

Gender Blending and Confusion¹

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There are two stories that I think would help us to put a mental framework around this topic of gender blending and confusion. The first one is *Alice in Wonderland*. If you haven't read it, certainly you have seen the movie. Why is it helpful? Because in Wonderland, nothing is what it seems to be. It is an overarching theme in *Alice in Wonderland*. Everything that seems normal is NOT normal. Things are exactly the opposite of what they seem to be in Wonderland. And so more and more, it is Wonderland for your young people today. I'm so old, I'm 70 now. I remember the sixties. The sixties literally were Alice in Wonderland. Everything gets changed. Actually, you can think through that idea now. The sixties and "Alice's Restaurant" was a theme song. You can be anything you want at Alice's Restaurant. Really the whole world has become Alice's Restaurant in that things really are illusory and do not seem to be what they really are. We are all chasing the Mad Hatter! Or worse yet, we have become the Mad Hatter!!

The second story that really helps, most of us know at least generally is The Emperor's New Clothes. You should remember it. A scam artist comes along and convinces the emperor saying, "Hey, I'm going to make you a new set of clothes. You can you take off your old ones". But the emperor is really naked, and nobody really wants to burst his bubble. The artist, however, said, "Oh, yeah, emperor, these are really great clothes. You really look great." Nobody wants to be the one who goes, "You know, you're naked, and you do not really have anything on, and this is really ridiculous." So you remember, he's in a parade, and of course, the little boy is the one who says, "Hey, the emperor has no clothes." And that's where the trouble begins. Today our culture really has no moral clothes, and Christians are the ones who are standing, pointing, and saying, "Hey you are naked in more ways than one. You're naked physically, but you are also naked because you have no defense before the living God."

Today in Western culture, everyone is responding strangely to this whole issue of gender and sexuality. Today a federal judge would say to a man who claims to be a woman born in a man's body that he can change his birth certificate and claim his identity as non-binary. In fact, it's not just male or female – those are not the only choices, you can be whatever you want. The reality is that western culture is on a bad acid trip. We have taken cultural LSD, and we are hallucinating all over the place. As Christians, we have to understand it. We are living in perilous times, and it's not just that Christians are being killed by ISIS or that house church pastors in China are being busted by the federal government for being in a non-registered church, but even you here in America are in for attacks. I keep telling our seminarians: "Some of you are probably going to end up in jail for a hate crime just for preaching through Romans." So we are more and more going to be like the early Christians, who were outsiders to the world and its approval and tolerance. In our country and western culture, the federal government, state governments, and

¹ *The substance of this paper was given at the Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship 2016 Summer Institute entitled "Disordered Desires: Bringing Grace to Modern Sexuality."*

local governments say, “You must swear allegiance to what we say.” This means the LGBTQ agenda for dominance has won the culture war. The moral communists have won.

Friends, this issue is not about political correctness; it is really religious correctness. They would not call it so, but it is a religious issue. Which God are we going to serve? Will it be the triune living God who made men and women in His image, or is it going to be God howsoever the government decides? We are told, we can be Christians, but keep it in the closet. So, gays, lesbians, and others talk about, “We’ve come out of the closet.” Well, guess what? They are out of the closet. The closet is empty, and they want to put us *in* the closet; This is the reality.

Several years ago, we were going to a gay rights parade in San Diego to offer gospel hope. I will not forget what the San Diego detective told us: “Remember you used to be the majority but are now the minority.” We also had another experience when my wife ran a pro-life pregnancy center in San Diego County: CUP, the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy. We were up front with our positions and had a confidentiality statement crafted by a pro-life lawyer. The advertisement in the phonebook stated clearly we were not a medical clinic. We thought for sure there was no way that we could be shut down. Planned Parenthood, however, shut us down, because they sued all the pro-life pregnancy centers in the county. In spite of having the most conservative judge who professed to be a believer, we lost the case! So this is the whole cultural milieu we are in today. It is an antagonistic culture, which is not sufficiently satisfied to say, “Keep quiet,” but if we say the emperor has no clothes, they will try to shut us down.

