

How We Got to Where We Are¹

HE HAD COMPASSION Consider some of the following Scriptures:

- A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; (Matt. 12:20 ESV)
- Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11:28-30 ESV)
- When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matt. 9:36 ESV)

PUTTING A FACE ON THE ISSUE: VIDEO INTERVIEW WITH BJ

1. What questions would you want to ask BJ?
2. Did BJ choose to be transgender? How would BJ answer?
3. How would Jesus show compassion to BJ? ...like He dealt with the Pharisee? ...like he treated the woman at the well? ...somewhere in between?

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Sex:** our biological make-up. Men have XY chromosomes. Women have XX chromosomes. These chromosomal differences result in different reproductive systems, hormones, and anatomy (e.g. broader shoulders vs. wider hips, etc.).
2. **Gender:** attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex. Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviors that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity. (e.g. neckties vs. dresses) In traditional societies gender has been attached to sex. What has changed today is that many now see gender as unattached to sex.
3. **Gender identity:** a person’s self-perception of whether they are male or female, masculine or feminine
4. **Gender dysphoria:** an experience of distress, inner anguish, or discomfort from sensing a conflict between their gender identity and their biological sex. It is a mismatch between the gender that matches their biological sex and the gender that they feel themselves to be.
5. **Transgender:** an umbrella term for the state or condition of identifying or expressing a gender identity that does not match a person’s genetic sex.
6. **Gender Fluid:** not identifying as one gender all the time.
7. **Non-binary:** not identifying as male or female at all.
8. For a more complete glossary see <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/from-agender-to-ze-a-glossary-for-the-gender-identity-revolution/>

¹ Based on the book *God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say About Gender Identity?* (2nd Edition) by Andrew T. Walker, 2022, The Good Book Company. (Chapters 1-3)

WHAT DOES GENDER DYSPHORIA LOOK LIKE?

QUESTIONS NEEDING ANSWERS

- Can a man become a woman? Can a woman become a man?
- How and when should children be confronted with the debates about gender?
- What are we to do with children who are a member of one biological sex but feel as though they were born in the wrong body?
- What do we say to someone experiencing these feelings and desires?
- How do we love and help those who are deeply hurting?

We will come to these questions in a later class period. For now, we need to ask, “How did we get here?”

- What/who does BJ think he is?
- How did BJ come to his conclusion?
- What is the basis for his worldview?

CULTURE-SHAPING FACTORS

1. RELATIVISM = Meaning and truth are relative. I decide what’s right for me.
2. POST-CHRISTENDOM = Biblical morals no longer set the cultural norm.
3. RADICAL INDIVIDUALISM = I need to be true to myself to be fulfilled.
4. SEXUAL REVOLUTION = *If it feels good, do it. How can it be wrong when it feels so right?*
5. GNOSTICISM = Tension between our true selves and the bodies we inhabit

TWO QUICK QUESTIONS

1. Does anything “cause” gender dysphoria?
2. How common is transgenderism?

DO GOOD

What, then, are Christians supposed to do in this context that differs and contradicts the Bible?

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up” (Gal. 6:9).

Weariness in the transgender debate opens us up to the temptation of doing what’s easiest. Two likely escape routes:

- Pulling up the drawbridge – withdraw and stop engaging the problem.
- Going with the flow – give in to it. Accept it. Go along to get along.

GENDER DYSPHORIA AND TRANSGENDER

*Most important to remember is that these people are real people.*²

² Walker, 35.

