

Comparing the Divine, Heavenly, and Natural Marriages



A Theological School Dissertation

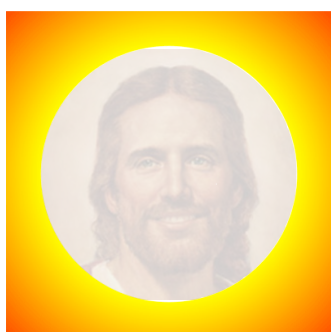
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Introduction

In many ways one could say that marriage is ‘what it’s all about.’ The answer to the question of ‘life, the universe, and everything’ is ‘marriage.’ Or in other words, life is all about: love, conjunction, union, connection, relationships... marriage. And the relationship between husband and wife is only one kind of marriage.

A thorough study of the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg will reveal that there are three basic kinds or levels of marriage, the Divine marriage, the heavenly marriage, and natural marriages or married love:

Divine Good and Divine Truth joined together within the Lord constitute the **Divine marriage** itself, from which the **heavenly marriage** springs, which in a similar way is a marriage of good and truth. From this too **conjugal love** springs.¹ (AC 3132:2)

These three kinds or levels of marriage in the Word are compared with each other, and often represent and correspond to each other (see AC 3960). Married love and the marriage of goodness and truth—heavenly marriage—have their source in the Divine marriage. The Divine marriage is expressed in the heavenly marriage and ultimately in married love (see ML 44.8).

My **inspiration** for studying this subject is two-fold: First, the subject of marriage has relevance in many important discussions and issues in the church and in our modern culture. For example, issues dealing with divorce, adultery, second marriages, dating, being single, living together, sleeping together, homosexuality, gender roles, women in the priesthood, the gender of God, etc. Searching for the answers to questions about these issues necessarily leads us back to the doctrine of marriage. And so a thorough understanding of this doctrine is essential in attempting to resolve some of these questions and issues.

Secondly, I have for a long time been fascinated with the fact that in the Writings, natural marriages (between and husband and wife) are often compared with heavenly marriages (such as that of a person’s will and understanding, or goodness and truth, or the Lord and the church). It goes beyond the simple use of the term ‘marriage’ for each of these relationships, to the point of using language such as: goodness and truth as being ‘lovers’ or ‘spouses’ (see DP 15, 233; DLW 398, 414, 416, 419, 422), or good ‘proposing’ to truth, and truth ‘consenting’ (see AC 3090), goodness and truth being ‘wedded’ to each other (see AC 3538), being locked in a continual

¹ Any bolded text within quotations throughout this paper is my own added emphasis.

embrace (see ML 238), and various other similar uses of language which anthropomorphizes their relationship.

When the two [goodness and truth, or will and understanding] are joined together it is called a marriage. For the two joined together resemble married partners, loving each other, conceiving and giving birth; and their offspring are called the fruit. (AC 8423; see also 54)

The use of such language encourages us to see these three levels of marriage as behaving in similar ways. The Divine marriage is like the heavenly marriage which is like natural marriage.

And yet, we need to be careful when comparing them too closely, because these three marriages are significantly different as well. The Writings even remind us of the differences by referring to the Divine and heavenly marriages as a “*kind of marriage*” (AC 718, 3090; DLW 402), or “*like a marriage*” (AC 747, 1468), or as a “*marriage-like union*” (AC 1432), or that goodness and truth are united “*as if in marriage*” (AC 2524, 8356). And likewise in reverse, the Writings remind us that the natural marriage of a man and woman is not the same as the conjunction of goodness and truth:

Thus the two [male and female] together form a single image, which **imitates** the conjugal model of good and truth. We say that it **imitates** this model, because it is **not identical to it but similar**. (ML 100)

One specific example of how we need to be careful with these comparisons lies in the analogy of the Lord being like a ‘husband’ and the church being like His ‘bride.’ This is a common analogy made in the Word. But the Writings remind us that we can’t take this analogy too far.

A husband does not represent the Lord and his wife the church, because husbands and their wives both together form the church. It is a common saying in the church that as the Lord is the head of the church, so the husband is the head of the wife.² If this were true, it would follow that the husband represents the Lord and the wife the church. But the truth is that, **whereas the Lord is the head of the church, people—both men and women—are the church**, and still more so husbands and wives together. (ML 125)

This example serves to illustrate the need for caution in taking these analogies too far.

Obviously in past history, this analogy has been abused to create situations in which husbands dominate their wives, as is indicated in the common saying in the passage above. This shows that it is absolutely essential that we properly understand these three marriages and how they compare to each other, in order to apply these doctrines properly to life.

² Quoting Ephesians 5:23. Cf. 1 Corinthians 11:3

However it is also important to remember that these comparisons are not merely analogies. They are very real connections, as is indicated here:

Anyone unacquainted with the internal sense of the Word may suppose that such imagery in the Word is simply an employment of comparisons like many of those used in everyday speech, and that this is the reason why the Church is compared to a daughter, a virgin, and a wife, and so why matters of faith and charity are compared to things which have some connection with marriage. But in the Word everything is representative of that which is spiritual or celestial, and it is a real correspondence;... Consequently things connected with the heavenly marriage, which is good and truth joined together, pass into those that correspond to them, and so into those which have some connection with marriages on earth. (AC 4434.6)

In making this comparison, this paper will also examine some of the differences and similarities between the two elements in each marriage: the Divine and the Human, the Lord and the church, goodness and truth, and masculinity and femininity.

The doctrine of marriage is considered one of the core doctrines of our church. I think that, in a general way, the ideal of this doctrine—the concept that true love can last forever—rings true for many people. But I also think that in specifics and details, it can be one of the more difficult doctrines to understand, accept and apply. My hope is that this study can be of use to a deepening understanding and application of this important doctrine.

My **goal** in this dissertation is to point out the specifics of the comparisons between these three marriages. In question form: To what extent are the passages about the marriage of a man and woman applicable to the marriage of goodness and truth? And to what extent are they not applicable? To what extent are the passages about the marriage of goodness and truth applicable to an actual marriage of a man and woman? And to what extent are they not applicable?

The **thesis** for this dissertation is that one of the reasons for why these three very different levels of marriage correspond to each other is that they are all reciprocal relationships, which is perhaps why “the Divine is imaged in two people who are immersed in true marriage love” (see HH 374). In other words, they are all balanced unions of complementary equals.³ However, as we will see, the heavenly marriage is sometimes a top/down, inside/outside hierarchy (see AC 3952), in which truth is the servant of goodness. Does this mean that in some ways the Divine

³ At the end of this introduction, there will be a brief study on reciprocation and the nature of marriage being a balanced union of complementary equals.

marriage in the Lord is a hierarchy? Does this mean that in some ways the relationship between husband and wife is a hierarchy? We will attempt to address these questions.

The paper will also explore the theory that one way to generalize the distinction between masculinity and femininity is that masculinity is oriented towards distinction, while femininity is oriented towards conjunction.

Terminology

The various definitions of the term ‘marriage’ will become more and more clear over the course of this study. To begin with however, the term ‘the Divine marriage’ has to do with the union of Divine love and wisdom, God’s essence and existence, Father and Son in the one Lord (AC 2803). The term ‘the heavenly marriage’ has to do with the joining together of goodness and truth (see AC 3952, 4434.5, 4466, and numerous other passages). The term ‘the heavenly marriage’ also has to do with the marriage of the Lord and His church (ML 54.5; DP 28; AC 162, 252, 665, 1023, 1432, 4638, 9789). The terms ‘natural marriage’ or ‘married love’ or ‘conjugal love’ mean the monogamous relationship between one man and one wife (AC 1907).

It is important to remember however that sometimes terminology can be interchangeable. There is a passage where the term ‘Divine marriage’ refers to the marriage of the Lord and His church (see ML 308). There are also passages which say that the ‘heavenly marriage’ is the Divine marriage (see AC 2508, 9536, 10366). Sometimes the ‘heavenly marriage’ is called the ‘spiritual marriage’ (see ML 41, 76.5, 141, 220, 516; DP 332.3; AR 543, 960; AC 3158, 3703.17, 5581). Sometimes ‘married love’ is called ‘natural marriage’ (see ML 76.5). One might be tempted to think that these three degrees of marriage could fit nicely into the common trine of the terms: celestial, spiritual, and natural. But the terms ‘celestial’ and ‘spiritual’ are both used to describe the ‘heavenly marriage’ (see AC 162; cf. SS 80). And after all, it is the ideas inside the terms which we need to understand (see AC 6343.2; ML 84).

In reference to ‘natural marriages’ I will be using the term ‘married love’ instead of ‘conjugal love.’⁴ Because of this I will be using Bruce Rogers’ translation entitled *Married Love*, and I will be referring to quotes from this work with ‘ML’ rather than ‘CL.’ However quotes from older translations of other works will include the term ‘conjugal love.’

⁴ My reasons for using this term can found in Appendix I at the end of this paper.

Resources

In this paper I will be using the New King James version of the Bible. As for the Writings of Swedenborg, I will be attempting to use the most modern translation available of each work. This means that *Heaven and Hell*, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, *Divine Providence*, *True Christianity*⁵, and volumes one and two of *Secrets of Heaven (Arcana Coelestia 1-1885)* will be quoted from the New Century Edition. All other quotes from *Secrets of Heaven* will be quoted from the Elliot translation.⁶ And each of Swedenborg's other works will be quoted from the most recent translations available.⁷

Marriage is a very common subject throughout the Writings.⁸ The subject of marriage comes up in almost every one of Swedenborg's published works. It is only the two works: *The Last Judgment* and *The Doctrine of Faith* in which you do not find this subject discussed.

Balance, Equality, Complementary Reciprocation

As I mentioned before, in the concepts of all three levels of marriage (to varying degrees) we are given the impression that marriage is a balanced union of complementary equals. So in this section we will examine where the concepts of balance, equality, and complementary reciprocation show up in reference to marriage.

Granted, there are some passages in the Writings that seem to indicate that marriage is *not* about the relationship between equals, but between *unequals*. The marriage of the Lord and the church is obviously a marriage of unequals if we consider finite people to be the church (see AC 3236). "There is no ratio between what is infinite and what is finite" (DP 32). In this passage the 'heavenly marriage' is described as a marriage of unequals:

⁵ When I mention the full title of this work I will use its NCE name: *True Christianity*, but when I quote a reference from that work I will use the more familiar abbreviation (TCR) referring to its older title: *True Christian Religion*

⁶ When I mention the full title of this work I will use its English name: *Secrets of Heaven*, but when I quote a reference from that work I will use the more familiar abbreviation (AC) referring to its Latin title: *Arcana Coelestia*.

⁷ When I quote from Swedenborg's unpublished work entitled *Spiritual Diary*, I will be using the abbreviation "SD," instead of the abbreviation "SE" referring to its alternate title: *Spiritual Experiences*.

⁸ See Appendix II for a brief description of where the subject of marriage comes up in each of Swedenborg's works.

The heavenly marriage is a marriage of good to truth and of truth to good. It is not however a marriage between good and truth which both belong to one and the same degree, but between good and truth which belong one to a lower degree, the other to a higher. (AC 3952)

There are even some passages that could seem to indicate to some that this marriage of higher and lower degrees applies not only to the heavenly marriage, but also to natural marriages as well, and that men should be in charge of their wives without a complementary balance:

Every law and commandment has something heavenly and spiritual as its source and true origin. So this law for marriage stating that a wife should be under the influence of her husband's good sense also has a heavenly, spiritual origin, since she acts on desire, which is self-centered, and not so much from reason as a man does. (AC 266; see also AC 568.2, 3236)

Passages such as these could simply be illustrating the fact that there was an "extreme lack of balance between the sexes in the 18th century"⁹ and so for the people of that era, this was a very understandable illustration for the 'heavenly marriage.' But these few passages are far outweighed by the numerous places that do indicate the complementary balance that exists (or should exist) in all levels of marriage. We will look at some of those passages now.

Balance and Equality

In the Writings, the word 'balance' usually is used to refer to the state of equilibrium created by good vs. evil, or truth vs. falsity, rather than the state of cooperation produced by the marriage of goodness and truth. But there are some passages in which that is the way it is used:

We need to realize that action and reaction are involved in everything in the universe, no matter how large or small, whether alive or lifeless. This yields a **balance [equilibrium]** throughout, which is canceled when action overcomes reaction or vice versa. (DLW 263)

When goodness and truth **are in balance [are equal]**, then there is justice. (AR 905)

[The spiritual] sun produces a constant **balance [equality]** of heat and light, that is, a constant union of good and truth. (ML 222.4; see also ML 137.4; DLW 105)

The conjunction of the goodness and truth in the heavenly marriage is dependent on their being balanced and equal with each other. This is true for the natural marriages of men and women as well. Without balance and equality in a relationship, there can be no true married love.

⁹ Woofenden and Rose, Reader's Guide to NCE *Secrets of Heaven* p. 55

Human history shows that for long periods of time there was no equality between the sexes. Mostly it was unequal in men's favor, with women being subject to men. This began to change when Jesus treated women as equals and as friends, and radically changed the way that women were viewed. He spoke with women (even foreign women) in public (see John 4:27), and He had women disciples and friends (see Matt 27:55-56; Mark 15:41; Luke 8:1-3, Luke 23&24; Galatians 3:28). He forgave a woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11), and He encouraged people to think differently about divorce (Matt 19:1-10), and many other laws of the Torah. The Lord treated women as equals, and paved the way for how women are treated today.

This attitude of equality between men and women continued to change with the second advent, especially with the doctrine of true married love. The equality mentioned in the Writings however has reference to *all* levels of marriage. There's equality in natural marriage:

According to the terms of their compact and covenant [married partners] have **equality**, and yet each has his [or her] own standing in duties connected with his [or her] role. (ML 291; see also ML 78.4, 377)

There's equality in the heavenly marriage:

The expression '**equally** of good and of truth' is used when the truth complements the good and the good complements the truth, thus when they **act as one and form a marriage**.... When the understanding acts as one with the will, that is, when the person perceives truth to be the complement of good, and good to be the complement of truth, that which consists **equally** of good and of truth exists with him [or her]. (AC 9716)

And there's even equality in the Divine marriage:

If there were more divine love than divine wisdom or more divine wisdom than divine love in any created work, **nothing would endure in it except what was equal**. Any excess would pass away. (DLW 36; see also DLW 37; Lord 58)

Complementary Reciprocation

Often people struggle with the concept of how men and women can be equal and yet still be so different. Their differences often give the impression of inequality. This is because men are better at some things, and women are better at other things. There is inequality in those things, but balance between the two of them when they are united (see DP 4). And so men and women *complete* each other through a reciprocal relationship.¹⁰ This is true in all levels of

¹⁰ See also AC 3090; DLW 48, 57; DP 92.2; ML 44.7, 76.7

marriage (see Lord 35.8; AC 6047, 9604). There's complementary reciprocation in natural marriage:

Conjugal love is **mutual and reciprocal**, and the life of one partner is bound up in that of the other, and vice versa, so that they are so to speak one. (AC 2740)

There is complementary reciprocation in the heavenly marriage of goodness and truth:

There is a union of good and truth in each and every created thing. And union does not come about without **reciprocation**, for union on one side and not on the other in return, of itself comes undone. (ML 61)

And amazingly, there is even complementary reciprocation in the marriage of the Lord and the church, our relationship with the Lord:

The **reciprocal partnership** between the Lord and us... is a mutual partnership that is brought about by **cooperation** rather than action and reaction. The Lord acts. We receive the Lord's action. We then function as if we were on our own. In fact, we function on our own from the Lord. (TCR 371.6; see also TCR 504.7; ML 132.6)

Interestingly, the word 'reciprocal' (*reciprocus*) essentially means 'going back and forth,' with 're' meaning 'back,' and 'pro' meaning 'forward.' So a reciprocal relationship is one that goes back and forth between two things. Also, in mathematics, the word 'reciprocal' means "a number related to another in such a way that when multiplied together their product is one."¹¹ This sounds a bit like the teaching that "two spouses in heaven are not called two angels but one angel" (HH 367)!

So in all levels of marriage, to varying degrees, there is balance, equality, and complementary reciprocation. In the heavenly marriage this gets a little confusing, but we will get to that in chapters two and three. For now, let's begin with the nature of the Divine marriage in the Lord.

¹¹ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/reciprocal>

Chapter One: The “Divine Marriage” - Marriage in the Lord

There are a number of ways that the Divine marriage is described in the Writings. It is the marriage of Divine love and Divine wisdom in God; the marriage of the Divine Essence and the Divine Human, or the Father and Son. It is the source of both masculinity and femininity in humanity, the source of all heavenly and natural marriages, the source of the conjunctive sphere of love that pervades all of creation. We’ll examine each of these in turn. In this chapter there will also be a section on “Marriage in the Word,” because the Lord *is* the Word (see ML 128).

Divine Love and Divine Wisdom, or Divine Goodness and Divine Truth

The Lord, the Creator, the One God of heaven and earth is essentially Divine love and Divine wisdom. This is a duality, a marriage of two things that exists in one God.

Good wedded to truth, and truth to good - such being the Divine Marriage that exists within the Lord's Human. (AC 2774; see also AC 2588; DLW 28, 29)

This is clearly stated in ‘part one’ of *Divine Love and Wisdom* (DLW 1-82). And as we will see over the course of this paper, this Divine marriage not only exists in the Lord, but it flows into, and exists within everything in the universe:

A **Divine Marriage** exists between celestial and spiritual things, or what amounts to the same, between the things of love and those of faith; or what still amounts to the same, between things of the will and those of the understanding. Those of the will are forms of good, those of the understanding forms of truth. Such a marriage exists in the Lord's kingdom in heaven, and such also exists in the Lord's kingdom on earth, which is the Church. Such a marriage exists in every individual, and in each part of him [or her], indeed in the most individual parts of all. That which does not have its existence within such a marriage has no life. Indeed from this **Divine Marriage** such a marriage exists in the entire natural order and in each individual part of it—though it does so under a different shape and form—otherwise nothing would ever continue to exist there. (AC 2173)

The Divine marriage *exists in* every other marriage that we will discuss in this paper. It also exists in various pairings such as ‘heat and light,’ the ‘heart and lungs,’¹² and a ‘bridegroom and bride’ (see TCR 37). Notice also that as this Divine marriage flows into these various things, it exists “*under a different shape and form*” (AC 2173). This will be a key element in this paper,

¹² See Appendix X for “heart and lungs,” and appendix XVI for more on “heat and light.”

because while they are all still marriages, they all behave in slightly different ways because of being in different forms.

Reality and Manifestation, Essence and Expression, Substance and Form

The meaning of ‘love’ used in these sections has to do with the Divine life force behind everything. And the meaning of ‘wisdom’ used in these sections has to do with the universal structure that allows that Divine life force to function. Reality and its manifestation.

Divine love and wisdom in and of themselves are substance and form. They are essential reality and manifestation, and unless they were as much reality and manifestation as they are substance and form, they would be only theoretical constructs that in and of themselves are nothing. (DLW 43; see also DLW 13,14; AC 9806.2; ML 115.3)

Oneness and Union

Now, the fascinating thing about the Divine marriage of love and wisdom in the Lord, is that in actuality, they are really one and the same thing. Divine love *is* Divine wisdom. Divine wisdom *is* Divine love. It’s really one thing, which we can only understand by dividing it into two. It is like two sides of the same coin. It is a ‘marriage’ unlike any merely natural marriage, in which the two are *really*, actually one. It is called ‘distinguishably one’ (see DLW 14):

Love and wisdom are two distinguishable things, and yet they are so united that love is a property of wisdom and wisdom a property of love. Love finds its reality in wisdom, and wisdom finds its manifestation in love. Further, since wisdom derives its manifestation from love, divine wisdom is reality as well. It follows from this that **love and wisdom together are the divine reality, though when they are distinguished we call love the divine reality and wisdom the divine manifestation.** This is the quality of the angelic concept of divine love and wisdom. (DLW 34. See also DLW 35)

This brings to mind some things that are said about husbands and wives in heaven being essentially one angel (see HH 367, 374; ML 52, 56). Although the difference here is that while angel couples become *as* one, even to the point of saying they have one soul (ML 75), still they never lose their individuality:

They can be joined together as though into one, even though their bodies cannot be so joined at the same time. This conjunction takes place especially between married partners who love each other deeply. ... Reason can see that **it is not an amalgamation into one but an adjunction**, nearer and closer according to the love, and to the point of contact in those who are in a state of true married love. This adjunction may be called a spiritual dwelling together, which occurs in the case of married partners who love each

other tenderly, however separated they may be in body. ... It is apparent from this that married love joins two souls and minds into one. (ML 158.2)

In a marriage, a husband doesn't become a wife, and a wife doesn't become a husband. They maintain their separate roles, while having one life together. And while we could say that wisdom is the form of love, we couldn't really say that a man is the form of a woman (cf. SD 6110.14), or that a woman is the form of a man (cf. AC 155; AR 812). Similarly in the marriage of the Lord and the church, we never lose our individuality (see DP 42). But in the Lord, the marriage of love and wisdom is so much of a union that the two can be said to actually *be* the same thing:

The Lord's Divine Rational is nothing other than Good, for **even the Truth there, being Divine, is Good.** (AC 3372; see also AC 3049, 3141; DP 13, 86)

So if we wanted to refer to the Lord's essential reality with two words we could say that He is Divine love and wisdom. But if we wanted to refer to it with only one word, we could say that He is Divine love (see HH 139). The Divine marriage of love and wisdom is essentially Divine love. The two are truly one (see also DLW 139). And as we will see: *Jesus is Jehovah.*

Heat and Light, and Life

One of the great illustrations used to describe this phenomenon is the nature of heat and light. Heat and light are described as two separate things, but in reality they come from the sun as one thing, the same thing. They function separately, and can even appear to be divided, for example on a hot summer night, or a cold winter morning. But at their source, heat and light are always one. They are distinguishably one. This is different from an illustration such as the heart and lungs, in which they are definitely two separate organs, but they function as one unit, and can't really function apart from each other.¹³ But heat and light, like the love and wisdom in the Lord, are really the same thing:

Love and wisdom are united in God.... Love and wisdom come from Jehovah God through the sun that surrounds Him. The heat radiating from that sun is essentially love, and the light radiating from it is essentially wisdom. From this it becomes as clear as day that love and wisdom are united at their source—namely, God, who is the origin of that sun. This point can be visualized [by thinking] of the sun in the physical world. It is

¹³ See Appendix X

nothing but fire. Heat radiates from its fieriness; light radiates from the glow of its fieriness. **At the outset, then, heat and light are one.** (TCR 41; see also ML 60)

And the reason this is important to know is that the Lord's love and wisdom, when they are married in us, must be in this balance, this oneness in order to be effective in our lives.

We cannot be reformed, regenerated, and saved by any excess of divine love over divine wisdom or by any excess of divine wisdom over divine love. Divine love wants to save everyone, but it can do so only by means of divine wisdom. All the laws that govern salvation are laws of divine wisdom, and love cannot transcend those laws because **divine love and divine wisdom are one and act in unison.** (DLW 37)

And just as heat and light emanating from the sun make all life possible on earth, so too the Divine love and wisdom emanating from the Lord make all spiritual life possible.

People do not know that **only God is life and that his life is divine love and wisdom.** We can see from this that the life in us is nothing else and that there is life in us to the extent that we accept it. We know that warmth and light radiate from the sun and that everything in the universe is a recipient, growing warm and bright in proportion to its receptivity. The same holds true as well for the sun where the Lord is, whose radiating warmth is love and whose radiating light is wisdom.... **It is from these two emanations from the Lord as the sun, then, that life comes.** (DLW 363)

And life is more than simply existence in space and time, it's also about continued existence.

And so just as the marriage of Divine love and wisdom in the Lord produces all life, the marriage of a man and woman also produces new life.

There is a conjugal atmosphere which flows in from the Lord through heaven into each and every thing of the universe, extending even to its lowest forms.... **A marriage of [goodness and truth] continually emanates from the Lord, because they are Him, and from Him come all things.** Moreover, whatever emanates from Him fills the universe; for without this, nothing that came into existence would continue to exist. [2] There are several atmospheres which emanate from the Lord.... But the universal one of all is a conjugal atmosphere, because it is at the same time **an atmosphere of propagation** and is thus the supreme atmosphere in conserving the created universe by successive generations. (ML 222)

And this life only comes through a marriage of two. A woman can't produce life on her own. A man can't produce life on his own. But together they can produce life. And so in a similar way it takes a marriage of love and wisdom to produce all life.¹⁴

¹⁴ See Appendix XVI for a further study on "Marriage in Creation."

Love by itself, or what is good by itself, is nothing. Consequently, the love that constitutes our deepest life, the life that comes from the Lord, is love and wisdom together. (DP 13)

Divine Love and Wisdom in the Bible?

The concept of ‘Divine love and wisdom’ is something that is found throughout Swedenborg’s Writings. But where do we find this concept in the Bible? After all, our doctrine should be drawn ultimately from the letter of the Word (see SS 53-56). But if we peel back the terminology, we can see that the Divine marriage of love and wisdom in the Lord *does* appear in the letter of the Word. Usually Divine love there is called ‘mercy, goodness, justice, righteousness, lovingkindness, or life.’ And Divine wisdom there is called ‘truth, judgment, light, or spirit’ (see DLW 38).¹⁵ More commonly in the New Testament, the Divine love and wisdom are represented by the duality of ‘Father’ and ‘Son’ in the Lord.

The Marriage of the Divine and the Human in God (the ‘Father’ and ‘Son’)

The Writings tell us that the Divine marriage is illustrated by the union of the ‘Father’ and the ‘Son,’ in the New Testament (and even the duality of Jehovah and God in the Old Testament: SS 88). It may seem strange to describe the relationship between two masculine characters in the Word as a ‘marriage,’ but that is how it is described! The ‘Father’ represents the Divine essence or love, and the ‘Son’ represents the Divine Human or wisdom.

The conjugal relationship in the supreme sense is the union within the Lord of the Divine and the Divine Human. From this it is the union of Divine Good and Divine Truth in heaven. (AC 6179; see also AC 2649, 3211)

Often people who read Swedenborg will describe this theology of the union of the Father and Son as being like the union of the soul and body in one person:

Reality and its manifestation are also distinguishably one in the Divine-Human One the way soul and body are. A soul does not occur without its body, nor a body without its soul. The divine soul of the Divine-Human One is what we mean by the divine reality, and the divine body of the Divine-Human One is what we mean by the divine manifestation. (DLW 14)

The *way* that the Father and Son are actually united is a little complicated:

¹⁵ See Appendix III for a list of examples of these from the letter of the Bible.

The Divine marriage itself within the Lord is not a marriage between the Divine good and the Divine truth present in His Divine Human but **between the Good of the Divine Human and the Divine itself**, that is, between the Son and the Father, for the Good of the Lord's Divine Human is that which in the Word is called 'the Son of God' and the Divine itself that which is called 'the Father'. (AC 3952)

It is fairly obvious that when talking about the union of the Divine Essence with the Divine Human that was born in time in the form of Jesus Christ, we are talking about a marriage between two planes, levels or degrees. The above passage talks about how marriage is actually a union of two things *in different degrees* (see AC 3952). Most of the time this seems to be referring to the *heavenly* marriage. But the above passage also applies this concept to the *Divine* marriage. How this actually works gets a little confusing. This passage indicates that the Divine marriage is a union between planes of the *goodness* in the Divine human with the Divine itself. However there are other passages that indicate that the Divine marriage is a marriage of the *truth* in the Divine Human (the Son) with the *goodness* in the Divine itself (the Father) (see AC 2649, 2803, 6179).¹⁶ The way that this marriage between planes is able to exist in One God, and still be a reciprocal union of complementary equals will also be addressed further in the subsections below. But first let's examine where this concept shows up in the Word.

The Divine Marriage in the New Testament

Secrets of Heaven paragraph 2803 says that the union of the Father and Son is the marriage of Divine good and Divine truth, and that it is a marriage because it is a truly reciprocal union. But unlike the marriage of a husband and wife, in which the partners remain two individuals, the union of the Father and Son is complete; in other words, they are the same Person. That same passages goes on to show that this is taught clearly in the Gospel of John.¹⁷

Father and Son Separated

One of the interesting things about the Lord being born on this earth, was that before Jesus was glorified, He and the Father had a relationship that was relatively distinct. Because of this, the imagery in the New Testament suggests that the Father and Son are two separate people.

¹⁶ This concept of marriage between planes or levels or degrees, will be explained more fully in chapters two and three, where it can be illustrated by the nature of the *heavenly* marriage.

¹⁷ See AC 2803, and John 1:1-3,14; 3:13; 6:62; 10:36,38; 13:31,32; 14:10,11; 17:1,5,9,10,21,24

Despite being confusing, this is describing a very necessary aspect of the Lord's life. The Lord came to earth to do battle with the hells and to free us from their hold over us. And in order to do this He had to put Himself in a position to be tempted by them. But Divine goodness can't be tempted. However Divine truth can!

It was Divine truth from which the Lord underwent and suffered temptations. Divine truth within the Lord is that which is called the Son of Man, whereas Divine good within Him is that which is called the Son of God. Speaking of the Son of Man the Lord many times says that He is to suffer, but He never says this when He refers to the Son of God. (AC 2813)

It was very useful to our salvation that the Father and Son began as separated. This is true with other marriages as well. It is a necessary part of our spiritual growth (the heavenly marriage) that we can learn the truth while still having an evil will. This allows us to develop a conscience, which is what leads to us being able to be saved. It is a necessary part of true married love (natural marriage), that men and women grow up as individuals, and work on their own separate repentance and reformation. If they didn't they wouldn't be able to be useful to each other in a marriage. So initial separation is a useful thing in all levels of marriage.

Father and Son in the Old Testament?

It may appear on the surface that this process of the Father and Son becoming united is a process exclusive to the New Testament. Actually this process is also described in the hidden meanings of Old Testament stories as well. It appears in the story of the relationship between Jehovah and Abram:

*On that day Jehovah struck a pact [covenant] with Abram symbolizes **the union of the Lord's intermediate self with His inner self.** This is established by the symbolism of a *pact* as union.... As the subject here in an inner sense is the Lord, the pact symbolizes a deeper union. The Lord went further and further in being joined and united to Jehovah His Father until they finally became one. In other words, His human side also became Jehovah, who was the Lord's actual inner self. These things were represented by the pact that Jehovah struck with Abram. (AC 1864)*

The Divine marriage is also represented by the actual marriage of Abraham and Sarah:

Indeed the letter H added to Sarah's name was taken from the name of Jehovah, in order that Sarah, like Abraham, might represent the Lord's Divine, that is to say, in order that the Divine marriage of Good and Truth in the Lord might be represented - '**Abraham**' being Divine Good and '**Sarah**' Divine Truth. (AC 2063; see also AC 2517, 3141)

The Divine and Heavenly Marriages are Different and Similar

The nature of the Divine marriage within the Lord is very different from the nature of the Lord's marriage with us in the church. The union of the Divine and Human in the Lord is called a "marriage-like union" (AC 1432), because it is different from other marriages.

The Lord's relationship with Jehovah was **union**, whereas that of [a person] with the Lord is not union but **conjunction**. The Lord united Himself to Jehovah by His own power and on that account became righteousness as well, whereas [a person] in no way joins himself [or herself] to Him by his [or her] own power but by the Lord's. (AC 2004.3)

However the Divine marriage and the heavenly marriage are similar in the sense that they are both reciprocal relationships of some kind.

The **glorification or uniting was reciprocal**, which too is the Lord's teaching in John, "Father, glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You." John 17:1. 'Father' is the Divinity itself that was within Him, and 'Son' is the Divine Human." (AC 10053.6)

Jesus, the Son, the Divine Human, the Divine truth, had the ability and power to unite itself with the Father, the Divine essence, the Divine love. And in a similar way, we are given free choice by the Lord so that we have the ability to choose to unite ourselves with the Lord, even though it is really the Lord who unites Himself to us. But more on this later.

Marriage in One God

Now, the theological problem with the idea of a Divine marriage in God which is represented by different 'persons' in the letter of the Word, is the danger of thinking that there are two gods, or two persons in God. So it is important to remember that this Divine marriage *exists in the One Person of God*, who is the Lord God Jesus Christ, "for the Lord's Divine Human *is the Divine Marriage itself*" (AC 4575). It is the marriage of the Lord's soul and body.

The Divine itself, and the Father, exists mutually and reciprocally within the Divine Human, termed the Son of God, according to the words of the Lord Himself in John, 'Jesus said, Philip, **he who has seen Me has seen the Father**. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me.' John 14:9-11; 10:38. This union is the Divine Marriage itself. (AC 3960)

This is illustrated by the fact that the very name 'Jesus Christ' represents this Divine marriage:

When Jesus is mentioned by someone reading the Word [angels] perceive Divine Good, and when Christ is mentioned, Divine Truth. And when both are mentioned together they

perceive the Divine marriage of good to truth, and of truth to good. (AC 3004; see also AC 8875.3)

In some ways you could say that the terms “Jesus Christ,” “Divine Human,” “Celestial Spiritual,” and “Lord God,” are all different ways of saying “good and truth,” or “love and wisdom.” And it gets even more technical when the Writings go on to say that the name ‘Christ’ represents “the Divine marriage of *good within truth*” while the name ‘Jesus’ represents “the Divine marriage of *truth within good*.” (see AC 3009) This brings to mind a similar sounding difference between the nature of masculinity and femininity in *Married Love* paragraph 32 in which men are *love clothed with wisdom*, and women are *wisdom clothed with love*.

God as the Source of Masculinity and Femininity

The Lord is the ultimate source of masculinity and femininity, as is described in the Creation story in *Genesis*:

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.”... So God created man in His *own* image; **in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.** (Genesis 1:26-27)

Strangely enough, there are not many passages in the Writings that directly address the subject of *both* men and women being created in the image of God, or the subject of women being created in the image of God, as well as men.¹⁸ But it must be assumed that this is the case, because “the Divine is imaged in two people who are immersed in true marriage love” (HH 374). It is the marriage relationship between a man and woman—the union of masculinity and femininity—that most fully captures the image of the Lord. And that is because both genders together paint the full picture of humanity.

In the case of a married couple, the masculine element and feminine element united by true married love produce one life that is fully human.” (ML 316.4)

A man by himself, or a woman by herself, in the grand scheme of humanity, really only represents half of humanity (see ML 37), so how could only one or the other ever fully represent the Lord?

¹⁸ The passages that refer back to Genesis 1:27 mostly talk about the internal sense of this passage, and concepts related to the heavenly marriage, rather than natural marriage.

And yet most of the time, in the Word, the Lord is represented only by a man. There are a few times in the Word when the Lord (God) is represented by a woman, which will be discussed in its own section at the end of chapter four. But for now, let me point out this intriguing passage from *Divine Love and Wisdom*:

Since we have been created to be recipients, then, and since we are recipients to the extent that we love God and are wise because of our love for God ... it therefore follows that the divine essence, **the Creatress**, is divine love and wisdom. (DLW 33)

This is from the Dole translation—the New Century Edition (NCE)—of the Writings of Swedenborg. There is a footnote that follows the word 'Creatress.' In the note the translator says,

Swedenborg's use here of the feminine noun *Creatrix*, 'Creatress,' is striking. While it may be prompted by the fact that *Essentia*, 'essence,' is a feminine noun, there is no grammatical necessity for a noun to agree in gender with a noun with which it is in apposition. This feminine noun occurs again in [*Divine Love and Wisdom*] 262 and in *True Christianity* 178, in both instances in apposition with *natura*, 'nature'; in these instances, it is quite possible that 'nature' was visualized in female form.¹⁹

In *Divine Love and Wisdom* 262, the translator translates the word as 'creatress,' but in that passage it is obviously referring to the false belief in 'mother nature' as the source of everything in the universe (see also TCR 178), while in *Divine Love and Wisdom* 33, the word 'Creatress' seems to actually be referring to the Lord, the Divine love and wisdom!

Most of the other translations of *Divine Love and Wisdom* 33 translate the Latin word *Creatrix* as "Creator." Rogers translates it as "the creative cause." But there are other Latin words for "Creator": *creator*, *genitor*, *conditor*, *plastes*, *aedificator*, all of which are masculine words. But the Latin word used here, *creatrix*, is a feminine word and according to *William Whitaker's Words* is properly translated as: "mother, she who brings forth; creator (of the world); authoress, creatress."²⁰ So in many ways this NCE translation, while being perhaps a little 'striking,' is the most accurate translation of this particular portion of this passage.

Traditionally we are more familiar with masculine language used in reference to the Lord. This is mostly because of the masculine images of Jehovah and Jesus presented in the Bible. But it does seem somehow fitting that in the book *Divine Love and Wisdom*—a more

¹⁹ George F. Dole. Note # 31 on page 268 of the New Century Edition of *Divine Love and Wisdom*

²⁰ <http://www.archives.nd.edu/cgi-bin/wordz.pl?keyword=creatrix>

philosophical analysis of the Lord—it would remind us that God is the source of both masculinity and femininity, with this striking reference to the "Creatress."

In a previous footnote in *Divine Love and Wisdom*, translator Jonathan Rose states that:

The Latin original of this passage [DLW 18, a discussion of the fact that God is Human] contains no hint of God's being either male or female. Although the identification of Jesus in his transformed state as God is central to Swedenborg's theology, as is the related concept of God's humanity, **Swedenborg seems stringently to avoid any indication of masculine or feminine gender in God.** He consistently uses the neutral term *homo*, "a human," rather than a gendered term for God's humanity; and where he uses adjectives in the role of nouns as terms for God, such as "the Infinite," "the Divine," "the Divine Human," and "the Human," he casts them as neuter rather than feminine or masculine. (A possible exception to this rule is the use of *Creatrix*, a feminine noun for the creator; see note 31 below.) The present edition uses the pronoun "he" for God even though it introduces gender implications that are not present in the original, because (a) the text's strong emphasis on the oneness of God contraindicates the use of plural pronouns; (b) the English language has no established gender-neutral singular third-person pronoun; (c) the text's strong emphasis on the humanness of God contraindicates the use of "it"; and (d) the identification of Jesus with God would make any pronoun but "he" awkward.²¹

In other words, the complications of using the words "Them," "It," or "She," in reference to God, outweigh the complications of using the word "He."

When it comes down to it, I like how this translation really breaks us out of the false assumption that the Lord is somehow male. Jesus was male. But the Lord (The Divine love and wisdom, the Creator of heaven and earth) is not male. The Lord is the source of both masculinity and femininity. Both men and women are created in God's image (Genesis 1:27).²²

The Lord is Love, Union and Conjunction Itself

Since the Lord is Love itself, He is also Union itself, because "Love is union itself" (DP 34). This could be part of why the LORD is referred to as 'One' in the Old Testament: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is *one*!" (Deuteronomy 6:4). The Lord is 'Oneness' itself! This state of 'oneness' is the default state of the Lord, the state that He always wants:

²¹ Jonathan S. Rose. Note # 21 on page 267 of the New Century Edition of *Divine Love and Wisdom*

²² I suppose one way of looking at this passage is that it is trying to point out that what most people think of as 'Mother Nature' is actually the Lord. I think a liberal translation of this passage could be: "... it therefore follows that the divine essence, *which is considered to be Mother Nature*, is divine love and wisdom." But that's adding a lot of additional vocabulary that isn't there in the Latin. The original Latin simply says: "*sequitur, quod Divina Essentia, quae Creatrix, sit Divinus Amor et Divina Sapientia*" (DLW 33).

In the highest sense, the Sabbath means the **oneness** of the Divine itself with the divine human in the Lord; and in the inner sense the **union** of the Lord's divine human with heaven and the church. In a general sense it means the **union of the good and the true** and therefore the heavenly marriage: 8495, 10356, 10730. So the rest on the Sabbath day meant **the state of that oneness, because then the Lord has rest**, through which peace and salvation come to the heavens and to earth; and in a relative sense it means **the union of the Lord with us**, because then we have peace and salvation. (HH 288.3)

The Lord is not only oneness in Himself, but He also desires oneness and union with us:

Every covenant exists to tie people together; that is, the goal is for people to live in mutual friendship, or in a state of love. This is why marriage too is called a compact or covenant. The Lord cannot unite with us except in love and charity, because the Lord is love itself and mercy; He wants to save us all and draw us to heaven—that is, to Himself—with a powerful force. (AC 1038.1)

He desires this because He loves us and “the Divine love in the Lord will[s] to confer joys upon mankind, whom He created to be recipients of both the love and the wisdom emanating from Him” (ML 180).

Because the Lord is Love itself, and love is union itself, the Lord cannot help but want to be one with us. And the way that He becomes one with us, is by means of love.

Three things constitute the essence of God's love: His loving others who are outside of Himself, **His wanting to be one with them**, and His blessing them from Himself... Divine love constantly aims to forge a partnership with us, as is clear from the Lord's saying that **He wants to be one with people**, He in them and they in Him, and He wants the love of God to be in them (John 17:21, 22, 23, 26). (TCR 43.1,3; see also ML 160)

This is the purpose behind the Lord's wish to be married to us. And because this is His purpose, that sphere of love, union, and conjunction flows out from Him into us. “There is a universal **conjugal atmosphere emanating from the Lord** and pervading the universe from the firsts to the lasts of it” (ML 92). Speaking of ‘firsts to lasts,’ we will now look at marriage in the Word.

