



Hurstville 1905
New
Church



The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society October 2026

Love, Confusion, and Restoring Marriage

By Rev. HyunJin Yang

*“My people are destroyed for lack of
knowledge...because you have forgotten the
law of your God.”*

(Hosea 4:6)

Why Did These Have to Be Written?

This is the second piece addressing what we encounter in the work *Married Love* (or *Conjugal Love*), following the first article, “The Joys in Heavens,” released in the September Newsletter. The previous issue began by asking, “Why did these spiritual accounts have to be witnessed in the spiritual world?” The answer, essentially, was to cast new light on the core Christian life of one’s rendering service and being useful for others, and how heavenly joys originate from and are found in these.

Similarly, this piece starts by asking, “why did these have to be written?” In *Married Love*, chapter 2 on ‘Marriages in Heaven’ addresses how and why we carry our core love—a dominant love we have learned, acquired, and cherished above all else while on earth—into the next life. It also explores why marriage exists in heaven, contrary to popular perception and the traditional interpretation of Jesus’ statement in Matthew 22:30: “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.” The text clarifies that here, the Lord was speaking of a spiritual marriage, namely, our conjunction with the Lord and how this must be achieved while on earth (See ML 41).

The crucial takeaway emphasized throughout the chapter, however, points us back once again to the question, “Why did these accounts have to be witnessed and written?” The answer is similar to the previous one. It was written on account of our deep ignorance and confusion regarding what a heavenly life is like, and particularly what conjugal or married love is. Its purpose is to cast new light and elevate our understanding about that love, and to help us have a vision and strive in a spiritual light, rather than a natural light.

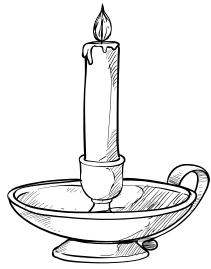
The Premise:

We Do Not Know and Thus Need to Learn

Therefore, my people have gone into captivity,
because they have no knowledge; (Isaiah 5:13)

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...
because you have forgotten the law of your God.”
(Hosea 4:6)

Let's consider 'our ignorance' about love and 'confusion' around it as result of such ignorance. The following premise is that we, being so, must learn what love is, intellectually, from the Lord's Word and also experience it more deeply by affirmatively living it out.



“For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.” (Isaiah 11:9)

Let us consider the following passages found in *Married Love* and other place in the Heavenly Doctrines that address those. The most general statement is found in *Married Love* 34 (highlights are mine):

People know that love exists, but **they do not know what love is**. They know that it exists from common conversation. ... But even though love is so frequently mentioned, nevertheless scarcely anyone knows what love is. (ML 34)

Specifically on the subject of truly conjugal or married love, the following passage explicitly states that we don’t—in fact cannot—know what it is, unless we look to the Lord, rely on Him for this knowledge, and live out that faith in our daily lives.

None can know what love that is indeed conjugal is or what the delight which accompanies it is like, **except those who receive the good of love and the truths of faith from the Lord**. For as has been stated, that love springs from heaven, from the marriage of goodness and truth there. (Arcana Coelestia 10171)

We, then, turn back to *Married Love*, where we read how truly conjugal love is nothing like unchaste love. And the intended message is that we do not know what the former is and are prone to identify the latter—unchaste love—as love that there is.

Truly conjugal love is a chaste love, and **has nothing in common** with unchaste love. It is with one and only one of the opposite sex, with all others set aside, for it is a love of the spirit and consequently of the body, and not a love of the body and consequently of the spirit, that is, it is not a love that infests the spirit. (ML 44.5)

Regarding our ignorance around love and sex, we find a startling passage in an earlier number that touches on something even more essential and foundational, that is regarding masculinity and femininity, and how people do not know what each of these essentially is.

We say that masculinity cannot be converted into femininity, nor femininity into masculinity, and that after death a male is consequently still a male, and a female still a female. But **because people do not know what masculinity consists in essentially, and what femininity consists in essentially**, therefore we must say a few words about it here....(ML 32)

Therefore, We Need to Learn

Look at the collection of passages, including the ones from the Prophets. They do tell us that we certainly lack true knowledge and the law of God. Our knowledge about love and sex is not an exception to that. And such knowledge is something we need to restore, not only intellectually from the Lord's Word, but prayerfully also in the midst of our own lives. And we do so by going to the Lord's Word and living a life according to His truths.

Now we read the *Arcana* passage again. We may find that it hits home harder.

None can know what love that is indeed conjugal is [between one husband and one wife] or what the delight which accompanies it is like, except those who receive the good of love and the truths of faith from the Lord. (Arcana Coelestia 10171; see also AC 10172)

Many Are Confused and in Lack of the Knowledge

Let's pause for a moment to acknowledge reality. For some readers, these are hard truths. The first thought that goes off

may be, “how dare does one define what I feel isn’t true love, and tell me that I need to learn what it truly is?” These may strike much like an insult in their faces, making them want to be dismissive. That is also our human experience.

