



# **Caring for Families with Gay and Transgender Children**

Facing the current challenges as churches

John Benton  
Ruth Woodcraft and  
An Anonymous Pastor and Wife

# CONTENTS

	Page number
1. A brief theology of transgender ideas John Benton	3
2. Our experience An anonymous pastor and wife	9
3. Resources for helping a child identifying as trans Ruth Woodcraft	16

© 2023 The Authors

Cover image: iStock

## **1: A brief theology of transgender ideas – John Benton**

We need immediately to record that the job of this booklet is not to condemn anyone. The writers know they are sinners and have fled to Jesus for a salvation we do not deserve. We are simply trying to get our heads around what is happening with many families and young people today.

Many cultural norms concerning sex and acceptable sexual behaviour have been swept away in recent decades. In particular, the Christian view of mankind being composed of two sexes, male and female, Genesis 1.27, and the Bible's teaching concerning marriage, Matthew 19.4,5, is in the process of being rejected as oppressive and damaging.

How have we got to this way of thinking? This seismic shift has not come out of nowhere, neither does it take the God of the Bible by surprise.

### **What happens when God is rejected?**

For the last 300 years or more secular thinkers have argued that God either doesn't exist or is irrelevant to daily life. Some said that in dispensing with God very little would change. Others are more honest. This is the late William B. Provine, once Professor of the History of Science at Cornell University: 'Let me summarize my views on what modern evolutionary biology tells us loud and clear...There are no gods, no purposes and no goal-directed forces of any kind. There is no life after death....There is no ultimate foundation for ethics, no ultimate meaning in life, and no free will for human beings either.'<sup>1</sup>

The Bible says that to turn away from God affects a society at the deepest level. When there is no ultimate basis for ethics, no meaning in life and we think we have no free will and therefore cannot help what we do, we enter a wholly different world. We should understand that this turning from God is the root of the titanic changes we are witnessing.

### **The trajectory without God**

Here are three key NT passages which highlight what happens.

- 2 Timothy 3.1-4

Jesus taught that in the last days 'many will turn away from the faith', Matthew 24.10, rejecting God. Here Paul lists some of the bad fruit which must inevitably

---

<sup>1</sup> In debate with Phillip Johnson, Stanford University, April 30, 1994

follow. Notice two things. *First*, people become ‘lovers of themselves’, v2. The individual self is put above all else. *Second*, that means, in practical terms, that people become, v4, ‘lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God’. Pleasure and personal ‘feel good’ become the priority. This is what loving yourself is about practically – what gives me pleasure, what I feel most comfortable with, what I get a buzz from. And from the list of other sins Paul mentions here, consequent upon this outlook we can infer ‘woe betide anyone who gets in the way’.

- Ephesians 4.18-19

These verses spell out the same trajectory towards pleasure, sensualism, hedonism for those who live without God. ‘Having lost all sensitivity’ to God and to spiritual things, they fill the void left in their hearts with sensuality. They ‘give themselves over’ to the pleasures of their five senses. Paul indicates that this heads in the direction of illicit sex, which will tend to extremes.

- Romans 1.18-32

Let me highlight two things here. *First*, the parallel with Ephesians – they ‘give themselves over’ and here ‘God gave them over’, v24 etc. *Second*, this behaviour not only deserves the judgment of God according to Paul, but it is, in itself, an expression of the wrath of God, v18.

This is our society, our current culture. The Western world which used to be thought of as ‘Christendom’, has become dominated by sex and sexual politics. While, down the years, there have always been a minority of libertines, it is now *their* ideas which command the culture.

### **The priority of the subjective over the objective**

Of course, we go in this direction without God, because of the Fall of mankind in Adam. This means that the human self is not neutral but sinful. Our desires, which determine our pleasures, are corrupted and anti-God.

With the priority of ‘feel good’, the internal, personal world of individuals tends to take precedence over external reality. The subjective trumps the objective. Thus emerges the supposed dislocation between gender and sex. What I am biologically and objectively (male?) is of secondary importance, if I feel, subjectively, more comfortable, as a female – because feeling positive, satisfying my desires is my life – it is who I am. But our world has an objective reality whether we *like* it or not and to pretend otherwise brings tragedy.

Behind this attitude to life lurks Satan's original lie in Eden, 'You shall be as God', Genesis 3.5. Adam and Eve were lured into disobeying God's command not to eat the forbidden fruit by Satan's promise of deity.

