



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 52”

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 52

2Samuel 6:23

23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Our takeaway point in this series on the Biblical Design of Gender is that God has designed man as the cooperative coalition of husband and wife so that man can successfully achieve the objective that God has given us to exercise dominion over the earth, developing wisdom and knowledge in preparation for further responsibility in our eternal life.

Michal, the first wife of David, who was the greatest King of Israel, is the woman about whom we are concerned today. In our last lesson, we recorded the fact that David consolidated the two southern tribes of Judah, which elected him king upon Saul's death, and the ten northern tribes of Israel, who elected Ishbosheth, Saul's son, as king upon Saul's death, into one kingdom. David did not do this by military force, but by attrition. The military men that were loyal to Ishbosheth recognized, over time, that Ishbosheth was little more than a puppet king, while David actually provided security for Israel and Judah by taking on their enemies in battle.

But David did not personally participate in the competition over the kingdoms. David did not incite any conflict nor did he take any steps to secure his rule over the northern kingdom. Not only that, but David did not even reward those that took steps to secure the kingdom for him. **2Samuel 4:2, 5-6, 8** tells us: **2 Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of troops. The name of one was Baanah and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin. (For Beeroth also was part of Benjamin,**

5 Then the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out and came at about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, who was lying on his bed at noon.

6 And they came there, all the way into the house, as though to get wheat, and they stabbed [Ishbosheth] in the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

8 And they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron, and said to the king, "Here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul your enemy, who



sought your life; and the LORD has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and his descendants.”

The two captains thought that David would think that they were doing him a service by killing Ishbosheth, thus making it possible for David to become king of Israel and well as Judah. They brought Ishbosheth's head to David to show their loyalty to him. But David was wiser than to see their actions as loyalty.

David knew that these men were treacherous; if they would kill their current king to show their loyalty to David, they would also kill David to show their loyalty to the next fellow that came along, if they had the chance.

This situation between David and the men that killed Ishbosheth is a lesson for those with marital problems. These men killed their king to get another king, which is intellectually analogous to a person that divorces their spouse to get another spouse. Now, it is very possible that, if a man and his wife were having marital trouble, a woman could seduce the married man or a man could seduce the married woman. But if a woman other than his wife tries to seduce a husband, the husband ought not be unfaithful and certainly ought not divorce his wife and marry the seductress, counting on the seductress being faithful to him once they are married.

The seductress is likely to abandon her new husband to seduce the next attractive man that comes along, just as she seduced the husband that she found attractive. And the same thing hold true in the reverse, for men seducing women. Jesus tells us, in **Matthew 19:9**:

9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

A divorced person has broken their marital vows. But as long as they do not remarry, the possibility exists that they may have second thoughts about that which they have done and return to their original spouse to fulfill the vows that they have made to God. But Jesus says that the person that marries a divorced person is committing adultery, because, although the divorced person may have obtained a legal divorce on earth, they made their marital vows before God, and by remarrying, they have broken their vow to Him. If a person is willing to break a vow that they made to God, how could you possibly trust any vow that they might make?

Any person that acts treacherously is treacherous, and you are not safe with them just because you benefit from their treachery. It is entirely possible that you will lose rather than benefit the next time they decide to do something treacherous.

And as far as treachery goes, the statistics about divorced counselors is interesting. Divorced counselors are more likely to recommend divorce to their married clients than are even single counselors, because once a person divorces, they tend to try to persuade others to join them in their situation to



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alleviate their guilt for having broken their vows. So a person that divorces is one that believes in divorce as a solution, and will not hesitate to duplicate the process with subsequent spouses. Thus, Jesus tells us to not marry a divorced person.

So, regardless of the problems in your marriage, don't seduce, don't be seduced, and leave other people's spouses alone. **Proverbs 5:15–20** tells us:
15 Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.

16 Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets?

17 Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you.

18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.

19 As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.

20 For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?

So David, understanding treachery, was not seduced by Rechab and Baanah, and did not look at the murder of Ishbosheth as an act of loyalty, but as that which it was, that being, an act of treachery. **2Samuel 4:9–12** records:
9 But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, “As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from all adversity,

10 when someone told me, saying, ‘Look, Saul is dead,’ thinking to have brought good news, I arrested him and had him executed in Ziklag—the one who thought I would give him a reward for his news.

11 How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous person in his own house on his bed? Therefore, shall I not now require his blood at your hand and remove you from the earth?”

