

Last weekend, the Oscars celebrated its 95th Academy Awards ceremony. Predictably, many of its member artists nowadays advocate for gender-neutral categories at its award show instead of separate “best actor” and/or “best actress” awards. One actress stated that she does not “*think the categories are inclusive enough at the moment*” and that it is difficult for her to justify “*being nonbinary and being nominated in female categories.*” I ask you. When did a sentence and sentiment like that come to make any intelligible sense in our society? She “*hopes for a future*” with gender-free awards and more featured roles for nonbinary, queer, and trans people on screen.¹

The percentage of Americans who identify as LGBTQ+ is 7.2%.² As it is a contemporary phenomenon, it is not surprising that young Americans are 329% more likely than adult Americans to identify as transgender.³ The confusion spreads proportionally among the younger generations, almost like a fashion trend, as our youth have deeper and more frequent exposure to and contact with its ideology and advocates.⁴

However, please do not think that this gender chaos is *primarily* a debate about gender. It is not. It is ultimately a battle for reality: who will define it, who will dictate it, and who will express its perceived purpose. Trans activists are not merely working toward and desiring social acceptance; they want the complete normalization and unqualified support of a global transgender culture!

¹ [For nonbinary actor Emma Corrin, gendered awards categories make things ‘difficult’.](#)

² [According to the latest Gallup survey, the rise in the percentage of Americans who identify as LGBTQ+ leveled out in 2022.](#)

³ [More U.S. teens identify as transgender.](#)

⁴ They have greater susceptibility to the mores of their peers, and peer pressure. They are generally rebellious by nature and developmentally experimental, having had poor mentors, dwindling common grace, being highly materially gifted, and by the influence of an unprecedented age of information and media.

But Christians are not directed or permitted to derive their worldview from Hollywood, or whatever may be socially trending in the popular entertainment media. So, how must Christians behave and how must we, as Christians, derive and express our worldview?

I want to you see and uphold the Biblical and beautiful portrait of gender. Our church constitution summarizes: “*that God created people male and female as the crowning jewel of His creation. Gender is both a wonderful gift and an unchangeable part of God’s design, and it does not exist apart from the God-appointed link with one’s biological sex.*”⁵ This statement implies that people sin by rejecting God’s good design and embracing a so-called transgender identity. This morning, we will first attempt to understand the worldview behind transgenderism. We will then consider the Bible’s portrait of gender.

I. Understanding Transgenderism.

“Transgender” is an umbrella term that describes persons whose gender identity or expression differs from the biological sex evidenced at their time of birth. Advocates of “Transgenderism” claim that gender is not binary (either male or female) and that one’s gender is not identifiable through physical features. Instead, a person’s *internal, psychological, personal sense and interpretation* of being a male or female, determines whether they are a man, a woman, or combination of the two. For example, one young transgender psychology student [who had been born a male] said, “*I’ve always been extremely feminine, I always **felt** that way. I can’t say that I ever **felt** like a boy; I just had to live as a boy for the first 16 years of my life.*” We need to love people like this. Love “*does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the*

⁵ Grace Constitution, Article 12.3.2.

truth” (1 Corinthians 13:6). This means that the act of truth-telling about gender from the perspective of the Bible is an act of love, contrary to culture’s judgment. But that is not a license to speak or act obnoxious, condescending, or uncaring. We must engage them as those who are truly *suffering*, as victims of an insidious ideology, and show evident compassion while *speaking the truth in love*.

For transgender proponents, the sex “assigned” at birth and their internal understanding of their gender does not “match.” *For example*, to them, a **transgender woman** is a biological male who lives as a woman and prefers the pronouns “she” and “her.” A **transgender man** is a biological woman who lives as a man and prefers the pronouns “he” and “him.” *Their inner psychology contradicts their outer physiology*.

However, the notion becomes more convoluted. *For example*, some people's gender identities do not fit neatly into either of the two binary [man and woman] categories. These people identify themselves as **nonbinary** or **genderqueer**. This means that they do not identify as either a man or a woman, *as if one’s sex were choice similar to a magazine subscription*.⁶ Moreover, others’ gender identities fluctuate between being a man and a woman at different times; and for some, they are both man and woman, simultaneously.

