

Teaching Children About Conjugal Love

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The following paragraphs are excerpts from New Church Education in the Home, which is currently being prepared for republication. These paragraphs discuss two of the principles that we should teach children about conjugal love. The Rev. Sandstrom notes that if the real essence of New Church education is preparation for regeneration, then it is also preparation for the conjugal, for these are inseparable.

A child should know not only that angels are men and women, and that they live in a most happy marriage forever, but also that it is the Will of the Lord that such marriages should commence in the world. Later the child will discover that many marriages on earth are not as they were intended to be, and he will then also understand why. In the meantime, it is essential for a child to know what is of Divine order; for to think in terms of eternity implies thinking spiritually. It is the spirit that lives forever. Therefore, if marriage is eternal it must be of the spirit. *This* is the concept for which a child must prepare.

A child can easily understand that the Lord led mommy and daddy together, and the little boy or girl can think from an early age that one day the Lord will give him or her a true partner too. This is an essential preparation, for it tends to place the mind of the child in the stream of Providence; and it will protect him in due course from allowing unworthy motives in choosing a partner. The child needs this protective influence, especially after the love of the sex has been awakened, that is, in time of youth. At that time a youth should be taught that there is an implied promise in the Writings, if he fulfils two conditions. The promise and the conditions are stated in *Conjugal Love* 49:e, and read: "Internal conjunction, or conjunction of souls, can be provided on earth with those who from youth have loved, chosen, and asked of the Lord a legitimate and lovely partnership with one, and who spurn and reject wandering lusts as an offence to their nostrils."

In youth thought turns directly to marriage. Then the young person should definitely pray, and definitely fight, as prescribed. But before he is a youth a child should be prepared for this. The story of how the Lord led Abraham's servant to Rebekah in his search for a wife for Isaac gives powerful illustration of the Lord's Providence in marriage.