Genesis 1 tells us that God is the Creator, Genesis 1.1. But the contemporary world replies with a rebellious 'No. I shall be my own maker – I will decide what I shall be, and what is good, what is right for me – no-one else. I will decide what is true and what isn't. I will make my own reality'. The oft repeated slogan is 'You can be whatever you want to be' and it finds full expression in the ethos of gender confusion. 'I will decide if I'm male or female or something else'.<sup>2</sup>

But the devil's promise 'You shall be as God' was a lie, and if you read Abigail Shrier's book *Irreversible Damage: Teenaged Girls and the Transgender Craze*<sup>3</sup>, you will see that is still the case as young teenagers wreck their lives through surgery and testosterone therapy they later deeply regretted. Sadly, given the current politically correct ideology, no-one, not even health professionals dare challenge them – because people must be free to be whatever they want to be. This is all terribly wrong. But our hearts go out to those caught up in these things.

### **The rise and triumph of the modern self**

In some ways, Carl Trueman's crucial book, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*,<sup>4</sup> simply traces in history the trajectory indicated by the Scripture texts we cited. This societal change has taken centuries because a Christian morality and view of family has been the fundamental building block of the West. But now they are being overthrown. Dispensing with God has reshaped how people now think of themselves and of others.

Trueman writes: 'The underlying argument is that the sexual revolution, and its various manifestations in modern society, cannot be treated in isolation but rather must be interpreted as the specific and perhaps most obvious social manifestation of a much deeper and wider revolution in the understanding of what it means to be a self'.<sup>5</sup>

He sees the historical 'evolution' of the self, something like this, enlightening us as to how we got to where we are now. The 'psychological self' was followed by

---

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Corinthians 6.9 – *malakoi* (the passive partner in homosexual acts – men and boys who allow themselves to be used as female?) & *arsenokoitai* (the active partner in homosexual acts – male / penetrative).

<sup>3</sup> *Irreversible Damage: Teenaged Girls and the Transgender Craze*, by Abigail Shrier, Swift Books, 2021

<sup>4</sup> *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, by Carl Trueman, Crossway, 2020

<sup>5</sup> Trueman page 35

the 'romantic self'. This was succeeded by the 'plastic (or malleable) self'. Next came the explicitly 'sexual self', which has now, under the arguments of the New Left become the 'sexually politicized self'.

All these are quite different from what we might propose as a Biblical view of self, made in the image of God, Genesis 1.27, fallen but redeemed for Christ and to become like Christ.

- *The psychological self*

Our first stop en route as we come away from Reformation thinking into the Enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). For Rousseau, people are intrinsically good until they are corrupted by the forces of society. But he is the thinker who, instead of looking outward to God, invites the self to turn inward. The real identity of an individual is to be found in the inner psychological autobiography.<sup>6</sup> Rousseau wrote of his *Confessions*: 'It is the history of my soul that I promised, and to relate it faithfully I require no other memorandum; all I need do, as I have done up until now, is to look inside myself.'

Along with this went an emphasis on self-love,<sup>7</sup> empathy and sympathy as the main informers of conscience and the tension between the individual and corrupt society.

- *The romantic self*

The poets of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Wordsworth, Blake and Shelley, take the ideas of Rousseau from the intellectual elite and popularize them into mainstream culture. Rousseau's idea of society corrupting and brutalizing the innocent individual, seemed writ large in the days of the Industrial Revolution. The solution was to turn inward and back to an idealized rural existence.

I ought to add that the romantic self also gained huge momentum from developments in France. The *philosophes* like Diderot attacked Christian sexual morality.<sup>8</sup> Diderot wrote an erotic / campaigning novel *The Nun* probably influenced by the fact that his sister Angelique died in a convent of overwork, he would say brought on by sexual frustration.

---

<sup>6</sup> Trueman page 129

<sup>7</sup> Compare 2 Timothy 3.2

<sup>8</sup> See *Wicked Company: Freethinkers and Friendship in Pre-revolutionary Paris*, by Philipp Blom, Weidenfeld & Nicolson 2011

- *The plastic self*

Plastic man is not simply psychological. He is, in Trueman's words, 'a man who thinks he can make and remake a personal identity at will'.<sup>9</sup>

The foundations for such thinking were laid by the philosophers Frederick Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Karl Marx (1818-1883), and by the scientist Charles Darwin (1809-1882). Nietzsche is famous for his grim atheism which saw life as a power struggle and invites us to rise above human nature – to become 'superman'. Marx saw industrialisation as not only changing society but reshaping people themselves and how they related to one another. Human nature is therefore plastic or malleable. Human nature is no longer a 'given' but a product of the times – not fixed. Darwin reinforced this. People must accept that they are mere accidents of evolution and not made in order to fulfil any kind of purpose. He blurred the lines between the human and the animal and removed any idea of humanity having special status. We are ever evolving, changing.

