

I. Transgender

- UT article – University of Tenn Office for Diversity and Inclusion is encouraging use of gender-neutral pronouns such as xe, xym, xyr (pronounced zee, zim, and zeer)
- White House – April 2015, the White House designated a gender-neutral restroom for visitors and staffers in order to express solidarity with transgender activists.
- California – They enacted a law to enable students to use the restrooms and play on the athletic teams of the gender they identify with, regardless of their biological sex.
- In January 2012, UK couple Beck Laxton and Kieran Cooper made headlines. They revealed for the 1st time that their 5 year old child, Sasha, is a boy. At birth, they simply called Sasha “the infant.” They let him decide what gender he wanted to be.
- According to GenderSpectrum.org, gender is a social construct, meaning that it was created, determined, and developed by society. Gender “is actually taught to us from the moment we are born.”
- According to this definition, gender changes with time just as society does.
- The gender-neutral/transgender community claims that one’s biology is distinct and separable from one’s true gender.

A. Terminology

Understanding the culture and how to respond in a Christ-like manner often begins with understanding its terminology. Here are just a few terms often used by the transgender-identified community.

1. Cisgender – Recently coined to describe those who have never experienced a “disconnect” between their physical body and their perceived identity.

2. Gender – A term borrowed from linguistics by the psychology profession starting in the 1950s and 60s. Until then, the noun “sex” was used to specify male or female.

3. Gender Expression – How people “express” themselves as male, female, some combination of the two, or neither. Gender expression may change from day to day.

4. Gender Identity – How a person identifies, regardless of their physical sex. It is not necessarily related to sexual attractions.

5. Gender Identity Disorder – (GID) A psychiatric term used for those with strong cross-gender identification and gender dysphoria, a state of unhappiness about one’s gender.

6. Gender-bender, gender blender, gender non-conforming, gender-queer, queer, pre-op, post-op and more. There are literally dozens of terms to describe the condition of gender confusion and the people involved. There is often disagreement over terminology and a constant invention of new terms. The few listed above are becoming more common and are often used by transgender-identified activists and their allies.

7. Intersexuality or Disorders of Sexual Development - Congenital, biological conditions where an individual has ambiguous or indeterminate genitalia, or where there is discord between a person’s chromosomes and bodily gender.

8. Transgender – An umbrella term including those who believe their gender differs from their bodily gender. It includes cross-dressers and drag performers, and does not necessarily mean that a person has had surgery or hormones.

“Blurring the Lines,” April 2012 issue of Citizen magazine

- The LGB community worked hard to keep transgender as far out of the public eye as possible. They didn't want a bunch of drag-queens and cross-dressers to scare away potential allies.

- Now that significant gains have been made in the political arena, they have added the "T" - for Transgender - to the LGB acronym that represents their community.

- Facebook gives up to 10 options for gender or you can add your own.

B. What Does the Bible Say?

- **Deut. 23:1** – They were likely kept from the worship assembly because it violated God's creation of man. It was associated with pagan practices. Parents often did this so their children could serve as eunuchs in the homes of great men.

- **Matthew 19:12** – 3 Types of Eunuchs:

- born with physical deformities
- made that way by man (often parents as part of pagan practices)
- not physical but spirit – (they chose celibacy)

Deut. 22:5 - cross-dressing is an abomination

Romans 1:23-27 - it goes against nature

Psalms 139:14 - God decided how we would be made (every detail).

- To claim that one's gender is different from one's anatomy at birth says that God gave us a gender that doesn't match up with who we really are and therefore, God got it wrong!

- It also makes the person the authority on who they are rather than God.

Genesis 1:26-27

SBC Resolution – June 2014

- affirmed "God's good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one's self-perception."

C. Same-Sex Issues

Terminology –

- Sodomy – sex between males (gay)
- homosexuality – (homo – like or same) – sex between two males (gay) or between two females (lesbian)
- born homosexual – some argue that homosexuality results from a genetically determined source and the individual has no choice and is therefore morally justified.

The Bible on Homosexuality

Genesis 18:20

Genesis 19:4-7 (see also Judges 19:22-23)

-Those in support of homosexuality say the sin was not homosexuality but inhospitality.

-If this were true, then God destroyed the city because of inhospitality.

- Consider 2 Peter 2:6-8 and Consider Jude 7

Leviticus 18:22

- It is an abomination (It disgusts God!)

