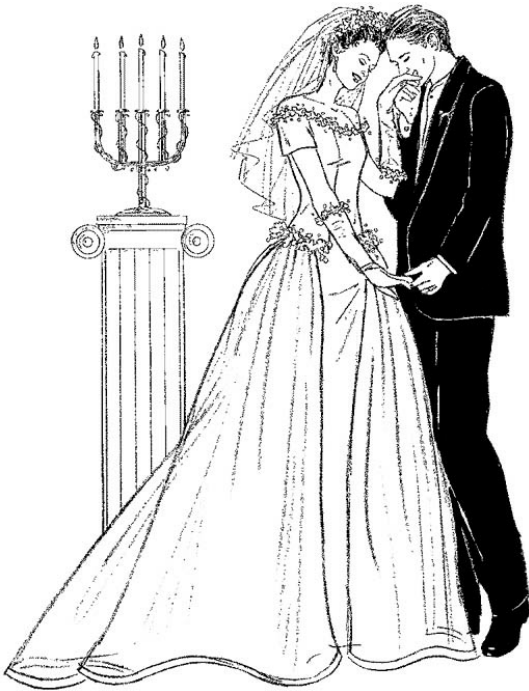


The Kingdom of Heaven
Mark 10

LEVEL 5 – MARRIAGE IS HOLY



The Lord teaches us about marriage in every phase of His Revelation. In the very beginning of the Old Testament He teaches:

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (*Genesis 1:27*)

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” (*Genesis 2: 24*)

From the beginning of time, people were to know that it is in God’s order for one man and one woman to be married.

This teaching is reaffirmed in our current chapter of the book of Mark. Jesus’ answer to a challenge from the Pharisees was to quote this teaching and then emphasize the importance *before God* of a chaste marriage. He said:

From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.”

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate. (*Mark 10: 6-9*)

With the Writings given for the New Church, the Lord has made clear all the teachings contained in the Old and New Testaments. The very important teaching that monogamous marriage is in Divine Order is emphasized and expanded in all the books of the Writings, especially in the book devoted to it—*Conjugal Love*.

Love truly conjugal is from the Lord alone. (*Apocalypse Explained 983:2*)

Marriage on earth descends from the marriage of good and truth in heaven.
(*Arcana Coelestia 4572*)

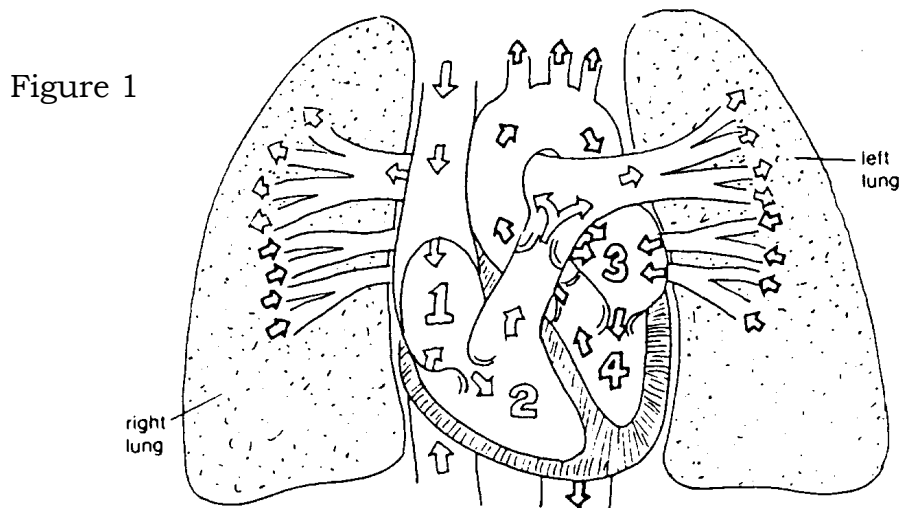
The conjugal union of one man with one wife is the precious jewel of human life and the repository of the Christian religion... a person is a living soul as a result of that love.
(*Conjugal Love 457*)

The Heart and the Lungs

Once when an angel was describing to Swedenborg his relationship with his wife, he said:

“We are one. Her life is in me and mine in her. We are two bodies but one soul. The union between us is as that of the two tents in the breast called the heart and the lungs. She is my heart and I am her lungs. But as by the heart we here mean love and by the lungs wisdom, she is the love of my wisdom and I am the wisdom of her love. (CL 75)

Let us look at the relationship between the heart and the lungs and see what teachings it illustrates about the relationship between husband and wife.