So where do we start in trying to understand this general shift in the culture and particularly the issue of gender confusion and gender blending? Jesus, of course, points us in the right direction. He always goes back to the beginning, to creation before the Fall. Let us turn our attention to Matthew 19. Now, it’s not about gay and lesbian; it’s not about gender confusion per se, but it is in the context of marriage and family, which after all are the biblical paradigms for this issue of gender. What this paper aims to do is not only to explain the confusion, but particularly how we should counsel someone who comes in and is confused and says, “I’m a man in a woman’s body” or “a woman in a man’s body” or “I’m transgendered” or the next identity du jour. The next term we might hear in this culture could be omnigendered – someone claims they are a little bit of everything. So, how do we deal with this confusion?

Interestingly, in Matthew 19, we have Jesus being tested by religious leaders. He is teaching about divorce, and in verse three we read this: “And the Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, ‘Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause.’” There was a controversy. Some rabbis were saying that the reason for divorce could be any cause (Deuteronomy 24); while other rabbis were saying it has to be a serious thing. So which is it? Jesus, however, answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female.” He didn’t offer them three different options. It’s male and female. This historical paradigm is not just a myth. It’s time and space history, and that’s God’s way of working. “Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother, hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let not man separate.” They said to him, ‘Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?’” Notice how they frame their opposition as Moses commanded to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away. It is *not* what Deuteronomy 24 says if you read it carefully. “But Jesus said, ‘It was because of your hardness of heart that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning, it was not so. And I say to you whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery.’”

The disciples said to him, ‘If such is the case of a man with his wife, it’s better not to marry.’” They are saying, in effect, “You’ve got to be kidding me. If you’re talking about being that strict, who can meet that standard? So it’s better not to get married.” Jesus said that “not everyone can receive this thing but only those to whom it was given. For there are eunuchs who have been so

from birth.” In other words, Jesus is speaking here of those incapable of sexual relations. “There are eunuchs who have been made so by men,” as Origen and others in church history. “And there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, but let the one who was able to receive this, receive it.” In light of this historic paradigm of male and female genders which Jesus uses to explain the basis of the issue, we need to consider the following perspectives in our approach to counsel those who are struggling with gender blending and confusion.

Gender issues are a subset of a larger issue of identity in general.

Modern people in America do not understand who they are. *It is the bigger issue.* Actually, gender and sexuality are only a subset of this larger issue. The issue is, “Who am I?” Every counseling psychology, whether Christian or non-Christian, secular or not, has a paradigm that answers fundamental questions like Who is man? What's wrong with him? How do you fix it?

I got saved in seminary and then went to Temple University, where I got my undergraduate degree in history, to get a Master's in psychology. I have never forgotten a counseling course that I had. This course was run by a woman, who was not a Christian, but her mother was a Christian. She walked into the class on the first day of the semester and said, “You have a ten-page paper for next week. Who is man? What's wrong? How do you fix him?” The design of the course was rather brilliant. You read the books, saw the films, you studied them, and then you wrote the same paper at the end of the semester. Everybody in the class was a Master's or a Ph.D. student. Panic reigned! “Oh, my word! This is so hard! What do I do? How does this work? Who is man?” And I'm thinking, “Wow, this is a piece of cake. That's not hard – Romans 1, 2, and 3. What's hard about this? Who's man? The image of God. What's wrong? Sin. How do you fix it? Jesus. This is easy.” So, I write my paper, and by the Lord's providence, I got a good grade. We went through the whole course and then I had to write the paper again. So, I go up at the end, and she says, “Let me guess. I'm going to get Romans 1, 2, and 3 again.” Of course, she was right! So I asked if I could write a critique of these different people from a Christian perspective. She allowed me to do so. I've never forgotten that course because even as a non-Christian, she saw that anthropology was the core issue in counseling.

Hence for everybody, whether it is any letter in LGBTQ, or whether it is people who now think that they're animals, identity becomes the issue. The fundamental question of identity is: Am I whom I was born to be? or am I who I demand that I want to be or imagine myself to be? While I was in Brazil, I learned that there is a woman in Brazil who thinks that she is a lion. She is getting plastic surgery to make her look like a lion. When I came back to the United States from Brazil, I heard there is a guy in Arizona who thinks he is a dragon. So what's he doing? He's getting surgery to make him look dragon-like, with horns and stuff. There is a whole subculture of “Furries”, youth who take on an animal persona. They have clubs, networks, and conventions. There are things to note: one, not all are the same except there is the common theme of personified animals. This is species confusion! The lines are blurred between humans and animals. Two, there is a higher incidence of gay, bi-sexual and transgendered among them than in the non-Furries. If you want to study or understand this phenomenon you can easily research it online.

