

Gender Identity

Research Paper for Australia



Version: 13 December 2023

Introduction

Is 'gender' a social construct? Should male or female be a matter of personal choice? Are there more than two 'genders'? Is identity decided by one's own personal feelings?

According to those whose views have become mainstream in the higher echelons of society, the answer to these questions is yes. We are now at the point where the Prime Minister has marched in the Mardi Gras, 6-coloured rainbow flags are printed all over packaging, children are being taught to question their 'gender' at school, and people are being harassed and vilified to the point of losing their jobs when they refuse to adhere to the creeds of the 'rainbow religion'.¹ Girls must even accept boys into their changerooms. The rainbow wave seems to have come suddenly, and it seems to be unstoppable.

Some questions which we, as Christians, may have include the following:

- How did we get here?
- What are the effects of this movement on Christians?
- How do we navigate this situation in a godly way?
- How do we respond when we are encouraged or coerced to participate – for example what do we do when the business we work for wants us to wear rainbow armbands? What is the truth about gender?
- Is there really much harm in allowing people to decide their own 'gender'?

A good place to start to understand the history of the transgender movement is *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, by Carl Trueman². In this book he tracks the current ideas down to their roots in Enlightenment philosophy around 300 years ago. Even though it may be a worthwhile endeavour to study the history of the transgender movement, that is not the intention of this paper. The intention of this paper is to gain understanding about the worldview behind this movement, the lies and truth around this movement, how Christians are being affected, and how we should live in the context of this movement. We will do so by considering the following:

- The nature of this movement:
 - A false narrative
 - Elitist
 - Utopian
 - Totalitarian
- A call for discernment

¹ Human Rights Law Alliance. (2022). Our Cases. Retrieved from Human Rights Law Alliance: <https://www.hrla.org.au/our-cases>. Accessed 21/03/2023.

² For a version that is easier to read, consider *Strange New World* by the same author.

- The consequences of the transgender movement
 - In society
 - For Christians
- The Truth
 - What does the God say?
 - Our identity in Christ
 - The evidence in line with God’s Word
 - The truth about gender transitioning
 - The importance of the family
- What should we do?
 - Preserving the family
 - The Church: Salt & Light
 - In society: some scenarios

The nature of this movement

God abandoned in favour of the Devil

“Men have forgotten God; that’s why all this has happened”.³ This was Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s explanation for the horrors of the gulags, oppression, and mass murder in the spirit of Communism. It is ironic if not utterly poignant that this statement also applies to the rise and acceptance of the transgender movement in contemporary western society. Rod Dreher expands on this quote: “Because men have forgotten God, they have also forgotten man; that’s why all this has happened.”⁴

Men have also forgotten the one who has been driving people away from God throughout history: the Devil. What is the Devil’s agenda? He wants to destroy the church (Rev 12:17)⁵ and bring all people into subjection to his authority (Rev 13). One of his methods to accomplish this is to undermine the family.⁶ The role of the family in society will be considered later, but it is important to realize that the Devil is using the transgender movement and the movements and ideas behind it to target the family. The movements of the devil in society typically have the following characteristics, or ‘fingerprints’:

- A false narrative or ideology
- Elitist
- Utopian
- Totalitarian

³ National Review. (2018, December 11). 'Men Have Forgotten God': Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's 1983 Templeton Address. Retrieved from National Review: <https://www.nationalreview.com/2018/12/aleksandr-solzhenitsyn-men-have-forgotten-god-speech/>. Accessed 21/03/2023.

⁴ Trueman, C. R. (2020). *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway. p. 12

⁵ Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

⁶ Witteveen, J. A. (2022). *How In the World Did We Get Here?* Canada. p. 56

A False narrative

In John 8:32, Jesus calls the Devil “*The father of lies,*” and his work is evident in the many false narratives or ideologies permeating our society. These narratives become the lens through which everything is interpreted. Anything that doesn’t fit the narrative is either discarded or distorted to fit the narrative. Truth is not important – the narrative is.