*The sexual self*

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the father of psychoanalysis is a key figure in this story. He equated happiness with 'genital pleasure'. Now personal identity became equated with sex and sexuality. That idea currently dominates the Western world – with people categorized according to their sexual desires, gay, bi, straight etc. For many, this is the most prominent truth about who you are.

If for Rousseau the natural man was innocent, for Freud the human subconscious, emerging from the strife of our evolutionary past, is dark, violent and irrational. The job of the psychoanalyst was to excavate the unseen forces within us and bring them to the surface of consciousness.

Freud places the sex drive at the core of what it is to be human.<sup>10</sup> Before Freud, sex was for procreation and pleasure, Proverbs 5.19 – now it is who we really are. The happiest person is the one who can constantly indulge his or her sexual desires. However, this plays into the hands of powerful individuals, so we need civilization to curb this. From Freud's angle, 'it means that it is impossible for the civilized to be truly happy'.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Trueman page 164

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that if sex is at the centre of what it is to be human then children have to be sexualized. This is where the agenda for sex education to be pushed earlier and earlier comes from.

<sup>11</sup> Trueman, page 219

- *The sexually politicized self*

Freud's ideas were later used to change the classic understanding of oppression. This is the most recent and crucial move in the story.

Because identity is about our inner self, especially our sexual desires, then victimhood becomes psychologized. The idea that oppression is about poverty or physical mistreatment is eclipsed. It is, in this case, those who feel unable to express their sexual desires, or whose sexual desires are deemed unacceptable by society, who are the oppressed. Oppression is about emotions.

Sex is no longer a private activity because it relates to our social identity. To outlaw or merely tolerate gay sex or transgender ideas, for example, is to outlaw or merely tolerate a certain identity. It hits at the very heart of who a person believes themselves to be. This is the problem we face in a secular world.

Many university humanities departments have adopted so-called 'Critical Theory'<sup>12</sup> and have latched on to this new angle on victimhood and oppression. The New Left interprets traditional sexual codes as a malign strategy for maintaining the status quo in society. Western ideals must therefore be overthrown. The family is the authoritarian state in miniature. Dismantling the family is now, therefore, thought by many to be essential for political liberation. Sexual revolution is the way to achieve this.

---

<sup>12</sup> Trueman summarizes the basic tenets of Critical Theory as follows: 1. The power can be divided between those who have power and those who do not; 2. The dominant Western narrative is really an ideological construct to preserve its own power structure; 3. The goal of Critical Theory is therefore to destabilize this power structure by destabilizing its dominant narratives that are used to justify it. (This includes things like natural gender, family and church - JB).

## **2: Our experience – an anonymous pastor and wife**

*This introduction is written in the 3rd person for anonymity.*

About 10 years ago, our child who had always seemed content with their biological sex started to behave in ways we found very puzzling. During their time at university, they had made some bad decisions but with the help of some godly mature Christians they had seemed to be back on track. So, we were somewhat bewildered when in their early 20s they started to cross-dress, change their name and pronouns and become very militant about LGBTQI+ ideology. As we observed this and their increasing struggles with poor mental health, we expressed parental concern and explained why we were worried.

This sadly didn't dissuade them from becoming increasingly entrenched in their new LGBTQI+ friendship group and lifestyle. This culminated in our receiving a message telling us that they no longer needed or wanted us in their life, and that contact with us just made them feel bad. We replied that we were deeply saddened by this and that our door is always open. At a later date they also cut off their sibling and so we have now had no contact for a number of years.

We are choosing to share our story, our pain and some of the things we have learnt in the hope that it might be of help to those who are experiencing similar challenging family relationships, or those seeking to support families in this situation.

### **Pain**

We have read many books on parenting, we have taught on it, but there are few books that talk about the pain of parenthood except John White's *Parents in Pain*. We recommend this book.

It's a normal part of Christian life to face difficulties. Christians face rejection and at times violent opposition. This can occur even in the family, *'Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death,'* Matthew 10.21-22

Other Christians also face deeply painful things as disciples. It is our determination not to be identified by our experience, nor to view ourselves, or be seen by others, as victims. Our identity is in Christ.

Each situation is, of course, different. For us it is an adult child who had already left home, but for others it is a student who enters the home occasionally and

inhabits two cultures, and for others it is constantly within the home as their child still lives there. But in every situation the parents are experiencing deep emotional pain.

Here are some comments quoted by Prof Miriam Grossman in conversation with Jordan Petersen (not Christians): *‘My daughter told me she was trans a year ago at age 15. I have sleepless nights, vacuous days occasionally where I just want to give up, and SOOOOO many instances of feeling alone and unseen or unheard. I wish this aspect of parenting a “trans” child was addressed more thoroughly!!!!’*<sup>13</sup> Church leaders must recognise the issues the parent is grappling with and the severe ongoing pain they suffer. There is much written about the dangers of the growth of LGBTQI+ ideology, but we have found little to help parents.