We need to weep over people like this for they are confused, very confused. Now, think about this question. Where do I go in the Bible to get a handle on this issue, because it doesn't seem like there is anything in the Bible that talks about people who think they are dragons or lions. But the point is identity. Am I a lion, a dragon, or am I a person made in the image of God who's in rebellion against God? So for us as believers, this is really straightforward; it is Romans 1, 2, and 3. Romans 1 makes clear what happens when you do not agree with God. You profess

yourself to become wise, but in fact, you make yourself to be a fool. So in a sense, this confusion should not throw us off, even though it is complicated. If the question Who are you? is answered as I think I'm a dragon, then the Bible clearly informs us, No, I am not a dragon. Dragons do not exist. Even if they did they will not be judged by God on that great and fearful, final Day. This argument goes across the board. People used to come in for counseling and say they were several different people because of Multiple Personality Disorder. But the answer is, No, you are not. You are whomever you are as you were born and developed, and there is only one of you. You are either in the first Adam or the second Adam.

I think we all struggle with identity. There are some things that we all do not like about us But, no matter what we think, desire or do, it is not going to change who we are. The sooner a person realizes this truth the better that, "This is who I am and my only hope of change is to become like Jesus instead of who I am, male or female. I have to become like Jesus." It is God's goal for you and me. Because, who is man? What does it mean to be an image bearer of God? Can you un-package that a bit for a counselee? This is important for a counselor to be able to do. If you say to someone that he is an image bearer of God, that should mean a couple of things. Your job is to reflect his character. You all woke up this morning and looked in the mirror. What did you see? Was it you? Yes and no! If your spouse came into the bathroom and went up and started kissing the picture of you in the mirror what would you say? You would say that the image is not you. It really is a reflection of who you are, but it's not you.

Think about this in concrete terms. In the Old Testament, and particularly in the New, what are the three offices of Jesus Christ? Prophet, priest, and king. I would submit to you that this is a good summary of what it means that you are an image of God. You are a worshipper, as a priest. You are to be a worker, as a king. You are a witness to preach or teach and reflect what God has taught you as a prophet. Not everybody is ordained to an office but we function in these three functions or capacities. Are you a good worshiper? This has implications for counseling. Are you teaching people to be a good worshiper? Are you teaching people to be a good servant of God?

Life must also be understood as two basic realities, not this amorphous "We're all god." There is God and then everything else is creation. There is male and female. There are the children of Satan and the children of God, going all the way back to the Garden: the seed of the woman, Jesus, and the seed of the evil one. Life is binary, like it or not! So if a federal judge says it's not binary, it does not change the fact that ***the world really is***; there are two separate realities, divisions, and it goes right through from the seeds in the garden. Remember, God created and explains the world, not human judges! Judges need to remember Psalm 82. Remember, the seed of the woman is going to come and crush the seed of the serpent. Or as Paul picks up in Romans, God will soon crush Satan under your heel, Romans 15:20. So Paul is picking up the theme and in effect saying, "Look, Christ is risen from the dead. You've got His victory, and he's going to defeat the evil one through you, not because you are the savior, but because you belong to the Savior".

We need to begin to think through all of these truths. Jesus says to the Jews, "You are of your father the devil because you want to kill me." Satan's children want to eliminate the children of the Light. Therefore we must see the gender issue as a subset of the larger overall identity issue. Yes, the gender issue is really just a subset of a larger issue that goes back to the Garden. It is Satan's seed playing out. "I'm not going to be whom you declare me to be. I will not accept my body as you have given it to me.." Or applied to the other area of identity in the culture: "I do not like being human; I'd like to be a dog. I refuse to accept God's definition of who I am." This is a demonic way of expressing, "did God really say there are only two complementary sexes?"; "did God really say I'm human, can't I become an animal?" Soon we might have people insisting they are aliens from other planets.

All counseling as involving the issue of the image of God.

Identity is an extension of this perspective. There used to be a phrase out there: “you are what you eat”. Do you know what the Bible’s answer to that is? ***You are whom you worship.*** Look at Psalm 115 and Matthew 6. These are very important passages because they are a key to counseling in general and particularly in these gender issues. What does Psalm 115 say? It contrasts idolatry and true worship.

“Not unto us, Lord, not unto us. But to your name be the glory. For the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness. Why should the nations say, ‘Where is their God? Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.’”

