

Culture Shock - Part 5

Sex, Sexuality & The Transgender Debate

Genesis 2:18-25

Memory Verses: Genesis 1:27

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

Our world, our culture, is shocking! But we shouldn't be shocked. *Matthew 24:1-14*, our launch platform for this series, tells us that all of these shocking cultural issues; whether natural disaster, war, rumor of war, persecution, unbridled hatred, anarchy, and extreme rampant wickedness, are all a part of God's plan to bring about His kingdom. So he says do not be led astray by the enemy's deceptions. Do not be alarmed by these outlandish corruptions and immoral calamities. And, when they come to challenge your faith through threat of harm or death, do not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. If we can do these three things; don't be led astray, don't be alarmed, and don't be ashamed, then we can find a strong footing in Jesus Christ and his Word, and not have our faith shaken when the time comes.... and make no mistake that time is here.

And so, this series is our attempt as a church to address some of these cultural issues specifically and in detail from a biblical perspective. And, to help you understand as believers what a biblical Christian response to these issues should be. Already we've looked at how we should respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, how we should handle fear and anger, and how we should respond to racism and riots. This week we are going to be looking at another one of these shocking cultural issues; Sex, Sexuality, and the Transgender Debate.

The term "transsexual" was introduced in 1949 as an umbrella term referring to anyone who identified as the opposite sex, was transitioning through gene therapy or surgery, had transitioned, or actively cross-dressed as a hobby. In 1965 Psychiatrist John F. Oliven of Columbia University coined the term "transgender" to distinguish between people who were transitioning their sex from people who simply identified with the opposite sex. In alignment with these linguistic changes, the once synonymous terms, sex and gender, have also been distinguished from one another with sex now referring to biological makeup and gender referring to the psychological underpinnings of femininity or masculinity. To further complicate the issue a third category of gender, "genderqueer" has been created to include all possible genders that are not identified as feminine or masculine. The primary gender in this category could be called agender meaning, "without gender." Individuals who claim this gender would consider themselves without a gender or genderless. But

as to not leave anyone out, there are now over 300 terms for over 200 different genders which include, "gender fluid;" a gender that changes at different times, "anogender;" a gender that fades in and out but always comes back to the same feeling, not to be confused with "anongender;" a gender that is unknown to both yourself and others. There's also "biogender;" a gender that feels connected to nature in some way, "colorgender;" a gender associated with one or more colors that describe your gender emotion such as pinkgender or yellowgender, "magigender;" a gender that is mostly gender and the rest is something else, and last but not least "felisgender," which is a small catlike gender, and "videogender," which is a gender that feels too robotic to be classified by human standards. I'm not kidding; google it. But, when all of this boils down transgender simply means that a biological man can now identify as a woman and a biological woman can now identify as a man and if taken to the ultimate conclusion will culminate in the altering of ones original biology to fit their preferred identity.

And of course this presents some issues for us as Christians. For one, it makes us uncomfortable. I'll just speak from my own experience; when I see a trans-man or a trans-woman I can usually tell... because something is obviously off. For the most part a trans-woman still looks like a man and a trans-man still looks like a woman and I spend the whole time trying to not look like I'm staring... but I'm staring. Why? Cause I got to figure it out! The curiosity in me won't let me just glance and then let it be. I have to know if that is a dude or not. And sometimes I'll catch myself start singing in my head Aerosmith. You know... "Da nun, Da nun...Dude looks like a lady." Is that insensitive? I hope not. I'm not trying to poke fun. I'm merely sharing what it's like to be a Christian who is trying to live in this new world. Should it make us uncomfortable or should we try to adapt? So that's one thing.

Another thing, it messes with our theology. Theology is just a 10 dollar word that means, "what we believe about God." When we see someone identifying as a gender that doesn't match their biology it makes us question what we know about God as our creator. We know that God created us Male and Female in his image and because of that our image has a sacred element to it. It's not okay to kill one of God's creatures made in his image, and it stands to reason that it might not be okay to, I don't know, decide to throw of the unique identity that God gave you for one of your own choosing. And if that is okay, then maybe God doesn't have a specific plan for us and we can just go our own way.

