

GENDER IDENTITY

A seminar and discussion
with Pastor Jonathan Holmes
about gender identity
and its relationship to
Christian hope and charity.



PARKSIDE
CHURCH

Identity, Hope & *Charity*

November 10, 2017

Introduction:

Current, cultural milieu:

- **Caitlyn (Bruce) Jenner:** I've tried to explain it this way: God is looking down making little Bruce...And then at the end, when he is just finishing, he says, "Wait a second; we've got to give him something. Everyone has stuff in their life they have to deal with. What are we going to give him? Let's give him the soul of a female, and let's see how he deals with that." So here I am: _____.¹
 - *I'm so happy, after such a long struggle, to be living my true self.*
- **Chaz (Chastity) Bono**²: There's a gender in your brain and a gender in your body. For 99% of people those things are in alignment. For transgender people, they're mismatched. That's all it is. It's not complicated, it's not a neurosis. It's a mix-up. It's a _____, like a cleft palate.
- Facebook currently has _____ options for gender identity³

¹ <http://abc.go.com/shows/2020/episode-guide/2015-04/24-bruce-jenner-the-interview>.

² Cintra Wilson, "The Reluctant Transgender Role Model", *New York Times*, May 6, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/08/fashion/08CHAZ.html>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/facebook/10930654/Facebooks-71-gender-options-come-to-UK-users.html> [Agender, Androgyne, Androgynes, Androgynous, Bigender, Cis, Cis Female, Cis Male, Cis Man, Cis Woman, Cisgender, Cisgender Female, Cisgender Male, Cisgender Man, Cisgender Woman, Female to Male, FTM, Gender Fluid, Gender Nonconforming, Gender Questioning, Gender Variant, Genderqueer, Intersex, Male to Female, MTF, Neither, Neutrois, Non-binary, Other, Pangender, Trans, Trans Female, Trans Male, Trans Man, Trans Person, Trans*Female, Trans*Male, Trans*Man, Trans*Person, Trans*Woman, Transexual, Transexual Female, Transexual Male, Transexual Man, Transexual Person, Transexual Woman, Transgender Female, Transgender Person, Transmasculine, Two-spirit]

- Mt. Holyoke Admissions Policy
 - Mount Holyoke College’s policy on the admission of transgender students states that it welcomes applications for its undergraduate program from any qualified student who is female or identifies as a woman. Can you clarify “who is female or identifies as a woman”?⁴
 - The following academically qualified students can apply for admission consideration:
 - Biologically born female; identifies as a woman
 - Biologically born female; identifies as a man
 - Biologically born female; identifies as other/they/ze
 - Biologically born female; does not identify as either woman or man
 - Biologically born male; identifies as woman
 - Biologically born male; identifies as other/they/ze and when “other/they” identity includes woman
 - Biologically born with both male and female anatomy (Intersex); identifies as a woman
 - The following academically qualified students cannot apply for admission consideration:
 - Biologically born male; identifies as man

Definitions & Terminology:

- Understanding the lingo:
 - _____: male or female according to chromosomes, external/internal physiology (anatomy)
 - _____: the psychological, social, and cultural manifestations of maleness and femaleness (masculinity and femininity)
 - _____: how a person perceives or experiences themselves as male/female (how they understand themselves)
 - _____: someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth

⁴ <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/policies/admission-transgender-students#q2>.

- _____: the experience of incongruence between one's biological sex and gender identity⁵
 - **Dr. Colin Ross**⁶: Gender identity disorder is unique among all DSM-IV-TR diagnoses. It is the only disorder in which treatment is designed to _____, reinforce, and validate the belief that is the basis of the mental disorder.
 - **Dr. Colin Ross**⁷: If a woman told a psychiatrist that she was a gorilla, this would be classified as a 'bizarre delusion' according to the text for schizophrenia. If she said she was the last Neanderthal left on earth, this also would be a bizarre delusion. But if she tells him she is a man trapped in a female body, the psychiatrist agrees to have her body fixed.
- _____: broad umbrella term for a person who experience a different gender identity than their biological sex
- _____: those whose birth at sex is somewhat ambiguous; 1 in every 5,000 births (0.02%)
- Why do people struggle in this way?

