



Five Aspects of Man

Introduction

Introduction

Aspect

God is the Creator of man and woman, and where He speaks about their nature, we have a definite and dependable word. We can know some truths about all men and women, because God has spoken definitively in the Scriptures. **Five Aspects of Man** presents five views of man based upon five definitive statements the Bible makes about man. This study calls each definitive statement an aspect. The word **aspect** means to view something a certain way or from a certain vantage point. In *Five Aspects of Man*, each aspect is a perspective on man's nature as a masculine creature. The Five Aspects of Man are not five different types of man. Rather they are aspects of **any** man, true to **all** men because God created them to be male. All the views are important, because if we leave some out, we short-change man. We truncate him, making him less than he is.

Important Term

aspect: to view something a certain way or from a certain vantage point

1. What is an aspect?

2. What is *Five Aspects of Man*?

Five Aspects

The aspects of man are drawn from five Bible passages, selected as **starting points** for organizing the Bible's teaching about masculinity. Each of these "gender passages" says something basic about males and females and how they relate to one another. Here are the passages along with the male and female aspects drawn from them:

<u>Passage</u>	<u>Male Aspect</u>	<u>Female Aspect</u>
Genesis 1	Lord of the Earth	Mistress of the Domain
Genesis 2	Husbandman	Helper-Completer
Genesis 3	Savior	Lifegiver
Proverbs 1-9	Sage	Lady Wisdom
1 Corinthians 11:7	Glory of God	Glory of Man

3. What are the five male and female aspects delineated in this study?

a. Genesis 1:

b. Genesis 2:

c. Genesis 3:

d. Proverbs:

e. 1 Corinthians 11 (also Ephesians 5):

Created, Fallen, Redeemed Paradigm

The Five Aspects turn into fifteen views of man, because each aspect is treated three times.

- **CREATED:** First, each aspect is introduced as it was created to be, as God intended it to be originally.
- **FALLEN:** Second, we study each aspect as it has been affected by sin and the curse. The lessons on the fallen aspects help us understand and guard against the dark side of our sinful nature.
- **REDEEMED:** Third, we study each aspect via the good news of redemption. Here we see what God has done to save us and what He is doing to restore each aspect of our masculinity, bringing us to maturity in Christ.

4. Each aspect is examined in three different conditions. Describe each of these in a few phrases.

Created:

Fallen:

Redeemed:

Principles of Bible Interpretation

Normal Biblical Interpretation

Five Aspects of Man is based on the view that the Scriptures are inerrant and authoritative (2 Timothy 3:16–17) and should be interpreted in a “normal” manner. **Normal interpretation seeks in every passage the meaning that the author intended to put there. History should be read as history, natural fact as natural fact, poetry as poetry, hyperbole as hyperbole.** Liberal interpretation, as contrasted with normal interpretation, removes the Bible from real history, science, and anthropology in an attempt to abstract only the Bible’s moral ideas. For example, in the liberal school of thought, it is not important whether Jesus actually fed the 5,000 or rose from the grave; what is important is that His ideas feed us and revive us today. Literal interpretation is a third type of interpretation which does not recognize figures of speech or other literary conventions. If one attempts to take every word of the Bible literally, metaphors alone quickly make for absurd conclusions. For example, if Jesus is the door, does He have a doorknob and threshold? One following the “normal” school would believe that Jesus actually fed the 5,000 and rose from the grave because these stories are presented as history in the text. One following the “normal” school would understand the statement “Jesus is the door” as a metaphor meaning that He is the way to God.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Five Aspects of Man views the Bible as inerrant and authoritative, the sufficient standard for faith and practice, for life and doctrine. This course attempts to interpret Scripture in a “normal” and faithful method (as contrasted with the liberal method or the literal method).