All Levels of Marriage in the Word

I include a section on ‘Marriage in the Word’ in this chapter, partly because the Lord is the Word, but also because in the Word we can see all three levels of marriage: the Divine, heavenly, and natural marriages. So it is a fitting overview for the end of chapter one, and as an introduction to the rest of the study.

The Three Marriages Portrayed in the Word

Because these three marriages: Divine, heavenly, and natural, represent different degrees of marriage, they show up in the discrete degrees of meaning inside passages from the Word:

The meaning of 'the loins' as the things of **conjugal love**, dealt with in 3021, 4277, 4280, and therefore as the things of **the heavenly marriage**, and in the highest sense of **the Divine Marriage**. (AC 4575; see also AC 3960)

Does the Bible really talk about 'conjugal love' or 'married love'? It certainly has things to say about marriage. But a lot of what it says about natural marriages can seem to be out-dated or sexist if taken in a prescriptive way.²³ Sometimes the Bible can even appear to be opposed to the idea of true marriage love by seeming to suggest that polygamy or inequality in marriage is alright, or that marriage doesn't last forever in heaven.²⁴ In many ways the idea of true married love doesn't even exist in much of the letter of the Word because "the Israelite nation was permitted to take more than one wife because in it the Christian Church did not exist, and so neither was true married love possible" (ML 340).

Even in the New Testament, where women began to be treated better, in the literal sense of the Word, it seems that the Lord is saying that we won't be able to be married to our spouse in heaven (Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35). The Writings tell us that this is because Jesus is talking about 'spiritual' marriage and "by spiritual marriage, conjunction with the Lord is meant, and this is achieved on earth" (ML 41). We have this life on earth to make our choices for good or evil, and decide whether we want to go to heaven—"the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9), the marriage of goodness and truth—or whether we want to go to hell, the marriage of evil and falsity (see AC 5138).

The Divine and Heavenly Marriages in the Word

In one of the sections above, we looked at where and how the concept of the marriage of Divine love and wisdom shows up in the Bible. But here we will look at the concept of how the Word of God actually *is* the Divine marriage. "The Word is the Lord because He is the Divine good and Divine truth in it" (ML 516).

²³ see Ephesians 5:22-33; Deuteronomy 24:1-4; 25:5; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9,25-40; 11:3; 14:34; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-6

²⁴ See Exodus 21:10; Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9,25-40; 11:3; Colossians 3:18

The fact that the Word is holy, extremely holy in its inner senses, is plainly evident from the consideration that the theme in the highest sense of all is **the union of the Divine Itself and the Divine Human within the Lord**. These extremely holy subjects contained in every detail of the Word are a plain indication that the Word has come down from the Divine. ... The inmost and highest sense holds the **Divine marriage** which exists in the Lord, thus holds the Lord Himself, within it.... Utterly Divine things are concealed within those repetitions [in the Word]; that is to say, ... the **Divine Marriage**, which is the Lord Himself, [is] concealed in them. (AC 6343)

The Word is also the *means* that we have for becoming married to the Lord:

The Word is the means of conjunction, because it is from the Lord and thus is the Lord. The Word is the means by which the Lord is conjoined with people and people with the Lord, because it is in its essence Divine truth united to Divine good and Divine good united to Divine truth.... It follows from this that the Word is a perfect marriage of good and truth. And because it is from the Lord, and because that which is from Him also is Him, it follows as a consequence that when a person reads the Word and draws truths from it, the Lord attaches good. ... Since the Word is the means of conjunction, it is therefore called a covenant - the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. A covenant symbolizes conjunction. (ML 128)

And because the Word is the means for this marriage, in the Word our relationship with the Lord is described by a marriage in which He is the Bridegroom and we are the bride: “As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you” (Isaiah 62:5; see also AC 155; AR 797.2,3; ML 117 for many other Biblical references to this).

The Word not only contains the *Divine* marriage, but it also contains the *heavenly* marriage of goodness and truth. “The Holy Scripture, which came directly from the Lord, is as a whole and in every part an expression of the marriage between good and truth” (ML 115.4; see also ML 516; AC 6343.2).

Double Expressions

One of the ways that this marriage manifests in the Word is in the fact that there are often double expressions, or couplets, or what seem like repetitions in the language of the Bible.

Since there exists such a marriage in every detail of the Word, therefore **double expressions** frequently occur in it, which seem like repetitions of the same thing. They are, however, not repetitions; but one relates to good and the other to truth, and when both are taken together they effect the conjunction of good and truth, and so combine them into one. This also is the ground of the Divinity and sanctity of the Word; for in every Divine work there is a conjunction of good with truth, and of truth with good. (SS 81; see also AC 2173)

These double expressions include things like ‘brother and companion, poor and needy, wilderness and desert, void and emptiness, foe and enemy, sin and iniquity, anger and wrath, nation and people, joy and gladness, mourning and weeping, justice (righteousness) and judgment’ (see SS 84-87), ‘life and light, life and spirit’ (see DLW 38), ‘man and neighbor, man and companion, man and brother’ (see AC 10555), etc. “It would be tedious to show from the Word that such double expressions occur there, apparently repetitions of the same thing, for this would fill pages” (SS 85). However, one particular example that I find interesting is from *Numbers*: “Look, a people rises like a **lioness**, and lifts itself up like a **lion**” (Num. 23:24). The interesting thing about this one is that it is not only a double expression, but it also reflects the concept of masculine and feminine duality.²⁵

Another thing that is reflected in these double expressions is the fact that the heavenly marriage is often about the union of internal things with external things:

For owing to the heavenly marriage in the Word, when the external is referred to, so also is the internal; and when truth is referred to, so also is good, see 6343. This sometimes seems to outward appearance to amount to a repetition of the same thing, as for example here where it says 'He washes his clothing in wine, and his garment in the blood of grapes .'Wine' and 'the blood of grapes' seem to describe the same thing, and so do 'clothing' and 'garment'; but they do not because what is external and what is internal are expressed in that way. (AC 6378)

And still another thing that is expressed by these double expressions is the duality of spiritual and celestial senses or meanings in the Word:

There are two senses in the Word, called the spiritual and the celestial, concealed within the sense of the Letter; what belongs to the spiritual sense has special reference to the Church, and what belongs to the celestial sense, to the Lord. The content also of the spiritual sense has reference to Divine Truth, and the content of the celestial sense to Divine Good; and consequently there is in the sense of the Letter of the Word this marriage. (SS 80)

We will explore both of these concepts (the marriage of internal and external, and celestial and spiritual) further in chapter three.

²⁵ Some translations render it “old lion” and “young lion.” The gender is technically unclear in the Hebrew.

People, Places or Things in the Word that Represent Marriage

There are numerous things in the stories of the Word that represent marriage. I will name just a few of them here for the sake of illustrating their variety and number: The tribe of Zebulun (AC 4592.13), marriage laws in the Torah (AC 3703.17), ‘dudaim’ or ‘mandrakes’ (AC 3941), the loins of a person (AC 4575), the Sabbath, because it joins together God and people (HH 288.3, DP 21, AC 8495, 8888, 8889, 10366, 10367), a jubilee (AC 8802), the place before the door of the tabernacle (AC 10001), twins (AC 4918), flowers and fruit (DP 332.3), sexual intercourse (AC 3914), the number two (AC 720), the number four (AC 9601), the two witnesses, and the two olive trees (AC 4197), the pairs of animals entering the ark (AC 671), the several sets of two brothers in the Word (AC 9806.2), the two tables of the 10 commandments (AC 10375), the two cherubim on the ark (AC 9509), a covenant (AC 665), bread and wine (AR 122), etc.

Obviously the actual references to ‘marriages’ and ‘weddings’ in the Word also represent marriage. Imagery such as the ‘Parable of the Wedding Feast’ (Matthew 22:1-14), the ‘Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins’ (Matthew 25:1-13), and the ‘Marriage Supper of the Lamb’ (Revelation 19:6-9), all have reference to the heavenly marriage (see also AC 4820).

Since things connected with conjugal love mean spiritual joining together, let it now be established from the Word that marriages and things that have a connection with marriages do not imply anything else. (AC 4434.2)

That passage goes on to list many scriptural confirmations of this (AC 4434, see also AR 812.3).

Men and Women, Husbands and Wives

Now we come to some representations which can get a little complicated. What do men and women represent in the Word? There are many different ways that men and women are described in the Word including: men and women, husbands and wives, man and wife, father and mother, daughter and son, brother and sister, boy and girl, virgin and youth, bride and bridegroom, master and mistress, king and queen, god and goddess, male and female, masculine and feminine, etc. And all of these have slightly different representations. In a very general sense “in the Word, when a male means good, its female means truth, and conversely when the male means truth its female means good” (AC 5198).

When [the Word] uses *man and wife*, the man [*vir*] symbolizes an element of the intellect, or something true, while the wife symbolizes an element of the will, or something good. When it uses *a human and his wife*, the human symbolizes the good that love embraces, or love, while the wife symbolizes the truth that faith espouses, or faith. (AC 915)

What a *wife* actually means in the Word's inner sense is truth united to goodness, because the bond between truth and goodness is no different than a marriage. When the Word speaks of a husband [*maritus*] by name, he symbolizes what is good and his wife symbolizes truth. When it does not name the husband but calls him a man [*vir*], however, he symbolizes truth and his wife symbolizes what is good. The Word is consistent in this respect. (AC 1468; see also AC 2517, 5946)

So in other words, in the Word, when a wife is married to a *husband* [*maritus*] or a *human* [*homo*], she represents truth and 'he' represents goodness. But when a wife is married to a *man* [*vir*], she represents goodness and he represents truth. The concept of a masculine man [*vir*] seems pretty consistently to represent truth. The concept of a husband [*maritus*] seems pretty consistently to represent goodness. The concept of a wife however can represent either goodness or truth depending on who she is paired with. But keep in mind also that we are talking exclusively about men and women in the Bible, rather than men and women in life. As becomes clear from a reading of *Married Love*, in real life (on earth and in heaven) husbands represent wisdom, and wives represent love (see ML 21.2, 33; cf. AC 4837.2). Or perhaps it's more accurate to say that husbands *are* truth-oriented and wives *are* goodness-oriented, whether they *represent* the opposite or not.

Another factor involved in why a wife sometimes represents goodness and sometimes truth has to do with whether that passage from the Word is referring to the 'celestial church' or the 'spiritual church.'

In the celestial Church good resided with the husband and the truth of that good with the wife; but in the spiritual Church truth resided with the man and the good of that truth with the wife: Such is and was the actual relationship between the two, for in human beings interior things have undergone this reversal. This is the reason why in the Word, when celestial good and celestial truth from this are the subject, they are called 'husband and wife', but when spiritual good and spiritual truth from this are dealt with, these are called 'man and wife', or rather 'man and woman' (*vir et mulier*).... [3] Here also is the reason why it has been stated already in various places that marriages represent the joining of good to truth, and of truth to good. Furthermore conjugal love has its origin in these two joined together. **Among celestial people conjugal love has its origin in good joined to truth, but among spiritual people in truth joined to good.** Marriages also correspond in actual fact to these joinings together. (AC 4823.2,3; see also AC 4434.9, 8337, 8647)

What does it mean to be in the ‘celestial or spiritual church’? We will get into the specifics of the distinction between ‘celestial’ and ‘spiritual’ in chapter three, but for now the general concept is as stated above: The celestial church is about “good joined to truth” and the spiritual church is about “truth joined to good.” This may sound redundant, but as we will see, there is a difference. One specific difference has to do with the difference between a wife [*uxor*] and a wife [*mulier*].

Those who constitute the Lord's spiritual kingdom and who are called the spiritual, ... are not sons of the marriage itself of good and truth, but of a certain covenant not so conjugal. They are indeed descended from the same father but not from the same mother, that is, from the same Divine Good but not from the same Divine Truth. **Indeed with those who are celestial, since they are the product of the marriage itself of good and truth, good exists and truth rooted in that good.** ... [3] In former times - to enable both those who are celestial and those who are spiritual to be represented in marriages - a man was allowed to have a concubine in addition to a wife. **That concubine was given to the husband by his wife (*uxor*), in which case the concubine was called his wife (*mulier*).** ... **The celestial Church was represented by the wife, and the spiritual Church by the concubine.** (AC 3246.2,3)

Sometimes the Latin word *mulier* is translated ‘wife’ and sometimes it is translated ‘woman,’ but the over-all concept is that a *mulier* is somewhat less of a wife than an *uxor*. This leads us nicely into the next point, which is that wives in the Word often represent the church.

The human symbolizes the core quality of the church, while the wife symbolizes the church itself. (AC 915; see also AC 770; cf. AC 476)

One of the interesting things here is that women in general represent the church whether they are married or not (see ML 21.3; AR 434).

As stated before, what a woman in the Word represents can vary widely, but a ‘husband’ in the Word consistently represents goodness.

The reason why ‘the husband’ represents good and ‘the wife’ truth is that the Church is compared to a marriage, and also is a marriage of good and truth. Good is what the husband represents because this is primary, while truth is what the wife represents because that is secondary. (AC 3236)

This is one of those statements that seems to represent an imbalance. While we may acknowledge that good is primary and truth is secondary in the heavenly marriage, it doesn’t seem to fit with the concept of natural marriage—especially in terms of true married love—to say that the husband is primary and the wife is secondary. So what does this mean? We will delve into that, later in the study.

It seems to be a general rule in the Word that when men and women are in a married state, the husband represents goodness and the wife represents truth, but when they are not in a married state (or are in a lesser married state), the man represents truth, and the woman represents goodness. “In general a male means truth and a female good” (AC 4005.2).

A **son** in the Word symbolizes doctrinal truth, and also an understanding of and consequent thought about truth and goodness. A **daughter**, on the other hand, symbolizes the goodness taught by doctrine, and also a willing of and consequent affection for truth and goodness. A **male** child, moreover, symbolizes truth conceived in the spiritual self and born in the natural one.... [2] Since these and no other are the offspring born of the spiritual marriage, and **male** offspring are truth and good in the intellect and consequent thought, while **female** offspring are truth and good in the will and consequent affection, therefore a **son** in the Word symbolizes truth. ... **Sons** mean people who possess doctrinal truths drawn from the Word, and abstractly, those truths themselves. ... **Daughters** symbolize an affection for the church's truth, thus the church in relation to that affection. (AR 543; see also AR 434)

But unfortunately it can get more complicated than that. So now let's examine individually what men and women represent.

What Men Represent

In the prophetic part of the Word especially 'man' (*vir*) is a word that occurs often - in the expressions 'man and wife', 'man and woman', 'man and inhabitant', and also 'man and human being' (*vir et homo*). In those expressions 'man' in the internal sense means that which belongs to the understanding, which is truth, while 'wife', 'woman', 'inhabitant', and 'human being' mean that which belongs to the will, which is good.” (AC 3134; see also AC 10406.5; HH 368)

As stated before, men [*vir*] in general represent truth in the Word.²⁶ But the specific things that men [*vir*] represent in the Word are numerous. Men represent our inner being (AC 156), our ability to reason (AC 191), faith (AC 338), the intellectual properties of truth (AC 430), the understanding or intellect (AC 476), the individual of the church [as opposed to the collective church] (AC 476), truth (AC 1468), rational truth (AC 2362), falsity (AC 2362), celestial truth (AC 2533), thoughts of truth (AC 2731), the Lord (AC 3236), the affection for truth (AC 3309), doctrine (AC 6086), the truth of faith (AC 6356), the truth of good (AC 6792), goodness (AC 8337) but *only* when that man [*vir*] is a husband (AC 4823, 5946), etc. And outside of the Word

²⁶ There are some notable exceptions, such as where men represent the affection for truth (AC 3309), which is something that usually women represent (see below).

men [*vir*] can also represent wisdom (ML 21.2), love and goodwill (TCR 41), etc. There is much more consistency here with men than there is with women. With men it's pretty consistent that they represent truth-related things. The notable exceptions include: our inner being, the Lord, and when men represent goodness as husbands (which we will examine more closely later in the study). Another interesting angle on all of this, is in this passage:

“As many as did accept Him, to them He gave the power to be God’s children, to those believing in His name, not from blood, or from the flesh’s will or from a man’s will.” (John 1:12,13)... A man’s will [*vir*] means something opposite to the faith that comes of love or charity, which is what a man symbolizes. **The flesh’s will and a man’s will are what divide**, but love and the faith that comes of love are what unite. (AC 1608.2)

This passage seems to indicate that man [*vir*] can represent the concept of division or separation. In these terms it is a negative thing. But in general terms, separation is a natural part of our process. In fact we begin life in a state of separation; separation from God, separation of our will and understanding, separation from our future spouse. In fact our ability to reason, the rational level of our mind, is essentially the ability to see things separated and divided; to see things in distinction and comparison (*ratio*). Truth is about division, while goodness is about conjunction, “for truths are many but good is one” (AC 10154). Faith divides, charity unites (see AC 1799.4, 4468, 6269.2). And so in a general way, men represent distinction and separation.

What Women Represent

'And their women' means charity. This is clear from the meaning of the words for 'woman' and 'wife' (*femina, mulier, uxor*) as affections for truth and affections for good. Affections for truth are meant when the partner is mentioned or when the expression 'husband' is used, affections for good when the partner is not mentioned or when the term 'man' is used, 915, 1468, 2517, 3236. (AC 4510; see also AC 3067; HH 368)

So it almost seems like the closer a woman is to a man the more she represents truth, and the further she is from a man the more she represents goodness.

The specific things that women [*mulier*] represent in the Word are numerous. Women represent our sense of self (AC 151), the church (AC 252), our affections which give birth to our rational mind like a mother (AC 1895.2), the Lord’s Divine truth (AC 3024), the truth (AC 3030), the affection of truth (AC 3030), affection of falsity (AC 3242), an affirmative attitude (AC 3913), the affection of goodness (AC 3974), charity (AC 4510), evil (AC 4823), the things

of charity (AC 6014), the things of the church (AC 6684), truth joined to good (AC 6718), the good of charity (AC 6916), goodness in the spiritual church (AC 8337), truth in the celestial church (AC 8337), affections (AC 8593), spiritual goodness (AC 8977), goodness (AC 9046), etc. And outside of the Word women can also represent the love of wisdom (ML 21.2), wisdom and faith (TCR 41), etc. Obviously all of these differences come from different contexts which must be understood. But there must be some underlying thread of similarity that unites them. In what way are all of these various things actually one thing? One way to unite them is to say that a woman represents us as the church which can be made up of all of the above mentioned things. And ultimately what is the church? The church is love to the Lord and the neighbor (AR 903). It is our relationship or conjunction with the Lord and people (ML 129). The church *is* that 'heavenly marriage' (AC 4835.3, 4918; AR 816.3; ML 115.4, 129; DP 21), and so in a general way, while men represent distinction, women represent relationships and conjunction.

This finishes the chapter on the Divine marriage in the Lord. Now we will turn to look more specifically at the concept of our relationship with the Lord being like a 'heavenly marriage.'

Chapter Two: The ‘Heavenly Marriage’ - The Lord and the Church

The Heavenly Marriage

There are two general definitions of the ‘heavenly marriage’ in the Writings. One is that it is the marriage of the Lord and the church (see ML 54.5; DP 28; AC 162, 252, 665, 1023, 1432, 4638, 9789). The other is that it is the marriage of goodness and truth in an individual’s mind (see AC 3952, 4434.5, 4466, and numerous other passages).

It is said that in every detail of the Word there is the marriage of the Lord and the Church, and consequently the marriage of good and truth; because where there is the marriage of the Lord and the Church, there is also the marriage of good and truth, the latter resulting from the former. (SS 82)

Because the latter results from the former, we will discuss the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the church first in this chapter, and then we will discuss the heavenly marriage of goodness and truth in an individual’s mind, in chapter three. As will be seen, both are really the same thing, which is why they are both called the ‘heavenly marriage.’

The Heavenly Marriage *is* the Divine Marriage

In some ways you could say that the heavenly marriage is actually the *Divine* marriage because “the heavenly marriage exists within the Lord Himself, so that the Lord is that marriage itself; for He is Divine Good itself and at the same time Divine Truth” (AC 2508; see also AC 9536, 10366). However, most of the time the term ‘heavenly marriage’ refers to our relationship with the Lord. But, it *is* true that having goodness married to truth within us, means having the Lord within us. It also makes sense that the Lord would *be* the heavenly marriage because the Lord exists *in* the heavens, not just above them (see DP 28).

At the same time, for the sake of understanding the differences, it is useful to make a distinction between the Divine marriage in the Lord Himself, and the heavenly marriage that exists in our relationship with Him. To that end, the Writings often state that the heavenly marriage comes *from* the Divine marriage (see AC 2649, 4575).

How It Is Described

In the Word, the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the church is described in several ways. One of the ways is in the concept of a ‘covenant;’ a formal contract, agreement, or promise.²⁷ The word comes from the Latin verb *convenio* meaning:

To meet, go to meet;... to come together, meet, gather; to make an agreement; to coincide; to converge; to unite, combine; to come to an agreement, agree; to fit;... to be applicable to, appropriate to; ... to be on good terms; to fit well;... to get married.²⁸

The Latin literally means to “come with.” So we can think of it as if the Lord were asking us to ‘come with’ Him. The wedding vows that a man and woman make when they get married are a covenant (ML 216, 276, 278, 291, 377). They are a contract and a mutual agreement to be in a relationship; to ‘go with’ each other. When the Word mentions a ‘covenant,’ it is talking about the ‘heavenly marriage,’ or our agreement to be in a relationship with the Lord.²⁹ Swedenborg saw this visually represented once in heaven:

I saw a great light on a hill at the center amid the tents, and I asked where that light was coming from. The man said, "It is coming from the sanctuary of our tabernacle of worship." ... And I asked what there was inside the sanctuary that was giving off so much light. He answered, "There is a tablet, which bears the inscription, "**The Covenant Between Jehovah and Heaven.**" That was all he said. (ML 75.8)

This covenant between us and the Lord is also often described in the Word by imagery in which we as the ‘church’ play the part of the ‘bride,’ and the Lord plays the part of the ‘Bridegroom.’

The Church Is the Heavenly Marriage

The heavenly marriage not only exists *between* the Lord and the church, but it also exists *within* the church, and it could be said to *be* the church itself. It is the heavenly marriage of goodness and truth that *makes* the church in a person.

Because the church, which is formed through truth of doctrine, and religion, which is formed through goodness of life in accordance with truth of doctrine, are in the case of Christians based solely on the Holy Scripture, it can be seen that the church as a whole and in every part is an expression of the marriage between good and truth. (ML 115.4; see also AC 4334.4, 4835.3; DP 21; AR 97.2; ML 76.5, 246)

²⁷ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/covenant>

²⁸ Traupman, John C. The New College Latin and English Dictionary, Bantam Books, 2007, p. 122

²⁹ See AC 665, 1023, 1025.5, 1038, 1055, 2053, 3654.8, 6804, 8767, 8778; ML 115.3, 128; cf. AC 1864

The church isn't just about *knowing* what the Word says, but about *doing* what the Word says. It's the marriage of faith and charity in life that makes the church. And this is the way to be married to the Lord. We will see why this is the case in the subsections below.

The Church is a Relationship

In one way we could say that the *heavenly marriage* is our relationship with the Lord. But we could also say that the *church* is that relationship with the Lord.

The church comes from the Lord and it exists in people who go to Him and live according to His commandments.... Love is what conjoins, and **conjunction with the Lord is the church.** (ML 129)

This is why in the book of *Revelation* “the marriage of the Lamb symbolizes a new church having a conjunction with the Lord” (AR 816.3). The church *is* our conjunction with the Lord. And because it is a human relationship, it is important that we think of God as Human.

It is when the Lord's humanity is acknowledged to be Divine that a full marriage of the Lord and the church is possible, and this can be seen almost without explanation.... For then God the Father and the Lord are acknowledged to be one, like soul and body. (AR 812.2)

Why is the Lord the Man, and We are the Woman?

In the Word, God is mostly portrayed as a masculine man. Because of this, when our relationship with God is portrayed as a marriage, we most often play the role of the woman, bride, or wife (see ML 21.3; AC 4434). But what are the reasons for this?

There are a number of reasons why we mostly play the role of the ‘woman’ and the Lord as the ‘man,’ or more specifically that we play the role of the ‘bride and wife’ and the Lord as the ‘bridegroom and husband.’ The Writings say that in one sense it comes down to the ultimate, physical relationship between a man and woman, which is that in the act of intercourse and insemination, the man is the *giver*, and the woman is the *receiver*.³⁰

The correspondence rests with married love, insemination, procreation, love for little children, and other things of a similar sort that occur in marriage and result from it. (ML 116, 127)

³⁰ Also, in the case of intercourse, a man is *not* a receiver, and a woman is *not* a giver. Humanity doesn't give the Lord anything that He doesn't already have. There is no such thing as reciprocal influx. See AC 9401.2

So humanity is then represented by the receiver in the act of intercourse: the woman. The Lord is always the giver, and we are always the receivers.

The marriage of the Lord and the church consists in the Lord's flowing into angels and people with the goodness of love, and in the angels' and peoples' reception of Him, or of the goodness of His love, in truths. By this means a marriage of goodness and truth is formed, a marriage that is the essence of the church, and one that becomes heaven in the recipients.... I have disclosed this secret to make known how the statement is to be understood, that the Lord continually implants goodness in their truths.” (AR 380; see also HD 13)

Goodness is the giver, and truth is its receiver (see AC 10555). And in our relationship with the Lord, we learn truths which are capable of receiving the Lord's goodness.

Now this is the general representation. There are some specific ways that this analogy doesn't work, or can even seem backwards at times, which is why we are given the warning that “a husband does not represent the Lord and his wife the church, because both husbands and wives together form the church” (ML 116, see 125, 126). We will get to those specific details later in the paper. But for now, think of the analogy of insemination as one basic rule for why we as the church are most often represent by a woman, the Lord's bride and wife in the Word. The Lord is always the giver, and we are always the receivers.

Heaven is the Heavenly Marriage

“Just as the Lord is the bridegroom and husband of the church, he is also the bridegroom and husband of heaven” (TCR 380). The church is basically heaven on earth. And because, as we now know, the church is the marriage of goodness and truth, or the marriage of the Lord and the church, then so is heaven. As it says in the Word: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son” (Matt 22:2). “The kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.” (Matt 25:1). “Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev 21:2).

The heavenly marriage is the Lord's kingdom in heaven and on earth, and that is why so many times in the Word the Lord's kingdom is called a marriage, and is compared to a marriage. (AC 2618)

Heaven is the heavenly marriage both because it is our ultimate conjunction with the Lord, and it is the final state of having goodness and truth married within us.

Truth and good joined together is what is called the heavenly marriage, which constitutes heaven itself with a person. (AC 10300; see also AC 4638.8, 8894, 10001; HH 422; DLW 429; ML 85)

Heaven is the conjunction of the Lord with us, which is the heavenly marriage.

The ‘Grand Woman’ of Heaven?

It’s interesting that in the Word the *church* is often portrayed as the bride of the Lord, while in the Writings *heaven* is portrayed as a more generic “universal human.” Older translations of the Writings refer to the concept of the “grand man” of heaven (see AC 911; HH 96). But the Latin word translated as “man” there is actually *homo*, the word for ‘human’ or ‘person.’ So while the Lord is referred to as the husband and bridegroom of heaven (see TCR 380), and the Lord is ‘married’ to heaven (see AC 9789), heaven is not usually portrayed exclusively as a woman (cf. AC 6179), but rather as a universal human created in the Lord’s image and likeness (see AR 955; AC 3883)³¹. Perhaps partly because the Lord has always been portrayed as masculine in the Bible, it was necessary for the church to take on the feminine form. But the glorified Lord, the Divine Human in heaven, is no longer exclusively in a male form. And the Lord is married to heaven, which is not exclusively in a female form, but rather in a universal human form.

So,... think of God in terms of His essence, and then consider how He is portrayed. Basing your thinking about His essence on how He is portrayed is thinking physically, even about His essence; whereas basing your thinking about how He is portrayed on what His essence is, is thinking spiritually, even about how He is portrayed. (TCR 623.5)

This has interesting implications which we will explore later. But since the relationship of the Lord and the *church* in the Word is indeed described as being like a Bridegroom and bride, we will now examine why and how that is.

The Marriage of the Lord and the Church is like a Bridegroom and Bride

In *Married Love* there is a whole chapter devoted to “The Marriage of the Lord and the Church and Correspondence to it” (ML 116-137). As the Writings indicate, this analogy comes up over and over in the Word (see ML 117; AR 797.2,3).

³¹ However AC 5054, 4918 describe the province of the “womb” of Heaven, and AC 5056.2 describes the province of the “seminal vesicles” in Heaven. See also HH 96-97.

The theme of the heavenly marriage occurs frequently in the Christian tradition. The source of this metaphor lies in the Old Testament, which portrays Israel as the bride of the Lord: Hosea 1-3 depicts Israel as a faithless wife, and the Song of Songs was from an early time regarded as an allegory of love between God and Israel (Schmithals 1997, 166-167). In the New Testament, Revelation describes 'the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of the sky, prepared as a bride dressed up for her husband' (Revelation 21:2). The 'bride' is 'the Lamb's wife' (Revelation 21:9; see AC 253). The union between Christ and the Church is thus portrayed as a heavenly marriage. In the Western esoteric tradition, this metaphor has a meaning closer to Swedenborg's, where the spiritual element is the Lord, and the physical 'self' is the bride.³²

So this is a well known analogy in the Christian world. But I think what many Christians still wonder is; why is the Lord represented by the man, and the church the woman (see ML 62)? Why isn't the Lord represented by the woman, and the church by the man? What is it about those relationships that requires it to be that way?

Giver and Receiver

As was mentioned in the above subsection, the general idea is that Lord is always the giver and we are always the receivers, just like in the act of insemination between a man and a woman (ML 116, 127). "The Church is a bride when she is willing to receive the Lord, and a wife, when she has received Him" (Lord 63).

The Lord by virtue of His Divine Good is called 'Husband' and 'Bridegroom', while His kingdom and Church by virtue of its acceptance of Divine Truth that emanates from the Lord is called 'wife' and 'bride.' (AC 9198)

The Lord always plays the part of the giver. Whether that means He is giving us truths like seeds (like semen), which we take into our understanding (a spiritual process), or whether that means He is implanting goodness into those truths within us (see SS 82) (a celestial process). Both ways, the Lord is the giver, and we are the receivers. This may seem a little out-of-balance or unfair. Why is it that in both the celestial and spiritual processes, whether he is representing goodness or truth, a husband and not a wife represents the Lord? I think it's because the correspondence rests on this most ultimate physical illustration of the relationship between a man and a woman, in which the man is always the giver and the woman always the receiver.³³ As we

³² Richard Smoley from Note 141 on page 613 of *NCE Secrets of Heaven*, referring to AC 155.

³³ See Appendix V for another way to think of this analogy.

will see in later sections, there *are* times when the woman plays the role of giver and the man the receiver, but that is more of a spiritual relationship, and not based on their physical relationship.

It can be traced all the way down to the ‘marriage’ of a sperm and egg cell. The sperm cell comes from outside, but enters into the egg cell. And that marriage leads to the birth of a new human, just like the heavenly marriage leads to the rebirth (regeneration) of a new human.

'The womb' [is] the place where good and truth have been conceived and are lying, and consequently the place where the essentials of the Church are lying. In the genuine sense 'the womb' means the inmost centre of conjugal love where innocence is present, for the womb corresponds to that love in the Grand Man. Now because conjugal love has its origin in the love of good and truth, which love is at the heart of the heavenly marriage, and because this marriage is heaven itself or the Lord's kingdom, and the Lord's kingdom on earth is the Church, therefore 'the womb' also means the Church. (AC 4918)

The church is represented by a woman, because it is within the church that the marriage of goodness and truth takes place, just as it is within a woman that the physical marriage of husband and wife—or sperm cell and egg cell—takes place.

One might wonder: If it is the Lord that joins goodness to the truths in us, couldn't that be represented by a woman joining ‘flesh’ to the ‘seed’ of the man by creating a fetus? But the goodness that we join to truth—the life of useful service and love that we lead based on the truth—is actually a secondary goodness that gets filled with the Lord's primary goodness (see ML 21, 32, 88). “A person acquires truth from the Lord, and... the Lord joins good to that truth according as the truth is put to **use**” (ML 123). And in later sections we will explore the ways that a woman *can* represent the Lord, and how there really is equality between men and women.

Gender and Hierarchy

This analogy doesn't mean that in terms of what the Divine is itself, or what humans are in themselves, that they fall into those gender categories. The Lord is not exclusively male, and humanity is obviously not exclusively female. God is the source of both, and we are divided into both. And because of that being the truth, this correspondence of the Lord being the Bridegroom and us being the bride, is difficult for many people. It can seem to be out of balance. And in the past it has been abused to the point of men behaving like they were closer to God than women.

It is true that there is a sort of hierarchy in the heavenly marriage (see AC 3952). The sticky part comes when we try to think about how it applies to the marriage of a man and

woman; two equal partners. It seems that the correspondence rests most clearly on the physical relationship, rather than the spiritual relationship between men and women. While the spiritual relationship between men and women *is* in fact a changing one in which men and women alternatively play the role of active or passive, primary and secondary, still the marriage of a man and woman ultimately grows and develops (or should grow and develop) towards something which is much more of a complementary reciprocal balance than the hierarchy which is sometimes portrayed by the heavenly marriage. This will be seen more throughout the paper.

The Lord is the Love, the Church is the Wisdom

Marriage is all about the conjunction of love and wisdom. This is true within the Lord Himself, and within the church itself. But it is also true *between* the Lord and the church. In that case, the Lord is the love, and the church is the wisdom that receives that love (see ML 21.2). “Love produces or begets all forms like a bridegroom and husband, by means of wisdom as a bride and wife” (TCR 37).

In the highest sense a bridegroom means the Lord in respect to Divine good, and a bride means the church in respect to Divine truth from the Lord. For a church is a church by virtue of its reception of the Lord's Divine goodness in the Divine truths that it has from Him. ... This heavenly marriage is produced in people in the church by their receiving Divine goodness from the Lord in Divine truths drawn from the Word. (AR 797; see also AC 6179)

We receive the Lord's goodness in the truths that we get from the Word. The church represents the truth or wisdom because the church is where the Word and its Divine truth is understood (SS 76). We learn His truth so that we can receive His goodness.

The bride's being prepared symbolizes her being attired for betrothal, and the church is made ready for betrothal and then for conjunction or marriage in no other way than by the Word; for the Word is the one and only means of conjunction or marriage. (AR 881.2)

The Lord, on the other hand, represents the love because as was stated above in chapter one, the marriage of Divine love and wisdom in the Lord is essentially Divine love.

One might ask then: If this is the nature of the relationship between the Lord as the Bridegroom, and the church as the bride, then why choose an intellect-oriented being (man) to represent the Lord's love, and a will-oriented being (woman) to represent the church's wisdom? Wouldn't it make more sense the other way around? Well, once again, the analogy and

correspondence seem to relate to the physical relationship rather than the spiritual relationship. It's not about being intellect-oriented or will-oriented, it's about love being the giver and truth being the receiver. But this will be explored further.

The Lord *Is* The Church

Another important factor in all of this is that in one sense the Lord *is* the church:

The Lord does not dwell in anything that is a person's or an angel's own, only in what is His with them. So it is that when the words 'the Church and heaven' are used, what is Divine and the Lord's with those who are there is meant. From all this it is evident how the statements that the Lord is the All in all of heaven and the Church and that **the Lord Himself is heaven and the Church** ought to be understood. (AC 10125; see also AC 10151, 10157; HH 7-12, 78-81)

A woman can represent the Lord in the sense that a woman represents the church, and the church *is* the Lord! One of the things the Writings tell us is that the church is essentially our conjunction with the Lord (see ML 126, 129). This also illustrates the theory that men are the image of God in terms of His distinction from us, while women are the image of God in terms of His conjunction with us (the church). This idea will be explored in the following section.³⁴

Mutual, Reciprocal Union

But if the Lord is the Lord, and the church is the Lord, then what are we? If the marriage of the Lord and the church is really just a marriage of Himself with what is His in us, then how are we involved? How can there really be a marriage between us and the Lord, if it's all the Lord? Well, in one sense this is true: it *is* all the Lord.

There is a union of the Lord with angels and a union of angels with the Lord; so it is a mutual relationship. The Lord flows into the love of angels' lives, and angels accept the Lord in their wisdom, in this way uniting themselves to the Lord in return. It needs to be clearly understood, though, that although it seems to angels that they are uniting themselves to the Lord through their wisdom, in fact the Lord is uniting them to Himself through that wisdom, since their wisdom also comes from the Lord. (DP 28)

But in order for us to take part in this marriage that is really all the Lord, we have to freely choose to be conjoined with Him. "It is the same with all union: it is not complete unless it is

³⁴ And also in Chapter Four, Part Two, Section entitled "Different Loves."

reciprocal” (Lord 35.8). And so it is essential for the sake of our marriage with the Lord that we have freedom and a sense of self.

Our free choice comes from our sense that we have life within us as if it were our own. God allows us to feel this way for the sake of our partnership [with Him]. A partnership with God would not be possible if it were not reciprocal, and it becomes reciprocal when we act freely, and completely as if we were on our own. If we were not allowed by God to feel this way, we would not be human and our life would not be eternal. (TCR 504.7)

Unless we could act as if from ourselves we would be incapable of having a ‘marriage’ with the Lord, because consent, which is the essence of marriage, depends on freedom. This is why it is even possible for the church (people) to be represented as the Lord’s bride. The Lord wants as real a partnership with us as possible, even to the point of *feeling like* the reciprocal partnership that exists in the marriage of a man and a woman. Even though in actuality it’s a relationship between what is infinite and finite.

And so because of this, the image of a woman as the bride of the Lord also represents our sense of self, the feeling that life is our own.

The heavenly marriage is something that exists in our selfhood. Moreover, **it is because of the heavenly marriage that our selfhood, after being brought to life by the Lord, is called the Lord’s bride and wife.** When the Lord brings it to life, our sense of self gives us the ability to perceive all the good desired by love and all the truth taught by faith. So it holds within it all wisdom and understanding, joined to an indescribable happiness. (AC 155; see also AC 252-253)

Our relationship with the Lord feels like a mutual reciprocal relationship because it feels like the truth that we understand is *our* truth (see ML 124, 126), and it feels like the life that we have is *our* life (‘Eve’ means ‘life’ in Hebrew). Our sense of self, often called the *proprium*, is something that *can* get us into trouble. It is something that is truly our own, and so it is therefore dead compared to the Lord (like a rib). But it is the part of us that the Lord brings to life through our marriage with Him (see AC 151-155). “The more closely we are united with the Lord, the more clearly we seem to have our own identity” (DP 42).

So why is our sense of self, the feeling that life is our own, better represented by a woman than a man? Perhaps because new life is created within a woman’s body by means of her conjunction with a man. We will continue to explore this later.

It should be noted, before moving on, that the difference between the church as the *bride* and the church as the *wife* has to do with our relationship with the Lord *prior to* and *after*

conjunction with Him.³⁵ The state of betrothal, when we are a ‘bride’ is like the spiritual state prior to regeneration, when we have chosen to follow the Lord’s truths, but we are not completely in a state of goodness yet. This is like a woman (goodness) following a man (*vir*, truth). The state of marriage, when we are a ‘wife’ is like the celestial state of regeneration, where we are united to the Lord’s goodness. Like a wife (truth) united to a husband (goodness).

Another thing that is useful to remember is that the concept of our relationship with the Lord being like a marriage is because of the reciprocal nature of monogamy. The heavenly marriage and Christian natural marriages are both monogamous. “Monogamous marriages, which are marriages of one man with one wife, correspond to the marriage of the Lord and the church” (ML 70). This is because in a monogamous relationship the one partner is focussed solely on the other, and vice versa. Similarly, in the heavenly marriage with the Lord, He is focussed solely on us, and we should be focussed solely on Him. “As the Lord loves the church and wants the church to love Him, so a husband and wife love each other” (ML 62). You could say “as a husband loves his wife and wants his wife to love him,” or you could say “as a wife loves her husband, and wants her husband to love her,” and both are true. Our marriage with the Lord is mutual in a similar way that the marriage of a husband and wife is mutual.

And as was stated in the above section, the church—our ability to respond to Him, to reciprocate His love—is really the *Lord in us* (see DLW 68, 116; DP 54, 92; ISB 14.4; Life 102). In this way the Lord is represented by a woman. And this idea supports the theory that the form of a woman represents the Lord’s *conjunction with us*, while the form of a man represents the Lord’s *distinction from us*. We see the Lord as a ‘man,’ but we *live* the Lord as a ‘woman.’ Now we will turn to examine the limits of how far we can take this analogy.

