

SOUL FOOD



*I am Alpha and Omega.
The beginning and the end
the first and the last.*

February 2011

How do I have a relationship with Someone I can't see?

by Rev. Malcolm Smith

How do we connect with Someone whom we can't see, can't hug, can't even talk with on the phone? Here are four approaches to try:

1 Picture Him as a Human Being

The New Church teaches that, though we can't see God with our physical eyes, He's not just a shapeless Force: He's a human being and that's how we can picture Him. *True Christianity*⁷⁸⁷, by [Emanuel Swedenborg](#), describes picturing Him as "a man in the air or on the sea spreading forth his hands and inviting to his arms."

One of the reasons He was born into the world was so that people could know that their God is human and visible.

We can't have a relationship with a Force, but we can have a relationship with a human being. The Lord doesn't just have a human form; He is also the source of all good human qualities—kindness, understanding, compassion—in short, He is "Divine love in human form" (*Secrets of Heaven* 4735, by Swedenborg).

2 Spend Time with the Lord

In any relationship it's important to have a good understanding of who the other person is, but that's not what's going to really develop the relationship. If you really want to get to know someone, you need to spend time with him or her and do the sorts of things he or she love to do. The same goes for our relationship with the Lord.

Two ways of spending time with the Lord are reading His Word and praying. Especially during a busy time of year it's easy to say, "Yeah, I know I should pray and read the Word," and never get around to it. And yet, if you commit to trying to remember to pray every morning and evening or to reading something from the Word every day for the month of February, you will notice a difference in your relationship with the Lord.

The New Church teaches that the Lord "is continually speaking with a person" through the good things that he/she feels inspired to do and the true thoughts that he/she has (*Secrets of Heaven* 904, by Swedenborg). If we are in the habit of praying and reading the Word, we'll be more likely to hear what our God is saying to us.

3 Keep His Commandments

The best way of connecting with the Lord, though, is even better than praying and reading the Word. It is through doing what the Lord loves to do by keeping His commandments. The Lord explained this to His disciples while He was still visible in this world. He said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. ...A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live,

you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (John 14:15, 19-21).

It's as simple as that: if we want to have a relationship with the Lord and see Him in our lives, then we need to obey His commandments. We're not expected to be perfect, but the more we're able to reject selfish desires, the more we will be able to see the Lord working in our lives with His unselfish Divine love (the Father) and the stronger our relationship with Him will become.

4 Look for Him in Other People

Just as we can come to see the Lord working in our lives we also can see Him working in other people's lives. When we see someone being generous or forgiving or patient we are seeing the Lord.

So, as we connect with friends and family, we can reconnect with the Lord at the same time through other people and through trying to live His love for other people.

News

Rev Gerald and Gay Waters arrive here in April. Gerald will take the service on May 1st. They are visiting family in Perth.

Carolyn Heldon from Sydney has arrived to take work at the Smiths Beach Resort at Yallingup. We hope to meet her soon in Perth. Her sister Angela is also here holidaying and is a guest of Lisa's while in Perth.

Local News

Christmas Eve carol singing at Val's was a lovely occasion for 20 people with baby lights surrounding the manger scene, a Geraldton Wax backdrop, Warren with guitar and Val on keyboard. Val and Richard's grandson called out "more" as each carol finished. At his age of 21 months, the angelic sphere was easy to see.

Keagan and Erin did very well in their exams with Erin gaining what she wanted – entry to Curtin University to do a Bachelor of Science. Erin spent Christmas in Saigon at boyfriend Steve's parents home. We look forward to hearing of her adventures.

Amy is expected home in July for a month. She is studying in the Academy of the New Church in Bryn Athyn.

Boris is enjoying his military training in the Dogs Unit of Police Force in Singapore.

John and Moira are welcomed back from South Africa after a great holiday with family and friends.

Tony enjoyed Respite at City Beach for 4 days in January while Verity took a short break and Mary was full time with Kayla and Michael.

Tracy had a few difficult days when advised that the course she wanted to do was full but is now happy again knowing that she has a place at TAFE in the Perth Campus to study Graphic Design.

Lisa and Shaun celebrated their engagement with a Mad Hatters Party at Harold Boas Gardens in West Perth. Although a storm was predicted it didn't arrive and the weather was kind to us. We had a gorgeous time with yummy home made food. We all wish Lisa and Shaun a wonderful life together.

Calendar Feb 2011

<i>Sun 6th Feb</i>	<i>Worship</i> 5pm <i>Followed with a shared meal.</i>	<i>10 Broome St South Perth (off Douglas St)</i>
<i>Sun 13th Feb</i>	<i>Worship</i> 10.30am <i>Followed by a shared meal.</i>	<i>10 Broome St South Perth</i>
<i>Sun 20th Feb</i>	<i>Worship</i> 10.30am <i>Followed with a shared meal.</i>	<i>10 Broome St South Perth</i>
<i>Sun 27th Feb</i>	<i>Worship</i> 10.30am <i>Followed with a shared meal.</i>	<i>10 Broome St South Perth</i>

*Worship Services are held weekly at
10 Broome Street, South Perth (off Douglas Street)
the first Sunday's services at 5pm
the rest at 10.30am*



General Church of the New Jerusalem in Perth

10 Broome St. South Perth (off Douglas St)

www.newchurch.org

Based on the Holy Bible, The New Church gains further inspiration and understanding from the Lord's New Revelation given through the 18th century scientist and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg. The 35 volumes of theology, set out the Lord's plan for a rebirth of Christianity, a clear vision of God in His own Word, and what that means in our lives.

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