



What Is Conjugal Love?

Lesson Overview

1. Watch a Video

Watch *Difference Between Love and Infatuation* online at bit.ly/GCEDInfatuation (3min 6sec). Discuss.

2. Read

What is *conjugal* love?

3. Activities

Explore conjugal/mutual love, or internal & external qualities.

New Church Concept Conjugal Love

With people who live in conjugal love the interior parts of the mind are open through heaven to the Lord, for that love flows in from the Lord through that which is inmost in a person. From this influx of that love they have the Lord's kingdom within them, and from it they have genuine love towards little children, for the sake of the Lord's kingdom. From that influx also they are receptive of heavenly loves more than others, and with them more than others mutual love is present, for mutual love flows from conjugal love as a stream from its source. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2737

Mutual love wants to give all that is his or hers to another person, except his or her own life—which is what conjugal love wills to give. See *Spiritual Experiences* 4436

FaithBuilder 1 | Lesson 20 | Conjugal Love

Watch a Video

Watch *Difference Between Love and Infatuation* at bit.ly/GCEDInfatuation (3min 6sec). (Enter bitly link in the web browser bar at the top of your screen.)

Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. What kinds of romantic love did the video talk about?
2. Do you think it's easy for a person who is feeling in love to identify if they are genuinely in love, or if it's a passing infatuation?
3. Is true love a feeling? Or is it more?
4. What other kinds of love are there besides the ones in this video?
5. How can you identify if a romantic love you feel is healthy and good or unhealthy and potentially harmful?
6. How might reflecting on the bigger picture of a person's life outside your relationship protect you from getting hurt or making a bad choice?
7. How might talking to an adult bring perspective to a romantic relationship you're in? Why might discussing your feelings with others be important?

Read

New Church teachings offer new ideas about a special kind of married love that has the potential to bring great happiness. This love is called *conjugal* love. (It is not to be confused with *conjugal* love—which means to be yoked together in marriage.) The Writings teach that conjugal love has existed since ancient times but today is so rare that most people are not aware of it. They describe what this love is and where it comes from.

Conjugal love comes from the marriage of Divine good and truth, and so in the Lord Himself. In heaven the joining of good loves with true ideas is compared to a marriage, and is called a marriage. When good loves united to truth flow down further it may be seen as a union of minds, and when it flows down still further it may be seen as a marriage between two people. As a consequence the union of minds springing from good united to truth from the Lord is conjugal love itself. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2728

Conjugal love exists in the mind of any person who obeys the Lord by connecting true ideas the person knows and believes with love in doing wisely charitable actions. Any person can experience some of the qualities of conjugal love on their own when their actions connect (or marry) their desire to do good things

with the true ideas the person believes. But conjugal love is most *fully* experienced by married couples whose minds are united not only by their love for each other, but also by their shared love for what is true and good.

True marriage is a marriage of one man and one wife. This a marriage is representative of the heavenly marriage, and as a consequence can contain heavenly happiness. See *Arcana Coelestia* 865.2

True marriage is between a man and a woman because of the complementary nature of men and women. The goodness of a wife is married more and more closely to the wisdom of her husband so that over time they become like one angel. They form a unit that works together as closely as the heart and the lungs do in the body.

Religion is a key part of conjugal love. Married partners who share the same religion share a life-view and life-goals. Marriages based on religion grow as the partners put their religious ideals to work in their lives. *This* is the source of their married happiness.

People were created to be able to become more and more interior beings—to be introduced or elevated nearer and nearer to a marriage of good and truth and so into truly conjugal love, to the point that they feel its state of bliss. The only means by which they can be introduced or elevated is religion. Where religion is lacking, conjugal love does not exist either; and where conjugal love does not exist, coldness develops instead. See *Conjugal Love* 238, 239

From the outside, there may appear to be no difference between couples who share their religious beliefs and couples who do not. Both may seem happily married. But if we could look inside, we would see a different picture. The spiritual life of religion warms the heart of marriage. If there is no religion, marriage is a practical arrangement that benefits both partners, but is cold at heart.

Discussion

Choose questions for discussion.

1. What is *conjugal* love? Where does conjugal love come from?
2. Can a single person experience the blessing of conjugal love? If so, why?
3. Married adults enjoy friendships with people outside of their marriages. How are these friendships different than the friendship within marriage?
4. What name do the Writings give to the kind of love people experience that is not conjugal love? (See sidebar on page 1.)
5. What is the difference between mutual and conjugal love? (See sidebar on page 1.)
6. Why is conjugal love experienced most fully in a marriage between a man and a woman?
7. How does the idea that conjugal love is a gift freely given by the Lord connect with the idea that conjugal involves taking initiative to learn what is true and work to put true ideas into practice?

New Church Concepts

The Golden Age

Once when I was thinking about conjugal love I felt a desire to know what that love was like among people who lived in the golden age and the following ages which are named silver, copper, and iron. Since I knew that all who lived well then are now in heaven, I prayed to be allowed to talk to them and learn. Suddenly an angel said, "I have been sent by the Lord to be your guide. First I will guide you to the people who lived in the golden age." We went.. and eventually the angel said, "We are now in an encampment." A man invited us into his tent . He was dressed in a blue-colored robe and a tunic of white wool. And his wife was dressed in a purple dress, with a blouse of embroidered fine linen underneath. Then because I wanted to learn about the marriages of the most ancient peoples, I looked by turns at the husband and wife, and I observed a seeming unity of their souls in their faces. So I said, "You two are one." The man replied, "We are. Her life is in me, and my life is in her. We have two bodies, but one soul. The union between us is like the union of the two tabernacles in the breast which are called the heart and the lungs. She is my heart and I am her lungs. But since when we say heart here we mean love, and when we say lungs we mean wisdom, therefore she is the love of my wisdom, and I am the wisdom of her love. Therefore her love outwardly clothes my wisdom, and my wisdom is inwardly within her love. Consequently, as you have said, the unity of our souls appears in our faces." See *Conjugal Love* 75

Complete the Sentence

Decide whether the following sentences describe *mutual* or *conjugal* love by adding the word mutual or conjugal at the beginning of the sentence. (See sidebar on page 1 for a comparison of conjugal love and mutual love.)

_____ love can exist between members of the same sex.

_____ love can be shared between people who are not married to each other.

_____ love comes from the marriage of good ideas and true loves in the Lord.

_____ love wants to give everything to another person except his or her life.

_____ love is not possible in relationship between people of the same sex.

_____ love is the source of all other loves.

Internal and External Qualities

We find others attractive for many reasons. We may like a person's sense of humor, his passion for what he does, or the way she makes us feel. Many of the things we love about others are relatively superficial—they are *external*. We relate to others on this level when we do things we enjoy—for example listening to music or playing a sport. Our religious beliefs are a deeper or more *internal* part of us. We may guard our beliefs more closely than other parts of us because we care deeply about them. We want to protect them from ridicule. They are who we really are at heart.

Using these criteria, decide whether the words in the list below describe *internal* or *external* qualities of a person. Then write them on the chart.

Internal Qualities	External Qualities

energetic

smart

attractive

moral

outgoing

honest

loves children

kind

faithful

fun-loving

friendly

positive

tall

polite

good fashion sense

religious

Discuss your answers.