The Marriage of the Lord and the Church is NOT like a Husband and Wife

A husband does not represent the Lord and his wife the church, because husbands and their wives both together form the church. It is a common saying in the church that as the Lord is the head of the church, so the husband is the head of the wife.³⁶ If this were true, it would follow that the husband represents the Lord and the wife the church. But the truth is that, whereas the Lord is the head of the church, people - both men and women - are the church, and still more so husbands and wives together.... Therefore neither in the

³⁵ See AC 3132:2, 3158, 3246, 7047, 8809, 9182.4,5; Lord 63; AR 895, 960

³⁶ Quoting Ephesians 5:23. Cf. 1 Corinthians 11:3.

marriages of angels in heaven nor in the marriages of people on earth does the husband correspond to the Lord and the wife to the church. (ML 125, 126)

[In a wedding in heaven] the bridegroom - now the husband - represented the Lord, and the bride - now the wife - represented the church, because weddings in heaven represent a marriage of the Lord with the church.... It is because a marriage of the Lord and the church is formed by two things, namely, love and wisdom, the Lord being the love and the church being the wisdom.... But ... after the wedding the representation changes, for then the husband represents wisdom and the wife represents love of that wisdom. ... Consequently, after the wedding the two together, the husband and his wife, represent the church. (ML 21.1,2)

Because of the representation of the marriage of the Lord and the church being described as a Bridegroom and bride in the Word, in the Christian world there has developed a concept that the husband should be the head of his wife. As *Married Love* 125 says above, this comes from the mistaken applications of this representation in the Epistles:

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:22-24; see also 1 Corinthians 11:3-7; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-6; Colossians 3:18)

But this is taking the analogy too far. Partly because there's a difference between representations in the Word, and representations in life. For example, a 'husband' and a 'bridegroom' *in the Word* consistently represent goodness and the Lord (see AC 1468, 3236; AR 797; cf. AC 265; 7047), but a husband *in life* almost always represents wisdom or truth or the intellect (see ML 198, etc.; HH 367; cf. AC 4837.2; TCR 41).

But this is also where we see some of the difference between the Divine, heavenly and natural marriages. The heavenly marriage of the Lord and us is a marriage of unequals, while the natural marriage of a man and woman is a marriage of equals. So when we start trying to apply the hierarchical characteristics of the heavenly marriage to a natural marriage, we get into trouble. Since we've already examined how the marriage of the Lord and the church *is* like a marriage of a man and woman, let's now look at some ways that the two marriages are different.

A Marriage of Unequals

Anyone can see that Jehovah never strikes a deal [makes a covenant] with us. That would go against His divine nature. What are we but some contemptible bit of filth that

cannot think or do anything but evil on its own? All the good we do comes from Jehovah. (AC 1864)

When you think about it, “there is no ratio between what is infinite and what is finite” (DP 32). They are as different as you can get! The only way we can be in a relationship with the Lord is by having the Lord in us, so that the Lord outside of us (bridegroom) is really married to the Lord inside of us (bride) (cf. DLW 49). So because the Lord *is* the church, then the marriage of the Lord and the church is a marriage of equals. But if we are talking about the relationship between what is finite and infinite, how can you really call that a marriage? It seems to be more like that of Monarch and subject, Master and servant. And yet, the Lord doesn’t *want* us to have a relationship of Master and servant, He wants us to have a relationship *like* that of husband and wife; a relationship of true mutual reciprocal love (see John 15:15). “The difference between marital friendship and a master-servant friendship in marriage is like the difference between light and dark” (ML 248). And so the Lord enters into a relationship with us, even in our imperfections.

'My covenant shall be in your flesh' means conjunction of the Lord with man in his impurity.... No pure intellectual truth, which is Divine truth, resides with man. Instead the truths of faith residing with man are appearances of truth to which illusions of the senses attach themselves, and to these in turn falsities, belonging to the desires that go with self-love and love of the world. Such are the truths that reside with man. And how impure they are becomes clear from the fact that such illusions and falsities attach themselves to them. [2] Nevertheless **the Lord joins Himself to man within those very impurities**, for with innocence and charity He brings soul and life to these, and in this way forms a conscience. (AC 2053)

This sort of a relationship however can’t be *truly* reciprocal. The Lord doesn’t have impurities. There is no way that we bring the Lord to life.³⁷ We can love the Lord, but the love that we return to the Lord, is still the Lord’s love. “There is a union of the Lord with us and a mutual union of us with the Lord, but... our mutual union with the Lord is not from us but from the Lord” (DP 219:4). Whereas the union of a husband and wife is a mutual union from *each other*. And actually, in some ways, the wife is more like the Lord, because husbands respond to the

³⁷ Except in the sense that by returning His love, we allow for the Lord’s love to be mutual, and therefore to have manifestation, for love isn’t real unless it is mutual (see DLW 57). God is Love itself. If God didn’t love us, we wouldn’t exist. But at the same time, if we didn’t exist, God couldn’t love us!

married love coming from their wives: “Women are born forms of love, while men - with whom they unite themselves in order to be loved in return - are receivers” (ML 160).

And as stated before, in our relationship with the Lord, the Lord is the giver and we are the receivers. The Lord doesn’t receive anything from us that He didn’t give to us first.

“Reciprocal influx, that is to say, from a person to the Lord, which the learned call physical influx, is not possible” (AC 9401.2; see also DLW 410). And yet in the natural marriage of a husband and wife, there is true reciprocal ‘influx,’ or give and take.

A maiden turns or is turned into a wife because **a wife has elements in her taken from her husband**, thus elements acquired which did not exist in her before as an unmarried woman. A youth turns or is turned into a husband because **a husband has elements in him taken from his wife**, which heighten the capacity in him for receiving love and wisdom, elements which did not exist in him before as an unmarried man. (ML 199)

But despite the heavenly marriage being a marriage of unequals, the Lord creates a relationship with us that is *so close* to being reciprocal (due to our freedom and sense of self) that it can truly be *compared* to the reciprocal relationship between a husband and wife.

The Specific Correspondence

A husband does not represent the Lord and his wife the church, because both husbands and wives together form the church. Therefore neither in the marriages of angels in heaven nor in the marriages of people on earth does the husband correspond to the Lord and the wife to the church. Rather, the correspondence rests with married love, insemination, procreation, love for little children, and other things of a similar sort that occur in marriage and result from it. (ML 116)³⁸

In other words, a husband doesn’t correspond to the Lord, and a wife doesn’t correspond to the church *because* the correspondence between these two relationships has to do with things like insemination (physical giving and taking) more than the spiritual nature of men and women.³⁹

But we’ve been talking about the Lord being married to groups of people: the church or heaven. Now let’s look at the specific relationship between the Lord and an individual.

³⁸ See Appendix VI for a brief study on ‘insemination, procreation, and love for little children.’

³⁹ This is not to say that the spiritual nature of men and women has nothing to do with the symbolism of the Lord being a Bridegroom and the church being a bride. Men as “the wisdom of love” represent the Lord as distinct from us. While women as “the resulting love of that wisdom” represent the Lord as being inside of us, and in our lives (see ML 32). But this will be explored further in the paper, in chapter four, part two, section entitled “Secondary Goodness or Love.”

The Marriage of the Lord with an Individual

There are a number of places in the Bible that describe our relationship with the Lord, talking about how the Lord will be in us and we can be in the Lord. “Live in Me and I [shall live] in you. Those who live in Me and I in them bear much fruit.” (John 15:4, 5).⁴⁰ The Writings tell us that each and every individual can have a personal relationship with the Lord.

A pact [or covenant] symbolizes rebirth, and more especially the Lord’s close connection with a regenerate person through love.... The heavenly marriage is the most genuine compact, and in consequence... the heavenly marriage inside everyone who has regenerated is such a covenant too. (AC 1023; see also AC 5114.4; DLW 53; AE 983.2)

Regeneration and getting to heaven is like entering into a marriage relationship with the Lord. It involves the same sort of consent, love, and faithfulness. Our relationship with the Lord is not about the sexuality that we often associate with natural marriages, but it’s about the commitment, deep love and friendship that exists in the spiritual married love between a husband and wife.

Reciprocal Relationship

Our marriage with the Lord is compared with both the Divine marriage of the Divine and Human, and natural marriages of husbands and wives. It is compared to these two, because these two marriages (Divine and natural) are reciprocal relationships. The Divine Essence joined to the Divine Human, and the Divine Human joined to the Divine Essence. A husband joins to his wife, and a wife joins to her husband. There is back and forth. It’s not a one way thing. This is the nature of love. And the Lord knew that if He wanted to have a relationship with us mere finite creations, we had to have the freedom and sense of self to choose to reciprocate.

The Lord loves [people], and desires to dwell with [them]; yet He cannot love [them] and dwell with [them] unless He is received and loved reciprocally; and this is the only possible ground of conjunction. For this cause the Lord has given to [people] freedom and reason, freedom to think and will as of [themselves], and reason according to which [they] may think and will. To love any one and to be conjoined with any one with whom there is no reciprocation is not possible; nor is it possible to enter into and remain with any one with whom there is no reception. (Life 102; see also ISB 14.4; AC 2004)

In *Divine Love and Wisdom* it says that “the essence of love is that what is ours should belong to someone else” (DLW 47). This is true in all levels of marriage. And so the Lord wants us to

⁴⁰ See also John 6:56; 14:20; 17:21-23,26; 1 John 3:24; 4:13,15; Revelation 3:20; AC 2803.2,3; DP 92; TCR 371.

make His love and wisdom our own. Making what is the Lord's our own, and making what is ours (our sense of self, our freedom and rationality, our life) the Lord's, is what allows us to have a reciprocal relationship of love with Him.

Angels, like us, simply feel as though they participate in love and wisdom on their own, and therefore that love and wisdom are theirs, their very own. If they did not feel this way there would be no union, so the Lord would not be in them, nor they in the Lord.... It makes sense, then, that if there is to be union, there must be reciprocity. (DLW 115; see also AC 2177.5; 5114.4)

Now, our reciprocal marriage with the Lord is *like* the Divine and natural marriages, but it is still not the same. We don't join ourselves to the Lord by our own power, but by the Lord's power (see AC 2004.3). And so there is a difference between the reciprocal nature of the Divine and natural marriages, and the reciprocal nature of our marriage with the Lord, which is explained in specific detail in the following passage from *True Christianity*:

Because the partnership [with the Lord] is reciprocal, it obviously follows that we have to unite ourselves to the Lord so that the Lord will unite Himself to us.... [4] There are two types of reciprocal partnership: one is **alternating**; the other is **mutual**. ... [5] A reciprocal partnership that comes about through **alternating** cycles can also be illustrated by the partnership of the heart with the lungs and of the lungs with the heart. ... **Action and reaction** forge this partnership.... [6] The reciprocal partnership between the Lord and us, however, is not like this. It is a **mutual** partnership that is brought about by **cooperation** rather than action and reaction. The Lord acts. We receive the Lord's action. We then function as if we were on our own. In fact, we function on our own from the Lord. ... [7] A reciprocal partnership that is **mutual** can be illustrated by various things in us and in the world. The partnership between the soul and the body in everyone is this type of partnership. The partnership of our will and our action is of this type, as is the partnership of our thought and our speech. Other partnerships that work like this are the partnership of two eyes working together, and two ears, and two nostrils. ... To sum up, the purpose and the means have this type of reciprocal partnership, as do the means and the result. (TCR 371)

So the *alternating* reciprocal partnership (action and reaction) is like the heart and lungs, and the *mutual* reciprocal partnership (cooperation) is like the two eyes, or cause and effect. Our relationship with the Lord is actually *mutual* (cooperation), not *alternating* (action and reaction)!

Now, the Writings compare both the heart and lungs to the marriage of good and truth (DP 8, 193; AC 3889, 9495, DLW 376, 394, 398, 399, 402, 403, 410), *and* the two eyes to the marriage of good and truth (DLW 409; ML 316; AE 984.2). They also compare both the heart and lungs to the marriage of a man and woman (DLW 398, 402, 403, 410; ML 75) *and* the two

eyes to the marriage of a man and woman (see AE 984.2). And the Writings also say that our relationship with the Lord is and isn't like the relationship between a husband and wife.

It's a pretty strong statement to say that our relationship with the Lord is "a mutual partnership that is brought about by cooperation *rather than* action and reaction." It seems to go against what some passages in the Writings say, namely that: "God alone acts, and [people] suffer [themselves] to be acted upon; and [they] react to all appearance as from [themselves]" (ISB 14.4). The Lord alone *is* action. But we are not merely passive beings that are acted upon. We have the ability to act (or react) as if from ourselves. So our relationship with the Lord is a *mutual* reciprocal partnership of cooperation. We are not robots.

It's interesting that while the analogy of the heart and lungs works to illustrate the alternating reciprocal marriage between a husband and wife, it does *not* work to illustrate the mutual reciprocal marriage between us and the Lord.⁴¹

The Means for This Conjunction

The Writings tell us that there are two basic means for this conjunction with the Lord. One is love. The other is the Divine Human. First, let's examine the nature of love:

The essence of love is loving others who are outside oneself, wanting to be one with them, and blessing them from oneself. Two things - love and wisdom - constitute the essence of God; but three things constitute the essence of God's love: His loving others who are outside of Himself, His wanting to be one with them, and His blessing them from Himself. (TCR 43; see also AC 1025.5)

Love is what binds two people together, whether that be a husband and wife, or a person and the Lord. But it's more than just those warm feelings that we have for our spouse. It also has to do with the two primary loves of religion which are: love to the Lord and love to the neighbor.

There is no eternal compact aside from love for the Lord and love for one's neighbor. This pact is eternal, because it stretches from eternity to eternity. The whole of heaven rests on love as its foundation. In fact the whole of creation does, because nothing animate or inanimate in the physical world that involves any kind of union or affiliation can possibly exist without tracing its origin to love.... When we are capable of being reborn, or being restored once more to the proper pattern, and welcoming mutual love, there is a pact. That is to say, charity then creates a bond. (AC 1055)

⁴¹ See Appendix X on the comparison of the heart and lungs with men and women and love and wisdom.

We are conjoined to the Lord by love to Him and by love to our neighbor. “And keep My covenant' means thus leading a good life, and as a consequence being joined [to the Lord]” (AC 8767). And there is an interesting connection here between the love that unites us and the Lord, and the love that unites a husband and wife (see ML 72). They are really the same love! These two loves create our reconnection (religion) with the Lord, which is called a marriage. And in the marriage of a husband and wife, love to the Lord and the neighbor not only bring partners closer to the Lord, but to each other as well, because married love corresponds to the marriage of the Lord and the church. Focussing on the Lord together draws partners closer to the source of love. And the intimacy of a natural marriage provides that opportunity to really practice love to the neighbor on a daily basis. But we will explore these ideas later in chapters three and four.

It is also important to remember that the means for our conjunction with the Lord is through His Divine Human.

[Passages in the Word referring to a ‘covenant’] plainly refer to the Lord and to the joining of the human race to the Lord's Divine Being itself through His Divine Human. In respect of His Divine Human the Lord is the Mediator, and no one can come to the Divine Being itself within the Lord, called the Father, except through the Son, that is, the Divine Human, as is well known in the Church. **Thus the Lord in respect of His Divine Human is the actual joining together.** Can anyone in his thought begin to comprehend the Divine Being itself? And if he cannot do this in thought how can he be joined to the Divine itself in love? But the Divine Human anyone can comprehend in thought and be joined to in love. (AC 6804.4)

We can't have a human relationship like a marriage with God, unless we think of God as Human. This is essential, and one of the core doctrines in the Writings. We need to remember that we are children of God. We are human *because* the Lord is Human.⁴²

Review

The analogy and correspondence of the relationship between the Lord and the church being like a Bridegroom and bride rests with the physical relationship between a man and a woman, which is that, in terms of intercourse and insemination, the man is always the giver and the woman is always the receiver (see also HH 371).

We've also learned that despite the fact that the relationship between humanity and the Lord is a relationship of unequals, the marriage of the Lord and the church is still a marriage of

⁴² See Appendix VII for a study on “Image and Likeness.”

equals. All marriage, including the marriage of the Lord and the church, is really only possible as a marriage of equals: Divine good and Divine truth. The Lord must also *be the church* in order for that marriage to take place with Himself (see SS 88-89). The marriage of the Lord with us is not a marriage of equals because it is a conjunction of what is finite with what is infinite. But as far as we have the Lord in us, then we can be married to the Lord. This also illustrates, and underlines the importance of equality in our marriages. We might be accused of being inconsistent if we told people that true married love is a marriage of equality between man and woman, and at the same time compared it with the marriage of the Lord and the church. If that latter marriage is understood to be a marriage of unequals (finite and infinite) then how can that be related to *our* marriages? But if we recognize that it actually *is* a marriage of equals—the Lord outside of us, and the Lord inside of us; Divine good (Lord) and Divine truth (church)—then the analogy makes more sense. We have also looked at the nature of reciprocal relationships, and the fact that all marriages must be reciprocal (see also TCR 99).

We have now reviewed the nature of the heavenly marriage in terms of the relationship between people and the Lord. We now turn to the heavenly marriage in terms of the relationship between goodness and truth within an individual.

Chapter Three: The ‘Heavenly Marriage’ - Marriage in an Individual

The marriage of goodness and truth ultimately comes from the Lord, and is the Lord, as we have learned in the above chapters:

The marriage of good and truth exists in heaven, in the Church, with every member of heaven and the Church, and in every individual thing within the natural order... it exists in every detail of the Word... and so in the highest sense it is the Lord Himself.
(AC 3960.3)

But this marriage also happens inside of each one of us. It isn't a marriage of people, but a marriage of different parts of us. This marriage includes the relationships between good and truth in us, our will and intellect (will and understanding, volition and discernment), our freedom and rationality, faith and charity, celestial and spiritual, internal and external, and more (see HH 356.15). We will examine each one of these marriages in turn.

Love and Wisdom; Goodness and Truth

The union of goodness and truth is called the heavenly marriage (see AC 2739). Now let's first look at some definitions of what love and wisdom are in a person:

There are many forms of love that have been given their own names because they are derivatives, such as desires, cravings, appetites, and their gratifications and delights. There are many forms of wisdom, too, like perception, reflection, memory, thought, and focus on a subject. Further, there are many forms that come from both love and wisdom, such as agreement, decision, and resolve to act, among others. All of these belong to both [love and wisdom], but they are assigned their names on the basis of what is dominant and nearer to hand. (DLW 363; see also AC 10367.2)

The Marriage of Goodness and Truth is Like the Marriage of Man and Woman

The Writings often anthropomorphize goodness and truth, and describe them interacting as if they were two people. And specifically they describe them as if they were a man and a woman in a marriage. There are passages that say that love listens to its wisdom (see DLW 241), and that goodness and truth love each other (see AC 8356), and that goodness and truth need each other (see AC 5365.2), and that goodness and truth should be monogamous (see AC 4434.9). The following passages talk about the 'desire which truth has for good.'

'Salted' means the desire which truth has for good. This is clear from the meaning of 'salt' as desire belonging to the love which truth has for good, dealt with below, so that 'salted' means something in which that desire is present. The reason why the desire which truth

has for good needs to be present is that this desire causes the two to be joined together; for to the extent that truth desires good it becomes joined to it. Truth and good joined together is what is called the heavenly marriage, which constitutes heaven itself with a person. Therefore when the desire for them to be joined together exists within the worship of God, within every single part of it, heaven - and accordingly the Lord - is present there within every single part. This is meant by the requirement for the incense to be salted. 'Salt' receives this meaning from its conjunctive properties; for it makes ingredients all combine and consequently brings out their flavour. Indeed it causes water and oil to combine, which otherwise do not combine. (AC 10300)

This is true whether you are talking about the marriage of a man and a woman, or the marriage of the will and understanding in a person's mind. If you don't have love, affection, desire, or passion, then heaven can't be present in your life or in your marriage. Desire is what causes good and truth (or masculine and feminine) to stick together. Without desire (love), men and women are different enough that they probably wouldn't stick together, just like oil and water.

Two or One? Conjoined or Separated?

In a philosophical sense, goodness and truth are really not two things, they are one thing. "Truth, being wedded to good, is good as well" (AC 3538; see also AC 3049; DLW 39). But we tend to separate them in our minds, like separating heat and light based on their functions, or separating substance and form based on their attributes.

Good does not exist by itself, nor truth by itself, but they are everywhere united. Anyone with any sense who tries to form for himself an idea of goodness, finds he cannot do it without adding something that expresses it and presents it to view. Unless something is added, good is a nameless entity. That which expresses it and presents it to view has to do with truth. Try saying just "good" without at the same time mentioning some particular or other with which it is associated, or define it abstractly, that is, without attaching any additional idea, and you will see that it has no reality, but that it has reality when something is added. If you focus the sight of reason on it, moreover, you will perceive that without any added qualification goodness has no assignable attribute and so no way of being compared, no capacity for being affected, and no character - in a word, no quality. It is the same with truth if it is referred to without a subject. Educated reason can see that its subject has to do with good. (ML 87; see also ML 65)

Despite this fact, in many ways goodness and truth actually do start out as separated in us.

The reason the wisdom and love within us seem to be two separate things is that our ability to understand can be raised into heaven's light, while our ability to love cannot, except to the extent that we act according to our understanding. So any trace of apparent wisdom that is not united to our love for wisdom relapses into the love with which it is united. This may not be a love for wisdom, and may even be a love for insanity. We are

perfectly capable of knowing, from our wisdom, that we ought to do one thing or another, and then of not doing it because we have no love for it. However, to the extent that we do the bidding of our wisdom, from love, we are images of God. (DLW 39)

So as the above passage indicates, the goal is to have goodness and truth united in us, but we very often don't. How can we start out with no love for doing what is right, and have any hope of uniting goodness and truth in us? Well, the Lord gives us some help. As we grow up, we are given an affection for truth, or what we would probably normally call 'curiosity.' We have an almost involuntary desire to know things. And because the Lord has deposited His truth into the world, we pick up bits of His truth, and are capable of gradually increasing our affection for truth, which can lead us to an affection for goodness (see AC 3159), and thus heaven.

Pre-Marriage States

By the conflict which comes before and is preparatory to the heavenly marriage one should understand spiritual conflict or temptation. (AC 8888; see also AC 4572.2)

Even Jesus went through a state of temptation before the Divine marriage of the Father and Son —the glorification— was accomplished (see AC 2814). And in a similar way, in the marriage of a husband and wife, partners often go through times of conflict before achieving a state of true married love.⁴³ And just as conflict is a necessary part of the process leading to the Divine and natural marriages, it's also a necessary part of the process for the marriage of goodness and truth.

This state [of temptation] is the first that a person who is being regenerated passes through; and it is called the state which comes before and is preparatory to the heavenly marriage. But when the person is governed by good and is led by the Lord by means of good, he has entered into the heavenly marriage, and so is in heaven since the heavenly marriage is heaven. (AC 8888)

And temptation occurs when we are in a spiritual state, prior to the peace of the celestial state.

So far as those who belong to the spiritual Church are concerned... they do not have anything of true marriage in them until they have had truth implanted in their good. Before this happens a marriage does, it is true, exist, but it is not pure because up to then no marriage of goodness and truth exists in their interiors. (AC 8809)

⁴³ Because as we will see later, *true* married love really comes from the relationship between two regenerate (or regenerating) people.

So when we (members of the spiritual church) are living according to what we know to be true even if we don't always like it, that's like a betrothal or pre-marriage state. Then when truth is implanted in goodness in us, we have an actual marriage, like the consummation of a natural marriage.⁴⁴

Implantation

There are some passages in the Writings which say that truth is implanted into goodness (AC 4301, 8753, 8754, 8793, 8805, 8809), and there are other passages which say that goodness is implanted into truth (AC 10026; AR 380; cf. AC 8889), or which seem to indicate it with statements such as this: "Nothing else exists to receive good except truth" (AC 3094.2).

Using the word 'implant' brings to mind the concept of planting a seed in the ground. And in that case, seeds usually represent truth, and the ground represents goodness (see AC 3324.2). But if truth is the *form* of goodness (see AC 688), then wouldn't it make more sense to say 'goodness is implanted in truth'? The following passage explains this concept:

A person who is being regenerated is led by the Lord at first by means of truth, and later on by means of good.... [This is so] that he may come to good, that is, come to know it, then intend it, and finally do it. But when he is being led to good by means of truth he comes first to good which has not as yet had the truths of faith implanted within it; for truths cannot be implanted until he is governed by good. He already knows them, it is true, because they are present in his memory; yet they do not at this time reside within good but lie outside good. Later on when the person receives a new life, which he first receives when he is governed by good, the truths of faith are implanted, and within the internal man they enter into a marriage so to speak with good. (AC 8754)

So we might find ourselves in a state where we *know* the truth, and we might even *live* the truth out of a sense fear, obligation or pride, but we might not *love* the truth, or have any feelings of love towards others. In that case we need goodness to be implanted in the truth that we know. But as the passage above describes, the truth can also lead us to a life of goodness that doesn't have the truth implanted within it. For example the goodness of love to the neighbor might guide us to helping someone who turns out to be an evil person. In that case the truth needs to be implanted in the 'goodness' that we are trying to live, so that we have a clear perception of who

⁴⁴ Technically there's more of a cyclical nature to our spiritual growth in which a marriage of goodness and truth in us actually then leads to temptation, which leads to a higher state of marriage, etc. (see AE 897.2)

is the neighbor. So it's really true that goodness is implanted in truth, *and* truth is implanted in goodness. Goodness needs to be joined to truth, *and* truth needs to be joined to goodness.

There are also passages that use the term implant in reference to the Divine marriage:

[The Lord] was constantly **implanting** the Human within the Divine in order that in every thing the marriage might exist of the Human with the Divine, **and** of the Divine with the Human. (AC 2574.2; see also AC 2643)

Implanting the Human within the Divine? Wouldn't it make more sense to say implanting the Divine (Divine goodness) within the Human (Divine truth)? Once again, here we have an image of the reciprocal union of the Father and Son: the Divine was joined to (implanted in) the Human, *and* the Human was joined to (implanted in) the Divine.

There is also a passage that says that the Divine is implanted in us (see AC 5114.4); using the term 'implantation' in reference to the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the church. So we can begin to see that the word 'implantation' occurs in connection with all kinds of marriage.

Another thing that the word 'implantation' brings to mind is the idea of a sperm cell from a man being implanted in an egg cell from a woman. And perhaps in a similar way to this kind of implantation, the Writings talk about how the church is implanted in a married couple:

In the case of married couples, the church is **implanted** first in the man, and through the man in his wife, because the man with his understanding acquires the truth that the church teaches, and the wife acquires it from the man. (ML 125)

But there are other passages that show that it's really more of a reciprocal thing:

They have been united also in respect to their bodies, by the **wife's reception** of the propagations of the husband's soul, and thus by an **implantation** of his life in hers, by which a maiden becomes a wife; **and conversely** by the **husband's reception** of the wife's married love, which disposes the inner faculties of his mind and at the same time the inner and outer faculties of his body into a state capable of receiving love and perceiving wisdom, a state which turns him from a youth into a husband. (ML 321.2)

There is give and take on both sides. Both husband and wife have elements of the other implanted in them (see ML 199). Parts of the husband are implanted in the wife, *and* parts of the wife are implanted in the husband. There's reciprocal joining, as with goodness and truth.

Truth has a need of good, and good has a need of truth; also, when truth has a need of good, truth is joined to good, and when good has a need of truth, good is joined to truth. The reciprocal joining together of good and truth - that is to say, the joining of truth to good, and of good to truth - is the heavenly marriage. (AC 5365.2)

Reciprocal Joining. Action and Reaction.

As just stated, there is a reciprocal nature to the joining of goodness to truth, *and* truth to goodness. In terms of the analogy with the Divine and natural marriages: The Divine joined to the Human, and the Human joined to the Divine. A husband joins with his wife, and a wife joins with her husband. We've even seen that this is true in terms of the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the church. The Lord joins with us, and we reciprocate with mutual love. And so in a similar way goodness and truth in general have a reciprocal joining together (see AC 8702). "As good loves truth and truth loves good so as to be one, so husband and wife love each other and are one" (ML 339.2).

Goodness cannot exist without its truth.... They are lovers or spouses, since the life of what is good comes from its truth, and the life of what is true comes from goodness. (DP 233)

But when you really get down to it, goodness is the active giver, and truth is the reactive receiver (see AC 688, 3094.2, 8691, 10555; cf. TCR 371).

As regards the joining of good to truths, and the responsive joining of truths to good, it should be recognized that when good flows into truths and joins them to itself, it does so by pouring good into them from itself and thereby attaching them to itself, and then the two are joined together. **Now because when this happens the truths receive life, they appear after that to act independently when they act in response, or react to the good. Nevertheless the truths do not act independently but are moved by the good flowing into the good which was added from itself to the truths.** It is like the blood vessels in a living body. The truths are like those vessels without blood in, them, whereas the good is like the blood itself. When the blood pours itself into the vessels which previously were empty it activates them. The vessels respond, because from the blood they receive motion and so to speak life. From all this one may see what is implied by the joining of good to truths, and the responsive joining of truths to good. (AC 5928)

And just like with the blood and blood vessels, you can't have one without the other. This is similar to the nature of the Divine marriage, in the sense that Divine goodness (the Father) is the essence and life, and Divine truth (the Son) is the form or vessel.

Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. (John 14:10; see also John 12:49)

But how does this relate to natural marriage? Could we say that a husband acts, and a wife reacts? Or that a wife acts, and a husband reacts? I think the answer is 'both.' But we will explore that more later.

Spiritual Rebirth

The Writings say in many places and in many ways that in terms of our regeneration or spiritual rebirth, “when truth and good act as one, [a person] is regenerate” (AC 2979.3). This is illustrated in the Divine marriage in that when the Father and Son became One, the Lord was glorified (see AC 2803). And it is also illustrated in natural marriages in that when a husband and wife act as one, they have true married love (see ML 215).

And just like when the Lord was glorified, or when a bride and bridegroom get married, there is joy. “Joy is present within every joining together of good and truth, for that joining together is the heavenly marriage, in which the Divine is present” (AC 4572.2).

Good and truth form themselves into a marriage, [and] heaven consists in this marriage, [and] those in whom the marriage exists possess wisdom and intelligence, [and] they enjoy feelings of bliss and happiness in endless, indescribable variety. (AC 5365.4)

This is actually a great way to imagine what states of regeneration must feel like. For a person who has experienced getting married, states of regeneration are similar states of joy. For people who have not experienced getting married, they can look forward to states of regeneration with the same hope and anticipation that they might look forward to with getting married.

And just as a man and a woman can't be 'fruitful' (in the purely natural sense of producing children) until they are married (physically), goodness and truth can't be fruitful in an individual until they are married.

Without this marriage nothing is produced, for every act of bringing forth and every effect is from that marriage. (AC 3793; see also AC 3186)

And while the product of the marriage of a man and woman is children, and the product of the Divine marriage is humanity (children of God), the product of regeneration in an individual by means of the marriage of goodness and truth is usefulness.

Love and wisdom are brought together in application to useful purpose, ... and in this they become a single entity which is called actual. Love cannot rest unless it acts, for love is the active force in life; nor can wisdom exist and endure unless it does so from love and together with love whenever love acts, and to act is application to useful purpose. Therefore we define application to useful purpose as the doing of good from love through wisdom. Application to useful purpose is what good is. (ML 183.3; see also ML 16.3)

We will see later in this paper, that there are actually two definitions of goodness, one that has to do with ends or purpose, and the other that has to do with effects and results. 'Good' is both a

very intangible, philosophical concept having to do with moral motivation, and it is also a very tangible concept having to do with useful products.

Faith and Charity

It is well known among readers of Swedenborg that there ought to be a marriage of faith and charity in our religious life. A marriage of our “belief system from the Word and a life according to it” (DP 8; see also AC 8033-8034). And just like with the marriage of goodness and truth, the marriage of faith and charity constitutes the heavenly marriage (see AC 2826.12, 3915, 8974.3, 9002). This concept is well known among readers of Swedenborg because it is in direct contrast to the doctrine of many Christian churches which believe in salvation by ‘faith alone’ (see AR 451.3). And interestingly, the concept of ‘faith alone’ is not actually taught in the Bible. In fact, the *Epistles* themselves state the contrary very effectively in James 2:14-26.

Faith and Charity, Man and Woman

Since the Writings talk about a *marriage* between faith and charity, our minds are inclined to associate them with men and women. There are a number of passages that indicate that men are like charity, and women are like faith: “Love is like a husband, and so is goodwill; wisdom is like a wife, and so is faith” (TCR 41; see also AC 281; AR 484.6; TCR 377). There are other passages that seem to indicate that faith is represented by a man, and charity by a woman (see AC 476, HH 379; AE 725.2). It seems that the difference has to do with whether it is talking about the celestial church (where a husband is goodness and a wife is truth), or the spiritual church (where a man is truth, and a woman is goodness; see AC 4823). We will discuss this further in the section below on ‘celestial and spiritual.’

Now that we have examined the nature of the marriage of goodness and truth, and faith and charity in a person, we will examine *where* in a person these two things reside, namely the will and intellect.

Will and Intellect

There are two faculties of life in every man, the understanding and the will, the understanding being the receptacle of truth, and thence of wisdom, the will being the receptacle of good, and thence of love. These two faculties ought to make one, that a man may be a member of the Church; and they are united when a man forms his

understanding from genuine truths, apparently of himself, and when his will is filled with the good of love, which is done by the Lord. In this way a man has the life of truth and the life of good, the life of truth in his understanding from the will, and the life of good in his will through the understanding. This is the marriage of truth and good with man, and also the marriage of the Lord and the Church in him. (SS 83)

These two faculties are called will (volition) and intellect (understanding, discernment). “Both man and woman are endowed with intellect and volition” (HH 369). And it is the place inside of everyone where the Lord flows in with His Divine love and wisdom (see DLW 30).

Two or One?

As we saw in the above section, goodness and truth are really one thing. And in a similar way, our will and intellect are really one thing, or are at least linked to each other.

A person does not have the smallest particle of thought, the slightest stir of feeling or activity, that does not involve a kind of marriage between intellect and will. Without some kind of marriage, nothing at all is ever produced or comes into existence. (AC 718)

However, goodness and truth get separated in our minds because our will and intellect are ‘distinguishably two.’

The two vessels and dwellings within us called volition and discernment have been created by the Lord in such a way as to be **distinguishably two** but to function as a single unit in everything we do and everything we sense. (DLW 395; see also AC 644)

The reason our will and intellect are distinguishably two is for the sake of our ultimate salvation:

For the people of the earliest church, the heavenly marriage existed within the sensation that they had their own power of will. For the people of the ancient church, however, the heavenly marriage developed within the sensation that their power of understanding was their own. When the human race’s willpower had become thoroughly corrupt, you see, **the Lord split our intellectual sense of self off from that corrupted voluntary sense of self in a miraculous way.** Within our intellectual selfhood He formed a new will, which is conscience, and into conscience He injected charity, and into charity innocence. In this way He joined Himself to us or, to put it another way, entered into a compact with us. (AC 1023.2; see also AC 2053)

So because our understanding is separated from our corrupted old will, it is possible for us to be saved. If we began our life with a married will and intellect, our corrupted will would pull us down into hell. But because we are capable of forming a conscience in our understanding of truth, we can eventually be given a new will, which will then be married to our new

understanding. So, as stated before in chapter one, it is useful in all marriages, that we begin life in a state of separation and move towards union.

For everyone, volition and discernment eventually act in unison. ... I mention all this to show that volition and discernment are two distinguishable functions, still created to be one function, and that they are constrained to act in unison after death, if not before. (DLW 397)

That phrase ‘distinguishably two’ seems to fit well with the analogy of a man and woman. It can be hard to picture how a husband and wife in heaven could be “one angel” (see ML 52), without picturing some situation where two people lose their individuality, or actually become the same person. Especially when we think about the fact that the Divine love and wisdom in the Lord really *are* one thing; the Father and Son *are* the same person. But just like with the will and intellect, a husband and wife are distinguishably two who are ultimately able to act as one.

Will and Intellect are Not Real until United

And not only are the will and intellect divided, but they are also not really *real* until they are united. It’s like saying that love without wisdom isn’t really loving, and wisdom without love isn’t really wise (see ML 65). The will isn’t really a true will without the intellect, and the intellect isn’t really a true intellect without the will.

People who have not been reborn have neither an understanding of truth nor a will to do good. (They only appear to have them, although they do have faculties that everyone calls by those names.) They are indeed capable of grasping truth on the rational and factual levels, but such truth is not alive. They are also seemingly able to will what is good, but the goodness is not living. (AC 671; see also DLW 30)

This is somewhat similar to the idea that a man is not fully human until married to a woman, and a woman is not fully human until married to a man.

For the human male and the human female were so created that from being two they might become as though one person or one flesh. And when they become one, then taken together they are [human] in [its] fullest sense. But without that conjunction they are two, and each is like a person divided or half a person. (ML 37)

Notice it says they are *like* a half a person. They are certainly each a complete human individual, but the fullness of humanity doesn’t come until they are united in true married love (see ML 316). Similarly the will and intellect are made real by the heavenly marriage, and Jesus was made fully God by the Divine marriage.

Will Married to Intellect

A person's **understanding** has been given to him in order that it may be enlightened with cognitions of goodness and truth, the end in view being that they may be received by his **will** and converted into good. For truths are converted into good when the person wills them, and in willing them does them. From this it is evident how the good present with a person is formed, and that unless good is present in a person he is not born anew or regenerated. **When therefore a person's will consists of good his understanding consists of truths wedded to that good. The person's understanding truly acts in unison with his will; for what the person wills, that he thinks when left to himself. So this is what is called the joining together of truth and good or the heavenly marriage.** (AC 10367.4)

When this happens our “land will be married,” as it says in *Isaiah* 62:4 (see AC 55.2). What does it look like to have a marriage of goodness and truth in our will and intellect? Well it probably looks like a person who doesn't struggle with problems or issues. A person who is trusting, honest, genuine, peaceful, loving, strong, and innocent. “What we intend we understand and what we understand we intend. Consequently, anyone in heaven who intends what is good understands what is true” (HH 425). In other words, it looks angelic.

Will and Intellect Like a Man and Woman

As indicated above, there are ways that the will and intellect behave like a husband and wife. Most often the intellect is associated with the husband because men are born intellect-oriented, while the will is associated with the wife because women are born will-oriented (see ML 33; see also AC 476, 718).

Both man and woman are endowed with intellect and volition, but for men intellect tends to take the lead, while for women it is volition that does so; and people are characterized by what is in control. There is no controlling, though, in marriages in the heavens. The volition of the wife actually belongs to the husband and the intellect of the husband belongs to the wife. This is because each wants to intend and think like the other, mutually, that is, and reciprocally. This is how the two are united into one. This is a truly effective union. The intent of the wife actually enters into the thinking of the husband, and the thinking of the husband enters into the intent of the wife, especially when they look each other in the face, since as already noted there is a sharing of thoughts and affections in the heavens. There is all the more sharing between a wife and a husband because they love each other. We may gather from this what the union of minds is like that makes a marriage and that gives birth to marriage love in the heavens-it is that each wants his or her blessings to belong to the other, and that this is mutual. (HH 369)

In a similar way for individuals, when we can get our will and understanding to ‘intend and think like the other, mutually, that is, reciprocally’ (in terms of goodness and truth) then we are entering into the heavenly marriage in our minds. When our understanding thinks in terms of goodness, and our will acts in line with truth, then we are reborn, and we bring the state of heaven into our minds and lives, and the heavenly marriage into natural marriage.

Most often the intellect is associated with men, and the will with women (see ML 270.1,4,5,6). In fact the people of the Most Ancient Church “called the intellect in the spiritual being male and the will there female; and when the two worked together, they called it a marriage” (AC 54). However in other parts of the Writings, the will is associated with the man and the intellect with the woman (see TCR 37; DLW 398).

Will and Intellect Not Exactly Like a Man and Woman

But once again, we have to be careful with how far we take these analogies. For example with the following passage from *Divine Providence*:

The reason we can be led away from evil when divine providence enables us to see what is true and gives us a desire for it as well is that truth points out and indicates things. When our volition does these things, it unites with truth and transforms it to something good within itself. It becomes a matter of its love, and whatever is a matter of love is good. All our reformation is accomplished by means of truth and not apart from it, since **in the absence of truth our volition stays dedicated to evil**. If it does look to our discernment it is not taught anything. Instead, its evil is justified by falsities. (DP 298.5)

Obviously it is not true that ‘in the absence of a man a woman stays dedicated to evil.’ or ‘in the absence of a woman a man stays dedicated to evil.’ That would be taking this analogy too far. Individual men and women are perfectly capable of working on their own process of regeneration apart from a spouse. In fact it is extremely important that they do. And so while comparing the will and intellect to the marriage of a man and woman can be useful in some ways, we also need to be careful with how we do it.

The Will Leads the Intellect

One of the things that comes up again and again in the Writings is the concept that good is actually first and primary, even if truth appears that it is (see ML 126). It is the same with the will and intellect. It appears that the intellect leads the will (and to some extent it ‘shows the

way’), but actually the will leads the intellect. It appears that our thoughts determine our feelings. But actually our loves and affections determine our thoughts.

Our discernment does not lead our volition, ... wisdom does not give rise to love. It merely teaches and shows the way. It teaches how we should live and shows us the way we should follow. It also follows from this that our volition leads our discernment and gets it to work in unison with itself. The love that is the substance of our volition gives the name of "wisdom" to whatever in our discernment it finds harmonious.... On its own, apart from discernment, our volition accomplishes nothing. Everything it does, it does in conjunction with our discernment. However, our volition gains the cooperation of our discernment by flowing into it, and not the other way around. (DLW 244; see also AC 7180; DP 318.9)

It’s interesting to compare the idea that the will leads, while the intellect only appears to lead, with the concept stated in *Married Love* that it is the wife who is actually the lover, while the husband only appears to be the lover (see ML 161). But we will examine this idea more later.⁴⁵

Now we will move on to talk about other marriages that occur in an individual’s mind. Marriages such as: freedom and rationality, the ‘sense of self’ and the ‘sense of God,’ spiritual and celestial, and internal and external.

