

Parables

Earthly stories with heavenly meanings

Week 3: The Judgment After Death



“They who were prepared went in with Him to the wedding.” Matthew 25:10

(with highlights)

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AC 2117. CONCERNING THE LAST JUDGMENT

AC 2118. By the Last Judgment is meant the last time of a church, and also the last state of each person's life. As regards the last time of the church, it was the Last Judgment of the Most Ancient Church, which was before the flood, when their posterity perished; their destruction is described by the flood. The Last Judgment of the Ancient Church, which was after the flood, was when almost all who were of that church became idolaters and were dispersed. The Last Judgment of the Representative Church, which followed among the posterity of Jacob, was when the ten tribes were carried away into captivity, and were dispersed among the nations; and when later, after the Lord's coming, the Jews were driven out of the land of Canaan, and were scattered throughout the world. The Last Judgment of the present church, which is called the Christian Church, is what is meant by John in Revelation by the "New Heaven and the New Earth."

Day One: New cloth, new wineskins

Luke 5:33-39 (also Matthew 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22)

And they said to Him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the *disciples* of the Pharisees, but Thine eat and drink? And He said to them, Can you make the sons of the wedding fast while the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast in those days.

And He also told a parable to them: No one patches an old garment *with* a patch¹ from a new garment; otherwise both the new rips *the old*, and the patch from the new does not agree with the old.

And no one pours young wine into old bottles²; otherwise the young wine will tear the bottles and spill out, and the bottles will perish. But young wine is poured into new bottles, and both are preserved.

And no one, having drunk the old, straightway desires young, for he says, The old is more agreeable.

Sons of the wedding with the Bridegroom

AC 9182:10. Those are called “sons of the wedding” who are in the truths of the church, and receive good, for the good which is from the Lord is “the bridegroom.” That “the sons of the wedding do not mourn so long as the bridegroom is with them” denotes that they are in a blessed and happy state, thus with the Lord, when they are in truths conjoined with their good. “They shall fast when the bridegroom is taken away from them” denotes that they are in

¹ “Patches ... with a patch” is literally “throws upon... what is thrown upon” in the Greek.

² made of animal skin

an unhappy state when good is no longer conjoined with truths. This state is the last state of the church, but the former is its first state.

Old and new garments

AC 9212:7. The Lord used this comparison to describe the truth of the new church and the truth of the old church, for the “garment” denotes truth. To “sew” or “add” one to the other is to destroy both....

AE 195:15. Because a “garment” signifies truth, the Lord compared the truths of the former church, which was a church representative of spiritual things, to a piece of an old garment, and the truths of the new church, which were spiritual truths themselves, to a piece of a new garment. He compared them likewise to bottles of wine, because “wine” in like manner signifies truth, and “bottles” mean the knowledges that contain truth.

Old and young wine and wineskins

AR 316:3. “New wine” is the Divine truth of the New Testament, thus of the new church, and “old wine” is the Divine truth of the Old Testament, thus of the old church.

TCR 784. Just so far as the new heaven, which constitutes the internal of the church with man, increases, so the New Jerusalem, that is, the New Church, descends from it. Consequently, this cannot take place in a moment, but it takes place to the extent that the falsities of the former church are set aside. For where falsities have already been implanted what is new cannot enter until the falsities have been rooted out, and this will take place with the clergy, and so with the laity; for the Lord said, “No one puts young wine into old wineskins....”

AE 376:28. This comparison, like all others in the Word, is from correspondences, “wine” signifying truth, “old wine” the truth of the old or Jewish Church, and “wine-skins” things that contain, “old wine-skins” the statutes and judgments of the Jewish Church, and “new wine-skins” the precepts and commandments of the Lord. That the statutes and judgments of the Jewish Church, which related especially to sacrifices and representative worship, are not in agreement with the truths of the Christian Church is meant by “they do not put young wine into old wine-skins, or else the wine-

skins burst and the wine is spilled; but they put [young] wine into new wine-skins, and both are preserved together.” That those who have been born and educated in the externals of the Jewish Church cannot be brought immediately into the internals belonging to the Christian Church is signified by “no man having drunk old wine straightway desires new; for he says, “The old is more useful.”