Leviticus 20:13

Romans 1:24-27

- “uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts” (24)
- “dishonor their bodies” (24)
- “exchanging truth for the lie” (25)
- “worship the creature rather than the Creator” (25)
- “vile passions” (26)
- “against nature” (26)
- “lust” (27)
- “shameful” (27)

Romans 1:32

1 Corinthians 6:9

Genesis 1:28

Matthew 19:2-6

- Heterosexual union is the norm in the Bible.
- Heterosexual union is natural biologically.

Hebrews 12:1-2

- Some say, "I have no choice; I'm born this way. It's genetic!"
- The biblical response is God would not make someone in a way that they would have no choice but to sin. It is not genetic.
- However, Hebrews 12:1-2 teaches that people are tempted and tripped up by certain sins more than others. So, they may be tempted toward same-sex relations, but by the power of God, they can overcome that!

1 Cor. 6:9

1 Cor. 6:11

Same-sex Marriage

- If the act is sinful then certainly the marriage is sinful.
- Genesis 1:28 and Matthew 19:2-6 make it clear marriage is between one male and female.
- See also: Eph. 5:22-23 and 1 Peter 3:1-7

Ministering to Transgenders and Homosexuals

* On Supreme Court decision day – *“You’re all going to hell and don’t expect me to cry for you when you do!”*

What is wrong with this? Is this what we should do?

**“There are two types of churches that will not reach those caught up in this lifestyle.”
(Russell Moore)**

1. A church that has given up on the truth of the Scriptures
2. A church that screams with outrage at those who disagree.

It’s easy to stand for truth, but more difficult to offer grace.

We must stand with truth and with love.

We must stand and speak with truth and grace.

We must speak with compassion.

- Ephesians 4:15 – “the truth in love”
- Romans 7:15 – We all have struggles.
- Romans 7:21-25

We may not have once been a homosexual or a transgender, but we were once in habitual sin (unrighteousness) before we were cleansed by Christ.
(1 Cor. 6:9-11)

Some Questions to Consider

1. Should I completely separate myself from a homosexual or a transgender? What if he/she is my sibling? What if he/she is my child?

-What if it was the sin of stealing? Lying? Fornication? Idolatry? Covetousness? Drunkenness? Etc.? Would we then?

1 Corinthians 5:9-12

-Don’t abandon your child. You are still parenting.

-Set some rules and boundaries just like you would with any other sin.

2. Should I attend a same-sex wedding? If I do, is it a sin?

- I don't believe it is a sin to attend, but I do believe it is an error.

- The reason has to do with what a wedding is. Those attending a wedding are there as witnesses who are giving their approval to the union. This is why you always hear, "If anyone has a just reason why this couple should not be married, speak now or forever hold your peace."

3. Should we let transgressors and homosexuals attend our churches? Join our churches? Stay church members?

- Yes on attendance. Like any other sinner, we want them to attend and hear the gospel with hopes of them being born-again. We would not want to allow any sinful actions to take place while attending.

- No on joining. A member must be a born-again believer in Christ. Those living in this lifestyle must repent and believe before being a member, in the same way anyone must repent and believe, from any other lifestyle. (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

- No on staying a church member. This is after following church discipline procedures, (Matt 18:15-17 – Galatians 6:1), as it would with anyone who begins to practice any particular sin on an on-going basis. Attempts would be made to restore such a person through repentance. If no repentance takes place, church membership would need to be forfeited.

Difficult Cases

- A transgender youth comes to your youth group. Do you call them Bruce or Caitlyn? Him or Her? He or She? Do they go to the girls small group or the boys? Do they use the girls restroom or the boys?

- While some of these are extremely hard to answer, keep in mind we do not want to imply that you must clean yourself up before coming to Christ.

- Don't want to communicate that only certain kinds of sinners are welcome.

- Joan or John?

- go to <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/joan-or-john>

Teaching Kids

- 7 year old – “How does a boy turn into a girl?” (Russell Moore)

“I saw on the news that a boy my age turned into a girl and I didn’t think that could happen. And how do I know....is that going to happen to me?”

- Be pro-active (usually earlier than you would like.)

- Be the 1st voice

- Pace yourself in terms of age-appropriateness

Some Thoughts

- Love your gay neighbor more than your position (J.D. Greear)

You want them to know you love them more than being right.

- Be just as overwhelmed by our own sin and our own need for the gospel as we are someone else’s.

- Speak the truth, but do it in love; understanding that the natural man cannot understand the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14)

- Remember that even if a homosexual or transgender comes to Christ they may still struggle with the temptation afterward. Acknowledge that sanctification is a process.

- Always make the gospel the center of our message. C.S. Lewis said,

“Don’t start with the issues, start with Jesus.”