

Picturing the Love of Marriage

The Heavenly Doctrines tell us that true marriage love is represented in heaven by a maiden of indescribably beauty surrounded by a bright white cloud. And the angels are beautiful according to the quality of true marriage love with them.

In contrast, the love of adultery is pictured by an old, deformed woman. The sight of her chills those who see her. And those who choose to live in hell are deformed according to the quality of the love of adultery with them.

- Picture these two images in your mind. You may also want to draw a picture of them.
- Think about the adjectives that would go with the beautiful woman picturing true marriage love—and the qualities of that love.
- You could also think about the contrasting adjectives for the deformed woman symbolizing the opposite love—the love of adultery.
- Heaven is the joining of good and truth with angels and it is this conjunction that makes true marriage love. How could you work on joining good and truth in your life?
- What are some true ideas—teachings from the Word—that you might find helpful in becoming a good marriage partner? (Everything that helps us try to live a heavenly life can help us become a better friend to everyone in our lives.)

Note: The chart on the next page may be used to organize your thoughts.

Background teachings from the Heavenly Doctrines

Genuine conjugal love is the image of heaven, and when it is represented in the next life this is done by means of the most beautiful things which can possibly be seen with the eyes or conceived in the mind. It is represented by a virgin of indescribable beauty who is surrounded by a bright cloud (*Arcana Coelestia* 2735).

It is said that the angels in heaven have all their beauty from marriage love. Heaven itself is represented in marriage love, because heaven with the angels is the conjunction of good and truth, and it is this conjunction that makes marriage love (see *Heaven and Hell* 382).

The love of marriage is represented in the spiritual world as a virgin, whose beauty is such as to inspire the beholder with the charms of life; while the love of adultery is represented in the spiritual world by an old woman, whose deformity is such as to inspire in the beholder a coldness and death to every charm of life. Therefore, in the heavens the angels are beautiful according to the quality of conjugal love with them, and in the hells the spirits are deformed according to the quality of the love of adultery with them. In a word, the angels of heaven have life in their faces, in the movements of their body, and in their speech, according to their conjugal love, while the spirits of hell have death in their faces according to their love of adultery (*Apocalypse Explained* 986:2).

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	True Marriage Love	The Love of Adultery
PICTURE		
ADJECTIVES		
TRUE IDEAS		