It makes us uncomfortable, it messes with our theology, and it challenges our prejudices. What do I mean by that? Simple. Regardless of what we believe or feel towards transgender people, it is possible that they are some of the most fringe of our society. No matter how mainstream our media tries to make it... transgender people are, and most likely will remain marginalized. And fair or not, probably fair, they believe that they will be

judged most harshly by one group, us. And some of us are okay with that. Some of us think they should be marginalized and judged and discriminated against. And that's sad.... because that is not like Jesus. Jesus loved the outcasts, the sinners, the fringe of society... the outcasts. He was truly without prejudice. Jesus was magnetic and enchanting to a world hungry for something fresh simply because he chose to love the people that no one else would love. And, these are the same people that Jesus has called us to love as well.

So, when it comes to the transgender issue what is our response? I want us to see today that God is calling us to something unique in our culture. He's calling us to disagree with an aberrant ideology that stands in contrast to his Word and conflicts with our sense of normality, while at the same time loving and respecting the people who carry that ideology.

Transgenderism Is Not A Part Of God's Plan, But Neither Is Rejecting Transgender People

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

So the first thing I want to focus on is the issue of gender identity from a biblical perspective. And, what we need to see is that..

Transgenderism Is a Corruption of God's Original Plan For Sexuality. **Genesis 1:27-28** tells us that God created us in his image; male and female. It's not complicated; our sacred two sex system is meant to represent the unique image of God, and to resist this system is to misrepresent the image of God.

He created us to have one of two biological sexes, either male or female, each with their own specific anatomy for a specific function. **Verse 28** tells us this function, to procreate, to be fruitful and fill the earth with children. So, what makes one biologically female or biologically male is the fact that they have the biological parts required to perform their conjugal duty as husband and wife in creating a child. A biological female can cut off certain parts and very skilled surgeons can create new parts out of old parts but make no mistake... that female is still biologically a female... nothing can change that. A biological male can have very skilled surgeons mutilate his body and turn it into something that resembles the body of a female but make no mistake he is still a male, he cannot produce an egg, grow a child in his womb, and give birth to a child.

So God has given us two unique biological sexes; male and female. And, then we see that God has also given us two unique gender identities that correspond with our biology; man and woman. Look at **Genesis 2:18-25**. God has purposefully instilled in each of us a gender role that matches our biological sex. These roles or identities are built into the psychological framework of what it means to be of a specific gender. Males lead, work hard, like the outdoors, assert dominion, create

organizational structures, attracted to females, and protect women. Females are companions, helpers, attracted to men, and complete men. There's no good man without a great woman. But these roles are not the entire framework of gender. There's so much more to manhood and womanhood. And it's obvious and observable. Men are innately more authoritative, more aggressive, more competitive; which leads them towards interests that align with these characteristics. Little boys love dinosaurs, transformers, legos, and nerf guns. As they grow into men, not much changes. They still love hunting, fishing, big trucks, loud fast cars, action movies, building things, and first person shooter video games. Women are more innately gentle, sensitive, compassionate, and social; which is why little girls play with dolls, and play pretend tea parties. As they grow into women they still like talking on the phone, romantic movies, dancing, and throwing parties. So, according to scripture there are only two biological sexes; Male and Female, and there are only two gender identities; Man and Woman, and biological males are to be men and biological females are to be women. And, in contrast to our post-christian culture, **never does the Bible anywhere suggest that one's gender identity can be separated from their biological sex.** That's God's design.

