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# MIND YOUR FAITH MAGAZINE



A Biblical  
Perspective  
on  
Transgender  
Issues

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express deep humility in the undertaking of this special issue. There are two things I know to be true: that transgender issues are much more complex than most admit, and that God has given mankind sufficient information through His word to firmly understand and promote what is right. I hope, through this article, 1- to urge Christians who have long stood opposed to the transgender tide to respectfully consider the other side with the humility and attitude Jesus would want. 2- to urge transgender allies to carefully ponder the Biblical presentation and the relationship between gender issues and the Gospel itself. I acknowledge that there are self-identified Transgender Christians. I wish to communicate to you my neighborly love, my encouragement to do God's will, and my heartfelt desire to help you combat the struggles you face from the Satan and from his malevolent influence. I believe you when you say you have struggles and conflicts. I believe you when you say you have been mistreated. It is my desire to stem the tide of ungodly hatred toward you by pointing to the love and humility of Christ. I ask of you, then, the patience to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ from a fresh perspective. I believe that transgender advocacy is incompatible with a complete view of the gospel. I believe souls are at stake. If it were not so, I would not fight for you so vigorously.

There are three avenues which we can use to approach transgender discussions. They are not completely separated from each other, but are worth their own presentations. We may take a philosophical approach. This approach targets the Locke-esque fallacies of perception of reality verses the substance of reality. How much control does the mind have over reality? How far are our feelings allowed to control other people? Is there a standard of truth, or is it relative? The second approach (not far removed from the first) is Biblical. We can open scripture and observe what the Christian whole-heartedly believes is God's mind. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" John 8:32. This verse affirms that truth can be known, is centered upon core reality, and has power to direct us. The Biblical approach has been sorely misrepresented as of late. There has been favor for pet passages and proof-texts rather than principles and themes. The third approach is medical. Since transgender issues concern the chemicals of the mind verses the construction of the body, the medical community has been hard at work looking for answers. We shall typically find validation for whichever side we have already chosen. None-the-less, it is good to discuss the medical concerns insofar as biology and chemistry impact the transgender discussion. As we should expect from the title of this issue, the second approach, the Biblical outlook, shall be our avenue of discussion. If any have any concerns, updated information, or alternative perspectives, all are welcome to contact us through our [Moyerpress.com](http://Moyerpress.com) parent sight.

Sincerely, Luke Moyer



**W**hat do you think when you hear the term “transgender?” For years, the concept was textbook taboo. This hesitation to discuss gender identity still pervades the American church. Many Christians don’t want to stir up trouble. Many others don’t know what to think or say. Three options are pushed: acceptance, silence, or quarrels. Are those the only choices? There have been severe misunderstandings both in the church and in culture because ‘transgender-ism’ is not seriously approached from a Biblical standpoint.

Since our culture has been at a loss for kind words, many transgender individuals have been horribly mistreated. From surveys in 2011, 41% of transgender identifiers considered or attempted suicide due to pressures<sup>1</sup>, and 19% of identifiers reported physical abuse<sup>2</sup>. These kinds of abuses are because we, as a culture, have not employed the proper approach to interacting with those who struggle with their gender. I doubt I exaggerate when I say that the average Christian has not seriously considered the issue prior to this last decade. It becomes increasingly difficult to have rational, scriptural, discussions.

This is a growing issue. Even a year ago, estimates show nearly 1.4 million Americans<sup>3</sup> (0.6% population) identify as transgender, which is double the number previously assessed in 2011. Given the climate and dominance of the LGBT(+) civil movement, we can expect these numbers to increase exponentially.

We cannot ignore the issues of gender identity. We must have a solid scriptural foundation on all moral matters. If gender roles are moral, then scripture can inform us. As it happens, there is much we can learn about gender issues from a Christ-centered worldview. We should also show proper decency toward those who believe and think differently. No matter what our thoughts toward a subject, we must always “Give every consideration to all people” (Titus 3:2).



There are three necessary concessions both parties must make at the outset of such a discussion.

First, we must acknowledge our positions to the other party. I shall, then, begin by saying that I believe in the ‘traditional’ model of gender: God places genders into the bodies (or perhaps they are one and the same) and expects individuals to behave within the role of their body. I wish to be respectful, courteous,

and kind in how I oppose transgender advocacy.

Second, both parties must concede that both viewpoints have arrived at their position through three criteria: 1- Our perception of reality 2- Thoughtful reasoning 3- Emotions regarding personal experiences. These are the three foundations for all positions. We all think about the world a certain way based on what we perceive through our senses and thoughts. We then take those perceptions and reason with them as best we can. Lastly, we apply our reasons alongside emotions garnered from our personal experiences.

Combining these two concessions produces the third: both parties must admit they might be wrong about their view. Both must admit that 1- Our perception of reality MIGHT be misinformed 2- Our reasoning process MIGHT be flawed, and 3- Our emotional experience MIGHT have biased us against the truth. If we do not admit these concessions then no rational discussion can ensue.