Questions and Comments

1. Is there a place in the New Church for fasting as a religious observance (not just for health reasons)?
2. In AC 9182:10, can you picture the unhappy state when good is not conjoined with truths, or life is not conjoined with the Lord’s teachings, and life seems purposeless or even evil? Then, can you picture the happy, peaceful state of acting according to conscience from the Word, and so being with “the Bridegroom”?
3. In AC 9212:7, why would adding the old, representative truths to the new, internal truths destroy both? Is it mainly because of the way the Jews had abused and twisted the meaning of the Word? This seems to be the case in TCR 784, but is there more to it?
4. In TCR 784, what is a falsity of the former church that needs to be set aside to receive the New Church? What is one that affects us here in our church?

Matthew 12:22-30 (and Mark 3:22-27, Luke 11:15-23)

Then one demon-possessed was brought to Him, blind and mute; and He cured him, so that the blind and mute both spoke and saw. And all the crowds were amazed, and said, "Is not this the Son of David?" But the Pharisees hearing said, "This Man does not cast out demons except by Beelzeboul, the ruler of the demons."³

But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them,⁴ "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzeboul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons in the spirit of God, certainly the kingdom of God has come upon you.

"Or how can anyone enter into the house of the strong one and plunder his vessels, unless he first bind the strong one? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters."

Demons

AE 586. "Demons" are evil cupidities, because by "demons" infernal spirits are meant, and all spirits that are in the hells are nothing but evil cupidities. For all spirits that are in the hells, as well as all angels in the heavens, are from the human race; and

³ See Matthew 9:32-34 for a similar story.

⁴ Mark 3:23: "And He called to them and said to them in parables...."

every man after death becomes such as his life has been in the world, consequently such as his affection has been. Therefore after death man is wholly his affection, a good man the affection of good and truth, and an evil man the affection of evil and falsity. Moreover, every man after death thinks, wills, speaks, and acts in accordance with his affection. The affection of evil and falsity is what is called cupidity, and is what is signified by “demon.”

Satan, Beelzeboul; the spirit and kingdom of God

AE 740:10. Here the term “Satan,” and not devil is used, because “Beelzeboul,” who was the god of Ekron, means the god of all falsities, for “Beelzeboul” by derivation means the god of flies, and “flies” signify the falsities of the sensual man, thus falsities of every kind. This is why Beelzeboul is called Satan. So, too, the Lord said, “If I in the spirit of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you;” “the spirit of God” meaning Divine truth proceeding from the Lord, and “the kingdom of God” thence signifying heaven and the church that are in Divine truths.

Evil and good are opposites.

DP 221. MAN IS ADMITTED INTERIORLY INTO TRUTHS OF FAITH AND INTO GOODS OF CHARITY ONLY SO FAR AS HE CAN BE KEPT IN THEM UNTIL THE END OF HIS LIFE....

(1) A man may be admitted into the wisdom of spiritual things, and also into a love for them, and yet not be reformed.

(2) If he afterwards recedes from them, and passes over into the opposite, he profanes holy things.

(3) There are many kinds of profanation, but this is the worst kind of all.

(4) Therefore the Lord admits man interiorly into the truths of wisdom and at the same time into the goods of love only so far as he can be kept in them until the end of his life.

DP 233:2. It may be seen by the rational man without explanation that evil with its falsity cannot exist in man's interiors and at the same time good with its truth; for evil is the opposite of good, and good is the opposite of evil, and two opposites cannot exist together. Moreover, there is in all evil an inherent hatred of good, and there is in all good an inherent love of protecting itself against

evil and removing it from itself. Therefore it follows that one cannot be together with the other. If they were together there would arise first conflict and combat, and then destruction, as the Lord also teaches in [these parables].