But, Satan had different plans. In **Genesis 3:1-7** Satan's deception was not just to get humanity to disobey God in a broader sense, but to distort gender identity in a more specific sense. You see that here the woman leads the man; leads him to sin. That's not right. Men are supposed to lead women but here the woman takes the lead as man relinquishes his gender role. Then the woman is deceived by the serpent, but that's not right either. Men are supposed to protect women but here man relinquishes his gender role and allows the woman to be deceived. Look at **verse 6**. He was with her the whole time but he never stepped in or spoke up. Listen, Satan knows that we are created male & female, man & woman, in the image of God. If he can corrupt gender identity then he can malign the image of God. **Transgenderism degrades the image of God and therefore defames the glory of God.** Look at **Genesis 3:16**. The curse of sin corrupts all things, including gender roles. A man who is called to lead his wife now wants to rule his wife. A woman who is called to help her husband is now contrary to her husband. And, of course this brings conflict to gender roles which leads humanity to try to fix or enhance God's original plan for gender. This whole manhood / womanhood thing isn't working out. So let's fix it. There must be a better plan. Which leads to men embracing feminine feelings, and women embracing masculine feelings, which leads to Males pursuing womanhood and Females pursuing manhood, which leads to a complete deconstruction of gender to the point where we now have 200-300 vaguely described genders that have no biblical origin. Look, transgenderism isn't part of God's plan. It corrupts God's plan. **Transgenderism Is Not A Part Of God's Plan, But Neither Is Rejecting Transgender People**

We can't reject transgender people. Why? Because... **Transgenderism While Unorthodox, Is Not Completely Unnatural.** Now hear me out before you start calling me a heretic. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, initiating the curse of sin on all mankind, sin became a part of our physical and psychological makeup. **Romans 5:12** tells us that through one man all sinned. **Psalms 51:5** says each one of us was conceived in sin and iniquity. This means that everyone of us is born with a natural inclination towards sin. **Romans 3:10** tells us that no one is righteous, no one seeks God. Let's get real, as a heterosexual man I am naturally attracted towards women. Have you seen my wife? She is smoking hot! But, as a sinful man I am naturally drawn towards all types of perversions of that attraction which I must resist in the strength of God. Therefore it makes sense that if men have sinful attractions towards women, then some men would have natural sinful attractions towards other men too. Why? Because sin is in our nature. At some point we have to quit acting like heterosexual sins are a more natural form of sin than homosexual sins. All sin is an abomination to a holy God, and all sin is natural for sinful humans. Get this, **every human is born with a proclivity towards all kinds of sinful activity.** If some are born with a proclivity towards heterosexual sins, some are born with a proclivity towards homosexual sins, then some are born with a bent towards stealing, or murdering, or lying, or anger, or worry... the list goes on and on. And, it also stands to reason that some are born with a natural feeling to resist their gender identity and replace it with another one.

For us who know the God of the Bible, we know that transgenderism is not a part of his natural plan. But, for those who struggle with their gender identity and cannot escape their innate feelings, they are not wrong to ask God why he made them this way. Gender dysphoria, previously known as Gender Identity Disorder, is a real thing. Somewhere around 1.7 million people in the U.S. alone have some level of it. In 2012 the Journal of Sexual Medicine released a study on sets of identical Female & Male twins and found that almost half had some type of Gender dysphoria. Another study on twins in 2002 suggested that Gender dysphoria may be 62% heritable. These two studies suggest that Gender Dysphoria could be largely due to genetic factors. If God didn't make them this way then who did? Of course he did. God has created all of us to have unique struggles that only he can fix. Someone who struggles with their gender identity is not a freak, they are merely predisposed towards a unique sin... the same way we all are predisposed towards specific sins... and just like us, they need Jesus.