The ideas underpinning the narrative of the transgender movement have their roots in the sexual revolutions of the 20th century, which themselves are rooted in the moral relativism developed by philosophers of the 18th and 19th centuries. We will consider some of these ideas and how they support the sexual and gender revolutions that followed. The ideas mentioned here are taken from Carl Trueman’s books, where more detailed analysis can be found.

1. Relativism: there is no objective truth

When Nietzsche famously declared that ‘God is dead’, the statement was not a proposition but rather an expression of what he saw as reality. According to Nietzsche, Enlightenment philosophers had made God implausible or unnecessary.⁷ There was no longer any basis for absolute truth, or purpose in life, or traditional moral norms. With God now dead, humans were now free to choose their own morals and destiny. The purpose of life is personal satisfaction.⁸ This is the message of moral relativism: do what seems good to you.

Relativism has consequences beyond its application to morals. If identity, meaning, and purpose are no longer objective, then they must be created by human beings themselves.⁹ The source of identity has been transferred from facts to feelings. Rather than living by an external standard (facts or objective truth), humans can only express their authentic identity (have freedom) if they express outwardly what is inside (their own feelings or desires). The bible has a different view of human desires: “Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person” (Matt 15:19-20). Not every desire is good, and fallen man is prone to evil desires. Relativism makes the very desires that, according to Scripture, defile a person part of the source of one’s identity and purpose in life. This is in essence a denial of man’s fallen nature.

In order for relativism to be credible, an explanation for human existence which doesn’t rely on God is required. Darwin’s Theory of Evolution gave that credibility: it gave people a reason not to believe in God. Not that it is rational or supported by scientific evidence, but it has an intuitive plausibility particularly for those who don’t want to believe in God.¹⁰ With God now out of the picture, humanist thinkers were now free to recreate society according to their own image. As Trueman writes: *‘If society/culture is merely a construct, and if nature possesses no intrinsic meaning or purpose, then what meaning there is must be created by*

⁷ Trueman, 2020, p. 186

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 193

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 217

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 207

*humans themselves.*¹¹ In other words, humans have decided that they are gods, and that whatever comes out of them is not only valid, but ought to be honoured.

2. The Church, Family, and Christianity are oppressive

The consequence of the belief that human beings only express their authentic identity if they act according to their natural inner desires is that any institution which promotes an objective standard of morality or identity is regarded as oppressive. This belief undermines the two most important institutions in society, the family, and the church, and was made manifest through the ideas of Romanticism and Marxism. Romanticism took aim at Christianity, claiming that the Church's moral codes, particularly those forbidding adultery, were preventing people from living authentic, happy lives.¹² The core idea is that humans are only free if they are free from sexual restraint. Marx, on the other hand, believed that the family and Christianity perpetuated an oppressive society. In his view, history is about classes, and these classes are divided between oppressors and the oppressed.¹³ Religion and the family reinforce the cultural values which maintained this distinction of classes. For people to be free the entire oppressive Western culture, including religion and the family, must be destroyed.

Note some of the consequences of these beliefs. If Christian morality is oppressive then it is also evil.¹⁴ Western culture, which was largely built on Christianity, is oppressive and must be upended. The power structures of the past should be removed to make way for new ideas and structures to take hold, forming a utopian society free from oppression due to class distinctions. The Marxist struggle between oppressors and the oppressed has also found its way into the sexual revolutions and now the transgender movement. Now the 'oppressors' are the people and institutions with traditional views on sexual norms and the sexes.

3. Traditional sexual norms are oppressive

The frontline of the Devil's offensive on the family is in the area of human sexuality. We have already seen how man has replaced God as the definer of morality and identity, and how the sexual revolutions of the 20th century have so far culminated in the transgender movement is the consequence of this. Why sex though? If identity is found in the expression of inward desires, then identity will naturally become sexual as the most powerful inward desires of most people are sexual in nature.¹⁵ The highest purpose of human existence then is pleasure, and the highest pleasure is sex. Witteveen writes that the key ideas of the sexual revolutions were *'personal freedom and autonomy, and the pure, perfected society that would be brought into existence if only the human sexual instinct could find free expression beyond the suffocating limits of traditional morality.'*¹⁶