Nonbinary persons generally prefer to be referred to by pronouns such as “they” and “them,” instead of the gender-specific “he” and “she”. However, we must remember that, for them, these categories remain fluid, and a year or a day from now, the language can change.⁷

⁶ There are also “drag queens” and transsexuals.

⁷ According to the American Psychosocial Association ([Understanding transgender people, gender identity and gender expression](#)), “The ways that transgender people are talked about in popular culture, academia, and science are constantly changing, particularly as individuals’ awareness, knowledge, and openness about transgender people and their experiences grow.” *For example*, Latinx is a gender-neutral term currently in use when referring to a transgender individual or group identity of individuals in the United States who also have Latin American roots.

Personal identity is like household plastic that you recycle which are remanufactured into new and different products. Individuals can create, dissolve, and recreate, unique identities at will.

People communicate their gender to others by their gender expression. Expression is demonstrated in the way one might behave, dress, style their hair, and modify their voice or body's appearance. And since an individual's sense of self may change radically and rapidly, it has not only caused the creation of new words, but changed our cultures' ability to define existing rudimentary and common words. For example, at the confirmation hearing for Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, one Senator asked the then Supreme Court nominee to define the word "woman." "I can't —" Jackson replied. "Not in this context. I'm not a biologist," she said.

Transition

"Trans" means to transition or be an individual transitioned from one gender state to another. **First**, their transition happens internally as they come to perceive, and express themselves differently. Most of the time, at least one other of these additional transitions occur: **Next**, a "trans" person may transition socially. They do so by representing themselves differently to others and desire others to have different relations with them. **Subsequently**, after a stage of testing, some transition legally, changing their legal names, birth certificates, driver's licenses, and other legal documents to reflect their new identities and genders.

Lastly, some choose to transition medically. Some ingest hormone drugs of their opposite sex, prescribed by so-called sympathetic doctors. Many of the fifty United States, in which the controversy rages, allow prepubescent adolescents to receive such body-mutilating treatments. Even our sitting President has described it as "*close to sinful*" to restrict transgender

This being the case, we may anticipate the immanent coinage of other similar terms such as: Asianx, Africanx, or Americanx.

medical rights [from] children.⁸ Surgery has become a sacrament for this ideology. Yet, one psychoanalyst wrote, after lowering the age at which clinics offer puberty blockers to children, it was “*revealed that after a year of treatment, ‘a significant increase’ was found in patients who had been born female self-reporting to staff that they ‘deliberately try to hurt or kill myself.’*”⁹

Others undergo surgeries that are too grotesque, gruesome, and unimaginable for me to describe here. One patient of such surgery, who now believes that she was too young to make an informed decision, wrote in the Washington Post, “*Surgery unshackled me from my body’s urges, but the destruction of my gonads introduced a different type of bondage. From the day of my surgery, I became a medical patient and will remain one for the rest of my life.*”¹⁰

What is the Difference between Sex and Gender?

Transgender ideology sharply distinguishes between one’s “sex” and one’s “gender,” severing the empirical link between one’s biological sex and gender. Sex refers to one’s biological status as male or female “assigned” at birth by a doctor. Transgender ideology associates one’s sex with physical attributes such as chromosomes, hormones, and anatomy.

Transgender ideology regards **gender** as a social construct and a psychological experience. The World Health Organization defines one’s gender as “*the characteristics of women, men, girls, and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviors, roles associated with being a woman, man, girl, or boy, as well as relationships with each other.*”¹¹ According to W.H.O., therefore, gender itself, not just gender norms, is culturally constructed.

