

Unpopular Opinion *March 12, 2023*
Abundant Life in a Broken World

We believe the Bible is our foundation, absolute truth; that Jesus is Truth

John 14:6 AMP Jesus said to him, “I am the only Way to God & the real Truth, & the real Life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

*God is who He is. He's not who you want Him to be.
We're called to be ambassadors, messengers of the Truth, not editors. God's Word is His perfect, ultimate, external authority. His absolute Truth.*

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God & is useful to teach us what is true & to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong & teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare & equip His people to do every good work.

Let's continually seek the Holy Spirit's help to stand against contradictory human philosophy & compromise.

Frank - Today's topic: Gender Identity in our Culture

Frank: Christian what is going on with gender in our culture today?

Many people in this church have grown up w/ culture being in line or agreement w/ what the Bible says about gender; about what it means to be male or female.

Genesis 1:27 NKJV So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2 paints a picture of God making a humans who are not complete unless there is a binary - man and woman.

Brief retell of **Genesis 2** - Adama/The Man:

Adama created verse **2:7**

Not good for man to be alone **2:18**

2:21-25 - creation of woman and first wedding

Here the Bible portrays man & woman as a binary that make up humanity.

Culture has, generally w/ few exceptions, been in alignment w/ this. This doesn't mean how America or the world has always defined manhood & womanhood is biblical, but culture has generally agreed w/ this binary.

But now our culture in the last 10-20 years has rejected, very quickly and with acceleration, the idea of a gender binary.

So, what's our culture moving to? Let me show you a graphic that's used to teach how gender identity interacts w/ the whole person.

Genderbread Person

<https://www.publichealthpost.org/databyte/genderbread-person/>

General first brief description:

4/5 different categories here that how the intersection of gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, and biological sex.

These things speak to each other, but they are not the same thing.

The traditional view would be that your biological sex would inform and characterize all of these other areas, but the current view is that these are all separate and not necessarily the same.

I want to speak to 2 different types people here (people over 30 and people under 30):

First, if you are under the age of 30. This concept is not new to you. You've been raised with, taught this in different places. Interacted with this regularly at the college at high school.

I might have lost you when I said that the Bible affirms a binary understanding of

gender. I'm going to speak into that in a minute and explain what I mean. But please don't check out.

I also, want you to understand many of the people over the age of 30 have never seen this before. This understanding of gender is foreign to over half this room.

Frank and my experience

For my under 30's, I want you to glean something. This model you've been taught that I'm showing right now is new. It's brand new.

As we talk about this in our church in this sermon and in our community, I'd like to ask you to do two things:

- Patience - understanding (seek to understand rather than be understood)
- Question - This is brand new. For some of you it has been taught in such a way that the concept of binary is labeled as backwards, harmful, wrong. I want to let you truly this conversation was not on anyone's mind in the 90s even early 2000s. What you've been raised in is not the norm or established fact. It is a brand new experiment. I want to ask you to consider that this form of gender is far from authoritative, and I challenge you to honestly consider the newness and un-testedness of this new idea.

Now I want to talk to the older generation:

You are looking at this graphic and thinking, "what in the world" how did we get here.

I want you to know this development did not come from the younger generation. I want to help you know where this comes from in the younger generation.

Starbucks analogy

Teaching Prep for Sexuality Class and Dating Website

Gatekeepers speaking identity

My two goals for those over the age of 30:

- I want to challenge you to a posture of compassion rather than judgement.
- Take seriously the call to be someone to speak identity over the younger generation.

I want to briefly run through this diagram to help explain a little more what is going on, and speak into each category what the Bible does say.

Genderbread Person

**Biological Sex

Where does the Bible and current agree: Biological sex exists!

*As we noted before in **Genesis 1:27 NKJV** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male & female he created them.*

Current culture does in general agree that biological sex does exist.

Though that has not always been a given. (Listening to this for first time on radio.)
And is still debated (Debate within the science of Biology)

Place where they disagree on Biological Sex:

1) Culture seeks to normalize abnormalities (xxy / x) *These should take compassion from Christians, but these are complicated cases. Our culture seeks to normalize them. Because they exist the strict binary can't be true. (**Refer to chart**)
As Christians we would say, as being part of a fallen world this abnormalities happen & they take compassion & discernment.

2) Our culture doesn't see biological sex as determining the other things on this chart. But as Christians, we believe God gave us our physical bodies. We don't have bodies. We are bodies. Our physical bodies do give us our identity. Being born a biological male should shape the way I think about myself and who I should marry.

****Sexually Attracted to**

Current Culture disagrees that biological sex should define our sexual orientation.

Genderbread Person - Go through chart.

The Bible teaches that God made the sex with a particular intent.

Genesis 2:24 ESV Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

I wish we could talk about this longer, but we don't have a lot of time.

God made sex to be done in a lifelong, monogamous (exclusive), heterosexual, safe/caring relationship - "one flesh" and "not ashamed."

Anything outside of this is outside what the Lord has made sex for. It's falling short of God's intent.

I want to be clear that we have all fallen outside of this intention God has. And every person heterosexual, homosexual, bi-sexual. We all need God's forgiveness. (Compassion and desire to show Jesus for those that aren't heterosexual. - Coming back to this a little later in the sermon)

But when it comes to sex, the Lord has called to either a lifelong, monogamous, heterosexual, safe/caring relationship.

Celibacy as an option for people struggling with attractions outside of God's intention for sex.

****Gender Identity**

Genderbread Person - Describe the chart.

However, as we said earlier, the Bible affirms that our biological, physical sex determines our gender identity and how we should think of ourselves.

We live in a hyper-individualist culture that says, “we alone are the ones with the right or responsibility to define who we are. To define our identity”

Example: Student and clay analogy.

We think today that we, individually, we solely allowed to be the ones to set our identity or “set the clay.”

However, the Bible describes a totally different reality.

Isaiah 64:8 ESV But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

As Christians, we believe that God is the one who sets our identity - not ourselves. We also believe that God gave us our biological sex and that determines a significant part of our identity - our gender identity.

****Gender Expression**

This one is the most tricky. Actually, this is one place where our culture doesn't agree with itself.

Throwing off gender stereotypes
Hyper=proscribing gender stereotypes

The truth is gender expression changes with culture and with time.

- *Lester talking about China*

- *Kilts*

- *Painting Fingernails (Kaitlin Jenner?)*

God wants us to own our biological sex as an essential part, but there is a lot of variation of how that is expressed.

In the past, the Church and tradition has over-proscribed how maleness and femaleness is expressed.

Frank - Absolute Truth