

# Principles of Government

By George De Charms 1960

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#### KEY TO REFERENCES + TO THE WRITINGS OF THE NEW CHURCH

AC Arcana Coelestia. +  
AE Apocalypse Explained. +  
CL Conjugial Love. +  
HH Heaven and Hell. +  
TCR True Christian Religion.

#### PREFACE

The substance of what is set forth in the following pages was first presented in a series of lectures to the Bryn Athyn Society in 1943. We were at that time deeply impressed with the importance to the New Church of the principles of government, both stated and implied, in the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. We were convinced that a knowledge and understanding of those principles was of tremendous importance to the firm establishment and future growth of the New Church.

Nothing has happened since then to modify that conviction. We are grateful, therefore, to Mr.

Raymond Pitcairn for making possible the publication of these lectures, and we would acknowledge with keen appreciation the assistance of Prof. W. C. Henderson in the task of preparing the manuscript for the press.

George de Charms.

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# Chapter I - Introduction

Because of the present world-wide struggle between two completely opposite political ideologies there is widespread interest in the subject of government. In spite of the fact that two world wars have been fought presumably to make the world safe for democracy there is great uncertainty and confusion of thought as to what democracy really is. The Soviet rulers claim that their government is democratic, but they can do so only by giving the term an altogether different meaning from that which is generally understood by the Western nations. Even among these nations the definition of the term has been greatly obscured because it has been interpreted so differently in different countries. What is lacking is a common understanding of basic principles. There is no agreement as to the origin of government. There is wide difference of opinion as to whence the authority to govern is rightly derived. What is the real purpose of government, and what are its limitations! These are questions to which no one has a wholly satisfactory answer.

Yet it is a notable fact that the fundamental principles of government have been Divinely revealed by the Lord at His second coming. These principles are now available to the members of the New Church, and it is vitally important that we should be familiar with them, and should learn to think from them. Although as a church we are too small to exert any discernible influence upon the world at large, we need to think from these principles in order that we may act from spiritual motives in discharging our personal responsibilities as citizens of our country, and even as members of our church, for the same principles apply, though in a different way, to both civil and ecclesiastical government.

In the application of these principles to the solution of political and economic problems there will always be variety of opinion among us. It cannot be otherwise, for any attempt to formulate doctrine into a political or economic system identified with our religion, and therefore made binding upon the conscience, would be destructive of spiritual freedom. Civil affairs are on the plane of effects. In the sight of the Lord they are external means which merely serve as tools for the promotion of spiritual and eternal ends. The application of universal principles on this plane must necessarily vary, therefore, according to changing spiritual states and needs. The varieties of spiritual states are innumerable, and their changes are unpredictable. For this reason there is no system of government that is of universal application or that can be regarded as permanently valid. The kind of government that is best for one nation may not be best for another. The kind best adapted to the needs of a people at one stage of national development may not always be best adapted. Changing conditions may make radical modifications of the system not only desirable, but necessary. What is best at any given time or place can be determined only by thinking from universal principles.

The conscience should not be bound to that which is temporary and valid only within narrow limits. If it is so bound, man, as to his spirit, cannot be kept in conjunction with the Lord or in consociation with the heavens. The Lord is infinitely aware of man's spiritual needs, and the Divine Providence ever looks to his eternal welfare. In the Lord's sight, therefore, external things, including all forms of human government, are of use only so far as they serve spiritual and eternal ends. The purpose of religion is to bring man's will into harmonious co-operation with the Lord's will. If, then, man is bound by religious conscience to external forms, to modes of procedure or of application, so that from spiritual affection he is induced to cling to them after their real usefulness has passed; or if he is led to insist upon them for all men and for every nation, regardless of differing spiritual states and needs, his

will cannot fail to become alienated from the Divine Providence. When this happens, man's religion loses its vital soul and becomes a natural superstition out of touch with genuine truth. Man's will can be in harmony with the Lord's will only so far as he looks to what is eternal. To do this he must constantly seek Divine guidance. He must be prepared at all times to modify his traditional ideas in accord with the direct teaching of the Word. He must regard nothing as permanent or unalterable except the spiritual truth of the Word. All human ideas, imaginations and concepts, when compared to the Word are things that quickly pass away, as taught in Isaiah: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand forever (40:8).

When he thinks from the truth of the Word, man is called upon to seek its application to the particular conditions of his own time, to the special needs of his own country, and to the fulfillment of his personal duty, both as a citizen and as a member of the church. To think, will, and act from the Word is the very life of religion. But if some system of government is made a matter of conscience - as if it had Divine sanction for all men and for all time - rational judgment concerning it is at once inhibited. Man becomes blind to any need for change, and loyalty to a natural form of government takes precedence over adherence to the teaching of the Word.

Yet some have supposed that it is the duty of New Church men, and the manifest destiny of the New Church to produce from the Writings a system of government that will finally be acknowledged by all men as being most in harmony with revealed truth. As to what form is preferable, there has been variety of opinion. Some have thought that monarchy is the only proper form of government because of what is said in the Word about the Lord as King, and because a kingly government was Divinely established with the children of Israel. Others have supposed that some form of communal ownership or socialistic government must be regarded as the only true order because this form was adopted by the primitive Christian Church, and also because of certain teachings in the Writings concerning the government that prevails in the societies of heaven. Still others have held that constitutional or representative government is the only true form because it looks to the freedom of the individual, to the personal responsibility of each citizen, and thus to those natural conditions which most effectively promote man's spiritual life.(\*). Each has sought to identify belief in a particular form of government with the only orthodox faith of the New Church. An effort has been made to induce ministers of the church to proclaim that chosen system as the only true expression of the Divine will on the plane of civil affairs, and thus to center the thought of the church upon the task of promoting that system as the genuine representation of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

(\*) It is understood, of course, that these forms of government are not mutually exclusive, but may, and frequently do, exist in combination.

From the beginning, the leaders of the General Church of the New Jerusalem have seen the fallacy of this view, and have sought to guard the church against any binding of man's conscience to a particular form of government. Yet we are not immune to this danger. When we are fully convinced that a particular application of doctrine on the civil plane is right, it is hard for any of us to understand how other New Church men can think differently. Especially when emotions are aroused, the vital importance of protecting the freedom of others to think from their own conscience, although acknowledged in principle, is easily ignored in practice. This may seriously injure the church by alienating us from the spirit of charity, and by inhibiting free inquiry into the deeper meaning of the

Writings. That is why it is of such great importance that we should be familiar with the fundamental principles of government now revealed, that we should continually seek to advance in our understanding of those principles, and that we should endeavor to think from them with reference to all matters of civil and political life.

In our application of these principles to the affairs of the church we must strive to think and act together. A common agreement in regard to modes to be adopted at any given time as being in harmony with principles of revealed truth is a very different thing from a permanent binding of the conscience to external forms. That is why the General Church has adopted no man made constitution. No form of government has been fastened upon the church by any external bond of law or tradition. Yet there is a Statement of Order and Organization that records what has been commonly recognized as most useful in the past. This statement is subject to change at any time, but it keeps the record clear while leaving the future free. It never should be allowed to become a fixed law; yet changes should always be made with full knowledge of past experience in order that they may be based on sound rational judgment.

It is not intended that, as the church spreads, any one particular form of ecclesiastical government shall become universal. Each race and nation should develop its own government in accord with its particular genius and form of mind. Differences in modes of government will not essentially divide the church as long as all look directly to the Writings for guidance, and as long as a spirit of charity prevails.

That there must always be great variety in the external forms of government is evident both from history and from the teaching of the Writings. Patriarchal government existed on this earth in most ancient and ancient times, and it still exists among primitive peoples. It is the kind of government that Swedenborg describes as existing on other planets. It is said to be the government that prevails in the celestial heavens of the most ancient people. It is the natural, and almost the inevitable government in the home; and therefore everyone comes into it during infancy and childhood. From all the teaching given we conclude that it is the form of government best adapted to those of a celestial genius; that is, to all who are to be led from within by love, and from without by obedience. Thus it is adapted to children, and to adults who are in childlike states.

So far as is revealed, monarchy, the government of hereditary kings, exists only on our earth. It arose with the decline of the Ancient Church, and its adoption is spoken of as a sign of retrogression. Yet it was Divinely sanctioned, and proved to be of great service through a period of the world's history after patriarchal government ceased to be appropriate to the needs of the great majority of mankind. In its highest development, under a benevolent ruler who was wise and God-fearing, monarchical government was truly representative of the Lord's kingdom. That is why it was established by the Lord with the Jewish and Israelitish nations, and was incorporated into the Word of the Old Testament. For the same reason the rule of princes could be retained in the heavenly societies formed from those who had lived under a monarchical form of government on earth.(\*). Monarchy, and especially absolute monarchy, is similar to patriarchal government in that it is paternalistic. It is adapted to states of willing obedience from loyalty rather than from rational judgment. It is based on the acknowledgment of authority, and in the last analysis, of Divine authority. For that reason the king came to be regarded as "the anointed of Jehovah" or as one who governed by "Divine right."