- *Shame and blame*

This is not what a parent plans, or hopes, for their child. When we rightly rejoice with those who are rejoicing in church over an engagement, a marriage, the birth of a child, do we also consider how the parents of a daughter who has just come out as gay and brought home her girlfriend will be feeling? What if they were to get engaged? Will that be announced with the same happiness? – of course not. How do parents feel if their child who is transitioning comes to church with them? And within all this the parent blames themselves, often asking where they have gone wrong, or what should we have done differently.

- *Perplexed and alone*

When our child started to cross dress, we were totally bewildered. We could not understand why this was happening. We felt alone. How do you share this in your church? And if you are in any position of leadership, it is even more difficult.

This aloneness is strangely heightened as there is conflict with the world. This is best illustrated on the occasion of meeting our very evidently cross-dressed child at a café. All eyes were on our table as people could not understand what they were seeing. Yet in contrast a transitioning child has the medical authority’s approval and affirmation, and the LGBTQI+ groups are celebrating.

## **Bereaved**

The most significant issue church leaders need to recognise is that this is a type

---

<sup>13</sup> Jordan Petersen in conversation with Miriam Grossman [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su2Z4\\_iQHz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su2Z4_iQHz4)

of bereavement. To quote Prof Miriam Grossman again, *'the parents have trauma, they are grieving, and none of it is acknowledged except by each other...'*.

- *Ongoing grief*

It is recognised that mothers and fathers respond differently in experiencing the death of a child and need different pastoral support. The same is true when a child transitions or comes out. Perhaps one parent wants to seek others to talk and pray with, whilst the other can hardly talk about it with their partner. Then something will trigger an emotion in one but not the other (perhaps a sermon or a song in church) and at that point the one affected can't understand why the other isn't feeling the same. The devil seeks to divide.

This is a pastoral issue that church leaders must acknowledge. As with bereavement this is very painful and if the parents feel ignored by leaders, they will be at best prickly, and at worst angry with this lack of care.

In essence this is grieving the loss of a child, but it is without change or end. In physical bereavement there is clarity and public knowledge. In time there can be acceptance and a new life lived without the loved one. However, in this situation, there is deliberate rejection, even hatred, causing an ongoing, unending grief - so you are constantly grieving but never able to reach a place of acceptance. And because there is limited public knowledge, there is limited care and the ongoing lonely struggle with shame.

## **Family**

This impacts the family in various ways.

- *Special days*

Those days of joy and celebration are marred. At Christmas, birthdays, Father's Day or Mother's Day there is either a card with the wrong name or no card at all. Imagine the emotions when you have to buy a birthday card for your daughter who is now saying they are your son.

- *Memories*

It feels as if the good memories have been erased. How do you process prior childhood? For example, what do you do with photos when the child was one gender and the appearance is different. What do you do with current photos and past family photos? What if a sibling marries what do you do with the wedding

photos? What if your son/daughter marries someone of the same sex? If you have photos of the other children but omit one what does that say about the child? Is this evidence of disapproval and favouritism? And what does it say to that child, the other children, any visitors and yourselves?

- *Wider family*

How does a sibling cope? At a recent family celebration our other adult child said with sadness and with no prompt from us – *‘there is always someone missing’*. If the other child had died there could be some conversation over happy memories, but in this there was none. Our child is now effectively an only child. Miriam Grossman talks about ...*the siblings who are held hostage by it all*.

And, of course, it is possible that some in the family won't see the issues as you do. They might celebrate what your child is doing, thus there will be added tension and even further division. In providing pastoral support every member of the family needs consideration.

- *Invasion*

It is hard to explain but it is a gloom that can invade without warning. More than once in these years since our child left, the three of us have been enjoying time together, perhaps watching a film, something happens on screen and a strange silence falls over the room. We know we are all thinking the same, then one speaks and we talk – a happy family time is spoilt again.

- *Home*

The simple joys of family life are affected. Think about Christmas and the common request *Can we stay with you this year?* For most church families that is a joy as your child and spouse or single child come to stay, but for others there are significant levels of difficulty. What if the child is not married and wants to bring their partner? What if that partner (or spouse) is of the same sex? What if this is a transgender relationship? What is the biblical response to all of these? If you're a church leader, how can you help and support the church member facing such challenging decisions?

## **Names**

This is one of the biggest and most difficult issues. If someone changes their name, how should you respond? What should church leaders advise? There is a divergence of opinion in this and we'd say there is no simple answer. It is complex as you have to grapple with truth, love and pragmatism.

