

- ***READ II Timothy 3:10-17*** In January of 2017, the Boy Scouts of American came to the decision that they would now “accept and register youth in the Cub and Boy Scout programs based on the gender identity indicated on the application.” In Connecticut this past Spring, two biological males placed first and second in the 200 meter state final while competing against females. And then of course I’m sure we are all aware of Olympic Gold medal winning decathlete Bruce Jenner who in 2015 declared that he was a transgendered woman who had been dealing with gender dysphoria for many years and had decided to finally truly “be herself.”
- If you are anything like me then as time progresses you find yourself recognizing the undeniable truth that is proclaimed by Paul in the text that we just read together just a few minutes ago. That truth is that **“evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.” (II Timothy 3:13)** While this verse in context is specifically speaking to the doctrinal heresies that were going to face Timothy in his ministry, the principle continues to remain true even today. As the years go by we are only seeing men growing worse and worse. What we thought was the height of human depravity 5, 10, 15, or 20 years ago seems like old news, and what we see today as being “as bad as it can get” will surely look like a small bump in the road another 5, 10, 15, or 20 years down the road.
- And yet that doesn’t negate the reality that we are faced with when it comes to the Gender Identity Issues that are prevalent in our society today. While it might be true that most of us have not had to face these issues head on in our day to day activities, there are some of us who have been affected by these issues. Melanie and myself have a mutual friend who as a young man just recently transitioned to living as a female because, in his words, he has always believed that he was a female even though biologically he is very much a male.
- Sadly, if you haven’t been faced with these issues up to this point, then odds are that they will be coming down the road, and we need to be equipped to figure out how to deal with such issues. This evening, I would like to focus on 4 important thoughts that will hopefully help us to be able to approach these issues with some logic and godly wisdom so that we might be able to be a good neighbor, friend, or family member to those who might be experiencing these issues.
- Let me also add that I am very much aware of just how polarizing an issue our topic of discussion is for this evening. I am well aware that there is a movement within our society that seeks to label such discussions as we are engaged in tonight as “hate speech” if we are not willing to end the discussion with a resounding show of support for those who are transgender or gender fluid. However, my job as a preacher and all of our jobs as disciples of Jesus and believers in the God of heaven is to open the Book, consider its teachings, and do the best we can to apply such truths to how we live our own lives and seek to serve our fellow man. Nothing said here tonight is said with even an ounce of vitriol, hate, or malice. I am seeking to only speak the truth in love, and allow that truth to rest upon the hearts of the listeners and hope that it takes root and does exactly what the truth of God is to do in showing men the path to God. Our goal is always to glorify and honor God, and we should strive to do such a thing even if we find ourselves in a situation such as this. With these things in mind, let’s open our hearts and Bibles and seek to settle upon God’s will in regards to gender identity issues.

4 Important Things To Remember

- I. **The rise of gender identification issues coincides with the rise of the rejection of truth & objectivity.**
 - A. **Over the past 50-60 years, the traditional beliefs of our culture have been under constant attack.**
 1. Since the end of World War II, there have been consistent attacks by those who would claim to be more enlightened against many of the traditional cultural beliefs that were the foundational fabric of western civilization for many decades. Questions began to be raised concerning why the family unit had to consist of a father, mother, and children. Why couldn’t

the blessings of marriage be enjoyed outside of marriage? Why couldn't a person have one or many casual sexual partners? Why couldn't a man be in love with a man or a woman be in love with a woman. Why couldn't unwanted pregnancies be terminated at a simple request? Why were traditionally held moral standards so closely guarded and kept by the majority of people?

2. While it wasn't necessarily wrong to ask such questions, the problems came when the given logical and objective answers were rejected in favor of people's personal feelings and desires being catered to. While statistics consistently show that children raised in a traditional household have an incredibly greater chance of finding success in life, people wanted to instead risk having children out of wedlock or just having abortions to cure these unwanted problems. Instead of sticking to social norms that had helped society to function for decades, people were ready to shake things up to, again, cater to their wants and desires. This isn't to say that there aren't culturally subjective norms such as activities that people participate in such as cooking, sports, or certain hobbies. Those types of activities have evolved over time to include more of one particular gender, but we are talking about changing the very fabric of who we are as individuals in our sex/gender.
 3. Once people started listening to feelings instead of reason, truth, and objective information, it shouldn't surprise us that people began deciding that they weren't content with even their own sex and gender! Instead of conceding that gender was determined by one's anatomy, many began to say that gender was simply a social construct that had no objective basis. Their claim was that gender is a totally subjective issue. What began to be embraced and what we see commonly today is this belief that the objective facts of biology simply don't determine gender identity, and that it is completely up to each individual person what gender they are.
- B. When truth and objectivity are rejected then only illogical foolishness can follow.**
1. Decades of rejecting truth and objectivity has gotten us to the place where gender dysphoria is the hot topic issue of the day. Those who suffer from such a disorder believe that their psychological or emotion gender identity differs from that of their biological sex. A male might believe in his mind that he is actually a female or vice versa. Yet, things don't end simply with this type of issue where an individual might transition to the opposite binary gender a single time and then live happily ever after.
 2. In fact, this first launch into gender identity change and issues simply opened up Pandora's box to the point where I don't see how we will ever be able to get everything back in order and sorted out to how it ought to be. Here are some examples of the madness (An article written by Rob Smith and published October 12, 2017 entitled "*Responding to the Transgender Revolution*" served as a tremendous resource for the preparation of this lesson.):
 - a) In 2014, the Vancouver School board instructed teachers to replace he/she with xe, him/her with gem, and his/hers with xyr.
 - b) The University of Iowa has more recently opted for ze, zem, and zir instead of traditional pronouns.
 - c) In January of 2015, The City University of New York announced the introduction of a policy not only banning titles and salutations but banning all pronouns completely. Students and staff are all to be referred to only by their first and last names.
 - d) In 2015, at Washington State University, students enrolled in a class called "Women & Popular Culture" were threatened with "failure for the semester" for using offensive language such as "referring to women/men as females and males."
 3. In addition to these examples of pronouns being rejected, we'll also note that there have been a massive upswing in the number of genders that are now recognized by different organizations. For example, there are now 60 genders that are recognized as legitimate by