And yet, we can try to be fair, be in a mindset of seeking truths, and put aside from personal defence for a moment. Pause for a moment to ponder the moments of how often we mistake various lusts for love. Now, we are getting real here. And as we are trying to be so, I would like to offer a heads-up that what comes below may be touchy for some.

Well. We call a summer fling love, when in fact we know in retrospect, in our marriage, and in our growing wisdom that it was not so much. We come to learn that curiosity and a fascination about sex, physical attractions from appearances, and the desire to explore sex, came off as a real love, but only on the surface. Once again, it was just a summer fling, that is, a romance of various lusts that heated up and cooled down within a couple of months. We know that is not love, in a genuine sense, and that to believe and pursue it is only a downward path, rather hard and fast.

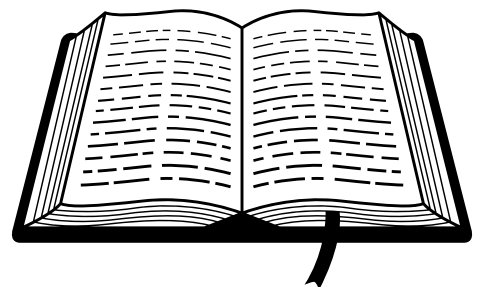
We see many more examples about how merely a ‘feeling’ is confused and sought for love: When people caught on cheating or committing adultery, people do say that they were simply in love. They say, “we did it out of love” or “we

were just faithful to our passion at the moment”, essentially calling adultery ‘love.’ However, the consequences reveal the truth: it was the very act that tore apart their family and many others with it.

This Is Not a False Alarm

These are rather uncomfortable subjects. But we, as a church and its community, need to address these because doing so is so much more important than the discomfort that it carries. Far more important than a pinch in our ego or even a bruised ego is the urgent need of recognizing this pitfall and the devastating consequences of burying or excusing these away. The break-down of marriage, family, and home has deeply penetrated society already. Where does our future lie really, unless we speak about this subject rather assertively and consciously endeavour to restore it, starting with reaching for a better understanding of it?

This Is an Offer of a Vision on Truly Married Love



... [No] one on earth **knows what real married love is**, as far as its origin and essence go. But it does make a difference to know this! So, the Lord decided to open the heavens for you so the light that illuminates can flow into your inner mind and you will understand. (ML 42)

What we read in *Married Love* can be very useful, if not most enlightening. Here is a reminder before engaging with it: everything written in this beautiful set of teachings is not intended to hurt or judge anyone unfairly. Rather it is there and is given to serve as a guiding light that reveals the Lord's vision for marriage.

We acknowledge that the subject as a whole can be very personal and delicate. So, it is easy that we overshadow the pages with our personal thoughts, dismissing genuine messages there.

Yet in humility, we can listen for the very first message: We are in ignorance and confusion regarding love, sex, and marriage; we need to restore the knowledge of these by looking to the Lord, relying on Him for this knowledge, and living out that faith in our daily lives (See also *Apocalypse Explained* 815.5). And if we will, we can think of it as a truth like a sharp sword, but whose blade is not aimed at us, but at our natural thoughts and reasonings, and their behaviours

that need detaching and healing of us.

Conclusion: Learn Affirmatively and Live

Recently I had a great conversation with a parishioner on this subject. The question at hand was, “what can I do when people who find themselves in deep confusion about love, sex, and marriage, and seek advice?”

The single answer I could think of, which I still holds to be true, was to invite them to read the Lord’s Word and the Heavenly Doctrines. More particularly, for example, we can read *Married Love*. I would be much happy to walk them through it, allowing the truths to speak for them, and see where they can go from that very first step. Or I can simply be a helper or a consultant as they learn and live by. I have confidence in this way, because everything eventually comes down to one truth: we learn from the Lord and His Divine teachings and live according to them. In this way, we heal the way we think, live, and find joy in life, even for eternity, since the Lord’s truths and His life are, by their nature, healing.

Pastor's Travel

Canberra (29-30 Aug)

Remember last time in May, I left home more than an hour early at 5:30 a.m. and ended up arriving in Canberra way earlier than I should've been. I learned the lesson. This time around, I departed on time, at 6:45 a.m., except that I had to return after my first five-minute drive to pick up my laptop at home.

I arrived promptly after 10:30 a.m. to visit Heulwen and Barrie Ridgway. We have a new routine. We greet; we go into the chapel; we begin with a formal worship service with Holy Supper included.

Following the service, we had lunch + lots of good talks about the New Church, including challenges and a hope for the Church. As arranged, I took my copy of *Apocalypse Revealed*, and Heulwen brought her. We reflected on a passage in 707.4, where it is said, "For the new church there will be a Word, and it will lie open to them."

Unfortunately, I couldn't get to ask someone around to take a photo of us this time. We were invested in our time and companionship.



The next day on Augst 30, six of us met at Philip's place—Sylvia, Philip, Peter, George, Tina, and me. A few others could not make it, including Elenor who was not well that day.