Freedom and Rationality

A discussion of freedom and rationality (or liberty and reason) is really just an extension of the discussion of the will and intellect (see DP 98).

Everything that belongs in the will looks to be free. The state itself of the will is freedom, for what I will, I choose and desire since that is what I love and acknowledge as that which is good. From this it becomes clear that the truth of faith in no sense becomes a person's own until it has been accepted by the will, that is, introduced and joined to the good there, which cannot happen except in a free state. (AC 3158.2)

Freedom and rationality are the faculties that we have from the Lord that make us human (see DP 98), and the faculties that allow us to engage in a marriage union with the Lord (DLW 116).

The Writings don’t really talk about a *marriage* between freedom and rationality *per se* (cf. DP 96). But they do talk about acting in freedom according to reason (see DP 71-99). The marriage of freedom and rationality isn’t necessarily a positive or negative thing, because both good and evil people have freedom and rationality (see DP 86-87), and the Lord doesn’t take freedom and rationality away from people in hell or they would cease to be human (see DP 210).

⁴⁵ See Appendix X on the “Heart and Lungs.” See also “Can a Woman Represent the Lord?” at end of chapter four.

People in hell actually use their freedom and rationality to keep goodness and truth divorced from each other (see DP 15). But the freedom and rationality that evil spirits have pales in comparison to what the angels have. The word ‘licentious’ actually comes from the Latin word *licentia* meaning ‘freedom’, and it is where we get the word ‘license’ (see ‘free love’ in ML 75). *True* freedom and rationality are about the *marriage of goodness and truth* in how we think and what we choose to do.

And in terms of our discussion in this paper, I don’t believe that freedom and rationality are ever compared to a husband and wife, the way that the will and intellect or goodness and truth are. But the Writings do talk about how important freedom is in natural marriages between a husband and wife (see HH 380, 386; ML 248; AC 10173), as well as how important freedom is in the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the church (see Life 102; TCR 371, 504.7; DP 92.3; AC 3158). In the same way that consent is the essence of married love (see ML 21.4, 299), you could say that freedom or consent is also the essence of the heavenly marriage (see AC 3090, 3155, 3157.2, 3158.2, 3179, 3180).

Rationality is also essential in our regeneration, because (as stated above) like the intellect, it allows us to raise our minds above our corrupt will and see the truth, and form a conscience. And in a similar way, rationality is essential in the natural marriage of a husband and wife because it allows for a person to be wise, which is the receptacle of true married love.

Married partners become an image of the marriage between good and truth only as the inner faculties of their minds are opened, because the mind only gradually opens from infancy to late old age. For people are born carnal, and they become rational as the mind just above the body opens and as this rationality is purified and decanted, so to speak, from its dregs - from fallacious appearances that flow in from the physical senses and from urges that flow in from temptations of the flesh. **Rationality** thus opens, and this is accomplished only through wisdom. Then, when the inner faculties of the rational mind have been opened, the person becomes an image of wisdom, and this wisdom is the receptacle of true married love. (ML 102)

A person becomes wise as the inner perceptions of his [or her] mind are opened, because by their opening the thoughts of his [or her] understanding are raised into a higher light and the affections of his [or her] will into a higher warmth - the higher light being wisdom, and the higher warmth a love for wisdom. Spiritual delights joined to natural delights - as is the case in people in a state of true married love - bring about an amenability to and therefore a **capacity for becoming wise**. (ML 211)

It's important to underscore the idea that *both* men and women have rationality and the ability to become wise. In *Married Love*, there are discussions about the particular wisdom which men have and women do not, and this wisdom is sometimes called 'rational' or 'intellectual' wisdom '*sapientia rationalis*' (see ML 163, 165, 168, 293). This of course is balanced by the fact that women also have a kind of wisdom that men do not (see ML 168, 208.2). We will look at both of these kinds of wisdom later in the paper. But passages in *Married Love* also indicate that actually *both* men and women have rational or intellectual wisdom (ML 102, 165)! However, the point for now is that both men and women have rationality and the potential for wisdom.

There is a very interesting statement, made by some angel wives in *Married Love*, about acting in freedom according to reason in terms of married love.

Our husbands have told us that it is the Lord's will that **the masculine sex act in freedom in accord with reason**; and since a man's freedom involves his inclinations and affections, therefore the Lord Himself moderates his freedom from within, and through his wife from without, and so forms the man and his wife together into an angel of heaven. Besides, if love is compelled, its fundamental nature changes and it becomes no longer the same love. But we will explain it more frankly. We are moved to this - that is, to a discreet moderation of the inclinations and affections of our husbands, so discreet that it seems to them that they **act in freedom in accord with their own reason** - because we feel delight from their love, and we love nothing more than for them to feel delight from our feelings of delight. But if these feelings become matters of indifference in them, they also begin to fade in us. (ML 208.3)

Obviously it's not saying that *only men* act in freedom in accord with reason. But it seems to be a very important part of a man receiving true married love that *he freely choose* to love only his wife according to reason and religion. We will look at this more when we discuss the wisdom that receives true married love in chapter four.

A discussion of freedom and rationality leads nicely into a discussion of the 'sense of self' and the 'sense of God,' because our ability to act freely, is what allows us to feel life as if it was our own, and our ability to reason is what allows us to know that all life is the Lord's.

Our Sense of Self and our Sense of God

Our ‘as-of-self’ or sense of self, or sense of autonomy, or *proprium* is represented in the Word by the character of Eve, from a Hebrew word that means ‘life.’⁴⁶ Meanwhile, her husband, the character of Adam represents the acknowledgment that all life is the Lord’s, or what we could think of as our “sense of God” (see ISB 14.4, TCR 3.2, DP 293).

Eve: Our Sense of Self

Eve represents our selfhood, sense of autonomy or independence (see AC 146-160, 194, 207, 252-253). “The curse imposed on Eve means the curse of **our emotional [or volitional] sense of identity**” (DP 313.3). Our sense of self is the feeling that our life is our own. In older translations of the Writings it is called what is a person’s ‘own,’ or a person’s *proprium*.

But it’s important to remember that the sense of self (or *proprium*) by itself is neutral. It can either be filled with an evil love of self (listening to the snake) or it can be the beautiful and living bride of the Lord (see AC 149-155). Some passages indicate that our selfhood (or *proprium*) is nothing but evil (See AC 154, 210). This is because what belongs exclusively to us is what is not the Lord’s, and is therefore inherently evil. But we need to remember that there is a big distinction between the snake (the evil *love* of self; see AC 250; DP 241, 313), and Eve (our neutral *sense* of self). The feeling that life is our own has been given to us from the Lord, so that we could freely choose to love Him, and be in a heavenly marriage with Him (see DLW 115; DP 92.3; AR 541.2; TCR 457.4). This is not evil. “This selfhood is the epitome of heavenliness” (AC 141). When our ‘Eve’ is listening to the snake, that is when our selfhood is nothing but evil.

And this part of us that feels that life is our own is very related to our faculty of freedom, and our will:

The female symbolizes the will or the properties of the will, so it symbolizes the qualities of love. This is also why the woman was named Eve from [the Hebrew word for] life, which belongs exclusively to love. (AC 476)

And because love is our life (DLW 1,3, 379; DP 73, 78; HH 14; TCR 399), and women are will-oriented people (ML 187, 223), Eve in the Bible represents the sense that life is our own.

⁴⁶ It’s interesting that the name ‘Eve’ only shows up two times in the canonical Word (Genesis 3:20; 4:1), and only four times total in the entire Bible (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Titus 2:13). And there are only eight references to ‘Eve’ in the Swedenborg Concordance. Eve is actually more often known by simply ‘woman’ than by her own name.

Adam: Our Sense of God

In general, Adam (Man, *Homo*) represents humanity as a whole (see AC 478; ML 156r). But when compared with Eve, Adam represents: belief in the Lord (see AC 64), someone who is led by the Lord (see AC 139), someone who acknowledges that the Lord is the life of all (see AC 141; cf. ML 444.5), our inner being (see AC 156), understanding and wisdom (see AC 158), heavenly, spiritual life (see AC 160), the rational mind (see AC 267, 229, 265, 267), the heavenly person (see AC 287-288), acknowledgment and belief (see AC 303), the church as to truths of doctrine (see AE 725.2; see also AC 479), the intellect and the qualities of faith (see AC 476), the core quality of the church (see AC 915), and our cognitive [or intellectual] sense of identity (see DP 313.3). In summary, Adam represents the acknowledgment that our life is the Lord's.

In Genesis it is said that Eve was formed out of Adam's rib (Genesis 2:21-23). It's important to remember that in this case it's talking about how one part of our spiritual being is formed out of another part of our spiritual being. Our outer mind comes from our inner mind (see AC 159-160). A love of wisdom is formed from wisdom itself (see ML 89). The feeling that life is our own comes from our life actually belonging to the Lord. However, the Writings also say that in some way "femininity is derived from masculinity" (ML 32). But there is a lot involved with that representation, so we will examine what that means later in chapter four.

Adam and Eve Married

It can seem like the 'feeling that life is our own' and the 'knowledge that it's actually the Lord's life' are two paradoxical realities. But we actually do need both Adam and Eve as parts of us. The success of the Lord's goal for us (experiencing His love) depends on our sense of autonomy; our ability to feel life. And so the Lord said in Genesis, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:18). The end-goal for Divine Providence depends on the creation of Eve; our ability to feel the Lord's life as our own.

So the Lord created Eve out of the rib of Adam. In *Secrets of Heaven* it says that "human selfhood, viewed from heaven, looks completely bony, lifeless, and hideous - inherently dead. But once the Lord gives it life, it appears to have flesh" (AC 149). On the next page it says that not only does it come alive, but it looks "lovely and beautiful" (AC 154). It is our sense of self (Eve) that actually becomes the Lord's bride and wife in the heavenly marriage (AC 155)! And

so the Lord said in *Genesis*, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). The Lord wants these two paradoxical realities to be married in us.

Much like the difference between the sexes, these two realities see life from very different points of view. But the Lord intended that they should be complimentary, and that, “the masculine element and feminine element united by true married love produce one life that is fully human” (ML 316.4). It says in *Divine Providence* that,

People do not know how two things can act in unison if they are different from each other.... [And yet] a form makes a whole more perfectly as its constituents are distinguishably different and yet united. (DP 4)

We can’t acknowledge the Lord as the source of our life, unless we can experience that life as our own. Adam must be married to Eve. But we also can’t truly experience life in its fullness, unless we acknowledge that that life is the Lord’s. Eve must come from, and be married to Adam. In *Divine Providence* it also says that “Love is the life of each one of us, and... the quality of that life depends on the quality of our love’s union with wisdom” (DP 193). So the quality of our life depends on our sense of self *married* to the knowledge that life is the Lord’s.

The marriage of Adam and Eve is also like the marriage of faith and charity, or freedom and reason. If we believe in ‘faith alone’ or ‘reason alone’ then the Writings say we are like statues, standing still, doing nothing, waiting for salvation (see DP 321). And if we believe in ‘charity alone’ or ‘freedom alone’—or the belief that we can regenerate ourselves—then the Writings say we are like animals (maybe even like serpents. See DP 310, 321), and we become people who believe only in our own prudence, and our own ability to accomplish good.

It’s also important that we remember that our sense of self is not nothing. It’s very real. Eve may have been created out of Adam, but she was just as much flesh and bone as he was. If our ability to make choices was not a real thing, then we would all be doomed to predestination. But that’s not part of the Lord’s Divine Providence. We are truly free to make spiritual choices, and to reciprocate the Lord’s love, thanks to the creation of Eve in us.

Part of Eve’s curse is that her husband would rule over her (Genesis 3:16). Our sense of autonomy—the feeling that life is our own—should be ruled by our acknowledgment that life is from the Lord. Contrary to what Christians like Paul, have thought, this doesn’t mean that

husbands should literally rule over their wives without their consent.⁴⁷ It's talking about a marriage inside each of us. But even though Paul's understanding may have been somewhat flawed, his words to the Ephesians still capture this spiritual idea very nicely. "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22). Our sense of autonomy should submit to our belief that our life is from the Lord. And Paul acknowledges the other side of it as well: "Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies" (Ephesians 5:28). We should love this sense of autonomy that the Lord has given to us. This is what allows us to feel the joy of the Lord as joy in ourselves, and thus to truly experience His love (see DLW 47). And this is also why "the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20).

Our ultimate union with the Lord is represented by a marriage, because our sense of self must be married to an acknowledgment that all life is from the Lord. Regeneration is a lot like marriage. It involves two very different points of view making one life together.⁴⁸ Speaking of two different points of view, we now turn to a discussion of the celestial and the spiritual.

Celestial (Heavenly) and Spiritual

These terms can sound a bit redundant (see AC 4585.3). Don't they both refer to things that have to do with heaven and religion? Yes, but there are some important distinctions which will be discussed below. To begin with, let's think about the term 'celestial'⁴⁹ as being associated with goodness, and the term 'spiritual' being associated with truth.⁵⁰

The Writings say that there is or should be a marriage between celestial and spiritual things (see AC 60, 61, 1203, 1577, 2173), and that this happens when celestial things flow into

⁴⁷ The Writings are clear that husbands should not control their wives (AC 10173; HH 369, 380; ML 248). This is not to say that there should not be a mutual consent to submit to each other's strengths. In a good marriage a wife will seek the counsel of her husband according to his strengths (AC 266, 568; ML 168). Likewise a husband will seek the counsel of his wife according to her strengths (ML 47r, 56.4, 160, 161, 200, 208.2, 218, 223). True marriage love grows from the spouses mutually seeking to submit to, learn from, and share in the strengths of their partner (ML 168, 321.2; HH 369). More in this in chapter four, part two: "Differences Between Men and Women."

⁴⁸ See Appendix VII for a continued discussion of Adam and Eve, and the Image and Likeness of God.

⁴⁹ In this section, I will be using the more familiar translation of *coelestis* as 'celestial' rather than 'heavenly.' However, most newer translations use the term 'heavenly.'

⁵⁰ For a more comprehensive study of the differences between 'celestial' and 'spiritual,' see Appendix IV.

spiritual things (see AC 3890, 9568). So in other words, when goodness flows into truth, or the will flows into the intellect, or our inner being flows into our outer being, or the Lord flows into us. The marriage of the celestial and spiritual can be represented by the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the church, with the Lord playing the role of the celestial, and us playing the role of the spiritual (see AC 162, 775, 1416, 1545; SS 80). The Writings talk about this flow from higher (celestial) things into lower (spiritual) things as being the nature of the heavenly marriage:

The heavenly marriage is not a marriage between the good and the truth present [in the spiritual man] but between the good of the spiritual man and the truth of the celestial man, for compared with the spiritual man the celestial man belongs to a higher degree. Nor again is the heavenly marriage between the good and the truth present there, but between the good of the celestial man and the Divine truth which proceeds from the Lord.... [The heavenly marriage is] the joining of the good of the external man to the affection for the truth of the internal man.... The heavenly marriage exists in a person when pleasure or delight, which essentially is the good of the external or natural man, stems from spiritual love. (AC 3952)

Imagine a picture with concentric circles. The two inner-most circles are Divine love, surrounded by Divine truth. Around that is celestial good, surrounded by celestial truth. Around that is spiritual good, surrounded by spiritual truth. Around that is natural good, surrounded by natural truth. There is no real need for a marriage to occur between the goodness and truth of the same degree, for example between celestial goodness and truth, because they are already united, and essentially the same thing. One is simply the form of the other. But a marriage needs to take place between goodness and truth of different degrees. Spiritual goodness isn't real unless it is inspired by celestial truth. In other words, the goodness of love to the neighbor isn't real unless it is inspired by the truths about love to the Lord. A marriage needs to take place *between* degrees in order for the Lord to flow all the way down to the natural degrees.

Men and Women in the Celestial and Spiritual Churches

Now, this makes sense... until we start trying to compare it to natural marriages. How is the marriage of a husband and wife, related to a marriage between higher (celestial) and lower (spiritual) things? Can we even make that comparison?

One of the connections that is made between these two subjects is not really an identification between celestial and spiritual, and men and women, but rather the difference between the relationships between men and women *within* celestial or spiritual states.

In the celestial Church good resided with the husband and the truth of that good with the wife; but in the spiritual Church truth resided with the man and the good of that truth with the wife. (AC 4823.2)

We've seen this before in chapter one, where we talked about men and women in the Word. But the question remains: *Why* is this the case? What is it about the celestial state that means that the husband represents goodness and the wife truth? What is it about the spiritual state that means that men represent truth, and women goodness?

It makes sense that the relationship between 'husband and wife' would refer to the celestial, while the relationship between 'man and woman' would refer to the spiritual, because as we saw above, the celestial state is much more of a united marriage than the spiritual state, which is sometimes called a marriage which is "not so conjugal" (AC 3246).

But notice that in both the celestial state and the spiritual state, the husband represents the one that is leading, or even the one that is 'primary' (see AC 3236). In the celestial state, a state of goodness leading to truth, the husband represents goodness, and the wife truth. In the spiritual state, a state of truth leading to goodness, the man represents truth, and the woman goodness. This could be because of the analogy between spiritual marriages and natural marriages resting on the concept of insemination, where semen flows from a man to a woman, and not the reverse.

Passages such as this can give a false impression that in natural marriages, the husband must dominate the wife, and the wife must be subject to the husband. But as we know, there is no controlling in the marriages in heaven (see AC 10173; HH 369). Actually there is a mutual reciprocal flow, back and forth between husband and wife—which is unlike the process of insemination—because "the intent of the wife actually enters into the thinking of the husband, and the thinking of the husband enters into the intent of the wife" (HH 369).

They have been united ... by the **wife's reception** of the propagations of the husband's soul... **and conversely** by the **husband's reception** of the wife's married love." (ML 321.2; see also ML 208.2, 223)

But in terms of the heavenly marriage, there is no reverse flow of truths of a lower degree into goodness of a higher degree (see DP 233.7; AC 9401.2; DLW 410), so in this way, heavenly and natural marriages are unlike each other.

One might wonder if we can make a connection between celestial and spiritual, and masculine and feminine.⁵¹ But we can't really *identify* men and women as being exclusively either celestial or spiritual. Both men and women have both intellect and will. Both men and women can have love and faith, goodness and truth, thoughts and affections, conscience and perception, love to the Lord and the neighbor, and an inner and outer being. And speaking of that, let's examine the heavenly marriage between our internal and external selves.

Internal and External Person, Higher and Lower

In every person there is an inward aspect and an outward aspect. These two are also called the inner person and the outer person, and so there is an inner and outer will and thought. (ML 47)

Much of the time, we have a divided mind. Our inner aspect (like the conscience) can try to get our outer aspect to do something that it doesn't want to do. Our inner self may want to have a strong and wonderful marriage with one spouse, but our outer self might still struggle with lust. Or in our inner self we might know that we have a bad temper and want to get rid of it, but in our outer self the temper still flares up. Or our inner self might really want to be a more generous person, but our outer self is still very selfish. Or the reverse might exist as well, where our inner self has bad intentions, but we put on a hypocritical show of being a good person.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the **outside** of the cup and dish, but **inside** they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the **inside** of the cup and dish, that the **outside** of them may be clean also. (Matt 23:25-26)

And so we work from inside to outside. Our inner conscience reforms our outer corrupted will.

In this world, it is allowable to live in the state of division between inner and outer selves, because this world is a state of preparation. But in heaven and hell, that is not allowed:

The purpose of the preparation in [the world of spirits] is to **bring the inner reality and the outer appearance into harmony, so that the internal and external become one, instead of being at variance and divided in two.** They are divided in two in the natural world, and only in the case of people who have an honest heart do they become one.... **In the spiritual world, however, one is not permitted to have a mind divided like that.** (ML 48r.2)

⁵¹ For a study on this subject see Appendix VIII

For the idea that an internal condition can be **divorced** from its external expression, so that there is no **conjunction** of the two, is nothing but an illusory notion. (AR 451.3)

And once the internal and external parts of us are united (in goodness and truth) then we are truly in the heavenly marriage which is the church, heaven, and reality itself (see AC 4899). “After this joining together has taken place the interior man and the exterior man enter into the heavenly marriage” (AC 3969.2). No longer do we have to *get* ourselves to do what is right and good, we actually *want* to do what is right and good! The struggle is over. This is the peace of heaven.

This is clear from the meaning of 'the seventh day' as the state of good that has been the end in view; for since the six days which come before mean the person's state which comes before and is preparatory to the **heavenly marriage**, the seventh day means when that marriage actually exists within the person. That marriage is the joining together of the truth and good residing with the person, thus when the person becomes an embodiment of the Church and enters heaven. The reason why a person enters heaven and becomes an embodiment of the Church when governed by good is that the Lord flows into the good residing with a person, and through the good into his truth. He flows into the internal man, where heaven within that person exists, and through the internal into the external, where the world within that person exists. (AC 10367)

The Divine marriage of the Father and Son in the Lord is actually this same kind of marriage, a marriage of His inner and outer selves, as was stated above in *Secrets of Heaven* 3952.2. This is why the Lord so often spoke with Himself (the Son speaking to the Father), because He too had a divided mind. Jesus was trying to follow His Divine conscience which was the Divine goodness of the Father. Once He and the Father were truly one, and the Lord was glorified, He made His Human Divine. He united the Human (of Jesus Christ) with the Divine itself, in the Divine marriage. And so now, the Lord is in heaven and no longer on earth, because heaven is the heavenly marriage, while earth is like a preparation for marriage, or a betrothal.

This is actually why so often the marriage of the Lord and the church is spoken of in terms of a betrothal, because that is the first joining that we come into:

Betrothal before marriage has been a custom since ancient times; it represented a first joining together, which is that of the internal man without the external. The actual marriage following it represented a second joining together, which is that of the internal man together with the external. (AC 9182.4; see also AC 3158, 8983.2)

So in our regeneration, goodness and truth are first joined in our inner person. This is what results in having a conscience (see AC 1023, 1033). This is like a betrothal. But once our

external person is married to that internal person—once we no longer have to *get* ourselves to be good, we simply *want* to—then we enter the true heavenly marriage.

This is very similar to the idea of betrothal and marriage between a man and a woman. When a man and woman have been betrothed, they have actually entered into a marriage of minds (see ML 303, 310). In that state, they *act* like they are married, in terms of their spiritual relationship. But they don't actually become married until it is consummated in body as well. A marriage of minds is really the essence of marriage (HH 375), but in this world, that marriage isn't 'fruitful' (in a purely natural sense) until the two are joined in body and able to produce children. And similarly, when we are *acting out* the heavenly marriage, "faking it till we make it," we are not very fruitful in our useful service. But we are much more fruitful when there is an actual marriage in our minds. When we actually *want* to do what is good.

Indeed after the joining of the interior man to the external man has taken place, that is, of the spiritual and the natural, fruitfulness of good and multiplication of truth take place, for that joining together of the two is the heavenly marriage with man. (AC 3971)

Internal and External Reciprocation

Furthermore all good with a person is given form by truth, for good flows in from the Lord by an inward path, while truth enters by an outward path. They then marry in the internal man. (AC 9995.3; see also AC 3207.2)

A great physical illustration of this is the nature of the heart and lungs (see DLW 376), where truth (air; AR 708) enters by an outward path, and goodness (blood; DLW 380) flows in by an inward path, and the oxygen purifies the blood, in a marriage.⁵²

But when it says that they 'marry,' and our minds go to the image of a relationship between a man and woman, how do we make sense of this? Obviously the marriage of a man and woman is not a marriage of inner and outer⁵³ but rather a marriage of equals. But it seems that the relationship between husband and wife illustrates the fact that even the marriage of inner and outer, can be a *reciprocal* relationship.

When the internal is joined to the external, or good is joined to truth, there is at first a communication with the external on the part of the internal, but there is no communication as yet in the opposite direction. When there is, the two exist joined together. (AC 5880)

⁵² See Appendix X

⁵³ Except in physical terms. See Appendix V.

There is a reciprocal element needed in the heavenly marriage between goodness (inner) and truth (outer), or between the Lord and us.

What else is a Divine operation in someone's internal constituents without the person's cooperation as though of himself in external actions? (AR 451.3)

And the reciprocation illustrated by a husband and wife with each other is perhaps the best analogy for the reciprocation that is involved with goodness and truth, *despite* the fact that goodness is higher/inner/primary, and truth is lower/outer/secondary. But we will get more into that in chapter four.

Since we've now talked about many of the elements involved in our regeneration or spiritual rebirth, we will now look at what role regeneration plays in the married love between a husband and wife, followed by the role that married love plays in regeneration.

Role of Regeneration in Married Love

As we have seen, there are different levels or degrees of marriage. The origin of true married love is in the heavenly marriage of goodness and truth (see AC 3942).

All those who are in heaven are caught up in the marriage of good and truth, and this is the essence of marriage. (ML 520; see also ML 76.5)

The Church

So how does true married love actually get to us? We don't fall into it by chance or destiny (cf. ML 229). What do we have to do in order to reach this sought-after goal of true married love? The Writings tell us that it depends on our regeneration, or that "married love in a person depends on the state of the church in him [or her]" (ML 70).

True married love comes from the Lord; and [the angels] testify also that this love depends on the state of their wisdom, and that the state of their wisdom depends on the state of the church in them. (ML 131; see also ML 141)

And what is the church? We've already learned that the church *is* the marriage of goodness and truth, and *is* our relationship with the Lord, and *is* the Lord. But in more familiar, down-to-earth terms, it is our religion. A person can attain the eternal blessings of true married love "if he [or she] goes to the Lord and lives from Him a life of true religion" (ML 333.2).

People were created to be able to become more and more interior beings, thus to be introduced or elevated nearer and nearer to a marriage of good and truth **and so into**

married love, to the point that they feel its state of bliss. The only means by which they can be introduced or elevated is **religion**. (ML 238; see also ML 81.5, 531)

And what is the essence of religion? It is the two great commandments: loving the Lord and the neighbor (see AC 2982; also DP 238), and those things constitute heavenly love (see HH 557). It makes sense that love is what holds a husband and wife together in marriage. But it's not just love for *each other*, it's actually the heavenly loves to the Lord and the neighbor that *really* hold a husband and wife together, and bring them into a state of true married love (see AC 3815; HH 494). A married couple can *look like* they have true love, because "something resembling conjugal love exists with some [people], but it is not in fact that love if the love of good and truth is not present in those persons" (AC 2742). And so the state of true married love depends on these two loves, or what is called the state of our religion and the church in us.

And what do religion and the church teach? They teach us to live a good life based on the truths of the Word. And this is the marriage of goodness and truth. And so, because the state of true married love depends on the church in us, it depends on having the marriage of goodness and truth in our lives. Only people who are in the marriage of goodness and truth can enter into true married love (see ML 44.10, 428). The church also teaches that we should lead a useful life.

Only those people know the blissful delights of married love who reject the horrible delights of adultery. And no one can reject these except one who is wise from the Lord, and no one is wise from the Lord unless he performs useful services from a love of doing them. (ML 137.7; see also ML 183.8)

There are some passages in the Writings that indicate that only Christians can have true married love (see ML 337). This is a pretty strong statement. One might wonder about good people outside of the Christian world who believe in God and are living a good life by their religion? Are they unable to attain true married love unless they become Christian? I think it is possible to be truly "Christian" and yet be outside of the organized Christian church. For example: People who believe that there is one loving Human God, and that the life of religion is to shun evils and to do good things from God. Or people who believe in being faithful and living monogamously, and focussing on only their spouse. I wonder if those sorts of a people are capable of attaining true married love? But then, maybe the point is that it's unlikely for people to believe all of those things unless they have the true Christian religion (see ML 458).

Since a Christian person who knows the Lord is in possession of the Word and has the church from the Lord through the Word, it is apparent that he has a capability and

potential beyond that of a non-Christian for being regenerated and thus becoming spiritual, and also for attaining true married love, because the two go together. (ML 339.3)

Wisdom

The state of true married love in us depends on the state of wisdom in us, because “wisdom is the receptacle of true married love” (ML 102).

True married love ... exists solely in people who are eager for wisdom and who accordingly advance further and further into it. (ML 98; see also ML 95; 355.8)

It's important to note that this refers to both men and women. Women may love the wisdom in their husbands, but that doesn't mean that they don't also advance further and further into wisdom themselves. The following passage describes this wisdom.

When the inner faculties of the rational mind have been opened, the person becomes an image of wisdom, and this wisdom is the receptacle of true married love. The wisdom which forms this image and receives this love is rational and at the same time moral wisdom. Rational wisdom views the truths and good virtues that inwardly appear in a person not as qualities belonging to him but as qualities flowing in from the Lord. And moral wisdom shuns evils and falsities as contagious diseases - especially lascivious ones which contaminate his married love. (ML 102)

It's interesting to notice that even *rational* wisdom (something often associated with only men) is a wisdom that both men and women have for the sake of true married love.⁵⁴

Married Love in Individuals

One of the important things for anyone to remember about true married love, is that it doesn't depend on one's partner. If someone is having trouble in a marriage relationship, it doesn't depend entirely on the other spouse to remedy the problem. This is because the state of married love is actually a state that exists in each and every individual to varying degrees.

Married love can be present in one of the partners and not at the same time in the other. Married love can exist in one and not in the other, for one may fervently vow for himself a chaste marriage, while the other does not know what chastity is. One may love matters that have to do with the church, while the other loves only matters that have to do with the world. One may be with his mind in a state of heaven, while the other is with his

⁵⁴ In the book *Married Love*, there is certainly an appearance that rational or intellectual wisdom (*sapientia rationalis*) is exclusively a masculine ability (see ML 163-168, 195, 293). However, my belief, based on the doctrines, is that rational wisdom is a *human* ability which men have an orientation towards and a strength in. Likewise, true married love is a *human* ability which women have an orientation towards and a strength in.

mind in a state of hell. As a result, married love may exist on the part of one and not on the part of the other. (ML 226)

How can married love exist in one spouse and not the other? Because the state of true married love in a person actually depends on the state of their individual regeneration, or whether they have the heavenly marriage within them, or to what degree they love the Lord and the neighbor.

Married Love and Religion Complement Each Other

While the above passages indicate that married love depends on the state of religion in us, there are also ways in which the state of our religion rests on the quality of married love in us. For example, we may know that we need to love the Lord and the neighbor from the church, and that will allow for a state of true married love to exist in us as individuals. But at the same time, being in a marriage, in which our spouse is our closest neighbor, provides the most opportunities for practicing love to the neighbor, or rather living the life of the church. And so “the origin of the church and the origin of married love have the same seat in a person, and... they are locked in a continual embrace” (ML 238). “The human inclination towards marriage goes hand in hand with religion at every step” (ML 80.2). In fact, married love and religion working hand in hand can raise us into the highest region of our minds.

There are in human minds three regions, the highest of which is called celestial, the intermediate one spiritual, and the lowest one natural. A person dwells by birth in the lowest region, but he ascends into the next higher one, called spiritual, by living according to truths of religion, and **into the highest one by achieving a marriage of love and wisdom**. All kinds of evil and lascivious lusts reside in the lowest region, which is called natural. In the next higher region, however, which is called spiritual, there are no evil and lascivious lusts, for this is the region into which a person is led by the Lord when he is born anew. And in the highest region, which is called celestial, one finds conjugal chastity surrounded by its love. **A person is raised into this last region by a love of serving useful ends, and because marriage serves the most excellent ends of all, by true married love.** (ML 305)

Role of Married Love in Regeneration

There are a number of passages in the Writings that can seem to indicate that being married is a prerequisite to being regenerated, or even to being truly human. They say that the marriage of a husband and wife makes a person more spiritual (see ML 230), and that it makes a person “a more complete human being” (ML 59; also 156, 200). They say that “there is... no love... which opens the interior recesses of minds more forcefully and adeptly, than married

love” (ML 302; see also ML 200; AE 984.3), and that it is “the precious jewel of human life and the repository of Christian religion” (ML 457). They say that “the pleasures of marriage love lead to heaven” and that married love “is the essential heavenly love” (HH 386). They say that heaven and the church are only with those who are in true married love (see AE 999), and even that outside of marriage a person is only like “half a person” (ML 37).

Does this mean that single people aren’t really human beings? Does this mean that single people can’t regenerate on their own? No, because the process of regeneration and true married love are the same process. They both involve the union of goodness and truth in our minds and lives. You can’t have true married love without regeneration. People have true married love in them based on their own individual state of regeneration (see ML 226 above).

And while it’s important to remember that regeneration (the marriage of goodness and truth in individuals) is what allows for a couple to experience true married love, it’s also true that it can be a bit like a ‘chicken and egg’ scenario: True married love has its source in the heavenly marriage, but in some ways the heavenly marriage finds its source in true married love. One provides the *essential* source, the other provides the *foundational* source, as we will see below.

Fully Human

It’s important to remember that spiritual growth happens by degree. And since spiritual growth determines the level of our humanity (see ML 230), then humanity happens by degree too. For example, we wouldn’t say that a newborn baby is not really human. And yet, in many ways that baby is much less human than a 10-year-old, who is much less human than a 40-year-old, who is much less human than a 600-year-old angel. Each of those people is certainly human, but each is human to a different degree. Humanity is about change, growth, and gradual perfection. And part of that includes the states outside of and within marriage.

Being in a marriage is a much fuller experience of humanity than being outside of a marriage. This is simply because humanity is made up of both men and women, and the only way to approximate the fullest experience of both, is in a marriage (see ML 37, 192, 316, 432).

Balance

As we will learn more about in the next chapter, men and women are very different.

Men are intellect-oriented humans, while women are will-oriented humans (see ML 33), and this means that men tend to like to focus on the intellect over the will, while women tend to like to focus on the will over the intellect (see AC 568.2). Now, because we live in a world where men and women almost always interact with each other, they always have the influence of the opposite gender on them to varying degrees. However, taken to the extreme, men are in a position to be overly intellectual, and women are in a position to be overly volitional. Swedenborg describes some of the ways that men could swing to the extreme without the influence of women:

The intelligence of women is by nature modest, gracious, peaceable, compliant, soft and gentle, while the intelligence of men is by nature critical, rough, resistant, argumentative, and given to intemperance. ... With respect to tone of voice, men have a stern one, while women have a gentle one. With respect to their speech, men's is given to intemperance and argumentativeness, while women's is modest and peaceable. With respect to their bearing, men's is bolder and more forceful, whereas women's is meeker and more delicate. With respect to their behavior, men's is more unruly, while women's is more civilized. ... thus [I could see] what a man's intellect in its development would be like without conjunction with feminine love and eventually married love. (ML 218)⁵⁵

But notice that this is not describing true masculinity, but rather masculinity untempered by femininity. And the same would be true in reverse. The relationships between men and women can aid the process of regeneration for individuals, because it helps to balance out the predominance and orientation in their minds. We see life from a more fully human perspective by learning from the opposite gender. And this is true to the greatest degree in marriage because it is the most intimate relationship between a man and woman.

As we will see in the next chapter, the active element in women is that they have that conjunctive sphere; a love for marriage (see ML 160, 161, 175.4, 223) which men react to. The active element in men is that they have that discerning sphere; a love for becoming wise (see ML 32, 33, 198, 293.4) which women react to. Men and women will never *own* each other's affections or spheres (ML 175.4), but they can learn to *share* them, and by doing so grow closer to the Lord (HH 369; AC 4145), because both spheres and affections are essential to our regeneration and humanity. So while we couldn't say that the marriage of a husband and wife is a *prerequisite* for regeneration, we could say that it is the most ideal matrix for regeneration to take place in. And it is the relationship that allows for humanity to be completed and balanced.

⁵⁵ See Appendix XI for a brief look at role reversals.

Married love perfects an angel, since it unites him with his partner so that he becomes more and more human. For, as we said above, married couples in heaven are not two but one angel. Therefore by the marital union they fulfill themselves in respect to their humanity, which is to want to be wise and to love what has to do with wisdom. (ML 52)

My own theory based on this is that both men and women begin with love and wisdom being *disjoined* and *unbalanced* in them. Through an individual's regeneration, love and wisdom become *joined*. Through natural marriage, love and wisdom become *balanced*.

Married Love is the *Fundamental* Source of All Heavenly Love

It's true that regeneration is something that individuals have to work on in their own minds; the marriage of their own will and understanding in goodness and truth. But at the same time, regeneration can't really happen in isolation. "Love's union depends on mutuality, and there is no mutuality within ourselves alone" (DLW 48). We need contact with other people to regenerate, because regeneration is ultimately about relationships with other people. And marriage offers a daily location for the work of regeneration, in the closest contact with another human being that is possible. Perhaps this is why the Writings speak so often about married love being the *fundamental* love of all loves (see AC 2737-2739, 3960.3, 9961.3-6; ML 64-65). It provides foundation. They also speak about it being the *source* of all other heavenly loves. Not that it's the source in terms of *origins*, but that it's the source in terms of providing the *foundation* for all other loves. It's a *fundamental* source.

With those who live in conjugal love the interior parts of the mind are open through heaven even to the Lord, for that love flows in from the Lord through that which is inmost in man. 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 anybody else, and with them more than anybody else mutual love is present, for **mutual love flows from conjugal love as a stream from its source.** (AC 2737)

Water really comes down from the sky in the form of rain. That's its original source. But we often get it as it's coming up out of the ground under our feet. That's its fundamental source. In a similar way, the heavenly marriage comes from the Lord, but we often get it through natural marriage. Because married love "underlies every other kind of love" (AC 3021.3).

The marriage of Divine Good and Truth, and of Divine Truth and Good, within the Lord is the source of all conjugal love, and **through that love** the source of all celestial and spiritual love. (AC 2618; see 4280.4)

This is the reason why married love is called “the head of all the other loves” (ML 64.3), and like a parent of all heavenly loves (ML 65). Parents give birth to children, but children are really a gift from God. In a similar way married love can give birth to the heavenly marriage, but the heavenly marriage really comes from God.⁵⁶

And because married love is the fundamental love of all heavenly loves, we now turn to look at natural marriages between men and women.

⁵⁶ See Appendix XII for an illustration from pop culture of married love being the *fundamental* love.

Chapter Four: ‘Natural Marriage’ - Marriage In Relationships

True Married Love

People have an instinctive belief in a ‘true love which lasts forever,’ which in the Writings is called ‘true married love,’ ‘true marriage love,’ or ‘truly conjugal love’ (see ML 333).⁵⁷ But as much as people instinctively believe in this love, people often don’t know much about it; what it really looks like, where it really comes from, what to do to attain it, how to keep it alive, etc. The teachings from the Writings really help us with the answers to these questions.

One of the big things that the Writings can confirm for us about this love is that it truly *can* last forever. A man and woman can fall in love on this earth, and then live forever in that true married love in heaven (see ML 27-41).

People who are in a state of true married love look to eternity in their marriage because **eternity is inherent in this love.** (ML 216)

Necessary Ingredients

So what are the things that make it so that true love lasts forever? Is it a matter of simply finding the right person? That appears to be the wisdom of the world these days. But true married love is not really about destiny as much as it’s about creating the right lifestyle to receive that love from the Lord (cf. ML 316.3). True married love is something we receive from the Lord, and in order to receive it we need the right shaped vessel. That vessel is the wisdom that holds true married love (see ML 102), which is what we will be looking at in this section.

The chapter on ‘Marriages in Heaven’ in the book *Heaven and Hell* (HH 366-386) provides a nice summary of the necessary ingredients.⁵⁸ The following is my own summary of what I see as the main points from that chapter. In order for a husband and wife to attain true married love they must:

- Be monogamous (HH 366, 367)
- Have a union of minds (HH 367, 375)
- Not control or dominate each other (HH 369, 380)
- Intend and think like their spouse, mutually and reciprocally (HH 369)
- Share their thoughts and affections with each other (HH 369)

⁵⁷ Some of the earliest references to “true married love” in the Writings can be found in AC 995.3 and HH 281.

⁵⁸ See also AC 10167-10175 for a nice summary of the necessary ingredients for true married love.

Unite truth to goodness in their lives (HH 371, 374, 375)
 Work on their own individual regeneration (HH 372, 373)
 Acknowledge the Lord, and live by their religion (HH 376)
 Be of the same religious mindset (HH 378)
 Not be polygamous (HH 379)
 Shun lust (HH 379)
 Be in freedom (consent) (HH 380, 386)
 Be innocent: 'Do no harm' (HH 382a, 386)
 Shun adultery (HH 384-386)
 Follow the 'Golden Rule' with their spouse (HH 385).

In one sense this describes both the wisdom and the love involved with true married love. Get yourself to do these things, and you will have true married *wisdom*. *Love* to do these things, and you will have true married *love*. We will now examine some of these things more closely.