Facebook. No longer can you choose only that you are either male or female, but you can now choose that you are agender, bigender, gender fluid, gender nonconforming, neither, other, pan gender, intersex, transgender, or two-spirit among many many more options.

4. This type of reasoning as led to a substantial amount of men and women transitioning from living as their biological sex/genders to a new gender of their choice. In fact, there is even a strong new movement where gender-reveal parties are highly discouraged because a new baby shouldn't have a gender impressed upon them from the time of their birth because they might grow up to feel as if they are a different gender than their anatomy shows. The line of reasoning states that parents should just let their kids grow up a little so that they can choose who/what they want to be without having any added pressure. Surely it doesn't take too long for us to recognize that we are living in dangerous times when even a foundational element of life such as what sex/gender we are is under attack, but our response should always be to consider what the Bible says on such an issue and then go from there.

II. The Bible supports static binary sex and gender.

A. There are major implications if we believe **II Timothy 3:16,17** to be true.

1. If we believe that the Bible truly is breathed out by God, meaning that He divinely inspired men to write what is contained within it then we must be willing to accept what is found within it. Specifically, what we see within this text is that it is perfectly capable of making the man of God adequate and equipped for every good work. It is profitable to teach us, convict us, correct us, and show us what is right and wrong.
2. If we believe this all to be true then that means that while a specific issue of our day might not be specifically addressed, the principles found within the Bible can help us to make the best decision possible as to how we ought to approach such an issue. Pornography, abortion, and gender identity issues might not be specifically addressed within the New Testament, but the principles found within it and the Bible as a whole can help us to be confident in what would be God's will on the issue. So what Biblical principles help us in this discussion?

B. **"He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE."** (Matthew 19:4)

1. In **Matthew 19**, we find our Lord Jesus being questioned concerning whether or not a man could divorce his wife for just any reason. Jesus's response begins by reminding the listeners of a foundational principle of life on this earth and that principle is that God, in the beginning, created men and women, males and females. There is no indication at all that there is any sort of third or beyond gender. In the beginning, God created a man and from the rib of the man He created a female and the two became husband and wife, and eventually they would become father and mother to children. The natural and proper sequence of life was established in Genesis 1, 2, & 4, and that sequence is that males would be born and they would have the opportunity to grow into husbands and fathers, and females would be born and have the opportunity to grow up into wives and mothers. This is the proper order of correlating sex and gender roles that God created us in, but we know that sin being introduced into the world messed up God's proper order that he had established from the beginning.
2. Therefore, it was necessary for God to have to include within the Law of Moses prohibitions against men trying to pass as women and vice versa. **"A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God."** (Deuteronomy 22:5) By and large people of Moses's day wore basically the same type of clothing, so we conclude that what is being spoken of in this text is a man or women portraying themselves as if they actually are the opposite sex/gender which would be in the minds of many a third gender, and yet we see that God does not approve of such in any way shape or form.

3. While this is a law that falls under the Old Covenant that was done away with when Christ established His covenant, we must notice that Jesus mentioned nothing of a third gender in **Matthew 19:5** that would've gone against the original natural order that was established in **Genesis 1,2**. We could also note that men had continued to try to do that which is against the natural order as can be seen in **Romans 1:26,27** where homosexual activity is expressly condemned by God.
4. Now, I will take a moment to recognize that there are a very small percentage of the human race that is born what would be termed "intersex" with some sort of gender abnormality in which both reproductive organs are found in various degrees. These are medically identifiable deviations from the binary sex/gender norms, and therefore they have not been medically confirmed as a third gender, but simply as an abnormality. These types of individuals are not under our scope of discussion because their issues are biologically based while those who are identified with the transgender movement do so from psychological motivations. Those born intersex are unfortunately suffering the affects of a fallen and broken world in which sin has greatly damaged God's original design of creation.
5. With all of this in mind, I hope we have sufficiently seen that there is not foothold within Scripture for an individual to transition genders or be gender fluid. In the beginning, God made us male and female, and this is His natural order than is to be upheld to this day.