Our goal is to be correct and consistent in our conclusions. I believe it is possible to arrive at the correct conclusion. But we must apply humility in order to objectively evaluate our own position. It is to this end that we have any discussion. We shall begin with as comprehensive a consideration as we can toward the transgender viewpoint. Our goal is to acknowledge what transgender individuals say. Then we shall then look at how the gospel interacts with this model and answer those concerns.



# Misunderstandings about ‘Transgender[ism]’

In order to understand ‘transgender[ism]’, we must look to the core of their argument. First, we must distinguish between transgender individuals and the political or civil movement most people see. The movement of transgender-ism is highlighted in news for political gain. However, few of the persons being discussed are part of politics. Most transgender people simply want peace harmonized with respect, and quiet synchronized with fairness. It is valuable, therefore, to consider the transgender argument on a personal level. For the sake of time, we are forced to consider generic arguments, but recognize a diversity among transgender motivations and beliefs. I seek to do the best I can to represent the majority, without fun-

neling individuals into preset boxes. Again, these are not my views. I cannot speak them first hand. The goal is always to speak with individuals and to know people rather than movements or political parties.

While the “LGB” (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual) ‘movement’ began in the 80s, the term “Transgender” wasn’t added until the 90s. More recent additions express various levels of a non-binary or non-gender identity. This means that the proponents of the LGB+ political movement connect transgender issues with homosexuality. There is some political and social connection between the two. However, if we assume that all the arguments concerning homosexuality will automatically cover transgender issues, then we will be surprised when we confront their actual beliefs. We need to first address the DIFFERENCES between homosexuality and transgender identity:

Transgender identity, at its core, **is not about sex.** While homosexuality is rooted in physical attraction and lustful actions or feelings towards the same gender (sexual orientation), transgender (gender orientation) proponents do not necessarily think about sex at all. “Gender identity and transgender are different from sexual identity and lesbian, gay and bisexual. Sexual identity is about who you are attracted to; gender identity is about how you identify as male or female.”<sup>4</sup> Transgender individuals are not basing their convictions on things like sexual attraction or marriage. The issue goes further than sex; it’s about identity.

Transgender identity **is not about ‘crossdressing.’** While proponents still admit that wearing clothes of their “inner” gender frees, empowers, and expresses them, it’s not really about the clothes. To them, it’s about freedom to express who they are, in whatever way fits their personality. You don’t know a transgender person by what they wear. From a Biblical standpoint, it’s worth noting that clothing is not the real

*thinkprogress.org/the-american-transgender-population-is-larger-than-we-thought-it-was-ab83126f33a*  
**1.4 Million**

47% 19%

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either. The scriptures never indicate *which* clothes are gender specific beyond what the culture already recognized. Clothing styles change constantly, and Christians cannot make doctrinal arguments about what God has left up to culture to decide. I would guess that a high percentage of Christian women today are currently wearing what would have been deemed scandalous just two hundred years ago. Modesty, nakedness, and appropriateness have their own Biblical arguments. Those do not concern the core of the transgender issue.

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They wish to have the freedom to act in whatever way they feel best expresses themselves. A transgender person could still dress, act, and behave as their bodily gender, but still identify inwardly as another gender. We are not first targeting outward appearance; this is a conversation for the mind and the heart.

their  
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stem from philosophy concerning perception and reality, their minds are no less capable than anyone else's. We may not agree. But we cannot ignore their claims. They feel that their body and their true self have been misaligned. Rather than push away reasonable discussion because we simply haven't experienced the issue, we should carefully hear them out. Only by understanding their arguments can we reason together (and vice-versa, I would add).

Transgender identity **is not about 'tomboys' and 'nancies.'** The point is not that a person has emotional tendencies towards one gender or another. In fact, many transgender individuals request that we remove all such stigmas to begin with. Some men identify as men and still maintain qualities that culture deems feminine. Some women identify as women while having culture defined 'manly' characteristics. These are not transgender individuals. Transgender advocates claim that it's about what they feel on the inside that