(\*) See @AC 5044; 3; @CL 11, 15, 266; @TCR 76.

In the degree that this absolute power was later restricted by the will of the people as expressed through their chosen representatives, kingly government lost its distinctive character and approached more nearly to the form of a republic or a democracy. A constitutional monarchy is a combination of monarchy, on the one hand, and representative government on the other.

Representative government, which may take many forms, is relatively modern. Obviously, it is adapted to a people of advanced educational and cultural development who are capable of assuming individual responsibility. Historically, it first appeared in ancient Greece, and later in Rome; but at that time it had only a very limited acceptance and a short duration. The world was not yet ready for it. Nevertheless, those first attempts performed an important use, implanting the seeds that would spring up as soon as the soil had been prepared. There was no opportunity for growth during the Dark Ages. Only with the coming of the Renaissance, the awakening of interest in scientific enquiry, the Reformation which helped to free the mind from the bonds of traditional dogma, and the increasing urge to understand, did new political freedom become possible. It is a notable fact that the dawn of this modern era coincides with the second advent of the Lord, and the Last Judgment in the spiritual world. From that point on there has been a development of public education, a spread of knowledge that has progressed with ever-increasing impetus, and with it the demand for representative government has constantly become more pressing and insistent. It produced the world-circling British Empire, the revolt of the American Colonies, and the French Revolution, the formation of other European republics, and most recently, the surge of nationalism in the near East, in India, and in China. Through all this the idea of democracy has gradually developed. Yet democratic government is nowhere wholly effective. It is found in varying degree in different parts of the world, but only to the extent that a foundation of general education has first been laid. In many countries it exists in name rather than in reality. Where it fails, military dictatorship usually comes into power, often retaining the outward form of democracy without its essence. Without some form of dictatorial power there would be chaos.

Experience clearly demonstrates, therefore, that there is no single form of government that is right in itself and of universal application. Although we find democracy as we understand it best adapted to the needs of the United States, we should not wish to impose it upon the entire world; nor should we take for granted that it is to be perpetuated without change even in our own country. We must be prepared to see it modified in accord with rapidly changing social, economic, and political conditions, indeed, as we shall endeavor to show later, as it is at present conceived, the idea of democracy contains elements that are contrary to revealed truth. These in time must be removed.

However, if we are to see clearly the true principles of government we must first investigate the nature of Divine government, and from this seek to deduce the essential nature of human government. We propose therefore to consider in the chapters to follow, the Lord's government in the heavens, in the hells, and in societies of men on earth. We shall attempt to define the part that spirits and men are given to play in this Divine government. We shall seek to draw the basic distinction between ecclesiastical government and civil government, and shall present certain conclusions concerning the present and future government of the New Church. We can, of course, present only a Very brief, partial, and imperfect survey of the subject, based upon personal reflections which have resulted from our study of the Writings.



# Chapter II - The Nature Of Divine Government

All who believe in God, however various their ideas of God may be, unite in confessing that He governs the universe of His creation. It is quite impossible to conceive of one who creates, sustains and preserves all things, yet who does not control or govern. In the practical conduct of human affairs on the plane of civil and political life, however, this confession is for the most part little more than a pious abstraction. Having made it, men promptly ignore it and proceed exactly as if it were not so. It is obvious that in spite of the universality of the Divine government there is imperative need in every form of human society for government by men. In the common view this means that certain chosen individuals must be regarded as having a recognized right to command obedience from others, as if God had ceded to them a part of His own government, or had relinquished into their hands a portion of His power. It may be supposed that this authority is an immediate gift by Divine selection or appointment, as with hereditary kings, or with dictators who imagine that they have been Divinely commissioned; or it may be thought that this authority is conferred for a longer or a shorter time by a majority vote of the governed, this vote being regarded as a sign or testification of Divine appointment. In both cases there may be a formal recognition that the right to govern is of Divine origin.

In the exercise of that right, however, it is generally considered legitimate, at least within the limits of the powers conferred upon him, for the governor to impose his will on his subjects. The very safety of society requires that the authority of constituted government should be sustained, if not by a willing acquiescence or by persuasion, then by force. If this is not done, then in effect the government, or the actual control, passes into the hands of others.

All of this is true only in appearance. The truth is that never, even to the least degree, does the Lord yield His government to the hands of men. He grants no legitimate authority to any man or body of men to rule from arbitrary will. Every effort to usurp this power is secretly overruled by the Divine Providence. Although he appears to do so, man does not govern, even though he holds positions of the highest authority. The Lord alone governs, either through human rulers or in spite of them. So far as a ruler, by self-imposed restraints, subjects his own will to Divine leading, the Lord governs through him. On the other hand, so far as he arrogates power to himself, placing his own will above the law, the Lord still governs, but in spite of him.

In this highest sense there is no such thing as human government. In the sight of the Lord a human governor is merely one who administers the Divine law and thus serves the Divine will. No attempt on the part of man to govern in defiance of the Divine will can in the least succeed. In fact, even the wisest human government, that of the celestial angels, is constantly overruled by the Lord because it is not wise enough. Only government by infinite wisdom can be permitted to prevail, lest the heavens fall.

That the Lord alone governs is therefore by no means a pious abstraction, but a constant and irrevocable truth. Only a deep and living acknowledgment of this truth, one that profoundly affects every Judgment and every decision of a human governor, can render his government effective in the sight of the Lord. By a "living acknowledgment" cannot be meant merely a vague affirmation. It must be a love of serving the Lord that seeks instruction and guidance from Him continually. The wisdom of the government will be measured, not only by intent or desire, but by knowledge and intelligent understanding. In the exercise of responsibility, decisions must be made. These decisions will be right

only as far as they are in accord with Divine law and order. This law, then, must be known, and in some degree understood, before a wise judgment can be made. He who would govern in accord with the Divine will must love spiritual truth, seek it constantly in the Word, and think from it in forming every judgment.

It is now revealed that even the Lord's government is not arbitrary. It is the government of infinite love moving steadily toward the accomplishment of a single unchanging purpose - the purpose of producing a heaven from the human race, and eternally perfecting it. From the pursuit of this end, God Himself cannot depart because He will not. To do so would be to act contrary to His own love, and thus in opposition to Himself. Thus the goal is fixed and the course of Divine government predetermined. The activity of the Divine love, the mode of its operation, the way it acts in order to achieve its purpose, is what is called the Divine wisdom. There is and can be only one such way. It is the very form of the Divine love, the inherent nature of its life, the only order, and the only law whereby it can act.

This operation of the Divine love, moving steadily toward its goal, is the law of life that governs all things. It is the order of the universe, an order that is impressed upon creation from the beginning, and is perpetually maintained. To act in accord with this Divine law, in greatest and in least - this is the government of the Lord.

Every means that contributes toward the achievement of the Divine end is called a use. The Lord, from His wisdom, foresees uses and provides for them. Everything He creates is a form of use, minutely designed in form and structure to perform the use for which it is intended. The performance of this use is its very life, its sole *raison d'être*. As long as the use persists, the organ created to perform it is protected by the Lord. If the use changes, the organ must be modified. If the use ceases, the organ, deprived of all inflowing life, dies. The only thing, therefore, that the Lord's government sustains and perpetuates is use; wherefore it is said that the Lord's kingdom is a kingdom of uses.

The end of creation is a heaven from the human race; but by heaven is meant the joy of love to the Lord and the happiness of performing a use from love to Him. To act from love is to act in freedom, for love cannot be compelled. It follows that without freedom there can be no heaven. Freedom involves the ability to choose. The choice that is offered to man is either to receive the Lord's guidance or to reject it. Only by virtue of this free choice can man receive guidance from love rather than from necessity. Because this freedom is a prerequisite to man's salvation, and because without it man can never know the happiness of heaven, the supreme purpose of the Lord's love is that man may be free. It is more important that man be free than that he be saved, because all salvation depends upon it. In order that man's freedom may be preserved he must be permitted to reject Divine guidance if he so wills. Man's availing himself of this permission is the source and origin of evil, the reason for the existence of hell.

Because, above all else, the Divine government looks to the protection of man's freedom, we are confronted by a curious paradox. Man is governed in such a way that he may be free, that is, that he may not be governed. If he is really governed he is not free, and if he is really free he is not governed. The truth is that man is always governed, but so subtly that he appears to be free. The Lord's will, His life, His love inflows so secretly that its influx is not perceived. The man feels it as if it had its origin in himself; thus as if it were his own will, his own life, his own love. Yet the truth is that it perpetually inflows, and its influx is constantly under the Lord's control. By controlling the influx of His life, the

Lord actually governs all things of man's life. So regarded, human freedom is only an appearance.

However, the love that is insinuated is not single but double. Man feels it as two opposite loves, between which the Lord preserves a perfect balance or equilibrium. Man is empowered by the Lord, nay, he is required to choose between these two opposites. In reference to this choice his freedom is not an appearance but a reality. The Lord provides for this freedom, preserves it when possible, and restores it repeatedly when it is momentarily lost. This is the perpetual operation of the Divine Providence.

