

SEXUALITY AND LOVE

LESSON 7: BIBLICAL CLARITY FOR UNBIBLICAL SEXUALITY

Main Idea: Gender confusion is infiltrating today's society. What is a biblical and theological response? In this lesson, you will discover how to trust God's Word, stand on His truth, and resist lies perpetrated by secular reasoning.



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

We in National Men's Ministries hear the culture's rally cry for inclusion and compassion. While this prescription for inclusion and compassion seems like a good—even Christian—thing, it is also evidence of a much deeper social quake taking place in America. It is part of the ultimate transformation of America into not just a secular nation but a pagan one.

It doesn't take much research to discover that this is a far cry from the Christian principles and biblical framework America was founded upon. In fact, before the 1970s, the term gender was not even used in scientific circles. You were either male or female. The term gender came out of university English departments, and it was used to describe persons who shared certain social attributes as much as biological qualities. However, the secular, pagan agenda sought to eliminate all distinctions, making sexual identity fluid rather than absolute. Androgyny is part of the neo-paganist, utopian vision for life, and is seen as ideal. But the idea that sexual identity is fluid with no fixed meaning (you can be whatever you choose) comes out of paganism. It is attentive to militant secularism and is part of the LGBTQ agenda. Ultimately, it is an assault on God as our Creator.

For that reason, this is not a flesh and blood battle—a battle against human beings. This is spiritual battle, in which human souls are at stake. Paul tells us in Ephesians 6:12, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

This is also a worldview battle. Secular society's worldview is that the world is one of our own making, and we can invite God into it or not. In contrast, the Christian worldview is that we live in God's world, and God invites us to be a part of it. As such, we are called to live according to God's wisdom, found in His Word.

God's Word provides hope and has a tremendous amount to say about our sexuality. First, God created human beings as male and female. Read these words from Genesis 1:27: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Gender identity in this passage is embodied. Gender is physically grounded, not psychologically or sociologically determined. God did not create nonphysical beings. He didn't create a nonphysical being called Adam and then found him a body. God fashioned a biological male body that He breathed life into and named Adam. Paul tells us that we are spirit, soul, and body. So, Adam was male spirit, male soul, and male body.

Every human being has been made in the image of God. The stamp of God is on us. So, every human being should be treated with value, worth, and significance because we have been made in the image of God. Human beings are not the only male and female in God's creation, but we are the only creatures whose maleness and femaleness has that kind of significance.



Some argue that gender is nonbinary, that it instead falls within a range or spectrum of masculinity and femininity. However, that is not what the Scripture teaches. Scripture teaches that there are two sexes, not a range of gender. Humanity is binary. Furthermore, humanity only fulfills God's intention for people with both the masculine and the feminine. If there was a community made up only of men, something would certainly be lacking. Likewise, a community made up only of women would lack something crucial. We need each other. We need our differences. If that were not the case, then only the strong would survive and the weaker would be crushed. But men need women and women need men. This is because gender is not a social construct but a real, physical, and spiritual creation of the living God. Being a male or female sexual human being is a sacred part of our identity. Therefore, rejecting your God-given gender is equivalent to rebelling against your Creator.

Genesis 3 tells the story of the original sin that led to the fall of humankind. The serpent, Satan, came to the woman and offered her the original lie: You, independent of God, shall be as God. When Adam and Eve then rebelled and rejected the truth of God, believing that lie, they were rejecting their God-given identity as creatures of God, human persons belonging to Him, already possessing everything they could ever need or want. What they were saying was, "I want the identity of God." Adam and Eve wanted to be divine. God was telling them, "That is not your identity. I've made you to be a creature, submitted to Me."

As a result of the original fall of humankind, we continue to live in a fallen world, filled with futile thinking. Paul informs us in Romans 8:20-21, "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God." There is coming a day when what is broken will be made right, but until that day, our physical world remains broken, subjected to futility and frustration. People get sick because our bodies are not what God created them to be. Someday, believers will experience a recreated universe where there is no more sickness, disease, or death. But right now, we face brokenness because there was a real, historic fall away from God's original design for humanity and this world.