Monogamy

We know from the Writings that monogamy began with the members of the Most Ancient Church, which they passed on to their descendants in ancient cultures:

“Children, if you wish to love God and the neighbor, and if you wish to be wise and be happy to eternity, we advise you to live monogamously. If you depart from this precept, all heavenly love will escape you, and with it inward wisdom, and you will become outcasts.” (ML 77.4)

And we know that spiritually monogamy comes from the marriage of goodness and truth:

From the marriage of goodness and truth in heaven and in the Church we may learn what marriages on earth ought to be like, namely that they ought to be unions consisting of one husband and one wife, and that love which is indeed conjugal does not exist at all if one husband has a number of wives. (AC 10172)

It seems like a pretty basic assumption about true married love, but it can be useful to ask ‘why?’. Why is it that marriage needs to be monogamous? What is it about the marriage of goodness and truth that is monogamous? Aren’t there many different truths that have to do with being good (see AC 10154)? And aren’t there many different loves, and ways of being good, based on one general truth (see ML 324)? And what about the marriage of the Lord and His church? Aren’t there many different kinds of people that can all be married to One Lord (see DP 245)? But as the Writings show, the heavenly marriage also needs to be monogamous:

In the case of the heavenly marriage the situation is that **no good can be joined to any but its own truth**, or truth to any but its own good. If joined to any truth other than its

own, good could not possibly be held together but would be torn apart and so would perish. (AC 4434.9)

Marriage with more than one is like an **intellect divided among more than one will** or like a person pledged to more than one church. This actually pulls faith apart so that it becomes no faith at all. (HH 379)

In the spiritual world, people are not allowed to have a divided mind (see ML 48r.2). Similarly, natural marriages need to be monogamous, because “it is not marriage unless it is a marriage of one man to one wife. Conjugal love cannot possibly be divided” (AC 1907).

Chastity is ascribed only to monogamous marriages, or to marriages of one man with one wife. ... When [married] love is a divided one it is not much different from promiscuous love, which in itself is a natural love. (ML 141)

So, spouses in a healthy marriage can't have divided minds. Or to put it in positive terms: true married love comes from two people focussing *solely* on each other. “Married love is love **solely** for one of the opposite sex and experienced with one” (ML 48; see also ML 44.6).

A husband's receiving the conjugal atmosphere **solely** through his wife is the mark by which true married love is recognized and differentiated from married love that is illusory, feigned, or cold. (ML 224)

Genuine conjugal love is not possible except between two married to each other, that is, within the marriage of one man and one wife. It is not by any means possible when one is married simultaneously to many, for the reason that conjugal love is mutual and reciprocal, and the life of one partner is bound up in that of the other, and vice versa, so that they are so to speak one. Such a union is possible between two, but not between many; **many split that love apart**. (AC 2740)

So a husband and wife being focussed solely on each other is an important part of the monogamy of true married love. This is like the marriage of the Lord and the church, in which He focusses solely on us, and we are meant to focus solely on Him (see above in chapter two).

Consent

“The consent is the essential element in marriage, and the rest of the things that follow are its formalities” (ML 21.4). Consent is something that both partners in a marriage do.

The basis of any marriage is the consent given by both parties. This has its origin in the marriage of good and truth, in that one party - good - proposes and the other - truth - consents, and the two are thereby joined together. (AC 3090; see also AC 3179, 3180)

This passage associates the man with goodness, and the woman with truth, like in the celestial church (see AC 4434.9, 4823.2, 8337, 8647). But there are other passages with talk about how it is really the goodness and the will which consent: “Consent flowing from the understanding alone is not consent, but all consent springs from the will” (AC 3158.2). This sounds a bit more like the spiritual church, with the man being the understanding and the woman being the will. But in reality, as stated above, consent has to come from both parties (see also AC 4456). A proposal *is* a form of consent. A proposal is like the active or initiating form of consent, while what we typically think of as ‘consent’ is the reactive or accepting form of consent. And this is true in the Divine, heavenly and natural marriages. “Every joining together requires such a response and therefore agreement on both sides” (AC 6047).

Good is informed about truth, and truth about good - and after that both parties give their consent. (AC 3155; see also AC 3157.2; ML 61)

And so in a natural marriage, both a man and a woman must give their consent to the marriage. And this is not just a one time thing. Consent is the essence of marriage because it must happen throughout the marriage in order for true married love to have a place to live. This involves continued pursuit on the part of the husband, and continued acceptance on the part of the wife. It involves the perpetual freedom to share love. Only then can they begin to be united into one.

A Union of Two Spirits, Minds, and Lives into One

It is well known among readers of Swedenborg that in heaven a married couple is referred to as “one angel.”⁵⁹ This is not because people lose their individuality and somehow actually meld into one person. It is because a married couple in heaven live one life together. And since there is no dimensional space in the spiritual world (see ML 50), two people living one life together *looks* like one person. This is also why it says that they are “*virtually* one person” (ML 44.6) or “*as* one person” (ML 59). “The essence of marriage is the union of spirits or minds” (HH 375).

Married love in its essence is nothing else but the wish of two to be one, or, in other words, a will on their part that their two lives become one life. (ML 215; see also ML 50)

⁵⁹ See HH 367, 372; ML 50, 52, 177; see also *De Conjugio* 8; ML 42, 75.5, 178, 306, 316.4.

And in a similar way the Divine marriage is the wish that the Lord's Divine and Human may be one in our lives. And also in the heavenly marriage, the wish on the Lord's part that we may be one with Him, or that His life can become our life, and our life, His life.

Reciprocal

As has now been shown in the introduction and the chapters above, the nature of all true marriages must be reciprocal.

I have heard from those most ancient people that conjugal love is such that one partner desires to be wholly the other's, and that this desire is **reciprocal**; and that when partners are expressing and receiving it from each other they experience the happiness of heaven. I have also heard that their minds are so joined one to the other that the expression and receipt of that **reciprocal** desire exists in every single detail of life, that is, in every single part of affection and in every single part of thought. (AC 2731; see also AC 2732, 2740; HH 369; ML 44.7)

Consummate Love or Romantic Love?

In modern popular culture people tend to believe that the way to find true love or “soul-mate” love is by means of romantic love. One of the ways that the Writings differ from this is that they would say that romantic love is only one of the means to true love. Modern psychologists actually agree with this, and would say that the means to true love comes more from something which combines intimacy, passion, and commitment, and which some psychologists call “consummate love.”⁶⁰ This is very similar to what the Writings call a combination of friendship, love, and trust, as essential elements in true married love:

When **friendship** and **mutual trust** join together with the first **love** in marriage, married love results, which opens the partners' hearts and inspires in them the sweet enjoyments of love, and this more and more deeply as **friendship** and **trust** are added to the original **love**, and as that original **love** enters into this **friendship** and **trust** and they into it. (ML 162; see also ML 180, 213, 214)

However, the missing element for many psychologists is the religious element. This love is something that we receive from the Lord. We can't *make* ourselves feel true married love. But we *can* build a place in our minds for that love to live in. And so we need to learn about it from the Lord, and pray to receive it from Him. And as has been stated before, the Lord wants our relationship with Him to be one of friendship, love and trust as well.

⁶⁰ Robert Sternberg: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triangular_theory_of_love

True Married Love is from Religion

“And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16). The ‘thigh’ represents married love, so this is a very interesting depiction in the Word of the fact that religion is ‘written’ on marriage, or that married love is foundational to religious and heavenly love (see AC 3021; AR 830).

As we’ve seen before, married love comes from the marriage of goodness and truth (see AC 8904.2,12; HH 371, 373, 382a; ML 60), and therefore from regeneration:

Conjugal love has its origin in the marriage of Divine Good and Truth, and so in the Lord Himself.... Consequently the union of minds **springing from good united to truth** from the Lord is conjugal love itself. (AC 2728)

In fact, not only does married love come *from* the marriage of goodness and truth, or love and wisdom, actually “true married love is *nothing but* a union of love and wisdom” (ML 65)! This drives home the point about how important religion is in married love. True married love depends on the state of the church in an individual (see ML 70, 81.5, 130). And because of this, married love is not just a natural love, it actually *is* a heavenly love.

As regards conjugal love specifically, whose range is the subject here, this love is fundamental to all other kinds of love; it descends from the marriage of good and truth in the heavens. And since the marriage of good and truth exists in and makes the heavens, **truly conjugal love constitutes heaven itself with a person**. But the marriage of good and truth in the heavens descends from the joining of the Lord to the heavens.... For **in themselves marriages are so holy that there is nothing holier....** It should be recognized therefore that **by conjugal love all celestial and spiritual love is meant**, because truly conjugal love, as has been shown above, is fundamental to all other kinds of love. People therefore in whom that fundamental love is present have all other loves belonging to heaven and the Church present in them. (AC 9961.3-6)

This isn’t because getting married magically makes you regenerate. This is because if you are regenerate enough to have true married love, then that love provides a foundation for all other heavenly loves (see ML 457). True married love *is* heavenly and spiritual love (see also ML 48).

Shunning Adultery and Lust

And because religion teaches that we should shun adultery, that is a key ingredient to experiencing true married love.

So far as any one shuns adultery, so far he loves marriage, or, what is the same, so far as any one shuns the lasciviousness of adultery, so far he loves the chastity of marriage. (Life 75)

This is easier said than done, especially when you add in the Lord's words from Matthew:

You have heard that it was said to those of old, '*You shall not commit adultery.*' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matt 5:27-28)

Many people who are faithful to their spouse, still struggle with lust. It can sometimes feel like an impossible commandment. How do we rid ourselves of unwanted feelings? Fortunately the Lord is mercy itself, and He asks us to give it our best shot:

People like this [namely, those who go to Him directly and live the life of the church from Him] abstain from love affairs outside of marriage, which are liaisons with others than their rightful wife or husband, and they abstain from them as injuries to the soul and as cesspools of hell. And in the degree that a married person abstains from such liaisons, even as regards the lusts of his will and his consequent intentions, in the same degree married love is purified in him and becomes progressively spiritual, first during his life on earth, and afterwards in heaven. [2] **No love can ever become pure in human beings, nor in angels. So neither can this love.** But because the Lord primarily regards the intention that is in the will, therefore to the extent that a person has the intention and perseveres in it, to that extent he is introduced into the purity and holiness of this love, and gradually makes progress in it. (ML 71)

Still many men might question that it is even possible to get to a point where they look on other women with only a "loveless nod" (ML 58). Swedenborg's descriptions of angel husbands give us a wonderful illustration of the kind of chastity, purity, strength and wisdom that men can aspire to: "Men like this, out of chastity, do not permit themselves to feel an influx of love on account of the body of any other woman than their wife" (ML 55.7).

Then I asked, "If such is the union between you, are you able to look upon any other woman than your own?" He replied, "I can, but because my wife is united to my soul, the two of us look together, and then not a trace of lust can enter. For when I look at other men's wives, I look at them through the eyes of my wife, who is the only one I am in love with. And because she, as my wife, can perceive all my inclinations, she acts as an intermediary and directs my thoughts, taking away anything discordant and at the same time inspiring a coldness and horror towards anything unchaste." (ML 75.6)

This is actually great advice for men even here on earth. Look at other women as if through the eyes of your wife, as a way to shun lust. And this is also great advice for anyone trying to live in the heavenly marriage: put yourself in other people's shoes as a way of shunning evil.

Wisdom and Innocence

As stated before, wisdom is what holds true married love (see ML 102, 211). So what is wisdom? To put it simply, wisdom is the form of love (see DLW 40, 139, 368). “Wisdom is nothing else than an outward expression of love, even as truth is nothing else than an outward expression of good” (ML 493). It is essentially going through the motions of love, with good intentions. “Wisdom is doing what is good because it is good” (DLW 427). If a person makes the effort to spend quality time with their spouse, that is wise. Spending time with one’s spouse may or may not hold love within it, but the act itself is wise. Wisdom is a life lived according to the principles of love, even if love isn’t felt in that life. The Lord’s promise to us is that the closer our life is structured around wisdom (the expression of love), the easier it is for Him to fill that structure with actual feelings of love. And so, as illustrated in the section above, a person is wise if they *shun* lust, even if they still *feel* lust. Because *shunning* lust is an *expression* of love, and is therefore wisdom.

[The wisdom of life is] to refrain from evils because they are harmful to the soul, harmful to the civil state, and harmful to the body, and to do good things because they are of benefit to the soul, to the civil state, and to the body. This is the wisdom that is meant by the wisdom to which married love attaches itself. For it attaches itself through wisdom's shunning the evil of adultery as a pestilence injurious to the soul, to the civil state, and to the body. And because this wisdom springs from spiritual concerns which have to do with the church, it follows that married love depends on the state of the church in a person, because it depends on the state of his wisdom. This also means, as we have frequently said before, that a person is in a state of true married love to the degree that he becomes spiritual. For a person becomes spiritual through the spiritual things of the church. (ML 130.4)

Another aspect of wisdom is that it must have innocence in it (see HH 281). Or in other words, it must have a desire to do no harm within it. Without innocence, wisdom is not wisdom (see AC 2736; ML 414). Wisdom and innocence also have to do with wanting to be led by the Lord, and therefore not having pride in our own intelligence (see HH 341; SS 91). Wisdom is humility, and not arrogance (see ML 193, 331). This is because we can only be led to love by the Lord, and not by ourselves. “Whoever is wise will observe these things, and they will understand the lovingkindness of the Lord” (Psalm 107:43; see also Deuteronomy 4:6).

And for purposes of this paper, the wisdom that supports true married love is really the same wisdom that supports the heavenly marriage, or the process of regeneration within any

individual. In other words: obeying the two great commandments, having innocence and humility, not trying to control other people, shunning evil by putting ourselves in someone else's shoes, engaging in friendship and trust, honoring commitments, sharing with others, and obeying the Golden Rule. And of course, all of these things stem from the Divine wisdom in the Lord.

Aside from this general wisdom that joins with true married love, there is also a specific kind of wisdom that only men have, and a specific kind of wisdom that only women have. So we will now turn to look at the differences between men and women.

Differences Between Men and Women

One of the basic differences between men and women that the Writings talk about is that men are **intellect-oriented**, and women are **will-oriented**.

The female sex is such by character and formation that the will or desire rules over the intellect. Every fiber in the female body is attuned to this, and it is the feminine nature. The male sex, on the other hand, is formed in such a way that intellect or reason reigns supreme. Every fiber in the male body is attuned to this, and it is the masculine nature. (AC 568.2)

This means that men tend to like cognitive processes—such as thinking, knowing and understanding—over volitional processes. While women tend to like volitional processes—such as intention, affection for goodness, personal relationships—over cognitive processes. It doesn't mean that men have no interest or ability in volitional processes, or that women have no interest or ability in cognitive processes.

Both man and woman are endowed with intellect and volition, but for men intellect tends to take the lead, while for women it is volition that does so; and people are characterized by what is in control. (HH 369; see also HH 368; AC 2731; ML 33)

This also means that these orientations affect the different ways that men and women act, behave, and react to love from the Lord and other people. "In men... affections reside in the intellect, whereas in women they reside in the will" (ML 197; see also ML 292).

The male sex receives [an atmosphere of a marriage of good and truth] according to its form, thus in the intellect, because the male is an intellect-oriented form, and ... the female sex receives it according to its form, thus in the will, because the female is a will-oriented form (ML 92)

Warmth and Light

These two orientations are really just two ways of receiving the same thing from the Lord. Remember in chapter one we talked about how heat and light are really the same thing, and in a similar way, the Lord's love and wisdom are the same thing.

Men were created to be receivers of light from the Lord, meaning the light of wisdom, and women were created to be receivers of warmth from the Lord, meaning the warmth of love for the wisdom in a man. (ML 137.6)

It's as if the Lord said to men and women, "Alright, everyone go out into that field. Now, I want all of you men to soak up all the light, and I want all of you women to soak up all of the heat."

In men the mind is elevated into a higher light, and in women the mind is elevated into a higher warmth; moreover, a woman feels the delights of her warmth in the light of a man. By the light into which men are elevated we mean intelligence and wisdom, because spiritual light, which emanates from the sun of the spiritual world (a sun which in its essence is love), goes together with these two as one and the same thing. Moreover, by the warmth into which women are elevated we mean married love, because spiritual warmth, which emanates from the sun of that world, in its essence is love, and in women is love that unites itself with the intelligence and wisdom in men. Taken in its broadest terms, this is the definition of married love, and when given a specific focus it becomes married love.... A person's mind is elevated into [higher] regions as it is opened - as it is opened in men by wisdom, and in women by true married love. (ML 188)

So as love and wisdom are united more and more closely in two people in a marriage, then those two people get closer and closer to each other, because true married love and wisdom are united.

Perception from Love or Intellect

Because men and women have these orientations, their perceptions are very different:

It is masculine to perceive from the intellect, and feminine to perceive from love. Moreover, the intellect also perceives those sorts of matters which transcend the body and the world - it being the nature of intellectual and spiritual sight to move in that direction - while love does not perceive beyond what it feels. When it does, its perception draws on its union with the intellect of a man [*vir*], a union established from creation. For the intellect has to do with light, and love with warmth, and concerns that are matters of light are seen, whereas concerns that are matters of warmth are felt. (ML 168)

'Matters that *transcend* the body and the world' could be considered theoretical, hypothetical, philosophical or abstract. Men can sometimes tend to not have their 'feet on the ground' as much as women. Men tend to be focused on truths and the relationships of ideas. Meanwhile,

women tend to be focused more on emotions and the relationships of people; matters *within* the body and the world. ‘How do truths apply in the relationships between people?’ ‘How do we *live* these truths?’ And because women’s perception is based on feeling love rather than seeing truth, it actually has the potential to be “superior” to men’s perception (see ML 208.2).

Different Intelligences

Because men and women are different, their intelligences are different:

The intelligence of women is by nature modest, gracious, peaceable, compliant, soft and gentle, while the intelligence of men is by nature critical, rough, resistant, argumentative, and given to intemperance. ... Thus [I could see] what a man's intellect in its development would be like without conjunction with feminine love and eventually married love. (ML 218)

The last part of the above quote is important to note. A man’s intelligence is not *supposed* to be critical, rough, resistant, argumentative, and given to intemperance. That’s just how it tends to start out. But once a man’s intelligence is joined with a woman’s, in true married love, it becomes actual wisdom:

The Lord took beauty and grace of life from man and transferred them into woman, and that is why a man not reunited with his beauty and grace in woman is stern, severe, dry and unattractive, and also not wise except for his own sake alone, in which case he is a dunce. On the other hand, **when a man is united with his beauty and grace of life in a wife, he becomes agreeable, pleasant, full of life and lovable, and therefore wise.** (ML 56.4)

And I imagine that a similar reciprocation would happen in reverse for women and their intelligence, in which their intelligence actually becomes wise as well. The description of women’s intelligence above makes it sound like even by nature it is better than men’s intelligence. But there is a time when defense of love is needed, and gentle won’t cut it. Picture an image of a knight in armor protecting a princess. Men at their core have a deep love and respect for women, and that is clothed with wisdom, the ability and strength to be tough in protection of love. Women are wisdom clothed with love. At their core they have a deep wisdom about love and relationships with men. That is clothed with love which is very vulnerable and soft. We will look at this more when we examine the nature of the difference between men as ‘love clothed with wisdom,’ and women as ‘wisdom clothed with love.’

Lovers and Receivers

One of the things we've learned about our relationship with the Lord is that He is the lover, and we are the receivers of His love. In the analogy of the Lord as the Bridegroom and us as the bride, this is represented by the fact that a wife receives her husband physically in terms of intercourse and insemination (see ML 219). But interestingly in spiritual terms the roles are reversed, because actually the wife is the lover and the husband is the receiver of her love. This is mentioned many times in *Married Love*:

Women are born forms of love, while men - with whom they unite themselves in order to be loved in return - are receivers. ... A man is not a form of love but only a form receptive of love. (ML 160; see also ML 155r, 161, 189, 198, 216r, 293.5, 321.2, 379, 393)

This is because women are will-oriented and men are intellect-oriented. And love is the giver, and wisdom is its receiver (see ML 102). And the will is the seat of love, and the intellect is the seat of wisdom.

But because marriage is always reciprocal, there are also ways in which a husband is a giver and a wife is a receiver, even in a non-physical way:

The wisdom that men have from the Lord knows no greater delight than to transmit its truths. And the love of wisdom that wives have in heaven knows no greater pleasure than to receive them as though in a womb, and thus to conceive them, carry them, and give them birth. That is what spiritual procreations are like among angels of heaven. And if you would believe it, natural procreations come also from the same origin. (ML 115.5)

There is always give and take on both sides in marriage, because this is what reciprocation is. The active, giving element in women is that they have that conjunctive sphere; a love for marriage (see ML 160, 161, 223) which men react to and receive. The active, giving element in men is that they have that discerning sphere; a love for becoming wise (see ML 32, 33, 115.5, 293.3,4) which women react to and receive.

Different Loves

Another big difference between men and women is that they regard the opposite sex very differently. "It is inherent in men commonly to love the opposite sex in general, whereas it is inherent in women to love one of the opposite sex" (ML 296). This is part of why it's important for men to propose to women, as a sign of their change of heart: a commitment to only one of the opposite sex (see ML 297).

My own theory for how to sum up the difference between men and women is that men have a love for separation and distinction, while women have a love for conjunction. Both of which are needed in the processes of regeneration and true married love.

Now we will turn to look specifically at some of these differences, namely the difference between love clothed with wisdom, wisdom clothed with love, men's rational wisdom, women's true married love, women's wisdom, and men's love.

Love Clothed with Wisdom, and Wisdom Clothed with Love

One of the ways that men and women are described as being different in the Writings is that men are 'love clothed with wisdom,' while women are 'wisdom clothed with love.'

The difference essentially consists in this, that the inmost quality in masculinity is love, and its veil wisdom, or in other words, it is love veiled over with wisdom, while the inmost quality in femininity is that same wisdom, the wisdom of masculinity, and its veil the love resulting from it.... Consequently, the male is a form of the wisdom of love, and the female is a form of the love of that wisdom. (ML 32; see also ML 66, 75.5, 159)

This is also described as women being the 'good of truth,' and men being the 'truth of good.'

The truth of good or truth from good exists in the male and is the essence of masculinity, and ... the good of truth or good from truth exists in the female and is the essence of femininity. (ML 61; see also ML 88, 90, 242)

One thing that this model represents is the physical nature of men and women's relationship. Men transfer their loves wrapped up in truth (seed) to their wives who then clothe that truth (seed) with goodness (a body) to create new life. So men are love clothed with wisdom (seeds), while women are that wisdom (seeds) clothed with love (egg, womb, fetus, etc. See ML 115.5 above). This also represents a common way that men and women interact, which is that men like to *think* about truth (love clothed with wisdom), while women like to apply that same truth to a useful life, or clothe truth with goodness (that wisdom clothed with love). Also, the fact that women are 'wisdom clothed with love' is one of the reasons why women in the Word represent the affection for truth (AC 3030; AR 543). They are the goodness of truth, the affection for truth, the love of wisdom. Women "love the things that wisdom teaches" (ML 202).

Secondary Goodness or Love

One of the interesting things about this model of men and women is that when taken together, it essentially creates the trine of love, wisdom, and use, which I suppose you could say is humanity in its fullest sense. Imagine a picture of three concentric circles. The center is love, the middle is wisdom, and the outer circle is goodness or use.⁶¹ Men represent the inner two circles (love clothed with wisdom), while women represent the outer two circles (that wisdom clothed with love or goodness). The Writings talk about how the outer ring is a different kind of goodness or love from the inner circle. It's a secondary love.

The husband represents wisdom and the wife represents love of that wisdom. This love, however, is not the first love referred to before, but a **secondary love** which the wife has from the Lord through the wisdom of her husband. The Lord's love, which is the first love, is the love in the husband of becoming wise. (ML 21.2; see also ML 32, 75.5, 89, 100, 115.5, 242)

There are, in consequence, two loves in a man, one of which is the love of growing wise, which comes first, and **the second of which is the love of wisdom**, which comes afterwards. But if this second love continues on in a man, it is an evil love, and is called conceit or love of his own intelligence. It will be established later that to keep this love from destroying man, it was provided from creation that this love be taken from him and transferred into woman, so that it might **become married love**, which makes him whole again. (ML 88.2, see also ML 193)

So it's good that this secondary love is initially separated from the love of growing wise, because then the love of wisdom can be turned into true married love, rather than the love of self. But ultimately the two can become united again. And when they do, then true usefulness results, which is inspired by the love and wisdom from the Lord through the husband and wife.

It might seem from this that the man is somehow closer to the Lord than the woman. It almost looks like a model in which the Lord is at the center (love), surrounded by men (wisdom), surrounded by women (goodness). But if that is a reflection of reality, it in no way puts women further from the Lord, and men closer to the Lord, because the fullness of the entire model exists in the outer ring, in usefulness. I think one way to think of it is that men and women both represent the Lord in the two different ways that He interacts with us. Men as "the wisdom of

⁶¹ Another thing this model calls to mind is that in the celestial church, husbands represent goodness and wives truth, while in the spiritual church, men represent truth and women goodness (See AC 4434.9, 4823, 8647, 8994.3,4). So maybe at the celestial core (inner two rings) of humanity it's a marriage of love (husband) and wisdom (wife), while in the outer spiritual ring (outer two rings) it's a marriage of wisdom (husband) and love (wife).

love” represent the Lord as distinct from us. While women as “the resulting love of that wisdom” represent the Lord as being inside of us, conjoined with us, and in our lives.

This is why women have a wisdom of the delights of married love (see ML 155r), because they represent the fullness of married love, the power in ultimates, the final return to love. “Love reveals itself through delights; indeed, it exists and lives through them” (ML 68). So in the wife is the fullness of married love experienced, and represented. I think this is why women have an inner enjoyment of life that men don’t have (see ML 297).

This is also perhaps why in Jeremiah it says “For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth— A woman shall encompass a man” (Jeremiah 31:22). A woman brings expression and application to the wisdom in a man. It also calls to mind the nature of the creation of woman in Genesis, where Eve was created from the rib of Adam. The rib clothes the heart (love clothed with wisdom; man), and woman was created from that rib (that wisdom clothed with love); the fleshed out rib of Adam. See *‘Femininity Derived From Masculinity?’* below.

I think another way to view this model is that in the marriage of a husband and wife the two are united by *two different* loves but *the same* wisdom. In other words, the husband is the wisdom of love (having a knowledge about married love which governs his life), while the wife is the love of that wisdom (having a love for actually joining with a husband who lives that life). They have different loves (inner and outer, theoretical and applicational), but they are united by the same wisdom (the wisdom of married love). And since wisdom is the expression of love, then they share the same expression of married love. In other words, they lead the same life together, while maintaining their individual loves. This is how they can become one angel, but remain two people. They share that same middle ring of wisdom: the life and expression of their own particular married love.

Women’s Married Love

The cycle of the relationship between men and women really starts with women, because they are the ones who have married love inherently in them from the Lord, while men do not.

Women are born forms of love, while men - with whom they unite themselves in order to be loved in return - are receivers. ... A man is not a form of love but only a form receptive of love. (ML 160; see also ML 155r, 161, 189, 198, 216r, 293.5, 321.2, 379, 393)

This [conjugal] atmosphere is received by the female sex and communicated through it to the male sex. The male sex does not have any married love inherent in it, but married love is inherent only in the female sex and is transmitted to the male sex from it.... The masculine form is an intellect-oriented one and the feminine form a will-oriented one; and an intellect-oriented form does not have the capacity to develop a marital warmth on its own, but can do so only from the associated warmth of another in whom this has been implanted from creation. Consequently the masculine form cannot receive married love except by having adjoined to it the will-oriented form of a woman, because this is at the same time a form of love.

(ML 223; see also ML 33, 161, 200, 224, 225, 297, 393, 409; cf. 46)

Men receive this sphere of love from women in general (beginning with their mothers, sisters, female relatives, and female friends), but particularly from their wives.

Men's Spiritual Rational and Moral Wisdom

We know that in general, married love conjoins itself with wisdom. Married love in men and women conjoins itself with their rational and moral wisdom. Both men and women can have this wisdom in them (see ML 102). If a person is leading a life that expresses married love (rational and moral wisdom), then that life can be filled with the actual feelings of that love.

But in particular we know that married love comes from the Lord through the wife and unites itself to a particular wisdom in men. And the particular wisdom that comes from the Lord through men to unite with married love is their rational (or intellectual⁶²) and moral wisdom.⁶³

Wisdom in men is twofold, intellectual and moral, and their intellectual wisdom has to do with their understanding alone, while their moral wisdom has to do with both their understanding and at the same time their life. (ML 163; see also ML 102, 130)

Rational wisdom has to do with things like “knowledge, intelligence and wisdom.... rationality, judgment, genius, learning, sagacity,” and it is associated with fields of study such as “philosophy, physics, geometry, mechanics, chemistry, astronomy, law, political science, ethics,

⁶² The Rogers translation of *Married Love* is, as far as I know, the only translation that translates *sapientia rationalis* occasionally as “intellectual” rather than “rational” wisdom. In terms of strict translation therefore, “intellectual wisdom” should be considered identical to “rational wisdom.”

⁶³ Traditionally it is believed that the counter-part to women's ‘married love’ is men's ‘rational wisdom.’ There are only eight passages in *Married Love* which talk about the specific wisdom in men which is the counter-part to the married love in women, and in all eight passages it says *both* rational *and* moral wisdom are needed, not just rational wisdom (see ML 102, 163, 164, 165, 168, 195, 293, 294).

history, and many more” (see ML 163). In other words, rational or intellectual wisdom has to do with **truth**.

Elements having to do with moral wisdom in men, on the other hand, are all **moral virtues** which have regard to the way they live and which enter into their manner of life. And they include as well **spiritual virtues** which spring from **love toward God and love for the neighbor**, and which flow together into those loves. Virtues which have to do with men's moral wisdom likewise have various names, and they are called **temperance, sobriety, integrity, kindness, friendliness, modesty, honesty, helpfulness, courteousness; also diligence, industriousness, skillfulness, alacrity, generosity, liberality, magnanimity, energy, courage, prudence** - not to mention many others. Spiritual virtues in men are **love of religion, charity, truthfulness, faith, conscience, innocence**, as well as many more. These virtues, both moral and spiritual, can be attributed in general to **a man's love and zeal for religion, for the public good, for his country, for his fellow citizens, for his parents, for his wife, and for his children**. In all of these justice and judgment prevail. **Justice** has to do with moral wisdom, and judgment has to do with intellectual wisdom. (ML 164)

In other words, moral wisdom has to do with **goodness**. These are the sorts of things that women typically are first attracted to in men (see ML 44.2). And this is why women unite themselves with men's moral wisdom outwardly (consciously), because “the virtues of this wisdom are akin for the most part to similar virtues in women” (ML 165). But a woman unites herself with a man's rational or intellectual wisdom inwardly (subconsciously) because the truth is a guide for goodness. So a wife loves her husband's rational wisdom as a guide for the life of their true married love. It's not that women can't be rational. Women are just as capable of being knowledgeable, intelligent and wise as men are (see ML 102, 122; HH 369). After all women “have these things in them inwardly” (ML 165) since their subconscious core is wisdom (see ML 32). But rather it's that women tend to have more of a focus on *using* that wisdom, then on *thinking* about it. They are will-oriented rather than intellect-oriented. Without moral wisdom, I don't think a wife could (or would want to) unite with a man's rational wisdom, because it's moral wisdom that looks to life. In fact it's actually his *moral* wisdom that a wife unites with (see ML 195). So it's not just ‘rational wisdom’ that is needed for a husband to receive married love from his wife, it's rational *and* moral wisdom, as the angel wives told Swedenborg:

Our husbands call this wisdom a spiritual-rational wisdom and a spiritual-moral one. Spiritual-rational wisdom, they say, is a matter of the intellect and its intellectual concepts, while spiritual-moral wisdom is a matter of the will and its mode of life. Yet they join the two together and regard them as one; and they maintain that the pleasant delights of this wisdom are transposed from their minds into delights in our hearts, and

from our hearts back to their hearts, so that these return to the wisdom from which they originated.... It is a spiritual wisdom, and from that a rational and moral one. Spiritual wisdom is to acknowledge the Lord our Savior as God of heaven and earth, and through the Word and discourses from it to acquire from Him truths connected with the Church, from which comes a spiritual rationality; and in addition to live from Him according to those truths, from which comes a spiritual morality. **Our husbands call these two the wisdom which in general works to produce true married love.** We have also heard from them the reason, namely, that this wisdom opens the inner faculties of their mind and thus of their body, providing free passage from the firsts to the last of these for the stream of love, on whose flow, sufficiency and strength married love depends for its existence and life. As regards marriage in particular, **the spiritual-rational and spiritual-moral wisdom of our husbands has as its end and goal to love only their wives and to rid themselves of all desire for other women.** Moreover, to the extent they achieve this, to that extent that love is heightened in degree and perfected in quality, and the more clearly and keenly do we then feel matching delights in us corresponding to the contented pleasures of our husbands' affections and the pleasant exaltations of their thoughts. (ML 293.3-4)

Men tend to like to think about abstract ideas. This is the intellect at work. But wisdom comes when those ideas are applied to life (see ML 130). Men can use their intellect to discover that the Lord teaches about the benefits and usefulness of married love. This is the man using his rational wisdom. And when the man then applies (marries) that wisdom to life, it is an expression of his moral wisdom. Women are attracted first to this moral wisdom, but innately within them they recognize that their ability to unite with a man as a husband must stem from his rational wisdom too, or in other words from his ability to recognize truths as coming from the Lord alone. (see ML 102, 163-165) Women therefore join themselves externally to the spiritual life that men lead (spiritual moral wisdom), as well as internally to the awareness in men that their moral virtues⁶⁴ are inspired by higher spiritual principles (spiritual rational wisdom). So taken in its entirety (a man's moral wisdom containing within it spiritual rational wisdom), this wisdom expresses itself in the desire to unite with just one woman in marriage.

So in a very general sense, you could say that the wisdom that men must have in order to receive married love from their wives is: the life of monogamy (see ML 294.2).

It is a mark of intelligence to love only one's wife, and such a love does not lack virility; but it is a mark of irrationality to love in preference to one's wife the opposite sex in general, and such a love does lack virility. (ML 331; see also ML 77.4, 200, 217)

⁶⁴ Its interesting to note that the word 'virtue' stems from the Latin word 'virtus' which also means 'manliness.'

And ultimately, a husband receives *true* married love from his wife not only when he *lives* the life of monogamy, but especially when he *loves* the life of monogamy. In the 1999 movie entitled “The Bachelor,” a wise elder gentleman describes two imaginary places to live: Bachelorville and Husbandtown. Many men want to live in Bachelorville. Even some husbands want to live in Bachelorville. But as this man says in the movie, “A good proposal comes not only from love, but from the *desire to be a husband*.”⁶⁵ A man who has rational and moral wisdom is a man who *wants* to live in Husbandtown.

Another aspect of the true wisdom that can unite with and receive true married love is that it is not an arrogant or conceited wisdom. True wisdom is humble, and not self-serving.

If a man loves himself on account of his intelligence, he draws it back from his wife to himself, which results in disunion instead of union. Furthermore, to love one's own intelligence is to look to oneself for wisdom, which is to be irrational; consequently it is to love one's own irrationality.... If men themselves love their own intelligence, their intelligence cannot be united with its proper true love which is found in a wife; and if a man's intelligence is not united with its proper true love which is found in a wife, his intelligence becomes irrational as a result of conceit, and married love in him turns cold. Now what woman can unite her love to a love that is cold? And what man can unite the irrationality of his conceit to a love for intelligence? (ML 331; see also ML 18, 193)

True wisdom is a wisdom of *life* and a wisdom of *love*. Wisdom of spiritual *life* comes from the church. A man receives married love from his wife, to the extent that he is wise from the church and from the Lord (see ML 63). Wisdom of *love* is what true masculinity is described as (see ML 32). True wisdom in men is a knowledge about and desire for true married love.

Abiding in those [angel] husbands and wives is wisdom concerning married love and its delights - **in the husbands, wisdom concerning married love**, and in the wives, wisdom concerning its delights. (ML 155r; see also ML 294.7)

One of the interesting things about men's wisdom is that the Writings say that men ultimately receive nothing but truth from the Lord.

From the spiritual marriage that exists between goodness and truth, which flows into each and every thing in the universe, nothing else is received by members of the male sex but truth and what relates to truth; ... The male soul, being intellectual in nature, is therefore truth; for anything intellectual in nature is nothing else. (ML 220; see also ML 90).

Because this is the way men are, their wisdom is completely different from women's wisdom. Even aside from the fact that both men and women need to have spiritual rational and moral

⁶⁵ See the Bibliography for more information about this movie.

wisdom (see ML 102), women's wisdom is completely different from men's because it stems from a will-oriented mind, rather than an intellect-oriented mind. And so even though women are essentially the "wisdom of masculinity" at their core (which is the wisdom of married love, see ML 32), the Writings say that women are not capable of men's wisdom:

This wisdom is characteristic of the intellect of men, and it ascends into a light in which women are not. That is why women do not speak from it, but in gatherings of men where matters like this are being discussed, they keep silent and only listen. Nevertheless, wives still have these things in them inwardly, as is apparent from the fact that they do listen, inwardly recognizing and concurring with those things which they hear and have heard from their husbands. (ML 165)⁶⁶

It is apparent from this that, because of the universal difference which exists between masculinity and femininity, a husband is not capable of his wife's wisdom, nor is a wife capable of her husband's wisdom. Women are not even capable of a man's moral wisdom to the extent that it springs from his intellectual wisdom. (ML 168)

Men perceive from the intellect, while women perceive from love. They might then have the same wisdom in *life*, but they come to it from very different places. Now we will turn to look at what women's wisdom is.

Women's Wisdom

Women play the role of love, but that doesn't mean that they have no wisdom. Sometimes people find that the above statements from *Married Love* 165 and 168 sounds degrading to women, as if women are somehow not as smart as men. I think what these passages are saying is that women's wisdom is completely *different* from men's wisdom. And as we will find out in this section, if anything, women's wisdom is greater than men's (see ML 208.2; cf. ML 299). Since it is believed by many that Swedenborg's book *Married Love* was written for men as the primary audience, it often seems that there is more information about men than about women. I've often found that frustrating with passages like *Married Love* 168. It almost seems like, if there were an equivalent passage referring to women's wisdom like, it might read something like this:

The [will] also perceives those sorts of matters which [apply to life and usefulness] - it being the nature of [emotional and celestial perception] to move in that direction - while [truth] does not perceive beyond what it [sees]. When it does, its perception draws on its

⁶⁶ See Appendix IX on "Women Speaking or Keeping Silent?"

union with the [will] of a [woman], a union established from creation. For the intellect has to do with light, and love with warmth, and concerns that are matters of light are seen, whereas concerns that are matters of warmth are felt. (Changed from ML 168)

Those are my own changes, and not actually what the passages says. However, there is a similar statement made in *Divine Providence*: “Our discernment simply sees, and it sees things that have to do with wisdom or truth but not things that have to do with love or what is good” (DP 39; see also AC 3463.3). In other words, the feelings and perceptions that women have are just as valid as the insights and thoughts that men have. And in a complementary way, they can work together.

Women have a wisdom that is based on their perception of love (see ML 166-167).

“Women have an *interior* perception of love, while men have only a more *superficial* perception” (ML 47r). Women’s wisdom is described by angel husbands and wives, because Swedenborg knew he was ‘out of his league’ on that subject (see ML 166, also ML 56.2):

“Our wives know all the states of our mind, nor is anything hidden from them. They see, perceive and feel whatever comes from our will. And we in turn know nothing of this in our wives. Wives have this gift, because they have very tender loves and feelings of almost blazing zeal for the preservation of the friendship and trust in marriage and thus for the preservation of both partners' happiness of life. This happiness they watch over for their husbands and themselves from **a wisdom inherent in their love.**”... [The angel wives] then said, "Every man has five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. But **we have also a sixth sense**, which is a sense of all the delights of married love in our husbands.... In a word, the spiritual delights of our husbands take on a kind of natural embodiment in us. And for that reason, our husbands call us the sensory organs of chaste married love and therefore of its delights. But this sense in our sex appears, continues, remains, and rises in the measure that **our husbands love us for our wisdom and judgment.**” (ML 155r.3-155r.4)

Some of [the secrets of married love] so transcend the wisdom of you men that the comprehension of your intellect cannot grasp them. You men vaunt yourselves over us on account of your wisdom, but we do not vaunt ourselves over you on account of ours - even though **our wisdom is superior to yours** because it enters into your inclinations and affections and sees, perceives and feels them. (ML 208.2)⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Apparently there is still a lot we don’t know about the intelligence of wives (See ML 209 and Appendix XIII).

Men's Love

Men play the role of wisdom, but that doesn't mean that they have no love. Men *can* experience and have within them true married love. This is possible because of a husband's relationship with his wife:

An intellect-oriented form does not have the capacity to develop a marital warmth on its own, **but can do so** only from the associated warmth of another in whom this has been implanted from creation. (ML 223)

Men have no capacity to develop marital warmth on their own, however they *do* from their wives. So you might say, men have a *potential* capacity for married love.

There is a conjugal element in the smallest particulars in every person, **both male and female**; only that the conjugal element in the male and the conjugal element in the female are not the same, but the conjugal element of the male possesses a capacity for conjunction with the conjugal element of the female, and vice versa, even in the least particulars. (ML 316.4)

The heavenly marriage flows into everyone, both men and women (see ML 92, 220). It's just that men receive it differently than women do. Men have the potential ability to focus on conjunction, just as women have the potential ability to focus on distinction. And their abilities to move beyond their native orientations comes from their interaction with the opposite sex.

Similarities Between Men and Women

Despite the differences mentioned above, there are a lot of basic general similarities between men and women. Obviously they are both human, created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27). Both men and women have a will and intellect (see HH 369), and therefore both men and women receive love and wisdom from the Lord into their minds (see ML 85, 101; cf. ML 220). Both men and women have rational and moral wisdom (see ML 102). Because of married love, they both can have their understanding raised into the higher light of wisdom, and their will raised into the higher warmth of a love for wisdom (see ML 211). And despite having different wisdom, the rational wisdom of men is similar to the wisdom women have inwardly, and the moral wisdom of men is similar to the moral wisdom of women (see ML 165). Men and women are as *different* as goodness and truth, *and* as *similar* as goodness and truth.

