



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 84”

July 24th, 2010

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



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John 8:6

6 This they said, testing [Jesus], that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

Thank you for being here with me or listening online as 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.

People that are not prepared for the challenges of married life often find it very tough. And why would people not be prepared for marriage?

Well, before we marry, we have a period of courtship and romance in which we may have stars in our eyes. And people with stars in their eyes have a tendency to overlook the reality of the situation.

Engaged people have the tendency to ignore problems in their relationship because once the wedding date is set, it would be really embarrassing to find out that there is a serious reason to not marry your intended. That is especially true after all you have told all your friends that you are engaged and the wedding invitations have been sent out.

Often, the real challenges in a pre-marital relationship do not surface until after the lives of the two people in the relationship become seriously intertwined. But when questionable situations happen between the engagement and the wedding, engaged people tend to take on the mindset of “happily ever after”, thinking that whatever was wrong with their partner before the ceremony will be magically corrected when their partner puts on either a wedding dress or a cummerbund.

But people should generally choose to not marry people with problems that they cannot fix. Often a person chooses to hang onto their problems rather than cooperate with their spouse in fixing them. And one spouse may actually want a spouse with a problem, so that they can use the problem as a club with which to control their spouse, beating their spouse over the head with the



problem when it suits them, and using the problem as a way to gain sympathy from their friends. But that behavior does not make for a good marriage; more often than not, it leads to divorce.

But all people enter marriage with a certain amount of dysfunction.

Romans 3:23 tells us:

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

If you choose to marry a human being, you can count on the fact that you have married a sinner of some description. Sometimes, people sin by doing that which they ought not do. Other times, people sin by failing to do that which they ought to do. But either way, sin is a universal characteristic. The universality of the sin nature means that there will something wrong with whomever you marry.

And the female protagonist in today's lesson is certainly a sinner. **John 8:2–4** records:

2 Now early in the morning [Jesus] came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to [Jesus] a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst,

4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.

Now, my friends, this is quite a situation. I have never heard of this situation happening, in the Bible, in history, or in my personal experience, other than in this one case.

The commission of adultery is generally not the type of sin which people are caught committing. Adultery is the act of a married person having sexual intercourse with a person to whom they are not married. The Scripture indicates that the Pharisees actually caught and captured someone's wife in the process of performing an illicit sex act.

This is, in my opinion, the most unlikely episode recorded in the Divinely Inspired written Word of God. John records that the Pharisees want us to believe that a married woman was having sexual relations with a man to whom she was not married in a venue in which other people knew exactly when they were doing the deed, and a venue that had so little privacy that church leaders could come in, observe the couple actually having sex, and then tear the woman physically from her bed of iniquity.

A married woman would know that adultery is a sin, and most people that commit adultery do so in a venue in which their sin can be concealed. How is it even possible that the hyper-religious Pharisees would know specifically where adultery was being committed?

That is not to say that my wife would not be able to gather evidence of my adultery were I ever so reckless as to commit adultery, but I can say, with total confidence and without fear of successful contradiction, that she would never actually catch me in the act. If I decided to commit adultery, I would be courteous



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enough to the woman involved to do it in a private, locked room, so that if someone tried to break in, we would at least have the time to stop that which we were doing and put on our clothes.

And look at that which the next verse, **John 8:5**, says:

5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

Nowadays, adultery is frowned upon, but not to the extent of making adultery a death penalty offense. And regardless of how desirous of having sex with a woman other than my wife I found myself, I would not risk my life to do the deed. And if I decided to risk my life, I would have more discretion than to do so in a venue in which I could be observed and taken into custody.

Now, maybe I am not the person that should be preaching this sermon. Maybe I am not a person of sufficient passion to understand the situation in which this woman found herself.

People do some pretty irrational things in the name of sexual tension and passion. It is entirely possible that enough sexual tension and passion exists that could lead people to throw caution to the wind in order to fulfill their desire. And obviously, this woman has done so. But, in my opinion, the situation lends itself to an explanation other than just blind sexual passion.

The first clue is that they brought the woman to Jesus. But why? Jesus had no jurisdiction over the woman. The Pharisees that caught the woman had jurisdiction, as we can tell by the fact that, when they chose to, they had the authority to bring even Jesus to judgment. In **Luke 22:52–54**:

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?"