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 218

¹² *Ibid*, p. 169

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 208

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 169

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 53

¹⁶ Witteveen, 2022, p. 58

4. Gender is fluid

Feminist thinkers (of what is called second-wave feminism) took the destruction of traditional values to the next level. If sexual norms are merely cultural constructs, then what about the traditional views regarding men and women? It was Simone de Beauvoir who introduced the idea that gender and sex are separate. Man and woman is no longer a biological fact (sex), rather it was what one decides to be (gender). One is a man or a woman if they feel like they are a man or woman.¹⁷ Note that there's an element of truth behind this belief: what it means to be a man or a woman is in some ways shaped by culture. However, the fact that you are a man or woman is not, and neither is the fact that there are differences between men and women. This fact was attacked by another second-wave feminist, Shulamith Firestone. Among the elements of society that she said must be swept away in the feminist revolution is the distinction between genders based on biological fact. According to Firestone, there should be no difference between male and female. Another element that she targeted was the role of motherhood: the mother should no longer be expected to educate her children.¹⁸ Ironically, both 'feminists' seemed to think that you are under oppression just by being a woman. Unlike with men, the consequence of sex for women is the risk of conception. Pregnancy and raising children appeared oppressive as they held women back from being like men, who were regarded as free to express themselves sexually and free from the dependency of children (at least in a world which has abolished Christian norms). This is why access to birth control, abortion, and childcare are regarded as so important. Feminist thinkers have sought to free women from oppression by promoting the idea that women should ultimately aspire to be like men.

Once feminism had blurred the lines between male and female, it was only a matter of time before the distinction would be removed entirely. In its purest form, gender theory states that sexual expression or gender is fluid. Whether you are male, female, genderless, or any of 1400+ and counting genders is up to you.¹⁹ There is, however, a contradiction within the transgender movement. On the one hand, activists claim that gender is fluid and entirely a personal choice, while on the other hand they claim that people have an innate and immutable gender that may be at odds with the body they are in.²⁰

5. A further contradiction

Another contradiction of the transgender movement is found in the acronym commonly used: LGBT (with other letters added on). This 'alliance' is more a case of sharing a common enemy.²¹ The 'LGB' movement paved the way for the emergence of the 'T' through the destruction of traditional sexual norms. Now, however, it is common to see the LGB community opposed to the transgender movement. Why? There is a fundamental

¹⁷ Trueman, 2020, pp. 278-283

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 286

¹⁹ James Parker speech at Momentum Baldivis 30/03/2023. Free Reformed Church Baldivis. (2023, March 30). Free Reformed Church of Baldivis Live Stream [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrioZHVllw>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

²⁰ Anderson, R. T. (2018). *When Harry became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment*. New York: Encounter Books. Ch 2.

²¹ Trueman, 2020, p. 393

dissonance in their ideologies. Defining what 'gay' or 'lesbian' are requires a fixed understanding of male and female. If sex is meaningless, as transgender ideology claims, then 'gay' and 'lesbian' are also meaningless. We see this opposition playing out in a couple of ways. First, according to transgender ideology a lesbian should also be open to a biological man who claims to be a woman (and vice-versa). Not to do so would be transphobia. Further, children who show gender-nonconforming behaviour or experience same-sex orientation are now being told that, rather than being gay or lesbian, they are transgender.²²

Elitist

The ideas just mentioned are just that: ideas. For ideas to be accepted into the social consciousness, they need credibility. We have already seen how the Theory of Evolution gave credibility to the belief that God doesn't exist. One reason has been mentioned: it explained the world's existence without God. The other reason is that it has authority: the 'experts' believe it, therefore it must be true. This fact exposes the second fingerprint of the Devil: Elitism.

Although it has been portrayed as a grassroots movement, the driving force behind the sexual revolutions and transgender movement is actually the 'elites' in power and academia.²³ The 'elites' see themselves as the high priests of this religion: 'we have this special knowledge (the narrative), and we must take control so that everyone benefits.' Notably, the source of this knowledge is a select few people, and it tends to contradict the way we see, experience, and understand the world around us. In other words, we are encouraged to reject our own experiences and understanding and instead place our trust in the 'experts'.