Two opposites cannot exist together in one substance or form without its being torn asunder and destroyed. If one should advance and draw near to the other, they would certainly keep themselves apart like two enemies, one of whom would retire within his camp or fortifications, and the other would remain outside. This happens with the evil and the good in a hypocrite. He harbors both, but the evil is within and the good is without, and thus the two are separate and are not mingled. From this it is now clear that evil with its falsity and good with its truth cannot exist together.

Questions and Comments

1. Abraham Lincoln quoted these verses in a speech in 1858, saying that we could not continue as one kingdom partly slave-holding and partly free. Do you see another such fundamental issue over which this nation is in danger of being brought to desolation?
2. What might be a present-day analogy to being demon-possessed, that is, possessed by evil cupidities or a false ideology? Can you see how such a state would make someone spiritually blind and mute, unable to see and acknowledge the Lord?
3. Who is “the strong one”? Who is strong enough to bind him? What might be meant by his vessels being plundered? Were they rightfully his vessels?
4. We have such mixed motives! How does the Lord keep good and evil separate in us?

Day Three: The Ten Virgins

Matthew 25:1-13

Then shall the kingdom of the heavens be likened to ten virgins, who taking their lamps came out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were prudent, and five foolish. Those who were foolish, taking their lamps, did not take oil with them. And the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps. And while the bridegroom delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

And in the middle of the night there was a cry made, "Behold, the bridegroom comes; come out to meet Him." Then all those virgins arose and adorned⁵ their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, "Give us of your oil, because our lamps are extinguished." And the prudent answered, saying, "Not so, lest there not be sufficient for us and for you. But go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves."

But when they were gone to buy, the bridegroom came; and they who were prepared went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. And afterwards the rest of the virgins came also, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us." And he answering said, "Amen I say to you, I have not known you." Watch therefore, because you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man comes.

⁵ Or prepared

AE 252:8. This [parable] is about conjunction with the Lord, by love and faith. Moreover this [is what] the “wedding” signifies. “Oil” signifies the good of love, and “lamps” the truth of faith.

To make clear that in every particular that the Lord spoke there is a spiritual sense, I will lay open the particulars of the spiritual sense of this parable.

- “The kingdom of the heavens,” to which the ten virgins are likened, means heaven and the church.
- “The ten virgins” signify all who are of the church. “Ten” means all, and “virgins” those who are in the affection of spiritual truth and good, and this affection constitutes the church. Therefore ... in Revelation it is said that “virgins follow the Lamb.”
- “The lamps that they took to go forth to meet the bridegroom” signify the truths of faith.
- “The bridegroom” means the Lord in respect to conjunction with heaven and the church by love and faith. For “a wedding” is treated of, which signifies that conjunction.
- “The five prudent virgins” and “the five foolish” signify those of the church who are in faith from love, and those who are in faith apart from love (the same as “the prudent and foolish” in Matthew 7:24, 26) [*about the house on the rock vs. the sand*].
- “Midnight, when the cry arose,” signifies the Last Judgment, and in general the end of man’s life, when he will be judged either to heaven or to hell.
- “The foolish virgins then saying to the prudent, Give us of your oil, and the prudent answering that they should go to them who sell,” signifies the state of all after death—that those who do not have the good of love in faith, or the truth of faith from the good of love, then wish to acquire it for themselves, but in vain, since such as man’s life has been in the world, such he remains.
- From this it is clear what is signified by “the prudent virgins” going in to the wedding, and that the foolish who said, “Lord, Lord, open to us,” received for answer, “Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.” “I do not know you” signifies that the Lord was not conjoined to them, since spiritual love conjoins and not faith without love. For the Lord has His abode with those

who are in love and in faith from it, and He “knows” these [people] because He Himself is there [in love and faith].

TCR 719. ...Those who merely understand and talk about what is true and good are like the foolish virgins who had lamps but no oil; while those who not only understand and talk about what is true and good, but also will and do it, are the wise virgins who were admitted to the wedding, while the former stood at the door and knocked, but were not admitted.