53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

54 Having arrested [Jesus], they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house.

So the authority to arrest and adjudicate was in the hands of the Pharisees, but, they brought the woman to Jesus for judgment. It seems pretty obvious to me that a simple consultation concerning the adjudication of the penalty for adultery was not the objective of the Pharisees.

The second clue is in the Scripture that the Pharisees quoted to Jesus.

John 8:5 tells us:

5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

Among the Jews, the Law of Moses is the supreme Law. Since that which the Law of Moses says is clear, why bring the situation to Jesus? Why would those with authority choose to cater to any idea that Jesus had rather than following the Law of Moses?



The key clue, however, is the missing member of the adulterous duo. **John 8:3–4** records:

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to [Jesus] a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.

Now, I’m not the greatest expert on adultery in the world, but even I know that you cannot catch a woman in the very act of adultery by herself. There has to be at least one other person involved. But the only one that the Jewish leaders brought was the woman.

Why would the Jewish leaders not bring the man that was involved in the adulterous act? Why would they bring the woman rather than the man? This, my friends, is very curious. There are a lot of unanswered questions associated with this case.

Well, let’s see what we can find in the Bible. In the beginning of the chapter that precedes this chapter, **John 7:1** tells us:

1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

This leads me to the conclusion that the Jewish leaders are not seeking Jesus’ counsel in the matter, but were really looking for a reason to execute Him. Jesus was eroding the influence of the Jewish leaders among the people, and the Jews could not have that. **John 7:30–32** records:

30 Therefore [the Jewish leaders] sought to take [Jesus]; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed in [Jesus], and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?”

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.

But the direct approach did not work. Jesus spoke to the crowds at the feast and to the men that were sent to arrest him. **John 7:40, 44–49** tells us:

40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard [Jesus speak], said, “Truly this is the Prophet.”

44 Now some of [the officers] wanted to take [Jesus], but no one laid hands on Him.

45 Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why have you not brought [Jesus]?”

46 The officers answered, “No man ever spoke like this Man!”

47 Then the Pharisees answered them, “Are you also deceived?”

48 Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in [Jesus]?

49 But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.”

When Jesus appeared, crowds followed Him and thronged Him because of His teaching ministry and healing ministry. The Temple police could not walk



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up and arrest Jesus while He was teaching because to do so would cause a riot among those listening that believed in Him or wanted something from Him. And once the officers heard Jesus' teachings, they themselves began to believe.

Since the acceptance of Jesus' religious teaching by the multitude was the key to Jesus remaining free, the Jewish leaders, who were also teachers of the law, felt the need to find a flaw in Jesus' teaching so that they could condemn Jesus for blasphemy, or teaching against the Law of God.

And that was what this public adultery trial was all about. **Luke 19:47** records:

47 And [Jesus] was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him,

The woman caught in adultery was part of a trap to ensnare Jesus. But the fact that the woman caught in adultery was produced without producing a man makes it reasonable to assume that the entire adulterous situation was a setup to bring this conundrum to Jesus.

Jesus' supporters supported Him because Jesus' decisions tended toward repentance and restoration rather than retribution. Jesus was known for healing, not taking life. When the woman who was a notorious sinner came into Simon's house and washed Jesus' feet with her tears of repentance, **Luke 7:39** tells us: **39 Now when [Simon] the Pharisee who had invited [Jesus] saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."**

Simon the Pharisee expected Jesus to condemn the woman, but, in **Luke 7:48–50**:

48 Then [Jesus] said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

49 And those who sat at the table with [Jesus] began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

50 Then [Jesus] said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Maybe you can understand why the people loved Jesus and the Jewish judges disliked Him. The Jewish judges obtained part of their power from their ability to punish people and keep them in line. Jesus obtained more power than the Jewish leaders by mercifully granting repentance to people who were heartily sorry about their misdeeds.

You can see how much power that Jesus had; when the Jewish leaders ordered their officers to arrest Jesus, the officers first could not do and then did not wish to.

But in this case, Jesus was being asked to choose between the Law of Moses and the law of love. In **John 8:4–5**:

4 [The Jewish leaders] said to [Jesus], "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act."