Follow the blood through one cycle. See where it enters the heart into the left chamber. From there it is pumped out to the lungs. In the lungs it goes through veins, which divide and divide into tiny capillaries. There, in tiny air sacs, the impurities which the blood brought from cells all over the body are exchanged for fresh oxygen received by the lungs. The oxygenated blood is collected in tiny arteries, and returns to the heart through greater and greater arteries. There it enters a different chamber than before, and is pumped out again to the whole body.

Follow this route on figure 1. Color the blood coming from the body through the first chamber dark red. Color it bright red once it has given up carbon dioxide and taken on fresh oxygen in the lungs.

What does this action show us about the interaction of husband and wife?

In the Writings we learn that blood corresponds to love, and even gets its color red from that correspondence. We also learn that the wife receives love from the Lord, which she gives to her husband, just as the heart receives blood and gives it to the lungs.

The husband receives wisdom from the Lord, or the lungs receive air. He loves his wife, and fills her with his wisdom, as the lungs return oxygenated blood to the heart.

Then together, when they have both received influx from the Lord and given to each other, they can serve the rest of the world through their family and uses.

Being Useful

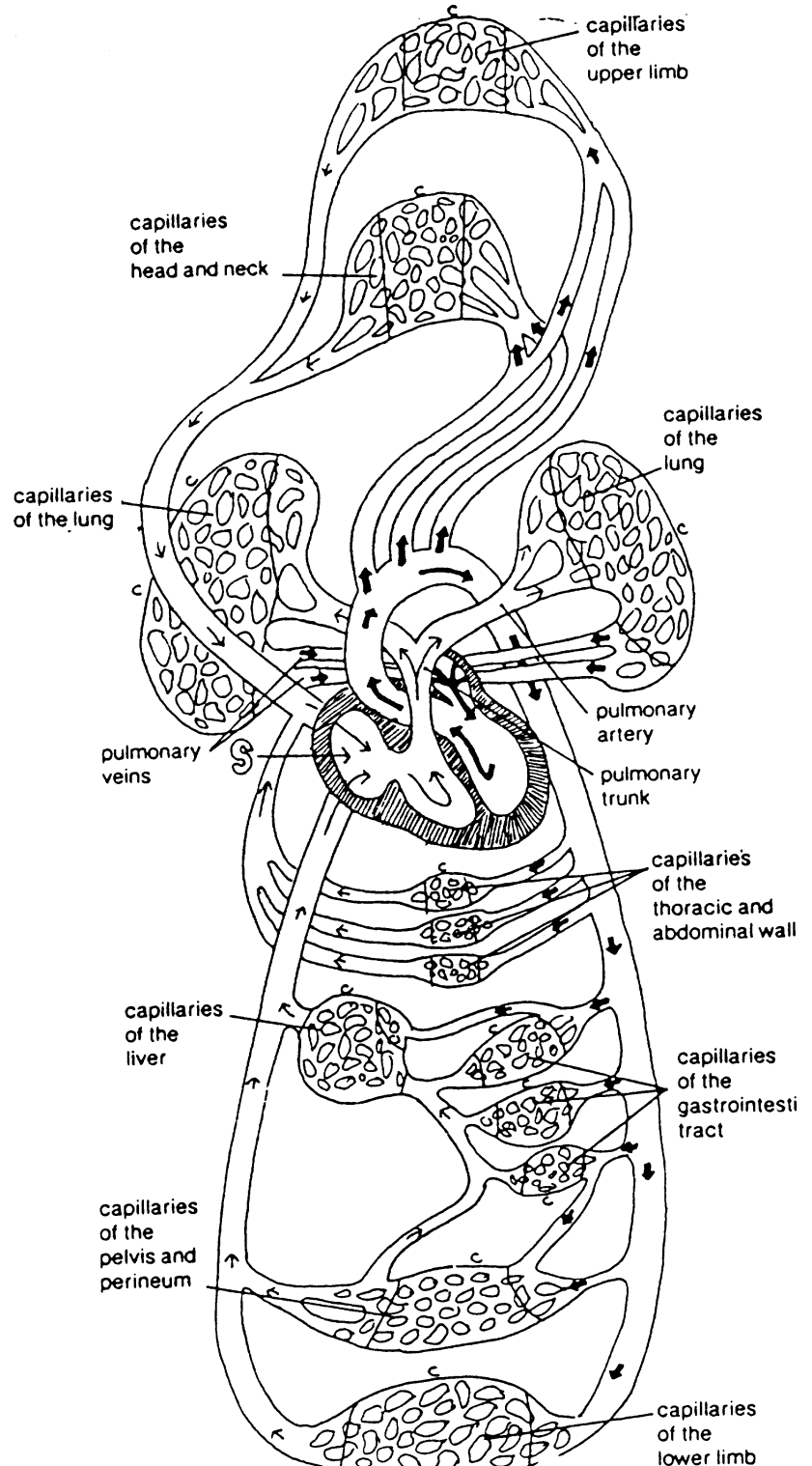
Look at figure 2. Notice how silly it would be to consider the heart and lungs alone without their use to the rest of the body. They are only part of the circulatory system, which carries oxygen and nutrients to all the cells and carries wastes away to be removed from the body.