5. What does it mean to interpret Scripture in the “normal” method?

Types of Biblical Literature

Five Aspects of Man is an attempt to learn the whole counsel of God about sexuality. Understanding four different kinds of Biblical material is essential to understanding this course. These types of literature are definitions, laws, narratives, and archetypes. To gain the whole counsel of God on manhood or anything else, one must consult the whole Bible, comparing Scripture with Scripture, rightly dividing the Word of truth. Delineating these types of Biblical literature and their relationships to each other will greatly clarify the study of the Five Aspects. The following explanation of terms is offered only as a brief introduction. Much greater detail will be provided in the lessons which follow.

Without clear statements of meaning, we cannot truly know or understand. It is not that there is no clear thinking without words. It is that there is no thinking at all without words.

Definitions are straightforward, categorical statements about the nature of something. Four of the aspects are based on such passages. For example, man is the image of God. Man is the glory of God. These are plain and definitive statements. Without clear statements of meaning, we cannot truly know or understand. It is not that there is no clear thinking without words. It is that there is no thinking at all without words. God called the whole of creation into being by His word. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall never pass away. It is through words that God has communicated His truth to us, and by words we communicate with Him. By words we order and rule the creation God has made; this is why Adam’s first task was to begin to name the creation. Truth, logic, rulership, understanding, and communication are based on words clearly defined and understood.

6. Why are definitions necessary for clear thinking?

Laws of Scripture give us absolute moral rules and boundaries. The Law is the foundation of Scripture and the basis upon which the story unfolds. Five Aspects is not a course about ethics or behavior; it is about the nature of man. We are not studying law per se; therefore, the course does not emphasize how-tos or rules. However, the whole course assumes Scriptural morality based upon the Law, and it teaches from the framework of Christian ethics regarding virgins, marriage, divorce, fornication, charity to widows, etc.

7. Why is a knowledge of the laws of Scripture fundamental to interpreting all the rest of Scripture?

Biblical narratives are the hundreds of stories and histories of Scripture given to us for examples. The stories always must be judged in light of God's Law and understood in the light of God's original archetypes. For example, we know that David's faith is what we should emulate, not his adultery. The Law makes this clear. Biblical narratives are used extensively as illustrations in the aspects' case studies.

8. Why are the biblical narratives, the stories of the men and women in the Bible there? What do we gain and how do we learn from them?

The Ten Commandments **Exodus 20:1–17**

1. *"You shall have no other gods before me."*
2. *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."*
3. *"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain."*
4. *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."*
5. *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."*
6. *"You shall not murder."*
7. *"You shall not commit adultery."*
8. *"You shall not steal."*
9. *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."*
10. *"You shall not covet."*

Famous Bible Stories:

- Noah and the Ark
- The Tower of Babel
- Abraham & Sarah
- Abraham & Isaac
- Jacob & his 12 sons
- Joseph in Egypt
- Moses & the Promised Land
- Joshua & Caleb
- Hannah & Samuel
- King David
- Solomon
- Elijah & Elisha
- Daniel in the Lion's Den
- Esther
- The Story of Jesus

Basic Biblical Archetypes:

- God the Father
- Wisdom: the first feminine
- Adam: the first man
- Eve: the first woman
- Fallen Adam: the unfaithful
- Israel: the wife of God
- Jerusalem above: our mother
- Babylon: mother of harlots
- The Virgin Mary: the mother of Christ
- Christ the Son: the second/last Adam
- God the Holy Spirit
- The Church: the bride of Christ

Biblical archetypes are original and exemplary patterns from Scripture which transcend culture and time. The masculine archetypes of Scripture include God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, Adam—the first man, Christ—the last Adam. Feminine archetypes of Scripture include Eve—the first woman, Israel—the wife of God, the Virgin Mary—the mother of Christ, the Church—the bride of Christ, Lady Wisdom of Proverbs 9—wisdom personified, and Jerusalem above—our mother. “Woman” folly and Babylon (the mother of harlots) are evil feminine archetypes. God often uses archetypes to reveal “the big picture” (e.g., Ezekiel 16; Ephesians 5:22–33), thus shedding a different light from that which comes from laws or narratives. Both archetypes and narratives are important to our study. People with a philosophical turn of mind tend to think in transcending categories. Others, more practical in their viewpoint, think in specific and concrete details. One of these groups is not more intelligent or godly than the other. The Bible gives us both kinds of thinking, often expecting us to reason back and forth between the two. For example, in Proverbs 1–9, we see universal categories for feminine roles and relationships in “lady” wisdom and “woman” folly. However, at the end of the book in Proverbs 31, the advice of a specific mother and the portrait of an individual wife are showcased. These specific wise women are concrete and individual representatives of the universal “lady” wisdom. Understanding this interplay between the universal and the particular is essential to building a Biblical framework on gender or any topic.