⁵ In order to receive this diagnosis, feelings of dysphoria must last 6 months in duration, cause great distress (APA, DSM-5, Washington RD: APA Publishing, 2013) p. 452.

⁶ Colin Ross, *Ethics and Gender Identity Disorder*, 165.

⁷ Ibid, 168.

- Statistics on gender dysphoria:
 - **Mark Yarhouse**⁸: It's _____ a very common experience.
 - 2011 UCLA study
 - 2016 UCLA study

- Gender dysphoria in children:
 - “No one knows for sure. Researchers have not figured out how to obtain consistent, reliable answers from teenagers, much less younger children. The best estimates are that the population is small, probably under 1 percent of adolescents.”⁹
 - **Dr. Paul S. McHugh** further noted studies of children who had expressed transgender feelings but for whom, over time, 70%-80% “spontaneously lost those feelings.”¹⁰

⁸ Mark Yarhouse, <http://qideas.org/videos/transgender-1/>.

⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/18/science/transgender-children.html>.

¹⁰ Paul McHugh, “Transgender Surgery Isn’t the Solution”, *Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2014. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/paul-mchugh-transgender-surgery-isnt-the-solution-1402615120>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

- Western Sydney University professor of pediatrics, **Dr. John Whitehall** said a study of Dutch children with dysphoria aged 4-11 revealed 52% had associated psychiatric problems with diagnoses including anxiety, phobias, mood disorders, depression, attention deficit disorder and oppositional behavior.¹¹
- **American College of Pediatricians:** Young children are being permanently sterilised and surgically maimed under the guise of treating a condition that would otherwise resolve in over 80% of them. This is criminal.¹²
- “The American College of Pediatricians urges educators and legislators to reject all policies that condition children to accept as normal a life of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex. Facts – not ideology – determine reality.”

¹¹ Dan Flynn, “Confusing Gender Ideology Not For Vulnerable Children”, March 2, 2017.
http://www.acl.org.au/confusing_gender_ideology_not_for_vulnerable_children?recruiter_id=3606

¹² American College of Pediatricians, “Normalizing Gender Dysphoria is Dangerous and Unethical”, 3 August 2016/ <http://www.acpeds.org/normalizing-gender-dysphoria-is-dangerous-and-unethical>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

Foundational Theology:

- **G.K. Chesterton:** These are the days when the Christian is expected to praise every creed except his own.
- Creation
 - You have a _____
 - You are a _____ being
 - You are a _____ being
 - You are an _____ being
 - **Sam Andreades**¹³: The Bible sees gender as a further _____ added upon our biology, shaping our identities and deeply revealing of God's self.
 - You are a _____ being
 - There is a _____ behind your creation!
- Pushback from the culture
- Fall

¹³ Sam A. Andreades, *engendered: God's Gift of Gender Difference in Relationship*, Wooster, OH: Weaver Publishing, 2015. 38-39.

- Redemption

- **Sam Allberry**¹⁴: For marriage to be a parable of Christ and the church, it must be between like and unlike, male and female. Change this arrangement, and you end up distorting the spiritual reality to which it points. Alter marriage, and you end up distorting a picture of the _____ itself.

- Consummation

- **Andrew T. Walker**: A Christian is free to look _____ all that makes them groan, but right now they are not _____ from what makes them groan.
- **Andrew T. Walker**: We live in a Genesis 3 world with a Genesis 1 blueprint on the trajectory to a Revelation 21 future.

