



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

# “The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 68”

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***Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.***



### The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 68

#### 2Kings 5:3

**3 Then she said to her mistress, “If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy.”**

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.

The early church flourished because it taught the history of Jesus Christ, Who, by His miracles, His signs, His wonders and His Resurrection, proved objectively that He was, and is, the Savior of the World, the Messiah, prophesied in the Old Testament. Although the power of God to work miracles flowed through Jesus Christ, the record of history indicates that God chooses not to work miraculously on our behalf when our need is something that we think that we can do ourselves; something that we think does not require supernatural intervention. For example, God told the man and the woman in the Garden that they would have to work to earn a living, rather than simply eating the fruit from the trees in the garden.

Our prayer life indicates this trend. If we look at our prayer list, we will find that every person for whom we pray has a problem which we doubt that human intervention alone can fix. We pray for people that are going to hospitals containing the finest and most current medical technology, because we know that doctors and medical science are limited in their ability to remedy illnesses and injuries. And these limitations have not changed over the years. Back in Jesus' day, **Luke 8:43–44** describes:

**43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any,  
44 came from behind and touched the border of [Jesus'] garment.**

While the physicians of the day were able to help some of the people that came to them, this woman, for more than a decade, contributed copious quantities of cash to pharmaceutical professionals with no return on her investment. But **Luke 8:44-48** tells us that when she touched Jesus:

**44 And immediately her flow of blood stopped.**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

45 And Jesus said, **“Who touched Me?”** When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, **“Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’ ”**

46 But Jesus said, **“Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.”**

47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

48 And He said to her, **“Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”**

Twelve years of the woman’s financial investments in medical science were instantly trumped by one touch of the Master’s garment. And why was that? Jesus testified that when the woman touched Him, He felt power going out of Him.

Doctors have practices, procedures and paraphernalia, while Jesus has power.

And Jesus didn’t acquire His power by traveling through the forty-two generations recorded in the first chapter of the book of Matthew to get to Mary’s womb in Bethlehem. Jesus, historically, had been intervening in the affairs of men for a long time. In our text for today, a young girl testifies to the pre-incarnate intervention of the Christ to the wife of the Syrian general who was her employer. **2Kings 5:1–2** records:

**1 Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper.**

**2 And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman’s wife.**

As, one after another, the idolatrous kings of Israel rejected God to worship Baal, God tired of their unbelief and decided to employ the pagan Syrians to teach the Israelites a lesson. God did so because, as I said earlier, people often don’t call upon God to refresh their relationship with Him until they recognize that they are faced with a circumstance that they cannot handle on their own. God initially allowed the kings of Israel to have military success over the pagan idolaters that lived in the land, but the Israelites confused military success with human strength and failed to recognize, as God told Jehoshaphat, in **2Chronicles 20:15**:

**15 the battle is not yours, but God’s.**

God was, and is, the arbiter of victory and defeat in war. When Israel became arrogant and rejected God, the military success that they anticipated was not forthcoming, and the Syrian army, under Naaman, was able to defeat



Israel. As the Syrians divided up the spoil, Naaman came upon a young Israelite girl and decided to take her captive to be a servant for his wife.

The girl became a good servant to Naaman's wife. Even though the girl was enslaved, she appreciated the fact that Naaman spared her life, as many Israelites were not as fortunate. In the house of the general, the girl had sufficient provisions, her mistress treated her well, and she was grateful that she was spared from death and given room, board and a good job.