For example, today some people are considered intersex people. This medical condition affects .018% of people¹ and involves biological issues in which a person has a discrepancy between the external genitals and the internal genitals. Conditions like this exist because we are fallen people who live in a

1. Leonard Sax, "How Common is Intersex? A Response to Anne Fausto-Sterling," *The Journal of Sex Research* 39, no. 3 (August 2002), accessed December 9, 2019



fallen world. Not only that, but humankind has rejected the God who wants to restore our wholeness. Paul informs us of this in Romans 1:21–22, “For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools”

All of humanity can be futile in their thinking and darkened in their understanding. This has been called a very unflattering anthropology because it means we do not have access to enough knowledge to ultimately determine who we are. A person can't fully identify himself based on his futile thinking. What is needed is an outside source to identify who we are.

All of us deal with identity issues throughout life. But where we find our true identity is in God and what He said in Scripture. Today when children express gender confusion, parents may rush to dress them like the opposite sex or even give them hormone treatments to block normal sexual development. In humanity's futile thinking, we often try to change the truth to conform to what we think, rather than conforming our thinking to the truth. In addition, we tend to conform our bodies to what we feel (our emotions), rather than to what God's Word says.

The Scripture teaches that we are to conform our thinking to the truth and not try to change the truth to conform to our thinking (Romans 12:2). This is a critical principle for followers of Jesus. Scripture teaches that when we receive Christ, our bodies become the temple of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13,14; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20). God literally comes to live inside you by the Holy Spirit. This means that as a believer you no longer belong to yourself. You were bought with the blood of Christ. Therefore, your body no longer belongs to you; it is God's temple.

When you give your life to Christ, you are under new management. This means that God now tells you how to live, what your identity is, and how you should care for your body. However, this doesn't mean your body, feelings, and desires will always want to cooperate with God. Even as a believer, evil and ungodly desires, and thoughts contrary to the Scriptures can flood the mind. What you should do when this happens is not to align yourself with the lies but return to the truth (God's Word). Accept who God says you are, rejecting the wrong desires. Jesus called this “denying ourselves.” Christ has given us the power and freedom to say an authoritative “no” to sin, carnal desires, and carnal thoughts and the ability to choose to live according to Scripture (Romans 6:1–4; Galatians 5:16–24; Titus 2:11–12).





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

In 2015, *Vanity Fair* magazine featured Bruce Jenner on its cover with the headline, “Call me Katlyn.” The former gold medal Olympian had undergone sex change surgery to become a woman. In the article, he said, “I am happy after such a long struggle to be living my true identity,”² in what has been called a pivotal moment for transgender people in our society.

Around that same time, Justice Department leaders introduced bathroom bills, which opened bathrooms not according to biological gender but according to the gender someone identifies themselves as being. Soon, several big box stores did the same with their changing rooms. Business leaders, politicians, and entertainers started lining up behind the transgender agenda.

Up until that time, we had been told that it was our biological make up that determined our gender. Now, we are being told something different. Now, it is our subjective perspective that determines our gender. It is not our biology but our psychology that determines our gender. Because of this, there has been a tremendous push to remove all gender specific terms such as *he* or *she* from public vernacular.

Men may now compete in women’s sports if they say they identify as a woman. Facebook offers fifty-eight gender identities to choose. Some states allow people to record a gender on their driver’s license as something other than what they were born, and some will even reissue birth certificates with their new preferred gender identity. Activists in the movement say biology is bigotry. Being able to determine your own gender is seen by many as a civil rights issue equivalent to race.

