

Controversial Topics the Church Needs to Address: *Transgenderism*



Caring for Sexually-Hurting People in Jesus' Name
www.harvestusa.org

What is transgender?

Traditional Understanding of Gender

Male – Female binary

Genital Intersex at birth – 1 per 1,500 births
(7/100 of 1% of the population)



What is transgender?

New Understanding of Gender

Male \leftrightarrow Female continuum

Gender is fluid, not static

Gender develops independent of sexual organs



What is transgender?

How many transgender individuals?

One estimate: 1,000,000 (4/10 of 1 % of the US population)¹

Social Security Administration: 135,367²

Pediatrics: 2.7% of teens³



¹*Transgender Population Size in the United States...* National Institutes of Health, 2017; ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5227946/, last accessed 03/20/2018

²Social Security Administration, 2015, cited in *The Search for the Best Estimate of the Transgender Population*, Miller, Claire Cain, *The New York Times*, 06/08/2015

³bpnews.net/50486/transgender-teens-new-study-no-surprise-says-ethicist, last accessed 03/07/2018

What is transgender?

Transition in thinking

DSM-IV (1994-2013)

Gender Identity Disorder (a mental disorder)

DSM-V (2013-Present)

Gender Dysphoria (a perceptual problem)



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A biblical understanding of gender

Scripture clearly identifies two and only two genders
in creation

Established generally by God's decree
(Genesis 1:27)

Assigned particularly to each individual by God's
providence (Psalms 139:13-16)



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A biblical understanding of gender

“Gender-bending” or gender transition is sinful

To acquit oneself as someone of the opposite gender is an abomination to the Lord
(Deuteronomy 22:5)



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A biblical understanding of gender

A person's psychological gender is rightly consistent with his or her birth gender



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A biblical understanding of gender

Gender is fixed

Not on a continuum from maleness to femaleness

No process to become male or female



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A biblical understanding of gender

Cultural idealizations of gender are frequently different from God's concept of gender

Cultural standards and stereotypes can't be definitive



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A biblical understanding of gender

Godly gender lived-out in real-life situations may have a diversity of expressions, and may not conform to cultural norms

Case in point: Jacob



Why would someone struggle with their gender?

Desire and Experience

The Tree Model

Over-Desire → Temptation → Sin → Death

Desires become Idols

Idolatry and Gender Confusion

How Desires Become Idols

Love

Good self-image

Affirmation

Affection

Security

No pain or suffering

Control

Comfort

Understanding

Intimacy

Disappointment

Discouragement

Despair

“I must have
this...I don't
care what it
takes”