It should be noted, however, that real freedom is an attribute, not of natural life but of spiritual life. Some appearance of freedom exists in all things of nature. In it resides the image of God. This appearance grows stronger and more perfect as we ascend the scale from the mineral, through the vegetable and animal kingdoms, up to man. Yet even man, as to all the functions of his natural life, the life of his body and brain, is only apparently free. He is continually under the government of irrevocable and inescapable laws - the laws of nature, of physics, chemistry and mechanics, the laws of health, of social, civil and moral life. The violation of these laws carries with it its own remedial penalties. Thus, as to natural things, man is beset on every hand by necessities. He is subject to the limitation of physical strength, of space, of time, of climate, of wealth, and of human restrictions imposed by others. The same applies to all the functions of spiritual life, to the operations of the mind. Man is born with innate faculties, with hereditary tendencies, with specific abilities, all strictly limited, and beyond which he cannot go. The laws governing his spiritual life, the laws of influx, of reformation, of regeneration, are just as exact and as inescapable as natural laws. Man has no freedom to modify them, and every infraction brings its own unavoidable penalty. Yet with all these limitations, man alone, of all creatures, has the power to use his God-given faculties either in the willing service of the Lord or for the satisfaction of his own ambitions. In this one respect he is really free, and in the exercise of this freedom lies the very image and likeness of God.

The Lord's government of man, therefore, is not a government from without by command or by necessity, but a government from within by influx, by conscience, by a subtle leading of the will. Concerning this we read: "The Lord does not compel man to receive what flows in from Himself, but leads in freedom; and so far as man allows, through freedom leads to good. Thus the Lord leads man according to his delights, and also according to fallacies and the principles received therefrom; but gradually He leads him out of these, and this appears to the man as if it were from himself. Thus the Lord does not break these things, for this would be to do violence to freedom, which, however, must needs exist in order that the man may be reformed" (@AC 6472). "Man is led by the Lord by influx and taught by illustration. Man is led by the Lord by influx because leading and inflowing are expressions relating to love and the will.... That every man is led by himself from his own love, and is led by others according to it, and not from the understanding, is known. He is led from the understanding and according to it only when the love or the will forms it; and when this is the case, it can also be said of the understanding that it is led; but still it is not then the understanding that is led but the will from which it is" (@DP 165). Nevertheless it is true that a man can be led only through that which he knows; wherefore we read: "The Lord inflows into those things which [a man] knows, and so leads his affections and thoughts. This is understood by being affected by truth for the sake of truth, and by good for the sake of good, and loving truth and good for the sake of life ... [thus] the Lord leads him through those things which he learns from affection or love" (@SE 5796). Of this we shall treat further in

connection with the Divine government in heaven and in hell.

The special point that we wish to make here is that all government belongs to the Lord alone, and has supreme regard for man's spiritual freedom. Human government derives its only legitimate authority from the Lord. It is genuine only so far as the acknowledgment of this truth is present and dominant in the mind of the governor. It is genuine only to the extent that it is inspired by the same ruling end as the Divine government, namely, the protection of human freedom. Foremost in the mind of every governor must be the desire to protect the real freedom of those whom he governs. For the sake of this end he must continually restrain his own will, and subordinate it to the rule of Divine law. So far as this is done, and no further, the Lord can govern through him. This is the first and most important principle of all human government, both civil and ecclesiastical.

# Chapter III - Divine Government In Heaven And In Hell

We have stressed the point that the supreme end of all Divine government is the protection of man's spiritual freedom, his freedom to accept or to reject Divine guidance, and thus to keep the law of God from love rather than from necessity. To realize this truth, and to appreciate its implications, is the very first essential of any genuine understanding of the Divine government. It offers the only rational explanation of the Divine Providence, which otherwise appears to human sight so inexplicable and so self-contradictory. It explains why evil, once confirmed in man's mind, can be removed only by a slow process, if at all. It enables us to understand why the Lord is so long-suffering, so willing to tolerate, even for centuries, falsities of religion and evils of life with men, showing infinite patience with their states of ignorance and perversity. It explains why the Divine power is apparently limited, and why it is impossible even for omnipotence to save all men by any arbitrary act that would compel belief or suddenly remove the evils from which the race is suffering. It shows that the existence of these limitations involves no contradiction of the Lord's omnipotence, because they are self-imposed, being inherent in the very nature of the Divine love itself, the love of a heaven from the human race; and finally, it explains why the Lord's government of men must be according to unalterable Divine law and order. Divine law, the law whereby the infinite love of God operates to achieve its purpose, is the only mode whereby man's freedom of choice can be insured, and Divine order is the only condition under which it can be preserved. To act apart from these would be to frustrate the end of creation and defeat the Lord's purpose

Because the Divine law is universal, government in accord with it must be inmosty the same for all; yet it must be minutely adapted to the particular states and needs of each one. These states are obviously so various, that the modes of Divine government appear to be extremely divergent, and we fail to perceive their inner unity. That is why, in our human sight, the ways of Providence seem so mysterious and mutually contradictory. We see only its outward manifestation. We do not know the spiritual states, either of ourselves or of others, to which the Lord constantly looks in everything He does. We cannot possibly know what is necessary in any individual case; nor can we know at any time in the history of the world what is required to protect man's freedom of choice. This is especially true on earth where good and evil are inextricably mingled. But this inner truth, so effectively concealed from view by the apparent confusion of world conditions, is made manifest to some extent by what is now revealed concerning the Lord's government in the heavens, and how this differs from His government in the hells. Here the application of the Divine law to the good is brought into sharp contrast with its application to the evil.

Government in heaven is effected entirely by influx. "Divine order," we are told, "is for the Lord to flow in through the interiors of man into his exteriors, thus through the will of man into his action. This takes place when the man is in good, that is, when he is in the affection of doing good for the sake of good, and not for the sake of himself" (@AC 8513). This means that the Lord does not govern in heaven by command, but by an enlightened conscience. He gives instruction through the Word which causes truth to be seen and interiorly acknowledged. The angels receive this truth with joy and gladness of heart. To comply with it is their highest delight, and thus they act according to it, not from any sense of

external compulsion, but from inmost freedom. This is true even when instruction is given through the instrumentality of wiser angels. "To 'command,'" we read, "is influx, because in heaven no one is commanded or ordered; but thought is communicated and the other acts willingly in accordance therewith" (@AC 5732). He acts, not because he has been told to do so, but because he sees and acknowledges the truth presented, and wishes to obey it. He sees the truth, not from the angel, but from his knowledge of the Word, and thus immediately from the Lord. Therefore he acts, not from the will of the angel who instructs him, but from his own will.

The number continues: "Communication of thought together with a desire which wills that something be done, is influx, and on the part of the recipient, is perception, and therefore by 'commanding' is signified also perception. Moreover, in heaven they not only think, but also talk together, but about things of wisdom; yet in their conversation there is nothing of command from one to another, for no one desires to be master and thereby to look upon another as a servant; but everyone desires to minister to and serve the others" (*Ibid.*). In another passage we read: "There is no archangel in the heavens. There are indeed higher and lower angels, also wiser and less wise; and in the societies of angels there are governors who are set over the rest; but yet there are no archangels in obedience to whom others are held by any authority. There is no such government in the heavens, for no one there acknowledges in heart any one above himself except the Lord only" (@AE 735). This we understand to mean, not that each one regards himself as possessing greater wisdom and judgment than others, but that he does not will to obey any but the Lord alone; thus that he is willing to accept instruction, and to act upon it only so far as he sees it to be true from the Word. This is quite different from the ordinary interpretation of the democratic idea that "all men are created equal." It is not based on any claim of individual rights, privileges, or powers, but simply on the truth that every individual is equally under the immediate leading of the Lord.

The forms of government in the societies of heaven differ widely in different parts of the Lord's kingdom. There is a major difference between the government of those who are in the celestial kingdom, and the government of those who are in the spiritual kingdom. "Government in the Lord's celestial kingdom," we are told, "is called righteousness because all in that kingdom are in the good of love to the Lord from the Lord; and whatever is from that good is called righteous. Government there belongs to the Lord alone. He leads them and teaches them in the affairs of life. The truths that are called truths of judgment are written on their hearts; everyone knows them, perceives them, and sees them; and in consequence, matters of judgment there never come into question, but only matters of righteousness which belong to the life. About these matters the less wise consult the more wise, and these consult the Lord, and receive answers. Their heaven, that is, their inmost joy, is to live rightly from the Lord" (@HH 214). By this is meant that those in the celestial kingdom never question whether or not a thing is true. This they see immediately and spontaneously from perception. Doubts arise only with reference to how the truth is to be applied in a given case. Thus they have reference not to things of intelligence, but only to things of wisdom.