So there is God - Jehovah God; we know now from the New Testament He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He’s contrasted in verse 4 to silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths but can’t speak, eyes but do not see; ears can’t hear; noses do not smell; hands but do not feel; feet but do not walk. They do not make a sound in their throat. Pretty understandable; pretty graphic description of an idol. But here’s a very pivotal line. Look at what it says in verse 8. They that make them ***become*** like them; the idol maker them becomes like them, so do all who trust in them. Where does an idol come from? Our mind sees something in creation, we put it together, and we design this idol, make it and then what happens? The ironic thing is that we become stupid and dumb like the idol – an ironic reversal or an idolatrous reversal. The dead idol controls the living creator and becomes his master. It’s really a creaturely thing that comes out of our imagination, pieced together from our experiences and imagination. But those who make them become like them, so do all trust in them. Do you want to be dumb? Make and serve an idol, mental and or physical.

In verse 9, the Psalmist says, “O Israel, trust in the Lord; he’s their help and shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; he’s their help and shield. You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; he’s their help and shield. The Lord has remembered us. He will bless us. He will bless the house of Israel. He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great. May the Lord give you increase, you and your children. May you be blessed of the Lord who made Heaven and Earth. The heavens are the Lord’s heavens for the Earth is given to the children of man. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any who go down into the silence, but we will bless the Lord from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord.”

Do you see the relationship? You are what you worship. Trace it out. Why do communists kill so many people? They are basically materialists. They do not believe there is a personal God, a moral God. So people are fodder for the State’s grist mill, merely raw material for the idolatrous State. Why is there so much sexual immorality in the Hindu religion historically? Look at the Hindu gods. They are a bunch of perverted gods, a bunch of dirty old gods. The god that you worship dictates who you become because you are made in the image of God and you will reflect Him or the god you serve.

In the New Testament, I think Jesus nails this truth down and makes it even clearer in New Testament terms. In Matthew 6, Jesus speaks about worrying:

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on Earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where are your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body, so if your eye is healthy your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness? You can’t serve two masters; you either hate the one and love the other, or will be devoted to the one despise the other. You can’t serve God and money.”

What does Jesus say in passages elsewhere? Where do adultery, fornication, murder come from? Out of the heart. Man is heart-driven, and what drives the heart? The Treasure of that heart. Jesus is saying we are what we worship. Our treasure dictates our self-concept and our character. It is the result when the fool has said in his heart there is no God. Therefore, in the area of gender, you become like the god that you serve. It is true for anybody. A person may not be gender-confused, he may not be species confused – or any of these other extreme things – but it comes down to this: you will become like the god that you serve. Psalm 115 shows this truth and Matthew 6 makes it even clearer.

In Ephesians 2, we are told we were dead in our trespasses and sins, but God made us alive in Christ. When you were dead in your trespasses and sins, you were like your father the devil who is a liar and a murderer. The big weapon that Satan uses is lies. Hence, if I think I'm a dragon with all of this power, I do not have to answer a living God. But even if you were a dragon, you would still have to answer to God! This issue is not as complicated as people make it out to be. It involves complicated issues, but it's not as confusing as it might at first seem to be. You need to know that you are an image bearer of God and that God is leading you. In a sense, you can take that clarity and gently shine it on this person who is confused about gender, species, or whatever. It's true even for people who really are not gender confused or species confused or someone who thinks he is an alien or something weird like "I was captured by an alien ship." Our response is always: "No, you're an image bearer of God." We need to help them pray as Moses prayed in Psalm 90 to teach them to number their days that they might have a heart of wisdom. We all are going to die and have to answer to the living God, and we need to realize it. You need to realize it now and so does your gender or species confused friend.

In chapter two of Ephesians, you were dead in your trespasses and your sins; you were made alive together with Christ, united with him. Chapter four then goes on to explain what true holiness is. Paul exhorts us to make sure that we keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Now you are part of the body of Christ. You have to find your identity in terms of where you are in the body. To our question, "What am I supposed to be accomplishing?" Ephesians answers it in chapter 4, verses 17-24:

"Now this I say, and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as Gentiles do in the futility of their minds. They're darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity."