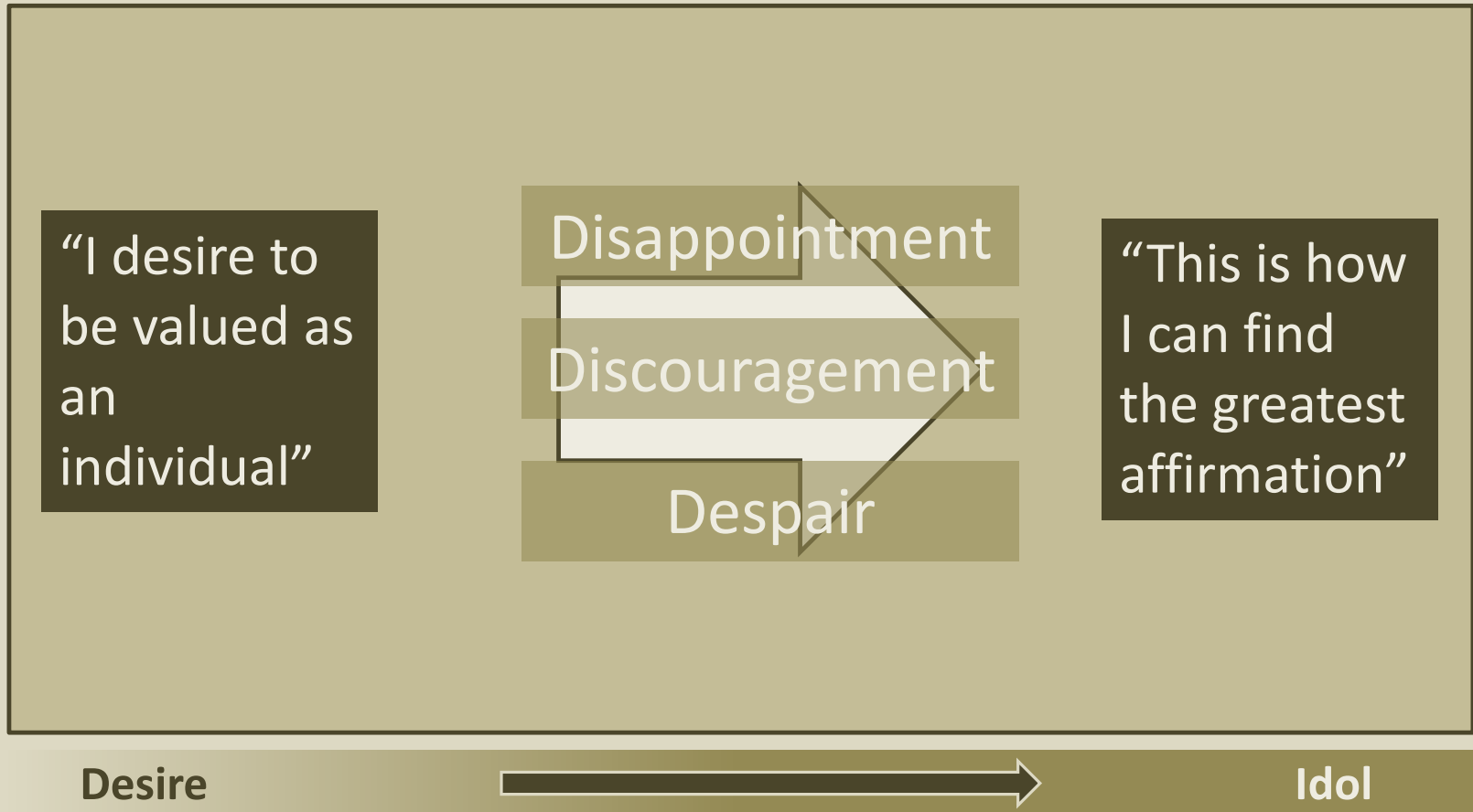
Desire



Idol

Idolatry and Gender Confusion

How Desires Become Idols



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Understanding the Gender Struggler

Gender dysphoria / transgender struggles / transgender identity have the same genesis and development as same-sex or heterosexual struggles



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Understanding the Gender Struggler

Individual experiences of discomfort with or dissociation from one's gender are attributed to the establishment of unbiblical worldviews, over the course of time, throughout one's life



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Understanding the Gender Struggler

Experiencing gender dysphoria is a manifestation of original sin

It is the result of the general corruption of sin

It is the temptation to believe that who you are, created by God, is incorrect



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Understanding the Gender Struggler

Acting on gender dysphoria, whether in thought, word, or deed, is willful sinful behavior and must be repented of



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Helping the Gender Struggler

The call for believers who experience gender dysphoria is the same as for any other sexual struggle

Walking in increasing faithfulness and repentance with Jesus Christ in community with his people, the church



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Helping the Gender Struggler

The church has a definite role to play in discipling someone who struggles with gender dysphoria

Discipleship is the key—helping someone wrestle with the question: “What difference does the person and work of Jesus make for me when I struggle with my particular idols?”



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Helping the Gender Struggler

The church must create safe places for people struggling with gender dysphoria to come forward and ask for help



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Helping the Gender Struggler

Help the gender struggler to see the connection
between their idols and their behavior



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Helping the Gender Struggler

At a minimum, repentance looks like:

a. Actively turning away from acting on gender dysphoria in thought, word and deed

b. Actively pursuing accountability with fellow Christians

c. Becoming actively engaged in fellowship with other Christians



Helping the Gender Struggler

At a minimum, repentance looks like:

d. Embracing one's God-given gender

e. Understanding typical patterns of temptation/behavior to act out, and actively turning from those patterns

f. Actively turning from associations with others who cultivate an unbiblical worldview



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Helping the Gender Struggler

The church needs to offer authentic love and community for the struggler, in place of the counterfeit he or she finds in transgender fantasy or the transgender community



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Helping the Gender Struggler

Communicate that gender dysphoria and transgender sin are not the unforgiveable sin



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Helping the Gender Struggler

Actively reject bullying and coarse talk



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Helping the Gender Struggler

Communicate that increasing holiness—not moral perfection—is the goal of sanctification

Struggle may persist at some level, but the person will struggle against sin better, with hope in Christ



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Your Questions