But the captive servant girl from Israel recognized the medical problem that plagued the house, and realized, as did the woman with the issue of blood about her situation, that there was no earthly cure for Naaman's leprosy. Fortunately, the girl from Israel knew the God of Israel and recognized, as we recognize when we put someone on the prayer list, that the solution to the incurable problem of leprosy was not in medicine or human effort, but, as **2Chronicles 20:15** tells us:

**15 the battle is not yours, but God's.**

So, the girl advised her mistress that there was a man of God in Israel that could take care of her husband's leprosy. **2Kings 5:3** tells us:

**3 Then [the girl] said to her mistress [Naaman's wife], "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal [Naaman] of his leprosy."**

When you tell me that you are going to undergo a medical procedure and ask me to come to the hospital to pray for you, I hope that you recognize, as did the servant girl, that the battle is not mine. I have no particular medical skill, and my voice, soothing though it may be, has no palliative effect. However, in my days of ministry, I have learned some things about medical problems. One Biblical principle with which I am familiar is given in **Psalms 90:10**, which says: **10 The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.**

This passage of Scripture gives me a floor with which to work. If you are a believer in Christ and are less than eighty years of age, I have the Biblically based expectation that God will look favorably on a prayer for the restoral of your health. Jesus Christ came for the healing of mankind, as **Matthew 4:23** tells us: **23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.**

Jesus came to restore the promise that God gave to the Israelites, in **Exodus 15:26**:

**26 "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you."**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Egyptians mentioned in this passage of Scripture knew of the power of God, because God showed it to them, but they declined to follow the instructions that God gave them through Moses. And from their experience, we draw the logical conclusion that those that decline to follow the instructions of God are setting themselves up to be diseased. But God told Solomon, in **2Chronicles 7:13–14:**

**13 When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people,**

**14 if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

**15 Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place.**

God's people, by their disobedience, can bring the pestilence upon themselves. But God's eyes are open and His ears are attentive to the prayer of those of His people that humbly repent, seek His face and turn from their wicked ways. Sickness, in certain cases, can be a "wake-up call" to let us know that we need to renew our allegiance to and refresh our relationship with God.

But there are other reasons for sickness. In one case, Jesus healed a woman who had been infirm for eighteen years. The day upon which Jesus met this woman was the Sabbath, and the Jewish religious leaders were incensed that Jesus would pick that day to heal the woman. **Luke 13:14** records:  
**14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."**

But in **Luke 13:15–17:**

**15 The Lord [Jesus] then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"**

**16 So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"**

**17 And when [Jesus] said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.**

This incident was a great intellectual victory by Jesus over the Jewish leaders, but I record this episode in my sermon to point out Jesus' testimony that the woman was bound by Satan for eighteen years. Jesus tells us that her sickness was not necessarily a function of her sin, nor was it necessarily a "wake-up call", but rather, was the work of the devil. Jesus tells us, in **John 10:10:**



**10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**

The thief of whom Jesus speaks is satan, whose mission the mission of Jesus directly opposes.

As we navigate the circumstances of this life, part of our growth process is to develop a close relationship with God and His Son Jesus Christ. This relationship is essential if we are to 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. And understanding the methodology of dealing with the attacks of the enemy is part of that which we are here to learn. To deal with the attacks of satan requires that we understand that which **2Chronicles 20:15** tells us:

**15 the battle is not yours, but God's.**

So, when you call me about your injury, sickness or disease, understand that I have no power to improve your situation, but I do have the ability to call upon the Lord to take care of the problem. Of course, you can call upon the Lord as well as me, but James tells us, in **James 5:14–15**:

**14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.**

**15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.**

In this passage of Scripture James tells us that the Lord will raise up the sick based upon the prayer prayed in faith. Jesus gives us an example of that in **Matthew 9:27–31**:

**27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"**

**28 And when [Jesus] had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."**

**29 Then [Jesus] touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."**

**30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it."**

**31 But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.**

But now, what is this faith? And how do we develop this faith?

Well, the short answer is that faith is believing in and acting on that which God tells us. Faith is first recognizing that God reveals Himself to us through His Word, and then recognizing that we can only achieve God's objectives by following God's instructions. The servant girl advised Naaman's wife to call on





the man of God in Israel, and Naaman exercised a tentative level of faith by deciding to follow her instructions. **2Kings 5:4–6**: records:

**4 And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, “Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel.”**

**5 Then the king of Syria said, “Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.**

**6 Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.**

I know a mechanic that is skilled in repairing automobiles. When my car needs repair, I know better than to try to fix my car, but rather, I take it to the mechanic. Naaman knew of the relationship of Israel to God, and he and the King of Syria tentatively decided to delegate the repair of Naaman’s situation to the mechanic in Israel.