Some say it is impossible to use any other name as that is a denial of reality and of parenthood. They say it is important to use the pronouns that are true. But if you refuse to use the new name then it is taken as being unloving and increases the hostility and division. So perhaps it is sometimes helpful to use the new name as that continues the relationship? In all of this there is a huge mix of entangled issues.

The fact is, as we discovered, it is almost impossible to consistently change the name you use after so many years of using the previous one, and each time you speak the new name there is a sense of deep rejection, and personal unease.

Whatever you decide is right about this – we would say that most importantly you must come to an agreement as a couple on this – do not give the devil a foothold in dividing you.

This (cultic) ideology has become accepted in our society. In our church book club we were reading *Being the bad Guys* and an 18 year old young man perceptively asked “*who is helping those at school?*” So, what about your youth group, Sunday school, children’s club? Are the leaders equipped for when a child arrives and says they have changed their name; or tells you that a girl at school is now a boy, and how good and brave it is of them?

## **Help and support**

How can a church leader help?

- *Not everyone needs to know*

This is not an item for the newsheet for prayer this week. The danger is that it becomes your identity – ‘they’re the parents who have a “xyz child”’.

- *Recognise the pain*

A woman in our small group was reflecting on her difficult family background and said, ‘*doesn’t everyone else have perfect families?*’ The answer is ‘No’. There is a danger that we play happy families or even make the family an idol in church. The Bible is realistic about family life as Genesis shows, with discord, deceit and even murder in families – and it doesn’t stop in Genesis! This helps all parents to see there are no perfect families and that the parent in pain is not to blame and is still loved by the Lord and can continue in effective service.

But do celebrate family life – Father’s Day, Mother’s Day, weddings, baby

thanksgivings – all wonderful occasions. The Bible says *rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn*. Whatever our personal sadness we should be choosing, in God’s strength, to share in the joy of others. At the same time leaders especially should be pastorally aware that some will be struggling on these occasions – this will include families like ours, but also those who struggle with singleness, infertility, difficult relationships and bereavement.

- *Keep on listening and be sensitive*

We’d encourage leaders especially, to listen and ask, but there should also be body ministry with one caring for another. It is so encouraging when someone sensitively recognises your pain and takes the initiative in asking how you are and means it. The opposite is also true – having shared something of our personal sadness with someone, which is something we don’t do with everyone, if they subsequently ask something like ‘*how’s the family?*’ in that shallow social way, this can inflict deeper pain.

It’s all too easy to have the quick one liner and before you know it, that thoughtless joke has upset someone, whether they show it or not. You might think a man calling themselves a woman or a man marrying a man is funny, but the reality is anything but funny. None of us would joke about the pain of infertility or bereavement.

- *Provide the small group*

Our home group is a great encouragement to us, but it has taken time and courage to share about our situation. You need to feel confident that the group will both understand your pain, see the truth and keep the necessary confidences. What an encouragement it is when a member mentions they’re praying for you and perhaps when they know it’s a particularly challenging time.

- *Recognise the cult*

It seems that there are many cultic characteristics within LGBTQI+ ideology. Those who are within the cult are hostile to those who challenge it and agreeing to differ is not an option. A common experience for families like ours is the controlling of other areas of family life, from something as little as cancelling arrangements, to refusing to meet with certain family members.

## **Still learning**

We are still learning in our walk with the Lord through this challenging situation.

- *To trust*

Suffering is where our faith and our theology hits the road. Tim Keller has been invaluable in helping us to think and respond Biblically. He says in *Walking with God in Pain and Suffering*: *'the crucible doesn't automatically make us better – we must recognise, depend on, speak with, and believe in God while in the fire.'* We were talking a few years ago with a friend who had suffered a very painful abandonment and we concluded that the bottom line is, will we trust our Lord? Every time we sing songs about trusting God it is both an opportunity and a challenge to choose to keep on trusting.

- *To lament*

You hate the situation, but you determine to approach God, bring the pain, ask for help and continue to trust. To quote John Piper, *'Lament helps you keep trusting the One who keeps you trusting'*. The Psalms of lament are particularly helpful. God's Word and His character has become even more precious to us through our challenges. He has proved Himself loving and faithful even through the darkest times.

- *To help others*

We have found over time the strength to confide with others. Our ministries constantly cause us to be meeting new people, inevitably the question comes, what family do you have? Where before we would seek to change the subject now, in God's strength, we are more open in what we say. And consequently, we can go on to have significant conversations with others who are suffering parental pain.

In the midst of pain we are being equipped to support others which is why we sharing our story.

