

800 Pound Gorilla (Week Two)

April 21st, 2024

“THE WORLDVIEW BEHIND TRANSGENDERISM”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ³For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

TRANSGENDER IS *PSYCHOLOGICAL*, INTERSEX IS *BIOLOGICAL*, AND TRANSGENDERISM IS *IDEOLOGICAL*.

Transgender: Incongruence between gender identity and biological sex. A transgender person often feels like they're trapped in the wrong body.

- Gender dysphoria: Psychological distress from incongruence between gender identity and biological sex.
- Transgender individuals deserve our love, support, and compassion as do all valuable human beings made in the image of God. One study found that 41% of people who identify as transgender will attempt suicide at some point in their lives, compared with 4.6% of the general population.¹
- Poor outcomes cannot be blamed on a hostile or bigoted society because they are reported even in the cultures most accepting of people who identify as transgender, such as Sweden.²

Intersex: A person born with atypical features in their sexual anatomy or chromosomes.

Transgenderism: An ideology that aims to transform cultural understanding of sex and gender. This ideology is being promoted through media, education, law, healthcare, and so on.

THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW IN COMPARISON WITH TRANSGENDERISM:

Worldview: A “*view of the world*” that answers three questions:

1. **Origin:** How did we get here?
2. **Predicament:** Why is everything so messed up?
3. **Solution:** How can we fix it?

CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW:

1. We are the special creation of a Holy God, created in His image as male and female (**Genesis 1-2**).
2. We are fallen, rebellious creatures living in an equally fallen universe that “*groans and suffers the pains of childbirth*” (**Romans 8:22**). Because we are sinful creatures, we are separated from God and often reject His guidance and violate His laws. The solution?
3. All creation will be restored and reunited with God through the saving work of Jesus Christ, who paid the price for our sin and offered forgiveness through His death on the cross.

BIBLICAL VIEW OF GENDER:

Genesis 1:26-27 ²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

- Humans are made in the image of God as *sexed beings*—male and female. God could have made sexless beings to reflect His image, but He chose male and female.
- There is a *similarity* between Adam and Eve (humans made in God’s image), but also a *difference* (sex). Marriage is the union of opposite sexed humans who come together as “*one flesh*.”
- Jesus affirms marriage as an opposite sex institution in Matthew 19:4-5. Technically, Jesus does not explicitly deny the possibility of other sexes existing, but he limits marriage to male-female.

Objection: While **Genesis** seems to be teaching polar opposites—day and night; land and sea, etc.—there are also dusk and dawn, and asexual creatures. Thus, the text allows for variation between male and female, humans (i.e., transgender, intersex, etc.)

¹ Ryan T. Anderson, *When Harry Became Sally*, p. 93.

² Cecilia Dhejne et al, “Long-term follow up of transsexual persons undergoing sex reassignment surgery: Cohort study in Sweden,” PLOS ONE 6 (Feb 2011): e16885.

Reality: Scripture consistently condemns crossing gender boundaries.

Response: The Bible affirms the existence of dusk and dawn (**Genesis 15:17**) and amphibians (**Exodus 8:2**), but humans are always referred to as male or female. The Bible acknowledges “*in-betweens*” for some aspects of creation, but never for humans.

Deuteronomy 22:5 *A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak.*

- This passage prohibits cross-dressing because it violates gender norms that are rooted in biological sex.

1 Corinthians 6:9 *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality.*

- Paul uses the term *malakoi* (soft, effeminate)³ to refer to the passive partner in male sexual activity. The term primarily highlights men who act like women. Being the receptive sexual partner is one way of crossing gender boundaries, but *malakoi* covers a range of what were considered feminine activities that confused gender distinctions.

Romans 1:26-27 ²⁶*For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.*

- Same-sex relations are wrong, in part, because they violate God’s original design of humans as opposite-sexed beings—male and female. This design is built into nature and apparent for all to see.

WHY WOULD SCRIPTURE CONSISTENTLY CONDEMN CROSSING GENDER BOUNDARIES (Romans 12:1; 6:6,16)?

Answer: We are more than our bodies, but we are no less than our bodies!

CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW SUMMARY:

- Scripture teaches and assumes that humans are intrinsically sexed beings.
- Males and females are called to live their gender in congruence with their biological sex.
- Scripture offers little specificity as to what this universally looks like; thus, gender expression can vary by culture.

TRANSGENDERISM WORLDVIEW:

1. **ORIGIN:** Humans are not made in the image of God as essentially sexed beings. The two-sexed system of male and female is considered ideological rather than a natural occurrence. Thus, humans have a *fluid* biological nature. Freedom is not found in orienting one’s life to God’s truth as revealed in nature and Scripture, but in having self-determination and societal support for one’s chosen gender self-expression.