And it is very important that men and women are similar, because having similarities is one of the ways that men and women can join with each other (ML 227-229, 241-246). Just like

it is important that goodness and truth be similar (see AC 3538; DLW 39; DP 233; ML 65, 87). “A rightful joining together, which is a joining of minds, takes place when similar goodness and similar truth exist with both persons” (AC 9182.3). This is how angel spouses are able to live in the same house and sleep in the same bed in heaven, because they have similar loves.

For all those who are in heaven are associated according to the affinities and close similarities of their love, and their homes are determined accordingly. This is because there are no dimensional spaces in the spiritual world, but they have appearances of space, and these appearances are determined according to the states of their life, and their states of life are determined according to states of love. Consequently.... two people cannot live together in the same house unless they are likenesses of each other. And they cannot live together at all as married partners unless their feelings for each other are mutual. (ML 50; see also AC 2732)

The Relationship Between Men and Women

That being said, it is still true that “in short, nothing in the two sexes is the same, although there is nevertheless a capacity for conjunction in every detail” (ML 33). Men and women conjoin because of what is different in them, as well as what is similar. In this section we will examine the ways that men and women join with each other in married love.

Even the beginnings of relationships between men and women reflect the nature of heavenly marriage. Young men and women in heaven are said to sport with each other—“as if the heart were sporting with the lungs” (ML 44.3)—in an angelic love for the opposite sex that is a chaste companionship between the sexes.⁶⁸ It also makes the implication that men are initially attracted to women’s *beauty*, while women are initially attracted to men’s *morality*. “The beauty of the young women and the morality of the young men correspond to each other, as reciprocal and mutually adaptable forms” (ML 44.2). And in fact a woman first joins with her husband’s *moral* wisdom (see ML 195).

In the beginning of the relationship between men and women there is also often conflict. Because the two are so different, they often don’t see eye to eye. It takes real effort to work towards complementary unity. This is very similar to the heavenly and Divine marriages. For example, the inner and outer selves are often at first in conflict with each other (see AC 3286). A person can understand something without willing it, and will something without understanding it (see DLW 361). Faith and charity have traditionally been divided in churches

⁶⁸ See Appendix X on the comparison of the heart and lungs with men and women and love and wisdom.

(see TCR 367). Which is more important, goodness or truth (see AC 7755)? Which comes first, goodness or truth (see AR 17)? The church has often turned away from the Lord (Ezekiel 23). Even in the Divine marriage, Jesus went through states of ‘emptying out’ (exinanition) in which He was not united with His own Divine soul (see TCR 105). So in natural marriages, this reality is frequently reflected in the fact that men and women can be in disagreement and conflict.

The thing that brings about *conjunction* is love (see HH 14; ML 72, 158, 172). Without love between the sexes, their differences could never be united in complementary union. This is true in all levels of marriage.

All joining of truth to good is effected by means of affection, for no truth ever enters the rational part of a person's mind or is joined to it except by means of affection, for affection has within it the good that flows from love, which good alone effects the joining together. (AC 3024)

And this is why, in the joining of a husband and wife, the wife plays the active role, and the husband plays the reactive or responsive role, because the wife has the love inherent in her. “A wife is joined to her husband by the atmosphere of her life emanating from her love” (ML 171).⁶⁹ And once a husband accepts that love within him, he can reciprocate and love her back (see ML 42.4).⁷⁰

Sex and the Sense of Touch

The Writings tell us that the sense of touch is “the special sense of married love” (ML 210-211). This is obvious in the interactions between the sexes. There is an innate desire to touch each other. The fact that men want to touch women’s bodies tends to bring up perverse thoughts. But this fact stems from a very important reality. It is through the sense of touch that married love is communicated on the ultimate level. Since men don’t have this love except through their wives, it makes sense that there would be a physical desire to touch, in order to ‘close the loop,’ to effect that transferal. And this sense (in its proper place) actually opens the interiors of the mind (see ML 211).

And of course the act of sexual intercourse is not only the end delight of this sense of touch, it is also the foundational representation for the heavenly marriage of the Lord and the

⁶⁹ See also ML 155r, 160, 161, 189, 198, 216r, 293.5, 321.2, 379, 393

⁷⁰ For a visual description of this reciprocation see ML 76.6-7, and Appendix XIV.

church, as has been shown above. And it is the physical representation of the heavenly marriage that goes on between and husband and wife.

A wife is joined to her husband by her assimilation of the powers of his manhood, though this depends on the spiritual love they have for each other. ... [Angels] said that the seminal fluids expended by husbands are universally received by their wives and added to the life in them, and that the wives in consequence lead a life in harmony and in progressively greater harmony with their husbands. Moreover, that the effect of this is to bring about a union of souls and conjunction of minds. The angels said that this is because a husband's seminal fluid contains his soul, and also his mind in respect to the interior elements of it which have been joined to the soul. They said further that this has been provided from creation, in order that a husband's wisdom - which forms his soul - may be assimilated into his wife, and that in this way they may become, in the Lord's words, one flesh. ... However, the angels added that occurrences of the utilization and assimilation in wives of the life of their husbands are contingent on their married love, because it is love, which is a spiritual union, which joins two people together. (ML 172; see also ML 115.5, 321.2)

Oneness

Becoming 'one flesh' represents the fullness of married love (see ML 201). But becoming 'one flesh' is only the physical form of the spiritual oneness that is the actual married love. So now we will look at what that spiritual oneness is. Oneness is brought about by having all the necessary ingredients for true married love that were mentioned earlier, and the expression of those ingredients through wisdom. In act, this oneness is brought about by sharing, by thinking and willing the same way, by freedom, and by living one life together in a complementary way.

A husband and wife actually share their spiritual elements with each other (see ML 199; AC 2732), because wanting another to have what is one's own is one of the aspects of true love (see DLW 47). A husband and wife also become joined together in true married love by thinking and willing the same way (see AC 10173, 10756; HH 369; ML 42.5). And this thinking and willing the same way must be done in complete freedom on both sides (see AC 10173; HH 369, ML 291): And a husband and wife become one by living one life together in a complementary way, like the heart and lungs, or like two eyes (see AC 2740, 6960, 9182.3; ML 75.5; TCR 371; AE 984.2). And because men and women represent the two halves of humanity, when they are united in true married love, they represent humanity in its fullness (see ML 192, 316). A woman actually becomes a better woman, and a man actually becomes a better man (see ML 200), as can be illustrated by this passage:

The Lord took beauty and grace of life from man and transferred them into woman, and that is why a man not reunited with his beauty and grace in woman is stern, severe, dry and unattractive, and also not wise except for his own sake alone, in which case he is a dunce. On the other hand, when a man is united with his beauty and grace of life in a wife, he becomes agreeable, pleasant, full of life and lovable, and therefore wise. (ML 56.4)

A husband and wife also become one by working on their own individual regeneration, because by working on the union of goodness and truth or will and intellect within themselves (the heavenly marriage), they bring that marriage into their natural marriage with their spouse, which is the source of true married love in natural marriages (see HH 370).

Union of Will and Intellect in Husband and Wife

The above section describes the general way that men and women unite in true married love. But there are some specifics about this union that the Writings also address, and these specifics have to do with the fact that natural marriage springs from the heavenly marriage, which is the marriage of goodness and truth, or the will and intellect. Specifically, the marriage of a husband and wife is the marriage of the wife's will with the husband's intellect (cf. ML 195). "In heaven, the husband plays the role labeled intellect and the wife the role called volition. (HH 367; see also HH 369).

A wife's will unites itself with her husband's understanding, and the husband's understanding in consequence unites itself with his wife's will. The reason is that a male is born to become a form of understanding, and a female to become a form of will that loves the understanding of the male. It follows from this that the marital union is a union of the wife's will with the husband's understanding, and a reciprocal union of the husband's understanding with the wife's will. Everyone sees that there is a very close union between understanding and will, and that the union is such that the one faculty can enter into the other and find delight from and in that union. (ML 159; see also ML 42.4, 270.4-6)

Also, as we seen before, a man is the 'wisdom of love,' while a woman is the 'love of the wisdom in a man' (see ML 32, 75.7). A wife loves her husband's 'wisdom of love' because the 'wisdom of love' in a husband is to love his wife. And a wife loves this, because it allows her to join with her husband in true married love. 'Love' loves whatever allows it to exist, which is wisdom. And this then allows for both the husband and wife to be more loving and wise. "A wife acquires from her husband's wisdom a love of it in her, and from his wife's love of wisdom a husband acquires wisdom in him" (ML 355.6; cf. ML 21.1, 32, 100).

And this is why “married love has its seat in chaste wives, but their love depends on their husbands” (ML 216r; see also ML 55.7, 69, 217), because a man must freely choose to oppose his innate love for many of the sex, and instead choose to love only one (see ML 296, 208.3). This is what makes a man heroic, manly and wise. This is the wisdom that a woman loves in a man, and the wisdom that is at the core of a woman. The wisdom of true married love.

A man receives the marriage of goodness and truth in his intellect, which means that for him it is an understanding of and affection for the doctrinal theory behind the conjunction of the two. This understanding, when brought into the life of his moral wisdom (virtues), is attractive to a woman. And because this is the order of things, the Writings say that the church is formed in the man, who then brings it into his relationship with a woman (see ML 63). This is the counter-balance to the fact that a husband receives married love from his wife. The marriage of goodness and truth flows into a man’s intellect in the form of the church. His loves and wisdom are based on this. The marriage of goodness and truth flows into a woman’s will in the form of married love. Her loves and wisdom are based on this. When the two are united in the relationship of a husband and wife, then the image of the church as the Lord’s bride is complete.

Femininity Derived from Masculinity?

One of the confusing things that comes up in a discussion of the relationship between men and women is the concept that ‘woman’ was created out of ‘man.’ This is a concept that comes right from the literal sense of the Word in *Genesis 2:21-23*.

And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: “This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

But is this saying that women were actually created out of men?

If you give it even a little thought, you can see that woman did not come from the rib of man and that these words involve deeper secrets than have ever yet come to light.... The exact wording is that the woman was *built* out of a rib, not that she was *made, formed, or created*, as before. “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (AC 152-153; Genesis 1:27)

Like the rest of the Word, this concept has an internal sense, which we will examine in this section. But the intriguing thing is that the Writings also say that based on this passage it is

somehow true that femininity is derived from masculinity (see ML 32). This seems to contradict the idea that both men and women were created together in the image of God in *Genesis* 1:27. But we will figure out what that means in the following subsections.

There are a number of places where the concept that ‘woman comes from man,’ is discussed.⁷¹ And there are a number of different ideas going on within this literal-sense story, which we will now examine more closely.

Woman Was Taken Out of Man [*Vir*] or Man [*Homo*]?

One of the ideas we can take from this story is that ‘woman’ was taken out of ‘man’ (*homo*), or ‘mankind’ or humanity. The following is a quote from *Married Love*, in which I have included some of the Latin words to make it easier to follow:

An inclination and also a capacity for conjunction as though into one was implanted in man [*vir*] and woman [*femina*] from creation, and man [*vir*] and woman [*femina*] still have this inclination and capacity in them. That this is so appears from the book of creation, and at the same time from what the Lord said. In the book of creation, which we call *Genesis*, we read:

Jehovah God fashioned the rib, which He had taken from the man [*homo*], into a woman [*mulier*], and He brought her to the man [*homo*]. And the man [*homo*] said, "This one, this time, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman (*'ishshah*), because she was taken from man (*'ish*) [*vir*]. For this reason **a man [*vir*]** shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife [*uxor*], and they shall be as one flesh." (*Genesis* 2:22-24)

The Lord also said something similar in *Matthew*:

Have you not read that He who made them from the beginning...male [*masculo*] and female [*femina*] ..., said, "For this reason **a man [*homo*]** shall leave father and mother and cling to his wife [*uxor*], and the two shall be as one flesh"?

Therefore they are no longer two, but one flesh. (*Matthew* 19:4-6)

[2] It is apparent from these verses that **woman [*femina*] was created out of man [*vir*]**, and that they each have both an inclination and a capacity for reuniting themselves into one. This means into one person [*homo*], as is also apparent from the book of creation, where the two together are called "man." [*homo*] For we read:

In the day that God created man [*homo*]..., He created them male [*masculo*] and female [*femina*] ...and called their name Man [*homo*]... (*Genesis* 5:1,2)

We find the reading here, "He called their name Adam," but "Adam" and "man" [*homo*] are the same word in the Hebrew. Moreover, both together are called "man" [*homo*] in *Genesis* 1:27 and 3:22-24. "One flesh" also means "one person," [*homo*] as is apparent from passages in the Word where the term "all flesh" occurs, meaning "every person" [*homo*]." (ML 156r)

⁷¹ See AC 151-160; ML 32, 56, 88-89, 91-92, 122, 156r-158, 173, 184, 193-199, 353

So was ‘woman’ taken out of man (*vir*) or man (*homo*)? According to the Latin of this quote from *Married Love*, *Genesis* says ‘man (*vir*) shall leave father and mother’, and *Matthew* says ‘man (*homo*) shall leave father and mother’. Swedenborg says man (*vir*), but the verse from *Matthew* seems to imply man (*homo*)! Interestingly the Latin for the translation of *Genesis* 2:21-25 in *Secrets of Heaven* paragraph number 130 says:

And Jehovah God made slumber fall on the human [*homo*], and he went to sleep. And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. And Jehovah God built a woman [*mulier*] out of the rib that he took from the human [*homo*] and brought her to the human [*homo*]. And the human [*homo*] said, “This time, bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. This is why she will be called ‘wife’ [*uxor*]: because she was taken from man [*vir*].” Therefore a man [*vir*] will leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife [*uxor*], and they will become one flesh. And they were both naked, the human [*homo*] and his wife [*uxor*], and did not blush. (Genesis 2:21-25 from AC 130)

So while it says that ‘woman was taken from man [*vir*]’ the storyline implies that woman was built out of the rib from the man [*homo*]. And the whole story ends describing the human [*homo*] and his wife [*uxor*], rather than the man [*vir*] and his wife [*uxor*]. The Writings describe the difference between these two:

When the Word describes the church, it uses either the phrase *man [husband, vir] and wife* or the phrase *a human [man, homo, adam] and his wife*.⁷² When it uses *man and wife*, the man symbolizes an element of the intellect, or something true, while the wife symbolizes an element of the will, or something good. When it uses *a human and his wife*, the human symbolizes the good that love embraces, or love, while the wife symbolizes the truth that faith espouses, or faith. So the human symbolizes the core quality of the church, while the wife symbolizes the church itself. (AC 915)

So this story is describing two things. One is how goodness in the will is taken from truth in the intellect (woman [*mulier*] was taken from man [*vir*]). The other is that the truth that faith espouses is built out of the good that love embraces, or true faith is built out of love (woman [*uxor*] was built from man [*homo*]).

Implanted in these two from creation is an inclination to join together into one, for the reason that one was formed out of the other. Wisdom is formed out of a love of growing wise, which is to say that truth is formed as a result of good. And a love of wisdom is

⁷² Note 514 from NCE of *Secrets of Heaven*, page 650: Swedenborg is referring to the Hebrew word (*is*) when he speaks of a ‘man’ here, and to the word (*adam*) when he speaks of a ‘human,’ and Genesis 2 has several examples of each. See the translation of Genesis 2.22-25 in this volume (after #130), where the distinction between the two words is preserved. See also note 379 on the text of Genesis 7:2 and note 61. - Lisa Hyatt Cooper

formed as a result of that wisdom, or in other words, the good of truth is formed as a result of that truth. (ML 89)

The Sense of Self Is Brought to Life

In the discussion of this subject in *Secrets of Heaven*, it also says that the woman represents our ‘sense of self,’ which was built out of the rib of the human.

Building means reconstructing what has fallen down. A rib symbolizes a sense of self devoid of life. A woman symbolizes a sense of self brought to life by the Lord. Bringing her to the human means giving people a sense of self. Unlike their parents, the members of the generation that inherited the earliest church preferred not to have a heavenly character but to lead themselves. They sought selfhood or a sense of autonomy, so it was yielded to them. Still, it was a living selfhood, vivified by the Lord, so it is called a woman and later a wife. (AC 151)

So the idea that ‘woman is from man’ in one sense is referring to the idea that the Ancient Church came from the Most Ancient Church. The remnants of the first church which was dead (like a rib taken out of a sleeping man), was built up into a new church (like a woman). The spiritual church was brought to life out of the dead celestial church.

But this idea also has to do with a fact which affects all of us today. It’s talking about how one part of our spiritual being is formed out of another part of our spiritual being. The true feeling that life is our own (Eve) comes from knowing our life actually belongs to the Lord (Adam). And the more we know that life is the Lord’s (Adam), the more we feel alive (Eve; see AC 155). (See also the discussion of Adam and Eve in chapter three above). That feeling that life is our own is what makes up the church, the bride of the Lord, so that we can reciprocate His love (see AC 155). But the true and good feeling that life is our own (the living Eve), comes from our rational mind knowing that life is the Lord’s (Adam; see AC 261). ‘Woman comes from man.’ And ultimately the two are meant to be married so that the “heavenly, spiritual life [is] linked so closely with the sense of independence that they [seem] to form a unit” (AC 160). The goal is that we not only *know* the love of God, but we also *feel* the love of God. The latter comes from the former. ‘Woman comes from man.’

Selfish Love of One’s Own Wisdom, Turned into Married Love

The word “*build*” is used because it means reconstructing what has fallen” (AC 153). Fallen humanity is when we are caught up in the love of self. The problem is that the Lord

designed us to be beings that love wisdom (we are naturally curious), which can lead to a pride of self-intelligence. And this is especially true for men, being naturally intellect-oriented. So in order to curb this tendency, “a man’s love of wisdom is transferred into his wife” (ML 156r.3). The Lord took the ‘love of wisdom’ out of men, and put it in women, so that instead of *men* loving their *own* wisdom (love of self), men love women, and women love men (married love).

Because every person is inclined from birth to love himself, [the angels] said, to keep a person from perishing from love of self and a conceit in his own intelligence, it has been provided from creation that that love in a man be transferred to his wife, and that it be implanted in her from birth to love the intelligence and wisdom of her husband and thus the man. That is why a wife continually draws her husband's conceit in his own intelligence to herself, extinguishing it in him and causing it to live in her, thus turning it into married love and filling it with gratifications beyond measure. (ML 353; see also ML 88, 193)

This is why in the description of femininity in *Married Love* paragraph number 32, it says that the core of a woman is the wisdom of masculinity. A love of wisdom is formed from wisdom itself (see ML 89), and so in a similar way, the ‘love of wisdom’ in femininity is formed from the ‘wisdom of love’ in masculinity (see ML 32). Men represent a love of growing wise. Women represent a love of wisdom (Adam’s rib) ‘brought to life,’ in other words, wisdom being used in life, and especially wisdom being used in the life of married love. The love of applying wisdom to life comes from the love of growing wise. ‘Woman comes from man.’

And because women are essentially this ‘love of the *wisdom of masculinity*’ or the ‘love of the *wisdom of love*,’ they are naturally inclined to want to unite (or reunite) with that wisdom (the wisdom of love, the wisdom of married love) which exists in a man (see ML 157, 195).

Secondary Love

We’ve talked a few times about how women represent a ‘secondary love’ which attaches itself to truth or wisdom. So in many ways what ‘woman was taken out of man’ is referring to is the fact that in terms of our spiritual regeneration, goodness appears to come from truth. Like a fruit tree grows from a seed, or a baby comes from insemination (cf. ML 220.3). What a woman inherently is (secondary or applicational love) comes from what a man inherently is (truth). Secondary love comes from truth, because truth is the seed from which it grows. We get our goodness from truth. ‘Femininity is derived from masculinity.’

The reality of the situation is that truth comes from goodness, because goodness is primary (see AC 7755). But in the spiritual church (which is currently the state of most of the world), truth apparently comes first in time, and it leads to goodness (see AR 17).⁷³ This paradoxical nature of goodness and truth is nicely illustrated by the paradoxical nature of the creation of men and women. In *Genesis* chapter one, both men and women are created in the image of God (goodness is primary, truth is secondary). But in *Genesis* chapter two, man is created first and then woman (truth appears first in time, and goodness second in time).

There are several passages in *Married Love*, that talk about how women represent this secondary goodness or love which comes from truth or wisdom (see ML 56, 88, 89, 91, 92, 122, 156r, 193), and that this is represented by the story of ‘woman coming from man’ in *Genesis*. This is reflected in the fact that men are intellect-oriented, while women are will-oriented. Men typically like to *think* about truth, while women typically like to *apply* truth to life in *love*.

So, often this concept of woman being formed from man makes it sound like woman is somehow a second-class citizen. But in reality I think what’s happening is that men represent that ultimate natural truth which needs to be drawn up by a higher love from their wives: married love. Similarly, women represent that ultimate natural goodness (secondary goodness) which needs to be drawn up by a higher truth from their husbands: rational and moral wisdom. There is a balance. But I suppose since truth is more ultimate than goodness, then it’s ‘man’ who represent that most ultimate, which ‘woman’ is created out of to become a form of natural goodness. In fact it is often women who give life (Eve) to the ultimate truths (rib) that are in men, by applying them to life. It can sound like ‘woman comes from man’ in the sense that men somehow are women’s creators. But that’s not what it is describing. The Lord is the only Creator.

A Woman Turns Herself into a Wife by means of a Man

Another concept behind the idea of ‘woman coming from man’ is the idea that a woman *turns herself into a wife* by means of a man. A *wife* is ‘taken out of’ man.

And Jehovah God made slumber fall on the human, and he went to sleep. And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. And Jehovah God built a **woman** out of the rib that he took from the human and brought her to the human. And the human

⁷³ Goodness is actually first in time as well as in end (AC 3325.3-4). Goodness is the firstborn even when its brother ‘truth’ steals the birthright. (See also 1555, 3603, 3701.5, 4247, 9296.2, 10057.2-4)

said, “This time, bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. This is why **she will be called ‘wife’**: because she was taken from man. (Genesis 2:21-23; NCE of AC 130)⁷⁴

The Writings say that this is describing a woman transforming herself into a wife:

This transformation is accomplished by the wife in secret ways, which is what is meant by woman's having been created while the man slept.... This sleep and the man's sleeping symbolize a man's complete ignorance that his wife is transformed and, so to speak, created from him. This is apparent from... wives' innate discretion and prudence not to divulge anything of their love, not even of their adopting their husband's life's affections and of their thus transfusing his wisdom into them. It is clear... that a wife does this without her husband's knowing and while he is, so to speak, asleep, thus that she does it in secret ways.... The prudence needed to accomplish it is instinctive in women from creation, thus from birth, for reasons that are necessary in building married love, friendship and trust, so that the two may have bliss in living together and happiness of life. (ML 194)

It is through a woman's relationship with her husband that she transforms herself into a wife. She puts flesh on his rib, she loves his wisdom, she gives life to his wisdom. She takes that wisdom to be her own, like the traditions of taking his name to be her own. It's the specific wisdom of life that she loves, and she finds it in this one man. And this is accomplished by her because as we've seen above, women are the lovers, and husbands are the receivers of that love.

This transformation is accomplished by the wife by a union of her will with the inner will of her husband. (11) This to the end that the will of the one and the will of the other may become one will, and the two partners thus one person. (12) This transformation is accomplished by the wife by an adoption of her husband's affections. (13) This transformation is accomplished by the wife by her reception of the propagations of her husband's soul with delight - a delight arising from her willing to be an embodiment of love for her husband's wisdom. (14) A maiden is thus transformed into a wife, and a youth into a husband. (ML 184; see also ML 173; 193-201)

So the fact that ‘woman is from man’ or that ‘femininity is derived from masculinity’ is not describing a literal reality between men and women, but rather it is describing the fact that faith (woman) comes from love (husband), and secondary applicational goodness (woman) comes from truth (man). *Loving God* (woman) comes from *knowing God* (man), and loving to apply wisdom to life (woman) comes from a love of growing wise (man). And finally that a woman transforms herself into a wife by means of a husband.

⁷⁴ See Appendix XVII - The Transformation of a Woman into a Wife

Men and Women's Roles and Representations

As we've seen over the course of this paper, men and women have a variety of different representations and roles.⁷⁵ And one of the important basic distinctions to observe is that there is a difference between what men and women represent *in the Word*, and the nature of who men and women are *in life*. They are related concepts, but they are distinct concepts. An example of this is the fact that in the *Word*, husbands represent goodness,⁷⁶ while in *life* husbands represent wisdom.⁷⁷ Notice the bulk of the passages listed in the footnote for the fact that 'in the *Word* husbands represent goodness' come from *Secrets of Heaven*, an expositional Scripture-oriented work. On the other hand, the bulk of the passages listed in the footnote for the fact that 'in *life* husbands represent wisdom' come from *Married Love*, a practical life-oriented work.

In a similar way, wives in the *Word* often represent truth, while wives in *life* often represent love. However, as we've seen before there are other factors involved too.

Sometimes Men Represent Truth, and Women Represent Goodness

We've seen that in one way, men represent truth, and women represent goodness (both in the *Word* and in *life*). This is because men are intellect-oriented humans, while women are will-oriented humans (see ML 33, 90-92, 187, 223; HH 368-369). So men are called 'forms' of truth, and women are 'forms' of goodness (see AC 476, 669; ML 44.9, 76.5, 137.6, 159, 160, 187).

The male was created to be an expression of the understanding of truth, thus a picture of truth, and the female was created to be an expression of the will of good, thus a picture of good. (ML 100; see also HH 367)

However, this doesn't mean that men *are* nothing but truth, and women *are* nothing but goodness, because goodness and truth can't exist apart from each other, so both men and women have goodness and truth in them, and both have a will and intellect (see HH 369; cf. ML 220).

"There is nothing," [the angel] said, "that was created solely into a form of truth, and nothing that was created solely into a form of good. Good alone or truth alone has no reality, but they take form and become real through a marriage of the two, the character of the resulting form being determined by the character of the marriage." (ML 115.3)

⁷⁵ See Appendix XVIII, for a further discussion on "Gender Roles, Duties and Jobs."

⁷⁶ AC 1468, 2517, 3236, 4358, 4434.9, 4823, 4837, 4843, 5946, 8337, 8647, 8994, 9198; AR 797; cf. AC 265, 7047

⁷⁷ AC 2731; HH 367, 369; ML 21.2, 42, 75, 159-161, 172, 198, 242, 270, 293, 353; cf. AC 4837.2; TCR 37, 41, 377

And so in reality, men represent the *truth of goodness*, and women represent the *goodness of truth* (see ML 83, 88, 90).

We've also learned that in the case of the marriage between a husband and wife, wives are the lovers, and husbands are the receivers of that love, just like truth is the receiver of goodness. This is because the woman has married love inherently in her, while the husband does not (see ML 155r, 160, 161, 189, 198, 216r, 293.5, 321.2, 379, 393).

And because of this, it is appropriate for men to propose to women, to show that they are interested in love, marriage, and commitment with one woman (see ML 161, 169, 221, 296, 297). In reality, married love begins with women. Men are influenced by—and react to—the sphere from women, but it appears that men are the initiators (see ML 187). This is very similar to the fact that truth appears to be first in time, but in reality goodness is first in end and in time (AR 17; ML 126). Similarly, it *appears* that 'man' was created first and then 'woman.'

Another way that women represent love is that they are more beautiful than men. The beauty in women represents the love and life that should exist in wisdom. Truth apart from love is harsh, rigid, and cold, like men can sometimes be. But truth joined with love is tempered and is reflected in the beauty that exists in women (see ML 56).

The beauty of women also represents married love itself. In one sense married love is represented by a husband and wife together, but in another sense married love is represented by just a woman. This is partly because married love is inherent in women only. Women have a natural desire to join themselves with men. They have a wisdom about relationships. They have an affection for applying truth to life. This is the natural way of love, to seek conjunction.

Genuine conjugal love is the image of heaven, and when a representation of it is made 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 shining cloud, so that one may speak of her as being beauty itself in essence and form. (AC 2735)

But as we've seen before, men don't always represent truth, and women don't always represent goodness. "In the Word, when a male means good, its female means truth, and **conversely** when the male means truth its female means good" (AC 5198). So now we'll look at the reverse representations and roles.

Sometimes Men Represent Goodness, and Women Represent Truth

There are some times when despite being intellect-oriented beings, men represent goodness. And likewise, there are some times when despite being will-oriented beings, women represent truth (TCR 37, 41, 377; AC 1470, 1484, 3090, 3207, 4837.2, 9182.5). These representations seem to be related to one of the following three situations. Either it's referring to the marriage of the Lord and the church (where the Lord as Bridegroom represents goodness, and the church as bride represents truth; see AC 9182.5; ML 21), or it's referring to the celestial church (where the husband represents goodness and the wife truth; see AC 4434.9, 4823, 8647, 8994.3,4), or it's referring to a man and woman being married as opposed to being not married (see AC 725). Husband and wife represent goodness and truth, whereas man and women represent truth and goodness (see AC 1468, etc.). All three seem to come together in the idea of a wedding. It seems that in the representation of a wedding—the first real joining of a man and a woman—the bridegroom represents goodness, and the bride truth. Whereas before and after a wedding, the representation can change (see ML 21).⁷⁸

Can a Woman Represent the Lord?

As mentioned earlier in the paper, in the Word, the Lord is depicted predominantly in the male form. We've discussed the reasons for why, in our relationship with Him, He plays the role of the Bridegroom and we play the role of the bride. We also talked earlier about how both men and women are created in the Lord's image, and so therefore He is the source of both masculinity and femininity. There is also that interesting description of the Divine love and wisdom as being the Creatress in *Divine Love and Wisdom* paragraph 33, which reminds us that God is not intrinsically exclusively male, He is simply represented that way. But are there any ways in which the Lord is represented by a woman or a female form?

There are a few places in the Word where a woman or a female form represents the Lord. One of which, as mentioned before, is that Sarah (Abraham's wife) represents Divine truth (see AC 2063). We also find many references in the Word to imagery that paints the Lord in a feminine way (see *Psalms* 123.2). For example in *Genesis* 1:1-2,⁷⁹ *Deuteronomy* 32:11-12, and

⁷⁸ For a study of men and women, and love and wisdom as represented by the heart and lungs, see Appendix X

⁷⁹ Gen 1.1-2: "In the beginning ... the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." AC 19: "The *Spirit of God* stands for the Lord's mercy, which is portrayed as *moving constantly*, like a hen brooding over her eggs."

Matthew 23:37 the Lord is compared to a female bird who wishes to protect her young under her wings. The Writings indicate that in these cases this represents the power and protection of Divine truth (see AR 245). In *Deuteronomy 32:18* it says, “You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave your birth.” The Writings indicate that here too, the ‘Rock’ signifies the truth (see AC 8581). In *Isaiah* we find these passages:

Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by Me from before your birth, carried from the womb; even to your old age I am He, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save. (*Isaiah 46:3-4*; see also *Isaiah 44:24*)

Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. (*Isaiah 49:15*)

The Writings indicate that all of these passages have reference to the fact that the Lord is the one who regenerates us; or the one who gives birth to us spiritually (see AE 710:3,11,14).

Another way that the Lord is represented by a woman is in the fact that in the highest sense the church (and heaven) *is* actually the Lord (see AC 10125, 10151, 10157; HH 7-12, 78-81). Our ability to respond to the Lord, which is the church in us, is actually *the Lord in us*. So the feminine representations of the church in the Word, such as the ‘Woman clothed with the Sun,’ and the ‘New Jerusalem as a bride,’ could be considered to be feminine depictions of the Lord, because the Lord can only really be married to what is His own in us (cf. DLW 49).

Another way that the Lord could be represented by a woman is in the fact that in natural marriages, women are the givers of love, and husbands are the receivers of love (see ML 155r, 160, 161, 189, 198, 216r, 293.5, 321.2, 379, 393). In a very similar way, the Lord is the giver of love, and we are receivers of His love in truth (see AC 9401.2; AR 380; SS 82). *Married Love* paragraph number 161 talks about how a wife inspires the union in her husband.

A wife inspires the union in her husband according to her love, and a husband receives it according to his wisdom. The idea that a wife inspires the love and thus the union in her husband is today kept hidden from men. Indeed, they universally deny it. The reason is that their wives persuade them that men alone are the lovers, and themselves recipients, or that men are forms of love, and themselves forms of compliance. They even rejoice at heart when their husbands believe this. Wives persuade their husbands of this for many reasons, all of which have to do with the prudence and circumspect nature of wives We say that it is wives who inspire or insinuate the love in their husbands, because not a particle of married love, not even of love for the opposite sex, is seated in men, but only in wives and women.... Wives are forms of love, and husbands its receivers. Husbands are

receivers of it according to the wisdom in them, especially the wisdom which results from religion, which is that they are to love only their wives. (ML 161)

I find it very interesting how similar this description sounds to our relationship with the Lord. This passage would make just as much sense if we inserted “Lord” where it says “wife,” and “church” where it says “husband.” I have taken the liberty to change this passage only for the sake of illustrating this point.

[The Lord] inspires the union in [the church] according to [His] love, and [the church] receives it according to [its] wisdom. The idea that [the Lord] inspires the love and thus the union in [the church] is today kept hidden from [people]. Indeed, they universally deny it. The reason is that [the Lord] persuade[s] them that [people] are the lovers, and [the Lord the] recipient [of that love].... [The Lord] even rejoice[s] at heart when [the church] believes this. [The Lord] persuades [the church] of this for many reasons, all of which have to do with the prudence and circumspect nature of [the Lord] ... We say that it is [the Lord] who inspire[s] or insinuate[s] the love in [the church], because not a particle of ... love, ... is seated in [the church], but only in [the Lord].... [the Lord is a] form of love, and [the church] its receiver. [The church is a] receiver of it according to the wisdom in [it], especially the wisdom which results from religion, which is that they are to love only [the Lord].

Isn't it intriguing how well that works? Another way that a wife could represent the Lord is that a wife's love is constant, while a husband's is not (see ML 160, 169, 221). Similarly the Lord's love is constant, while ours is not (see AC 2004, 3159; DP 21; TCR 43). So why is the image of a woman or a wife so rarely used for the Lord, when it could represent that relationship so nicely in this way? My wife pointed out that the reason could be right there in this passage: this idea “is today kept hidden.” Perhaps the idea of the Lord being represented by a woman is too confusing for us to handle, given the history of the representations of the Lord. There would be too much danger of us dividing the Lord into two people.

So we have examined some of the roles and representations of men and women—in general, and in specific—in comparison with the heavenly and Divine marriages. This concludes the chapter on natural marriages, true married love, and the relationships between men and women. And as we've come back full-circle to the Lord, we conclude the body of this paper.

Conclusion

This study has been an attempt to explore the various places in the Heavenly Doctrines which compare the three levels of marriage—the Divine, heavenly, and natural marriages—for the purpose of trying to see how they are similar and how they are different.

Summary

In **chapter one** we saw that the marriage of love and wisdom in the Lord is really the closest marriage of all, in which the two are actually one, “distinguishably one,” like heat and light. This is different from the other levels of marriage, in which the partners are “distinguishably two.” We’ve also looked at some ideas for how the Lord can be the source of both masculinity and femininity in humanity. And we’ve seen that the Lord can be considered the Divine marriage because He is love, union and conjunction itself.

In **chapter two** we examined the natures of the relationship between the Lord and the church as being like (and not like) a Bridegroom and bride. To a certain extent the analogy rests on the physical relationship between a husband and wife in which the man is always the giver and the woman is always the receiver, which supports the idea that the Lord is always the giver and we are always the receivers. But in reality a husband does not represent the Lord, and a wife does not represent the church (ML 116).

We also learned that the marriage of the Lord and the church is a marriage of equals in terms of the Lord being the church in us. In this way the marriage of the Lord and the church is like the marriage of equality between a husband and wife. In this way we also see a feminine depiction of the Lord as *being* the church: the feminine representing the Lord *in us*, and the masculine representing the Lord *distinct from us*.

We learned that our relationship with the Lord is a truly reciprocal relationship of cooperation based on the fact that we have a sense of self and freedom capable of choosing to love the Lord. Our relationship with the Lord is therefore (meant to be) much closer to the consenting, committed, loving relationship between a husband and wife than it is to the relationship between a master and slave.

In **chapter three** we learned that the marriage of goodness and truth in our minds sometimes behaves like the relationship and marriage of a man and a woman. This is because they are both reciprocal relationships.

One of the interesting things that came out in chapter three is the fact that goodness is always first and primary, while truth is always secondary. Truth is the servant of goodness. There is also a hierarchical nature to the difference between the celestial and spiritual, and what is inner and outer, or higher and lower. This hierarchical nature of goodness and truth is at times different from the more mutual relationship that exists in true married love. But we've also learned that the relationship between goodness and truth, despite being hierarchical, often behaves more like the balanced, complementary, reciprocal relationship between a husband and wife, than like that of master and slave, which is why it likened to a marriage.

In chapter three we also looked at the ways in which there is mutual dependence between the process of regeneration and the process of true married love. In reality married love between two people depends on their individual states of regeneration. True married love is the state of two people who are regenerate (or being regenerated) living in marriage. However, there are some passages which indicate that a person is not fully human until they are in a state of married love. This can imply that our state of regeneration is dependent on our state of true married love. We learned that the marriage of goodness and truth in an individual (regeneration) provides the *essential source* of true married love in them. However, a person's marriage can provide the *fundamental or foundational source* for that person's spiritual growth and regeneration. This is partly because the state of marriage is the best matrix for practicing love to the neighbor on a daily basis.

In **chapter four** we looked at the essential ingredients for true married love, and the life of wisdom that supports that love.

In chapter four we also examined the differences between men and women. We explored the idea that when united in marriage, men and women complete the trine of 'love, wisdom and use,' in which their two different loves and orientations are united by the same wisdom of married love. We looked at the nature of the 'married love' that comes through a wife. And we

looked at the nature of the ‘rational and moral wisdom’ that comes through a husband. We also looked at the natures of women’s wisdom, and men’s love.

In chapter four we also explored some of the confusing concepts that come up when we compare the relationships between men and women to the heavenly and Divine marriages. Concepts such as ‘femininity being derived from masculinity,’ and gender roles and representations.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Further Study

There are strengths and weaknesses in the nature of this study. One of its weaknesses is in the nature of it being a comparison of three things. Because of this, the paper can sound repetitive at times.

One of the strengths of the paper is in the breadth of its scope. It has addressed many of the essential doctrines of the church through the lens of marriage. But this is also one of its weaknesses. Because it is such a broad subject, it is at times more of a survey. There is a lot of doctrinal study that I have had to leave out of this paper for the sake its size. There could have been a chapter on the ‘Degrees of Marriage and Separation,’ which would have discussed the difference between marriages in heaven and on earth; the difference between chaste, unchaste, and non-chaste; fornication and concubinage; the degrees of cold, separation and adultery; and the difference in degree between married love and *true* married love. As in all things, there are varying degrees of the states of marriage (and separation).

Possible Application

The above mentioned missing chapter would have had even more application to the issues of divorce, adultery, second marriages, living together, sleeping together, and homosexuality, than the paper currently does. So further study is needed.

As was mentioned in the introduction, the findings in this study could have application to many of the current issues in the church and in the world. Perhaps especially issues within natural marriages, and issues dealing with dating, being single, gender roles, women in the priesthood, and the gender of God. My hope is that this study could prove to be useful in addressing some of those questions and issues.

Reciprocation, Distinction, and Conjunction

The paper has explored the thesis that the three levels of marriage are all called *marriages* because they are all (to varying degrees) reciprocal, or in other words, they are all balanced unions of complementary equals, which was addressed in the introduction. In every level of marriage there is some kind of reciprocation. Even in the marriage of goodness and truth, and the marriage of the Lord and the church, where it appears to be more like the relationship between master and servant, there is still reciprocation, because the Lord wants our relationship with Him to feel like the mutual love within true married love. The three marriages are similar because they are all reciprocal relationships.

But we've also seen that there are times when marriage describes a hierarchical relationship between two things, and that we have to be very careful about how we apply that idea to other levels of marriage. The Divine, heavenly, and natural marriages are very different from each other, and though they are all called marriages, they should not be assumed to behave in the same ways. The three marriages are as different from each other as any Divine, heavenly, and natural subject must be.

They also differ in the level of *how closely* they are united. The Divine marriage is a true *union*, like that of heat and light, in which the two things are really the same thing. The heavenly marriage in us is a *conjunction*, like the heart and lungs, in which two individual things really can't function apart. And natural marriage is an *adjunction* in which two individuals *can* function apart, but choose to function as one (see AC 2004.3; ML 158.2).⁸⁰

This paper has also explored the theory that one way to categorize the difference between the two elements on any level of marriage is that the masculine element is oriented towards separation, distinction and the relationships of ideas, while the feminine element is oriented towards union, conjunction and the relationships of people. Both of which are essential to humanity.

