

Capernwray Night School  
Monday 23rd January 2023

## Navigating the Transgender Landscape



## Navigating the Transgender Landscape

- Looking around...
- Some key terms
- How did we get here?
- How does scripture help us navigate?
- How should we respond?

OED

Oxford English Dictionary  
The definitive record of the English language

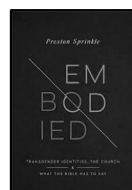
*In 2019 the OED updated its definition of 'they'/them' to include 'someone whose sense of personal identity does not correspond to conventional sex and gender distinctions.'*



*In April 2022 the USA became the 17<sup>th</sup> country in the world to introduce gender-neutral passports, offering the option of "X" alongside "M" and "F".*



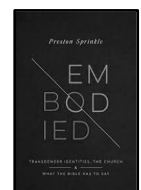
*This book is about people. A diverse group of beautiful, honest, courageous people created in God's image. People who are marginalized and misunderstood, shamed and shunned by those who don't share their experiences. People who are infinitely valuable in God's eyes.*



*"The thing that brought me to an acceptance of Biblical masculinity was not a poignantly laid-out exegetical argument against transsexuality, nor a fire and brimstone diatribe against homosexuality, but a man who gave me the space to speak about my desires openly and let me know that he and God loved me nevertheless."*



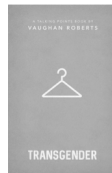
*It was love, not logic, that changed Alan's heart. People are rarely argued into the kingdom. People want to find the truth, but they want to find it with a friend.  
Preston Sprinkle, 'Embodied'.*



*Sometimes it's easier to protest and rage against the tide of history than to go back to our Bibles and think carefully about what God is saying – holding up society's views, and our own, to the truth-revealing mirror that is God's word.*

*We are not simply talking about 'issues' here, but people: precious individuals, each created and loved by God. Most don't have a strong political agenda or any desire to fight in a 'culture war'; they are simply trying to cope with feelings that may well cause them great distress.*

Vaughan Roberts



**Sex:**  
the biological differences that generally match the categories of male, female, and intersex.

**Gender:**  
the psychological, social and cultural aspects of being male or female. ('identity', and 'role')

### Some key terms

*There's a gender in your brain and a gender in your body. For 99% of people, those things are in alignment. For transgender people, they're mismatched. That's all it is. It's not complicated, it's not a neurosis. It's a mix-up. It's a birth defect, like a cleft palate.*

Chaz Bono. Transgender activist



**Sex:**  
the biological differences that generally match the categories of male, female, and intersex.

**Gender:**  
the psychological, social and cultural aspects of being male or female. ('identity', and 'role')

**Intersex (or 'DSD'):**  
People whose biological characteristics don't fit typical notions of male or female bodies (formerly 'hermaphrodite').

### Some key terms

**Non-binary:**  
People who do not identify as either male or female.

**Gender dysphoria:**  
(formerly GID)  
People whose internal sense of gender identity does not match their biological sex.



**census 2021**

- The census question on gender identity was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and over. The question asked "Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?".
- Overall, 45.7 million (94.0% of the population aged 16 years and over) answered the question.
- In total, 45.4 million (93.5%) answered "Yes" and 262,000 (0.5%) answered "No".
- The remaining 2.9 million (6.0%) did not answer the question.

**Sex:**  
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**Intersex (or 'DSD'):**  
People whose biological characteristics don't fit typical notions of male or female bodies (formerly 'hermaphrodite').

**Cisgender (or 'non-trans'):**  
People whose gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth.

### Some key terms

**Non-binary:**  
People who do not identify as either male or female.

**Transgender:**  
People who identify with a gender other than that which was assigned to them at birth.

**Gender fluid:**  
People whose gender-identity shifts.

**Gender dysphoria**  
(formerly GID)  
People whose internal sense of gender identity does not match their biological sex.

**Gender Reassignment, or 'Transition':** 3 levels  
Socially: (dress, behavior, pronouns)  
• Hormonally: (HRT: testosterone or estrogen)  
• Surgically: (SRS: sex reassignment surgery)

**Transgender:**  
People who identify with a gender other than that which was assigned to them at birth.

Gender dysphoric trans

- Early-onset gender dysphoria
- Late-onset gender dysphoria
- Rapid-onset gender dysphoria ('trans-trender')

Transgender: People who identify with a gender other than that which was assigned to them at birth.