III. Those dealing with gender dysphoria and like issues are suffering in various ways.

A. Those struggling with a gender identity crisis see themselves as being unsatisfied in some way.

1. The most common statements from those who suffer from gender dysphoria are "I was born in the wrong body. My mind says I'm one gender, but my body is the opposite." Because of these thoughts, these people struggle to live a fulfilling life because they constantly feel as if there is a struggle between their mind and their bodies. In their minds, the only way they can be who they truly believe themselves to be is to transition to the opposite gender and have gender reconstruction surgery or begin a hormone regiment that will help them to become more of the gender that they believe they really are.
2. Other people are simply dissatisfied with the culture norms and gender roles that are in place in our society. It might be that a person enjoys doing things that might fall on both sides of the gender norm line. Maybe a person likes to clean house while also enjoying playing football. Instead of recognizing that these are culturally determined gender roles and letting it be what it is, they decide that they would rather just become gender fluid and allow for each individual day to determine what type of gender they will be. It might seem ridiculous, but when there is no objective standard by which to determine reality then reality can become whatever one decides for it to be. Therefore, it shouldn't surprise us when we encounter people who are just flat out miserable and unhappy in their current state of being because they can't find fulfillment in their current situation as a biological male, female, or something else.

B. These struggles have led to a very high rate of suicide and self-harm being carried out by transgendered people.

1. Recent studies have found that in transgender males there is a suicide attempt rate of up to 52% while the rate for all other adolescents only stands at 9%. (*Pediatrics* Publication) A recent study conducted by the Canadian Institute of Health Research concluded, "*Transgender youth had a higher risk of reporting psychological distress, self-harm, major depressive episode, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts. Risk ratios ranged from 3.8 to 16.1. Transgender boys/men and non-binary youth were most likely to report self-harm and non-binary youth also reported lower overall mental health. Rates of self-harm and suicide were lower in the 19–25 age group than the 14–18 age group, but reported overall mental health was the same across these age groups.*" (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5630273/>)

2. There are many more reports that could be shown to support such conclusions, but I share these within this discussion to simply show that those who are struggling with these issues are in serious danger, and they need to find legitimate help to allow them to find some sort of solid foundation for how they can live well in this life. I might not be a doctor who could clinically diagnose such mental issues that are involved within this discussion, but I am a Christian and there are certain steps I can take to help those who I might know that are struggling with these issues within their own lives.

IV. The people going through these issues need our love and compassion.

A. It can be easy for us to write those who deal with these issues off as being lost causes.

1. As with any sin that is open and public, it can be easy to simply treat such people involved as if they have the plague or leprosy. We could cut off any and all ties with them and simply write them off as being lost causes because they have become involved in things that we might deem as being just too wrong to even address. Our own uncomfortable feelings with such things stands as a barrier between us and those who are in need of guidance.
2. I think this type of reaction is most common when it comes to sins of a sexual nature because they are truly against the natural order that God created us to be in. However, we must recognize that sins of a sexual nature are sins just like anything else, and they are sins that need to be addressed or they will eventually lead the person to an eternity in hell. Paul addresses all sins as being equally dangerous and condemning when he says in **I Corinthians 6:9,10**, *"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God."* No matter the sin whether it be sexual in nature or not...it will condemn and keep people out of heaven, and that shouldn't be what many of us desire. Thankfully, not all hope is lost!

B. There is hope for those who might be currently suffering through these issues.

1. This text is one of my favorite passages because it states that even these brethren were engaged in some of these horrific sins, and yet that is said in the past tense because they had overcome those things! They had overcome them by the grace and mercy of God, and found themselves washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Jesus and in the Spirit of God!
2. That same type of hope can be found by those who might be struggling with gender identity issues within their own lives. We must be the people who remind them time and time again just how much God loves them and how He wants to use them to His honor and glory by them working hard to overcome the fleshly desires that they might feel within themselves. We need to shower those who have the struggles with as much love and support as possible because those who would seek to use them as poster children for the transgender movement will surely be busy trying to encourage them to do what is best for themselves, and we know that changing themselves into something other than what God created them to be simply isn't what will be pleasing to our great God who is in heaven. Overcoming such struggles will be just as difficult as any number of other struggles that we all face. All of us have to deny ourselves in one way or another, but it can be done with a fervent desire to please God and embrace whatever portion it is that God has given us in this life and the roles that have been given to us to fulfill.

There is so much more that could be discussed within such a study such as this, but I hope that this might simply give people encouragement as to how they can help themselves or those they know who are struggling with such issues within their lives. This issue is a serious and polarizing issue in which feelings will often try to trump facts and truth, but we must be a people who are committed to loving the truth and loving those who are in desperate need of our help to overcome the struggles in their lives. Regardless of the blowback that might be garnered from the politically correct and enlightened, may God help us to stand firm in His Word and the truths found within it.