Masculinity represents separation and distinction. It was essential that at first Jesus was distinct from His own Divine soul; the Father. Without this being the case, He could not have been tempted, and therefore could not have saved the Human race. It is essential that we recognize that the Lord is distinct from us, so that we can develop the proper humility necessary

⁸⁰ However, the terms *union* and *conjunction* are used in reference to all three marriages in the Writings.

to truly receive His life. It is essential that our will and understanding are capable of being separated. It is essential that we are given rationality, so that we can compare and contrast different ideas in our own mind. Without that ability, we would not be able to develop a conscience which allows our understanding of truth to rise above our corrupt native will. It is essential that men and women be distinct individuals who have their own strengths, and their own spiritual paths. The marriage of a husband and wife would not be able to function unless the two spouses maintained their individuality, like the distinction between the heart and lungs.⁸¹ All of that shows how important the masculine element of humanity is, and why the masculine image is so often associated with these things. Masculinity represents this state of distinction.

Femininity represents conjunction. It is also essential that we recognize that Jesus *is* the Father; they are One. It's essential that we recognize that the Lord is the union of love and wisdom. It is also important for us to recognize that we are created to be conjoined with the Lord. This is the "bride." We are designed to be vessels for the Lord, allowing his life and love to flow through us. And we are made to be able to experience that life and love freely as if it was our own. It is essential that we recognize that the goal for our minds is to have a marriage of our will and understanding. We need to have a marriage within our minds: our understanding of the Lord's truth, applied to a life of love. And ultimately we are designed to eventually have a marriage of our inner and outer selves, so that our true intentions, thoughts and feelings are married to our words and actions. And men and women are created to live together in a relationship in which they reflect the fullness and completion of humanity. The Lord's goal for humanity is to live in all of these marriages. This is the state of heaven. This is the 'location' of our spiritual conception and spiritual rebirth. And this is why heaven is depicted as a marriage and as a bride. Because femininity represents this state of conjunction.

And when we see that all of these essential things are represented by the marriage of masculinity and femininity, we can see why marriage is such a pervasive subject in the Writings.

This paper itself has been an attempt to show the *distinctions* present in the concept of marriage, for the purpose of a better *conjunction* of ideas that belong together, and a better application of those truths to a life of love.

* * * *

⁸¹ See Appendix X

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Appendices

Appendix I:

Reasons for Using the Term “Married Love” Instead of “Conjugal Love.”

Bruce Roger’s Translator’s Remarks (1990) on his translation of “Married Love” 1995:

Translation of the word ‘Conjugal’

“The chief drawback to use of the word *conjugal* in English has been its tendency to etherealize readers’ understanding of the passages in which it occurs and thus to obscure the content and meaning of them so that they lose their intended import. Whole generations in the Church have been raised to believe that the term *conjugal* signals something extraordinary, outside the realm of ordinary human experience and perhaps beyond their personal attainment - “the pure and celestial affection” of which Clowes spoke. Yet the meaning of the Latin term *conjugalis* as used by Swedenborg is relatively broad in scope, being applied to a variety of human states ranging from the most sublime to the quite commonplace and familiar.

“It is true that the text tells us that truly conjugal love today is so rare that people do not know what it is like, and scarcely that it exists (CL 58, 59, 69, 333, 337. Also AC 2727). But that is said of *truly* conjugal love or *genuine* married love. It is *true* or *genuine* married love that is rare, because only sincere and practicing Christians are capable of it, and they are, unhappily, relatively few (CL 337. See also CL 70-72, 113, 114; 116; 130, 131; 137:7; 142; 149; 238, 239; 340, 341; 458; 534). Sometimes, admittedly, the term *conjugalis* is employed without use of an explicit modifier to refer to truly conjugal love. But there are clear instances when this is not the case, when by the term *conjugalis* something broader is meant. Misunderstanding of this point has led to a number of frequent misconceptions - that the text deals only with truly conjugal love and its opposite, licentious love, and not with intervening states of love that lie between; that conjugal love depends primarily on finding the right partner, even the right, foreordained partner, rather than on religion; that the attainment of conjugal love is therefore difficult; that because it is difficult, it is possible only to members of the New Church who have learned about it from their doctrines; and other similar errors.

“A restricted understanding of the meaning of the word *conjugal* has given rise in the Church to the phrase, “conjugal partners.” The phrase, however, is not found in the text. The closest equivalent appears in two numbers, nos. 229 and 316:3, where the reference is to conjugal pairs. In both cases, however, the subject is the provision of marriages of love truly conjugal in heaven. Otherwise, the text simply refers to *conjux* (married partner, or spouse) or *conjuges* (married partners, or spouses), without the addition of any modifier.

“The truth is that conjugal love exists in degrees. The term embraces a wide spectrum of married love (See CL 78:8, 225, 318, 368). There is conjugal love not chaste, which nevertheless is not unchaste (CL 139). In people without genuine truths of religion, but who nevertheless possess some elements of good, some conjugal love is possible (CL 243). On partner may possess it and not the other (CL 226, 531). It may be gained and then lost (See for example, CL 249, 250, 474, 480. Also SE 4612a). A single man’s resorting to a courtesan and then falling in love with her is once described as conjugal love - which, if he withdraws from the relationship and marries another, is conjugal love lost, in violation of their conjugal union (CL 460:5).

“The term *conjugalis*, in short, is used to refer not only to truly conjugal love, but also to a variety of merely external states and relationships connected with marriage (See CL 148; 242; 250; 344, 369, 370 (though cf. 345). Also SE 3319). It is applied even to states of coldness in marriage (See CL 167:1, 236, 239, 245, 247, 249:2, 270:1,6) and to simulations and pretenses of love (See CL 279-281). The marriage covenant is called the covenant *conjugiale*, whatever the state of the partners in respect to their marriage (See CL 45, 277:2, 278, 295:2, 307, 460:2, 464, 468). Sexual intercourse in marriage is once called the duty *conjugiale* (CL 472), and the marriage bed is called the bed *conjugiale/conjugalis* (CL 449:@, 465, 469). By life *conjugalis* is usually meant simply married life (As in CL 47[repeated], 299:1, 319, 323, 502:1; also 155:2, 452:3, 459:1). By age *conjugalis* is meant a marriageable age (CL 450). An inclination *conjugalis* is an attraction toward marriage (CL 187). Life *extraconjugalis* is unmarried life (CL 155:2). And love *extraconjugalis* is not “extra-conjugal” love but love outside of marriage or love free of marriage (CL 44:6,7, 71:1, 257. Cf. no. 320:2).

“What, then, is conjugal love? A conjugal relationship among Christians is defined as the marriage of one man with one wife (CL 142). Properly speaking, therefore, by a conjugal inclination is meant the desire to have but one wife, and this on account of religion (CL 80:2,

466:2). Consequently conjugal love - even *truly* conjugal love - is defined simply as love for one of the opposite sex (As in CL 48, 296:2, 317, 507, 509, for conjugal love; and CL 44:6, 58, 333:2, 346, for truly conjugal love). Because an inclination to love only one can be inherited (Cl 146, 466:2; also 202-205), some seed of the love may exist in infancy and childhood (AC 3610:3). Especially is this true of girls (CL 393). The instinctive monogamous inclination of women is accordingly described as an innate or inherent conjugal love, implanted in them from creation (CL 188:2, 216[r], 223:1, 296, 393, 409). Since conjugal love lies within love for the opposite sex, like a gem in its native rock (CL 97, 98) the first beginnings of that love may be felt in adolescence, when a young man and young woman first fall in love (CL 58. Cf. nos. 333). In an orderly development of the love, it grows and deepens during the time of betrothal (CL 58, 300, 301, 311, 322). Then, at the time of the wedding and in the first period of marriage following, the delights of that love are felt in their fullness - delights which are properly described as the delights of conjugal love, a love which emulates truly conjugal love and presents a kind of visible image of it, whatever course it may take thereafter (CL 58, 213, 224, 309, 311:1). That is why it can be said that the first end of conjugal love is the procreation of offspring (CL 385, 387, 401:1; cf. nos. 156:1, 183:7, 254, 409. See also AC 2039:1), even though the procreation of offspring normally takes place in the early states of marriage.

“Conjugal love, therefore, grows gradually, through commitment to genuine religion (Cf. nos. 63, 70, 71:1, 72, 80:2, 130, 131, 141, 142, 149, 238, 239, 240, 241, 336, 337, 458, 531, 543). It does not come suddenly, simply by finding the “right” partner. Nor is it something that either exists or does not exist. It has its beginnings, it has its progressions, and these progressions are gradual (See CL 48, 58, 145:1,2, 146, 147, 148:1, 209, 313:2,3. Also AC 4145).

“Because of the misconceptions that have ensued in the Church from use of the word *conjugal*, we have not retained it in this translation. We have found instead more suitable renderings occurring in standard English, and have adopted, for example, the more idiomatic and more felicitous renderings *married love* and *true married love* instead of conjugal love and truly conjugal love. We have done this in order that previous misinterpretations may be corrected and use of this term not continue to lead astray.

- N. Bruce Rogers, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, October 1990

Appendix II: “Marriage” in the Writings

Obviously Swedenborg’s work *Married Love* is all about the subject of marriage. Although it is mostly about natural marriages. One of Swedenborg’s small unpublished works, *De Conjugio* is also about natural marriage. But the subject of all three levels of marriage comes up at various times when it is appropriate throughout Swedenborg’s other published works as well. Even in the works not devoted entirely to marriage, there are usually chapters or sections devoted to the subject. In *Secrets of Heaven*, there are over five hundred references to “true married love.”⁸² In that same work there is a chapter on the subject of marriage and adultery (AC 2727-2759), as well as a brief survey of the principles of true married love (AC 10167-10175). In *Heaven and Hell* there is a whole chapter on ‘Marriages in Heaven’ (HH 366-386). In *The New Jerusalem* there are two chapters on ‘Good and Truth,’ and ‘The Will and The Intellect’ (HD 11-33). In *The Doctrine of the Sacred Scripture*, there is a chapter on the fact that in every detail of the Word there is a marriage of the Lord and the church, and goodness and truth (SS 80-90). In *The Doctrine of Life*, there is a chapter on shunning adultery (Life 74-49). In *Divine Love and Wisdom*, part one discusses the Divine marriage in the Lord (DLW 1-82). Part two discusses the Divine marriage emanating from the Lord (DLW 83-172). Part five compares love and wisdom, to the will and intellect, and to the heart and lungs (DLW 358-431). In *Divine Providence* there is discussion about our sense of autonomy, or the feeling that life is our own, which is represented by Eve being married to Adam. In *Apocalypse Revealed* there is discussion about the church as represented by the ‘bride’ of the Lamb in Revelation. The very title of *Intercourse Between the Soul and the Body* calls to mind the idea of a marriage between our inner and outer selves. Chapter one of *True Christianity* discusses the Divine marriage in the Lord (TCR 4-80). As you can see, marriage is a pervasive subject in the Writings of Swedenborg.

⁸² George F. Dole, Robert H. Kirven. See Note 178 on page 474 of the NCE of *Heaven and Hell*.

Appendix III - “Love and Wisdom” in the Letter of the Bible

And he said, “Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken **His mercy and His truth** toward my master.” (Gen 24:27)

The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in **goodness and truth**. (Exodus 34:6)

Mercy and truth be with you. (2 Sam 15:20)

As for the Almighty, we cannot find Him; He is excellent in power, in **judgment** and abundant **justice**; He does not oppress. (Job 37:23)

He shall judge the world in **righteousness**, and He shall administer **judgment** for the peoples in uprightness. (Psalm 9:8)

All the paths of the LORD are **mercy and truth**. (Psalm 25:10)

For **Your lovingkindness** is before my eyes, and I have walked in **Your truth**. (Psalm 26:3)

Your **righteousness** is like the great mountains; **Your judgments** are a great deep. (Psalm 36:6)

I have not concealed **Your lovingkindness and Your truth** from the great assembly. (Psalm 40:10)

Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O LORD; let **Your lovingkindness and Your truth** continually preserve me. (Psalm 40:11)

God shall send forth **His mercy and His truth**. (Psalm 57:3)

For **Your mercy** reaches unto the heavens, and **Your truth** unto the clouds. (Psalm 57:10)

For the LORD God is a **sun and shield**. (Psalm 84:11)

Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed. (Psalm 85:10)

Truth shall spring out of the earth, and **righteousness** shall look down from heaven. (Psalm 85:11)

But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in **mercy and truth**. (Psalm 86:15)

Mercy and truth go before Your face. (Psalm 89:14)

He shall judge the world with **righteousness**, and the peoples with **His truth**. (Psalm 96:13)

For the LORD is good; **His mercy** is everlasting, and **His truth** endures to all generations.
(Psalm 100:5)

To Your name give glory, **because of Your mercy, because of Your truth**. (Psalm 115:1)

Your righteousness is an everlasting **righteousness**, and Your law is **truth**. (Psalm 119:142)

I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for **Your lovingkindness and Your truth**. (Psalm 138:2)

In **mercy** the throne will be established; and One will sit on it in **truth**. (Isaiah 16:5)

A King shall reign and prosper, and execute **judgment and righteousness** in the earth.
(Jeremiah 23:5)

They shall be My people and I will be their God, in **truth and righteousness**. (Zechariah 8:8)

In Him was **life**, and the life was the **light** of humanity. (John 1:4)

The words that I speak to you **are spirit, and they are life**. (John 6:63)

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, **in truth and love**. (2 John 1:3)

Appendix IV - Celestial and Spiritual

For the sake of clarity and cohesion, here is a quick summary of the various things that the words ‘celestial’ (heavenly) and ‘spiritual’ represent:

‘Celestial’ refers to love to (and consequent faith in) the **Lord**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to charity toward the **neighbor** (AC 81, 847, 880, 1001, 1442, 2023, 9992).

‘Celestial’ refers to the **Lord**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to **people** or the **church** (AC 162, 775, 1416, 1545; SS 80).

‘Celestial’ refers to **goodness**, affection and love, while ‘spiritual’ refers to **truth**, knowledge, and wisdom (AC 590, 1155, 1435, 1470, 1525, 1577, 4570, 9550; DLW 427).

‘Celestial’ refers to **love and charity** playing the leading role, while ‘spiritual’ refers to **faith** playing the leading role (AC 52, 61, 81, 83, 418, 1096, 1450, 1480, 1577, 2231, 10604).

‘Celestial’ refers to **goodness leading to truth, or the truth of good**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to **truth leading to goodness, or the good of truth** (AC 53, 310, 459, 511, 2088, 5733, 6295).

‘Celestial’ refers to a life according to goodness, while ‘spiritual’ refers to a life according to truth. (DP 32)

‘Celestial’ refers to perceiving the **affections** in the Word, while ‘spiritual’ refers to understanding the **ideas** in the Word. (AC 2275).

‘Celestial’ refers to the **will**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to the **intellect** (AC 52, 61, 793, 1071, 1577).

‘Celestial’ refers to **goodness implanted in the will**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to **goodness implanted in the intellect**. (AC 2715, 10124).

‘Celestial’ refers to the marriage of goodness and truth in the will, while ‘spiritual’ refers to the marriage of goodness and truth in the intellect. (AC 9995.3)

‘Celestial’ refers to **perception**, while spiritual refers to **knowledge**, intelligence and **conscience** (AC 80, 597, 865, 1442, 1707, 2515, 2552).

‘Celestial’ refers to *perceiving* that life is the Lord’s, ‘spiritual’ refers to *acknowledging* that life is the Lord’s (AC 123, 141).

‘Celestial’ refers to the **inner being** ruling the outer being, or doing “good because we love to”, while ‘spiritual’ refers to the **outer being** ruling the inner being, doing good because we ought to (AC 52).

‘Celestial’ refers to a **marriage** between our inner and outer selves, or will and intellect, while ‘spiritual’ refers to a **separation** or lesser marriage between our inner and outer selves, or will and intellect. (AC 91, 2069, 2930; ML 305).

Some other related things that ‘celestial’ and ‘spiritual’ refer to:

‘Celestial’ refers to a **likeness** of God, while ‘spiritual’ refers to an **image** of God (see AC 51, 85).

‘Celestial’ refers to peace and **rest**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to struggle and **conflict** (AC 55, 74, 81, 5052).

‘Celestial’ refers to being like the **heart**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to being like the **lungs** (AC 418, 2054).

‘Celestial’ refers to **mercy**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to **grace** (AC 598).

‘Celestial’ refers to the **sun and warmth**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to the **moon and light** (AC 1530, 1577, 2231)

‘Celestial’ refers to being **gentle**, while ‘spiritual’ refers to being **not so gentle** (AC 2301)

‘Celestial’ refers to the Lord’s actually goal for us, while ‘spiritual’ refers to the next best thing (AC 2669)

‘Celestial’ refers to the soul, while ‘spiritual’ refers to the mind (ML 158)

Those who are celestial are moved by the affection for good, those who are spiritual by the affection for truth. Those who are celestial possess perception, whereas those who are spiritual possess the dictate of conscience. To those who are celestial the Lord appears as a Sun, but to those who are spiritual as a Moon, 1521, 1530, 1531, 2495. The light which the former have - enabling them to see good and truth from the Lord with their eyes as well as to perceive it - is like the light of the sun in the daytime; but the light which the latter have from the Lord is like the light of the moon at night, and so, compared with those who are celestial, these dwell in obscurity. The reason for this is that those who are celestial dwell in love to the Lord, and so in the Lord's life itself, whereas those who are spiritual dwell in charity towards the neighbour and in faith, and so, it is true, in the Lord's life but in a rather more obscure way. All this explains why those who are celestial never reason about faith or the truths of faith, but because a perception of truth from good exists with them, simply say, 'That is so', whereas those who are spiritual talk and reason about the truths of faith because a conscience for what is good received from truth exists with them. A further reason for this difference is that with those who are celestial the good of love has been implanted in the will part of their minds, where man's chief life resides, but with those who are spiritual it has been implanted in the understanding part,

where man's secondary life resides. This is the reason why, compared with the celestial, the spiritual dwell in obscurity. (AC 2708)

The celestial Church differs from the spiritual Church in that in those who belong to the celestial Church and who are called celestial, love - that is to say, the good and truth of love - is present; but in those who belong to the spiritual Church and who are called spiritual, faith - that is to say, the good and truth of faith - is present. Good as it exists with those who are celestial consists in love to the Lord, and truth as it exists with them in love towards the neighbour. But good as it exists with those who are spiritual consists in charity towards the neighbour, and truth as it exists with them in faith insofar as this is doctrine concerning charity. From this it may be seen that good and truth are present in the Lord's spiritual kingdom, as they are in His celestial kingdom, yet are considerably different. (AC 3240)

Appendix V - God is Interior To Us

“Jehovah has created something new in the earth: a woman will encircle a man” (Jeremiah 31:22). Another way to think about this analogy and correspondence, is that the Lord is always interior to us, just like in the act of intercourse a man is always interior to a woman. Picture a circle within a circle. In the physical relationship, the husband is the center circle and the wife the outer circle. This is reflecting the physical reality of that relationship (not the spiritual reality⁸³). And this can represent the fact that the Lord is at the center of humanity. Humanity will encircle the Lord, the church (the bride) will encircle the Bridegroom.

The Lord is always the instigator (seed), the inside, while we are always the outside, the thing that gives form to His love and truth (the womb). In terms of the *spiritual* relationship between a husband and wife, it is true that sometimes the man is (or represents something) spiritually interior to the woman (see AC 155, 4456; ML 32, 100, 165, 188), and sometimes the woman is (or represents something) spiritually interior to the man (see ML 47r, 75, 160, 161, 188, 208.2, 223, 293.5). But there’s no getting around the fact that in the *physical* terms of insemination and procreation, men are always the inside, and women are always the outside. So this ultimate physical reality can be used to describe the fact that the Lord is always interior to us, because that physical reality doesn’t change or vary with different couples and in different situations. We are always in the place of ‘wife’ (outer) and the Lord is always in the place of ‘husband’ (inner).

This doesn’t mean that in terms of what the Divine is itself, or what humans are in themselves, that they fall into those gender categories. The Lord is not exclusively male, and humanity is obviously not exclusively female. God is the source of both, and we are divided into both. And because of that being the over-arching truth, this analogy and correspondence of the Lord being the Bridegroom and us being the bride, is difficult for many people. It can seem to be out of balance or not equal. And in the past it has been abused to the point of men thinking they were better than women, or somehow more like God than women.

⁸³ However there are some passages that seem to indicate comparisons where the woman represents what is interior, and the man what is exterior—see AC 8983.2; SD 6110.14—while others indicate that the man represents what is interior, and the woman what is exterior, see AR 812; AC 3236; Jeremiah 31:22; AC 156-160.

There is a certain reality to the idea that all the levels or kinds of marriage involve a marriage of interior and exterior, or higher and lower (AC 3952). This is true in the Divine marriage of the Divine Essence and the Divine Human. It is true in the marriage of the Lord and the church, the marriage of goodness and truth, and the marriage of the internal person with the external person (AC 3969.2) (We will examine this more in chapter three). The sticky part comes when we try to think about how it applies to the marriage of a man and woman; two equal partners. It seems that the correspondence rests most clearly on the physical relationship, rather than the spiritual relationship between men and women. While the spiritual relationship between men and women is in fact a changing one in which men and women alternatively play the role of active or passive, or primary and secondary, still the marriage of a man and a woman ultimately grows and develops (or should grow and develop) towards something which is much more of a complementary reciprocal balance than the hierarchy which is sometimes portrayed by the heavenly marriage.

Appendix VI - Insemination, Procreation, and the Love for Little Children

A husband does not represent the Lord and his wife the church, because both husbands and wives together form the church. Therefore neither in the marriages of angels in heaven nor in the marriages of people on earth does the husband correspond to the Lord and the wife to the church. Rather, **the correspondence rests with married love, insemination, procreation, love for little children**, and other things of a similar sort that occur in marriage and result from it. (ML 116)

Married love corresponds to an affection for genuine truth and its chasteness, purity and holiness; ... **insemination** corresponds to the power of truth; ... **procreation** corresponds to the propagation of truth; and ... **love for little children** corresponds to the protection of truth and good. (ML 127)

Insemination corresponds to the power of truth. So we receive the power of truth from the Lord. If it was the reverse (if the church was the husband, and the Lord was the wife), we would be giving the power of truth to the Lord, which isn't how it works.

Procreation corresponds to the propagation (the spreading, increasing, reproducing) of truth. So we are represented by a wife because it's the wife that takes the husband's semen and reproduces it in children, just like we take the Lord's truth and reproduce it in more goodness and truth in our lives.

The love for little children corresponds to the protection of truth and good. Women have a much more innate or instinctive love for little children than men do. Probably because the children actually come from their bodies. These little truths and goods that we produce appear to have come from us, and so we have an instinctive desire to protect them, from our sense of self. So this seems to work well with us being the woman.

Appendix VII - Image and Likeness, Adam and Eve

It is said that we are created in the image and likeness of God: “God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). In a list of points about the marriage of goodness and truth, *Divine Providence* n. 8 notes:

(d) It is because of the inflow of love and wisdom from the Lord as a single whole into angels of heaven and people of the church and because of their acceptance by angels and people that the Lord is called the bridegroom and husband in the Word and the church is called the bride and wife. (e) To the extent, then, that heaven and the church in general, or angels of heaven and people of the church in particular, participate in this union, or in the marriage of goodness and truth, they are images and likenesses of the Lord. This is because these two realities are a single whole in the Lord and in fact are the Lord. (f) In heaven and the church in general, and in angels of heaven and people of the church in particular, love and wisdom are a single whole when volition and discernment (and therefore goodness and truth) form a single whole, or what is the same thing, when charity and faith form a single whole; or what is also the same thing, when a belief system from the Word and a life according to it form a single whole. (DP 8)

Point “(e)” above states that when we participate in this union—the marriage of goodness and truth—we are in His image and likeness. This is said, right after it says that we are like the bride, and the Lord like the Bridegroom. So the bride is the image and likeness of the Bridegroom.⁸⁴ Obviously this is not referring to gender, but to humanity. We become truly human when we are married to the Lord. We come into the most intimate relationship we can with the Lord when we are regenerated.

In order to fulfill the purpose intended by the essence of his love, God created human beings in his own image and likeness - characteristics with which he could forge a partnership. (TCR 43.3)

From these things it is clear that by marriage a [person] becomes a form of that love, and therefore a form of heaven, which is an image and likeness of God. (AE 984.2)⁸⁵

The Writings say that an ‘image’ refers to wisdom (DLW 358; cf. AC 481), or what is spiritual (AC 51, 473), or love to the neighbor (AC 1013.3), while ‘likeness’ refers to love (DLW 358; cf. AC 481), or what is celestial (AC 51, 473), or love to the Lord (AC 1013.3). In

⁸⁴ In an interesting way there are some passages in the Writings that refer to husbands and wives having an image and likeness of each other in their minds (see AC 2732; SD 4408).

⁸⁵ AE 984 also talks about how the marriage of a husband and wife actually helps to bring them into the image and likeness of the Lord more fully. See also HH 374. This is explored more in chapter three, part nine “The Role of Married Love in Regeneration.”

general, a likeness is a lot closer to the Lord than an image is. However in *Married Love* it says that an 'image' refers to the acknowledgment that our life is the Lord's, while a 'likeness' refers to the feeling that life is our own:

Man is a vessel recipient of God, ... and a vessel recipient of God is an image of God. Since God is love itself and wisdom itself, man is a vessel recipient of these. And as a recipient vessel, a person becomes an **image** of God to the extent that he receives. Moreover, man is a **likeness** of God because of his sensing in himself that the things he has from God are in him as though they belonged to him. But still, a person is an **image** of God as a result of that **likeness** only in the measure that he acknowledges that the love and wisdom or good and truth in him are not his and so do not originate from him, but are God's alone and so originate from God. (ML 132.7)

This description sounds very similar to the symbolism of Adam and Eve as discussed in part five of chapter three of this paper entitled "Our 'Sense of Self,' and Our 'Sense of God.'" There is no passage in the Writings that indicates a link between the concepts of 'Adam and Eve' and the 'image and likeness' of God. But based on *Married Love* 132, one could almost make the connection that Adam is like the image of God, while Eve is like the likeness of God. This is also interesting when we think about the idea that Man (Adam, *Homo*) was created in Genesis chapter one, while Eve was created in Genesis chapter two:

A person with a spiritual character is an image, but a person with a heavenly character is a likeness or exact copy. Genesis 1 deals with the spiritual person, Genesis 2 with the heavenly person. (AC 51)

And there are places that hint at the idea that the masculine form (like Adam) is spiritual, while the feminine form (like Eve) is celestial or heavenly (see AC 476; SD 1061). But these representations are not consistent everywhere in the Adam and Eve story (see AC 141, 461, 469).

Appendix VIII - Masculine and Feminine, Celestial and Spiritual

One of the concepts that comes up in many places in the Writings is that there is the ‘good of truth’ and the ‘truth of good,’ and that the “two constitute the heavenly marriage (see AC 3960.4). So what’s the difference between the two?

Since the expressions 'the good of truth' and 'the truth of good' occur rather often, the difference between the two should be stated. Anyone unacquainted with what the celestial Church is when compared with the spiritual Church cannot possibly know the difference. **The truth of good is a characteristic of the celestial Church, the good of truth a characteristic of the spiritual Church.** With members of the celestial Church good was implanted in the will part of the mind, the proper place for good to be seated. From that good - that is, through that good received from the Lord - they had a perception of truth; that is why the truth of good resided with them. But with members of the spiritual Church good is implanted in the understanding part of the mind, by means of truth; for all truth belongs in the understanding. They are led by means of truth towards good, for good consists for these people in putting truth into practice, which is why the good of truth resides with them. (AC 5733)

“Forms of love resulting in wisdom are celestial, while forms of wisdom resulting in love are spiritual” (ML 64.2). So the ‘truth of good’ or the ‘wisdom of love’ is celestial, and the ‘good of truth’ or the ‘love of wisdom’ is spiritual, and there is a marriage between them. This sounds very similar to other passages which talk about men and women:

There is good's truth and from this truth's good, or truth resulting from good and good resulting from that truth, and implanted in these two from creation is an inclination to join together into one. (4) In members of the animal kingdom, good's truth or truth resulting from good is masculine, and truth's consequent goodness or good resulting from that truth is feminine. (ML 83)

The inmost quality in masculinity is love, and its veil wisdom, or in other words, it is love veiled over with wisdom, while the inmost quality in femininity is that same wisdom, the wisdom of masculinity, and its veil the love resulting from it... Consequently, the male is a form of the wisdom of love, and the female is a form of the love of that wisdom. (ML 32)

These passages taken together seem to indicate that there is a connection between what is celestial and masculine, and between what is spiritual and feminine.

However there are other passages that seem to indicate the opposite. One of which is from Swedenborg’s *Spiritual Diary*, which was an unpublished work, so for some people that brings into question the authority of what is said there.

In heaven, then, spiritual and heavenly qualities are likewise distinguished from each other. How they are distinguished can become clear from the depictions mentioned [1057-8]. According to what was established from creation, **the masculine sex belongs to the class of spiritual qualities, while the feminine belongs to that of heavenly qualities**. Hence the commandment of the first marriage that he must cleave unto his wife [Gen. 2:24], that is, that matters of understanding must be coupled with heavenly qualities, so that they make one body. (SD 1061)

Nowhere in the published works of Swedenborg is this same connection made so blatantly.

However there are places which seem to indicate this kind of connection.

The male or a man symbolizes the intellect and everything connected with it, so it symbolizes the qualities of faith. The female symbolizes the will or the properties of the will, so it symbolizes the qualities of love. This is also why the woman was named Eve from [the Hebrew word for] life, which belongs exclusively to love. As a further result, a female also symbolizes the church, again as shown earlier, and a male symbolizes the individual of the church [§§253, 288]. **The subject here is the state of the church when it was spiritual**, although it soon became heavenly. **This is why male comes first**, just as it did in Genesis 1:26, 27. (AC 476)

The female sex is such by character and formation that the will or desire rules over the intellect. Every fiber in the female body is attuned to this, and it is the feminine nature. **The male sex, on the other hand, is formed in such a way that intellect or reason reigns supreme**. Every fiber in the male body is attuned to this, and it is the masculine nature. Marriage between the sexes results from these circumstances, as does a union between will and intellect in every individual. (AC 568.2; cf. AC 52, 61, 793, 1071, 1577)

Now, obviously any comparison between what is celestial and spiritual with what is masculine and feminine, is going to be a comparison (or correspondence), rather than an identification. It is fairly obvious that both men and women live in the celestial kingdom of heaven, and both men and women live in the spiritual kingdom of heaven. So we can't really identify men and women as being exclusively either celestial or spiritual. Both men and women have both intellect and will. Both men and women can have love and faith, goodness and truth, thoughts and affections, conscience and perception, love to the Lord and the neighbor, and an inner and outer being.

Appendix IX - Women Speaking or Keeping Silent?

There are some confusing passages in the Writings which can seem to indicate to people that it is not appropriate for women to speak in certain situations (AC 266, 568.2, 8994.4; DLW 361; ML 165, 167, 169, 175, 296; SD 4940, 5936). But there are other passages that help to explain what is really going on, and we will examine them in this section.

In the Epistles, Paul says:

Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but *they are* to be submissive, as the law also says.³⁵ And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. (1 Corinthians 14:34-35)

The comment about “as the law also says” is referring to *Genesis* 3:16 where it says that for women “your desire shall be for you husband, and he shall rule over you.” As we know from the Writings this is not referring to the literal relationship between husbands and wives, but to the spiritual relationship between everyone’s will and intellect in which the intellect should rule over the will, so that we can be regenerated by conscience (see AC 261, 265, 266). But in true married love, the husband does not rule over his wife (see AC 10173; HH 369, 380; ML 248, 291). There is a passage in *Secrets of Heaven* which references this quote from *1 Corinthians*:

Those who are spiritually perceptive have a liking for women with an affection for truths, but not for women who concentrate on gaining knowledge. For it is in keeping with Divine order for men to know things and for women purely to have an affection for them, so the women do not love themselves because of their knowledge but love men; and from this springs the desire for marriage. This also is why those of old said that **women must keep silent in the Church.** (AC 8994.4)

‘Those of old’ is referring to Paul’s comment in *1 Corinthians*, rather than to the people of the Most Ancient or Ancient Churches. *1 Corinthians* is not a canonical book of the Word according to Swedenborg, so we don’t need to take this statement literally. It would seem that this quote from *Secrets of Heaven* is referring to this comment from Paul as an illustration of how the people of that time understood the inherent difference between men and women. It’s true that men and women are spiritually different, but Paul’s understanding of that difference, and the behavior he suggested is not the truth.

This passage even goes on to acknowledge that this is only ‘one side of the coin’ in terms of what men and women represent, and even what their inherent nature is:

It should be recognized however that this is the situation among those who belong to the Lord's spiritual kingdom, whereas among those who belong to His celestial kingdom the reverse applies. There husbands are the ones with affection, and wives are the ones with knowledge of good and truth; and this is what the desire for marriage springs from among them. (AC 8994.4)

So one can assume from this that in celestial terms it is very appropriate for women to speak, as we will see in some of the following passages.

We should take a moment to note here that, everyone, both men and women are capable of learning truth, developing their understanding or intellect, and becoming wise (see ML 102, 122, 211). Despite this, there is a passage that says that women tend to keep silent and listen in gatherings of men:

We say that a wife's union with her husband's intellectual wisdom exists inwardly, because this wisdom is characteristic of the intellect of men, and it ascends into a light in which women are not. **That is why women do not speak from it, but in gatherings of men where matters like this are being discussed, they keep silent and only listen.** Nevertheless, wives still have these things in them inwardly, as is apparent from the fact that they do listen, inwardly recognizing and concurring with those things which they hear and have heard from their husbands. On the other hand, a wife's union with men's moral wisdom exists outwardly, because the virtues of this wisdom are akin for the most part to similar virtues in women, and they spring from the husband's intellectual will, with which the wife's will unites and forms a marriage. And because a wife recognizes these virtues in her husband better than he recognizes them in himself, we say that a wife's union with them exists outwardly. (ML 165)

So women don't speak from men's rational (or intellectual) wisdom, even though they have that wisdom in them inwardly (see ML 32). This passage almost seems to indicate that women tend to prefer to speak from moral wisdom, rather than getting caught up in intellectual debates. And once again, this is a descriptive passage not a prescriptive passage.

One of the ways that the Writings imply that it is inappropriate for women to speak is where it says that, "it is evident in itself that it is not unbecoming for men to speak of love and to declare it, while it is unbecoming for women to do so" (ML 296; see also ML 167). It may have been evident in Swedenborg's day, but these days it's not so evident why this is the case. Perhaps this idea is related to the concept that it is appropriate for the man to propose, because men don't inherently want to love one of the opposite sex, while women do. So it's better for a man to show his commitment to a changed way of life (wisdom, monogamy) first by proposing.

But there is also a sense that this is *describing* the way some women are, rather than *prescribing* the way women should be. There are passages that indicate that while keeping silent about their love might be the way some women behave on earth, it's not how wives are in heaven. "Among angels in heaven one also finds discourse by wives about love and not the same silence that one finds in some cases on earth" (ML 258). Some women on earth don't speak about their love with their husbands, because their husbands would grow cold (see ML 155r.3, 167, 258).

"But this happens," [the angel wives] said, "in the case of people who do not hold marriage sacred, and who therefore do not love their wives with a spiritual love. It is different with those who do. This love in their minds is spiritual, and in the body becomes natural as a result of that. We here in this hall experience the natural love as a result of a spiritual one, and consequently we confide to our husbands secrets about the delights we feel having to do with married love." (ML 155r.3)

So in a true married love situation, women *do* speak about their love with their husbands. And it is certainly not unbecoming in that case.

As we saw above, women have a special kind of wisdom all their own, which in many ways exceeds the wisdom of men (see ML 47r, 155r, 208). And one of the interesting things about this wisdom is that there is some secrecy involved in it (see ML 166). In other words, it's not that women *can't* speak or *shouldn't* speak, but that they *don't want to* speak about certain things involved with their wisdom to people other than their husbands. 'Secrets of the home' as it were. In a discussion with angel wives, Swedenborg said:

"This angel who is with me, he told me privately that wives are vessels receptive of and sensitive to those delights, because they are born forms of love, and all delights have to do with love." Smiling at this they answered, "Be discreet, and do not say such a thing unless it can be interpreted in more than one way, because it is a point of wisdom kept deeply hidden in the hearts of our sex, which is not revealed to any husband except to one who is in a state of true married love. There are many reasons for this, which we conceal within and keep to ourselves." (ML 155r.3)

The passage goes on to talk about how women have a sixth sense about their husbands. The angel wives also said that "our husbands love us for our wisdom and judgment" (ML 155r.4).

So there is a special wisdom that wives have which they sometimes choose not to speak about with people who are not their husbands. But what about women speaking about intellectual things? Going back to the beginning of this section, some passages seem to indicate that women who speak about intellectual things are out of their league (see AC 8994.4; ML 165).

Many people believe that women can perform the duties of men if only they are introduced into them from early age in the way that boys are. However, **women can be introduced into the exercise of these duties, but not into the judgment on which the proper performance of these duties inwardly depends. Therefore, those women who are introduced into the duties of men, in matters of judgment are bound to go to men for advice**; and then, from the men's recommendations, if they are their own mistresses, they choose what accords with their love. [3] Some people also suppose that women can raise the sight of their understanding into the same realm of light that men can and see things on the same high level. They have been persuaded of this opinion by what some educated female poets have written. But when the works of these **female poets** were examined in their presence in the spiritual world, they were found to be works, not of judgment and wisdom, but of cleverness and a facility in the use of language. And works which result from these two gifts, because of the elegance and skill in the way the words are put together, appear as though they were lofty and intelligent - but only to people who take any kind of cleverness and call it wisdom. (ML 175)

I don't really know what to make of this statement because it contradicts my experience. I've been acquainted with many women (such as college professors) who are full of wisdom and good judgment. It also contradicts the above statement from *Married Love* 155r.4 where it says that angel husbands love their wives for their wisdom and judgment.

Another similar passage from *Divine Love and Wisdom* implies that women can't be good writers. The passage is talking about how some people don't understand the distinction between the will and intellect when they are writing because their thinking is only in touch with the sensory level of their mind. "This is why some people can think and talk well but still not write well, as is frequently the case with the **female sex**" (DLW 361). Later in this passage it says that,

Simple people see what is good and true more clearly than people who believe they are wiser. This common sense comes from an inflow from heaven and descends through thought all the way to sight; but thought separated from common sense fades into fantasy based on sight and on self-importance. (DLW 361)

As is often the case in the Writings, the "simple" are wiser than the "scholarly" or "educated." I think most people (both men and women) wouldn't want to be considered "simple," but when compared with the "educated," it's the better category to fall into. And notice that this passage also says that women *can* think and talk well.

There are also two passages that imply that women shouldn't be teachers or preachers, both of which are from the *Spiritual Diary*, which is an unpublished work of Swedenborg's. *Spiritual Diary* paragraph number 4940 says that "women are indeed able to enunciate with

affection and thus to excite to devotion and sanctity, but not to teach.” Once again, this goes counter to many people’s experience with women teachers. And the following passage seems to indicate that women shouldn’t preach.

Women who think in the way men do on religious subjects, and talk much about them, and still more if they preach in meetings, do away with the feminine nature, which is affectional; owing to which they must be with married men: they also become material, so that affection perishes and their interiors are closed. They also begin to develop a tendency, as regards the thoughts, to take up with crazes; which takes place because the affection, being then destroyed, causes the intellectual to be crazy. In outward form, indeed, they are still able to appear like other women. In a word, they become sensual in the last degree. Woman belongs to the home; and she [becomes] of a different nature where [she engages in] preaching. (SD 5936, Buss translation)

A more modern (accurate?) translation by the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose helps clarify what’s going on here:

Women who think the way men do on religious topics and speak about them a lot, and still more if they preach in gatherings, lose their feminine nature belonging to the affection from which they will be with [their] husbands, and become so materialistic that their affection perishes and they close up inside. They also begin to rave in their thoughts, which takes place because their affection, then destroyed, makes their intellect delirious. Admittedly, in external form they can appear like other women. In a word, they become sensual in the lowest degree. [Their form is] that at home,⁸⁶ and another one where preachings [occur]. (SD 5936)⁸⁷

One way to understand this is that if women preach as if they were men, then they lose their femininity. This makes sense. If women do *anything* like men, then they are being like men not like women. Therefore one could argue that this passage is indicating that women should preach like women, not like men. However, many readers of Swedenborg see this as a clear statement that women should not enter the priesthood.

One traditional idea among some readers of Swedenborg for perhaps why women can’t teach or preach or speak in gatherings of men, is that women can’t separate their thoughts from their emotions like men can. But I believe that this is an idea that is taken out of context from a passage in *Married Love*.

⁸⁶ Note also that, if the Rev. Dr. Rose’s translation is more accurate, then this passage is not saying that “woman belongs to the home.”

⁸⁷ New Church Life 1997 pp. 89-90

A wife continually thinks about her husband's disposition towards her, with a view to joining him to her. This goes along with what was explained above, namely, that a desire to unite her husband to her is constant and continual in a wife, but inconstant and intermittent in a husband. ... It follows from this that a wife thinks continually about her husband's disposition towards her with a view to joining him to her. To be sure, a wife's thinking about her husband is interrupted by the domestic concerns which are under her care, but still it remains in the affection of her love; and **in women, this affection does not become detached from their thoughts as it does in men.**" (ML 169)

What this passage is actually saying is that wives continually think about their husbands, while husbands don't continually think about their wives. It's not saying that women can't detach their affections from their thoughts *in general*. Otherwise women wouldn't be able to be regenerated by a conscience that rises above their corrupt will.