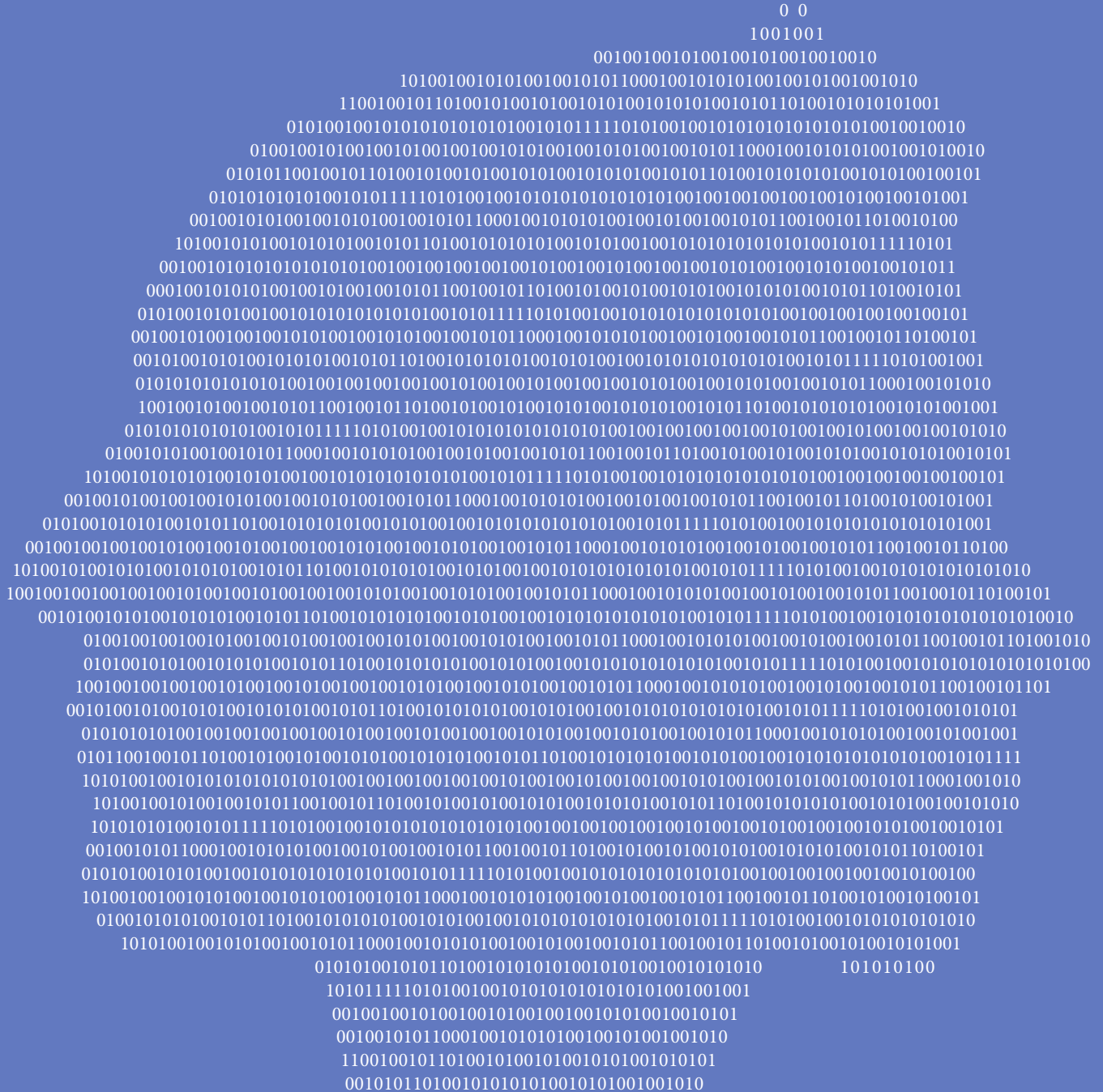
### The Struggle is Real

While the number of transgender identifiers is rapidly growing, we have every reason to believe they shall always remain in the minority. Most people simply do not know what a crisis in gender identity feels like. I, personally, do not know what this feels like. My initial reaction was to write off the issue as fantasy, laziness, or insanity (precisely the cultural approach pre- mid 20th century). As I began to talk to and read from advocates and transgender individuals, I learned that this is a real concern for them. Transgender individuals have scholarly and medical degrees, skillful hands, and rational minds. While the premises of

What are the claims? **First**, in their own words: "Transgender, or Trans: means someone whose gender differs from the one they were given when they were born."<sup>5</sup> or "A transgender person...is someone whose sex assigned at birth is different from who they know they are on the inside."<sup>6</sup> Expressions like "My identity is not about my genitals" is


4 (Expired) Now see: [belongto.org/youngpeople/advice/transgender-info/](http://belongto.org/youngpeople/advice/transgender-info/)

5 (Expired) Now see: [belongto.org/youngpeople/advice/transgender-info/](http://belongto.org/youngpeople/advice/transgender-info/)



6 [hrc.org/resources/reporting-about-transgender-people-read-this](http://hrc.org/resources/reporting-about-transgender-people-read-this)

7 [wqad.com/2017/07/05/baby-in-canada-may-be-worlds-first-person-to-have-no-gender-assignment/](http://wqad.com/2017/07/05/baby-in-canada-may-be-worlds-first-person-to-have-no-gender-assignment/)



becoming the norm. They see a person's identity extending physicality. I agree that a person is more than their body. Our discussions should, then, consider the purpose and design of the human body and how it corresponds to our true identity.

**Second**, transgender individuals resent culture for forcing its definitions of gender onto persons. "I am not going to foreclose their choices based on an arbitrary assignment of gender at birth based on an inspection of their genitals"<sup>7</sup> says a transgender parent who desires for their child to remain genderless until they self-determine. In their perspective, it is culture who has forced people into boxes based on their physical appearance. Do the physical, bodily, differences come from culture, or another source? Our discussions must include this field.