Leading a service at Philip's was my second time, and something unique was that everything was much more conversational. We sat around a table and remained seated for the whole time. I welcomed the people's questions and thoughts, as I offered my talk. We were all on points. We moved to a nearby club for lunch and a catch-up for some time before I had to head out for traveling back. We enjoyed an engaging lunchtime with questions, thoughts, and answers. I look forward to my next visit. Special thanks to Sylvia who hosted me at her wonderful place.

I am not able to visit them as often I would like, but whenever it happens, it is very refreshing to know and reconnect with others in a different region who are readers of Swedenborg and learning about the New Church.

George was a newcomer a few months back, who was initially Anglican, then became agnostic, and now enjoys his new journey of learning about Swedenborg and his theology. It was also great to know that Peter is a regular reader of the Writings. He has been reading *True Christianity*.

Attends the NCIA's Council of Ministers meetings (September 14-18)

I was invited to join the NCIA's annual, face to face, Council of Minister's meetings, which were held in Melbourne this year. My invite and participation are as a fellow New Church minister in Australia, but I do so as a General Church minister. I want to clarify that, following a couple of enquires I received relating to it.

HyunJin

■ What's Coming Up?

A Three-Week Series on King David + A Movie Night

Pastor HyunJin is planning to focus back on 'biblical stories after covering heavy topics in July and August, such as 'sin', 'Scripture', 'disorder', 'human freedom,' and 'cultural influences.'

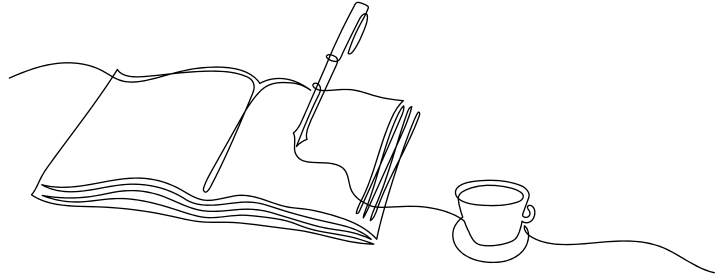
His pick will be the stories of King David — one of the stories that is exciting, encouraging and that never grows old! HyunJin is excited to lead a three-week series on him, beginning on September 27 through October 4, 11.

Please also note that there will be a Movie Day as part of this series, the date and time is still TBD! We will keep you updated as soon as they are decided. So, please stay tuned for weekly updates.

One of the other inspirations for the choice of the stories was the remarkable 2025 animated film, David. The hope is that the series and the movie will leave us with a good, lasting message in us.



Doctrinal Class (Oct 8)

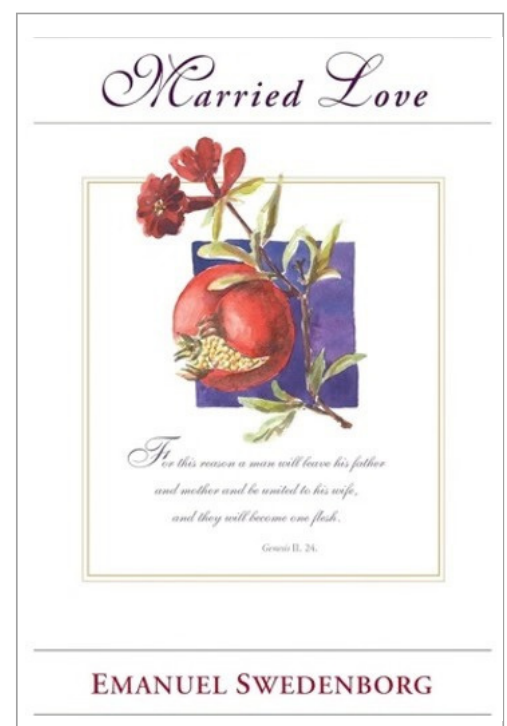


Our quarterly doctrinal class + BYO will be held at Baringa, at 11:00 a.m., at Richard Morse Room in Baringa. Topic to be decided, but potentially on a unique view that the New Church offers.

For your information, our next class will be held in December, not January. Traditionally, we don't have a class in January as it is a vacation month for many, and also because we expect plenty of activities and classes at the NCIA Family Retreat later in the month. It may be helpful to take note that our quarterly doctrinal classes are scheduled in the order of October, December, April, and July, unless otherwise notified.

Monthly Reading/Discussion Group on Married Love

Following our September readings on 'Married Partners After Death' and 'Truly Conjugal Love', our October readings will continue to walk us through the concept of 'Truly Conjugal Love' (Paragraphs 74-82, about 23 pages). These will be very suitable for a daily reading routine.



For our discussion meet-up, we will meet on October 28 (Last Wednesday of each month), at 2:00 p.m., at Baringa. This slot in the early afternoon still works for our regular attendees.

It is not too late at all for you! If you are considering joining the reading and discussion group, feel free to contact HyunJin at pastor@hurstvillenewchurch.com for your interest and any enquiries. We may decide to move our time and date if others want to join but have different availabilities.

Happy Birthday 

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Darren Kermond, Cameron Walsh.

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