12 So David commanded his young men, and they executed [Rechab and Baanah], cut off their hands and feet, and hanged them by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it in the tomb of Abner in Hebron.

When Ishbosheth died by treachery, the kingship of Israel was open, and the people of Israel wanted David to be their king. David took the job, and went to work. David defeated the Jebusites, who occupied Jerusalem, and took Jerusalem as his capital. David then defeated the Philistines in battle, and then victoriously brought the Ark of the Covenant, which the Philistines had captured in an earlier battle, to Jerusalem. The restoral of the things of the Tabernacle to their rightful places for the worship of God was a source of great joy for David.

2Samuel 6:14–15 records:

14 Then David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod.



15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

But everyone in David's entourage did not focus on the joy of bringing the Ark back to the Tabernacle. **2Samuel 6:16** records:

16 Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

David's joy at being able to return the Ark of the Covenant to the Tabernacle was such that he danced before the Lord with all of this might. In the Church in which I grew up, when people became expressively emotional during the service, the old folks called it "getting ugly for the Lord". And Michal did not enjoy it when David got ugly for the Lord, because David was wearing a linen ephod, which exposed the lower part of his body as he danced and whirled before the Lord. So Michal was disgusted with her husband for showing his body to the crowd.

But David had no thought of showing off his physique. David was only thinking of praising God for the mercy that God had showed him, from the confrontation with the giant Goliath, to his many days spent successfully fighting the Philistines, to escaping Michal's father Saul, from the days of his differences with Saul's son Ishbosheth and his final defeat of the Jebusites to take over the city of Jerusalem and restore the Ark of the Covenant to the Tabernacle. David lived a life of conflict, even from the time that he slew the lion and the bear while keeping his father's sheep, and the return of the Ark to Israel signified the consolidation of his kingdom and the culmination of his conflict. God made David the victorious King, and blessed David that, although he was victorious in battle against Israel's enemies, David never had to raise a hand to avenge himself nor to make himself King of Israel.

So David had something for which to praise God. And David was not going to restrain himself. But Michal did not appreciate David's joy in the Lord.

2Samuel 6:20 tells us:

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"

But David did not accept Michal's rebuke. Husbands generally have a difficult time accepting a rebuke from their wives.

I was in a discussion group based upon a line from an article written by someone in an organization called Marriageworks, which read:

The number one predictor of divorce is the habitual avoidance of conflict.

The article said: While it's true that we don't get married to handle conflict, if a couple doesn't know – or learn how – to fight or disagree successfully, they won't be able to do all the other things they got married to do.



I took issue with the article in the discussion, and responded:

Choose your spouse wisely, treat your spouse well. Choose to marry a mature person with whom you share a value system, and the two of you should not have “conflict” with one another.

You may disagree on what color the drapes should be, but that's not “conflict” and it's easily resolved. Let the woman pick on that kind of thing. That's not conflict; that's a division of labor.

But the key to the avoidance of conflict in marriage is in the selection process.

Don't marry a woman who has to have her way all of the time or she feels oppressed. You'll be able to discern that characteristic while you are dating her.

Don't marry a man who is not loving and giving or who has to have things a certain way. You'll be able to discern that characteristic while you are dating him.

Spend your dating time getting to know the other person objectively without being sexual. Never assume that you will marry a person that you are dating even after engagement; you generally do not become sufficiently familiar with the other person to make a choice until you have gone through the engagement period with them. Wedding preparation often brings out the true colors of a person. You should actually make the decision to marry at the altar, and you should keep the option open to change your mind at any time before that occasion.

So don't have sex with the person before you marry them.

Sex causes people to lose their ability to evaluate the other person objectively. If you have sex with him or her, you will perceive a bond between you that is inappropriate and that you will find difficult to break should you find out that the other person is inappropriate for you.

Don't assume that you have to marry the person because the dress has been bought and the shoes have been dyed. A dress and shoes cost a few hundred dollars; divorce is much more expensive, and your children will pay a greater price than can be counted out in money. Physical fulfillment can come later, after you have determined that the other person meets your objective criterion.

So, the idea of marriage is not to learn to fight well; the idea is to choose someone with whom a fight will be unnecessary.