And this isn't a new phenomena. People have struggled with Gender Dysphoria for thousands of years. Archaeologists have discovered 9000 year old art depicting transgender people. Other

archaeological documents from the Mediterranean dating 4500 years old speak of transgender priests called the Gala. It is well documented that the Roman emperor Antoninus, In 222 A.D., preferred to be called a lady not a lord, and was one of the first to seek sex reassignment surgery. If you go to transgender history on wikipedia you will find that there have been prominent transgender people in every century and in every decade. In fact, it was so prevalent in the early days of Israel, around 1300 B.C., that God gave the Israelites this law in **Deuteronomy 22:5** which basically says do not cross dress. Obviously someone in Israel was struggling with Gender Dysphoria and needed biblical direction as how to proceed.

So how should they proceed? Should they just be allowed to do whatever they want with their gender identity? Of course not. Someone who says that they are naturally drawn towards starting forest fires should not be allowed to set forest fires simply because they have to be true to themselves... thats silly. I must resist my sinful urges every single day in order to obey God's call on my life and bring him glory. You must resist your sinful desires every single day so that you can be the person that God is calling you to be. One of the greatest lies that Satan ever told us is to be true to who we are. Who we are is sinful. Who we are is rebellious to the law of God. We have all kinds of natural affections that will destroy us if left unchecked. No... **stop trying to be true to who you are and start trying to be true to who God is.**

The point is this... your identity shouldn't be based on what your feelings tell you to do or be... your identity is meant to be in God; the image of God. Transgenderism is just another sinful lifestyle that must be surrendered to the Lordship of God. And if that's the case then transgender people aren't any different than any of us sinners. We all need the love of Christ and we all need to accept his salvation. **Transgenderism Is Not A Part Of God's Plan, But Neither Is Rejecting Transgender People**

So, lastly, **We Must Intentionally Love and Strategically Lead Trans-people to Christ.** **James 2:1-4, 8-9, 13** tells us that showing partiality and judging people without mercy is sinful. It's just as sinful as the sin you are judging others for. So we can't discriminate against Transgender people. They are people created by God and God loves them and we are to also love them. And, we must respect Transgender people. I'm probably gonna catch some flak for this, but so be it. But, I believe that we should call them by their desired name, and we should use their desired pronouns. I know it may go against your impulses... but once again, the bible calls us to do what people ask us to do as long as what they ask is not sinful. We are to submit and subject ourselves to others in humility. And, we must not ignore Transgender people. It may be out of our comfort zone, it may be take some awkward interactions, but **if we don't befriend people like Jesus did then we will not be able to show them Jesus.** And most of all, we must

speaking the truth in love. We should never back down on biblical truth in order to be accepted by culture. The Bible is and will always be offensive. But as truthful as we must be, we should be all the more loving towards those who disagree with us in order to reach a point of discussion, then relationship, and eventually influence. **Transgenderism Is Not A Part Of God's Plan, But Neither Is Rejecting Transgender People**

Application

So there are four applications this morning that I want to leave you guys with. First, we must recognize that Transgenderism is sinful and defames the image of God. Second, we need to recognize that Transgenderism is just as natural an innate sin as homosexuality, adultery, sex outside of marriage, stealing, lying, and gossip. No sin is natural according to God's original design, but all people sin and thus all are drawn towards sinful lifestyles. Third, we must answer the call to love and pursue relationships with transgender people as to show them the love of Christ and lead them to reclaim the image of God in their identity. And fourth, we must mentor and disciple our children to embrace their God given biological sex and their corresponding gender identity. Fathers teach your sons to be biblical men. Mothers teach your daughters to be biblical women. Our biblical gender identities reveal the image of God and we must take that seriously.

Conclusion

John Piper has been asked his take on this issue a lot recently and his answer is where I'm going to leave us this morning. He says; "God knows what is best for humanity. He also knows the painful disordering of our sexual desires that came with the fall... We are all disordered in some measure in different ways. He promises to help us with our disordered loves so that we can enjoy measures of contentment in the midst of our necessary self-denial." We are all sin sick... we are all in need of a savior.. Jesus is the answer! **Transgenderism Is Not A Part Of God's Plan, But Neither Is Rejecting Transgender People**