In contemporary society, science is often regarded the 'expert', and scientists and academics as the truth tellers. Like the religious leaders of old, they have the social authority to declare theories as fact.²⁴ Today the Theory of Evolution is widely accepted even by Christians because 'Science!'.²⁵ We will now consider how 'science' was used to push the agenda of the transgender movement.

The work of two researchers features prominently in the sexual revolutions of the 20th century: Alfred Kinsey and John Money.²⁶ Kinsey published *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male*, otherwise known as "The Kinsey Report", in 1948. This report is responsible for false claims such as the prevalence of homosexuality and absence of sexual purity in society at the time. As Witteveen writes:

²² Weerakoon, P., Smith, R., and Weerakoon, K. (2023). The Gender Revolution. Matthias Media. p. 89

²³ Witteveen, 2022, pp. 56, 67, 70

²⁴ Trueman, 2020, p. 207

²⁵ Note that this is a fallacious appeal to authority, which is when the evidence given to support a claim is simply that an 'expert' states it – regardless of the truth of the claim itself.

²⁶ James, S. (n.d.). What is the Transgender Agenda, and how should Christians respond? Retrieved from Reformation Today: <https://reformation-today.org/articles-of-interest/what-is-the-transgender-agenda-and-how-should-christians-respond/>. Accessed 21/03/2023.

*'The Kinsey Report introduced America (and the world) to the idea that any suppression of immoral sexual behaviour was nothing more than an expression of hypocrisy. Because, after all, "everyone is doing it!" According to Kinsey's years-long, in-depth study, premarital intercourse was far more widespread than anyone had previously imagined, women were far more sexually interested (and sexually active) than most men believed, and aberrant sexual behaviour (including bestiality and incest) was not nearly as rare as had been previously imagined.'*²⁷

As Witteveen proceeds to explain, The Kinsey Report was actually junk science. It was written by a biased researcher, who himself committed many of the perversions he declared mainstream. The participants of the study also were not a balanced representation of the general population. Many of the subjects were prisoners, which included those incarcerated for rape and prostitution. Others were volunteers, which considering the topic of the study introduces further biases. It is much less likely that traditional thinking, conservative people would be willing to participate in a study focusing on their sexual experiences, which is for them a private matter. Finally, and most disturbingly, is that he conducted sexual experiments on children. Kinsey should have been arrested for child abuse and his work should have been thrown out, but instead he was celebrated, and his work used to justify the consequent sexualization of society.²⁸

While Kinsey's research focused on sexual activity, Money set out to prove that people can change gender. His most famous case was that involving David Reimer. Money persuaded David's parents to allow him to perform surgery on David to make him appear female, and they brought him up as a little girl. He then reported the 'success' of his experiment, and his work was used to promote gender transitioning practices. The truth is that he forced David and his twin brother to engage in sexual acts as young boys, David suffered depression and then chose to live as a boy as a teen, and tragically both twins committed suicide in their 30s after the truth had come out.²⁹ By the time the truth came out, however, his ideas and practices had already become mainstream.

The social authority of science is not only found in the research done in the halls of academia. The work of researchers and theorists like Kinsey and Money filters its way down to the doctors and therapists that are involved with people at an everyday level. Today, many children and parents are going through with transition surgeries because of the lies their therapists, who they regard as 'experts', tell them.³⁰

Utopian

So far, we have looked at the development of the narrative of the transgender movement, and how the authority of 'science' is used to give it some credibility. One may wonder, 'Why

²⁷ Witteveen, 2022, p. 68

²⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 68-75

²⁹ Heyer, W. (2015, April 27). "Sex Change" Surgery: What Bruce Jenner, Diane Sawyer, and You Should Know. Retrieved from Public Discourse: <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/04/14905/>. Accessed 31/03/2023.

³⁰ Anderson, 2018, ch. 3

Note that not all therapists promote the lies of the transgender movement.

is there such a strong push to force everyone to comply through legislation? Isn't it enough now that people have the freedom to do what they want and decide their own identity?' One answer to these questions is found in the next of the Devil's fingerprints: the transgender movement is a utopian movement.

