

Gender Dysphoria
Gender Matters Message Series Week 5
Pastor Jeff Burkholder
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1. What is gender ideology?

A. Terms you need to know:

- **Gender identity:** a person's self-perception of whether they are male or female, masculine or feminine.

“Gender has always been expressed in different ways. What has changed today is that many now see gender as unattached to sex. That is, you don’t just express gender differently; you can be a different gender. Your sex may be ‘female,’ but that does not necessarily mean that you—as regards your gender—are ‘female.’ Rather than a biological reality, gender has become a psychologized reality.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 34.

- **Gender dysphoria:** when someone experiences distress, inner anguish, or discomfort from sensing a conflict between their gender identity and their biological sex.

“Dysphoria is an experience; it is not necessarily a lens or ‘identity’ through which a person views his or her life.”

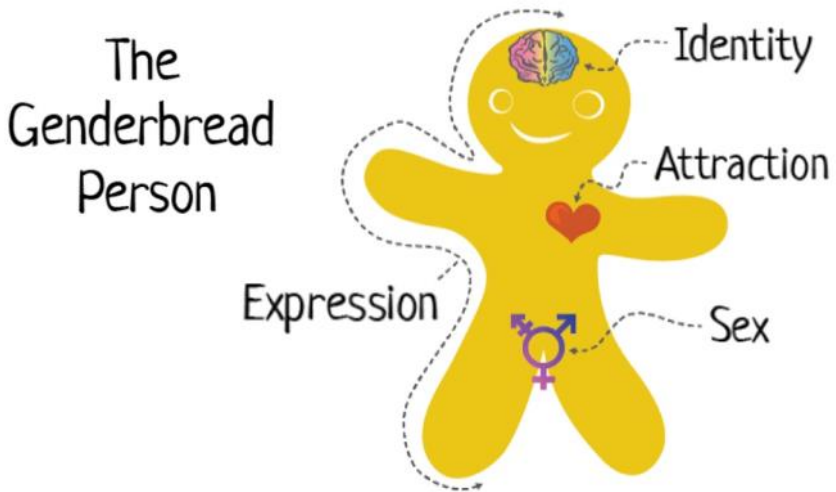
Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 36.

- **Transgender:** the state or condition of identifying or expressing a gender identity that does not match a person’s genetic or biological sex.

B. False claims of gender theory:

- Binary is bad.
- Gender is a spectrum.
- Boy/girl, man/woman are just social constructs.
- Many individuals have a gender identity different from their biological sex.
- Gender theory believes that biology is irrelevant; what we feel is what matters.

C. Genderbread Person (www.genderbread.org)



2. What is a biblical perspective on gender dysphoria?

- A. **God, as creator, is the rightful ruler over His carefully designed creation, and to our Creator we are accountable.** (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 4:13)
- B. **God created male and female and declared it was very good.** (Genesis 1:26-27, 31)

“God’s creation was ‘very good.’ It was not average, and it was not purposeless. God’s act of creating was successful in every part, and it was intentional in every part. The God of the Bible is not a God of chaos or randomness, but order and purpose. And his purpose is brilliant—whether it is trees, or mountains, or stars or atoms or babies’ fingers, creation is full of awe-inspiring sights, sounds, and smells.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 50.

- C. **Jesus affirms the Genesis blueprint of male and female.** (Matthew 19:4-6)
- D. **God creates each person for a uniquely designed purpose.** (Psalm 139:13-14; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Ephesians 2:10)
- E. **Gender dysphoria is not a sin.** (Genesis 3:1-7)

“In the same way, it is a category error to say that gender dysphoria is sinful. Gender dysphoria simply refers to the mental distress that an individual experiences as a result of feeling misalignment between their biological sex and so-called ‘gender identity.’ That distress may or may not have a sinful root cause, but the distress itself is not the main moral concern. No one needs to repent of ‘mental distress’ (although they might have reasons to repent of what has caused the distress.) To desire or embrace misalignment is, however, sinful. The experience of gender dysphoria is a sign that all of our selves are broken by sin, just as the creation around us is.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 76.

F. Choosing to identify as someone other than your God-given sex is sinful. (Genesis 3:1-7)

“It is, then, not experiencing the feeling but deciding to let that feeling rule—to feed that feeling so that it becomes the way you see yourself and the way you identify yourself and the way you act—that is sinful, because it is deciding that your feelings will have authority over you, and will define what is right and what is wrong. It is to act in the same way Adam and Eve did in eating from the tree.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 76.

G. Our battle is not against flesh and blood. Satan is looking to seek and destroy. (1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44, 10:10; Ephesians 6:12)

Summary from CBC’s Position Paper on *Transgender and Gender Dysphoria*:

“We believe that gender ideology today downplays the significance of our bodies, stating that our subjective feelings take precedence over God's design—that our inner self can overrule the physical reality of our own bodies. This division defies the teaching of Scripture which testifies to the fact that God created us as a whole—the material part of us *and* the immaterial part of us (what we often speak of as our heart, spirit, mind...). We believe that no individual can change the sex that God made them. And we believe that this understanding is consistent with God's revelation through His Word and through His creation (who we are biologically).”

3. How do we relate to those who identify as transgender?

A. With compassion. (Matthew 9:36)

“Compassion does not mean approval. But neither does compassion mean silence. Compassion says, ‘I’m so sorry you are experiencing deep inner anguish about your gender. I cannot fathom the types of struggles you experience, but I would like to listen to you and I would like to be here for you. I’m sorry for any hurt or rejections you’ve encountered from others. I want you to know that I am your friend and will walk with you through the valleys of your struggles. I want you to know that I may not agree with you, but I will never look down on you. You are loved.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 109.

B. With grace and truth. (John 1:14, 17)

“Grace tells me I am still loved, and so are you...Grace says there is no one outside the reach of God, including you and including me.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 138.

“If Christians have anything to offer in this contentious age, it is truth, and we should not shy away from that truth.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 136.

“Love does not mean looking someone in the eyes and affirming every desire they experience. Love means looking someone in the eyes and communicating the truth of scripture. We are to do so gently, but we are to do so nonetheless.”

Andrew T. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, The Good Book Company, Epsom, United Kingdom, 2022, p. 106.

4. Should we use someone's preferred name or pronoun?

- A. The goal is to love your neighbor while not sending the message that you approve or condone of them identifying as a transgender. (Matthew 22:39; Romans 1:32)
- B. Allow the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to guide you through the complexities of situations and relationships. (Hebrews 4:12; John 14:16-17, 16:7)
- C. Seek the advice and counsel of mature believers. (Proverbs 11:14, 12:15, 15:22)
- D. Questions you need to ask as you try to discern God's leading:
- What does grace and truth look like in this situation or relationship? (John 8:1-11)
 - Am I more concerned with seeking the approval of God or man? (Galatians 1:10)
 - What will it look like to speak the truth in love? (Ephesians 4:15)
 - Am I willing to count the cost of following Jesus? Am I willing to be rejected? (Luke 14:25-33)

Resources:

- *God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say About Gender Identity?* by Andrew T. Walker
- *Gender Ideology: What do Christians Need to Know?* by Sharon James
- CBC's Position Paper on *Transgender and Gender Dysphoria*