

The images, both frightening and beautiful, are part of us. They are part of the journey of transformation. This, when we grasp it deep in our hearts, is a wonderful 'revelation'.

This fine and evocative book by Michael Stanley nurtures the potency of our 'individuality' and should be highly commended

Steve Leeder

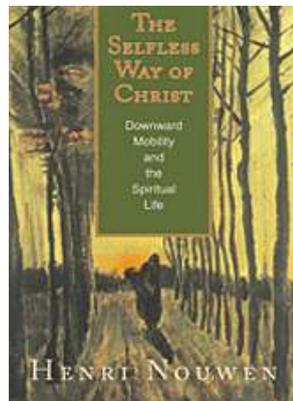
This book will be available from the Swedenborg Centre, North Ryde, in the not-too-distant future. Its price will be \$25 plus postage. If you are interested in obtaining a copy, please register your interest with the Centre (contact details on page 2)



THE SELFLESS WAY OF CHRIST

by

Henri Nouwen



Often appearances deceive, as it was with a small book I just read. The book seemed far too small to be significant. Yet this little gem manages to cover a topic of great spiritual importance: namely, that the essence of living truly like Christ is to live contrary to the overwhelming expectations set by society as covertly bellowed at us since childhood that we must take control and strive for success in every way to thrive and survive. The message we are sold at every opportunity is that our primary goal must be to work hard at improving our personal power, comfort, status and wealth. In other words

we must ensure that we are 'upwardly mobile', to take complete control of realising this number one goal to 'make it'.

In his book, author Henri Nouwen points out that the way of Christ was to resist such a trend. And in resisting, Christ constantly startled those around him with his contrary answers, advice and actions, thwarting those expectations of him that he would assume political power with which to redeem the Jewish people from their Roman oppressors.

Christ instead addressed the inner needs of the spirit, demonstrating a way to liberate our spirit from its inner oppression by speaking the truth and acting on it despite the consequences of doing this on one's personal life, wealth, status and comfort. He resisted power and wealth, acting and teaching locally through the common and overlooked people of his time, not acting nationally as would be expected of a 'Messiah', liberator of the Jewish nation. By addressing inner needs, he liberated the individual from the oppression caused by acting on unexamined expectations and aims at empty notions of success.

The power of Christ's approach is nicely phrased by Nouwen as '*downward mobility*'. The power of Christ's way is reinforced by the reaction it got from the political activists, movers and shakers of his time. By revealing the inner truth, Jesus exposed the shallowness of their lifestyles and all they had worked for, an investment which the unenlightened keenly defended to the extent that they killed him in the way of a common criminal.

But this small book is far from any historical analysis. It is truly relevant advice addressing the here and now. Nouwen is clearly speaking from experience since he himself left a professorship at Yale to share his life with people with mental disabilities at the l'Arche Daybreak Community in Toronto, Canada. His selection of ten Vincent Van Gogh drawings included throughout the text are valuable to reflect on.

An inspiring read.

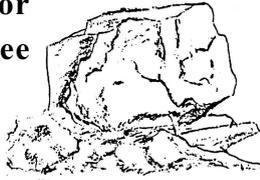
Joe Vandermeer

The Selfless Way of Christ by Henri J M Nouwen is published by Orbis Books - ISBN 0 232 52707 5). It is available from Adyar Bookshop, Sydney (phone 0292678509) for \$27.95 plus postage or via amazon.com on the web.



Correspondence Column ~ Part 7

... Looking into the Mirror of Correspondence to see what **“ROCKS”** could represent in our inner life



Much of our life is a constantly changing flux of impressions, images and events, like the restless winds that sweep across the land, and the ceaseless waves that rise and fall on the surface of the seas. To be aware of only such fleeting, ephemeral aspects of our experience leads, of course, to a sense of underlying unease, meaninglessness and restlessness. How we then long for some permanent bedrock in our lives! - something to rest securely upon, something whose pattern, structure and meaning can be grasped and reflected on, because it doesn't keep endlessly changing its form before our eyes.

Such is most strongly represented for us in rock and stone, which many of us may be drawn to examine and meditate on during our summer vacation on some coast or mountainside.

There is a 'message' for us in the rocks which can greatly help us to orient ourselves better to the true inner dynamic of life, and so be more 'in line' to experience the inner sense of peace and joy that comes with such alignment.

Crystals and the crystalline aggregates we call rocks are beautifully and wonderfully varied in many ways; the 'messages' they contain for our souls must be many. Space will not permit any detailed exploration of this amazing sub-world of crystallised forms. But let us content ourselves with some insight into the general overt 'message of the rocks'.

* * * * *

Not everything in the inner life is unending change or development. There are vital permanent structures, some small and 'loose' like stones, some large and relatively immovable like great rocks or the earth's bedrock itself. These are spiritual facts - or the facts of the spiritual dimension we live in. And the greatest and most solid of these is the ever-present 'undergirding of the Divine arms' - the protective love our Creative Source (God) always has for his 'developing creatures'. Is not this the greatest spiritual Fact we can ever know and rest on?