9. Archetypes are original and exemplary patterns. How does seeing “the big picture” through Scriptural archetypes give us meaning and insight which transcend time and culture?

Both Peter and the writer of Hebrews hold up Sarah as a wonderful example of the godly and faithful woman. However, when Paul offers the Church as the original and panhistorical model of femininity in Ephesians 5, he takes us beyond Sarah and before Eve. He offers us an understanding of femininity that goes beyond all individual women to the very origin of the idea of the feminine. The ideas of the Church and Lady Wisdom came before all women and thus throw light on the femininity of all women. Archetypes such as Eve and Mary transcend all other women and thus provide patterns and examples for all other women. (Only Eve actually came from the side of a man; only Mary bore her Child directly to God.)

10. Why do Biblical narratives give life to the definitions, laws, and archetypes of Scripture?

The Bible is filled with hundreds of characters and centuries of history which literally “flesh out” how God works with individuals, families, and nations. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-11 Paul explains that God has recorded the Old Testament history deliberately in order to provide examples of good and bad behavior for our instruction.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

The Benefit of Seeing More Clearly

Why should you take this course? Jesus says something very important in Matthew 6:22–23 about this point: *“The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!”* Our Lord is talking about our viewpoint. *Five Aspects of Man* is a course about a way of seeing God, the universe, and everything in it from a truly Biblical framework.

How do you see? Do you see God as great, loving, good, majestically sovereign, and yet graciously disposed to you? Or do you see Him as mean and distant, motivated by some cosmic sadism? Or perhaps you see Him as a psychological down comforter, white and fluffy, for cuddling when you feel low. How do you see other men? How do you view your own father, and how does that affect your view of God the Father? What about your brothers and peers? Do you see them as competitors in a “winner takes all” type game or pawns to your own success? What about sex and women? Do you see women as sex objects or seductresses? Are women second-class citizens who are only silly and petty? Or do you see them as interchangeable with men or even the independent and dominant, the rightful rulers of the race?

If you see God and men and women in any of the ways just described, your eyes are full of darkness and your whole body will be full of darkness, too. But if you see God as He really is—the great, majestic, and loving Father and Savior that He is—and if you see men as they were created to be, and if you see women as they were created to be, your eyes will be full of light. Your viewpoint will be different, and with this new viewpoint, your ability to be different and act differently will be enhanced greatly. You will be able to incorporate and apply how-to principles much more rapidly, because the way you see and who you are will be different.

The *Five Aspects of Man* is a way of seeing. It is a vision which should lead to an application of the Christian life in a most profound sense. Jesus said that all the Law can be summed up in two laws.

The first and great commandment is, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*” (Matthew 22:37). God wants us to give the totality of ourselves to Him, everything in our being.

Five Aspects of Man can help you love God and understand Him better, particularly by helping you understand His masculinity. Our God has revealed Himself to us as “He.” He is Father, Son, King, Bridegroom, Firstborn Brother, High Priest—just to name a few of His masculine roles. From one end of the Scriptures to the other, He teaches us to call Him “He.” Jesus is a man. He is the God-Man. The Holy Spirit is not “It.” He is “He.” If we are to be Biblical Christians, we must not be confused by those who would lead us aside and say, “God is an It,” or “God is a He-She,” or “God is our Mother.” We need to understand the masculinity of God, love Him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and in all the other roles of His revealed and masculine Person. One reason people want to make God feminine is because they are looking for ultimate feminine categories. This course provides clear and understandable answers from Scripture on ultimate masculinity and femininity. We need these answers to keep us from falling prey to a whole host of doctrinal errors which are plaguing the Church in this sexually aberrant and gender-confused day.

