

## DOCTRINE FOR THE YOUNG

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# DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

by the Rev. Brian Keith

One of the most important things that the Lord has given to His New Church is the promise, the gift of conjugal love. True marriage love is between one man and one woman. And conjugal love is how they grow together. It is said that in heaven, when you look into the distance you sometimes see one angel. It looks like one person. But as you draw near, as you get very close, you see that there are actually two people. The reason that they appear as one off in the distance is because that is what they are. They are two parts of one angel. For no person, man or woman, is complete alone. They must be joined so that they may become one, a whole angel.

Now you are not married yet. But you do have a lot of adults around you who are married. And you know that by living together for a great amount of time they learn how to work together, how to read together, how to grow to become one. Right now, since you are not married, you are not growing to be one with anybody in particular. But there are things you can do to prepare for marriage, to prepare to receive that most precious gift, conjugal love. You can pray to the Lord, asking Him for a conjugal partner. You can ask Him to provide you with someone whom you can love intimately – someone with whom you can become such a good friend that you cannot imagine ever being with anyone else in the same way.

Also you can try to do as you are taught—try to live a good life. In this way you are better prepared to be a good marriage partner later on. Yet you are aware, probably, that conjugal love only grows gradually. And it is like anything else that has to be perfected. Think of people who want to be good athletes and perform in a sport or game. They need hours and hours of practice so they can develop skills. And while they learn they make a lot of mistakes. It is the same with people who are growing up to be married. It takes a long time and they also make a lot of mistakes. A lot of times they forget what they are striving for and only think about themselves. But this does not mean that they are not still trying to become conjugal partners. It may just mean that they have forgotten about it for a short time.

Yet there is one thing that the Lord cautions us against—something that can destroy the most precious gift, and that is adultery. Adultery is living with someone else, other than your married partner as if he or she were your married partner. This tears conjugal love apart, because the person is trying to be conjoined with two others, not just one.

An example of this is found in the story of David and Bathsheba. David, who was already married, lusted for Bathsheba from seeing her take a bath. Yet Bathsheba was already married to Uriah the Hittite. David was so caught up in his lust that he didn't think about what might happen. And so he took Bathsheba, and she became pregnant. So David had to do something. He knew he was going to be found out. So he called Bathsheba's husband in from battlefield and asked him how the battle was going. Uriah gave him a report. Then David tried to get Uriah to go home and spend the night with his wife. Yet Uriah, being a loyal soldier, did not do this. All

of his friends, all of his fellow soldiers were out in the battlefield. He thought he should not leave them to enjoy the comforts of going home. Even when David got Uriah drunk, he could not make Uriah go to Bathsheba. So finally David arranged to have Uriah killed. He had him put in the hottest part of the battle. Then he had all the other soldiers withdraw, so that Uriah would surely be killed. And this is indeed what happened.

Up to this terrible time David had been a very good king. He had followed what the Lord taught. Yet by committing this evil, he got himself wrapped up in more and more evil. He became deceitful. And in the end he even became a murderer. This is where evils lead. So we must be very cautious about anything that would harm that most precious gift of life, conjugal love. Let us obey the Lord's Word. Let us think chaste thoughts. This is the way to prepare for marriage and to more easily grow toward becoming one—one perfect angel in heaven.

**Text: II Samuel 11**