Meanwhile, some people suffer with a condition called *gender dysphoria*. It is real and painful, presenting many challenges and struggles. The person with gender dysphoria feels a disconnect between who they think they are and their biological reality. While awareness of gender dysphoria may have grown in tandem with the legalization of same sex marriage, it is a different issue altogether, unrelated to homosexuality, lesbianism, or same-sex attraction. Gender dysphoria is not about who you are attracted to but who you believe

2. Michael Rothman and Lesley Messer, “Caitlyn Jenner, Formerly Known as Bruce, Poses for Vanity Fair,” ABCNews.com, June 1, 2015, accessed April 11, 2023, <https://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/caitlyn-jenner-bruce-poses-vanity-fair/story?id=31447196>.

yourself to be. So, someone may be biologically male but deep down inside feel that they are really a female trapped in a man's body. Or a person who is a female biologically may feel deep down inside that they are male.

It is estimated that roughly 1 in 10,000 men and 2 or 3 in every 100,000 women in our society suffer from gender dysphoria, a tiny fraction of the population³. Believers should have great compassion for these individuals, particularly in light of their potential exploitation as pawns in the larger agenda.

As noted in the previous section, gender is biologically grounded. Furthermore, it is a calling. You are called to be a man or a woman for a divine purpose. Science continues to discover ways that boys and girls are different. Science tells us that men and women have different brains, hormones, chromosomes, and bodies. No amount of surgery, hormone injections, or hormone blockers can change someone's DNA from a man to a woman or a woman to a man. The DNA you received at birth is unchangeable. You could go through sex-change therapy, altering your voice and appearance, but an autopsy performed upon your death would still reveal your true biological gender.

John Hopkins Hospital was a pioneer in the sex change movement, becoming one of the first hospitals to perform operations. However, in the 1970s, former Psychiatrist-In-Chief Dr. Paul McHugh said he could not in good conscience recommend the surgery saying they must be stopped at once, at which point John Hopkins ceased performing them. The reason was because after talking with post-operative transsexuals, they discovered that the patients were worse off than before surgery. They found rearranging the skin on these people's bodies failed to resolve the issue in their souls. Of the surgeries McHugh said, "Hopkins was fundamentally cooperating with a mental illness. We psychiatrists thought we would do better to fix their minds and not their gentilities."⁴

McHugh was saying gender dysphoria is a mental problem. We all have mental and thinking issues at times, and the only way to find health and life going forward is to align what we think with truth. McHugh saw with his own eyes how trying to align people's bodies with their thoughts, rather than aligning their thoughts with truth, led to more problems. A tragedy of the transgender movement is the tremendous amount of regret in people who have sex-change surgeries. In fact, they are twenty times more likely to commit suicide than the general population.⁵

3. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* 5. American Psychiatric Association, 2013, 454.

4. CNSNews, accessed August 27, 2021, <https://www.cnsnews.com/article/national/michael-w-chapman/johns-hopkins-psychiatrist-transgender-mental-disorder-sex>.

5. Ibid.



As followers of Jesus, we must reject the idea of *gender fluidity*. First, it is a form of rebellion against God and against His created order. Second, it is just plain harmful to people.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

1. Where did the term gender come into existence?
2. Describe the difference between the secular worldview and biblical worldview as it relates to sex and sexual identity.
3. What does it mean to you that your body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit after salvation?
4. What comes to your mind when you read Dr. Paul McHugh's findings for a sex change operation?
5. As a believer, how would you respond to someone who is choosing to live in obedience to Christ, yet is gay and doesn't act on it?

- Take some time to listen to the Lord about what you just studied. How did this study help deepen your love for God?

- As a result of your deepened love for God, how can you practically demonstrate the thought you experienced to your family and to others around you?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the *FireBible* note on Romans 1:21.

- Describe in your own words the downward course of spiritual rebellion and moral corruption among those that do not know or follow God.

Read the *FireBible* note on Romans 1:22.

- What are disobedient people really showing by pressing on in their own independent ideas and practices?

Read the *FireBible* note on Romans 12:1.

- How should a believer show God's holiness to a secular world?

Read the *FireBible* note on Ephesians 4:17-19.

- What happens when a person's mind and life are not open to God and His truth?

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®) copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