Non gender-dysphoric trans

- Identify as trans, but don't experience dysphoria.
- Self-identify, with no medical diagnosis necessary.

Trans de-transitioners

- Transitioned, socially, hormonally or surgically, but have de-transitioned subsequently.

Mental health and trans people

- Trans people experience co-occurring mental health challenges at a higher rate than the general public, including: anxiety, depression, eating disorders, OCD, schizophrenia, ADHD, autism-spectrum disorder.

Trans as internal homophobia

- Transition to avoid being SSA.

**Agender:** no gender/ genderless

**Alia/Aporagender:** defines gender as 'other' or apart from existing genders

**Androgynous:** identifies as androgynous, gender-wise

**Bigender:** two genders; can identify as both, or move between the two

**Cisgender:** gender is same as sex they were assigned at birth

**Demigender:** feeling a partial, but not a full, connection to a particular gender identity (also called: demiboy, demigirl)

**Genderfluid:** moves between genders; their gender is not something that they or anyone can pin down and define

**Genderflux:** Having a gender that varies in intensity or degree over time; related to but distinct from genderfluid

**Graygender:** ambivalent about their gender identity/ expression, but who identifies at least partially with a gender (defined or not) outside of the binary

**Intergender:** in the middle between the binary genders of female and male, and may be a mix of both; intended for **intersex** people to use

**Pangender:** experiencing a wide variety of genders; may feel that they experience genders beyond their ability to describe or beyond those which are currently recognized

**Polygender:** 'many genders'; experience multiple gender identities, either simultaneously or varying between them


**Transgender:** self-identity does not conform unambiguously to conventional notions of male or female gender

**Trigender:** one shifts between or among the stereotypical behaviors of male, female, and a third gender

When you've met one transgender person... you've met one transgender person.


A 'one-size-fits-all' understanding of what it means to be trans needs to be locked in a box and tossed into the sea.

Mark Yarhouse, psychologist



### Truth and Love

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1: 14




- Zealous for upholding biblical truths and
- Lots of love for winning argument, less love for people.
- Turns churches into zones for the marginalized rather than 'hospitable sinners'.
- Sees Christian faith as vulnerable & besieged.

...ous for the church to be as loving and inclusive. passion without critical thinking. empathy without biblical engagement. Conflates caring with condoning.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness... 1 Corinthians 5: 22 - 23

### 'Transphobia'

 **phobia**

/ˈfəʊbiə/

noun

an extreme or irrational fear of or aversion to something.  
"she suffered from a phobia about birds"

**'Transphobia':** 'intolerance of gender diversity based around the idea that there are only two sexes – male or female – which you stay in from birth'.


### How did we get here?

How do we know what is true?

**REVELATION:** God shows us what is true

**REASON:** Human reasoning will lead us all to truth

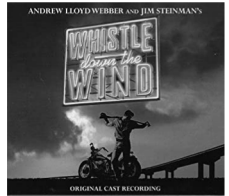
**INDIVIDUALISM:** I must find my own truth





No matter what they tell you  
No matter what they do  
No matter what they teach you  
What you believe is true.

Lloyd Webber/Steinman





**How did we get here?**

How do we know what is true?

REVELATION: God shows us what is true  
↓  
REASON: Human reasoning will led us all to truth  
↓  
INDIVIDUALISM: I must find my own truth

Over himself, over his own body and mind,  
the individual is sovereign.  
John Stuart Mill, 'On Liberty' (1859)






**How did we get here?**

How do we know what is true?

REVELATION: God shows us what is true  
↓  
REASON: Human reasoning will led us all to truth  
↓  
INDIVIDUALISM: I must find my own truth  
↓  
AUTHENTICITY I must be true to myself


This culture of expressive individualism has become the  
moral wallpaper of the modern world.  
Jonathan Grant

**How did we get here?**

'Mimesis': the world has a given order and meaning that we have to discover.	'Poiesis': the world is raw material for us to craft meaning from.
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------



'The Psychological Self': Rousseau, 18c  
'My identity is the history of my own soul'.  
↓  
'The Romantic Self': Wordsworth, Blake, Shelley, 18 - 19c  
'Truth is found in what feels right and looks right.'  
↓  
'The Plastic Self': Nietzsche, Marx, Darwin, 18 - 19c  
'Human nature is changing, malleable, plastic.'  
↓  
'The Sexual Self': Freud, 19 - 20c  
'Sex is the core of what it means to be human.'  
↓  
'The Therapeutic Self'  
'Truth is simply how I feel, my attitudes and preferences'.