Does not this passage offer us a functional definition of the unregenerate or those who are dead in their sins? What is callousness? It's a heavy layer of skin that keeps you from rubbing yourself the wrong way. So when you get a callus, you become insensitive to the irritation. In the same manner, when you are dead in your sin, your heart becomes callous to the reality of God. How do you then live? If you do not know the reality of God, you give yourself up to sensuality. One could say it this way, faith is supra-sensual. Can you see God? You can't see God. Can you hear him, smell him, or taste him? No. Can you feel him in your body? No! So, I tell people, positive or negative, your feelings are not the Holy Spirit. The bottom line is that sensuality is living by your five senses. What I see, and touch, and feel. So if I think I'm a rabbit, or whatever I am living by my senses, and not living by faith in what the Word of God says. As Paul says about the unregenerate in verse 24: "They give themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity." The more you give yourself to sensuality, the more you take on that identity, and the more you would think thoughts like "I'm an animal, transgendered, or whatever," and it becomes a deeper form of sin that we all experience.

We can think we are wonderful people, but that is still sin manifesting in pride. The Bible is clear that apart from Christ we are all sinners. The bottom line is, am I like Jesus? Normally not, but

that is where he is changing me. As I become more like Jesus, I am becoming like I am supposed to be. This my identity – love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, meekness, and self-control. It's my true identity in Christ, and it's where I have got to go and grow. To be honest, every one of us needs a reality check to see whether we are living by faith in the Son of God who is making us conformed to his image or living in a fantasy world.

Gender is but a subset of the image of God.

In Genesis 1, God made man in the image of God. In Genesis 5:3, Adam had a son in his image and likeness. Moses, by the Holy Spirit, deliberately picks up that theme and phrase. Remember when you go to Luke, the genealogy of Jesus goes all the way back to Adam who was the son of God. There is the image bearing all the way back to the beginning. In Romans 5, or 1 Corinthians 15, Paul tells us that there are really only two images: the first Adam and the second Adam. So everyone who is in the first Adam is confused and cursed as to identity. They do not understand being an image bearer of God. If I am in Christ, then I am now part of the man from Heaven, the second Adam, who has laid down his life. *It also follows from this paradigm that Adam and Eve are the norms.* Anything else is a sinful degeneration from that created norm. Gender and sexuality are part of the image of God and are impacted by sin. But the insanity of thinking I am some other gender than what I am is really just a subset of the insanity of thinking I am something other than an image bearer of God who has to answer to God. This type of moral, spiritual insanity has been around since the Fall.

Do not be deceived by the pagan worldview around us.

Underneath all the heat surrounding gender issues, whether it is the male/female identity or whether it's the binary nature of gender or species issues these all are a subset of this whole concept of identity. Who am I living in a covenantal relationship with and whom am I reflecting? Doesn't that seem a lot simpler? It's not easy, and you and I cannot convert people; we cannot even get them to see this as the core issue. But, it is the reality. So, when we step back, whatever the person's sin is, whether it's a gender issue or something else, at the root or at heart it's the same identity issue. Am I going to live in reality, or am I going to live in a dream world? Hold up my head high and whistle a happy tune? Therefore, I'm not afraid to imagine I am whomever I think myself to be. All of this is Eastern thought. All this is going back to the garden: "You'll be like God. Do not worship the real God. You can set your own agenda and do your own thing."

Peter Jones' work is very helpful in this regard. He shows how homosexuality functions as the sexual sacrament of the New Age movement.² It is really what we see with the gay and lesbian movements. The movement thinks, "We gays are going to lead the world into the Age of Aquarius; we're going to lead them into the new world where there are no distinctions. And all these old distinctions that actually create war and issues - they're all going to be obliterated as we are absorbed into the godhead and we express our essential deity." This a lie that leads straight to the pit of hell. How do I go about counseling this issue? It's difficult, but it's not all that esoteric. We have faced it, and yet we think it's different. For me, it's all about going back to the Introduction to Biblical Counseling, the Marriage and Family course, and the Advanced courses which I teach at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh and have taught elsewhere for decades. In all of it, I have tried to be biblical. The Advanced course interestingly, utilizes the Ten Commandments and the Westminster Larger Catechism as

² Peter R. Jones, *The God of Sex: How Spirituality Defines Your Sexuality* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2006), 67-84.

opposed to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), saying that God gave us ten words – that’s sufficient to organize life. And Jesus says it boils down to two commandments. The first four and the second six. All the law and the prophets hang on these two - loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves. So, however you want to organize and approach it – low to high or high to low, it all comes down to love God with everything you have, love your neighbor as yourself, and you’ll be fine by the grace of God.³ This gender issue is just an extreme version of trying to avoid who we really are.

