

DOCTRINE FOR THE YOUNG

CONJUGIAL LOVE

by the Rev. B. David Holm

You have probably heard your parents and minister speak of Conjugal love. Perhaps what it means has been explained to you. Still, because it *is* so important to the New Church, it is always useful to hear it explained again. Conjugal love is the love between a husband and wife who both love the Lord and are happily married and who will live together forever in heaven. It is a love that lasts forever because the souls and minds of a husband and wife, who truly love each other, are joined together in such a wonderful way that they cannot be separated - not even by death.

Conjugal love is a very high human love. Only love to the Lord is higher. This means we should think of conjugal love as the most beautiful love that can ever be between two people. The Writings of the New Church tell us that conjugal love is “inmost friendship”. Certainly we are to look forward to the day when the Lord will lead us to our conjugal partner. And while we are waiting for that day, there are certain things we can learn and do to help prepare us for this so special love.

You all know the differences between girls and boys and men and women. They are different because the Lord planned it so. Because of this the difference between the sexes is clean and wholesome. He wanted two different sexes, and He wanted these two sexes for some very important reasons. You already know one of these important reasons - which is so that there can be new babies or offspring. The Lord wants this so that there will always be people on the earth and so that heaven will keep growing larger and larger. This is a very important reason for there to be two sexes.

In order for there to be new babies or offspring, the husband and wife must be joined together or paired. Both sexes are needed. This is a thing of wonder, and a thing of beauty, it *must* be for the Lord planned it this way and you know that what the Lord makes is always wise, clean and right. For there to be new life, there must be both the male and the female. You all know this is true of people and of all animals. In your science classes you have learned that the same thing is necessary for plants. There is a male and female part to each flower. And, on a much lower scale, the same is true of the mineral kingdom - where the different elements are joined together to form new substances. In this broad sense the whole of the Lord’s creation is sexual. Sex or pairing is universal. Nothing could be more normal and right.

From this we can see that everything in the universe is paired or joined together. Do you know why this is so? To understand it you may have to stretch your mind a bit, but you can try. Two Divine things come out from the Lord: His love and His wisdom - or His good and His truth. Some things of His creation receive more of His love or good. From this comes the female sex.

On the other hand, the other things receive more of the Lord's wisdom or truth. From this comes the male sex. This is true on every level of creation.

Now the Lord wants His love and wisdom or good and truth to be joined together everywhere in His universe. The reason He wants this is because neither love nor wisdom are complete by themselves. They are united in the Lord, and He wants them united everywhere else. This is another reason why the Lord wants the two sexes to be joined—so that they can be complete. In being complete, they can perform uses—especially the use of producing offspring.

But there is, with humans, another and even higher reason why the Lord provided two sexes. And this reason is love—conjugal love. While male and female animals can be very fond of each other—at least for a time—still they cannot really love each other. They are not capable of it. But humans are capable of real love—if they really try for it. A husband and wife can be truly joined together—not just for this world but forever—joined as to soul, mind, and body. In this union the husband is to give wisdom or truth to his wife, and the wife is to give love and good to her husband.

Conjugal love is a promise of the Lord—a promise to His New Church. In the New Church, conjugal love is to be again given to mankind. Long ago in the Most Ancient Church, there was real Conjugal love, for men were then still good. But, sad to say, over the many thousands of years that followed, men lost Conjugal love—that heavenly, mutual love of one man and one woman who together love, worship and obey the Lord. Indeed men have now, all too often, made marriage a mockery, and sex a filthy thing. But now, the truths about Conjugal love are given once again by the Lord in the Writings given through Swedenborg. They have been given not only for our happiness, but also so that the Lord's love and wisdom in human beings can be joined together in the highest way possible. This is why the Lord gives conjugal love to us - so that we can come into the highest happiness and that His plan for us can come true.

With many of you, marriage is still far, far away, but it is not too soon to begin to get ready for conjugal love. The Writings tell us to begin preparing for Conjugal love from our youth upward (CL 49e).

If you are a girl, the first thing you can do to prepare is to be truly a girl. Learn to love feminine things. There are countless feminine things you can take interest in—cooking, sewing, pretty clothes and activities that girls delight in. Develop your loving nature. In today's world, it is wise for girls to remind themselves that they are indeed *girls*—you are feminine as to soul, mind, and body. The Lord planned it that way so that you can receive His love and someday give that love to your husband, and in turn receive wisdom from him. Never make the mistake of imitating boys or pretending to be one. You are a girl—take pride in this fact and prepare yourself to become a loving woman.

If you are a boy, you can prepare for conjugal love by becoming truly masculine. Take active part in the good things boys love to do—the things of investigation and of mastering skills. Enter into sports and the things of adventure. Boys also need to remind themselves that they are masculine from the inmost part of their souls to the externals of their bodies. You are to become a form of wisdom, so that someday you can give that wisdom to your wife, and in turn receive

love from her. In this way you will fulfill the Lord's plan for you, and you will become a man filled with the Lord's wisdom.

All of you can prepare for conjugal love by really seeing the beauty of it and seeing how tremendously worthwhile a happy and lasting marriage is.

Texts: Genesis 24: 50-67; Conjugal Love 42, 43

NOTE: If this is to be used in family worship, the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 24:50-67) would be a suitable lesson. If a lesson from the Writings is also desired, Conjugal Love 42 and 43 are suggested.