"In the Lord's spiritual kingdom the government is called judgment; because those in that kingdom are in spiritual good, which is the good of charity toward the neighbor, and that good in its essence is truth; and truth pertains to judgment, as good pertains to righteousness. These, too, are led by the Lord, but mediately; and in consequence they have governors, few or many according to the need of the society in which they are. They also have laws according to which they live together. The governors

administer all things in accordance with laws which they understand because they are wise, and in doubtful matters they are enlightened by the Lord" (@HH 215). We understand this to mean that in this kingdom doubts arise as to what is true. The laws are acknowledged and understood by all in general, but in particulars the angels are in obscurity greater or less according to the degree of their wisdom. In varying degrees they understand truth when it is presented, but they must acquire it gradually, by study and reflection. They do not perceive it spontaneously as the celestial do; yet it is their deepest desire to abide by it so far as they are able to understand. Truth thus seen is like reflected light, and for this reason it is compared to the light of the moon, while that in the celestial kingdom is compared to the light of the sun.

In both kingdoms there are innumerable lesser varieties of government. "There are various forms of government," we are told, "differing in different societies, the variety being in accord with the functions performed by the societies.... All these forms of government agree in this, that they look to the public good as their end, and in that good, to the good of the individual; and this is so because every one in the whole heaven is under the auspices of the Lord, who loves all, and from Divine love ordains that there shall be a common good from which each individual shall receive his own good. Each one, moreover, receives good according as he loves the common good; for so far as he loves the common good, he loves all and every one; and as that love is the love of the Lord, he is to that extent loved by the Lord, and good comes to him" (@HH 217). Judging from the teaching given in other passages, we would conclude that the external forms of government in heaven differ, not merely in accord with the functions of the societies, but also in accord with the forms of government that have been known on earth. If so, they might be patriarchal, princely or representative, according to the genius and form of mind of the people, their earthly experience, and background. There is nothing either good or evil inherent in any of these forms *per se*. Any one of them, in indefinite variety, might be heavenly, provided only that it had regard to the public good. This characteristic alone is universal in all the varieties of heavenly government.

In hell also, government is effected, so far as is possible, by influx; but to this is added government by command, and by the external compulsion of fear. Government by influx obtains with reference to thought, imagination, and internal will. These are not coerced, but are allowed free rein, however false or evil they may be. To inhibit them would deprive the spirit of all semblance of life. One whose ruling love is evil can neither think nor will from any other affection. If he could not exercise this love he would have no thought, no will, and therefore no life. The only delights that evil spirits can know are those of willing evil and of thinking falsity. The Lord permits these delights, and at the same time controls them. As far as possible He controls them by influx; that is, by bending the will. Evil spirits, like evil men, restrain the outward expression of their malevolent desires in order the more completely to achieve their end. The love of power and the greed of possession must be concealed for the sake of gaining the assistance of others, or until they have been rendered helpless to oppose or prevent what is planned. Cunning and deceit are of no avail against the angels, who at once penetrate a mask of pretense; but other evil spirits are blinded by their own lust of power and wealth. They gladly accept the pretended friendship of another, hoping to turn it to their own advantage.

But the love of evil is insatiable. Being centered in self it can prosper only at the expense of others. It leads therefore to inevitable conflict. When each is pretending to help the other, and yet is thinking only of himself, the time must come when opposing interests openly clash. Then the deceit appears,

and each is revealed as the treacherous enemy of the other. Apparent friendship is then turned into manifest hatred. In the midst of this welter of conflicting ambitions, the Lord, by influx, that is, by an imperceptible bending of the will, directs the balance of power. He permits one spirit or one society of spirits to gain the ascendancy, and thus for a time to rule, in order that the more grievous evils may be checked and held in external bonds by those that are less grievous. The bonds imposed by evil spirits themselves are those of fear induced by cruel punishments. But since each governing party takes advantage of its power to rush into ever deeper evils, it in turn must be checked, and the Lord permits the opposing forces to gather strength until the force of the growing evil is broken. Infernal government, therefore, is just one revolutionary movement after another.

Concerning this we read: "How the hells are ruled by the Lord shall be briefly explained. In general the hells are ruled by a general outflow from the heavens of Divine good and Divine truth, whereby the general endeavor flowing forth from the hells is checked and restrained; also by a particular outflow from each heaven and from each society of heaven. The hells are ruled in particular by means of the angels, to whom it is granted to look into the hells and to restrain insanities and disturbances there; and sometimes angels are sent to them who moderate these insanities and disturbances by their presence; but in general all in the hells are ruled by means of their fears. Some are ruled by fears implanted in the world, and still inherent in them; but as these fears are not sufficient, and gradually subside, they are ruled by fears of punishments; and it is especially by these that they are deterred from doing evil. The punishments in hell are manifold, lighter or more severe with in accordance with the evils. For the most part, the more wicked who excel in cunning and in artifices, and who are able to hold the rest in subjection and servitude by means of punishments and consequent terror, are set over them.... It must be understood that the sole means of restraining the violence and fury of those who are in the hells is the fear of punishment. There is no other way" (@HH 543). "The subordinations in hell are those of despotic authority, and consequently of severity; for he who commands, rages fiercely against those who do not favor all his commands; for every one regards another as his enemy, although outwardly as a friend for the sake of banding together against the violence of others. This banding together is like that of robbers. They who are subordinate continually aspire to rule, and also frequently break forth in revolt, and then the conditions there are lamentable, for then there are severities and cruelties; and this takes place by alternations" (@AC 7773).

This is not a bad description of our modern world, which displays all the opposites of heavenly government. In it freedom is ephemeral, and there is no sense of security or peace, no real delight in serving others, but only a feverish struggle for self-advancement, a constant fear, a continual pretense of morality and justice, but only for the sake of self. Thus there is no basis for mutual confidence, no assurance that another will keep faith or abide by a promise, because under every appearance of friendship, enmity and cruel hatred lie concealed. Such is the present-day struggle between East and West. Under these conditions, force is the only law that will be respected, and government must be by compulsion. Its power must be constantly maintained by cruelty, or the threat of cruelty that induces fear, for the government is in constant danger of being overthrown, and its authority is continually being put to the test by revolt.

Let it be noted, however, that these external bonds are never imposed by the Lord. In spite of the apparent difference, His government is interiorly the same in hell as it is in heaven. It is government by influx - unseen, calm, powerful, irresistible in its purpose to protect the good, to maintain internal



freedom, and by directing the balance of evil forces, to prevent the evil from increasing beyond the bounds of use. Against this supreme government of the Lord, evil has no power. He who has reduced the hells into order and holds them in perpetual subjection to His will controls the destiny of the race and overrules the selfish designs of men and spirits. Because He leads the good by open teaching and the self-compulsion of conscience, and leads the evil by an imperceptible bending of the evil will toward external order and obedience to law, and at the same time by controlling the balance of power, the Lord alone reigns, and His Divine will prevails.

# Chapter IV - Divine Government On Earth

Although Divine government appears so different in its application to the varying states of men, it is actually the same for all. We have noted how opposite, in outward seeming, is the Lord's government in heaven from that in hell. In heaven it is almost invisible, insomuch that it scarcely appears to be government at all: this because it is effected through the truth of the Word, which is gladly received and willingly obeyed. The angels accept its guidance freely, of their own choice. Where this is the case each one appears to be his own governor. Those who are in positions of government demand no obedience. They rule, not by command, but by instruction, making the truth of the Word clear to those who are in obscurity with reference to it. When this is done, those who are taught respond to the truth from affection, with gratitude for the enlightenment received and without any sense of external compulsion. Such is what the Writings call "government by influx."

In hell, on the other hand, the appearance is that Divine government is effected by means of fear. The truth of the Word is denied and its counsel is rejected. Each one wishes to dominate over others, but no one is willing to govern himself. Those in positions of command seek to impose their own will upon others arbitrarily, either by persuasion or by force. In its outward form, therefore, the government of hell is harsh, cruel, heavy-handed. Inmost, however, it does not differ from the government of heaven. The Lord overrules what the evil spirits do, and secretly controls their actions from within by an influx that preserves at least a remnant of freedom. The hells are not kept in order by the domination of one evil spirit over others, but solely by the Lord, who subtly leads and moderates the evil will of him who imagines he is ruling. By a hidden providence He preserves the balance of power, causing deeper evils to be checked by those less grievous.

Only when we realize that the Lord, by influx, governs both the good and the evil alike, can we begin to understand the nature of the Divine government in the world of men where the good and the evil are indistinguishably mingled. Here the government of heaven and that of hell must operate together. It must prevail over all, whatever their quality. It must operate simultaneously upon all who live in any community or in any country, whether under a monarchy, a dictatorship, republic. It must operate continually upon each individual, through all the varying states of his life - through states of self-will and rebellion, as well as through states of innocence and loyalty to the truth of the Word. This is possible only because the Divine government is always the same. The apparent differences arise solely from the different ways in which men react to it.

The Lord always governs by an imperceptible influx into the will. Men suppose that evil arises from ignorance, and that it can be eradicated by instruction. This is the appearance because when truth is known and acknowledged it forms the conscience. It brings to light hidden evils and falsities, that they may be removed. But instruction would not lead to the removal of evil unless the man were willing to obey the truth. The will alone is the mainspring of action. Indeed, without will or love there is no interior enlightenment. Though truth be presented ever so clearly, and even acknowledged superficially, its implications will not be perceived. If there is no heart in the application of the truth to life, there will be no reformation.