AC 4636. That by this parable the Lord described His own coming, is evident from the particulars, and from the end, where He says, “Watch therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man comes.” [See also AC 4638:6 about why the prudent could not share with the foolish.]

Questions and Comments

1. Notice how many parables the Lord tells about the kingdom of the heavens. Heaven, hell, and the life after death were new concepts in the New Testament. Why is heaven frequently compared to a wedding?
2. What do you think it means that the bridegroom delayed, and that they slumbered and slept?
3. What is an example of being spiritually prudent?
4. Why must there be a judgment either to heaven or to hell?
5. How does this parable help us understand the second coming of the Lord?

Day Four: The Talents

Matthew 25:14-30

For He is as a man going abroad, who called his own servants, and delivered up to them his belongings. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; to everyone according to his own ability; and straightway he went abroad.

And going, he who had received the five talents worked with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received the two, he also gained another two. But he who received one, departing, dug in the earth and hid his lord's silver.

And after much time, the lord of those servants comes and reckons with them. And when he came who had received the five talents, he brought to him another five talents, saying, "Lord, thou didst deliver up to me five talents; behold, I have gained another five talents besides them." And his lord declared to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful in a few things; I will appoint thee over many. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

And also when he came who had received the two talents, he said, "Lord, thou hast delivered up to me two talents; behold, I have gained another two talents besides them." His lord declared to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful in a few things; I will appoint thee over many. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

And also he receiving the one talent, coming, said, "Lord, I knew thee, that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sowed, and gathering whence thou hast not

scattered. And being afraid, going away I hid thy talent in the earth; behold, thou hast thine own.”

And his lord answering said to him, “Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I have not sown, and gather whence I have not scattered. Thou shouldst therefore have cast my silver to the bankers⁶, and when I came, I should have received my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has shall be taken away from him. And cast out the useless servant into the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Burying the talent

TCR 527:2. Those who know what sin is, and still more those who know many things from the Word and teach them, and yet do not examine themselves, and consequently see no sin in themselves, may be likened to those who scrape up wealth and lay it up in chests and coffers, making no further use of it than to look at it and count it; also to those who gather into their treasuries jewels of gold and silver, or hide them in vaults, for the mere sake of being rich. Such are like the trader who hid his talent in the earth... (Matt. 25:25; Luke 19:20). They are also like the hard wayside and the stony places upon which the seed fell (Matt. 13:4, 5). Also like fig trees full of leaves but bearing no fruit (Mark 11:13).... They are like the five virgins who had lamps but no oil (Matt. 25:1-12).

TCR 527:3. Those who acquire from the Word much about charity and repentance, and who have abundant knowledge of its teachings, and yet do not live according to them, may be compared to gluttons, who stuff their food into their mouths in chunks, and swallow it without chewing, so that it remains

⁶ Literally, “those at tables” (see AE 193:10)

undigested in the stomach, and when it passes out, it vitiates the chyle [spoils the nourishment], and brings on lingering diseases, from which they finally die a miserable death. And as such are without spiritual heat, however much light they may possess, they may be called winters, frozen grounds, arctic climates, and even fields of snow and ice.

AE 193. All the knowledges acquired from the Word that have not acquired spiritual life will be taken away from them. These words signify also the unexpected time of death, because death comes unexpectedly, and after death man remains to eternity in the state of that life which he acquired for himself in the world. For this reason man must be wakeful.

We receive different spiritual talents.

AC 2967:2. ...All who are being reformed and regenerated are gifted with charity and faith by the Lord, but each according to his capacity and his state. For there are evils and falsities with which man has imbued himself from infancy, which stand in the way of one person's receiving a similar gift as another. These evils and falsities must be vastated before the man can be regenerated, and so far as there is something of heavenly and spiritual life left after vastation, this can be enlightened with truth and enriched with good. It is the remains, which are goods and truths from the Lord stored up with man, that then receive life. These goods and truths are acquired from infancy even to the time of reformation, with one person more, with another fewer.... [See also AC 7984 on page 18.]