⁸ [Biden says efforts to restrict transgender rights ‘close to sinful.’](#)

⁹ They wrongly assume this results from societal oppression instead of horrific medical practices how it changes the brain. [Why I Resigned from Tavistock: Trans-Identified Children Need Therapy, Not Just 'Affirmation' and Drugs](#)

¹⁰ [I was too young to decide about transgender surgery at nineteen.](#)

¹¹ [Gender and health.](#)

As a social construct, gender is presumed to fluctuate from one culture to another. And, according to W.H.O., gender can culturally evolve over time. *Since society constructs gender, society can also deconstruct it.*

Culturally defined social norms influence how people feel about themselves, and this ideology assumes society must respect the individual's feelings. *Modern individuals find identity and meaning by giving expression to their feelings and desires.* Again, gender is not so objective as one's sex, but an individual's *internal, psychological, and personal sense.*¹²

Gender and Critical Theory

Contemporary critical theory divides society into oppressed and dominant groups, and a transgender identity forms a basis of solidarity that unites them as one group. In the contemporary critical theorists' view, the social construct of gender is hierarchical and, therefore, inevitably produces inequalities that lead to oppression.¹³

For example, Planned Parenthood equates "trans oppression" with an almost clinical-like diagnosis called *Transmisia*. The "misia" in *Transmisia* means "hatred" and includes "*prejudice at the root of beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and systems that hurt or deny the existence of trans and nonbinary people.*" One symptom is "*denying the validity of their identities.*" *This condition overlaps with Binarism*, the belief that only two genders exist. *They created new "isms,"*

¹² *The NCAA and the International Olympic Committee also want to erase the reality of biological sex and sever it from gender.* A fifth-year swimmer at the University of Pennsylvania recently dominated the women's Ivy League conference championships... as a biological male. William Thomas, a biological male now known as Lia, came out as transgender and switched from the men's swimming team to the women's swimming team. Few of us consider how allowing this masquerade may be sexist, that a biological male can take over a female sporting event, and that everyone is encouraged to celebrate his dominance!

¹³ According to a report by the National Center for Transgender Equality: 29% of transgender people live in poverty, compared to 14% of the general population. Transgender people experience unemployment at 3x the rate of the general population

meaning you are oppressive and discriminatory by believing in only two genders.¹⁴ We now live in a society that interprets simple and common instances of the words “biological male” and “biological female” as harmful and even intentionally hateful.

Transgender people latched on to this expanded definition of victimhood and oppression and interpreted the traditional gender and sexual codes as an expression of oppression in society. These ideals, including the “authoritarian” influence of religion, must therefore be overthrown for political liberation. *Though they enthrone the inner psychologized self, they still need society to acknowledge and affirm them.*

The Heir of Radical Individualism

Transgenderism is the heir of sexual aberrations that have persisted with man since before Sodom and Gomorrah. Today’s rebellion is built on a foundation of intellectual relativism and radical individualism. The most apparent manifestation of this revolution is understanding what it means to be an individual. People can create and recreate their psychologized, sexual selves at will. *We prioritize the psychological over the physical. That’s why a sentence like, “I am a woman trapped inside a man’s body” makes sense today. Carl Trueman said, “The desire for inner happiness and psychological well-being lies at the heart of the modern era.”*

There are two different ways of thinking about the world. **First**, a person may consider the world as having a transcendent order and objective meaning. Therefore, this requires human beings to discover that meaning and conform to it, and they fulfill their purpose by meeting their obligations to others. By contrast, **another view** considers the world as raw material, *like clay*,

¹⁴ [What's transphobia, also called transmisia?](#)

from which the individual can create meaning and purpose. Natively, humankind would rather alter the truth than be altered by it.

People suppose a world without God would relieve us of the specter of God with no appreciable negative effects. But we know that turning away from God affects society at the deepest possible level.

They (those without God) are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more (Ephesians 4:18–19).

Transgenderism is an unattractive misrepresentation of our Creator. Accord to GLADD's website, 40% of [transgender] survey respondents reported attempting suicide in their lifetime, nearly nine times the attempted suicide rate in the United States (4.6%).

II. The Biblical Reality.

God created only two genders, and the creation of male and female displays God's beautiful image. Genesis 1:27, *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.* Biblically, gender refers to the embodied biological differences between males and females and the different, appropriate cultural manifestations of these created distinctions.