The Lord governs, therefore, not by instruction, but by insinuating a love that opens the mind to the reception of truth, together with a desire and intent to live according to it. This desire and intent are

what produce conscience, not instruction without them. Where such a conscience cannot be implanted because man rejects it in favor of self-will, the Lord can govern only through this will, subtly bending it toward a lesser evil, and if possible, toward good. This He must do gently, without destroying man's freedom of choice. Concerning this we read: "It is believed by some that the understanding rules, but the understanding does not rule unless the will inclines; for the understanding favors the will, because regarded in itself, the understanding is nothing else than the form of the will. When the will is mentioned there is meant the affection of love, for the will of man is nothing else. This affection is what rules man, for the affection of love is his life. If a man's affection is that of self and the world, then his whole life is nothing else, nor can he withstand it, for this would be to withstand his very life. Principles of truth effect nothing; if the affection of these loves has dominion, it draws truth over to its side and falsifies it, and if the truth does not fully favor it, it rejects it. Hence it is that principles of true faith effect nothing whatever with man unless the Lord insinuates the affection of spiritual love, that is, of love toward the neighbor; and insofar as the man receives this affection, so far he also receives the truths of faith" (@AC 7342).

This government by influx into the love of man is effected through societies of angels and spirits in the other world, both good and evil. We are taught "that the affections of man, from which are his thoughts, have extension into societies in the spiritual world on every side, into more or fewer of them according to the amount and quality of the affection. Man as to his spirit is within these societies, and to them he is attached as it were with extended cords which determine the space where he can walk. As he passes from one affection into another, so he passes from one society into another, and the society he is in, and the place where he is in the society is the center from which the affection and its thought extend to other societies as circumferences, and these are thus in unbroken connection with the affection at the center, and from that affection man then thinks and speaks. Man acquires this sphere, which is the sphere of his affections and thoughts therefrom, while he is in the world, from hell if he is evil, from heaven if he is good. Of this, man is ignorant because he does not know that such things exist. Through these societies, man, that is, man's mind, although bound, walks free; but he is led by the Lord, and he takes no step into which and from which the Lord does not lead; and yet the Lord grants continually that man shall have no other thought than that he goes of himself in full liberty; and he is permitted to persuade himself of this because it is according to a law of the Divine Providence that man shall go whithersoever his affection wills. If his affection is evil he is conveyed through infernal societies; and if he does not look to the Lord he is carried into these societies more interiorly and deeply. And yet the Lord leads him as if by the hand, permitting and withholding as far as man is willing to follow in freedom. But if man looks to the Lord he is led forth from these societies gradually, according to the order and connection in which they stand, which order and connection no one knows but the Lord only, and thus he is brought by continual steps out of hell up towards heaven, and into heaven. This the Lord does without the man's knowing it, because if man knew it he would disturb the continuity of that process by leading himself" (@AE 1174).

Note here that the Lord leads and governs both the evil and the good, the one through hell and the other through heaven. The mode whereby He leads is the same in both cases, but where He leads depends upon man's freedom of choice. There are three planes of conscience by which the Lord rules man. They are a conscience of spiritual truth from the Word, a conscience moral and civil truth, and an apparent conscience or a willingness to do what is just and equitable for the sake of self and the world (See @AC 4167). Except those who are insane or those who are openly criminal, all men have a

conscience on one of these three planes. Those who have not can be governed only from without by external compulsion and fear. Yet even these are secretly governed by influx from the Lord, as is the case also with those who are in hell.

By means of a spiritual conscience the Lord rules those who have been regenerated, thus all who are in heaven. By the same means He rules all on earth who are in a state of regeneration, or whenever the love of spiritual truth is active and dominant with them. By means of a conscience of what is just and equitable the Lord rules those who have not yet been regenerated, but who can be regenerated and who are being regenerated, if not in the life of the body, yet in the world of spirits after death. This includes the simple good everywhere, Gentiles who are ignorant of the Word or in falsities of religion, and yet who are well-disposed. By means of an apparent conscience, or a willingness to act in accord with justice and equity for the sake of self and the world, the Lord leads the evil, bending them to lesser evils from those more grievous, so far as they are willing to follow in freedom. The same applies, we understand, to the good when they are in proprial states, or when selfish and worldly loves are dominant with them. The love of truth, whether it be a love of spiritual truth or a genuine love of civil and moral truth, constitutes an internal bond - a bond of conscience. But a mere willingness to abide by civil and moral laws for the sake of self-advantage constitutes an external bond. Thus we read in the *Arcana Coelestia*: "The Lord rules the man who is in good by means of internal bonds, which are of conscience; but one who is in evil by external bonds alone. And if these should be broken, every such man would become insane, even as is the man who is without fear of the law, without fear for his life, and without fear of the loss of honor and gain, and thus of reputation, for these are the external bonds - and so the human race would perish" (@AC 4217). We are told that "an angel-man is led by the Lord both from within and from without; but a devil-man is led by himself from within, and by the Lord from without. An angel man is led by the Lord according to order, from within from order, and from without to order; but a devil-man is led by the Lord to order from without, but by himself against order from within.... Because an angel-man is led by the Lord, he is led by civil law, by moral law, and by spiritual law, for the sake of the Divine in them; a devil-man is led by the same laws, but for the sake of himself in them" (@AE 1145).

In regard to human government on earth, this teaching clearly indicates how the Lord governs through the instrumentality of men, or in spite of them, in such a way that the Divine law overrules, and thus the Divine end is assured. For the sake of man's freedom, Divine government must operate mediately through the administration of human governors. This is true, not only in hell and among the evil on earth, but even in heaven, and indeed in the highest heavens. This will always be true on earth, even when the Lord's kingdom has been established universally.

Government implies the power to direct the course of action, to fix and determine policy, and thus to administer the law within a prescribed jurisdiction. It implies that this shall be done according to the free will and the personal judgment of the governor. Except in an absolute monarchy, or in a dictatorship, this power is limited by an established constitution, by custom and tradition, and by other means; but only to the extent that it is not inhibited can one be said to govern. The governor actually rules so far as his will and his judgment prevail. Note, in this connection, the situation in Great Britain. The Crown represents the fixed and established law that is acknowledged by all citizens, and that is constant regardless of which political party may, at any time, be in power; but the Prime Minister, who is called upon to interpret the application of that law to the specific need of the day, is the real

governor. He alone can exercise judgment and direct policy. The responsibility of government rests upon him.

A human governor may be either good or evil. He may act either from patriotism and a genuine regard for the common good, or from the love of power and for the sake of self-aggrandizement. In either case he is not only free to act according to his own will and to use his own judgment, but he cannot avoid doing so. Others look to him for leadership. They expect him to make vital decisions. Indeed, only so far as his will and his judgment prevail can he be said to govern. The appearance is that he imposes his will upon others either with or without their consent. This is true of all government. It is true whether the governor is good or evil. The will of the governor may be self-restrained by a spiritual conscience, by a moral and civil conscience, or by an apparent conscience for the sake of self. In any case it will appear to the governor and to the governed as his own free will, his own personal judgment. Yet the truth is that in every case the Lord really governs by a secret influx into the will of the governor, silently bending that will and turning his judgments and his decisions toward the accomplishment of the Divine purpose. So far as the will of the governor cannot be thus bent, the Lord rouses opposing forces by a similar influx into the will of the governed, or of others affected by the government. He causes these forces to compel some modification of the governor's will, and in extreme cases, to overthrow the government and replace it with one more amenable to Divine leading. We do not mean that the new government is necessarily better than the one that has been overthrown. It may indeed be far worse, and yet may serve to bring to the surface latent evils in order that they may be recognized and rooted out. Whether this new government is better or worse it is one that can be made to promote the secret purposes of the Divine Providence. Because in this way the Lord always controls the destiny of the human race, to say that the Lord is the only real governor is not a pious abstraction; it is the veritable and constant truth. We should rejoice to have it so, and the continual endeavor of both the governor and the governed should be to co-operate with this Divine will and law, for only to this extent is wise government possible.