Utopian movements are those that promise 'heaven on earth'. They seek the ultimate existence (prosperity, happiness, and/or health) or 'perfect society' through the wisdom of man. They are the manifestation of the attitude of Babel: "*Let us make a name for ourselves*". (Gen 11:4) They are also the rejection of God, and His promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

The utopia sought by the transgender movement is one of free sexual and gender expression.³¹ This freedom, however, can only be found when there is total compliance.³² This leads us to the final fingerprint of the Devil that we will consider: the transgender movement is totalitarian.

Totalitarian

We have seen how the Devil's work in society is characterised by false narratives, elitism, and the promise of utopia. These all come together with totalitarian ideology, as we will see now.

Totalitarian movements are those where adherence to a certain ideology becomes 'total' – everything else is subverted to this ideology. This includes traditional democratic freedoms such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of movement, and personal autonomy. Here the connection between these fingerprints of the Devil becomes clear. In the case of the transgender movement, all freedoms must be subverted to the transgender ideology, the false narrative. This movement has already made inroads in Australia, generally in the form of censorship. The truth is suppressed through the removal of content labelled 'disinformation' or 'hate speech,' and people are insulted with labels like 'bigot'. Censorship, however, is not the only means. If a person's voice cannot be removed, then the person must be removed, as we will see in the next section when we will look the totalitarian effects of the transgender movement in more detail.

The connection between utopianism, elitism, and totalitarianism has also been hinted at already. Utopian movements such as the transgender movement promise 'freedom', if only society with its' oppressive institutions is destroyed and replaced by an authority proclaiming and enforcing the new truth. We have already seen how the objective for many centuries has been to remove the church and family, which are claimed to be 'oppressive institutions'. The purpose is to enable people to live in the utopia of free sexual expression. It's not actually about the freedom to choose what you want: you need to bow to the new religion. Only when everyone is in subjection to this new religion, when there are no dissenters to 'oppress' people, will people be able to experience the promised Utopia.³³

³¹ Witteveen, 2022, p. 58

³² 'Dissenters' are convenient scapegoats for the inevitable failure of and destruction caused by utopian movements.

³³ Trueman, 2020, p. 260

Further, as mentioned previously, the elites see themselves as having special knowledge (the narrative) which is required for human flourishing. The ‘ignorant masses’ must comply (forced compliance i.e. totalitarianism) to share in this blessing (utopia). One biblical example of such is once again found in Babylon with the attempts to force Daniel’s three friends to bow down to an idol in Daniel 3.

A call for discernment

The use of the word ‘fingerprints’ to describe the works of the Devil in society was intentional. Just as the presence of any one of multiple fingerprints is used in forensic science as evidence that one was present at a crime scene, or by your phone or computer as evidence that you are indeed the person trying to sign in, the presence of the Devil’s fingerprints is evidence of his work. When we see lies, censorship, calls to trust the experts rather than evidence, or the promise of blessing or life conditional upon total compliance, then we see the Devil’s handiwork. Knowing how the Devil is at work through the transgender movement is important for two reasons: we can examine ourselves to see where we are participating in the work of the Devil, and we can also discern the lies of the Devil present in other ideologies. Sometimes it is difficult to discern truth from error, and this is where knowledge of the other fingerprints of the Devil can help. Consider the following:

- The Devil is not limited to using academics, intellectuals, scientists, doctors, and therapists as ‘experts’. In recent times the idea that the government are ‘experts’ or the arbiters of the truth have been prominent. There is also the danger for Christians that Ministers or Theologians are regarded in the same way. Scripture says, *“do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God”* (1 John 4:1). Are we doing this?
- Are we aware when differences of opinion are being censored? We have seen some examples: labels such as ‘misinformation’, ‘disinformation’, ‘hate speech’, or insults such as ‘bigots’, and ‘deniers’ (for example, the term ‘science deniers’ has been used by the elites for decades against those who question their narrative on issues such as evolution, climate change, and health). Labels such as these, or the suppression of other voices, are typical of false narratives. An appropriate response when we see censorship is to ask, ‘Why?’. What are they trying to hide? Why are they trying to hide it?³⁴
- Have we bought into the utopian narrative that the government must force compliance for the sake of people’s prosperity, happiness, or health – or ‘the greater good’?

