



# SUMMER STUDY SERIES

## *Cutting Through the Darkness: Being Christ's Witness When It's Hard*

*The Gender Crisis: Applying the Singularity of Scripture to a Non-Binary World*

July 16, 2023

### INTRODUCTION

*To equip you to have a culturally-wise, biblically-informed, and compassionate conversation with someone struggling with same-sex attraction or gender identity.*

### WE NEED TO BE CULTURALLY WISE

#### ❖ *What Does THAT Mean?*

#### Current Key Sexuality & Gender Identity Terms

1. Biological sex: male or female according to chromosomes, external/internal physiology (anatomy).
2. Gender: the psychological, social, and cultural manifestations of maleness and femaleness (how culture understands masculinity and femininity).
3. Gender Identity: how a person perceives or experiences themselves as male/female (how they understand themselves).
4. Cisgender: someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.
5. Gender Dysphoria: the experience of incongruence between one's biological sex and gender identity. They don't know what they are. Key Criteria: It has a long-term duration (min. 6 months) and is accompanied by marked distress.
6. Transgender: Broad umbrella term for a person who experience a different gender identity than their biological sex.
7. Transsexual: A person who physically transitions from male to female or vice versa, ranging from physical appearance to complete gender reassignment surgery.
8. Gender Fluid: Gender identity best described as a dynamic mix of boy and girl. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more man some days, and more woman other days.

9. Gender Queer: *An umbrella term for gender identities other than man and woman. People who identify as “genderqueer” may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female or as falling completely outside these categories. Use this term only when an individual self-identifies as “gender queer.”*
10. Gender Non-Conforming: *A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.*
11. Intersex: *Those whose birth at sex is somewhat ambiguous; in every 5,000 births (0.02%). Often transgender community will talk about intersex people as the biological basis for why gender is a social construct, which is not the case. All of the terms mentioned talk about how a person self-identifies, but intersex people are actually born with ambiguous genitalia. In the vast majority of intersex cases, parents & doctors can make a choice to resolve the biological issue medically/surgically. They know that they do not have make the individual suffer from this issue for the rest of their lives.*

#### ❖ *Where Are We?*

- **Statistics on Gender Dysphoria among Teens & Adults**
  - **June 2023 Study (Williams Institute, UCLA)**
    - .5% of surveyed **adults (18+)** in US are transgender.
    - 1.4% of surveyed **youth (13-17)** in US are transgender.
- **Gender Dysphoria among Children**
  - Most children develop gender identity between the ages of 2-4.
  - Among children aged 4-11 who are struggling with their gender identity, 52% also have other psychiatric problems.<sup>1</sup>

#### ❖ *How Did We Get Here?*

- **On the Surface: Conventional Wisdom**
  - Two predominant theories:
    - **Brain-Sex (Nature) Theory**
    - **Family Noise (Nurture) Theory**

- **Digging Deeper: Two Underlying Conditions**

1. **A Shift in the Dominant Worldview**

	<b>Biblical Worldview (Classical)</b>	<b>Natural/ Scientific Worldview (Modernism)</b>	<b>Relativism Worldview (Postmodernism)</b>
<b>Description</b>	The objective foundation for truth, meaning, purpose, and value is found in a supreme being (“God”).	The objective foundation for truth, meaning, purpose, and value is found in humanity, nature, and science.	The objective foundation for truth, meaning, purpose, and value does not exist or cannot be known.
<b>Reality</b>	Exists independently of the human mind (including the supernatural), and truth is that which corresponds with reality.	Exists independently of the human mind but is only found in the natural world.	No way of knowing independent reality and no way of judging which view best corresponds to reality.  “I know” gives way to “I feel”
<b>Truth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– one, meaning truth in one area is consistent with those in another area</li> <li>– discovered, not invented.</li> <li>– universal; it is true for all people, in all places, at all times.</li> <li>– absolute, having no restriction, exception, or qualification.</li> <li>– does not change, even if our beliefs about truth change.</li> <li>– Beliefs do not determine truth no matter how sincerely they are held.</li> <li>– Interpretations of truth, no matter how convincing, do not determine truth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– discovered, not invented, but must be verified.</li> <li>– does not change, but new information may change one’s understanding of the truth.</li> <li>– logical and provable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– suspicion/rejection of large-scale explanatory systems (religion &amp; science).</li> <li>– relative &amp; personal, becoming whatever an individual person says. <i>“It’s true if you believe it, and that goes for anything”</i></li> <li>– changes from person to person and circumstance to circumstance.</li> <li>– subjective, useful, and workable.</li> </ul>

- **Problems with Postmodern Relativism Regarding Sexuality & Gender**

- 1) *It is inherently contradictory.*
- 2) *Sexuality of Modernism & gender identity of Postmodernism are in conflict.*
- 3) *Proponents of Postmodern sexuality and gender identity are hypocritical.*