*2 Corinthians 1.3-7 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

### **3: Resources for helping a child identifying as trans – Ruth Woodcraft**

Some children need protecting from succumbing to the illogical and unbiblical thinking of gender ideology. Some need help because they find themselves in the grip of it.

Space allows for just a quick skate across the surface of the advice and wisdom which has been amassed over the past few years on this topic. It is by no means a comprehensive look at all the resources available.

For those who are reading this, urgently looking for help to rescue their child from the grip of ‘gender’ thinking, please go straight to the resources list at the end of this chapter and start accessing the information and support on the sites given. You are not alone, and there’s some fantastic advice out there about how to help a child who has been drawn in by the cult-like behaviour of the gender believers.

It is worth noting that the vulnerable teens identifying as ‘trans’ often have co-morbidities like abuse, autism, or being bullied.<sup>1</sup> They become victims of this ideology which has spread so swiftly through the western world. They are not like the trans identifying males, who don’t have surgery, and are claiming they are women, sometimes claiming they are lesbians with a ‘female penis’. They are also not the vanishingly small group of boys, who have through decades remained a consistently sized group who from a very young age have felt a disconnect between their body and mind, (a disorder healed most often by dismantling stereotypes about boys and girls).

The majority of teens, who have become the fastest growing group<sup>2</sup> of trans identifying individuals, are young girls, though a not insignificant group of teen boys now present as having rapid onset gender dysphoria. Some are no doubt escaping our pornified culture which is frightening to young girls by claiming they are ‘boys’, and some have taken on an identity pushed on them by regressive stereotypical ideas of male and female, which see them turned into pharmaceutical patients for life.

What can we do?

#### **Soak yourselves in the Bible**

*Gender: A conversation guide for parents and pastors*<sup>3</sup> walks through all the key

ideas from the Bible about sexuality and gender. Quite often people search for texts that would help frame a 'gotcha' argument about sexuality or 'gender'. 'Isn't there something somewhere about a man not dressing as a woman?' thinks the desperate Christian. But this somewhat misses the point. The whole of the Bible is about God relating to humans as male and female. The Bible starts with a wedding in a garden and ends with a wedding in a city. The authors of this book understand that. All the major teachings about who we are, who God is, salvation, sin, and so on are in the first chapters of Genesis. All of these are foundational issues which have been upended with the appearance of queer theory<sup>4</sup> in schools, and absorbed into society in general.

The book is easy to read, and short, and the content should be taught sooner rather than later. Although we need to take account of what we think our child is ready to understand, the exposure to the ideology – regardless of whether or not they are home educated – starts early. You would have to live in the middle of a field seeing absolutely no one before you could be sure a child had not seen things which makes them question biblical teaching heard in the home or on a Sunday about biological sex and 'gender'. Homeschool will not protect a heart, as the heart is deceitful above all things, and it is out of a person's heart that evil thoughts come (Jeremiah 17.9, Matthew 7.20). Engagement with the child about these issues is necessary regardless of the education choices made by parents prior to the age of 18.

Alongside that, we shouldn't be afraid of telling children about difficult subjects in a simple way. For example, when my children started using the family computer (in a family room downstairs) for school work, I discussed 'frightening or confusing images' they may stumble across unintentionally. That was an early conversation about pornography, without using the word 'porn' or telling them in detail about the content. It is possible to shield your child from the horror of the world whilst protecting them in an age-appropriate fashion. No parent shows their child the mutilated body of a pedestrian crushed in a traffic accident, but most parents tell their child to stay on the pavement so they don't get hurt by a car.

### **Read some good Christian books**

One highlight from the reading list<sup>5</sup> is *Finding your best identity* by Andrew Bunt. Having wrestled with his body and wondering if he was 'trans'<sup>6</sup>, he then struggled with his sexual orientation. His book stands out from some teaching which has become prevalent lately, as he is unafraid of reminding the reader of

the need to 'flee' from sin, and he emphasizes 1 Corinthians 6.11 which states so confidently 'what some of you were'. His identity is in Christ. It's easy to read and possible for a teenager to access.

Beware of books, blogs or podcasts that might downplay the problems of trans identities, or those who seem to be happy to live alongside desires which contradict the Bible's teaching on relationships or biological sex. The grip of 'gender' is strong. Clarity of thought, being logical, is vital.

### **Recognise unbiblical pseudoscience**

Many organisations now assume everyone has a gender, separate from and alongside their biological sex. This set of regressive stereotypes, as embraced by trans identifying men (transwoman) when they don 'womanface' and skip around as 'girls' or pornified women, doesn't correspond with the biological sex at birth. Actually, we don't have a gender. We each do have a personality. And it is this which 'gender' has usurped, swallowing up biological sex along the way, suggesting people are 'assigned' a gender at birth. In fact, sex is observed at birth, or before. It is a given.

