



Men & Women are Different

Lesson Overview

1. BrainBuilder

How are men and women similar or different?

2. Watch a Video

Watch *Brain Study Shows Why Men and Women Are Different* online at bit.ly/MFBrain (2min 36sec).

3. Read & Discuss

Men and women receive the Lord's love and wisdom in different ways.

New Church Concept Men

A male...has a disposition to know, understand, and be wise—a disposition to know in childhood, a disposition to understand in adolescence and early youth, and a disposition to be wise from this time of his youth on into old age. The male is by temperament inclined to develop his understanding, consequently he is born to become intellect-oriented. But because this cannot happen apart from love, the Lord attaches love to him according to his reception, that is, according to the spirit in him that wills to become wise. See *Conjugal Love* 90

FaithBuilder 2 | Lesson 18 | Conjugal Love

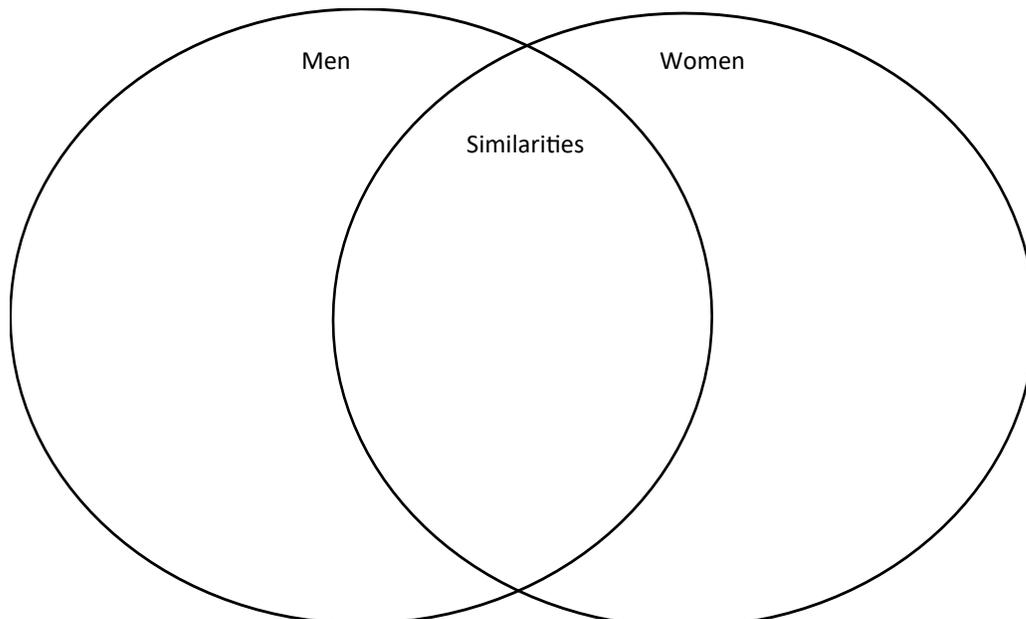
BrainBuilder

It is easy to see that men and women are different. Men are usually larger and stronger, have deeper voices, and facial hair. But there are similarities as well.

1. Use the space below to brainstorm a list of masculine qualities you admire.
Group option: brainstorm using a large piece of paper or board.

2. Brainstorm a list of feminine qualities you admire.

3. Compare masculine and feminine qualities using the chart below to note similarities and differences between men and women.



New Church Concept Women and Men

The disposition of the female...is a disposition to love knowledge, intelligence and wisdom—not in herself but in a man—and for that reason to love a man. For a man is not lovable because he looks like a man, but on account of the gifts he has in him which make him human. See *Conjugal Love* 91

The conjugal 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. There is a 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. *Conjugal Love* 159

Wisdom in men is twofold: intellectual and moral. Intellectual wisdom has to do with the understanding alone; moral wisdom has to do with both the understanding and life.... Men's intellectual wisdom is called knowledge, intelligence and wisdom; or rationality, judgment, learning. Intellectual wisdom includes subjects learned in schools, through which men become intelligent, such as physics, geometry, chemistry, political science, and ethics. Moral wisdom includes moral virtues which have to do with the way people live and which enter into their manner of life. They include spiritual virtues which spring from love toward God and love for the neighbor, and which flow together into those loves. See *Conjugal Love* 163

Brain Differences Between Men and Women

Researchers have identified more than 100 structural differences between the male and female brain. These include:

- **Verbal/spatial differences** Boys brains have more cortical areas dedicated to spatial functioning than girls. Girls have greater cortical emphasis on verbal-emotive processing.
- **Frontal lobe development** A girl's prefrontal cortex is more active than a boy's. This is the decision-making, reading and writing area of the brain, consequently girls find it easier to sit still and read, and are less impulsive.
- **Neural rest states** Boys brains go into neural rest states many times a day. Some boys try to avoid rest states by tapping pencils, etc. to stay awake when they are "bored." When the female brain gets bored, brain functioning stays active and girls are able to do tasks such as listening or taking notes. (Research by Kelley King and Michael Gurian)

Watch a Video

Watch *Brain Study Shows Why Men and Women Are Different* online at bit.ly/MFBrain (2min 36sec).

Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. The narrator highlights differences in the way men's and women's brains function. Is it logical for him to conclude that differences between men and women are *all down to the wiring of their brains*? Why or why not?
2. The video suggests men are better with perception, learning and single tasks; women are better with social skills, memory and multi-tasking. Does this ring true for you?
3. The people interviewed at the end had various opinions about whether men and women are different. Which opinions did you agree with most?
4. Have you had an experience in which you were helped to see a different perspective by talking to someone of the opposite sex? What was the problem, and how did the conversation help you?
5. What contributions do feminine strengths make to society?
6. What contributions do masculine strengths make to society?

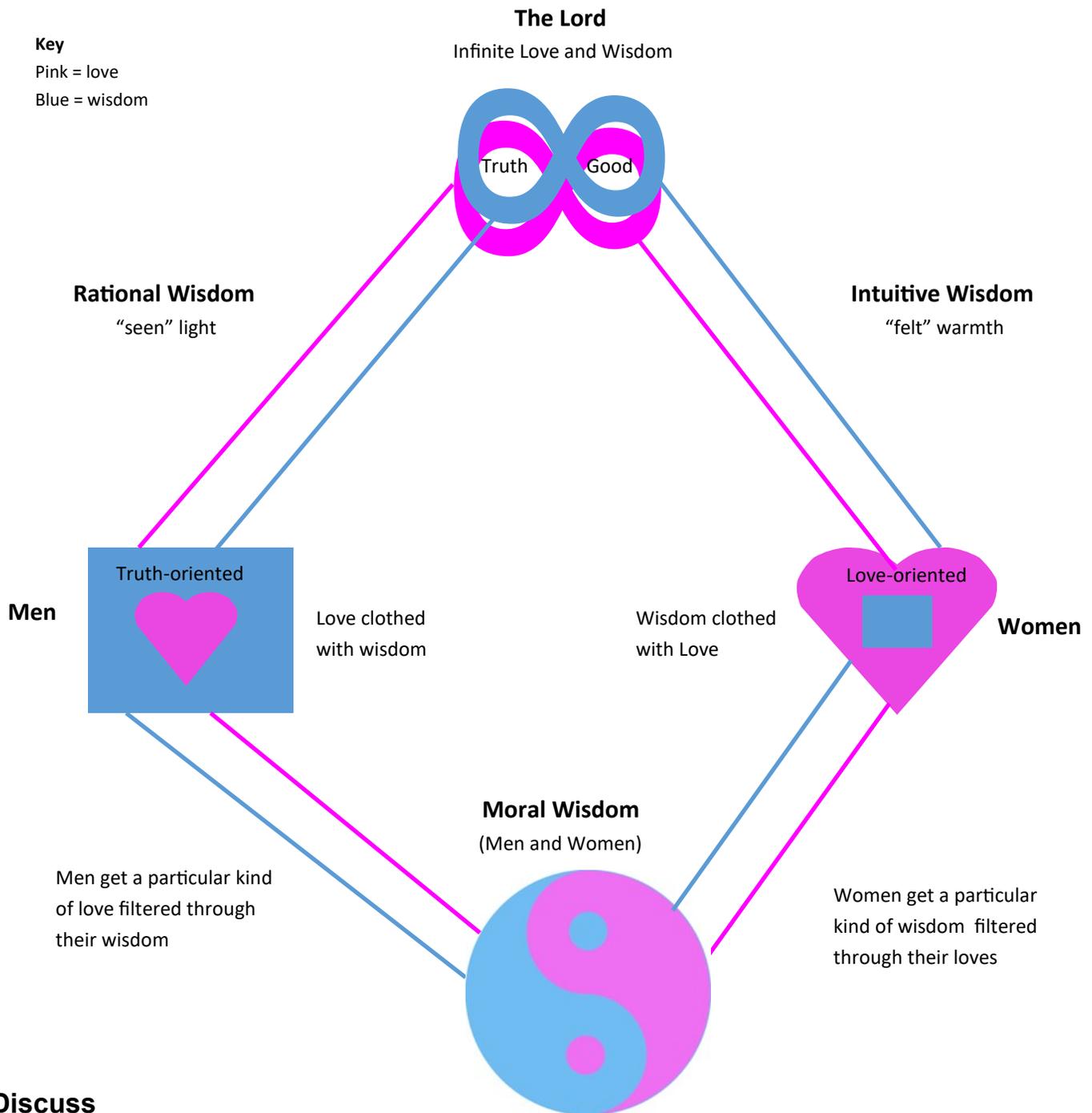
Read

The Writings teach that differences between men and women are spiritual as well as natural, since we are spiritual beings created in the image of God.

God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:27-28).

Since the Lord is love and wisdom itself, all created life is from the union of these loves in the Lord. Men and women receive the Lord's love and His wisdom, but in

in different ways. The following diagram shows how it works.*



Discuss

1. Describe the difference between intellectual wisdom and moral wisdom. Do men's and women's intellectual wisdom differ? Do men's and woman's moral wisdom differ? Support your answers.
2. What do you think women love most in men? What do you think men love most in women?
3. How might differences between men and women strengthen relationships between women and men?
4. Swedenborg learned about men and women by talking to men and women angels. Why couldn't the Lord simply describe differences between men and women?

* Adapted from a chart created by Rev. Barry Halterman