

CORNELIUS FRIESEN  
A Resurrection Address by Rev. Coleman S. Glenn  
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The Writings for the New Church teach that there are two universal spheres that proceed from the Lord: the sphere of a love of creating, and the sphere of a love of protecting what has been created (*Conjugal Love* 386). The Lord Himself is the source of these spheres and these loves, and from them He keeps the universe in perpetual existence. These loves flow from Him into everything in creation. We see it in the way that a tender seed is protected by a hard shell. We see it in the way that even the fiercest animals will protect their young. And in people, we see it especially as conjugal love, or marriage love, and a love for little children.

The book *Conjugal Love* speaks of two kinds of love for children, a natural love and a spiritual love. Merely natural people love their children only for selfish reasons. They don't care whether their children do what is right or good – they only think of their children as an extension of themselves, a source of admiration and glory. They love their own children but dislike others. Spiritual people are very different. They love not only their own children, but all children. They love their children not as reflections of themselves, but as children of the Lord. They love the innocence they see in children. They wish for their children to grow up to be of use in society, and eventually to find heavenly happiness in a life of eternal use.

For those who love children from a spiritual love, the innocence in a child touches an innocence they have within themselves. A person who is in a spiritual love is inwardly innocent and childlike – gentle, mild, friendly, and kind. But this tenderness is not to be confused with weakness. Externally, a person with a spiritual love does not always appear gentle and soft. Whenever a good love comes under attack – for example, the love of a child's eternal welfare – that gentle love becomes like a burning flame. The person is filled with zeal, which looks like anger, but which is different from anger in that it seeks primarily to *defend* something good, not to attack. And after that good thing has been defended, the zeal dies down, and the externals again become more gentle, in accordance with the internal charity that was there all along.

This love for little children, this love for innocence, is a love of the angels in heaven. In fact, the Writings tell us that innocence and peace are at the heart of heaven. And although the

Lord alone knows the hearts of man, Corney Friesen seemed to have something of this angelic love of innocence, which expressed itself especially as a love for children.

Cornelius Friesen – better known as Corney – was born in Boggy Creek, Manitoba, on May 17, 1931, to David Friesen and Annie Wiens Friesen. He grew up in a full house, with 6 brothers and three sisters. By the age of 17, Corney had left home and was working at a smelter in Flin Flon. Two years later, after he had made his way to Edmonton, he joined his brother Dan in northern Alberta, working on a road construction crew. In 1953, the two of them found themselves in Valleyview. One day they went into a restaurant together, and they were waited on by a young waitress named Dorothy Williamson. By the next year, on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1954, Corney and Dorothy were married.

Corney continued in road construction for some time after he married Dorothy, until his brother Dan invited him to move to Dawson Creek, where the two of them worked together to found the Friesen Trucking company. Throughout his life, Corney wore many hats: mine worker, construction worker, crane operator, truck driver, business-owner, farmer. Although he didn't farm as much as some of his brothers, Corney had a soft spot for farming, and loved to do it when the opportunity arose.

But perhaps the roles that mattered most to Corney were his roles as husband, father, uncle, grandfather, and great-grandfather. All told, Corney and Dorothy had thirteen children, 31 grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren – and counting!

Corney loved kids. He loved his own kids, his grandkids, his great-grandkids, and countless other kids. His children and grandchildren, as well as their friends and cousins, have fond memories of Corney at the lake, teaching them to water ski. He seemed to never tire of it – he would drive the boat around the lake all day, giving every child plenty of time on the water. He'd also ski himself – sometimes with a kid sitting on his shoulders! He had a great sense of fun. Besides water skiing, he'd drag kids along on sleds behind the ski-doo, and he constructed a circular swingset / merry-go-round that was a source of great delight (and some terror) to his kids and grandkids. He'd play games at home, and he loved to play tricks on people.