But the King of Israel was not the mechanic. He responded in fear, in **2Kings 5:7**:

**7 And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me.”**

But the actual mechanic heard of the problem, and reassured the King, in **2Kings 5:8**:

**8 So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.”**

So the King sent Naaman to see the man that could repair his problem. **2Kings 5:9–10** records:

**9 Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha’s house.**

**10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.”**

Hold it! Elisha, the mechanic, sent a messenger to the general. Now, while the general was tentatively willing to have faith in the God of Israel, the general also had a personal opinion as to how God should respond to him. The general thought that, since he was a general, the prophet of God should take a more personal interest in his problem and show him the deference due to the man that defeated Israel in battle.

Naaman’s response to the prophet’s instructions brings us back to the question: What is faith? And how do we develop faith? Well, the short answer is



that faith is believing that which God tells us. And if we have faith in God, we can't allow anything or anyone, including ourselves, to get between us and God in exercising our faith.

Naaman tentatively had faith in God, or he would not have come to Israel to get God's help with his condition. And if Naaman had the opportunity to see God face to face as did Moses, Naaman would probably have been as obsequious as anyone else.

But Naaman did not have the chance to see God; Naaman did not even have the chance to see the prophet of which the Israelite girl told him. Naaman only saw the messenger boy that the prophet sent with the instruction to do something that Naaman was not particularly interested in doing.

Naaman felt that he, as a conquering general, was being treated disrespectfully, but he could not even protest the disrespectful treatment that received, because what could the messenger boy do about it?

So Naaman had to make a decision. Should Naaman reject the commandment of God because it was transmitted to him in that which he considered a disrespectful manner, or should Naaman swallow his pride and follow instructions, although he did not receive the instructions with the pomp and circumstance that he felt that he was due?

**Proverbs 6:16** tell us:

**16 These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:**

And the first thing that God hates, as **Proverbs 6:17** tells us, is:

**17 A proud look.**

To answer a question as to how we develop faith, we need to know that the biggest deterrent to faith is pride. **2Kings 5:11–12** records:

**11 But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.'**

**12 Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.**

Naaman's pride was hurt and he was angry because he did not feel as though the prophet showed him the proper respect. Naaman wanted the prophet to perform a ceremony that recognized his position as the general of the Syrian army that had just defeated the Israelite army. Naaman wanted recognition to maintain his standing with those that were watching the situation.

Naaman was a leper, but he would have preferred to keep his leprosy than submit to that which he considered an indignity. And sometimes we, like Naaman, would rather keep negative situations in our marriages and in our physical bodies than to submit to following God's instructions, because to do so would hurt our pride. But, as many people find out to their sorrow, **Proverbs 16:18** tells us:





### **18 Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.**

So that is the universal problem of mankind. We have a difficult time having faith in and obeying God because to do so would cause us to give up our pride. Remember that first sin? **Genesis 3:6** records:

**6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.**

But then the Scripture goes on to say, in **Genesis 3:6**:

**6 She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

And God chastised the man, in **Genesis 3:17**:

**17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.**

Why did the man disregard God and heed the voice of his wife?

Why did Naaman ignore the voice of the prophet’s messenger?

Why do we disobey God whenever we do so?

The simple answer is pride. The man did not want to look bad to his wife, and Naaman did not want to look bad to his people. To do so would hurt their pride. And we don’t want to look bad either.

And our pride is the devil’s main tool to convince us to disobey God.

Christians in our country wink at all types of sin and evil because they don’t want to appear “intolerant”.

Whenever we support disobedience to God because of the way that we will “look” if we stand on the Word of God and call for obedience, we are choosing to exercise our pride rather than to obey God.