The second commandment is like the first, Jesus said, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*” (Matthew 22:38). The first commandment is to love God; the second is to love others. All the “others” out there come in two kinds—male and female. How can *Five Aspects of Man* help us love others rightly, both men and women? Concerning other men: starting with Cain and Abel, the problem of fratricide and hatred is a foundational problem in the story of Scripture. The Son, who lays down His life in order to give it to others, provides the fundamental answer to combat all jealousy, hatred, anger, and competitiveness towards other men. Concerning women: after Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 11 that our glories differ, he goes on to say that we have an interdependence based upon our differences. Verses 11–12 state, *However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. ¹²For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God.* Eve came from Adam; yet men come from their mothers. The way we come from each other is different; nevertheless, our lives are bound up with one another. To despise, to hate, to be bitter or dismissive towards, or to belittle the opposite sex is suicidal. The life of men is inextricably bound up with women because God has created us to be interdependent. We spiral up and down together, and our relationships with others matter greatly.

11. There are two basic commands which undergird all the others. Name them.

12. What are the benefits of mastering the *Five Aspects of Man* course?

13. In a few sentences, describe how you view God at this point in your life. What does the idea of God as Father mean to you? How about the idea of God as King?

All of us have truncated and imbalanced views of God. The more we mature spiritually and grow in His grace, the more we will be able to see Him as He is. In the area of God's attributes, it is our personal experience that older believers and those from a high-church background have more appreciation for the holiness, majesty, justice, and authority of God. He is transcendent; One to be feared and revered. On the other hand, younger people and people with exclusively low-church exposure see Jesus as loving and compassionate, a personal Friend and Companion. Both of these viewpoints are true, but one without the other represents a serious misunderstanding of the God of the Bible.

In the area of roles, the same kind of breadth of understanding must be pursued. God is King as well as Shepherd, Lord as well as Savior, Master as well as Servant, Infinite Creator as well as Immanent Friend.

The masculinity of God is the area of His Person under vigorous attack today. Many people have thoughtlessly imbibed one or more of the following false ideas:

- a. God is spirit and therefore transcends gender;
- b. God is both masculine and feminine; and
- c. The Bible calls God "Father." However, this is just an accommodation to our limitations, He is not really a "He" or a Father.

It is not the purpose of this Introduction lesson to teach at length on the masculinity of God or to refute all of these false ideas.

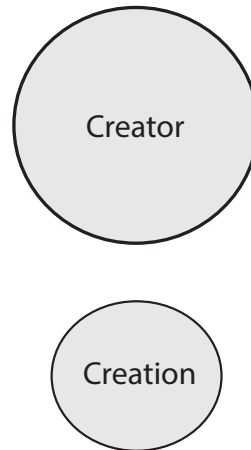
"Everything depends upon the kind of God one believes in."

-George MacDonald

However, the masculinity of God is the major premise of Biblical gender truth as taught in this course.

To begin to truly understand the teaching of the masculinity of God, one must first understand the foundational truth about God that the Bible and this work are built upon: the distinction between the Creator and that which is created. God is the Creator. He is not a part of His creation. That which is created, the world and all that is in it, including mankind, are created and therefore creatures. By definition, they are not God. A simple diagram is helpful to see the difference.

As the leader, try to discern your class members' comprehension of this important area. Explain that it is only as we understand God better that we will be able to understand man and woman better. Whatever you say on this question here at the beginning, whether little or much, seek to prepare the students to understand that the Christian God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are not optional or merely accommodating names.



The Creator and the creation are distinct. Yet, as we will see in the repeated Created, Fallen, Redeemed paradigm: fellowship between the Creator and man, the creature, is the original design and the ultimate goal. The capacity for fellowship between the Creator and His creation is paramount to the Christian faith. Even so, the distinction between Creator and creation is never blurred or replaced.