

GENDER STEWARDSHIP

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

Transgenderism

Transgenderism is the manipulation of biological birth gender - the decision of a male or female to make a change from their birth gender to the opposite sex. On May 13, 2016, a federal directive was given to public schools in the US to allow students to use whichever restroom or locker aligned with their chosen gender change. In July, 2016, the ban on transgender military personnel was repealed. A Rand Corp. study, commissioned by the Pentagon, indicated that there are currently well over 2,500 transgender people in the military. On Aug. 29, 2017, Defense Secretary James Mattis announced a panel will be established to provide advice on how to handle the controversial transgender military personnel issue.

Abnormality of Gender Change

Statistically, a very, very small minority struggle with their gender identity known as "Gender Dysphoria" or "Gender Identity Disorder" (GID). There is no evidence that this disorder, as well as same-sex attraction, have genetic components. People are not born with GID. Actually, it is impossible to change one's birth gender. Even gender surgery is only cosmetic; hormones will have to be taken for the rest of one's life. In some cases, gender change has gone to the extreme of *Felisgenderism*, the inherent feeling of being a cat.

Biblical Views about Gender

God created human beings male and female. (Gen. 1:27) Not only did He create distinct genders, the creation process of each was different. Genesis 2:7 states that He formed man from the dust of the "ground" (Hebrew "ha-a-dam", most likely a reddish clay). Adam was named after the ground from which he came. Eve was created differently from the rib of Adam. (Gen. 2:21-22) As their genders, so their roles were also different. Man was entrusted to be the major provider, protector and preserver and woman his "helper" in those functions. (Gen. 2:18) Men and women are different. Thank God! Solidified in the pleasant bond of love, a husband and a wife complement each other in a beautiful fulfilling way. A woman is not independent of man, nor is a man independent of woman. For as a woman came from a man, so a man is born of a woman.



Gender Stewardship

Christian stewardship essentially involves the management of life according to God's will. It includes sexual stewardship. In their state of perfection Adam and Eve felt no sexual shame. (Gen. 2:25) When they sinned, their perfect life was disrupted and their sinful nature perpetuated. Sin invades the nooks and crannies of human lives every day in many forms, including gender identity. Gender bending is not something new. Deuteronomy 22:5 opposes "Androgyny" (gender ambiguity): "*A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor a man women's clothing, for the Lord, your God, detests anyone who does this.*" 1 Cor. 11:11-16 also encourages mores regarding manliness and womanliness. As sexual stewards, Christians should delightfully celebrate their God created biological sex gender according to His guidelines for human sexuality.

Solutions for Gender Dysphoria

Those, who suffer with the feeling their gender is different from their anatomical sex, need compassionate spiritual care to help overcome the disorder. Spiritual therapy begins with the awareness that the Scriptures are the very words of God given in love for mankind's good. Repentance and the reception of God's Gospel forgiving love produce an empowering love for God in the battle to overcome whatever sin. It would be wrong for us to turn away in disgust from anyone struggling with Gender Dysphoria. God loves sinners without approving their sins. So should we. The Church has the responsibility of lovingly sharing God's Law/Gospel message to our terribly confused culture. Christianity emerged in a Roman world far more debauched than ours today. God's Law, relentlessly pointing out sin, and Christ's Gospel, lovingly declaring forgiveness, transformed the Roman world and can do so again today. Currently, Dr. Gregory Seltz, former Lutheran Hour speaker, directs the LCMS Lutheran Center, Washington, DC regarding issues such as transgenderism, same sex marriage, abortion, religious liberty and conscience.

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