Questions and Comments

1. One idea of justice is that everyone should end up with the same material wealth. What does this parable indicate about that idea, if anything?
2. How can we be wakeful and make good use of the spiritual and natural talents given to us by the Lord?

Luke 19:11-19

But as they heard these things, He added and told a parable, for He was near to Jerusalem, and they thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, A certain noble man went into a distant country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his own ten servants, and gave them ten minas⁷ and said to them, "Do business till I come."

But his citizens hated him, and sent an embassy after him, saying, "We are not willing that this man should reign over us."

And it came to pass that when he had come back, having received the kingdom, he also said that these servants should be called to him, to whom he had given the silver, that he might know what everyone had gained by doing business. And the first came, saying, "Lord, thy mina has earned ten minas." And he said to him, "Well done, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in the least, have thou authority over ten cities."

And the second came, saying, "Lord, thy mina has made five minas." And he said to him also, "Be thou also over five cities."

AE 675:7. "Ten" signifies all persons and all things, and "five" some persons and some things. "The ten servants" whom the nobleman going into a far country called to him, mean all who are

⁷ A mina was a monetary weight in silver equal to 100 drachmas or denarii, about one and a quarter pounds. The word is related to "Mene, Mene," written on the wall of Belshazzar's palace, meaning "counted" (Daniel 5:25, 26).

in the world, and in particular, all who are of the church. For the “nobleman” means the Lord, and “going into a far country” means the Lord’s departure out of the world and His then seeming to be absent. “The ten minas that he gave to the ten servants to trade with” signify all the knowledges of truth and good from the Word, with the ability to perceive them. For a mina, which was silver and was money, signifies the knowledges of truth and the ability to perceive; and “to trade” signifies by means of these [knowledges] to acquire intelligence and wisdom. Those who acquire much are meant by the servant who from a mina gained ten minas; and those who acquire some are meant by him who from a mina gained five minas. The “cities” which are said to be “given to them” signify the truths of doctrine, and “to possess them” signifies intelligence and wisdom, and life and happiness from them.

Being good stewards of our Master’s goods

DP 210. Unless it appeared to man that he lived as from himself and thus that he thought and willed, spoke and acted as of himself, he would not be man. From this it follows that if man, as from his own prudence, did not dispose all things pertaining to his function and life, he could not be led and disposed from the Divine Providence. For he would be like one standing with his hands hanging down, his mouth open, his eyes closed and holding his breath, awaiting influx. He would thus divest himself of the human, which he has from the perception and sensation that he lives, thinks, wills, speaks and acts as from himself. And at the same time, he would divest himself of his two faculties, liberty and rationality, by which he is distinguished from the beasts.... Without this appearance a man would not have the power to receive and to respond, and thus would not have immortality.

DP 210:2. Therefore, if you wish to be led by the Divine Providence, use prudence as a servant and steward does who faithfully dispenses the goods of his master. This prudence is the talent that was given to the servants to trade with, of which they must render an account (Luke 19:13-25; Matt. 25:14-31).

Prudence itself appears to man as his own; and it is believed to be his own so long as he keeps shut up within him the deadliest enemy of God and the Divine Providence, the love of self. This

dwells in the interiors of every man from birth. If you do not recognize it—for it does not wish to be recognized—it dwells securely, and guards the door lest man should open it, and it should thus be cast out by the Lord. Man opens this door by shunning, as of himself, evils as sins, with the acknowledgment that he does so from the Lord. This is the prudence with which the Divine Providence acts as one.

Questions and Comments

1. “They thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.” Do we think this way when we feel angry at God or doubtful of His providence when we see injustices and hardships in this world?
2. How does the part about the citizens hating him fit into this parable? See also the end of this parable on page 18.
3. Doing business has a very good correspondence in this parable and the parable of the talents. The Lord gives us knowledges of truth and the ability to perceive them. Then we can apply them to life and so acquire intelligence and wisdom, life and happiness. Do you know of businesses that operate with integrity like this?
4. Do you sometimes wish you could just let your hands hang down and wait for influx? At such a time, perhaps we can think of Joseph in Potiphar’s house, and in the prison, and caring for Egypt, and aim to be a good steward following his example.