**Third**, they claim that true identity is about the mind, heart, and freedom to express. Each of these areas are independent metrics for our gender. How a person thinks can, in this view, establish gender. How a person feels can determine gender. How a person looks and talks should be granted to them also, they say. If someone identifies their mind and heart as a gender contrary to their bodily sex, then they wish for the freedom to unite their whole being under a single gender. Transgender individuals feel they are oppressed, not only by their culture, but by their bodies. They want to be themselves. They feel restricted. Ident-

ty is important for every human. Without it we have no confidence in our purpose. Without knowing who we are we have no motivation to act. I believe one of the strengths of the gospel is the way it provides every human with an identity. I believe that a firm understanding of this resolves the transgender crisis. Jesus allows all of us to be redefined. Our discussions ought to include where identity is found, and how it should be applied.

**Fourth**, many transgender individuals affirm "this is not a choice." Their premise is that the internal defines identity. If the internal IS (in their perception of reality) a certain gender, then to deny the 'real' inner gender is denying reality. We cannot fault those who have no choice. This has, for many, become a lifelong struggle. Many have confessed they would change their feelings if they could. It is due to this helpless, uncontrollable feeling that many transgender individuals give up.

We may not have a choice over our struggles, our temptations, our 'feelings.' But we do have choice over our role and our outlook. While 'feelings' may be pushed upon us by our bodies, fleshly nature, or Satan himself, we are not forced to obey our feelings. I can acknowledge the transgender feeling (though never experiencing it myself). But there are many other feelings that I, as a Christian, am required by the gospel to reject and put in submission. Our discussion must include what

should be done with the elements of our lives which are under our control.

This article is not dealing with the philosophical premises about perception of reality. It intends to address the transgender viewpoint as it is presented. Can we engage in thoughtful, reasoned disagreement? It is the goal of both pro- and anti-transgender to be calm, reasonable, and attentive. It is difficult to be calm when hearing a view that is contrary to our convictions. But we must at least understand what the arguments are. Opponents of 'transgenderism' must recognize that transgender individuals have been grasping and maneuvering these issues for quite some time. Just because we disagree and have not experienced these feelings does not mean that others are not struggling. Just because someone thinks differently doesn't make them delusional. Some persons, to be sure, take easy and lazy paths following rash compulsions; that does not represent every individual.

Likewise, proponents for transgender identity must not assume that 'traditional' minded individuals are hateful, illogical deniers. Just because some 'christians' have behaved in hateful and unreasonable ways does not mean God has failed to provide loving guidance on the matter. The following presentation seeks to provide a Biblical foundation as a rebuttal for the purpose, choice, and identity of gender.

## Biblical Response

With the rapid growth of the transgender political movement, social awareness, and personal acceptance, Christians should not put up walls and barriers based on personal comfort. Just because the subject may be awkward or taboo, we ought not decline scriptural discussions about it. Doing so alienates many from the truth. Instead, we should go to the scriptures and reason from them. "Reasoning" implies taking a series of statements, supporting them with evidence, and forming an argument to support a conclusion. Studying transgender issues from the scriptures is more than going to your favorite Bible search bar and typing in "trans". We will come woefully short. Neither can we group transgender with homosexuality and effeminacy. So what do we do? Let's start by going to the author and master teacher Himself.

Jesus, as the perfect teacher and

model, provides brilliant answers to many of the moral dilemmas thrown at Him. As our pattern, I wish to note Jesus' response concerning divorce in Mathew 19 and Mark 10. When asked about divorce, Jesus had a host of passages he might have used (Malachi 2:16 not the least among them). Yet, He says "From the beginning it was not so." To Jesus, "from the beginning" was a sufficient scriptural argument to define the human ethics of male and female purpose and interaction. He says "from the beginning of creation He made them Male and Female." To Jesus, this principle, "from the beginning" is the basis for gender origin, purpose (1 Corinthians 11), bodily use (1 Corinthians 6), role (1 Timothy 2), and interaction (Ephesians 5).

### **God is Creator.**

Every person who is a 'believer' believes that God made everything (Genesis 1:1). Without Him, "nothing which exists came into being."

(John 1:3). This may seem like a given, but is vitally important to both the gospel and to our discussion here. As Creator of this vast, dazzling, and complex universe, there are a few qualities about God we simply cannot ignore. 1- God is all powerful. If God wants to do something He has the power to do it (Jeremiah 32:27). Nothing is going to hold God back or stop Him from accomplishing His goals. 2- God is the Designer. Everything which God has made serves a very specific and well-balanced purpose. Without perfect order, this universe would instantly collapse. We may not understand why certain things are created the way they are, but we can know that if God has created it, it has a function. 3- God has all authority. As the potter, God has a right to expect whatever He desires from the clay. It is not within our right, as creation, to dictate our own purpose or design (Romans 9:20).