◆ **American College of Pediatricians:** “Young children are being permanently sterilized and surgically maimed under the guise of treating a condition that would otherwise resolve in over 80% of them. This is criminal...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.”<sup>ii</sup>

## 2. Competing Influences on Forming Identity<sup>iii</sup>

TRADITIONAL IDENTITY	MODERN IDENTITY <i>(starting @1500s)</i>
External	Internal
Chosen for you	You choose
Fit in	Stand out
Highest good: honor & moral good	Highest good: happiness & authenticity
Decisive validator: higher powers	Decisive validators: you
You are your duties	You are your desires
You make the sacrifice for society	Society makes the sacrifice for you
Argument: happens inside (society, you wrestle in your heart)	Argument: happens outside (wrestle in your heart, then go to society and demand acceptance)

## KNOW THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE OF SEXUALITY & IDENTITY

❖ *God designed human sexuality and gender as a means of reflecting His master plan.*

- Sexuality is a reflection of God’s design and plan for His whole creation.

<b>STRATEGIC ORDER OF CREATION EVENTS</b> <i>(Genesis 1)</i>			
<b>DAY 1 (3-5)</b>	<i>Creation of light/darkness; division of day &amp; night</i>	<b>DAY 4 (14-19)</b>	<i>Creation of sun, moon, &amp; stars</i>
<b>DAY 2 (6-8)</b>	<i>Division of sky &amp; seas</i>	<b>DAY 5 (20-23)</b>	<i>Creation of birds &amp; sea life</i>
<b>DAY 3 (9-13)</b>	<i>Division of land &amp; seas; creation of vegetation</i>	<b>DAY 6 (24-31)</b>	<i>Creation of animals and man &amp; woman</i>

The entire biblical story shows a balancing binary relationship: Creation (binaries in nature), the Fall (sin and sacrifice), Redemption (Christ and His church), and culminating in the Restoration (New Heaven & New Earth).

- Our identity is found in how God created us.

<b>KEY DISTINCTIONS</b> <b>BETWEEN GOD’S CREATION OF NATURE &amp; HUMANITY</b>		
<b><u>GENESIS</u></b>	<b><u>CREATION</u></b>	<b><u>HUMANITY</u></b>
<i>1:11-12, 21, 24-25, 26-27</i>	<i>Everything is created in its own image.</i>	<i>Humans are specifically created in the image of God.</i>
<i>1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24; 2:7</i>	<i>God spoke all into existence.</i>	<i>God hand-crafted the human from the dust of the ground.</i>
<i>1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24; 2:7</i>	<i>God’s word gave life to all creation.</i>	<i>God breathed life into the human.</i>
<i>What God Is Called</i>	<i>“God” (Elohim)</i>	<i>“LORD God” (Yahweh Elohim)</i>

➤ ***Ephesians 2:10***

*We are supreme creations of God, made in the image of God,  
and for the pleasure of God.*

❖ *Homosexuality is evidence of a life far from God and His design.*

#### **Biblical Passages Referencing Homosexuality**

- Genesis 19:1-29
  - Leviticus 18:22
  - Leviticus 20:13
  - 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
  - 1 Timothy 1:9-11
- **Romans 1:26-27** —<sup>26</sup>*For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. <sup>27</sup>Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

## **TALK ABOUT SEXUALITY WITH CLARITY AND COMPASSION**

❖ *Some Guiding Principles to Keep in Mind*

- 1) *There are two ways to be one body.<sup>iv</sup>*
- 2) *There is a difference between same-sex attraction and homosexual acts.*
- 3) *Virtually all human beings have strong sex drives that the Bible holds may be properly satisfied only in heterosexual marriage.*
- 4) *For those who fall, God offers to forgive and accept; and so must his people.*
- 5) *Our identity should not be shaped by attractions toward the same or opposite sex; rather our identity should be shaped by the reality of creation and redemption—that we are God’s image bearers and are “in Christ.”*

❖ *Suggestions for Engaging Someone with Same-Sex Attraction & Gender Dysphoria*

1. *Talk to transgender people when possible.*
2. *Know the goal of the conversation.*
3. *Address the pronoun and name issue.*
  - Those Who Don't Claim to Know Christ
  - Professing Christians
4. *Avoid coarse humor or insensitive jokes.*
5. *Be there when their sense of identity is not fulfilled through whatever non-biblical ways they've pursued it.*
6. *Strive for relational credibility.*
  - Matthew 5:16
  - John 13:35
  - Romans 12:9
  - 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12
  - 1 Timothy 2:1-3

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<sup>i</sup> 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](http://www.acl.org.au/confusing_gender_ideology_not_for_vulnerable_children?recruiter_id=3606).

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

<sup>iii</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2018). See also Jonathan Holmes, "Gender Identity, Charity, and Christian Hope," Part 3. <https://teach4theheart.com/gender-identity-seminar/>. Accessed 11 March 2022.

<sup>iv</sup> Rebecca McLaughlin, *Confronting Christianity*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019. ch. 9.