³⁴ Note that it is possible for lies to be censored in favour of the truth. This doesn’t, however, justify the censorship.

Exposed by Scripture

The pattern of how the sexual revolutions have taken place is found in Scripture, in Romans 1. First, men suppressed the truth by their unrighteousness (Rom 1:18). Although they knew God, they did not honour him as God (Rom 1:21). They *“exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and [creatures].”* (Rom 1:23) Men wanted sexual ‘liberation’, they wanted to follow their sinful desires without restraint. Therefore, they suppressed the truth about God – they ‘forgot’ God. They declared that God is dead and put man in his place: man decides what is right and wrong, man decides his identity. *“Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves.”* (Rom 1:24). Paul then explains how men dishonour themselves through homosexual relations, which has happened in our society. Now they have taken it even further: they are dishonouring their bodies by rejecting them and trying to recreate them. Finally, Paul writes, *“Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”* (Rom 1:32) People are being encouraged to ‘come out’ as gay or transgender and celebrated for it. From Scripture we also know that the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23), and we will see that as we look at how Western culture is being destroyed.

The consequences of the transgender movement

In society

When we look at the effect of the transgender movement on society, we see that, in following the Devil’s agenda, mainstream society is turning God’s created order upside down. The truth is becoming lies and lies are becoming the truth. God’s standard of morality is being discarded in favour of man’s standard. According to mainstream society, man was not created by God with a purpose for existence, but rather is just a product of ‘chance’. The good institutions God gave us are now regarded as evil. Men haven’t only forgotten God: they have placed themselves on God’s throne and judged God as evil.

When God is abandoned, there is no longer a reason for moral standards. This abandonment started to justify their new sexual ethic, but it didn’t end there. Whenever society, generally through government legislation, accepts a new ethic, the next one is pushed. After the sexual revolution of the 1960s came the decriminalization of abortion, then promotion of ‘homosexual rights’ (culminating in changing the definition of marriage in 2017), and now the push for ‘transgender rights’. The slippery slope is real: when morals are subjective then every moral standard can be questioned. If the ultimate happiness is found in sexual expression, then shouldn’t paedophilia be accepted or even promoted? Shouldn’t we be encouraging children to be happy by expressing themselves sexually? Further, if we can choose our own identity then why limit it to being human? We are now seeing people affirmed in their assumed animal identities.³⁵ When the moral code becomes self-expression, the foundation for banning other crimes such as murder, torture, abuse, lying

³⁵ Muehlenberg, B. (2022, August 24). School Affirms Student's 'Trans Cat' Identity. Retrieved from Caldron Pool: <https://caldronpool.com/school-affirms-students-trans-cat-identity/>. Accessed 31/03/2023.

etc. has also been destroyed. Traditional, and particularly Christian, morals and ethics become a hindrance to 'true' self-expression.

Therefore, these moral qualities have been discarded and replaced. Consider what has been traditionally regarded as virtuous: commitment, honour, sacrifice, courage, resilience, love, selflessness, strength, modesty, and self-control. When the new ethic is found in expressing your authentic identity, these virtues (which are focused outside of oneself) are undermined. In contrast, qualities such as selfishness, lust, being temperamental, sensuousness, immodesty, taking offense, and feeling entitled are now promoted. The qualities which build up and protect society are regarded as vices, while the qualities which destroy society are regarded as virtues.

Even those qualities which remain have been twisted to suit the transgender ethic. 'Love' and 'tolerance' means affirming everyone's choices and standards, unless you decide to obey God's law and uphold God's standard. Freedom is also a one-way street: you are free to do what you want, if it fits the narrative. The government must also promote 'freedom' by punishing those who do not comply. Another word which has taken on a new meaning is bravery: it is regarded as 'brave' to come out as homosexual or transgender in a society which encourages and praises it, whereas to stand up for traditional morals is not brave but 'bigoted'. Although the transgender movement portrays itself as 'tolerant' and 'inclusive', the truth is that it is intolerant and exclusive. They have taken qualities which have been good and twisted and perverted them to suit their agenda.