# Chapter V - The Theory Of Democracy

It is astonishing that in the midst of a gigantic world struggle to preserve and extend democratic institutions we should find such great confusion as to what democracy really is. Definitions of it are legion, most of them being expressed in terms of the end or goal that democracy seeks to attain. Thus it is defined as government by all the people as contrasted with government by an individual or by a small group. It is defined as a government based on the proposition that "all men are created equal," and that the state exists for the benefit of all its citizens. It is defined as a government that exalts the dignity and worth of the individual, and protects his personal rights, providing equal opportunity for all to enjoy "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." It is defined as a government that recognizes no special privilege, accords preference to no group, class, or section, but looks to the common good of all. It is defined as a government that guards the ramparts of liberty against the encroachment of any civil authority - one that insures freedom of religion, freedom of speech and of the press, freedom of peaceable assembly, freedom from search and seizure without due warrant, and freedom of trial by one's peers. More recently, to these have been added freedom from want and freedom from fear. The goal of democracy, therefore, is to provide for the free exercise of conscience, the free development of the intellect, the free expression of personality, the free enjoyment of the rewards of one's labor, guarding all these freedoms against the bondage of arbitrary government, against any supposed prerogatives, any special privilege, or restrictive monopoly. As a well-known contemporary writer has stated: "For more than two thousand years, since western men first began to think about the social order, the main preoccupation of political thinking has been to find a law which would be superior to arbitrary power. Men have sought it in custom, in the dictates of reason, in religious revelation, endeavoring always to set up some check upon the exercise of force. This is the meaning of the long debate about Natural Law. This is the meaning of a thousand years of struggle to bring the sovereign under a constitution, to establish for the individual and for voluntary associations of men rights which they can enforce against kings, barons, magnates, majorities, and mobs. This is the meaning of the struggle to separate the church from the state, to emancipate conscience, learning, the arts, education, and commerce from the inquisitor, the censor, the monopolist, the policeman, and the hangman" (Walter Lippmann, *The Good Society*, Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown and Company, 1937, pp. 5, 6).

Yet in the two countries that have been the greatest exponents of democracy, and that are now partners in a life-and-death struggle to preserve it, there is a rapid and seemingly irresistible trend toward governmental control. As the same writer points out: "Virtually all that now passes for progressivism in countries like England and the United States calls for the increasing ascendancy of the state: always the cry is for more officials with more power over more and more of the activities of men" (Ibid., p. 5). And this in the name of democracy! The contention is that with the mechanization of industry, mass production, the disappearance of geographical frontiers, and the development of rapid transportation, man's intimate dependence upon his fellow man has greatly modified the real meaning of liberty. The individual freedom of earlier times no longer is thought possible. That which provided for the greatest measure of freedom yesterday will not do so today. Under modern conditions it is only so far as government takes the responsibility for planning and directing the national economy, and for turning individual effort into the most fruitful channels, that some measure of individual liberty can still be preserved.

The enemies of democracy make the charge that the cry for freedom is merely a pretense; that democracy itself is a form of special privilege; that the so-called democratic nations, having acquired by force a major portion of the world's wealth, and having set up a controlling power over the world, have used that power to exploit other peoples for their own advantage, and are now fighting to retain these superior benefits, as of right. The answer given is that the democracies propose to extend the blessings of their form of government to all peoples; that they are not fighting to defend the status quo, but to open the gates of opportunity to every race and nation in order that freedom may find congenial soil, and may spring up and flourish in every part of the world. The claim is that the dominant nations of the Western civilization owe their wealth and power to democracy, and that how far similar benefits may accrue to others will depend upon how far democracy can be established with them also. Opposition to democracy, it is said, arises only because that form of government is not understood. Therefore, in the words of another modern writer: "What is necessary now is one thing and one thing only - that the issue of democracy be made precise and clear" (Archibald MacLeish, *The American Cause*, New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, Inc., 1941, p. 28).

Some of the confusion disappears if we define democracy, not in terms of its objectives, but in terms of the political means regarded as essential to the attainment of those objectives. James Bryce, in *Modern Democracies*, does this. "The word Democracy," he says, "has been used ever since the time of Herodotus to denote that form of government in which the ruling power of a State is legally vested, not in any particular class or classes, but in the members of the community as a whole. This means, in communities which act by voting, that rule belongs to the majority, as no other method has been found for determining peaceably and legally what is to be deemed the will of a community which is not unanimous. Usage has made this the accepted sense of the term, and usage is the safest guide in the employment of words" (James Bryce, *Modern Democracies*, 2 volumes, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921, I, p. 20). Rule by majority vote of the people is thus regarded as the way to achieve free government. This is on the theory that "the cornerstone of our whole democratic edifice is the principle that from the people, and the people alone, flows the authority of government" (Address of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt). Yet this definition also leaves us in uncertainty because the ideal of equal suffrage for all within a country has never been fully attained. Furthermore, suffrage, when exercised, does not endow all with the same measure of participation in government. The question has been asked, Shall we still call that country a democracy where women do not vote, where a considerable portion of the male population does not enjoy that privilege, or when the exercise of the ballot by a minority is coerced through fear or through partisan propaganda? Look over the countries of the world, and find one where the theory of democracy, as Bryce defines it, exists in actual practice. Judged either by the standards of its objectives or by those of its accepted political means, we must admit that democracy is not a thing accomplished, but an ideal toward which men have long striven, and for which they must continue to strive.

However we may define it, or fail to do so, the ideal of democracy is simple and plain for all to see. It contains a fundamental truth from which all its power has been derived; but it also embodies a basic error that has proved a continual source of weakness. The truth in it is worthy of our complete devotion; namely, that the foundation of all human progress - the basis on which rests not merely the natural welfare of society, but every hope of man's spiritual regeneration - is the freedom of the individual. Human government, if it is to be patterned after the Divine government, must make individual freedom its first and highest aim. It must protect man's right to think and act in accord with

his conscience; and this, not merely in regard to his spiritual faith, but also in regard to the affairs of civil and moral life. It must recognize every man's responsibility to judge what it is right for him to do in his business, in his political and social relations with others, as well as in matters of pure theology; for in this judgment, in the decisions made here lies the real life of religion, and there can be no true religious liberty without freedom in this arena of action. This freedom is essential now as never before, because the present stage of racial development requires a degree of individual responsibility that was not possible in earlier times. The race has grown up. The Lord has given to men a rational Divine revelation, and in so doing He has opened the way for man to "enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith." He has revealed Himself as to the Divine Natural, setting forth the laws of influx, and the modes of His operation in nature and in human society on earth. This revelation is new. It was unknown before, even to the wisest of the most ancient people; and this new knowledge carries with it its own responsibility.

The New Church, as an everlasting, kingdom of the Lord on earth, must be made up of men and women capable of receiving this revelation and of assuming the new responsibilities it involves. Such a church can flourish and grow only in the soil of freedom. That is why the Lord, through all the ages, has been present with those who have struggled to increase the freedom of mankind. It is the reason, in providence, that democracy, as an ideal of freedom, has prospered. It is a compelling reason why that ideal must be preserved at all costs, why we must fight for it today with even greater dedication of spirit than our forefathers did. It is the reason we can feel confident that if we stand true to this ideal, the Lord will not allow the light of freedom to go out, but will kindle it ever anew.

The basic error in the commonly accepted idea of democracy is the belief that government rests with the people and derives from them its authority. This is not true. All authority is derived from the Lord and rests with the Divine laws inherent in His creation. It cannot rightly be ascribed to the people as a whole any more than it can be ascribed to a select group or to an individual. The fact is that government, meaning by this the inauguration of policy and the active administration of affairs in accord therewith, is a function of rational judgment, and this is necessarily individual. It is a particular use, calling for specialized knowledge, experience, training, and illustration. As we have pointed out, the Divine influx whereby the Lord governs, and whereby He gives illustration, is always into the will; and the will is intensely individual. There is no such thing as a common will, except such as may arise by the conjunction and free co-operation of many individual wills. We therefore agree with Harold J. Laski, when he states: "Each of us desires the good as he sees it; and each of us sees a good derived from an individual and separate experience into which no other person can fully enter.... I reject, therefore, the idea of a real will, and, still more, the idea that there is a common will in society" (Harold J. Laski, *Liberty in the Modern State*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1930, p. 21).

The average citizen is interested in government only from time to time, and only at specific points of contact. If he is to form any opinion that can influence the direction of affairs, that interest must be roused and focused by those whose lives and uses are dedicated to the study and practice of government. If many wills are to be organized for mutual co-operation, leadership is necessary. To quote again from Bryce: "Co-operation must be expressed in and secured by the direction of some few commanders whose function it is to overlook the whole field of action and issue their orders to the several sets of officers. To attempt to govern a country by the votes of masses left without control would be like attempting to manage a railroad by the votes of uninformed shareholders, or to lay the



course of a sailing ship by the votes of the passengers. In a large country especially, the great and increasing complexity of government makes division, subordination, co-ordination, and the concentration of directing power more essential to efficiency than ever before" (James Bryce, *Modern Democracies*, II, pp. 546, 547). He continues: "Even those citizens who do take some interest in the welfare of their community are prevented, some by indolence, some by a sense of their want of knowledge, from studying political questions. Those who think, those who quickly turn thought into action, inevitably guide the rest. The common will to which Rousseau attributes rule, must have begun as the will of two or three, and spread outwards from them" (Ibid., pp. 547, 548). Thus Nature is always tending to throw Power into the hands of the Few, and the Few always tend by a like natural process to solidify into a Class, as the vapours rising from the earth gather into clouds.... Thus Free Government cannot but be, and has in reality always been, an Oligarchy within a Democracy (Ibid., pp. 549, 550).