- Sociologist Ann Travers, *The Trans Generation*: “The very ‘fact’ of the two-sexed system is an *ideological* rather than a *naturally* occurring phenomenon (p. 16).” Sexual differences come from societal and parental influence.
- One problem is the scientific evidence for brain differences in utero.⁴ Unborn male and females have different kinds of connectivity in their brains that result in different brain development later in life.

2. **PREDICAMENT:** Transgender activists believe sex is read into nature, while Christians believe it is read out of nature. Gender expectations cause suffering in the lives of transgender kids and harm all society. Questioning anyone’s gender self-determination is considered oppressive.

- “It is not being transgender, per se, that increases the likelihood of self-harm and suicide among trans kids, but rather cultural and social prejudice that does the damage (p. 171).”⁵
- Gender oppression occurs through organizations and institutions that divide the world into sexes: bathrooms, sports, drivers’ licenses, and so on.

³Find Hebrew and Greek translations of the words in the Bible using the Concordances at BibleHub.com

⁴M.D. Wheelock et al, “Sex differences in functional connectivity during fetal brain development,” *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience* 36 (2019).

⁵Ann Travers, *The Trans Generation*.

- SPORTS: “The institutionalization of the two-sex system as natural contributes to the cultural and economic marginalization of women, gays, lesbians, and transgender people in the world of sport and beyond” (p. 95- 96).⁵
- BATHROOMS: Traverse describes a group of boys who “terrorized” a gender non-conforming girl by not allowing access to the girls’ bathroom.
- DRIVERS’ LICENSE: “Many trans people suggest that even requiring a gender marker is fundamentally oppressive. Trans activists and allies are fighting for an end to the inclusion of sex markers on government identification entirely (p. 28).”⁵

3. **SOLUTION:** Abolish gender identity and allow people to identify as the gender of their choice, or even apart from their gender entirely.

- “The appropriate focus for schools should be on transitioning the school community away from the binary system of gender and finding ways to interrupt and change other oppressive dynamics (p. 77).”⁵

In sum, transgenderism tells a story about reality, namely, that people are not essentially sexed beings (**origin**). Yet many transgender people—and especially children—suffer because of arbitrary societal expectations regarding gender identity (**predicament**). Thus, if gender were abolished as a defining characteristic, suffering would be alleviated and a more just society would emerge (**solution**).

	Christianity	Transgenderism
1. Creation	Male and female	Sexless beings
2. Fall	Sin	Gender expectations
3. Redemption	Grace through faith in Jesus Christ	Abolish gender norms and provide self-determination

TRANSGENDER ACTIVISTS:

- See their plight as part of the larger system of oppression including racism, colonialism, poverty, sexism, misogyny, etc.
- The goal is to combine efforts at “social justice” with these larger movements of liberation.
- The worldview behind much of transgender activism is **Marxism**.
- “The socially constructed heterosexual, cisgender nuclear family is a key ideological building block of white-supremacist and colonial-capitalist heteropatriarchal societies such as Canada and the United States (p. 116).”⁵

WHAT CAN WE DO?

We need *apologists* to defend truth in the public square, *pastors* to care for those struggling with gender dysphoria, and *lawyers* and *politicians* to defend religious liberty and human rights.

1. LOVE TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AS YOU WOULD ANYONE ELSE.

- **YouTube** video, “*Loving LGBT Students*” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4yelmcoAnY>
- **1 John 4:18**, “*Perfect love casts out fear.*”
- Listen. Listen. Listen.

2. BE WILLING TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE.

- Frame the conversation: “*Are you an inclusive and tolerant person who is open-minded to views different than your own?*”
- Appeal to common sense:
 - Prager Video, “*Sex Matters.*”
 - Ask: Why do feelings determine reality on the question of sex, but not anything else, such as race, height, or age?
 - Option: Video from WA Family Institute regarding “*6’5 Chinese Woman.*”

3. TEACH A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW TO THE NEXT GENERATION:

- *So The Next Generation Will Know* by Sean McDowell & J. Warner Wallace.
- *Same Sex Marriage* by Sean McDowell & John Stonestreet.

- *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Genesis 1:26-27; Matthew 19:4-5

1. Share from the sermon what was insightful and challenging.
2. Read **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** and **Genesis 1:26-27** two or three times. What do these passages share about God's heart?
3. What questions would you ask from hearing the sermon?
4. How would you answer the questions of origin, predicament, and solution?
5. What is the story you are telling yourself about how the world works?
6. Who are you having conversations with about how God's story impacts how we view and interact with culture?

Passages to Prepare: Psalm 139:1-16; 1 John 1:9; Proverbs 31:8-9