Even with this great sense of fun, though, Corney could be very serious. He could be stern sometimes, and gruff. No one is perfect, and Corney would not claim to be, and sometimes that gruffness verged into anger. But in many cases, it seems that Corney was acting not out of anger but out of *zeal* – not a desire to attack or hurt someone, but a desire to protect something

precious. It was important to Corney that children learn to act in the right way, and when kids were breaking the rules, they were sure to receive some discipline. Corney could get heated in his defense of something he believed passionately. He was strong – he would stand up to fight against anything that he saw as harmful to the Lord’s intentions of love for the neighbour and love for God. But as we read earlier, even though zeal can be harsh and rough in its outward expressions, inwardly it is mild and gentle.

And especially as Corney got older, that tenderness shone through more and more. Tears would come to his eyes when he talked about marriage, or when he talked about Jesus. His love of little children seems to have stemmed from that tender love for the Lord, and for marriage. He cared deeply that children would receive “remains,” a word the Writings use to describe all the states of goodness and truth that a person experiences, especially in early childhood, that later serve as a foundation for heavenly life. Corney cared deeply about the New Church – both the doctrines, and the community of New Church people. He put countless hours of work into this building, right from the time that it was first being constructed. When it came to the doctrines, he was a thoughtful man – sometimes he would reflect for days after a religious discussion, pondering on the Lord’s teachings. He spoke of the doctrines with thoughtfulness and conviction.

And Corney loved marriage. The book *Conjugal Love* tells us that men do not primarily receive their love for little children directly from the Lord, but indirectly through their wives, who receive it directly from the Lord (*Conjugal Love* 393). Corney and Dorothy raised their children *together*, as husband and wife. The love of marriage that a person has in this world continues after death, and in fact, for those who are in truly conjugal love, as we read, “The spirit of the deceased continues to dwell with the spirit of the one not yet deceased, and this until the death of the other, at which time they come together again and are reunited, loving each other even more tenderly than before, because they are in the spiritual world.” (*Conjugal Love* 321)

And Corney is still present with all of us in spirit when we think of him, since it is a law of the spiritual world that thought brings presence. And thought with affection brings about a joining together. Corney is very much alive, and beginning now the next phase of his life. The book *Heaven and Hell* describes the process that he has been going through since he passed into the next world on April 20<sup>th</sup>. At first, he would have been with celestial angels, who would keep him in thoughts of eternal life, and kept him in a state of peace. Next he would have been with

spiritual angels, who would have opened his spiritual eyes, and answered any questions he had about spiritual life, giving him everything he needed. And following this – within about three days of his passing – he would have begun to walk about in the spiritual world, interacting with good spirits, in the world of spirits, which is intermediate between heaven and hell.

That is probably where Corney is now, in the world of spirits. That intermediate stage can last anywhere from only a few days to thirty years. If a person's ruling love is a heavenly love, he is prepared for heaven in that world of spirits. At first, he is in similar externals to the ones he was in this world, acting and talking in similar ways. Gradually, he comes into a state of his internals, where his true heart shines through. Perhaps with Corney this process will not take much time; those who know him well say he was already one of the most genuine, honest, *real* people they knew, and he didn't have much time for people putting on false fronts (he was not a great fan of Hollywood actors).

Eventually, when a person has been prepared for heaven, they see a pathway and follow it, and after travelling from place to place, they come into a place that feels like home – where they are with people in similar loves, performing a use that only they can perform. We can imagine Corney eventually finding this path, and finding that eternal use – although perhaps not until Dorothy has joined him. Even now, though, we can imagine him walking around in the other world, with a new body that is free from disease. We can picture him growing younger and younger, to young manhood, so that he once again has the strength to throw children in the air and carry them on his shoulders. Even now, we can imagine the delight he might feel in the innocence of the good spirits he is meeting. When we think of that heavenly innocence affecting Corney, when we think with love of that affection that he showed in this world, our spirits are present with his spirit.