The function of the people in government is not an active, but a reactive one. They can give or withhold their consent. They can express a choice between two or more proposed courses of action which are placed before them by those in the governing function. From a number of candidates they may select those whom they wish to represent them, thus giving sanction to their exercise of government, and this sanction can also be withdrawn. In this sense alone can the authority of government be said to reside with the people. When two or more ends are placed before them they may choose the one for which they wish their government to strive, and in the same way they can indicate the means they regard as most conducive thereto; but they cannot originate ends, nor devise means, nor administer them except through the medium of individuals duly prepared and appointed to the function of government.

It is therefore an error to suppose that the authority of government rests with the people in the sense that what the majority decides must be regarded as right, or just, or wise. "The belief that the larger the number of those who share in governing the more will there be of wisdom, of self-control, of a fraternal and peace-loving spirit has been rudely shattered. Yet the rule of Many is safer than the rule of One ... and the rule of the multitude is gentler than the rule of a class" (James Bryce, *Modern Democracies*, II, p. 608). This is the most that can be said in favor of ascribing authority to government by the people; and even this, we believe, is true only where there is sufficient public education, knowledge, and enlightenment to render a people capable of self-government. As we have seen, influx is into the will of each individual, and it can produce opinions and judgments only according to the knowledge present in the mind of each one. A good will cannot give rise to wise decisions where ignorance prevails. But the reverse is also true; namely, that accurate knowledge will by no means guarantee a wise decision on the part of one whose judgment is warped by self-interest. A common opinion necessary to bring about a decision by majority vote does not spring up of itself, but must be produced by individuals capable of presenting clearly, understandably, and forcefully the issue to be decided. When this is done fairly, and an opportunity is given for calm judgment, the view of many is apt to be freer of bias, more disinterested, and thus more reliable than the view of one. In such a judgment there is apt to be a solid foundation of common sense, often more perceptive of essential justice and equity than is the view of those who have a personal axe to grind, or whose minds have been focused on details and particulars until broad principles have become obscured. But this safety element is often counteracted by the fact that public opinion, based as it is on incomplete knowledge, can easily be swayed by an appeal to the emotions. One skilled in public speaking, and who knows the people, in the sense of perceiving their most active desires and hopes can readily rouse their will in

favor of one side or the other. Unscrupulous leaders can thus deceive the people and obtain a following for their own personal advancement, quite regardless of justice or truth. Because of this, the vote of the majority is by no means a guarantee of a right choice.

We conclude that democracy, in our modern world, and where public education is sufficiently developed, may well afford the greatest opportunity for political freedom that has yet been devised by man. It is not, however, as is commonly supposed, government by the people, as contrasted with the rule of an individual or of a select group. It is no more than the check of popular opinion on the arbitrary will of a governor. Neither this nor any other political system can guarantee freedom. Freedom depends, in the last analysis, on character; that is, on self-control from consideration for the good of the community. Democracy is possible, therefore, only among those who have reached a certain stage of social development, a stage sufficient to make possible an intelligent use of the ballot. This form of government will succeed only where there is with the people an individual conscience formed by civil, moral, or spiritual truths. Such a conscience must direct the choices presented to the citizens for decision. It must also direct the judgment of the governors who have been freely elected and sanctioned by the people. Even then, such measure of civil and political freedom as results must be re-established by each succeeding generation. Like the manna of old, it cannot be kept "until the morrow"; it cannot be inherited or passed down by tradition, for it is not a man made thing, but an immediate gift of God to each individual, a gift that ceases to be freedom unless each one labors for it, fights for it, and thus appears to achieve it for himself.

# Chapter VI - Ecclesiastical Government

In *The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* (@NJHD 311) we read: "There are two things which ought to be in order with men, namely, the things which are of heaven, and the things which are of the world. The things which are of heaven are called ecclesiastical, and those which are of the world are called civil." Here it is clearly indicated that the church and the state should be distinct, because they are related to one another as are the things of heaven to the things of the world. But how is this to be understood? The church, as well as the state, exists on earth. It is an organization of men living in the natural world, confronted with all the problems and the necessities of natural life. How can such an organization be identified with "the things which are of heaven"?

Everyone, even while he lives on earth, possesses not only a body, but a mind or spirit that transcends the things of bodily life. This mind is not governed by the laws of the material universe. Its life is actually in the spiritual world. It is not governed even by the civil laws of an earthly society: this because it has its own independent and individual life, concealed from the sight of others. It is therefore beyond the reach of the civil law, because this applies only to that which can be seen and demonstrated. The civil law can take account only of words, deeds, and such motives as may appear in them. But the inner spirit of man contains deeper thoughts, intentions, and ends which may be completely at variance with the appearance. Man's internal mind, therefore, can be controlled and reduced into order only by a higher law, the law of spiritual life, such as obtains in heaven.

The state is an association of men co-operating in the performance of external uses, the uses of earthly society which are concerned with providing food, clothing, shelter, recreation, and protection for the body and the lower mind or animus. Civil government is designed to guard these uses, and in so doing to insure justice, equity, and equal opportunity for everyone in the pursuit of them. This it does by prescribing rules and enacting laws that all are required to obey. It does so by establishing courts to administer the laws, and by setting up police powers to enforce them. By these means the state controls the outward conduct of its citizens, and establishes the external order that is essential to freedom. But because these same citizens possess an inner mind that cannot be brought under the bonds of civil law, civil government by itself is not sufficient. There are higher needs to be provided. There is a category of uses beyond the reach of civil law. For the performance of these uses a different kind of organization is necessary, one that can bring into ordered co-operation the internal minds of men, their deepest loves, and their inmost thoughts. Such is the church, organized for the purpose of promoting co-operation in spiritual uses, in the uses of providing food, clothing, shelter, recreation, and protection, not for the body, but for the spirit of man. This it does, not by civil laws, nor by courts, nor by police powers, but by teaching the truth of the Word, by kindling an affection for that truth, and leading thereby to the good of life. The good it seeks to promote is the good of love to the Lord, of charity toward the neighbor, and of internal resistance to evil. These are what bring man's spirit into the order of heaven.

It is evident that the church and the state, dealing as they do with the same people, must be intimately associated and mutually interdependent, yet they must be kept distinct, and the autonomy of each must be respected. The state must protect the civil rights of the church. It must preserve religious liberty, and place no external bond on the spiritual conscience of its citizens. On the other hand, the church should not seek temporal power. It should teach patriotism and respect for law. It should not

resort to measures of external compulsion, except the power of separation, which is to be applied only in extreme cases and for the sake of self-preservation. Both the church and the state must heed the Divine admonition to "render therefore unto Caesar the thing which are Caesars, and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21). If this is not done, the freedom and the order of both are violated.

Of course the ideal is that the Lord should govern the state as well as the church; but this is brought about only so far as the church builds up in its members a spiritual-moral and a spiritual-civil conscience. By this we mean a conscience based on an intelligent understanding and an abiding love of Divine law and justice. The church indeed, as a natural organization, must have an order and a government of its own. How, we may ask, does the ideal of this ecclesiastical government differ from the ideal of civil government as expressed in the term "democracy"? The two run parallel in that they both seek to provide the greatest possible freedom for the individual. But they differ in this, that the state has for its end the protection of civil, political, and economic freedom, while the church looks to the protection of spiritual freedom. By "spiritual freedom" we do not mean the liberty to adopt a creed of one's own choice, or to select one's church affiliation. These freedoms fall within the jurisdiction of the state. We mean instead, the freedom that is born of spiritual knowledge and understanding, the freedom to distinguish evil from good and falsity from truth, the freedom of the internal mind to reject what is evil and false, and to choose what is good and true. This is impossible apart from a knowledge and understanding of the Word. The church seeks to impart an ever truer understanding of the Word, together with an affection for spiritual truth and a love of performing spiritual uses. To instill such an affection from earliest childhood, and to infill it with the knowledge and understanding of spiritual truth, these are the primary purposes of the church.

As conceived in our own body, the church is not an ecclesiastical democracy. It has no humanly devised constitution. It acknowledges nothing but the plain teaching of the Heavenly Doctrine as the ultimate authority. It looks to this alone as the source of all law and the fountain of all government. The law itself is Divine, but it must be interpreted and administered through the instrumentality of an educated and ordained priesthood. This the Writings specifically declare, for it is written that "governors over those things with men which relate to heaven, or over ecclesiastical affairs, are called priests, and their office is called the priesthood" (@NJHD 314).

The government of the General Church is similar to the government of a democracy, in this, that it is exercised only by the consent of the governed. No one joins the General Church who does not freely acknowledge the Divine authority of the Writings. But the right of the people to give their consent to the government of the priests who are to administer the Divine law and worship is protected, and they may withdraw that consent at any time. There is, however, this notable difference between the government of our church and that of a democracy: democracy seeks to achieve freedom by placing restraints upon the arbitrary exercise of power by its governors. This it does by demanding adherence to a written constitution and to the laws of the realm as interpreted by the courts. It does so by electing new governors at stated times; and it does so by the checks and balances of opposing parties, and also by a careful separation of the executive from the judicial and the legislative branches of the government. The church, on the other hand, seeks to remove external restraints, not only from the people, but also from those who govern. This it does because it recognizes that all the authority of government comes from within, from the Lord by way of Divine revelation. It comes by an influx into

the will that gives instruction, illustration, and enlightenment. It imparts the illustration of use to each one in the performance of his own function, and therefore imparts a special illustration in matters of government to those who are in that use. For this reason neither the governor nor the governed should be placed under any bond except that of a conscience formed by the teaching of the Writings.

