

# What Does the Bible Teach About Gender Identity Issues?

November 4, 2021 Indepth Bible Class  
of the Trilacoochee church of Christ

# What Is The Issue?

- A relatively new and quite controversial issue.
- Very little that is religiously useful has been written about this question
- Our approach will be factual and objective.
- This class series is titled What Does the Bible Teach About; it is not What Do Current Philosophy and Politically Correctness Teach About or What Do Contemporary Progressive Religionists Teach About.

# What Is The Issue?

- “There are an estimated 700,000 people in the US who identify as “transgender”: that is, they claim a gender identity different from “the sex they were assigned at birth.” *(U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, May 13, 2016)*
- “Transgender - An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.” *(Human Rights Campaign)*
- Gender Dysphoria - “Significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.” *(American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders)*

# What Is The Issue?

- Gender Dysphoria in Children - “Gender dysphoria is much more common in children than in adults. However, the majority of children with gender dysphoria do not grow up to be adults with gender dysphoria. Studies that have followed children with a strong desire to be of the opposite sex have found that only a very small proportion of these children continue to have gender dysphoria when they grow up.”  
(<http://www.cpa.ca/docs/File/Publications/FactSheet> - 3/24/13)
- The issue has currently received attention from the media and in politics out of proportion with its prevalence. As with the true statistics regarding the number of persons who are LGBTQ that have been inflated to around 10%, when according to a survey by the University in Berkley, CA, the actual percentage is less than 2%; so, this issue has been greatly exaggerated by the press and civil leaders far out of relation to the number of persons involved.

# What Is The Issue?

- Transgenderism in recent years has permeated the news in debates about bathroom bills, workplace policies, and school locker rooms. But in all the flurry of the media, we can't forget that this is ultimately about real people, created in God's image.
- While Christians may be repulsed by the behavior, they are not permitted to treat persons in sin with revulsion. Religious bigotry is not covered by the fig leaf apron of dogmatic rationalization. A professed Christian will be just as lost by treating a sinner with contempt as will the sinner will be lost over his sins.

# This Is Not A Complex Issue

- The complexity with which it is presented in the public forum is generated by the media mongers. The Human Rights Campaign has developed a glossary of 32 terms to describe aspects of the issue, including nine forms of gender identity.
- It is also evident that these terms have been developed to euphemize or deliberately cloud the issue and reduce accuracy of communication.
- However, the Bible is quite clear about this matter.

# What Is Written In The Bible?

- God created men and women in His own Image
  - Gen. 1:27-28, 31 - “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 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’ ... 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good...”

# What Is Written In The Bible?

- With sexually differentiated bodies, God chose to exhibit His Image in the souls and spirits men and women, and doing so in different, complementary ways.
- There was no gender dysphoria and no discontentment with the way God had made them in spite of the fact that they were structurally and visibly different from each other.
  - Gen. 2:25 - “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”



# What Is Written In The Bible?

- Human sexuality, male or female, is a biological binary trait determined for each person by God Himself.
  - Psalm 139:13-14 - “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...”
- While this binary trait is essential here for reproduction and family structure, it will be irrelevant in the eternal realm.
  - Matt. 22:30 - “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven”

# What Is Written In The Bible?

- The Bible differentiates the complementary nature of men and women
- Physically
  - We appear different physically - Song 7:1-7
  - We function differently - Lev. 15:16, 20:18
- Familially - Gen. 3:16-19; Eph. 5:22-33, 6:4
- Socially - Prov. 31:10-31

# What Is Written In The Bible?

- Emotionally
  - Mothers are better qualified as nurturers - Titus 2:3-5
  - Fathers more likely to place emphasis on discipline - Col. 3:21
- In every case, our differences are designed to facilitate our roles and to complement each other
  - Gen. 2:18 - “And the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’”

# What Is Written In The Bible?

- Human beings intentionally choose to reject God's design.
  - “Gender is a kind of performance... something we actively create from the limited cultural materials we encounter; babies and toddlers are genderless.”  
*(Jessica Winter, “Are You a Boy or a Girl?” Slate, 5/11/16)*
  - This view makes gender subjective to each person, who must decide for themselves if they are a man or a woman, in spite of their design.
  - “Anatomy isn't destiny. Sexual orientation determines who you want to go to bed with, and gender identity determines who you want to go to bed as.” *(Allan Metcalf, “What's your PGP?” Chronicle of Higher Education, 9/2/14)*

# What Is Written In The Bible?

- However, three salient facts remain:
  - Human beings often depart from God's way - Rom. 1:18-28
  - These departures do not change God's way - Gal. 1:6-7
  - These departures bring judgment upon those who depart - Rom. 2:2, 5-11

# Answering Objections

- “What about persons born with both genders?”
- “One in 1500 children may be born with some rare disorder of sex development or intersexual trait.” (<https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/intersex.pdf>)

# Answering Objections

- In Genesis 3, because of Adam and Eve's sin, God curses the ground and death enters the world. Therefore the fall (mankind's rebellion against God) affects physical and spiritual ailments that afflict humanity. There was no sickness or death before the curse.
- However, transgenderism is not about persons with ambiguous physical gender traits; it is about choices people make about sexuality in spite of unambiguous physical gender traits. The first is a physical disorder; the second is an immoral choice.
- Persons born with intersexual traits can be aided medically and psychologically to differentiate, and their families and religious leaders can support and encourage them through this process.