Now David, the shepherd boy who was devoted to God, chose to marry Michal, the King's daughter. Their marriage was a weird situation: Michal was initially married to David, then her father, King Saul, took Michal away from David and married her to someone else. Michal and David were reunited only after Saul



died. David did not woo Michal away from her husband, but Abner and Ishbosheth took her from her husband by force as part of a power play, in which she was more a possession than a wife. She was the pawn in the play to overthrow Ishbosheth and put David in power in Israel. **2Samuel 3:14–16** records:

14 So David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul's son, saying, "Give me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines."

15 And Ishbosheth sent and took her from her husband, from Paltiel the son of Laish.

16 Then her husband went along with her to Bahurim, weeping behind her. So Abner said to him, "Go, return!" And he returned.

So their marriage is not one in which they shared backgrounds, nor was it one in which they developed a great deal of mutual respect for one another. Michal loved David for his masculine military prowess during their first marriage, but then, after David fled, Michal developed affection for her second husband. David then had Michal ripped from the arms of her second husband and restored to him, not for love or affection, but as a sign of his conquest of Michal's brother Ishbosheth.

In addition, at the time of this second marriage, Michal is one of seven wives and some number of concubines. David has so many women in rotation that he has a difficult time relating to any complaint that any of them might have.

So Michal, who once loved David when he was her father's military general and when she and David were each other's only spouses, now despises him after she has been taken away from her husband and brought into David's harem. Michal despises David and that about which David is enthusiastic, that being, the worship of the Lord. But of all things about which to engender conflict, Michal has picked the wrong one. **2Samuel 6:21–22** records:

21 So David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD.

22 And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor."

The problem with spouses managing conflict is that, in marriage, the two are intended to become one. Conflict in marriage is analogous to a degenerative bone disease in the body, something that is causing the body to fall apart. To understand this point may require a change of thinking; a paradigm shift. My point is that the key to marriage is proactive rather than remedial. You can't just marry anyone that stimulates your emotions; you have to make an intelligent choice.



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God does not tell us to fight our way through marriage, but rather to love one another. Listen to the attributes that God tells us to use to avoid conflict, in

1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

4 Love is patient, love is kind. [Love] does not envy, [Love] does not boast, [Love] is not proud.

5 [Love] is not rude, [Love] is not self-seeking, [Love] is not easily angered, [Love] keeps no record of wrongs.

6 Love does not delight in evil but [Love] rejoices with the truth.

7 [Love] always protects, [Love] always trusts, [Love] always hopes, [Love] always perseveres.

8 Love never fails.

Love never fails because the Lord Jesus Christ is always acting on our behalf to facilitate our keeping of His commandment to love one another. It may have appeared to the disciples, on that Friday that Jesus hung on the Cross, that Jesus' mission of love was ineffective, but their perspective changed early on Sunday morning, as Jesus' Resurrection taught them that His love for us would never fail.

So if, in your marriage, circumstances cause you to think that you are failing, rather than creating conflict, I admonish you to remember to continue acting lovingly towards one another and allow God the time to do His Work, because God is promising you today that if you keep your pledge to always act in a loving manner, your actions, and your marriage, will ultimately be successful.

But Michal, who allowed herself to despise her husband, ultimately lost, as **2 Samuel 6:23** says:

23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Either God shut up her womb or David never had anything else to do with her, but Michal was denied the pleasure of having a child and watching and nurturing him as he or she grew into adulthood.

Michal never felt those little arms squeezing her neck, and never saw those big brown eyes and heard that little sleepy voice saying, "I love you, Mommy".

In Dr. Laura Schlessinger's book, "In Praise of Stay-At-Home Moms", she publishes an email that she received from a woman that reads as follows:

As I sit to write this letter, my hope is that if just one mother can hear what I have to say and holds her child just a little tighter today, I will have fulfilled my reason for writing.

By the time I was 29 our family was complete. I had three beautiful children, a loving husband, and although never money to spare, we found ways to get by. I had stopped working full-time and started part-time shortly after my first child was born because I loved being with her. Although I had my mother and mother-in-law to babysit whenever I needed, by the time my middle son was born, I knew I could not work anymore. Something inside of me told me that I had



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to spend as much time with my children as I could. My husband worked extra hours, I made do with what we had, and we made things work for us. My husband would work at night or at home, but if there was a baseball game—he was there. I cut everyone's hair, including my own, did my own nails, and never bought anything that was not on sale. But we were happy.