Innocence is defined in the Writings especially as a willingness to follow the Lord. In the world, Corney's life exhibited a great desire to follow the Lord's commandments. If that life was a true reflection of his heart, then we can be assured that he will hear the words the Lord spoke in parable: "Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your Lord." *Amen*

Readings:

- 1 Jehovah is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me to lie down in pastures of tender herb;  
He guides me unto waters of rest.
- 3 He restores my soul;  
He leads me in paths of justice for the sake of His name.
- 4 Yes though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
for Thou art with me;  
Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.
- 5 Thou arrangest a table before me  
in the presence of my adversaries;  
Thou anointest my head with oil;  
my cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:  
and I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah for length of days. (Psalm 23)

- 1 O Jehovah, our Lord, how magnificent is Thy name in all the earth,  
who hast put Thy majesty upon the heavens.
- 2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou founded strength, because of Thine  
adversaries,  
to cause the enemy and the avenger to cease.
- 3 When I see Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,  
the moon and the stars, which Thou hast established;
- 4 what is man that Thou rememberest him?  
And the son of man, that Thou visitest him?
- 5 And Thou hast made him to be in want of a little compared with the gods,  
and hast crowned Him with glory and honor.
- 6 Thou hast made him to rule over the works of Thy hands;  
Thou hast put all things under his feet:
- 7 the flock and the oxen, all of them,  
and also the beasts of the field;
- 8 the bird of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,  
whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas.
- 9 O Jehovah, our Lord,  
how magnificent is Thy name in all the earth! (Psalm 8:1-9)

15 And they brought also to Him babes, that He should touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. 16 But Jesus called them to Him, and said, Let the little children come to Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. 17 Amen I say to you, Whoever shall not accept the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it. (Luke 18:15-17)

Man has been so created that he cannot die in respect to his internal, because he is able to believe in God and also to love God, and thus to be conjoined with God in faith and love; and to be conjoined with God is to live forever. (*Arcana Coelestia* 10591)

When the body is no longer able to perform the bodily functions in the natural world that correspond to the spirit's thoughts and affections, which the spirit has from the spiritual world, man is said to die. This takes place when the respiration of the lungs and the beatings of the heart cease. But the man does not die; he is merely separated from the bodily part that was of use to him in the world, while the man himself continues to live. It is said that the man himself continues to live since man is not a man because of his body but because of his spirit, for it is the spirit that thinks in man, and thought with affection is what constitutes man. Evidently, then, the death of man is merely his passing from one world into another. And this is why in the Word in its internal sense "death" signifies resurrection and continuation of life. (*Heaven and Hell* 445)

The zeal of a good love harbors in its inner aspects friendship and love... The internal element in one who is prompted by a love of good, is, in itself, gentle, mild, friendly and kind. Consequently, even when, to protect itself, the external element hardens, stiffens, bristles, and so acts harshly, still it is tempered by the goodness which moves its internal element. (*Conjugal Love* 365)

The sphere of a love for little children is an atmosphere of protecting and maintaining those who cannot protect and maintain themselves. We said above that effecting of useful ends by the Lord by means of the spheres emanating from Him are Divine providence. This providence is also meant therefore by a sphere of protecting and maintaining those who cannot protect and maintain themselves. For it exists from creation that things created must be preserved, safeguarded, protected, and maintained - otherwise the universe would fall to ruin. But because this cannot be done by the Lord directly in the case of living beings to whom He has bequeathed free judgment, He does it indirectly through His love implanted in fathers, mothers and nurses. (*Conjugal Love* 391)

People who before had lived with their partners in a state of truly conjugal love... are not actually separated by the death of one; for the spirit of the deceased continues to dwell with the spirit of the one not yet deceased, and this until the death of the other, at which time they come together again and are reunited, loving each other even more tenderly than before, because they are in the spiritual world. (*Conjugal Love* 321)

Those that are in heaven are continually advancing towards the spring of life, with a greater advance towards a more joyful and happy spring the more thousands of years they live; and this to eternity, with increase according to the growth and degree of their love, charity, and faith. In a word, to grow old in heaven is to grow young. Such forms or such beauties do those become in the other life who have lived in love to the Lord and in charity towards the neighbor. All angels are such forms in endless variety; and of these heaven is constituted. (*Heaven and Hell* 414)

1 Let not your heart be disturbed; believe in God, and believe in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many abodes; and if not, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am you may be also. (John 14:1-3)