5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?”

And, as I postulated, they did not say this because they were trying to uphold the law of Moses against adultery. **John 8:6** records:

6 This they said, testing [Jesus], that they might have something of which to accuse Him.

Why would this question give them a reason to accuse Jesus? Well, they intended to put Jesus in the whipsaw of a conundrum with no good answer. The woman that washed Jesus' feet was not sinning when she came into Simon's house. Simon knew that she was a sinner, but she wasn't sinning at that exact moment, and Simon was hosting a dinner, not a court. And prostitution was not a death penalty offense like adultery.

But the woman in this case, being taken directly from an adulterous bed, did not require a trial. She was both tried and convicted, as the evidence against her was plainly visible, and she only needed to have her action punished. If Jesus granted the woman mercy, the Jewish leaders could accuse Jesus of breaking the Law of Moses. But if Jesus gave the woman the death penalty, the Jewish leaders thought that that would damage Jesus' standing with the crowd.

The interesting thing, as we can clearly see, is that the woman was not really the one whom the Jewish leaders were putting on trial. She was simply a pawn in an effort to checkmate the King. But that the Jewish leaders would sacrifice a woman for this purpose just goes to show you how very little they were concerned about the welfare of the people over whom they had authority. The Jewish leaders considered it nothing to sacrifice the life of a woman in order to bring Jesus down. And that is why the adulterous man was not brought to trial.

The Bible doesn't tell us this directly, but common sense tells us that the reason that the Jewish leaders were able to find a woman committing adultery was that they solicited a man to seduce a woman into adultery and then expose her in the process of committing the act. And we know, for a fact, that the Jewish leaders were not above soliciting someone to act in a surreptitious and dishonest way to trap Jesus. **Matthew 26:59–61** records:

59 Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death,

60 but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward

61 and said, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.’ ”

The Jewish leaders were not above using false testimony, acts of betrayal and intimidation to discredit Jesus. And the woman was simply a pawn in an effort to checkmate the King.

But God anticipated the treachery of the Jewish Leaders. Look at that which the Old Testament says on the subject, in **Hosea 4:14**:



14 “I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, nor your brides when they commit adultery; For the men themselves go apart with harlots, And offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.

This is a most interesting passage of Scripture. In the Jewish system, men are always the teachers, the leaders and the judges. If there is a sentence for sin to be passed, it is passed by a man. This gives men more responsibility, as God has chosen men to be the judges of their families, their communities and their nations.

Judges have to evaluate the statutes that prohibit sex outside of marriage within a certain context. **Matthew 19:4–6** tells us:

4 And [Jesus] answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’

5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’ ?

6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

1Corinthians 7:3, 5 tells us:

3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

These passages of Scripture teach is that sex is a part of marriage.

In our discussion period last week, I was asked about the origin of that to which we refer as the traditional wedding ceremony. My research on the topic led me to the Catholic church; the words of the modern wedding ceremony appear to have been codified at the Catholic Council of Trent in the 15th century.

But Jewish weddings were quite different. The vows were taken some period of time before the actual marriage, after which the bride and the groom prepared for their marriage as the groom prepared a home for his wife and the bride prepared to move her possessions into the home prepared by the groom.

The wedding ceremony itself was not so much of a ceremony as a celebration. The bride moved into the home prepared by the groom, and the bridesmaids assisted her. Once their preparation was over, the bridesmaids went outside to await the groom, who was returning to his home to consummate his marriage. When the groom arrived, the bridesmaids and well-wishers began a celebratory feast outside the house while the bride and groom consummated the marriage inside.

But there was no ceremony per se; the actual bride and groom were considered wed when they completed the marital sex act.

In Genesis 1:28:



28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

The basis of man’s dominion over the earth is fruitful multiplication. Economic prosperity is dependent upon fruitful multiplication. Military conquest is dependent upon fruitful multiplication. In the Bible, Abraham the patriarch had one child by his wife, Isaac his son had two children by his wife, but Jacob had four wives and thirteen children. Thus, Jacob fruitfully multiplied while his father and grandfather did not. So God named the nation that He promised Abraham after the new name that God gave Jacob.