# Answering Objections

- “What about persons who firmly believe they were born in the wrong gender?”
- What we believe and what we feel are often different than what is right.
  - Romans 1:18-28 & 8:20-23 teach us that nature as we see and feel it is not necessarily nature as God intends it. Therefore, just because something seems “natural” to us in a fallen world doesn’t mean it’s right or wholesome.



# Answering Objections

- Our feelings and personal beliefs can be distorted
  - Jer. 17:9 - “The heart is deceitful above all things,  
And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”
- Our hearts aren’t infallible. We must listen to God to find out who He has created us to be
  - Prov. 14:12 - “There is a way that seems right to a man,  
But its end is the way of death.”

# Answering Objections

- I do not pretend to know the thoughts and feelings of one experiencing gender confusion. And since we all have distorted views of ourselves to a certain extent, this means that we should be able to respond with patience and gentleness to those experiencing temptation about their gender. We also know that by God's grace and power, people really can change. Through a greater knowledge of God and His Word, we all can grow in having a more accurate understanding of ourselves.
  - 1Cor. 6:11 - "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."
- At the same time and for the safety of those in confusion, we must be clear that rejecting one's God-given gender is sin, and sin always has certain consequences. Like all sin, it will lead to pain, despair, and ultimately perdition.

# Answering Objections

- Well-meaning parents may fall into the trap of thinking that it is love to acquiesce to their child's gender struggle without considering the more important responsibility of shepherding their eternal souls. But putting your acceptance of your children's preferences and behavior above their relationship with God doesn't truly help them.
- This actually sets them up for an ongoing state of gender confusion and future hardship in relationships.
- "Whatever disunites man from God, also disunites man from man." (*Edmund Burke*)

# How Do We Love Our Neighbors With Gender Confusion?

- Seek the wisdom of God
  - Matt. 10:16 - “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”
- Seek to be compassionate
  - John 3:16 - “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.”
  - Rom. 5:8 - “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

# How Do We Love Our Neighbors With Gender Confusion?

- Speak the truth in love
  - Rom. 12:18 - “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”
  - Eph. 4:15 - “speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ”
- Speak to the erring of repentance
  - James 5:20 - “Let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins”

# How Do We Love Our Neighbors With Gender Confusion?

- Live contentedly as a man or woman of God
  - Deut. 6:6-8 - “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.”
  - Phil. 4:11 - “...I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content”

# How Should We Respond To Persons With Gender Confusion?

- As individual Christians
  - Do not become upset or show disgust
  - Thank them for being open and trusting toward you
  - Assure them you aren't afraid of them and that you are interested in their well being
  - Listen to them patiently
  - Pray with and for them
  - Let them know that God loves them
  - Be realistic both with what the word of God has to say, and that yielding to the will of Christ does not mean the temptation or confusion will go away immediately
  - Be available and proactive in leading them to repentance and salvation

# How Should We Respond To Persons With Gender Confusion?

- As a local church
  - Preach all of God's Word as the standard and not avoid the challenging passages or questions
  - Guard the truth of God's word, protect God's people from doctrinal error, and confront the world when it tries to press us into its mold.
  - Speak the truth about all sins and emphasize God's forgiveness to all who come in sincere repentance of any sins.
  - Summon all sinners to faith in Christ by sharing the Gospel with them.
  - Provide opportunities where people can talk openly about any of their struggle and battles.
  - Ask forgiveness when we are rude, thoughtless, bigoted, or joke about those who experience temptation toward homosexuality.
  - Strive to be a family that welcomes all who hate their sin and struggles against it, even when that struggle sometimes involves failure and setbacks. Be a place of both encouragement and accountability.



# Scriptures For Further Study

- Humanity's creation in the image of God includes the ability to choose between right and wrong. Individuals were made morally responsible for their choices.
- Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; 1 Kings 20:40; Psalm 51:5; Isa. 64:6; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; Luke 16:15; John 7:17; Rom. 3:10–12; 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph. 2:1-3; 1Tim. 2:5; Titus 3:5; Heb. 11:6; Rev. 22:17

# Scriptures For Further Study

- God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship that is Divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship.
- Gen. 1:27–28; 2:18, 20, 23–24; Isa. 54:4–8; 62:5b; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16; Hosea 2; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 19:4–6; Mark 10:9; John 2:1–2, 11; 1 Cor. 9:5; Eph. 5:23–32; 1Tim. 5:14; Heb. 13:4; Rev. 19:7–8.

# Scriptures For Further Study

- God's word is very clear on the matter of homosexuality. It is specifically forbidden in both the Old and New Testament and thus a sin. It is unnatural in the sense of Creation's fixed order (not what we subjectively feel is natural). It is contrary to God's perfect design - Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Gen. 19; 1Cor. 6:9-11; 1Tim. 1:9-10
- Jesus did speak directly about homosexuality and affirmed the Creation account of marriage - Mark 7:20-23; Matt. 19:4-6, 11-12
- It is not an inescapable sin, nor is any other - 1Cor. 6:11