¹⁴ Sam Allberry, “How Celibacy Can Fulfill Your Sexuality”, August 26, 2016. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-celibacy-can-fulfill-your-sexuality>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

- Summary:
 - **Jeremy Pierre**¹⁵: People are obligated to _____ their self-conception to God's conception of them, and his divine conception has been unfolded in a story, a sweeping narrative that includes all human beings and their personal experiences.
- EXCURSUS: Understanding identity and its role in human experience
 - **John Stuart Mill**¹⁶: Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is _____.
 - **Richard B. Corradi**, MD, Professor of Psychiatry, Case Western Reserve¹⁷: Clearly forming a stable personal identity is a complicated business. For some people it is prolonged, and some _____ achieve it.
 - **Tim Keller**¹⁸: Part of having an identity is having a stable, core sense of who you are, day in and day out, in different settings and times. That is why the traditional way of forging an identity through connection with something solid outside the individual self made sense. But if your identity is just your desires, they are going to be _____ all the time.

¹⁵ Jeremy Pierre, *The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life*, Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2016. 130-137.

¹⁶ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, ed. Elizabeth Rapaport (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1979), 9.

¹⁷ Richard B. Corradi, "Transgenderism is Mass Hysteria Similar to 1980's Era Junk Science", November 17, 2016. <http://thefederalist.com/2016/11/17/psychiatry-professor-transgenderism-mass-hysteria-similar-1980s-era-junk-science/>. Accessed 16 March 2017.

¹⁸ Tim Keller, *Making Sense of God*, New York, NY: Viking Press, 2016. 124.

- **Jonathan Grant**¹⁹: Modern authenticity encourages us to _____ our own beliefs and morality, the only rule being that they must resonate with who we feel we really are. The worst thing we can do is to conform to some moral code that is imposed on us from outside—by society, our parents, the church, or whoever else. It is deemed to be self-evident that any such imposition would undermine our unique identity...The authentic self believes that personal meaning must be found within ourselves or must resonate with our one-of-a-kind personality.
- **Sam Allberry**²⁰: Our culture says: Your psychology is your sexual _____—let your body be conformed to it. The Bible says: Your _____ is your sexual identity—let your mind be conformed to it.

¹⁹ Jonathan Grant, *Divine Sex*, Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2015. 30.

²⁰ Vaughan Roberts, “Gender Identity and the Body”, <http://www.bethinking.org/human-life/gender-identity-and-the-body>. Accessed 10 March 2017.

Culturally informed, pastorally sensitive conversation:

- Christian response:
 - **Vaughan Roberts:** There are two common responses to this issue: an unquestioning “_____!” and an unquestioning “_____!”
 - **Os Guinness:** Be known for your love of people who _____ with you radically.
- 2 extremes we need to navigate away from:
- The pronoun and bathroom issue
- Talk to transgender people when possible
 - **Brad Hambrick:** In the _____ of relationship, our theology becomes theory.
- Avoid coarse humor or insensitive jokes

- Know the goal of the conversation
 - **Mark Yarhouse**²¹: “The tip of the iceberg may be gender atypicality — ‘Use this pronoun,’ or, ‘Call me this.’ Many times ministers respond to what’s above the surface of the iceberg. What’s under the surface of the iceberg is much more substantive, and that is a need for _____, a need to be loved, a need for identity, compassion, spiritual questions (‘Does God love me? Does God like me? Do you want me here?’). A lot of churches, in my view, are at their best when they minister to what’s under the surface, and not overreact to what’s above the waters.

- Be there when their sense of identity is not fulfilled through whatever non-biblical ways they’ve pursued it

²¹ Mark Yarhouse, “Ministering to People Navigating Sexuality and Gender”, August 11, 2016. <http://intersectproject.org/faith-and-culture/mark-yarhouse-minister-people-navigating-sexuality-gender/>. Accessed 10 March 10, 2017.

Resources:

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<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/from-agender-to-ze-a-glossary-for-the-gender-identity-revolution>
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<https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2017/10/16/new-talking-points-for-the-talk/>
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- Peel, Warrne, “Boy or Girl? How do we related to Transgender people?”
<http://gentlereformation.com/2017/09/15/boy-or-girl-how-do-we-relate-to-transgender-people/>
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<http://intersectproject.org/faith-and-culture/confessions-christian-struggled-gender-identity/>.
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