But, even with the command to fruitfully multiply, God tells men to be faithful to their wives and wives to be faithful to their husbands. **Matthew 19:4–6** and **1 Corinthians 7:3, 5** make it clear that there are two aspects to faithfulness. One can be unfaithful to a spouse by having sex with someone other than the spouse, or one can be unfaithful to a spouse by depriving them without consent for a time.

And God tells the men of Israel, in **Hosea 4:14**, that their women will not be punished for harlotry and their wives will not be punished for adultery as long as Jewish men are having sex with prostitutes.

In **Hosea 4:14**, Jesus has the Old Testament basis for His answer to the Jewish Leaders about the woman taken in adultery. And the reason that Jesus is able to answer all their objections without violating the Scripture is because the Scripture is written expressly for the purpose of facilitating the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Hosea 4:14 is not in the Bible by accident; **Hosea 4:14** is part of God’s predetermined plan for the very episode that we are discussing.

And one of the most important objective proofs of the ministry of Jesus Christ is that Jesus’ teachings are prophesied, foreordained and prepared in the Old Testament of the Divinely Inspired Written Word of God, which was completed at least 400 years before Jesus came onto the scene. And the Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus Christ are so numerous that they could not possibly be coincidental.

But, Jesus does not spring His trap on the Jewish Leaders immediately. **John 8:6** tells us:

6 But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

Jesus could have immediately refuted the argument of the Jewish leaders, but He decided to wait until His words would have the greatest effect. As the Jewish leaders continued to prod Jesus for an answer to their question, they rejoiced at Jesus’ hesitation, thinking that they had presented Jesus a conundrum for which He had no good answer to give.



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Their plan was to tangle Jesus in His talk, and they considered themselves successful in doing so. In the meantime, the attention of the crowd was on the repentant woman in the midst, and all of the people who were opposed to Jesus were rejoicing in her discomfort and condemning her for her sinfulness, although, after all, had she not committed adultery, they would not be in this situation of power over Jesus.

And as the disdain for the woman's sin and the exaltation over finally besting Jesus in argument reached its' zenith among the Jewish leaders, they continued gloating and taunting Jesus. But **John 8:7-8** records:
7 So when they continued asking Him, [Jesus] raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

8 And again [Jesus] stooped down and wrote on the ground.

Hosea 4:14 tells us:

14 "I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, nor your brides when they commit adultery; For the men themselves go apart with harlots, And offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.

An unfaithful man cannot condemn an unfaithful woman. Was there any among the crowd sinless enough to afford to throw a stone? **John 8:9** records:
9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last.

I guess not. **Romans 3:23** tells us:

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

But **Romans 6:23** tells us:

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

No one was sinless enough to throw a stone except Jesus Himself, but Jesus Christ allowed them all, from the oldest to the youngest, to leave. Jesus could have easily called down fire from heaven to consume them, even as Elijah did, but Jesus did not do so. Jesus simply stood up and watched them leave.

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.

I don't know if those that left were saved, but Jesus did speak salvation to one person. **John 8:9-11** tells us:

9 And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"



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11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, **“Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”**

Romans 8:1 tells us:

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

And as long as we walk according to the Spirit, there is no condemnation for us, regardless of that which we do. As long as we listen when the Spirit of God tells us, as Jesus told the woman, **“Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”** we are not condemned.

The only sin that we can commit that cannot be forgiven is rejecting the mercy of Jesus Christ. If we ignore Him, if we fail to believe in Him, if we pick our way over His way, if we fail to accept His grace, acknowledge His mercy and repent of our sins, we are lost, but **Romans 10:9–10** tells us:

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

And if we have His righteousness in our hearts, and the confession of His Lordship in our mouths, our salvation is not an issue. Satan may do all that he wishes to trouble us, but Jesus Christ paid the penalty that we owe for the sins that we have committed when He suffered, bled and died on Calvary’s Cross. And Jesus’ command to those that believe in Him is clear. **Romans 13:9–10** tells us:

9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. The penalties of the Law have been satisfied. And the commandment to love one another has replaced the Law.

The Jewish leaders were willing to harm the woman in order to condemn Jesus, but Jesus loved the woman, just as He loves us all. Let us love one another as He has loved us.

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis
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