

## ACCORDING TO, OR CONTRARY TO, DIVINE ORDER?

Two of the Ministers' views published in the June issue of *Lifeline* brought in the idea of *divine order* – suggesting that homosexuality may not be in accordance with it.

I have long been uneasy with this term, feeling that it smacks of authoritarianism and uniformity, whereas I understand the Lord as leading with love, patience and compassion, glad that we're unique individuals, and tolerating our oddities. This feeling is partly due, no doubt, to my recollections of military discipline and order, but also to concerns about our translations from Latin.

Swedenborg used the Latin word *ordo* fairly often and in different connections, and Chadwick's Lexicon offers several English words as sometimes appropriate, including *line*, *row*, *sequence*, *order*, *arrangement*, and *organisation*. I would suggest the further possibilities of *pattern* and *scheme*. Different terms suit different contexts.

I feel quite unable to offer a detailed study of this subject, but do urge that we always remember, the divine scheme includes that everybody can be led into a heaven, whatever their inborn character and cultural upbringing. The Lord delights in variety, provides for countless unique heavenly communities, and can include all who do their best to live by their beliefs.

Being opposed to his scheme, or *contrary to divine order*, surely means such things as being proud, contemptuous, hateful, vengeful, cruel, greedy, mean, uncaring, deceitful, destructive, shallow, envious. You or I could list plenty more examples, but are any of them relevant to being homosexual or heterosexual?