Luke 19:20-27

And another came saying, "Lord, behold, thy mina, which I have held laid up in a kerchief. For I feared thee, for thou art an austere man; thou takest up what thou didst not put down, and reapest what thou didst not sow."

And he says to him, "Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee, wicked servant. Thou didst know that I am an austere man, taking up what I did not put down, and reaping what I did not sow. Why then didst thou not give my silver to the bank⁸, so that at my coming I might have exacted it with interest?"

And he said to those who stood by, "Take from him the mina, and give it to him who has ten minas." And they said to him, "Lord, he has ten minas."

"For I say to you that to everyone who has shall be given; but from him who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken away from him. Nevertheless, those enemies of mine who were not willing that I should reign over them, bring them here and slay them in front of me."

To everyone who has shall be given

AC 7984:3. Everyone, whether damned or saved, has a certain measure which is capable of being filled. The evil, or those who are damned, have a certain measure of evil and falsity; and the good, or those who are saved, have a certain measure of good and truth. In the other life this measure is filled with everyone; but some have a greater measure, some a less. This measure is acquired in the world by means of the affections which are of the love. The more anyone has loved evil and the derivative falsity,

⁸ Literally, "on the table," as in AE 193:10

the greater is the measure he has gained for himself; and the more anyone has loved good and the derivative truth, the greater is his measure. The limits and degrees of the extensions of this measure are clearly seen in the other life, and cannot there be surmounted, but they can be filled, and also actually are filled, namely, with goods and truths in the case of those who have been in the affection of good and truth, and with evils and falsities in the case of those who have been in the affection of evil and falsity. Hence it is evident that this measure is the faculty gained in the world for receiving either evil and falsity, or good and truth....

AC 7984:4. That everyone's measure is filled, the Lord also teaches in another place in Luke:

Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom (Luke 6:38).

AC 7770:2-3. The very memory-knowledges of truth and good which have been possessed by those of the church who have known the arcana of faith and yet have lived a life of evil, are transferred to those who are of the spiritual church.... The reason is that with the evil, the knowledges of good and truth are applied to evil uses, and with the good the knowledges of good and truth are applied to good uses. The knowledges are the same, but the application to uses effects their quality with each person. The case here is like that of worldly riches, which with one person are disposed for good uses, with another for evil uses. Consequently riches are such with each person as are the uses to which they are disposed. From this also it is evident that the same knowledges, like the same riches, which the evil had possessed, can be with the good and serve for good uses.

DP 17. It is with difficulty that a man in this world can enter into either the one or the other conjunction or union, namely, of good and truth, or of evil and falsity; for as long as he is living in the world he continues in a state of reformation or regeneration. After death, however, every man comes into one union or the other, because he can no longer be reformed and regenerated; he then remains such as his life, that is, such as his ruling love, has been

in this world. If, therefore, his life has been a life of the love of evil, every truth that he acquired in the world from a teacher, from preaching, or from the Word itself is taken away from him; and when the truth has been taken away, he acquires, as a sponge takes up water, such falsity as agrees with his evil. On the other hand, if his life has been a life of the love of good, all the falsity which he gathered in the world from hearing and from reading, but which he did not confirm in himself, is removed; and in its place there is given him truth agreeing with his good.

Questions and Comments

1. What feeling or thought does it bring to mind that they protested to the nobleman, “Lord, he [already] has ten minas”?
2. We each have a certain measure, and no two of us have the same measure. The Lord is eager to help us expand our measure while we live in the world, and then to fill it to overflowing in heaven. Remember the comparison with a king and a peasant, and that everyone in heaven receives as much happiness as he possibly can. And the opposite is true of those in hell. There the Lord limits their misery as much as He can.
3. Can you think of an example of the same knowledges or facts being used to support opposite claims?
4. Can you think of a time when you or someone else soaked up knowledge like a sponge? It’s easy to see that love, founded in how we actually live, is the essence of who we are.