There were many days where I was pulling out my hair, found myself screaming at them, and was totally exhausted by the end of the day, thinking to myself 'Any other work would be a pleasant relief'. But there were also many moments I would never trade in for any job, no matter what the pay. Those moments when your child gives you a smile or a look you never forget, moments when they would give you a kiss, a hug, or just hold your hand for no reason. Those are the moments a mother treasures in her heart forever and they can never be replaced, not even by a grandmother.

I was selfish—I wanted my children to know me, and I wanted to be that special person in their lives. Although I didn't know it then, and on certain days may have told you otherwise, my life was perfect.

Maybe life isn't meant to be lived perfectly. Perhaps I took too many things for granted. But our life is no longer that perfect storybook tale. Two years ago my middle son was killed in an auto accident. He was 22 years old. He was away at college when he decided to get in a car where the driver had been drinking; ten minutes later he was dead.

Our lives will never be the same again; the world as we knew it has been destroyed. We miss our son terribly. My husband, surviving two children, and I will never be the same, but we are trying to hold on to each other and pick up the pieces, one piece at a time.

There is only one thing I can say. I am so grateful for those moments I had with my son. Those moments, the good as well as the crazy ones, I will forever hold close to my heart. All those precious years I spent with my son now are what help me get through the day.

So to all the young moms who feel they can't handle it, are struggling with making it through the day, who believe they "need" to work instead of being with their child, just think how much it might someday mean to you to have spent those precious moments with your children. Hopefully you can just take my word for it: Don't let anyone or anything prevent you from holding them, hugging them, playing with them, memorizing their smile, their laughter, their heart.

Our children are such special gifts that should never be taken for granted, and life is so unpredictable, we never know if today we will breathe our last breath.

Unfortunately for Michal, she never had this experience. Michal despised her husband and thus never had a son. Or a daughter. Michal went from being the king's daughter to being the king's wife and she never had a material need. She lived in the palace and had the best of everything in the kingdom. But



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although she was a woman of leisure, a woman of privilege and a pampered queen, she soon found that the material pursuits of the world did not satisfy.

Psalm 127:3–5 tells us:

3 Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward.

4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth.

5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

It was a week ago yesterday, when I stood on the roof of the Holiday Inn Center City in Charlotte, North Carolina with my son, as I both reminisced about old times and sent him into his future with his new wife. I shared my experience of child raising with him. I said to him, Sir –

I want you to know that, from the day that I met you and we first looked one another in the eye, that, other than your mother, you have been, and still are, my favorite person in the world. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Jesus' Father was looking at Him, as I am looking at you, as His Father watched Him for thirty years during which Jesus always looked after His mother, and Jesus always did the right thing. After thirty years of faithful service to his family, Jesus' Father sent Him on a mission that would culminate in the salvation of the world. And as Jesus' Father opened the windows of heaven and looked down through forty-two generations to watch John and His Son celebrate the ceremony of baptism on the banks of the Jordan River, He said to His Son that which I wish to say to you and to this crowd of witnesses gathered here today, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

Even God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, wanted offspring.

Psalm 100:3–5 tells us:

3 Know that the LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

5 For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations.

But we are God's creation. We are His people because He has created us, but God has a much more intimate relationship than that of being a creator, and it started with a woman who became a mother, as **Luke 1:26–35** tells us:

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,

27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"



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29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

30 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.

32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

34 Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?”

35 And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

And the child which the Holy Spirit conceived was born of Mary, as **Luke 2:7–14**:

7 And [Mary] brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

10 Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

All of the great miracles of Jesus Christ, His walking on the water, His feeding the 5000, His giving sight to the blind and cleansing lepers, His great preaching and the repentance of the people of Israel, and even His sacrifice on the Cross would not have happened had not a woman brought Him into the world. And Jesus commemorated His birth, even at His death, as **John 19:25–27** tells us:

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.



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26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, **“Woman, behold your son!”**

27 Then He said to the disciple, **“Behold your mother!”** And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

The fruits of the marital relationship is the great joy of life. Material possessions are fine and it is wonderful to have them, but God tells us that the most important thing in life is love, and love is best expressed in our marriages. God does not love us by giving us possessions, as Jesus tells us in **Matthew 5:45:**

45 for [God] makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

But God loves us through His Son, the fruits of the womb, as **John 3:16–17** tells us:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

God does not show us His love through the things of the world, but through the ministry of His Son, the fruit of the womb. So let us emulate His example, eschew conflict, and love our spouses and children.

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