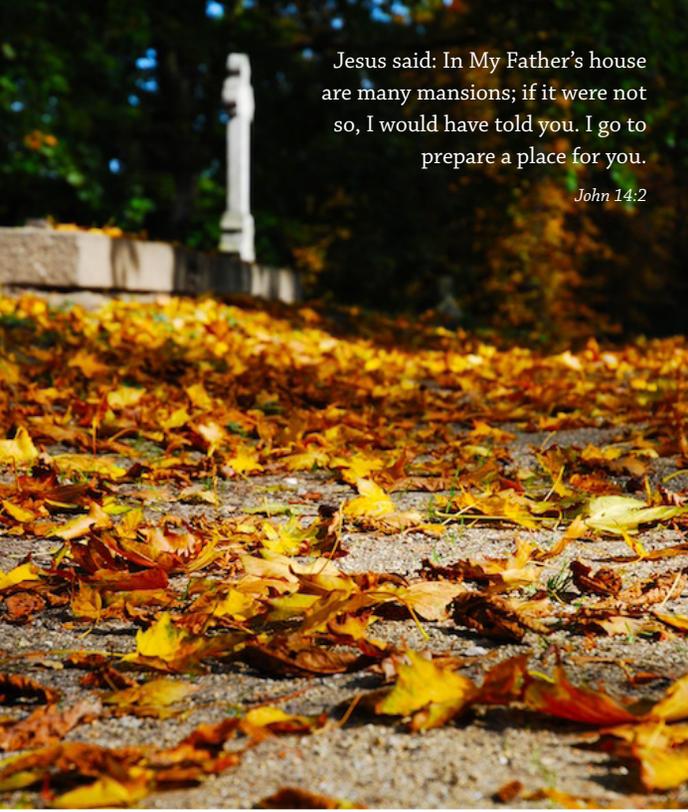


Jesus said: In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

*John 14:2*



Swedenborg's message sweeps across the heart of humanity like some sweet breath from God's presence. We can now meet death as nature does, in a blaze of glory, marching to the grave with a cheerful step, wearing our brightest thoughts and most brilliant anticipations, as nature arrays herself in garments gold, emerald, and scarlet, as if defying death to rob her of immortality.

*Helen Keller, Light in My Darkness*

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

*The path to grow spiritually is simple.*

### LOOK TO THE LORD

Learn what God teaches. Ask Him to show you what changes need to be made in your life. Pray for guidance every day.

### LOOK AT YOURSELF

What habits or behaviors are harming your relationship with God, your family members, your friends, and others?

### CONFESS TO THE LORD

Admit to the things you do which you see are wrong. Pray that God will remove any selfishness you may have and help you move forward.

### WORK ON IT

Choose one habit, thought pattern, or behavior that you wish to change, and ask God to remove it from your life. Take action yourself, but remember that it is the Lord who gives you the strength to overcome temptations and change. Pray for the power to change.

### BEGIN A NEW LIFE

Ask God to help you look forward in this new direction, and show you new opportunities to be of service to other people. Through this process you will become more compassionate, more peaceful, wiser, and less fearful. You will experience greater closeness to God. This is spiritual rebirth.

## THE NEW CHURCH



[www.newchurch.org](http://www.newchurch.org)

# Life After Death



NEW CHURCH PERSPECTIVE SERIES

# What Happens When We Die?

The New Church teaches that all people are born to become angels after they die, because God loves everyone and wants us all to live forever with Him in heaven.

Emanuel Swedenborg's Writings tell us a lot about what it's like to wake up after we die, what heaven is like, and what hell is like.

## The Spiritual World

After people die they wake up in the next life, in a spiritual world, feeling safe, healthy, and happy. Any pain, trauma, or sadness they may have experienced at the time of their passing is no longer present. They are greeted by angels; maybe even people they had known. Through God's mercy, life appears to be a lot like it was on earth. Slowly it becomes clear, as people are ready to understand, that they have begun a new life.

During this first phase of spiritual life people continue their preparation for either heaven or hell, a process which was begun on earth. This choice is up to each individual. It is not decided by God. While God invites everyone into heaven, and deeply hopes we will choose to be with Him, He allows us to make our own decisions in freedom.

What happens after we die? Is there really a life after death? What is heaven like? Hell? How can I get to heaven? Why would I end up in hell? What are angels? The New Church offers many new ideas about life after death.



Heavenly joy is so great as to be beyond description.

—Emanuel Swedenborg  
*Heaven and Hell* 409

## Choosing Heaven

We choose heaven by loving God and living a life of usefulness and kindness toward other people. The New Church teaches that people in heaven have full lives. They are married and deeply in love. They have friends, jobs, and enjoy celebrating together, worshiping together, and doing good things for each other. This is what heavenly happiness is.

## Choosing Hell

God does not send people to hell, and hell is not a punishment for having done bad things. It is a choice that some people make. You might ask why anyone would choose hell instead of heaven. Serving other people does not make materialistic or self-centered people happy. People who do not love God and others would actually rather live with like minded people in the afterlife, in a place where selfishness, greed, gossip, or lewdness are more acceptable. So God provides a place where they can freely choose to be this way. Because these behaviors bring about their own misery, it's called hell. The punishments they experience are the consequences of their own actions and preferences for evil.

## Choosing Heaven and Hell on Earth

We begin choosing heaven or hell here on earth. The Ten Commandments show us the path. Whenever we help someone else, do something really useful, act with integrity, or feel genuine gratitude to God or another person, we experience what heaven is like. Whenever we are ungrateful to others, lose our temper, cheat or harm someone, or indulge in jealousy or gossip, we experience hell. Each day God gives us new opportunities to choose heaven.

## Children in Heaven

“Every child who dies, no matter where he or she is born, within the church or outside it, of devout or irreverent parents, is accepted by the Lord after death, brought up in heaven, and becomes an angel.”

*Heaven and Hell* 329

For more on this topic, read  
*Heaven and Hell*  
by Emanuel Swedenborg