Exhortations for Life

You need to live and counsel out of these realities.

You need to live as an image bearer of God being recreated by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. You need that for your own identity, so when somebody comes in, and he thinks he is a furry or an animal, you need to relate to him as God’s image bearer who can be redeemed through Christ.

Obviously, you need to teach your children.

Your children are growing up in a culture that tells them they can be anything they want to be. And they have friends who are kind of weirding out. We need to teach them that while Jimmy may be very nice, Jimmy is confused. Jimmy thinks he’s a fox, but he’s really not a fox. We have to have compassion for him, and we have to love him, but we cannot treat him like a fox. He cannot come to our house and eat our chickens. We need to treat Jimmy as Jimmy. You need to teach your children, and you need to teach your churches the truth of how God views these issues.

You’re probably facing this issue already with people in your youth group. We had a father-son retreat that I spoke at recently, and there was a furry there. The kid was wearing a fox tail and a hat. How do you relate to him? You talk to him and ask about his parents. What’s your name? Where do you come from? Why did you pick a fox as opposed to a cat? You can ask good questions and probe and say, “What’s in it for you?” It’s not all that different unless you’re at the University of California, Irvine; you’re the anteaters. Or if you’re UC Santa Cruz, you’re the banana slugs. My guess is that they picked these mascots because they wanted to be weird or kinky. Nobody is terrorized by a banana slug! We laugh, but most of our sports teams take on mascots. Why? They want the spirit of the animal. Nobody wants to be an aardvark, because who’s afraid of the aardvark, or the armadillo? Pitt Panthers, Penn State Nittany Lions, sure! We have this tendency as humans that we want some of these other qualities to make up for us where we think we lack. So when you think of these issues, it’s not all that confusing. And so we need to speak this truth into the culture and say, “You’re much more special than a fox.”

I experienced some of it at an abortion clinic in Chula Vista. A young guy was really mad at me. He asked why I was there. I said, “Because you are made in the image of God, and you’re important. The same is true for your baby; that’s a human being. Anyways I believe that you’re important. If you abort the baby, that’s a human being made in the image of God. To do that is

³ For a summary of the basics of biblical counseling on sexuality and related issues, see George C. Scipione, “The Biblical Ethics of Transsexual Operations,” *Journal of Biblical Ethics in Medicine* 4, no. 2:13-22.

to incur guilt.” He retorted, “I do not believe that.” My response: “Well, whether you believe that or not, that’s the reality; and you are more important than you think you are. You’re not an animal. If someone was going to kill you, it would be my job to defend you. The same thing for this or any other unborn baby. You are more significant than you possibly could imagine. When you think about it, you’re cool, aren’t you? You’re not even an angel.” He calmed down but walked away.

As an aside, some people say angels are better and stronger than us. True, but so are elephants! Angels are not the image bearers of God, and Jesus didn’t die for angels! Years ago, I was in Uganda and a Pentecostal pastor asked me why can’t Satan be saved. I was surprised by the question! I responded it is because He didn’t die for Angels. Hebrews 2:16 says he died for the seed of Abraham. To the pastor or the young father who is dealing with children struggling with this issue, tell your young people: “You’re way more important than an angel, and you’re way more important than a fox or anything. You have more dignity than you possibly could possibly imagine. So why do you want to be an aardvark or a fox when you can be an image bearer of the God who created the whole universe and sent Jesus to die for such sinners as you so you can become an adopted son?”

Conclusion

So these are the kinds of themes we can work with people and challenge them in their confusion. The gospel works here. Repentance and faith are the doors into the person and work of Jesus through which the transsexual or the transgender or the trans-species person needs to enter the kingdom. So in a real sense, the transgender and the trans-species person is no different from you or me or any “regular” sinner. You have to give up your old identity, bound as it is to the first Adam, and gain a new identity in Jesus Christ, the second and final Adam.

Obviously, you need real wisdom to apply this to real people in counseling and evangelism. And of course remember to fulfill 2 Timothy 2:25, “the man of God must be gentle, able to exhort those who contradict, so perhaps God may give the gift of repentance unto life.” Remember, you too were dead in your sins and confused. But God had mercy on you in Christ our Lord. I do not know who you thought you were, but now you are in your right mind and you are an adopted child of God. This good news is what you needed. This same gospel is what every gender confused person also needs. Amen!