

## True Love for our Transgendered Neighbors

The LGBTQ agenda has overwhelmed our society, so that public school curricula, big business, and government policies advance the agenda as the new “civil rights issue of our day.” But, within that acronym, the “T” – transgenderism – is being pushed at breakneck speeds that outpace even society’s recent acceptance of the L, the G, or the B. Indeed, if one even questions the wisdom of this “Transgender” ideology being fed to our young children (or our young children being fed to this ideology!), he is called a bigot. And if one dares indicate he is not an “ally” of this message, he is more likely to be “cancelled” from the rest of society, as it quickly bends the knee.

But, with all social tidal waves that besiege a society, fundamental questions are to be asked... even if only few well-anchored in the storm are able/willing to ask them. Perhaps the most fundamental question to ask about our Transgender neighbors is, “Are we showing them true love?” Is it true love to unquestioningly abandon natural law that still biologically confesses that “he who created them from the beginning made them male and female” (Matt. 19:4)? Is it true love to nod in approval about an awkward and often ugly, depraved lie – “Sure, you’re now a woman; we can all see that was clearly God’s intent even though you were born a male”? Or, conversely, is it true love to point out the difficult, but divinely beneficial truth that our neighbors entangled in such a morass of self-deceit have been deprived of the truth (1 Timothy 6:5)?

Only an age careening toward nihilism (“there is no truth”) can foster such blatant disregard for the obvious. But, such is not new in our day. When Jesus declared before Pilate that he had come to bear witness to the Truth, Pilate responded, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). St Paul describes the resulting depravity of the culture, almost a mirror image of our own day:

“...their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, **to the dishonoring of their bodies** among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator...” (Romans 1:21b-25; emphasis added).

The culture’s depravity led to direct harm to their bodies, bodies that Jesus, by his sacrificial death, makes heirs of the resurrection of all flesh. But this assumes a fact that our society is no longer willing to consider: that the body is just as important as the mind, the body often being more concretely and tangibly aligned to God's creation than is the mind!

Our society assumes that truth is found “inwardly,” in whatever the mind thinks. But is the mind a more reliable confessor of the truth than the body? To be sure, the body is riddled with the effects of the Fall and ample evidence of the sad truth that God’s creation was ruined by Sin; however, that same body – even that sin-riddled body – retains indelible evidence of God’s creative work. That God created us to be male and female is seen in the body, not in the mind. That God created us with good order – two ears, two eyes, ten fingers, ten toes, male or female reproductive organs, etc– is indelibly stamped on every succeeding generation’s *body*, not mind, and thus a more reliable indicator of truth in the Creator’s work through the ages. Thus, what makes one a man? His body’s biological creation as given by the Creator? Or, his mind’s ever-changing thought about the Creator (and, thus, himself)?

Indeed, it was *the mind* that suffered the first effects of the Fall into sin. When God called to Adam in the shadows of the fallen garden of Eden, Adam responded, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was *afraid* because I was naked...” (Genesis 3:10). The same sin underlying

Transgenderism – a mind ashamed of its body – was the first confessed effect of the Fall. The mind was suffering the effects of the Fall even before God made Man aware that his body would also suffer the Fall’s effects, namely physical death (Genesis 3:19). And, to this day, the body endures throughout life the effects of dying unto the point of physical death; but the body does not lie to us about our identity... that was never a consequence of the Fall. Instead, the psyche is damaged to the point of lying to us – even telling us we should be ashamed of our bodies and afraid of our God!

St Paul hints at this psychological trauma in his continuing explanation in Romans 1: “God gave them up **to a debased mind** to do what ought not be done” (1:28; emphasis added). This same debased mind is the liar behind not just Transgenderism (as if a greater evil than all others), but behind so *many* problems of life in this fallen world, as Paul warns Timothy of “constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth” (6:5). Fittingly, admonishing against such things, Paul appeals, “As for you, O man of God, flee these things... [I charge you in the presence] of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession...” (6:13). Jesus made the good confession; even knowing Pilate’s nihilistic retort, Jesus had come to bear witness to the truth of Creation, the Fall, Redemption, Sanctification, and our eternal inheritance.

Thus, to our Transgender neighbors, we ought lovingly confess the Truth: it is the *mind*, not the *body*, that is broken to the point of lying to them. It is the *mind*, not the *body*, that is “depraved... and deprived of the truth.” The Transgendered neighbor is being victimized by his mind and needs to be shown the truth that God has created us each to be male or female, and of that creation the body will not lie... but the mind so tragically does. After all, why do we militaristically enforce these depraved notions in our grammar and language before they suddenly ‘show up’ in our sciences if not because it is much easier to lie via the mind than via the body?

But, there’s a Truth equally great to that of the Fall and its horrific results for both mind and body. In that very same garden of Eden in which Adam confessed the first result of sin – the mind deprived of truth – God’s first response to Sin was the promise of the Christ, a Messiah whose atoning sacrifice upon the cross would redeem us all not just by the saving of the soul, nor just by the resurrection of the body, but also by *the renewal of the mind*. To those baptized into Christ Jesus and the divine adoption of sons, Paul encourages, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed (passive – *God’s* redeeming work) by the renewal of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2).

Indeed, by God’s own merciful work in baptism, our souls, bodies *and minds* have been made beneficiaries of Christ’s redeeming work. Christianity does not believe in “conversion therapy,” for therapy seeks to use *human philosophy and wisdom* to change the mind. But all human philosophy comes from the same fallen source – the love of human wisdom, which is to say, “the debased mind.” The Christian faith relies not on human philosophy, fallen wisdom, and its resulting “conversion therapies,” but it relies on the redeeming work of Christ Jesus for the divine benefit to soul, body, mind... with the result that, being brought to the font, those baptized into Christ Jesus may live in soul, body, *and mind* as one redeemed, renewed, and awaiting the resurrection: “We were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Romans 6:4-5).

*This* is Jesus’ redeeming work also for the one living a life dubbed Transgender. *This* is His love for them, too, for He has died for their sins just as much as for yours. *This* is the one true love – God’s love – to confess for the benefit of our dear neighbor desperately needing to be freed from the Transgenderism lie.