In addition to the discarding and twisting of traditional moral qualities, the traditional model of a family - father, mother, and children and their roles in the family and society - is also under attack. The family had already been severely compromised by the sexual revolutions prior to the transgender movement, and now this destruction is only continuing. It is no longer up to the parents to educate their children, but the state. Children are being taught the transgender ideology while being told not to share it with their parents. Activists have even gone so far as suggesting that children be removed from parents who don't accept their chosen identity.³⁶

This undermining of the family is also evidenced through the attempts to change the familial roles, particularly those of women. These attempts are epitomized by the vocabulary changing from 'mother' to terms such as 'pregnant person', 'menstruator', 'uterus owner', and 'chestfeeder'.³⁷ Success is now often defined in masculine terms. The narrative is that a successful woman is defined by her progress in her career, sporting achievements, public engagement, or the like. Supporting a family and homemaking are ridiculed and seen as examples of oppression. In effect, the removal of 'mother' from the vocabulary and redefinition of what it means to be successful as a woman amounts to the destruction of womanhood.

Finally, we are also seeing the destruction of traditional human rights. The transgender movement is attacking the rights to freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and as

³⁶ Anderson, 2018, ch. 2

³⁷ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, p. 7

mentioned previously the freedom for parents to choose their children's education.³⁸ When identity becomes self-centered, speech becomes harmful; any refusal to validate one's chosen identity can be an attack against their identity.³⁹ For this reason, freedom of speech becomes regarded as the freedom to do harm. The Christian religion is regarded as 'hateful' and 'bigoted', and Christians who do not comply are being marginalized. This animosity towards Christians is strangely not directed as strongly towards other religions with a similar sexual ethic, including Muslims. This makes sense when considering that the Devil is driving this agenda. As mentioned previously, the Devil is targeting the Church, and we will now look at how Christians are being treated.

Christians

The Devil's tactic against the Church largely has not been to attack churches directly. He uses a divide and conquer approach: individuals (particularly Christians) are targeted and isolated until they comply.⁴⁰ This is cancel culture at work. A lot of examples can be found in the work of the Human Rights Law Alliance (HLRA) to defend Christians from vilification because of their beliefs. On their website there are several cases of Christians who lost their jobs, were excluded from college, or threatened with litigation because of their Christian beliefs.⁴¹ One example of such is Dr Jereth Kok. Following an anonymous complaint about his social media posts, his medical license has been revoked even though there was no issue with the way he practiced medicine. When he appealed, the Victorian Tribunal upheld the Medical Board's decision.⁴² Other well-known victims of cancel culture include Israel Folau, who was suspended by Rugby Australia for a social media post where he quoted a Bible verse,⁴³ and Andrew Thorburn, who was forced out of the Essendon Football Club because of his association with a church which maintains traditional biblical views.⁴⁴

There have been times when Christian organizations have been targeted as well, such as Citipointe Christian College. In the beginning of 2022, they updated their enrolment contract. A couple of days later this contract, which included Christian beliefs on sexuality, had been released on Twitter. This led to protests, a local pastor criticizing the school, and

³⁸These rights are all included in the International Covenant of Human Rights, of which Australia is a signatory. United Nations. (2023). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Retrieved from United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/ccpr.pdf>. Accessed 20/05/2023.

³⁹ Trueman, 2020, p. 363

⁴⁰ Peter Abetz speech at Momentum Baldivis 30/03/2023. Free Reformed Church Baldivis. (2023, March 30). Free Reformed Church of Baldivis Live Stream [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrioZHVllw>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁴¹ Human Rights Law Alliance, 2022. <https://www.hrla.org.au/our-cases>

⁴² Steenhof, J. (2021). Slouching Towards Groupthink: Cancel Culture, the Law and Religion. In K. Donnelly, *Cancel Culture and the Left's Long March* (pp. 107-120). Melbourne: Wilkinson Publishing Pty Ltd. p. 115

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 113

⁴⁴ Human Rights Law Alliance. (2022, October 05). *Andrew Thorburn forced to resign for his faith*. Retrieved from Human Rights Law Alliance: https://www.hrla.org.au/andrew_thorburn_forced_to_resign_for_his_faith. Accessed 10/04/2023.

then vandalism, death threats, and bullying towards the school, teachers, and students. Finally, only a week after updating the contract, the principle resigned and the school announced that they were reconsidering the contract. This happened to a normal Christian school upholding normal Christian beliefs.