**How did we get here?**

The world's 'good news'

"For years our spirits have been suffocated  
by restrictive traditions and morality. But  
now we must have the courage to follow  
our own light. We must resist anyone or  
anything tat stands in our way. We must  
discover the hero inside ourselves and  
enter into the freedom that comes when we  
become who we really are."

### It's not just Christians who are concerned

*Young children are being permanently sterilized and maimed under the guise of treating a condition that would otherwise resolve in over 80% of them. This is criminal.*  
American College of Pediatricians

*I concluded that to provide (adult sex-change surgery) to the body of these unfortunate people was to collaborate with a mental disorder rather than to treat it.*

Dr Paul McHugh, John Hopkins University

MON, JUNE 20, 2022

**FINA bans transgender athletes from women's events**

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



#### 1. We are creatures

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*  
Genesis 1: 27

We are flawed masterpieces in need of restoration, not Lego bricks needing construction from scratch.



### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



#### 2. Being sexed and embodied is integral to being God's image-bearers on earth.

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*  
Genesis 1: 27

*tselem*, 'the physical copy of a non-physical being'

To bear God's image is to be the visible representation of an invisible deity

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



#### 2. Being sexed and embodied is integral to being God's image-bearers on earth.

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.'* Genesis 1: 28

So 'male' and 'female' are clearly categories of sex, not merely 'gender identity', or 'gender role'.

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



#### 3. Being sexed and embodied is integral to our own identity.

*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.* 1 Corinthians 6: 19 - 20

We are not merely souls with bodies – we are embodied souls. Our sexed physicality is integral to our identity. The real 'you' is the embodied 'you'.

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



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So what I feel about myself can never be the whole picture, because God made us embodied souls. Our bodies are essential in determining and revealing who we truly are.



### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



4. Being sexed and embodied is central to understanding our relationship with God

*We are members of his body. 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church.*

Ephesians 5: 31 – 32

The difference between male and female reflects the difference between God and humans, and marital sex patterns the unity that's possible between God and us.

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



4. Being sexed and embodied is central to understanding our relationship with God

Our culture says:  
Your psychology is your sexual identity – let your body be conformed to it

The Bible says:  
Your body is your sexual identity – let your mind be conformed to it.

Sam Allberry



### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



5. So scripture prohibits behaviour that 'crosses sexes'.

*A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor a man wear women's clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.* Deuteronomy 22:5

*Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.* 1 Corinthians 6: 9

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



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*The prohibition... was to safeguard the division between male and female and was rooted in God's concern for diversity and order as reflected in the creation account of Genesis 1 – 2.*  
Peter J Harland, Cambridge University



### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



6. Scripture undermines cultural gender stereotypes

What is 'Biblical Masculinity'?

Kissing other men?  
Crying with other men?  
Writing poetry?  
Playing the harp?  
Loving other men intimately?

*David and Jonathan kissed each other and wept together—but David wept the most.*  
1 Samuel 20: 41

### How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



6. Scripture undermines cultural gender stereotypes

What is 'Biblical Femininity'?

Running a business?  
Killing enemies?  
Showing immense courage?  
Funding men's ministry?

Proverbs 31, Acts 16  
Judges 4  
John 19  
Luke 8

## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



### 6. Scripture undermines cultural gender stereotypes



#### 'Keepers of the garden'

- 'Forsake the fake, relish the real
- Protect the vulnerable
- Be ambitious for the right things
- Make women & children feel safe
- Choose today who you will become tomorrow
- Take responsibility for your own spiritual life

## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



### 6. Scripture undermines cultural gender stereotypes

Cat was raised in the church and experienced gender dysphoria from an early age.

"I loved to play basketball and hated wearing dresses. I was made to feel as if I was an ungodly woman for not being typically feminine."

'I'm no longer a slave to fear, I am a child of God.'

The more she sang those words, the more she believed them. In the midst of her dysphoria, her incongruence, her shame, her fear, she began to recognize that God saw her as his precious child.

## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



### 6. Scripture undermines cultural gender stereotypes

Let's give one another the freedom not to conform to gender stereotypes.

Let's not judge anyone's gender – including our own – on whether they conform to gender stereotypes.



## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



### 6. Scripture undermines cultural gender stereotypes

Jesus comes to us as one who challenges cultural notions of masculinity. He washes feet, touches sick people, shows compassion to sinful women, loves children, and more.  
Mark Cortez



## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



### 7. Scripture tells us we are both created and broken

To the woman he said, 'I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children.'

physical

Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.'

psychological

## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



### 7. Scripture tells us we are both created and broken

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools.

Romans 1: 21 - 22

Intellectual & spiritual

## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



8. Scripture tells us we can find rescue in Jesus

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.*

1 Peter 1: 3 - 4

## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



8. Scripture tells us we can find rescue in Jesus

*Remember that the dulllest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations.*



## How does scripture help us navigate the transgender landscape?



8. Scripture tells us we can find rescue in Jesus

*It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.*

CS Lewis, The Weight of Glory



## How should we respond?



1. A trans man (a biological female identifying as male) begins attending your church services. How should the church leadership respond?
2. Your sister is transitioning, and asks to be referred to using a boy's name and the pronouns 'he/him'. How should you and the wider family respond?
3. A prospective Capernwray student applies for Bible School describing themselves as 'gender-fluid'. They request that they be referred to as 'them/they', and ask what sort of shared accommodation they'll be placed in. How should the Capernwray leadership respond?

## How should we respond?



1. A trans man (a biological female identifying as male) begins attending your church services. How should the church leadership respond?

*I was visiting one church and saw someone arrive who was very obviously transgender...*

*No-one batted an eyelid. They greeted the individual with a smile and a kind word, just as they did for everyone else.*

Vaughan Roberts



## How should we respond?



2. Your sister is transitioning, and asks to be referred to using a boy's name and the pronouns 'he/him'. How should you and the wider family respond?

*I would be lying to call a he a 'she'.* John Piper



*We affirm our duty to speak the truth in love at all times, including when we speak to or about one another as male or female. We deny any obligation to speak in such ways that dishonor God's design of his image bearers as male and female.*

The Nashville Statement, (2017) Article 11.



### How should we respond?



2. Your sister is transitioning, and asks to be referred to using a boy's name and the pronouns 'he/him'. How should you and the wider family respond?

*In speaking with transgender people, wisdom, love and respect are the watchwords and, in my opinion, respect will mean calling someone by the name they choose to be called by.*

Vaughan Roberts



### How should we respond?



2. Your sister is transitioning, and asks to be referred to using a boy's name and the pronouns 'he/him'. How should you and the wider family respond?

#### 'Pronoun hospitality'

- They're using the pronoun to describe their identity, not their biological sex
- Pronoun use shows respect and enables relationship

*There's a sense in which dead-naming and mis-gendering me is trivial, but it's also a very economical way of erasing and sneering about everything I've done as an artist, critic and human rights activist in the four decades since I transitioned.*

Roz Kaveney



#### 'Pronoun hospitality'



*Misgendering people with an intense trans or cross-gender identification can cause them pain and sometimes results in them not even recognizing themselves. Language is a social construct which brings things into being, and pronouns are a part of that. People can find it physically painful when I get their pronouns wrong.*

Claudia, Consultant clinical psychologist

#### 'Pronoun hospitality'



*A wider adoption of they/them might even allow some children and adolescents to explore and resolve their confusion around gender without rushing into potentially life-changing decisions.*

*It's so useful to have non-gendered third-person pronoun. Because there are some people who feel acutely 'not me' when addressed as he or she.*

Claire Armitstead



### How should we respond?



3. A prospective Capernwray student applies for Bible School describing themselves as 'gender-fluid'. They request that they be referred to as 'them/they', and asks what sort of shared accommodation they'll be placed in.

#### Naming and personal pronouns

As a basic courtesy Capernwray staff, students and guests will be encouraged to use the name and personal pronoun requested and preferred by any adult individual. (In the case of under-18-year-olds our usage will be guided by the parent or guardian.)

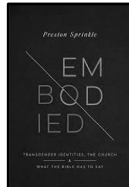
We would not compel anyone to address another using a name or pronoun they feel compromises their conscience/religious beliefs, but would expect them to instead limit use of any name or pronoun contrary to the individual's expressed preference and to continue to act with respect and gentleness in all interactions.

#### Toilets & Changing Facilities

Most toilets and changing rooms at Capernwray are designated as either male or female. There are, however, a number of individual cubicles around the site. Our request and expectation is that when residents do access a gender-specific toilet or changing room they use the one appropriate for their sex<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Sex to be determined by passport or similar official state identification, subject to any gender recognition certificate

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