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**“Have you not read that He who created from the beginning made them male and female? And for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God joins together, let no man separate.... Because of the hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it has not been this way.” Matthew 19:4–6, 9**

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## **God made male and female**

Of all things God created, he saved the best for last. He chose to duplicate Himself (in limited fashion) in His creation. Therefore, He made humankind in His own image. The image of God, we must note, was fashioned as both male and female. Both male and female genders can represent God equally. In this statement, we are not assigning gender to God. For example, the DNA of both a father and mother are passed on to both their male and female children. A male can share appearance and personality traits of his mother, but this does not make the mother masculine. A female can resemble and act like her father, but this does not make the father feminine. In the same way, male and female traits are expressions of God's qualities rather than our gender reflecting on His (not to mention we are material bodies and He is Spirit). The point we must see is this: both male and female have critical value. God, as the creator and the designer has seen fit to place males and females onto the earth to represent Him. This diversity was the last (and arguably the greatest) thing God ever created.

## **God creates individuals**

God did not just create Adam and Eve and then let creation take over for itself. Humankind does not have the capacity to create life. God alone is the giver of life (Genesis 30:2; Numbers 16:22; Job 33:4; Isaiah 42:5; John 6:63; Acts 17:28; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 11:11). We may plant seeds in the ground but God is the one who causes the growth and the life therein (1 Corinthians 3:7; Ec-

clesiastes 11:5; Romans 4:21). When He makes things, He intentionally designs them. When He made us, He knows who we are and what we shall become (Genesis 49:25; Isaiah 43:1, 7; 44:2; Jeremiah 1:5; Galatians 1:15) God knows every detail about us. He knows our name, our appointed days, and even number of the hairs on our head. He designs each of us from the womb with these things already known. We are not random numbers to Him. He loves each of us individually. He designs each of us individually.

## **God is perfect**

It is impossible for God to make a mistake. Everything God made in the beginning was "good." It was exactly the way He wanted it. By the choices of Adam and Eve (and our choices following) the earth has been corrupted. The evils which have infiltrated this world do not reflect negatively on the perfection of God. Instead, we must see that all authority is still within His hands. God allows for evils to beset people for His own purposes (Job 2:6; John 9:3). We can know that God is in charge of what we ought to be. He does not make mistakes when He forms us. He creates each of us from the womb and places us in the exact place, time, and body He desires. He expects His will to be accomplished in each of us. Questioning this undermines His sovereignty, our amenability to His expressed will, and any application of the gospel.

Since God is the creator, He has a right to make demands on us, not the other way around. Since God

made male and female, we must respect that He had a designed reason to do so. It is not in our authority to challenge His gender assignments. Since God creates individuals, we know that He has created us with very specific intentions. Because God is perfect, we know that we are given the body that He desires. When we claim that we are a disembodied gender, then we claim error from God. Remember the quotation above about Trans identity being "someone whose gender differs from the one they were given when they were born." There is a subtle recognition that our bodies have been granted to us by some other source. While advocates of transgender thinking may complain that culture assigns unfair 'boxes' upon male and female bodies, no believer can argue that culture gives the bodies. It is God and God alone who gives both body and soul. If we are believers in the God of scripture, then we must admit that He created us as we are on purpose.

## **What are we allowed to do with our bodies?**

God has created this world and put it in subjection to humankind (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 8). This gives us the authority to build, create, and change our environment. We have the authority to resist the perversions of nature. This is what medicine attempts to do. But what if our bodies have been perverted by being the wrong gender? Do we not have the authority to change and adapt as best we can to our true gender? While we have authority over many aspects of nature, God does give

limitations about the purpose and use of it. Paul emphatically states in 1 Corinthians 6- “the body is not for immorality but for the Lord... your bodies are members of Christ... you are not your own... therefore glorify God in your body.” This sets the precedent that there is a right and a wrong way to use our bodies.

In 1 Corinthians 6 Paul’s concern was how we use our bodies for sex. While the transgender issue is not about sex, the use of the male and female body must still be derived by the Lord’s own instruction, and not by our wants. Since God has given us the body we have, we must use it to glorify God. Making mends to the body (treatment for sickness etc) honors God’s intention for life. Making changes to the purpose of the body which God has given us rejects His wisdom and intentions. Also, within Paul’s scathing remarks about sexual misuse in Romans 1:26ff, the issue boils down to leaving ‘natural’ order. Each gender, as designated by the body, must submit to the Creator’s ordained (natural) role and function. Our medical changes may only assist us to accomplish that purpose. In other words, God expected homosexuals to align themselves to the natural order which He had created “from the beginning.” They rejected the bodies God gave and lust after oth-

er bodies. While, again, transgender identity is not about sex, God has still placed order to the nature He has created, especially as it concerns male and female bodies.