Ontological Identity

Image is the first ontological (fixed nature, being) reality acknowledged by God about human beings: *So, God created man in his own image. Gender is the second! Male and female, he created them.* Genesis 1 describes the male and female identity and how that identity achieves a divine purpose: procreation meant to populate the earth, making gender fundamental to the

human nobility and dignity.¹⁵ Gender is an embodied reality with a goal, and the Bible never divorces the indissoluble link between sex and gender.¹⁶

Andrew Walker wrote, “In other words, Male and female self-conception are not constructed from psychology alone (what I feel becomes who I am). Gender is objective, physical, and permanent.”¹⁷ As a result, transgenderism denies the image of God and the person's humanity.

Narrow and Broad Definitions of Gender

Dr. Walker distinguishes between narrow and broad definitions of gender.¹⁸ **Broadly**, gender refers to biological differences between a male and female body. We observe this differentiation down to the chromosomal level (Female XX, Male XY), anatomical level (e.g., muscle mass), reproductive level (only women menstruate, conceive, give birth, and produce milk), physiological (body parts), and hormonal level.

Narrowly speaking, culture also manifests creational distinctions between male and female culture (e.g., baby girls adorned in pink; baby boys decked in blue). Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11:14-15, *Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory?* This cultural difference was

¹⁵ Men and women are equal in dignity and value but distinct in design and role. Together, God commissions them to “*be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion.*”

¹⁶ “Ambiguous genitalia” is a rare condition in which an infant’s genitals don’t appear either male or female. The genitals may be incompletely developed, or the baby may have characteristics of both sexes. This condition is an exceptionally rare *disorder* of sex development. Usually, ambiguous genitalia is obvious at or shortly after birth. Either way, this is the exception that proves, rather than disproves, the rule of two genders. It is a disorder, like being born without sight, and not the creation of a different human species or gender. “[It is estimated that up to 1.7 percent of the population has an intersex trait and that approximately 0.5 percent of people have clinically identifiable sexual or reproductive variations.](#)”

¹⁷ [Gender and Sexuality](#)

¹⁸ Recommend his book, *God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say About Gender Identity?*

expressed by married women wearing a head covering. However, not all cultural constructs are accurate (e.g., assuming men aren't artsy; real men hunt and drive trucks; women don't like the outdoors or sports). Therefore, we must **NOT** react extremely to an extreme ideology and define manhood as synonymous with Clint Eastwood characters or Vin Diesel movies. Nor should we define femininity as merely synonymous with housemaids. Otherwise, WE risk discouraging and confusing our youth with unbiblical and unhelpful standards and inadvertently driving them into the accepting arms of the very ideology we fear. We need a truly biblical understand of femininity and masculinity.

[What is Femininity?: The attributes and activities characteristic of a woman who loves others, namely the cheerful helping and tender nourishing of those near her, and the creative beautifying and industrious enhancing of everything in her stewardship.]

[What is Masculinity?: The attributes and activities characteristic of a man who loves others, namely servant leadership, wise instruction, the material, emotional, and spiritual provision for and protection of the people near him, and the diligent ordering and executing of the tasks before him.]

But several are proper expressions of God's created distinctions (e.g., dress, physical appearance, hair, makeup, play toys). Christians need to understand that as partakers of God's good creation, we are to acknowledge and participate in culturally-appropriate gender distinctions. God's law upholds these distinctions, Deuteronomy 22:5, *A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.*

The Christian Worldview of Gender

God made gender, and it is a constitutive aspect of God's rule over humanity. **We never created ourselves, so it is impossible for us to genuinely recreate ourselves.** Identity requires us to look outward to God for our meaning and identity.

Jesus said in Matthew 19:4, “*Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female...*” Jesus affirmed that there are only two genders, and they are fixed. [How do Christians understand gender?](#) **First, gender is objectively known**, such that the identity of who we are as sexed humans is not a mystery. **Second, they are embodied realities.** This physical difference starkly manifests itself in the anatomical design of male and female, making fulfilling of the cultural mandate to continually populate the earth actionable. **Third, gender is physically and spiritually permanent.** No hormonal treatment or surgery can change our sex chromosomes or God’s relationship to our souls. **Gender is determined by God, fixed at fertilization, known at birth, without considering the baby’s feelings.**

Men and women are human persons, brilliantly made in the image of the glorious God and called by Him for particular purposes. [So, what is a woman?](#) A woman is a human female distinguished by permanent XX chromosomes and, under normal development, by the anatomy that has the potential to conceive and menstruate at some point in her life cycle. [What is a man?](#) A man is human male distinguished by permanent XY chromosomes and the anatomy that makes conception and menstruation impossible.

