

CORECLASSES

How Should Christians Respond to Gender Confusion?



Three Areas of Consideration

1. People
2. Philosophy
3. Propaganda

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Is Gender Confusion Even Worth Engaging?

1. There is a clear pattern presented of recognizing two genders, and defending the importance of the distinctions (Deut 22:5; 1 Cor 11:1-6).
2. Where do things go wrong in the biblical story?
 - When humans start defining what is good and bad.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."
(Genesis 1:27)

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The First Priority: People

When I say people, I am talking about the Transgender and Intersex community:

1. Intersex – Involves some type of deformity in their sexual organs.
 - The levels of deformation vary greatly.
 - Gender is an issue to be worked through in relation to the type and level of deformation.
2. Transgender – These are people who believe that they were born with the wrong anatomy, or were assigned the wrong gender at birth.
 - Difficult to collect statistics, but perhaps around 0.3% of the population.



The First Priority: People

The most extreme instances of these feelings are diagnosed as Gender Dysphoria:

- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
 - Males: 0.005-0.014%
 - Females: 0.002-0.003%



The First Priority: People

The statistics are difficult to reliable gather on Transgender people because of the way that surveys are often worded, but everything we do know points to this as a suffering community:

- Significantly lower income
- Physical and Sexual Abuse
- Addictions
- Suicide
- Mental Illness
- Homelessness



The First Priority: People

How should we relate to the people within this community?

Titus 3:1-8

"Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone."

Titus 3:1-2

Acknowledge their humanity; do not invalidate their feelings.



The First Priority: People

Relate to the suffering that being a human with a broken nature brings.

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.

Titus 3:3

- ReGeneration
- Decrease the mental and emotional distance



The First Priority: People

Remember the Source of restoration from brokenness.

But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone.

Titus 3:4-8

Your goal is not to try and make them "normal", but to introduce them to the One who can restore them from all brokenness.



The First Priority: People

Group Brainstorm:

1. What are ways that you can affirm the humanity of someone who is different than yourself?
2. What are ways that you can decrease the mental and emotional distance between you and someone different from you?
3. What are ways you can help others appreciate the necessity of Christ?

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The Second Priority: Philosophy

The discussion does not end with these individuals. Transgender individuals have been around for a long time, the philosophy currently making gender such a prominent issue has not!

"Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves."

Matthew 10:16

Crash Course in Western Philosophy

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Modern Culture in a Nutshell

- Christianity's dominance ended by the Enlightenment.
- Modern Culture developed.
- By leaving behind authoritative sources of truth, humanity will be able to use reason and technology to progress humanity toward ultimate happiness.

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Postmodern Philosophy

An Attack on Modern Philosophy

The primary strategy of Postmodern philosophy is to deny humanity's ability to know anything about reality.

There are no absolute truths.

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Postmodern Philosophy

Every person's perspective on life is equally valid.

- There is no truth in a person's belief about others, or themselves.
- These beliefs about reality are just social constructs.

Postmodernism's message is that since no one's beliefs are true, just live in accordance with how you want because there is no one to correct you.

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Social Construct and Gender

One social construct is not better than another, so don't let anyone tell you who you are or who you need to be!

Gender is just another social construct:

- "Gender assigned at birth" – The doctor assigned it, so it is not valid.
- Facebook in 2014 created 58 options for gender, and eventually created a "custom" gender option to accommodate peoples preferences.

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Postmodern Philosophy

Postmodernism is a form of Subjectivity.

- Google "C.S. Lewis Doodle The Poison of Subjectivity."

Practical tips for dealing with the Postmodern Philosophy:

- Pointing out logical contradictions is not likely to make much headway.
 - The belief system values feelings, not logic
 - The belief system conditions them to ignore contradictions



Postmodern Counters

Be able to argue for the existence of God:

- If there is a God, then there is a source of absolute truth!
- It is common to challenge Christianity's ability to explain all of the chaos in the world (problem of evil), but from their perspective they have a much harder task to explain the order that exists in a meaningless universe.

Encourage them to recognize that humans are more than just animals:

- The philosophy tells people to do what they want to numb the pain of life.
- Encourage them to recognize that there is more to life than self indulgence!



Finally: Propaganda

It is important to recognize the manner in which people are engaging Christian resistance to LGBT issues all together, so that we can be prepared to respond well.

In a recent blog post, Dr. Edward Feser provides a series of quotes from the book After the Ball by Marshal Cook and Hunter Madisen written in 1989, calling for a long term propaganda campaign to change attitudes about homosexuality by shaming, ostracizing, aimed at manipulating emotion.

<http://edwardfeser.blogspot.com/2016/09/michael-rea-owes-richard-swinburne.html>



Calm Under Fire

So how do we respond when we are shamed, ostracized, and attacked?

1. Silence your opponents, the way Christ told us to.

It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you. For you are free, yet you are God's slaves, so don't use your freedom as an excuse to do evil. Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.

1 Peter 2:15-17



Calm Under Fire

2. Don't act surprised, be a partner with Christ.

Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

1 Peter 4:12-13



Calm Under Fire

3. Do not mistake your enemy.

Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts, and they will learn the truth. Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants.

2 Timothy 2:23-26