Perversions of nature like sickness, death, tragedy, etc. were not part of God’s perfect creation. He has given mankind the authority to organize, utilize, and correct nature. But the soul is not part of nature. The spirit is not found within our domain. It is not within our authority to change God’s purpose for our souls. If transgender identity is about the deeper identity of our souls, then we need to respect where God has placed them. Since God alone forms our bodies and gives us our souls, nature cannot pervert the process of matching soul to body. We may be born with disease, struggles, and temptations, but God alone delivers us into our bodies. God alone has the right to tell us what the intentions of our bodies are.

## Gender Roles:

One of the big pushes from transgender advocates concerns the ‘arbitrary’ rules that culture assigns to men and women. When culture assigns identity based on subjective values, then they have a point to make. However, from scripture we

see that culture does not and cannot create life, gender, nor dictate intentions for our life and gender. God assigns us our bodies, and He makes no mistakes. I believe that part of the transgender argument misunderstands God’s assigned roles just as sorely as they claim culture misunderstands them. Understanding gender roles from scripture shall increase our appreciation for God’s intention in placing each of us as we are.

## Equality

We must stress, first off, that God has not created disparity in value among men and women. Equality, from a scripture standpoint regards our conformity to Godliness, our independence, and our final reward. We find that in all three cases God has made male and female with true equality. Both Men and Women can be like God. The standards of righteousness are the same for both. God does not demand more of one or another, nor does He allow greater capacity for godliness to either male or female. He has also, in His wisdom, made sure that we cannot be independent of each other (1 Corinthians 11:11). While we can live individual lives without the other gender, as a species we can only exist through each other. God gave this balance to nature in order show us that neither is more important

**Man does not originate from woman, but woman from man. However, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor is man independent from the woman. Does not nature itself teach you? 1Corinthians 11:8,11,14**

# God made it evident since the creation of the world. His invisible attributes , His eternal power, and His divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made. Romans 1:19, 20

than the other. Finally, God makes no separation as to our final reward. In the Lord there is neither male nor female, we are co-heirs of eternal life (Galatians 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7).

While transgender believers probably acknowledge Biblical equality, I would challenge the notion that gender somehow adds or detracts from our worth. A Transgender feels that they are less of a person because their body and their soul is out of alignment. This is placing worth on gender where God does not. In the Lord there is no male or female, meaning you are not closer to perfection because you identify as a male or female or if you reassign yourself to what you feel. If you feel you are in the wrong body, know that God has given you equality to the point where your eternal salvation does not depend on which gender you are. You can exist in your current state and have equal opportunity to come to God. How you go about honoring the gender assignment God has given you, however, will impact your ability to glorify God. You cannot approach God on your terms. You must use His terms, and His assignments.

## **Submission**

Submission is a dirty word in our culture. Nobody likes to talk about

it. This is because some have a stilted view of Biblical submission. Biblical submission does not mean inferiority (see above on equality). God has demanded that males and females submit to each other (Ephesians 5:21). Our gender does not determine our worth, but our gender does determine our role and duty. How are men and women to submit to each other? Men submit to women (Husbands to wives in Ephesians 5) by loving and sacrificing self. Men are assigned the role of crucifying selfish desires so that women can have what they need to be pure and perfect. To accomplish this, men are given the words of scripture to teach and convey. It is his duty to lead and make decisions which shall result in the building up of the woman, the church, and the image of God. Women submit to men (wives to husbands in Ephesians 5) by respecting the man's decisions and trying to follow them wherein God's truth allows. Women are in no position to disobey God on account of the man. But when she honors the man's decisions (particularly within the marriage and within the spiritual context) she builds up the man, the church, and the image of God.

## **Role**

Adopting transgender identity will necessarily impact the roles God

assigns. If God has assigned a person with a male body, then the expectation is that they accomplish a man's role. The transgender individual calls to question God's roles for their own body. For a quick case in point, consider the roles in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14. In Corinth there were female bodies who found that God's spirit called them to do things which might normally be done by the man. What was God's answer to that quandary? It was not to change their gender, nor claim the identity of the other gender. If transgender is a legitimate path in God's eyes, then it would have been much easier for Paul to tell the Corinthian women with the Holy Spirit of prophecy to identify as a man, thereby nullifying all gender role disputes. Instead, Paul says that the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet, and must be brought into alignment with God's pre-assigned gender role. Would Paul have allowed the prophetess to simply identify as a man? Not based on that discussion. It is clear in 1 Corinthians 11 that the roles were connected with their created bodies. We must take care to maintain the roles which God has given by His own creation. Some may feel that they relate to or identify as another gender, but this does not alleviate God's expectation for our bodies and the roles they play.

# The Example of Our Lord

There is no higher appeal than the example of the Lord Jesus. He left us all the perfect model to follow. Jesus' example can inform our identity, role, and purpose. If anyone had claim to being disembodied from their true identity, it was Jesus. Think about it; He was God living in a human body. No gender crisis comes close to what Jesus would have felt every waking second of being the eternal, infinite creator dwelling in a material, finite, and problem filled body. "Therefore He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest... for we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15). I, Luke Moyer, may not have a clue what a transgender really feels, but I know for certain that Jesus does. Because He lived in a foreign body, He can give the pattern to follow. The question is, what did Jesus do with His situation?

