

# INTRODUCING SWEDENBORG'S MARRIAGE LOVE

## Introduction

In an age when the institution of marriage and the family is coming under ever-increasing pressure, Swedenborg's ***Marriage Love***, which he published in 1768 under the Latin title "Conjugal Love", provides insights into the marriage relationship as an essential spiritual union. Further, it shows how the focus on materialism and sexuality only makes it difficult for the essential spiritual nature of marriage to blossom.

Swedenborg looks at the underlying reasons why very many human relationships break down and how sexual perversions, lusts and other disorderly states arise.

Today we have reached an identity crisis as far as the sexes are concerned and people are asking themselves what their roles as men and women should be.

Because of his deep insight into human nature Swedenborg spoke with great clarity about the underlying spiritual differences between the sexes. They were created to complement each other and through faithful union to attain a new dimension - impossible for either of the sexes to acquire by itself.

In today's contemporary society, through scientific research and a wide range of books dealing with masculinity and femininity and the nature of human relationships, we are widely becoming aware of the complementary balance between men and women.

Each has a unique character: the man an ability to focus more on intellectual light, which the woman with her ability to focus more on warmth and affection makes man's intellectual emphasis into a living reality. There is no rivalry in a true union but fruitfulness and deepening love that goes beyond death and continues eternally in heaven.

## Content of Book and Reading Approach

***Marriage Love*** is perhaps Swedenborg's most distinctive work. He had published a good number of spiritual works prior to it but this is the first to bear his name on the title page. There was also considerable hostility towards its appearance from within the ranks of the Swedish Lutheran Church. Two advocates of the book were even tried and convicted for heresy although sentences were relatively light. Such was the level of desire to have the material withheld from the Swedish public, copies of the book were confiscated.

The book has two parts:

### 1. The Sensible Joy in Married Love covering such topics as:

- *Marriages in heaven*
- *Condition of married partners after death*
- *Real love in marriage and its source*
- *Marriage of good and truth*
- *Union of souls and minds by marriage*

- *Changes in the condition of men's and women's lives through marriage*
- *Causes of coldness, separation and divorces in marriage*
- *Commitments and weddings*
- *Remarriage*
- *Jealousy*
- *Love for children*

## 2. The Foolish Pleasures of Illicit Love covering such topics as:

- *Fornication*
- *Concubines*
- *Adultery*
- *Rape and defloration*

The following paragraphs (not pages) give an excellent example of the depth and beauty of Swedenborg's thoughts:

<i>Every person lives after death</i>	28-31
<i>Which marriage continues?</i>	49
<i>Human spheres or auras</i>	171
<i>Death does not separate</i>	321
<i>Origin of parental love</i>	393, 396

## Relevance Today

We are drawn by the author's spirituality to contemplate the very depth of our being and to see in our masculinity or femininity the Creator's highest blessing in offering "conjugal" love to mankind. Swedenborg uses this word to express an all-embracing spiritual love in marriage.

At the very centre of marriage love and mirrored in human sexuality is the Divine nature of love and wisdom which together combine or unite to create and preserve all life.

The apparent rise in gay and lesbian relationships is seen as a departure from the Divine state of marriage but is a permission by God to respond to other underlying issues that affect a person's sexuality.

## Invitation

Over recent years there has been a growing recognition of the wonderful differences between men and women. This realisation has moved things away from gender comparisons and conflicts into a very helpful sense of their equal and complementary nature. Swedenborg's book, *Marriage Love*, endorses this true understanding of human sexuality and all through it, connects love, sex, marriage and parenting with spiritual and Divine origins and purposes. It is both a very practical and spiritual book which captures the union in human loving.

## Quotations

**Monogamy** - From paragraph 48

*"Marriage love is love for one person of the opposite sex and with that person. Love towards many others and with many is a natural love and a person has that*

*in common with many animals and birds which live from their own nature. But marriage love is something spiritual and also specifically human because human beings are created and born to become spiritual."*

**Marriage union** - From paragraph 37

*"Love is the desire and striving to come together, and in marriage love it is to come together as one. Men and women have been created so that from being two people they can become one. When they do become one, then, taken together, they are in the human form in the greatest sense. And if this coming together or union is not there, they are two and each of them is, as it were, a divided or half person."*

## Availability of the Book

Paperback

Hardback

## Brochures in this Series:

INTRODUCING SWEDENBORG'S

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