God made us male and female, and although our bodies as women are designed to reproduce, we are not merely reproductive machines. It is the believers in gender who reduce us to body parts separating us into bits. The Bible sees us a whole person: heart, soul, mind, strength. We have dignity and variety, skills and gifts specific to us as individuals that we have been given to use for God's glory.

### **Teach complementarianism well**

How many children might think that their primary purpose in life is to be saved, get married and have children? How many might have a skewed view of life as a Christian, especially in churches where teaching is given, that women are to be flowery skirt-wearing apple pie makers even if they don't like wearing skirts and make terrible pies? This may raise a smile, but it can be terribly painful for women, who don't fit the stereotype.

Teach biblical roles for men and women, but ensure no 'gendered' thinking creeps in that shouldn't be there. There is no reason why a girl can't be sporty, or a quiet boy has to 'be a proper boy'. There is nothing wrong with churches running boys groups, or asking children to split into boys and girls to play a game. But should we only be offering curry nights to men, and craft nights to

women? Think through the messages church inadvertently sends out. Knowing that churches may have children associated with them who are trans identifying, or trans sympathetic, this subliminal messaging can be damaging.

### **Learn the language**

There are myriad terms, fluid, inconsistent and contradictory ideas to learn. But all are worth getting conversant with as understanding something from the inside will aid an objective critique of it. Gender doesn't mean sex – it never did – it just means a collection of society specific stereotypical behaviours of one sex which gender believers rank above biological sex. So captured has society become, so duped by the propaganda produced by some individuals telling their 'story', the world has been reshaped in a few short years by a few porn addled men who claim victim status whilst sporting stubble and dresses.

Watch some of the videos of characters like Jeffrey Marsh,<sup>7</sup> a man who identifies as non-binary who encourages people (including children) to go 'no contact' with family who aren't on board with the pronouns, names, clothes, behaviours of those performing gender as if it were more concrete and certain than biological sex.

### **Monitor Screens**

At the start of the school term, the year 11 head at school said: 'We probably all wrestle with screen time with our children. Just pick up the screen... and throw it in the bin'.

Due to people like Jeffrey Marsh who, frankly, appears to groom observers into the cult of gender, the way YouTube shorts make one's thumb just flick repeatedly to the next video, and the addictive doom scrolling where algorithms drive one further and further down the rabbit hole, screens can provide the primary source material which draws in the vulnerable child who then claims to be 'nonbinary' or 'trans'. There are so many online who are mentally ill teenagers – or in the US, often teachers – claiming they have 'systems' (formerly a mental disorder appearing in those who were coping with terrible abuse where someone thinks they have different 'people' in their heads) or they are not the sex they were born as due to reasons that are incoherent, exhibiting concerning behaviours. These are in the hands, in the bedrooms, of so many children who are slowly being indoctrinated into the ideology.

It is impossible to explain the absurd videos online. What is inexplicable to the

baby boomer chimes with those born in the last 20 years, sucks them in, and spits out a child who wants to mutilate their body, or hide in their room.

The child becomes more dependent upon the screen, maybe feeling ill, unable to go outside. The co-morbidities which drove the child to the isolation of life in the blue glow of the phone are exacerbated, and the desire for binders, packers, mutilations of the body, hatred of it in its sexed form, increases.

For all children, less screen time is healthy.<sup>8</sup> For the trans identifying, turning off the internet, getting the child out of the house and mixing with real friends in the physical world may be the best solution to regaining a sound view of their body and life. No restriction on technology is too extreme to rescue a child, or protect a child, from the tentacles of the cult like behaviour of the trans activist online.

Remember, children are the victims in this ideology. But the adults online – and in schools, hospitals, and many other organisations<sup>9</sup> – who are pushing so many into surgery, medication, lifelong sterilisation and anorgasmia, are to be avoided and called out.

### **Investigate schools**

Recently the mainstream news has begun discussing the problem of what children are being taught about reproductive sex, relationships and biological sex. Government still insists that children are taught about ‘gender’, but there is a reasonable hope that dialling down on this nonsensical belief may happen, (but only under a continued Conservative government<sup>10</sup>).

Look at school policies. Ask to see the PSHE / RSE / RHSE teaching materials. Look for phrases such as ‘assigned at birth’ and ask about any outside agencies the school uses to teach the topics. You have a right to see what is taught; the government said so in March 2023<sup>11</sup>. Schools still hide resources or offer counselling or support behind parents’ backs. They use neo pronouns, or names that the parents are unaware of despite this being a form of social transition which the interim Cass report says is ‘not a neutral’ action<sup>12</sup>. Schools are not trained to diagnose children and should not be allowing transition to take place in secret.