We find that Jesus submitted fully to God's plans (John 8:28). He did not treat His body as foreign, but accepted that it was necessary to accomplish God's will. He did not try to resist the body the Father made for Him. His identity was very unique, being the one and only son of God. This is starkly different from our situation as creation. Yet Jesus still accepted His identity as human. He didn't try to leave behind His role as human or change His body to become more divine. Instead, he endured the trials of humanity because He loved the Father. In the end, He was called upon to endure the most identity challenging experience any being has ever gone through: taking on Himself the sins of the world.

Nothing could be so inverse and unnatural as the only Holy God of the universe taking sin upon Himself. Jesus' flesh did not want to do this. He prayed for a way out. It would have been quite convenient to identify as God rather than man in this moment. It would have been preserving and fulfilling to transition so that He wouldn't need to fulfill the role of human. Instead, Jesus chose to remain in His fleshly body as it was and endure death itself.

What can trans identifiers learn from Jesus? That nobody had more reason to adapt to internal identity than Jesus. That God has purposes in mind for us that often entail us remaining in the state we are placed in. That we must submit our wills to God's. Every human will face the desires of the flesh: the struggle that the body has in disparity with the mind. Sometimes this will look like sexual lusts, sometimes apathy, sometimes anger or abuse, sometimes anxiety or crisis. For each struggle in which we find ourselves, we must remember that lust is always going to be at odds with the spirit (Galatians 5:17). It is our calling to apply self control. From a Biblical standpoint, both the body and spirit must be brought into alignment with His will. We must not let perversions control us. Jesus' body was changed upon resurrection. He goes to great lengths to show His disciples that it was still a body, and that it was still the same body. It was different, however. The flesh and blood portion of it had been 'transitioned' to a spiritual state. Jesus gives us the promise that He will do the same for our bodies (1 Corinthians 15:50ff; 1 John 3:2).

If a transgender person feels that

their bodies are corrupted or misplaced, are they willing to let the creator Himself change them at the resurrection? The promise of resurrection is for those who honor His will in their lives. This takes patience and suffering. But the final reward will always be greater than what we forgo in this body (Mark 10:28ff). As a note to transgender opponents, no good comes from telling a persecuted mind to simply "stop feeling persecuted!" We must first establish the grounds of scriptural reality. We then must deal with people as they are, helping them see how they can bring their own lives into conformity with God's expectations. For some, the struggle may pass. For others, the persecution of gender crisis may continue every day of their lives. My concern is not to rid people of struggles, but to assist their burden as they walk in a manner worthy of the gospel. How can a person conflicted with gender dysphoria possibly be expected to continually live in struggle between body and mind? By focusing on true identity.

## Where is our identity found?

When Jesus Himself was challenged to give in to the temptations of the flesh, where did He find His ultimate answer? In Matthew 4, the challenge was on His identity as the Son of God. Jesus, each time, proves that He is the Son of God, and because He is the Son of God He will not be driven by fleshly temptations. If we are to avoid evil, temptation, and the perversions of the flesh, then we, too, must call upon our true identity. Our true Identity is not found in male or female at all,



but rather in the Lord Himself! “The Children of God do not sin” (1 John 3). In this statement John is compelling us to consider our identity as children of God in order to combat the flesh. Paul says that identifying ourselves by human standards will profit nothing. We are identified by our crucified Savior (Galatians 2:20). Peter tells us that if we are to suffer, it should be for our identity as Christians (1 Peter 4).