Faith and pride are mutually exclusive, and if you don’t believe it, ask Jesus how embarrassing His sacrifice on the Cross actually was. One with faith in God can not afford to worry about how he or she looks to others, nor can one with faith in God afford to feel that following God’s instructions would embarrass them too much.

Naaman didn’t think that he should have to take instructions from a messenger, because of the way that it looked to do so, and Naaman didn’t want to wash in the comparatively dirty Jordan River when he had access to the cleaner rivers in Damacus.

But faith in God recognizes that our pride really doesn’t matter. And Naaman was fortunate to have some advisors that did have faith in God. **2Kings 5:13–14** records:

**13 And [Naaman’s] servants came near and spoke to him, and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?”**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**14 So [Naaman] went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.**

Here is the point. God told Israel, as He tells us, in **Deuteronomy 30:15–16:**

**15 “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil,  
16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.**

And just as Naaman was cleansed by eschewing his pride and following God’s commandments, we can be cleansed as well.

Our marriages can be improved, not by changing partners, but by following God’s instructions for wives to obey their husbands and husbands to love their wives even though others around us may tell us that we are being foolish to follow God’s instructions, or that our spouse will take advantage of us if we follow God’s instructions, or that we should maintain our pride and our independence by not following God’s instructions.

God, by giving us His Word, has set the choice of life and good, or the choice of death and evil before us and given us the responsibility to make a choice. God is not really impressed by our profession of faith; God is impressed when we show our faith by our actions. We can have faith in the existence of God without having faith in the instructions of God; Biblical faith in God demands that we recognize the superiority of God’s instructions and then follow them.

**Proverbs 4:20–22** tells us:

**20 My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.**

**21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart;**

**22 For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.**

And just as Naaman was healed of his leprosy by following the instructions of God, we can be healed of our maladies by following the instructions of God. As I said earlier, I have no power to improve your situation, but I do have the ability to call upon the Lord to take care of the problem.

**Galatians 3:13–14** tells us:

**13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”),  
14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

In this passage of Scripture, Paul says that through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we are redeemed from the curse of the law. And what is the curse of the law? **Deuteronomy 28:20–22, 27-28** tells us:



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**20 “The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.**

**21 The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess.**

**22 The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish.**

**27 The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.**

**28 The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart.**

God curses us for forsaking Him, but we are redeemed from these curses, if we are not filled with pride or intimidated by circumstances, by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We have to have faith in God, as Jesus tells us in **Mark 11:22–24**:

**22 So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God.**

**23 For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.**

**24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.**

Faith is a powerful force. And Jesus paved the way for the exercise of our faith by removing the curse of the law. All we need to do is to decide to believe that the Bible is the absolute truth, find the passage of Scripture that pertains to our situation, digest that Scripture by repetition, act on that Scripture in spite of temptation to do the opposite, and simply refuse to dwell on contradictory circumstances, because the contradiction of God’s Word is nothing more than the tool of the devil. **Romans 5:3–5** tells us:

**3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;**

**4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.**

**5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.**

The key to faith is perseverance, character and hope. The promises in the Word of God, however improbable that they may seem, are true, and we can count on them, as **2Corinthians 1:19–20** tells us:

**19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, Silvanus, and Timothy—was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes.**

**20 For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, [let it be so], to the glory of God through us.**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

The physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead makes it clear, as **Mark 10:27, 9:23** tells us:

**27 But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”**

**23 Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”**

And all of God’s promises, including faithful, loving marriages, and long, healthy physical life are possible because, 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.**

We are saved from both the penalty of our sins and from the curse of the Law. The diseases of the Egyptians are not for us. The key to the abundant life is faith, meaning following the instructions give to us by God, as we persevere through contradictory circumstances and, as Paul tells us, in **Philippians 3:12–14**:

**12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.**

**13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,**

**14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

So let us not be deterred from obeying God by the devil, by apparent circumstances or by pride, but let us 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, by keeping our eyes on the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

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