Have conversations with your child about what is taught and what they think about the ‘rainbow’ curriculum. Gently challenge wonky thinking without getting

worked up about it (no matter how panicked you may feel).

### **General advice**

Watchful waiting, a globally established model of practice, is the best way to help a child get through puberty and out the other side. This is the time when most children who have problems with their body recognize they aren't born in the wrong body. The very thing they need is for puberty to be completed and for their brain to mature. Sometimes medication is prescribed which stops maturing happening and halts puberty. No. Just watch, wait, and if counselling is sought, check out the kind of therapy being given. Is the therapist going to affirm the child in their delusion, or help the child deal with their changing body?

For those who are just identifying as trans to follow a trend, perhaps show them some photos of yourself as a teenager and explain how thankful you are that your choices then weren't ones you tied yourself to for life.

Keep listening to your child and talking with them. Get them outside and active rather than stuck indoors. Talking is always better when the intensity of sitting opposite each other is removed, so a good walk in the country getting the child in touch with their body is so helpful at addressing skewed thinking on the body.

This isn't going to go away overnight. There is no quick fix. Take care of yourself: you need to focus your energy on your child, not on campaigning. Leave that to those who aren't fighting to protect their child from making medical or surgical changes to their body, ruining a life that has barely started.

### **Identity crisis**

I'll finish where I started. To address this identity crisis, keep pointing your child to Jesus, soaking oneself in the Bible, and the love that God has for you. Christians more than anyone should understand a crisis of identity because Christians have wrestled with their identity and found theirs in Jesus.

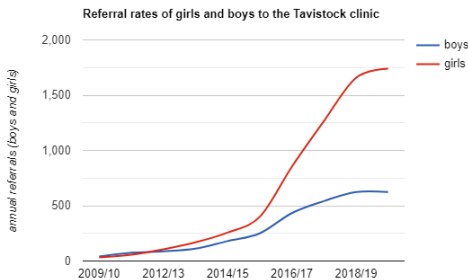
So, write this text up somewhere, and live it out and encourage others to join you as you pray it to be true for your child: 'I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live. Jesus Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.' Galatians 2. 20

## Footnotes

1 <https://www.bayswatersupport.org.uk/iceberg/>

2 The Gender Identity service's own graph of referrals <https://gids.nhs.uk/about-us/number-of-referrals/>

Graph showing sex of children who were referred to the Tavistock clinic. <https://www.transgendertrend.com/surge-referral-rates-girls-tavistock-continues-rise/#:~:text=The%20total%20number%20of%20referrals%20for%202018%2F19%20in%20England,staggering%205%2C337%25%20increase%20in%20girls.>



Lower line: boys  
Upperline: girls

3 <https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/gender>

4 Queer theory is best demonstrated by the 'smashing of heteronormativity' in the classroom which is proposed by Educate and Celebrate. An academic study which also looked at what classrooms would be like if 'pleasure' were discussed, morphed into a resource which many schools use

<https://www.transgendertrend.com/educate-celebrate-smashing-heteronormativity-classroom/>

5 <https://ivpbooks.com/finding-your-best-identity>

<https://uk.10ofthose.com/product/9781527109391/pride-hardback>

<https://www.sharonjames.org/books/gender-ideology/>

6 It's worth noting that 'trans' is an umbrella term that encompasses those formerly known as 'transvestite' or 'transexual'. The discomfort one feels applying these terms to a child and substituting them with 'trans' says much about the way the ideology has been thought through to make it sound 'acceptable'. The change in language has made it more palatable to call a child 'trans', but not right to call a child such. Thinking there is such a thing as the

'trans child' is such an inappropriate belief to hold: they are either cross dressing as they have a mental disorder (transexual) or dressing for sexual kicks (transvestite).

7 <https://www.jeffreymarsh.com/> His YouTube shorts are disturbing

8 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9815119/#:~:text=Conclusion,location%2C%20and%20screen%20time%20duration>

9 Stonewall's influence on government, schools, the police, and parallel organisations operating in the same way in the US, must not be underestimated.  
<https://fairplayforwomen.com/stonewall-transcripts/>  
UNESCO and worldwide organisations pushing trans ideology onto children  
<http://yogyakartaprinciples.org/principles-en/>  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>

10 A puberty blocking producer donating to a UK political party, donations to the Liberal Democrats have been given to Labour MPs including Dawn Butler  
<https://archive.ph/8nMYq>

11 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1154813/RSHE\\_letter\\_SoS\\_to\\_schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154813/RSHE_letter_SoS_to_schools.pdf)

12 <https://cass.independent-review.uk/publications/interim-report/>