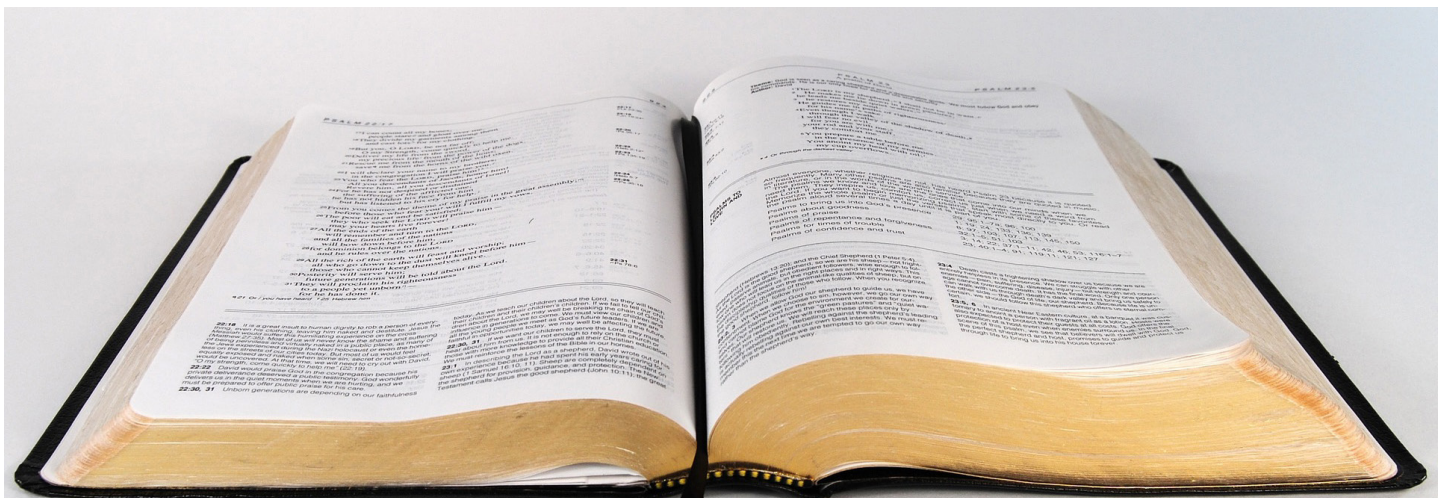
We do not wish to downplay the suffering which transgender individuals feel. We simply wish to place it within a Biblical perspective. Our identity is not found through our gender; it is found through the name of Jesus. We are called by His name (Acts 15:17; Ephesians 3:15). When we are ‘in the Lord’ it shouldn’t matter to us if we are male or female (Galatians 3:26-28). The core of the transgender argument is about identity. But if our identity is about male and female, then we have missed the point of being human. The point of being human is to be identified by Christ. In Him we have fulfillment, completion, and perfection. Our bodies and our spirits are going to be at odds with one another. That’s not a transgender issue; it’s a hu-

man issue. God is the creator and the author of nature. He has created male and female with meticulous precision. He has created and formed each of us from the womb to be exactly the way He wants so that we can glorify Him. He is perfect and cannot make a mistake. He has allowed humans to manipulate creation, but has not authorized us to manipulate our assignments. He has assigned each soul with a body. He has assigned each body with a gender. He has assigned each gender with a role. Our duty is to deny self desires and submit to God’s will.

So what choice do we have? Our appeal to transgender individuals and those who struggle with internal gender identity is not about conforming to social standards or denying purpose and identity. The Biblical appeal is to choose to serve your God and Savior within the role He has placed you. God has provided each of us a body and expects us to choose service over selfishness. God has given each of us a purpose and expects us to choose HIS purposes of godly living, holiness, and love. God has provided each of us with an identity beyond ourselves and expects us to choose Jesus as our pri-

mary definition. If we choose God and His work, then we may please Him even if we struggle with the disparity between flesh and spirit.

Denying God’s created order denies His wisdom. Denying God’s intended roles is pride and rebellion. Do we really know better than God? Let each of us, with whatever internal struggle we face, find our greatest identity in Jesus Himself. In Him, gender does not impact value or worth. Let us be content to pursue the work that God has given to each of us (1 Corinthians 7:20; 12:4-30; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 4:10). Let us continually look to Jesus as the great example and guardian of our souls, and follow after His footsteps in selflessness, love, and obedience. If your gender assignment causes you to suffer, know that if you do it the Lord’s way: “After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.” (1 Peter 5:10) ■



## References (taken from 2017):

1 and 2 - [www.marieclaire.com/culture/g3065/transgender-facts-figures](http://www.marieclaire.com/culture/g3065/transgender-facts-figures)

3- [thinkprogress.org/the-american-transgender-population-is-larger-than-we-thought-it-was-ab83126f33a](http://thinkprogress.org/the-american-transgender-population-is-larger-than-we-thought-it-was-ab83126f33a)

4 - <http://www.belongto.org/group.aspx?contentid=2918> page expired. Now see: <http://belongto.org/youngpeople/advice/transgender-info/>

5- [www.belongto.org/group.aspx?contentid=2918](http://www.belongto.org/group.aspx?contentid=2918) page expired. Now see: [belongto.org/young-people/advice/transgender-info/](http://belongto.org/young-people/advice/transgender-info/)

6- [www.hrc.org/resources/reporting-about-transgender-people-read-this](http://www.hrc.org/resources/reporting-about-transgender-people-read-this)

7- [wqad.com/2017/07/05/baby-in-canada-may-be-worlds-first-person-to-have-no-gender-assignment/](http://wqad.com/2017/07/05/baby-in-canada-may-be-worlds-first-person-to-have-no-gender-assignment/)

## For further Trans advocate reading:

<https://www.glaad.org/transgender/transfaq>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/transgender>

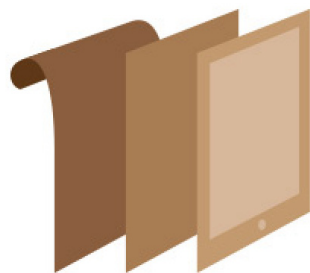
<http://www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/transgender.aspx>

<https://www.hrc.org/explore/topic/transgender>

<https://transequality.org/issues/resources/frequently-asked-questions-about-transgender-people>



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