Is not this the 'Rock' which Jesus indicates our 'house' should be built on to be able to withstand the

buffetings of life? (Matt.7:24). What was it that Simon Peter had that led Jesus to say to him:

“You are Peter” (which means 'a stone'); “On this rock I will build my Church”.
(Luke 16 : 18)

Surely it was the rock-like trust Peter had in Jesus, that He was the Christ, the promised Saviour of man. What Jesus manifested and represents - the ever-loving, ever-supporting Father - is the 'Mighty Rock' (Psalm 62 :7). So Peter was to call Jesus the 'living Stone' to whom we come, and to describe his hearers as 'living stones being built into a spiritual house' (I Peter 2: 4,5).

Manifest in our essential nature is the same wonderful, spiritual fact - that each one of us is a beloved child of our Heavenly Father. Yet, though 'hewn' from the one Rock, and just as no two stones are exactly alike, each one of us is uniquely different. And, just as many spiritual facts can together build a gloriously strong and beautiful philosophy, so can we, united together, manifest something of the One Living Stone who upholds us all.



Written by Rev. Dr. Michael Stanley for the newsletter of the Swedenborg Movement (UK)

The universe is an orderly and harmonious place

Order and harmony do not occur by chance

Order requires planning

Planning requires a Planner

I believe "GOD" to be this Planner

If one does not have Order and harmony

One has Chaos

I am a living example of the latter

I hope to achieve the former

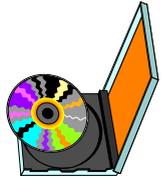
I am a "W I P", a work in progress.

Submitted by **Ken Cross**, Queensland



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If you order the following titles in the October to December 2007 Quarter, you will receive approx. 25% off the retail price. (see the discounted price and postage on the form below)
Complete the Order Form (you can copy it) and return it to the Swedenborg Centre or telephone on 02 9888 1066 and mention this notice.

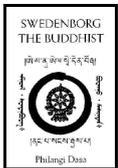


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These pages are a thoughtful and moving study of what was happening in the heart and mind of Christ as he went about his life's work, as recorded in the Gospels. Whilst most would imagine this to be something impossible for us to know, Childs' uses Swedenborg's teachings to disclose these things. The source is to be found symbolically in the stories of the Old Testament, especially those in Genesis. They reveal the struggles, triumphs and inner development of Christ as he forged the path of love and wisdom for us to follow.



***Swedenborg: The Buddhist* by Philangi Dasa**

RRP \$25.00

437 pages, paper

Herman Carl Vetterling, 19th century Swedenborgian minister, homeopathic physician, Theosophist and Buddhist, was also known as Philangi Dasa. This book is cast in the form of a friendly round-table discussion, placing the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg along side a wide range of religions and spiritual pathways. Subjects covered include the spiritual composition and potential of humanity, heaven, hell, karma and reincarnation to name just a few. The universality of Swedenborg's philosophy shines through.

Swedenborg and Steiner: Two Scientist Seers

RRP \$9.00

CD of a talk given by **Geoff Forster**, Melbourne

Geoff Forster gave this talk in Sydney during 1988, the tricentenary year of Swedenborg's birth, as a means to bring together meaningfully, two significant traditions which have given rise to wide influence. As well as providing an excellent background to each of these 'giants', Geoff compares and contrasts the main philosophical approaches of both, touching on Christ's nature, aspects of Christ's life, the Bible and the spiritual world and the afterlife. He also addresses what a seer is. Despite occasional background noise in this live recording, it is an excellent informative hour's listening.

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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);
- Perth (Trevor Moffat on (08) 9470 9775; email: trevorm@ic-net.com.au;)
- Sydney region (Michael Chester on (02) 9913 2421; email: mchester@accsoft.com.au);



It would be good to establish Groups in other areas. If you can help, please contact Michael Chester.

Details of programmes will be advised by leaflet as soon as they are known. Our website is updated when new information comes available - www.swedenborg.com.au

Brisbane: New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie. Currently in abeyance - see Report on page 5

Melbourne: New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley. Usually last Fridays at 8pm
28th September ~ Panel of Speakers from Different Faith Traditions
26th October ~ *The Game of Life*. Speaker: **John Brogan**, Sydney
30th November ~ To be advised

Perth: Petros Lifeskills Bookshop, 281 Albany Highway, Victoria Park. Currently in abeyance.

Sydney: Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde. Usually 4th Fridays commencing 7.45pm.
28th September ~ *Spiritual Growth - Tips & Approaches*. Speaker: **David Moffat** (note date change)
26th October ~ *Moments of Enlightenment ~ Wilson Van Dusen's Poetry* with **Michael Chester**
23rd November ~ *Natural Healing and Swedenborg*. Speaker: **John Maitland**
Meditation Evenings - First Monday of month. 6.30 - 7.30pm
Cabramatta Spiritual Group - 2nd Tuesday of each month. Contact Walter on 0416 276 227

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