Referring to the natural desire to protect the church by means of legal restraints, the late Bishop W. F. Pendleton said at the General Assembly held in 1897 for the purpose of organizing the General Church: "No external bond should be placed upon any member, or official, or part of the church; a bond so placed is a bond placed upon the whole Church. You cannot bind a part without binding the whole. You cannot bind another without binding yourself. This is the inevitable spiritual law. If the Church is interiorly in evil it cannot be held together, except by external bonds; but if it is in the process of being made internal by reformation and regeneration - is in the way of spiritual growth - then an external bond is unnecessary and hurtful; it is better to run the hazard, yea, to suffer many evils, than to establish and confirm so great an evil as the voluntary suppression of the freedom of the Church, by introducing the principle and practice of external compulsion into its workings, whether this proceed from one man, or from a number of men together. . . . If the Church would have the heavenly form and be in heavenly order, it must be governed in an image as the Lord governs the heavens, or as the Lord governs the individual, regenerating man, or as the spiritual world governs the natural, or as the soul governs the body - according to the law of spiritual influx and not of physical influx, from within and not from without, from above and not from below, from heaven and not from the world" (Bishop W. F. Pendleton, Notes on the Government of the Church, *New Church Life*, Volume XVII, July 1897, p. 107).

For the same reason the church should not formulate any doctrine by council. It should make no decisions that bind the future. It should not bind its governors in matters of judgment by a majority vote. As we have pointed out, majority opinion is produced by some individual opinion, and is dependent upon it. A majority can do no more than choose between two or more such opinions, and give voice to one of them. The vote of a majority, therefore, is just as arbitrary as the decision of a governor, and no more reliable. But if a governor judges on the basis of Divine revelation, and clearly presents to the people the teaching on which his judgment is founded, all who love the truth will respond freely, with no sense of external compulsion.

Such a government is possible only in a church made up of men and women who have freely accepted a Divine revelation as the sole source of authority, and who willingly submit themselves to its guidance. Even then, the degree of freedom achieved will depend upon the faithful adherence from conscience to the teaching of the Word on the part of both the governors and the people. In such a body the ideal of government "of the people, by the people, and for the people," which characterizes a democracy, will be replaced by the ideal of government by the Divine truth of the Word, from use, for use, and to use. This is because the Lord's government has regard, not to persons, but to uses. In the sight of the Lord men are but forms of use. They exist for the sake of use, and command respect solely on account of their use, and according to it. The love of uses, and the common desire to promote them, give not only illustration as to the application of the Divine law, but also harmony of thought in regard to the principles and policies to be adopted for the effective performance of the uses proposed. They help men to put aside personalities and to look to the use itself in all things. When they do this they think and judge from within from the Lord, who is use itself, and the author of all uses.

In looking to use there is protection, as Bishop Pendleton again points out: "To incorporate distrust in the organic life of the body makes the Church natural, and it cannot become spiritual so long as such an incubus is laid on its internal activities. Still we have a knowledge that there is such a thing as human frailty and human weakness; we know that there is such a thing as perversion of truth and abuse of power. How far should this knowledge influence the manner and character of the organization of the Church? ... A knowledge of human weakness and error, and the dangers arising therefrom - which are very great - present all the stronger reason for a plenary trust and confidence in the Mercy and Providence of the Lord. All the ills of the Church, from the most ancient times, have arisen from the conceit or persuasion that man can care for the Church.... It may be said, however, in general, that the organization of the Church from use, for use, and to use, will tend to its safety and perpetuation. Use is conservative and preservative, for the Lord is present in it, and where He is there is health and perpetuity.... If the Church be [thus] organized ... there will result guards, checks, and balances, in the very nature of things, or flowing from the very form itself; and it will not become necessary to adjoin arbitrary guards, checks, and balances, for the sake of the preservation of the body" (Bishop W. F. Pendleton, "Notes on the Government of the Church," pp. 107, 108).

To govern from use, for use, and to use, means to legislate for the present to meet present needs, to provide for those immediately in prospect, but to leave the future free, untrammelled by the weight of precedent or by the heavy hand of tradition. Conditions change continually, and with them the application of doctrine changes in ways we cannot foresee. Each generation should be free to judge and to act in the light of its own day - the light that Divine revelation sheds upon the conditions that exist at any given time.

Instead of government by a majority vote of the people, the church substitutes rule by council and assembly. This gives opportunity for instruction, for free discussion, for acquainting the governor with the views, opinions, and feelings of the people, without at the same time placing him under any external bond. His judgment should be influenced, not merely by his own interpretation of revealed truth, but by the state of the church, by its intellectual and affectional readiness to accept the interpretation as being in accord with the Divine truth. The governor's mind always should be open to revision or modification in the light of new knowledge or information gained from others. If the matter in question is one of conscience that cannot be modified, there should be delay, awaiting further enlightenment. This is because of the desire not merely to acknowledge the right of a minority to protest while a majority opinion prevails, but to protect the conscience of the minority by awaiting virtual unanimity before action is taken. It may not always be possible to do this because action may become imperative. But where there is primary regard to use, where there is a desire to protect uses, and to think and act together for the sake of use, there will be a disposition to set aside personal prejudices and to act in harmony, even against one's individual judgment. Such a willing accord will guard freedom far more effectively than the fixed rule of the majority. To wait for unanimity does not mean that a small minority should claim the right to block action indefinitely, for this would lead to the rule of the minority. It does mean, however, that where unanimity has been sought and is not attainable, when yet action is necessary, there still can be a spirit of unity, a willingness to adopt the course proposed, to accept it affirmatively, and to test it by experience. Such a willingness is engendered by a prior regard for use, a concern that uses shall be maintained without serious interruption. It is produced by a spirit of humility, an acknowledgment that one's own opinion is not infallible. It follows that essential unanimity is not necessarily complete agreement as to the modes to

be adopted, but is rather a spirit of charity, an unwillingness to override those who hold an opposing view, and therefore a readiness to restrain one's own will for the common good. It is inmosty a desire to follow the indications of providence, and thus to be led by the Lord. If this desire is shared by both the governor and the governed it will do more than all else to insure genuine freedom in government.

Such an ecclesiastical government, although distinct from the state, is nevertheless dependent upon it. The church can exist only where there is civil government to maintain civil order and protect civil freedom. Therefore we should have profound regard for the government of the state, and be grateful to the Lord for the natural freedom it provides. We should be prepared to defend the ideals of civil liberty, not only from a love of country, but at the same time from a spiritual love of the church which derives such indispensable benefits from it. We should seek to encourage and promote free government everywhere, as prerequisite to the extension of the church; yet in so doing we should not seek to impose democratic forms prematurely upon peoples who are not prepared to assume their implied responsibilities.

The most important need, however, is to realize the difference between the concept of government as it must necessarily exist in the state - even in an ideal state - and the concept of government that is peculiar to the church and essential to its spiritual life. Civil government, even in that highest form which we call democracy - a form that above all things has regard to the freedom of the individual - must impose external bonds. It is concerned with the natural man, with the body, and the world. Its purpose is to establish and preserve external order, justice, and liberty. But the church, through its ecclesiastical government, cannot impose external bonds without destroying the very freedom for the sake of which it is established. It must depend upon the state for external order, and must grow, as it were, in the soil of civil freedom; but out of this soil it must arise, bringing into being a higher order, and establishing a more interior freedom. This order and this freedom cannot live under external bonds. They can be produced and preserved only by internal bonds, by the bonds of conscience, informed by spiritual truth and animated by spiritual charity. If we hope to attain this ideal we must observe its requirements. The temptation is ever present, from human prudence and from fear, to devise external restraints and fasten them upon the church. But to do this is a fatal error that deprives the church of its opportunity to develop its spiritual life. It is an error that brings the church down to the level of the state, and makes it natural. Furthermore, in order to attain that ideal, each one must be prepared to assume a measure of personal responsibility greater than that required by the state. There must be a greater degree of self-control - control not only of speech and action, but of inmost will, thought, and intention. There must be a constant spirit of patience, tolerance, and co-operation for the sake of use; and there must be willing self-sacrifice for the preservation of use, without regard to personalities.

These things do not come spontaneously just because we have a church founded upon this ideal. They can be achieved only gradually, through labor and persistent struggle. The government of our church can do no more than provide the necessary conditions and the opportunity to approach more nearly to this ideal, from generation to generation. Every generation must enter the ranks, and assume the burden of the conflict for itself. Each one must acquire its own knowledge and understanding of the Writings, from which to make its own decisions; and each one must face anew, and overcome, the temptation, prompted by human prudence, to introduce external bonds into the church in the vain hope of protecting it from without.