There are many cases in *Married Love*, where Swedenborg listened to angel wives or women speaking to him in public (See ML 155r, 166, 208, 293, 294). And as stated before, "Among angels in heaven one also finds discourse by wives about love and not the same silence that one finds in some cases on earth" (ML 258). I believe that the passages that talk about women keeping silent are not *prescriptive* passages but *descriptive* passages about how women sometimes behave on earth. If angel wives are a model of what women should aim for, then women speaking about their love and sharing their wisdom is a good thing. In this day and age it is much more common for women to speak about love and share their wisdom. Perhaps in this way we are headed in the right direction.

The Writings also talk about how in heaven, husbands and wives speak from each other, showing the nature of their marriage even in their speech.

When I had seen these things, they spoke with me again. And when the husband spoke, he spoke as though he spoke at the same time on behalf of his wife, and when the wife spoke, she spoke as though she spoke at the same time on behalf of her husband. For such was the union of their minds, from which comes their speech. It was then that I heard as well the way married love sounds, how it was inwardly together with, and also the result of, the delights of a state of peace and innocence. (ML 42.5; see also ML 56.5)

Appendix X - The Heart and Lungs, Love and Wisdom, Men and Women

One of the specific examples in the human body that the Writings often use to describe the marriage of a husband and wife, and love and wisdom, is the example of the heart and lungs (see AC 3889). Part Five in *Divine Love and Wisdom* talks about this analogy and correspondence (see DLW 398-422).

The union of life is ... like the union of the heart's beating and the lungs' breathing, the kind of union in which neither partner is anything apart from the other but in which each becomes something through its union with the other. (DP 194)

One of the interesting points that comes out in the comparison of the marriage of love and wisdom to the marriage of the heart and lungs is the way that they are married, namely that the process begins with the heart, or the love:

Some idea of this marriage may be gained from the way in which heart and lungs are joined together. The heart joins itself to the lungs, and the lungs in turn join themselves to the heart; for the heart sends blood out from the right side of itself into the lungs, and the lungs in turn send it back into the heart, but into its left side, and so on unceasingly. (AC 9495)

Other passages however paint the picture even more strongly by saying that it's really the heart that does all the work:

I am wholly convinced by what I know about the structure of the lungs that love marries itself to discernment by means of its desire and that discernment does not marry itself to any desire of love. Rather, it is married willingly by love so that love may have a sensory and active life. (DLW 412)

Each of these [the heart, and our volition] attaches to itself a partner with which it lives and carries on the business of life, the heart uniting the lungs to itself and volition uniting discernment to itself. (DP 193)

Now the question this brings up in relation to the theme of this paper is: how does this relate to the marriage of a man and a woman? *Divine Love and Wisdom* paragraphs 398-422 use terminology that makes it obvious that the relationship between the heart/love/will and lungs/wisdom/intellect is like a man and a woman (see also ML 44.3). But which is which? Is the man like the heart, or is the woman like the heart?

When the Husband Is like the Heart/Love/Will, the Wife Is like the Lungs/Wisdom/Intellect

The treatment on the heart and lungs in *Divine Love and Wisdom* (DLW 398-422), paints the picture of the husband being like the heart and the wife being like the lungs. The language there might seem to be ambiguous,⁸⁸ but a passage in *True Christianity* shows that clearly the heart/love here is depicted as the husband, and the lungs/wisdom as the wife.

It is a known fact that these two pairs of motions are at work in each and every detail of our bodies. This happens because the heart corresponds to love and the lungs to wisdom, a correspondence that is fully demonstrated in *Angelic Wisdom about Divine Love and Wisdom* [371-431], published in Amsterdam. [3] Countless examples in both worlds, spiritual and physical, can convince us that love produces or begets all forms like a bridegroom and husband, by means of wisdom as a bride and wife. (TCR 37.2-3)

This depiction of the heart/love being like a husband, and the lungs/wisdom being like a wife is further illustrated by the way the language is used in this *Divine Love and Wisdom* treatment.

Love or volition prepares a home or bridal chamber for its spouse-to-be, wisdom or discernment.... We can see from their union how love or volition pledges itself to wisdom or discernment, and later leads it or enters a kind of marriage with it. It pledges itself by preparing a home or room for wisdom, and it leads it by a marriage that takes place through desires. Then it brings wisdom with it into its house. (DLW 402)

This paints the picture of a man courting a woman, asking for her hand in marriage, and finding a job and a house so that he can support her. We can almost picture the traditional image of a man carrying his bride across the threshold of their new home. The passages goes on to say: “We can tell from the heart and the lungs, then, that the heart first forms the lungs and then weds itself to them. It forms the lungs in the fetus and weds them after birth” (DLW 402). This description is similar to the idea that ‘woman was created out of man;’ an idea that we get from *Genesis* 2:23 (see also ML 32. This subject is addressed fully above). We could also think about the feeling that life is our own (represented by Eve) being like the voluntary control over our breathing, while the fact that our life is the Lord’s (represented by Adam) is like our involuntary heartbeat (see DLW 401).

⁸⁸ Depending on the translation. The Rogers and Dole translations of *Divine Love and Wisdom* paragraph 402 accurately translate it this way: “Love or volition prepares a home or bridal chamber for its *spouse-to-be*, wisdom or discernment” (Dole). This is because the Latin word there is *conjuge* (*conjunx*, *conjugis*) which is a neuter word meaning ‘spouse, mate, or consort,’ and therefore it appears to be ambiguous as to whether wisdom is a female or male spouse. Both the Ager and the Harley (older) translations translate *conjuge* as ‘wife,’ which, though it is technically less accurate to the Latin, agrees with the intended description of the wisdom being the wife, and love being the husband, as described in TCR 37.

The description of the husband being like the heart/love/will goes on in the next number where it says that “love enters discernment” (DLW 402), and “since union by correspondence means that the one behaves in the same way as the other, we can see from the blood flow from the heart into the lungs how volition flows into discernment” (DLW 405). This description is similar to the act of consummation or insemination between a man and a woman.

There is also a description of the woman being like the lungs/wisdom/understanding in this passage, in the sense that women are considered more beautiful than men:

Truth is simply the form of love's desires. **Beauty is its intelligence**, which it acquires by means of the truths it gains through outer and inner sight or hearing. It is these that love arranges in the form of its desires. There are many variations on this form, but they all take some similarity from their common form, which is the human form. **To love, all these forms are beautiful and loveable**, but others are ugly and unlovable to it. (DLW 411; cf. ML 213)

The idea of the connection between women and wisdom and beauty is found in several other places in the Writings (see DLW 358; ML 56; AC 1470; cf. AC 2735). The imagery goes on:

Once their opposites have been removed, we are involved in them, so we recognize and see them from the inside. Until that happens, there is a kind of veil in the way. It does let a little of heaven's light reach our love, but since that **love does not love wisdom, its spouse**, to that extent, it does not accept the light. **It actually criticizes it severely and finds fault with it** when it comes back down from its height, **though the light is still attractive to it** because wisdom in our discernment can be a tool that helps gain us respect, praise, and profit. (DLW 419)

This language paints a picture of a husband (love) who at times can grow cold towards his wife (wisdom), and even criticize her, and yet still find her attractive.

The concept that a man or husband can represent the heart/love/will, while a woman or wife can represent the lungs/wisdom/understanding is described in other passages from the Writings as well:

In the celestial Church good resided with the husband and the truth of that good with the wife. (AC 4823.2)

Love is like a husband, and so is goodwill; wisdom is like a wife, and so is faith. (TCR 41; see also TCR 377)

It is good that acknowledges them [truths] and links itself to them like a husband to his wife (AC 4358)

She is said to encircle the man because our self-life encircles us as the fleshed-out rib encircles the heart. (AC 155)⁸⁹

The basis of any marriage is the consent given by both parties. This has its origin in the marriage of good and truth, in that one party - good - proposes and the other - truth - consents, and the two are thereby joined together. (AC 3090; cf. AC 3158.2)

Choosing whom to court is the prerogative of the man, and not the woman. (ML 296)

But wait. This last passage from *Married Love* goes on to say that it is the prerogative of the man “because the man was born to be a form of the intellect, whereas the woman was born to be a form of love” (ML 296). So actually this last passage describes the opposite idea of a man being like the lungs/wisdom/intellect rather than the heart/love/will!

And when you think about it, there are a number of other passages that paint the picture the other way around as well, which we will examine next.

When the Wife is like the Heart/Love/Will, the Husband is like the Lungs/Wisdom/Intellect

The most obvious passage that describes the opposite representation is the one from *Married Love* where the angel husband says “She is my heart and I am her lungs” (ML 75.5).

This concept even appears to be described in *Divine Love and Wisdom* in certain ways:

Love or volition prepares a *home* or bridal chamber for its spouse-to-be, wisdom or discernment.... We can see from their union how love or volition pledges itself to wisdom or discernment, and later leads it or enters a kind of marriage with it. It pledges itself by preparing a *home* or room for wisdom, and it leads it by a marriage that takes place through desires. Then it brings wisdom with it into its *house*. (DLW 402)

This passage was quoted above. But it’s interesting to compare this passage, about the ‘home or house’ being one that belongs to love rather than wisdom, to this one from *Married Love*:

Their marriage is provided by the Lord and celebrated in the heaven where the young man resides; and **he shortly then follows his wife into her heaven, or to her house** if they are in the same society. (ML 411)

This comparison seems to indicate that the woman is the one that represents love, since it is to her house that a new couple goes when they are married in heaven.

But a clearer depiction of the woman being like the heart comes from the idea that the heart/love/will is the active role and the lungs/wisdom/intellect are the reactive role:

⁸⁹ Perhaps even like the lungs encircle the heart.

Love or volition marries wisdom or discernment to itself and arranges things so that wisdom or discernment marries it willingly. We can see that love or volition marries wisdom or discernment from their correspondence with the heart and the lungs. Anatomical research teaches that the heart is engaged in its life motion before the lungs are....This in turn shows that love or volition marries wisdom or discernment and that wisdom or discernment does not marry itself to love or volition. ... It seems as though discernment were accepting them and not love or volition, but this is an illusion. It also seems as though discernment married itself to love or volition, but this too is an illusion. Love or volition marries itself to discernment and arranges things so that the marriage is mutual. The reason it is mutual lies in the marriage of love with it; so the union seems to be mutual because of the life and consequent power of love. The same holds true for the marriage of what is good and what is true, since the good is a matter of love and the true is a matter of discernment. The good does everything. It accepts the true into its house and marries it to the extent that it is in harmony. ... The reciprocal union—the union of what is true with what is good—is actually nonexistent. The reciprocity of the union comes from the life of what is good. (DLW 410; see also DLW 412)

This concept, that it is the heart/love/will that marries itself to the lungs/wisdom/intellect, and not the reverse is very similar to the ideas that are described in *Married Love* in numerous places about how it is the wife that first joins herself to her husband, and not the other way around. In terms of true married love, the wife plays the active role, and the husband plays the reactive role.

A wife's will unites itself with her husband's understanding, and the husband's understanding in consequence unites itself with his wife's will. The reason is that a male is born to become a form of understanding, and a female to become a form of will that loves the understanding of the male. It follows from this that the marital union is a union of the wife's will with the husband's understanding, and a reciprocal union of the husband's understanding with the wife's will. (ML 159; see also ML 33, 160, 161, 169, 170, 171)

A wife joins her husband to her as good joins truth to it; also that a husband joins himself to his wife in return according to his reception of her love in him, as truth joins itself to good in return, according to its reception of good in it. (ML 198)

“All conjunction by love requires action, reception, and reaction. The state of our love and its delights is the agent or that which acts. The state of our husbands' wisdom is the recipient or that which receives. And this same wisdom is also the reagent or that which reacts in accordance with their reception.” (ML 293.5; see also ML 76.6,7)

These don't directly compare the active role of a wife to the active role of the heart, but the following passage does directly compare the heart/love to a woman, and the lungs/intellect to a man:

This atmosphere is received by the female sex and communicated through it to the male sex. The male sex does not have any married love inherent in it, but **married love is inherent only in the female sex and is transmitted to the male sex from it...** The masculine form is an intellect-oriented one and the feminine form a will-oriented one; and **an intellect-oriented form does not have the capacity to develop a marital warmth on its own, but can do so only from the associated warmth of another in whom this has been implanted from creation.** Consequently the masculine form cannot receive married love except by having adjoined to it the will-oriented form of a woman, because this is at the same time a form of love. [2] **The same point could be further confirmed from the marriage between good and truth, and, to the natural man, from the marriage between the heart and the lungs, because the heart corresponds to love and the lungs to the intellect.** (ML 223)

Another interesting aspect about this comparison is that as long as the human body is alive, the heartbeat is constant, while the breathing of the lungs is inconsistent. This sounds very similar to passages such as these:

A desire to unite her husband to her is constant and continual in a wife, but inconstant and intermittent in a husband. (ML 160)

For the intellect is not as constant in its thoughts as the will is in its affections. Indeed, it is carried upward one moment and downward the next, being sometimes in a state of serenity and clarity, sometimes in a state of turmoil and confusion, at times engaged in pleasant subjects, at other times caught up in unpleasant ones. And because the mind in its workings is at the same time in the body, it follows that the body undergoes similar states. As a result, the husband sometimes draws away from married love, sometimes toward it. (ML 221)

It's also interesting to note that it *appears* that men are the initiators of love, and women are the receivers of that love, while in reality it is the other way around. Similarly it *appears* that our life comes from our breathing, or that our intellect plays the active role, or that truth is first, when in reality our life comes from our heart, our love and our will:

It seems as though discernment were accepting them and not love or volition, but this is an illusion. It also seems as though discernment married itself to love or volition, but this too is an illusion. Love or volition marries itself to discernment and arranges things so that the marriage is mutual. The reason it is mutual lies in the marriage of love with it; so the union seems to be mutual because of the life and consequent power of love. (DLW 410)

The idea that a wife inspires the love and thus the union in her husband is today kept hidden from men. Indeed, they universally deny it. The reason is that their wives persuade them that men alone are the lovers, and themselves recipients, or that men are forms of love, and themselves forms of compliance. They even rejoice at heart when their

husbands believe this. Wives persuade their husbands of this for many reasons, all of which have to do with the prudence and circumspect nature of wives (ML 161)

There are other passages from the Writings that also describe this idea of the heart/love/will being like a woman, and the lungs/wisdom/intellect being like a man:

A man and a male symbolize truth while a wife and a woman symbolize good... Truth acting on its own is completely unable to enter into marriage with goodness—it is possible only for goodness to join with truth. (AC 725; see also AC 4823.2)

Man may be described as the form of the wife; they are one flesh; a man shall cleave to his wife; **the wife** is the man's soul, and life, or **is the heart of the man**; (SD 6110.14)

So Which Represents the Heart, the Man or the Woman? Yes.

It is clear that in *Divine Love and Wisdom* (#s 398-422) the heart/love/will and lungs/wisdom/intellect are compared to the marriage of a man and woman. *True Christianity* 37 confirms that in those passages, the heart/love is the husband and the lungs/wisdom is the wife, even though the language used in *Divine Love and Wisdom* appears ambiguous. One of the reasons why I think this is, is because it *can* be, and *is* both ways. Both husband and wife can play active and reactive roles with each other. It's truly reciprocal.

Marriages represent the joining of good to truth, **and** of truth to good. (AC 4823.3)

The intent of the wife actually enters into the thinking of the husband, **and** the thinking of the husband enters into the intent of the wife, (HH 369; see also ML 213)

After the wedding the representation changes (ML 21.2)

The conjugal element of the male possesses a capacity for conjunction with the conjugal element of the female, **and vice versa**, even in the least particulars. (ML 316.4)

They have been united ... by the **wife's reception** of the propagations of the husband's soul, and thus by an implantation of his life in hers, by which a maiden becomes a wife; **and conversely** by the **husband's reception** of the wife's married love. (ML 321.2)

Like the heart and lungs, men and women behave differently (see DLW 405), and yet can work together reciprocally to produce one life. And just like both men and women have both a will and understanding, both the heart and lungs deal with both blood and oxygen, it's just that they each have a different focus on them (see DLW 408).

Appendix XI - Role Reversals

The intelligence of women is by nature modest, gracious, peaceable, compliant, soft and gentle, while the intelligence of men is by nature critical, rough, resistant, argumentative, and given to intemperance. ... With respect to tone of voice, men have a stern one, while women have a gentle one. With respect to their speech, men's is given to intemperance and argumentativeness, while women's is modest and peaceable. With respect to their bearing, men's is bolder and more forceful, whereas women's is meeker and more delicate. With respect to their behavior, men's is more unruly, while women's is more civilized. ... thus [I could see] what a man's intellect in its development would be like without conjunction with feminine love and eventually married love. (ML 218)

Interestingly, this description is exactly the opposite of how my wife and I are. Speaking from experience I know that it *is* possible for a man to be gentle, modest, gracious, peaceable, compliant, soft, meek, delicate, and civilized by nature. And it *is* possible for a woman to be critical, rough, resistant, stern, intemperate, argumentative, bold, forceful, and unruly by nature. And it doesn't mean that those men are not really men, or that those women are not really women, because this passage isn't describing true masculinity and femininity. It's describing how we tend to begin by nature. This passage is a good description of these general tendencies. But in specifics it tends to be more complicated. And what seems to be even more important than the details of the native nature of a given man or woman's intelligence, is whether a husband and wife compliment each other and help each other to grow towards a better state of humanity individually and together. It's not how we start out, it's how we end up. More on that in chapter four.

Appendix XII - “All Because Two People Fell In Love”

The concept of married love being the fundamental love of all loves is nicely described in a song by Brad Paisley called “Two People Fell in Love”⁹⁰:

There ain't nothing not affected, when two hearts get connected;
 All that is, will be, or ever was.
 Every single choice we make, every breath we get to take,
 Is all because two people fell in love.
 You know to me it's all so clear, every one of us is here,
 All because two people fell in love.

Individual marriages aren't the original source of the goodness in the world, but they do seem to provide the foundation for goodness to rest on. Thus, married love is the fundamental or foundational love of all loves.

Appendix XIII - The Unknown Mysteries of the Intelligence in Wives

Apparently there is still a lot we don't know about the intelligence (or wisdom) of wives (among other things), as Swedenborg indicates in *Married Love*:

There are very many points in regard to marriage which, if presented in detail, would swell this book into an immense volume. For we could present a detailed treatment of various particulars relating... to **the intelligence in wives**... and many other topics besides, which, if they were set out point by point, would expand this work into so large a tome it would weary the reader. (ML 209)

⁹⁰ See Bibliography for information about this song.

Appendix XIV - A Visual Description of Reciprocation in True Married Love

“A wife is joined to her husband by the atmosphere of her life emanating from her love” (ML 171).⁹¹ And once a husband accepts that love within him, he can reciprocate and love her back (see ML 42.4). The nature of this giving and receiving is beautifully illustrated in a story from *Married Love*, in which a married couple in heaven who lived in the silver age of this earth are showing Swedenborg “pictures and forms representing the many qualities, attributes and delights which have to do with married love.”

While we were looking, we saw on the wall a kind of rainbow, consisting of three colors, purple, blue, and bright white. And we saw how the purple color passed through the blue and tinted the white with a purplish blue hue, and that the latter color flowed back through the blue into the purple and raised it into a kind of flaming radiance. [7] Then the husband said to me, "Do you understand it?" And I said, "Instruct me." So he said, "The purple by its correspondence symbolizes the married love of the wife; the bright white, the intelligence of the husband; the blue, the beginning of married love in the husband's perception from the wife; and the purplish blue, which tinted the white, married love then in the husband. This latter color's flowing back through the blue into the purple and raising it into a kind of flaming radiance symbolizes the married love of the husband flowing back to the wife. Things like these are represented on these walls whenever we reflect on married love, its mutual, progressive and simultaneous union, and then look closely at the rainbows exhibited there." (ML 76.6-7)

- Purple (married love of the wife)
- Blue (beginning of married love in the husband's perception from the wife)
- Bright White (intelligence of the husband)
- Purplish Blue (married love in the husband)

And we saw how the purple color passed through the blue and tinted the white with a purplish blue hue, and that the latter color flowed back through the blue into the purple and raised it into a kind of flaming radiance. (ML 76.6)

In other words, the wife's married love passes through the husband's beginning perception of what married love is, and it tints his intelligence with the feeling of married love in himself. Then his own expression of married love flows back through his perception of that love into his wife's experience of mutual married love and raises “it into a kind of flaming radiance.”

The atmosphere of love emanating from a wife who is tenderly loved, in heaven is perceived as sweetly fragrant. (CL 171.3)

⁹¹ See also ML 155r, 160, 161, 189, 198, 216r, 293.5, 321.2, 379, 393

Appendix XV - Homosexuality

The following passages could have relevance to the subject of homosexuality:

“Male and female he created them.” The inner meaning of male and female was very familiar to the earliest church, although their successors lost touch with this secret when they lost sight of any deeper import to the Word. These earliest people found their greatest happiness and pleasure in marriage. Whenever they could possibly draw a comparison between something else and marriage, they did so, in order to perceive the happiness of marriage in that other entity. Being people of depth, they enjoyed only the deeper aspects of things. External objects were just for looking at; their thoughts were occupied instead with the things those objects represented. External objects, then, were nothing to them, serving only as a springboard for reflection on inner realities, and these for contemplation of heavenly realities and so of the Lord, who was everything to them. The same process caused them to reflect on the heavenly marriage, which they could tell was the source of the happiness in their own marriages. As a result, **they called the intellect in the spiritual being male and the will there female**; and when the two worked together, they called it a marriage. (AC 54)

Indeed, masculinity in the male is masculine in every part, even in the least part of his body, and also in every idea of his thought, and in every bit of his affection. So, too, with femininity in the female. And because one cannot as a consequence be converted into the other, it follows that after death a male is still male, and that a female is still female. (ML 33)

A love for the opposite sex remains in a person after death for the reason that a male is then still a male, and a female still a female, and masculinity in the male is masculine in the whole and every part of him, likewise femininity in the female, and there is a capacity for conjunction in every detail - indeed, in every least detail - of the two sexes. Now, because that capacity for conjunction was introduced from creation and is therefore permanently present in the two sexes, it follows that each yearns for and aspires to conjunction with the other. (ML 37)

As regards love for the opposite sex, this is universal in all people, for it is implanted from the moment of creation in a person's very soul, from which comes the essential nature of the whole person, and it is implanted for the sake of propagating the human race. This love remains especially, because after death a man is still a man, and a woman is still a woman, and there is nothing in the soul, mind, or body which is not masculine in the male and feminine in the female; and the two sexes have been so created as to strive for conjunction, indeed, for conjunction in order that they may become one. This impulse is the love for the opposite sex which precedes conjugal love. Now because an inclination to conjunction has been engraved on each and every element in the male and female, it follows that this inclination cannot be wiped out or die with the body. (ML 46)

Married couples enjoy the same intimate relations as in the world for the reason that after death a male is still a male and a female is still a female, and an inclination to conjunction has been implanted in each of the sexes from creation. In the human being, moreover, this inclination is an inclination of the person's spirit, and of the body as a result of his spirit. (ML 51)

Having heard these things, the angels crossly asked the spirits who were standing to the right, towards the south, to speak, and these spirits said, "There is a love between men, also a love between women, and there is the love of a man for a woman and the love of a woman for a man. And these three pairs of loves are completely different from each other. Love between two men is like the love between one intellect and another, for men were created and so are born to become forms of understanding. Love between two women is like the love between one affection and another for the understanding of men, for women were created and are born to become forms of love for the understanding of men. These loves, namely, the love between two men and the love between two women, do not enter deeply into their hearts, but remain outside and only touch. Thus these loves do not unite the two of them interiorly. That is why two men together also spar with each other with endless arguments, like two athletes boxing, and two women sometimes as well, with endless insistence on their own wishes, like two marionettes battling with their fists. On the other hand, the love between a man and a woman is a love between intellect and its affection, and this enters deeply and unites them. The union also is the love." (ML 55.6,7)

Chastity and a lack of chastity are terms that apply to states of marriage and things that have to do with marriage. This is because truly conjugal love is the essence of chastity, as shown below. And the love opposite to it, which we call licentious, is the essence of unchasteness. In the measure, therefore, that conjugal love is purified of unchasteness, in the same measure conjugal love is chaste, for in that measure the opposite that destroys it is taken away. It is apparent from this that what we mean by chastity is the purity of conjugal love. There is also conjugal love in which chastity is absent, which is nevertheless not unchaste - such as exists between partners who for various external reasons abstain from outward expressions of lasciviousness even to the point that they do not think about them. Nevertheless, if that love is not purified in their spirits, it is still not chaste. It has an outward form that is chaste, but its inward essence is not chaste. (ML 139)

Chastity is ascribed only to monogamous marriages, or to marriages of one man with one wife. (ML 141)

Only a Christian conjugal relationship is chaste.... By a Christian conjugal relationship we mean a marriage of one man with one wife. (ML 142)

Truly conjugal love is the essence of chastity.... It is truly the seedbed of the human race and consequently of the angelic heaven. (ML 143)

It should be known, however, that conjugal love does not become entirely chaste or pure in people, not even in angels. There is still something not chaste or not pure, which attaches and appends itself to the love. Nevertheless, this element is different in nature from unchasteness.... As seen above in no. 71, no love in people or angels is entirely pure, nor can it become so. But the Lord regards primarily the objective, purpose or intention of the will, and therefore to the extent that a person has the objective, purpose or intention and perseveres in them, to that extent he is introduced into purity and progressively draws nearer to it. (ML 146)

Chastity in marriage comes about through total renunciation of licentious relationships in accordance with religion. (ML 147)

Chastity cannot be ascribed to people who are born eunuchs or who have been made eunuchs.* **By people who are born eunuchs we mean chiefly people in whom the outmost impulse of love is missing from birth.** And because the highest and intermediate impulses then lack a foundation on which to rest, neither do these impulses develop. Or if they do, the people are not concerned with distinguishing between chaste and unchaste states, since either one is a matter of indifference to them. The diversities among people like this, however, are many. (ML 151)

Appendix XVI - Marriage in Creation

“The universe, from beginning to end and from first to last, is so full of divine love and wisdom that you could call it divine love and wisdom in an image” (DLW 52). First, let’s define what creation is. Creation is not the Lord, and yet it came from the Lord. We are not God, but we were made by God, and we can have God in us (see TCR 43.2). Creation did not come from nothing, and it is not nothing. And yet since the Lord is reality itself, we might be tempted to think that creation is not actually anything. It is something, but it is not the same reality that God is:

What is created by God in God is not a continuation of Him, since God is intrinsic reality and there is no trace of intrinsic reality in anything created. If there were any intrinsic reality in a created being, it would be a continuation of God, and any continuation of God is God. (DLW 55)

But creation *is* full of God, and it only has life and existence because God is in it. For example: I have recorded a number of CDs of my music. When someone hears one of those recordings playing, they might ask, “Is that Solomon?” Someone might then respond by saying “Yes it is.” Well, it’s not actually *me*, but it is my music, and it only exists because of me, and in some ways it *is* an extension of who I am. It’s similar with God in creation.

Love and Wisdom are Everything

We are discussing creation here because since God is the Divine marriage of love and wisdom, and everything is created in His image, then every created thing is some form of the marriage of love and wisdom. “It is because the divine essence itself is love and wisdom that everything in the universe involves what is good and what is true” (DLW 31; see also DLW 28). In one sense everything in creation reflects the marriage of love *and* wisdom in the Lord (see AC 7022). In another sense everything in creation is a form of *wisdom* that is married to the *love* in the Lord “If you look at the created universe with an eye to its design, it is so full of wisdom from love that you might say everything taken all together is *wisdom* itself” (DLW 29). But that is a subject more for chapter two when we talk about the marriage of the Lord and the church (see also ML 85). In this section we will be looking at how “in the created universe and in every detail of it there is a marriage between what is good and what is true” (DLW 402):

Everything which exists in the whole world is nothing but a form of the marriage between good and truth, since each and every thing was created out of and into a marriage of good and truth - both everything that lives and breathes and also whatever does not live and breathe. (ML 115.3)

Marriage in Nature

Marriage is reflected in everything in nature. It's reflected in the fact that living things are separated into male and female, and if not into male and female at least into parts that combine in order to reproduce (see ML 92, 222; cf. TCR 585). It's reflected in the union of heat and light from the sun. It's reflected in the interplay between active and passive (or reactive) forces in nature (see AC 7022). It's reflected in that fact that everything has substance and form, energy and matter. This is the ancient wisdom behind the concept of Yin and Yang.

Every single thing in the spiritual world, and consequently in the natural world, has two forces associated with it - goodness and truth. Good is an active inflowing force, truth a passive, recipient one. Also, because everything has these two forces associated with it, and because nothing can ever be brought forth unless the two are made one by becoming so to speak married to each other, a joining together is therefore meant by them. [2] This type of marriage exists in every single thing within the natural order and its three kingdoms; without it nothing whatever can come into existence. For anything to come into existence within the natural order there needs to be heat and light, heat in the natural world corresponding to the good of love in the spiritual world, and light corresponding to the truth of faith. These two - heat and light - must act as one if anything is to be brought forth. If they do not act as one, as is the case in winter-time, nothing at all is brought forth. ...This explains why the ancients likened every single thing in the world, and every single thing within the human being, to a marriage. (AC 5194)

Now sometimes, as is indicated in the above passages, the duality of things in nature that reflect love and wisdom, do *not* act as one like they should (see also AC 3793). Often times, in all levels of marriage, things begin in a state of separation, and move towards a state of conjunction:

As for the way love and wisdom form a unity in things beneath or outside us—in the animal kingdom and the plant kingdom—this will come up throughout the following pages. I may mention three things by way of preface. First, there was a marriage of goodness and truth in the universe and in absolutely everything in it that the Lord created. Second, **this marriage was broken up in us after creation**. Third, it is a goal of divine providence that what has been broken apart should become a whole and therefore that **the marriage of goodness and truth should be restored**. (DP 9)

In some ways it seems like the whole progression of creation is a cycle of separating and reuniting, separating and reuniting. God separated part of Himself to create us, and then He wants to reunite with us. Jesus was separate from the Father and then reunited. Children are

separated from their parents and then reunited with a spouse and a new family. The will and understanding are separated and then reunited. Cells divide and then unite towards a common goal of human growth.

Heat and Light

One of the specific examples in nature that the Writings often use to describe the marriage of love and wisdom is the example of heat and light. All of part two in *Divine Love and Wisdom*, is about this analogy and correspondence (see DLW 83-172).

It is because the divine essence itself is love and wisdom that the universe and everything in it, whether living or not, depends on **warmth and light** for its survival. Warmth in fact corresponds to love and light corresponds to wisdom, which also means that spiritual warmth is love and spiritual light is wisdom. (DLW 32)

One of the useful things that this analogy points out to us about love and wisdom is the fact that love is primary and truth is secondary (see AC 3236). The light of the sun ultimately comes from the fire in the sun, and the warmth that we feel ultimately comes from the heat and light radiated from that fire. Without fire there would be no light.

The truth of faith is subordinate to the good that flows from charity. The things which are the substance and the basis of a person's thought have an affect on him. If he were to think from the goods of charity he would see plainly that the truths of faith occupied the second position, and he would also see truths themselves so to speak in light. For **the good which flows from charity is like a flame which provides light** and so illuminates every single thing which he had previously assumed to be true. (AC 4245)

Another interesting thing that this analogy shows us is that love and wisdom need a third thing in order to truly be functional, and that third thing is useful service:

Warmth is love, and light with warmth joined to it is wisdom, and useful service is like an atmosphere which holds both in its embrace. What are heat and light without their containing medium? So likewise, what are love and wisdom without their expression in useful service? Without expression in useful service, there is no bond of marriage between the two, because the objective reality in which they exist is lacking. (ML 137.4)

The Human Body

Humanity is the part of creation that most reflects the image of God. And so in the human body there are numerous ways that the marriage of love and wisdom is reflected. One of which is that the human body has an obvious right and left side. The Writings tells us that the right side has to do with goodness, and the left side has to do with truth.

The right side has to do with the good that results from truth and the left to the truth that results from good; or in other words, the right refers to the good that love can do, which leads to the truth of wisdom, while the left refers to the truth of wisdom that results from the good that love can do. (DLW 384; see also AC 9604; DLW 127, 409; cf. ML 21.2)

And as much as the right and left sides can act separately, they are never actually separate because “in the middle between them the communication of good with truth and of truth with good takes place, so that they are perpetually and unceasingly joined together” (AC 9604). And it is not just two sides of the body, but often pairs of organs that appear in the body and which beautifully illustrate the nature of how two things can function together in a marriage:

This is also made evident... from the composite organs of the body which are formed from its elemental constituents. We find, for example, two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, two cheeks, two lips, two arms and hands, two legs, two feet; and inside the body, two hemispheres of the brain, two ventricles of the heart, two lungs, two kidneys, two testicles [DLW 384 & 409 mention two “reproductive glands” which is less gender specific]. Even when an organ is not paired, still it exhibits a division into two parts. The reason there are these sets of two is that one is connected with the will and the other with the intellect, which operate in conjunction with each other so marvelously that they give the appearance of being one. Thus the two eyes produce one power of sight, the two ears one power of hearing, the two nostrils one sense of smell, the two lips one speech, the two hands one labor, the two feet one gait, the two hemispheres of the brain one habitation of the mind, the two chambers of the heart one life of the body through the blood, the two lungs one respiration, and so on. (ML 316.4)

One eye can see, but two eyes give us a sense of perspective. One ear can hear, but two give us a sense of the direction of the source. One hand can lift heavy objects, but two hands pushing in opposite directions can lift even heavier objects. On one foot we can barely hop around, but on two we can run. *Divine Love and Wisdom* paragraph 384 talks about how the cerebellum provides a seat for the will, while the cerebrum provides a seat for the understanding. It’s amazing how well this depicts the nature of all marriages. Without Divine wisdom, Divine love cannot act. Without our understanding, our will cannot function. Without a husband, a woman cannot be a wife, and vice versa. The combination is more than the sum of its parts.

One of the specific examples in the human body that the Writings often use to describe the marriage of love and wisdom is the example of the heart and lungs (see AC 3889). For a complete study of this comparison, see the section on the “Heart and Lungs” in Appendix X.

Appendix XVII - The Transformation of a Woman into a Wife

One of the concepts behind the idea of ‘woman coming from man’ is the idea that a woman *turns herself into a wife* by means of a man. A *wife* is ‘taken out of’ man.

And Jehovah God made slumber fall on the human, and he went to sleep. And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. And Jehovah God built a **woman** out of the rib that he took from the human and brought her to the human. And the human said, “This time, bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. This is why **she will be called ‘wife’**: because she was taken from man. (Genesis 2:21-23; NCE of AC 130)

The note following this passage in *Secrets of Heaven* says:

The derivation of the word ‘wife’ described in the rest of the verse depends upon the Hebrew, in which the word for man (or husband) is *ish*, while that for wife (or woman) is *ishah*, so that the word for the latter seems to be ‘taken from’ the former. (Note 132 from NCE of *Secrets of Heaven*, page 611-612. [Richard Smoley, Lisa Hyatt Cooper])

And another note addressing these same verses from *Genesis* says:

Although in Swedenborg’s Latin the word ‘woman’ (Latin *mulier*) is used in Genesis 2:22 and the word ‘wife’ (Latin *uxor*) is used in verses 23-25, the same Hebrew word *ishah* underlies them both. In making this change here from ‘woman’ to ‘wife’ Swedenborg follows a long-standing tradition in Latin translations of the Bible. (Note 143 in reference to AC 156 from NCE of *Secrets of Heaven*, page 613. [Jonathan S. Rose])

But this tradition seems to reflect one of the inner meanings of this story, which is that it describes the transformation of a woman into a wife.

Appendix XVIII - Gender Roles, Duties and Jobs

One of the subjects that comes up in the Writings which can be difficult to understand and apply, is the subject of gender roles, duties and jobs. Some of the descriptions of gender roles, especially in *Married Love*, can seem a little outdated in today's world. But if the Writings are Divine revelation, then how can the teachings be outdated? One of the ways we can understand teachings like this is that many of them are *descriptive* rather than *prescriptive*. In other words, the descriptions of what occupations, duties and behaviors men and women typically had in Swedenborg's time were *descriptive* of the spiritual marriage. This may not mean that the occupations, duties and behaviors of people at that time are *prescriptive* for men and women today. Rather, the underlying teachings about the spiritual marriage that can exist between men and women is what is prescriptive. But this is debated among readers of Swedenborg.

Married Love indicates that the employment of men typically has to do with forensic (public) uses (ML 90). Jobs like this often attract men because jobs like this are typically intellect-oriented. *Married Love* also indicates that the employment of women typically has to do with domestic uses (ML 91). Jobs like this often attract women because jobs like this are typically will-oriented. Men like to focus on the relationships between ideas, while women like to focus on the relationships between people. Men like to focus on jobs that support intellectual pursuits, while women like to focus on jobs that support relationships and family in our culture. (And there are also many women who are attracted to forensic or intellectual jobs, and men who are attracted to relationship-oriented or domestic jobs.) The extreme conservative stance on passages such as these is that the only job appropriate for women is that of stay-at-home mother. But some believe that this passage is simply describing the reason for why the women of Swedenborg's day were typically stay-at-home mothers. A more common approach to these passages is that women bring a domestic orientation to whatever job they have, while men bring a more intellect-oriented focus to whatever job they have. Obviously there is a lot of overlap and debate in the application of these principles. Is the job of 'teacher' something appropriate to men or women or both?⁹² The common approach these days is both. What about a doctor, social worker, or counselor? Many believe these are appropriate jobs for both. What about president,

⁹² See Appendix IX - "Women Speaking or Keeping Silent?"

minister, or soldier? Here there is more disagreement. In this paper we are not attempting to solve these issues, but merely to point them out, and where the issues stem from in the Writings.

The Writings also talk about the different *duties* of husbands and wives, and that they are distinct from each other.

In duties appropriate to husbands, understanding, thought and wisdom play the primary role, whereas in duties appropriate to wives, will, affection and love play the primary role. A wife also performs her duties out of will, affection and love, while her husband performs his out of understanding, thought and wisdom. Consequently, their duties are by nature different; but still they are progressively conjunctive as time goes on. (ML 175)

In *Married Love* paragraph 174 it says that a husband has duties appropriate to him, and a wife has duties appropriate to her, and that they can't enter into each other's duties. But this passage is actually fairly vague about what these duties specifically are.

There is no need to illustrate by recounting them that there are duties appropriate to a husband and duties appropriate to a wife, for these are many and various in nature. Moreover, everyone knows how to divide them into their categories according to their general and specific kinds, provided he directs his mind to seeing the difference between them. (ML 174)

In one sense this is frustrating, because it doesn't say specifically what the duties are. But in another sense, this is much better. We are left on our own to figure out how to apply these teachings to the varied duties of husbands and wives in the modern age.

At the end of *Married Love* paragraph 175 it says that the reason men and women have different duties appropriate to them is that they have completely different affections. What exactly these different affections are is a little hard to pin down. Both men and women can have the affection for goodness and the affection for truth. It seems to vary with different circumstances.⁹³ In general the difference seems to be that "in men, ... affections reside in the intellect, whereas in women they reside in the will" (ML 197).

But an important thing to notice is that the end of *Married Love* paragraph 175 says that men and women's affections *can become one* through marriage.

The two affections - the affection of a woman and the affection of a man - cannot become one except between the two sexes, and never is this possible in one person. (ML 175; see also HH 369)

And as these two different affections become one through marriage, so do their duties:

⁹³ AC 2731, 3030, 3067, 3159, 3309, 3974, 4510, 8994; HH 368, 369; AR 543; ML 33, 160, 208, 211, 221, 296

These duties also join the two into one, and at the same time make a single household, depending on the assistance they render each other.... These duties are joined together through the counsel, support, and many other kinds of assistance that the two partners give each other. (ML 176)

In the traditions of the past, the duties of men and women had been clearly divided and defined. Men brought home the paycheck, managed the finances, fixed the car, mowed the lawn, and did barbecue. Women changed the diapers, watched the children, cooked, and did the laundry and dishes. But I think what this passage is suggesting is simply that in true married love, a husband and wife will help each other with their duties. Duties do need to be clearly defined, but what those duties are for specific marriages is up to those men and women to define. And what is perhaps more important than defining and dividing, is sharing and helping.

What about jobs in heaven? Heaven, after all, is a kingdom of uses. Some people have gotten the impression that the only job that women have in heaven is childcare for people who died as babies or children (see AC 2302; HH 332; ML 174-176). While this is certainly *one* job that women have in heaven, I don't believe it is the *only* job that women have.⁹⁴ There are more jobs in heaven than we can even imagine (see HH 387-394). And I believe that many of them are performed by both men and women. Husbands and wives having jobs is actually something that helps to unite them in marriage, as a married couple from heaven describe to Swedenborg:

We found that [the state of our married love] is gradually tempered as the husband is perfected in wisdom and as the wife grows to love that wisdom in her husband, which is achieved through and **according to the useful services which each of them performs in society with the other's help.** (ML 137.3)

⁹⁴ I wonder if there are *married couples* that care for children in heaven, rather than only women (see HH 391).

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