Similarly, a husband and wife do not look only to each other, but function together for the sake of the uses they can perform. The Lord tells us that love of children is very close to the love of husband and wife, and that providing a caring home is one of the first uses of marriage.

“The spheres of conjugal love and of the love of infants, flow into all things of heaven and all things of the world...”
(CL 389)

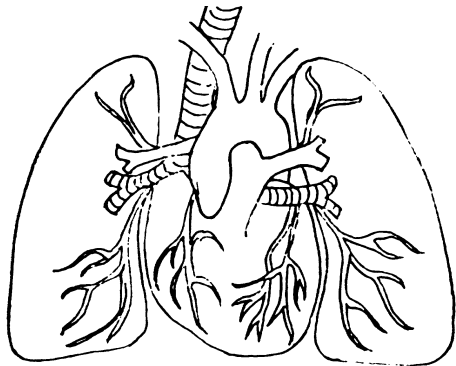
The sphere of the love of infants is a sphere of protection and support of those who cannot protect and support themselves.
(CL 399)

“...it is provided from creation that things created shall be preserved, guarded protected, and supported...” (CL 391)



“The innocence flowing into the souls of parents joins itself with the innocence of their infants.” (CL 396)

Love from the Lord and love for each other



Another important teaching about marriage is illustrated in figure 3. Note that blood vessels are not only carrying blood through the heart and lungs. There are also vital arteries bringing blood to nourish the heart itself and the lungs themselves. These are the arteries which cause a heart attack if their flow of blood is blocked.

Similarly in marriage both the wife and the husband must be nourished by love from each other and the Lord. If that love is cut off, the function of the married partner stops and the marriage dies. Just as modern health professionals urge us to exercise for cardio-vascular fitness, so every married couple must exercise their love for each other and guard its health. The proper interaction of husband and wife is a truly beautiful harmony.

Conjugal love in its essence is nothing else but the wish of two to be one, or, in other words, a will on their part that their two lives become one life. To carry out that will is the constant endeavor of this love, and all that it does flows from it. (CL 215)

No others come into that love and no others can be in it but those who go to the Lord and love the truths of the church and do the good things it teaches. (CL 57)

The following activity will help you remember how the heart and lungs mirror the relationship between a husband and wife.

The Correspondence of the Heart and Lungs

Get a piece of tracing paper. Lay it over the diagram below (figure 4) and trace the heart and lungs and their connecting vessels.

- Where it says:
- heart** - write **wife**
 - lungs** - write **husband**
 - blood** - write **love**
 - oxygen** - write **wisdom**
 - body** - write **uses**