Gender Dysphoria

The Fall is essential to understanding humanity’s struggles. We are all broken people living in a broken world. One author defines “**gender dysphoria**” for us: it “*refers to experiences of gender identity in which a person’s psychological and emotional sense of themselves does not match or align with their birth sex.* (19, emphasis added).”¹⁹ He adds, “*Most children who meet criteria for gender dysphoria do not continue to meet criteria as they grow up and enter adolescence*” (92).

¹⁹ Mark Yarhouse, [Understanding Gender Dysphoria: Navigating Transgender Issues in a Changing Culture](#)

People aren't necessarily sinning by experiencing gender dysphoria or times of confusion. Such feelings result from the fall (Romans 8:23). If you are confused or have confused children, please talk with the pastors. Sin occurs when people make peace with their desires and/or act on the dysphoria.

Application

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ saves us and then calls and empowers us to glorify God with our bodies: *you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.* (1 Cor. 6:20). We embrace appropriate gender norms, believing that we are not our own, and our gender *“is both a wonderful gift and an unchangeable part of God’s design, and it does not exist apart from the God-appointed link with one’s biological sex.”*

See below for more applications.

Appendix of Applications

How should you wade through the tumultuous tides of culture? Do not live by lies and let lies live through you. Yet, remember, God offers forgiveness and restoration for all sin through His Son Jesus Christ, and Christians should always act in the spirit of love, not hate, toward all people without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

When interacting with a transgender person or proponent, you must go deeper than only contending for the link between biological sex and gender. It would be best to address their worldview (transcendent order vs. a world of raw material) and its unhappy logical consequences (unhappiness, suicide, disruption). Then present the truth of the Biblical worldview and why it makes more sense of the world around us and our lives in it. We cannot find any ultimate happiness in what passes away. Only by trusting and submitting to God, in Christ, can we find an eternal understanding, forgiveness, identity, and purpose.

Recommend everyone read Andrew Walkers online article, [He, She, Ze, Zir? Navigating pronouns while loving your transgender neighbor](#).

First, remember that the Bible requires us to tell the truth. Paul tells the Corinthian church that love “does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:6). This means that the act of truth-telling about gender from the perspective of the Bible is an act of love. But do not be obnoxious, condescending, or uncaring.

Paul wrote, “*If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all*” (Romans 12:18). Don’t be needlessly combative but disarming and defuse conflict when you can.

How should we use pronouns?

1. **Avoid if you can.** If at all possible, avoid using pronouns altogether.

2. **Probably use preferred first name.** Names are gendered culturally, which is important, but not the only point to consider. For example, a man may be named Aaron and a woman Erin, yet both sound the same.
3. **Practice honesty in public.** Speak respectfully, but don't say what you do not believe, to either God or man.

[Proverbs 3:27 *“Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.”*

Matthew 5:27 *“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”]*

4. **Family.** Generally, do not honor their request. You possess the relational capital to understand this person's story and speak truthfully to them. Use it or lose it. To retain it is to retain one's testimony, credibility, and integrity which are attractive before everyone.

[Acts 17:32-33 *“When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some began to mock him, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this topic.” At that, Paul left the Areopagus....”*

Acts 26:28 *“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuade me to be a Christian.”]*

5. **Coworkers.** Nearness means clarity. Think of a concentric circle. How someone will choose to refer to a colleague will depend on the depth of the relationship.
6. **Church Settings.** I do not know how a question of pronouns would come up in a momentary introduction between persons. Still, I do think it would be needlessly confrontational to immediately correct someone's pronoun preference if they are visiting. Again, [#1] avoid pronouns altogether.

[Matthew 10:19 *“But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.”]*

7. **Pay the price.** Be willing to lose your job or social capital to glorify Christ.

[Acts 6:15 *“And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.”]*²⁰

²⁰ Andrew Walker, [He, She, Ze, Zir? Navigating pronouns while loving your transgender neighbor](#).