Cancel Culture is not limited to the workplace or public square – in recent times several Australian states and territories have passed laws against conversion therapy which reach into the private sphere of everyday Australians. As a result of these laws, parents, teachers, religious leaders, and counsellors can all be criminalised for maintaining the biblical standard, counselling which doesn't affirm one's chosen identity, or even praying for someone who asks for help.⁴⁵ Victorian Police are even allowed to investigate and charge people who live outside of Victoria.⁴⁶ Tasmania and Western Australia do not have conversion therapy laws at the time of writing. However, the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute has recommended measures which go beyond Victoria's conversion therapy laws,⁴⁷ and the Law Reform Commission of WA has released a report recommending changes which would restrict a religious school's ability to only hire staff who uphold their religious ethos.⁴⁸ There could soon be laws in place which affect the personal lives of Tasmanians, and schools and other religious organizations in both states.

The changes to Australian law have not been limited to the states and territories. The Australian Law Reform Commission's final report on Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws is due to be released at the end of the year.⁴⁹ This could have a similar impact on federal legislation.

In summary, it is becoming increasingly clear that Christianity has no place in a society dominated by the transgender ethic. Christians and Christian organisations across Australia have been vilified, threatened, and lost their jobs because of their convictions. In some states it is illegal to reject one's chosen identity, and laws of this kind are likely to be passed in Western Australia and Tasmania as well. As we consider how we should respond to the transgender movement, we will first consider the truth: The truth in God's Word, the scientific evidence, and the truth about gender transitioning.

⁴⁵ Steenhof, 2021, p. 117

⁴⁶ Human Rights Law Alliance. (2021, February 06). *New Victorian law is an attack on fundamental freedoms that puts everyone at risk*. Retrieved from Human Rights Law Alliance: <https://www.hrla.org.au/new-victorian-law-is-an-attack-on-fundamental-freedoms-that-puts-everyone-at-risk>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁴⁷ Human Rights Law Alliance. (2022, August 04). *Tasmania set to ban conversion therapy*. Retrieved from Human Rights Law Alliance: https://www.hrla.org.au/tasmania_set_to_ban_conversion_therapy. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁴⁸ Human Rights Law Alliance. (2022, August 22). *WA joins queue of states 'modernising' anti-discrimination laws*. Retrieved from Human Rights Law Alliance: https://www.hrla.org.au/wa_joins_queue_of_states_modernising_anti_discrimination_laws. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁴⁹ Australian Law Reform Commission. (2023). *Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws*. Retrieved from Australian Law Reform Commission: <https://www.alrc.gov.au/inquiry/anti-discrimination-laws/>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

The Truth

What God says

Transgender activists generally make two contradictory claims about ‘gender identity’:

- Gender is entirely a social construct. Everyone, and particularly the young people, should be free to be whoever they want to be, and name this whatever gender they want.⁵⁰
- Gender is not a social construct but the subjective sense of oneself as male or female which may be at odds with biology.⁵¹

The first claim is the logical consequence of abandoning God, but it is also an anti-realist view. It is essentially meaningless: there is no point trying to define gender, male, female, or whatever other gender one may decide to be when it is subject to one’s feelings. This claim also doesn’t support transition surgery: how can one transition from girl to boy if the meanings of ‘girl’ and ‘boy’ are subjective? It turns out that people do generally want meaning and realism, and that is where the second claim comes in. It is a new form of Gnosticism, the heresy originating from biblical times that the soul (or one’s true self) is detached from the body. It is also problematic: how can you tell one’s innate gender if not by their biological sex?

In contrast to the claims of transgender theory, the Bible proclaims a reality that is evident through biology. This is taught already on the first page: *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”* (Gen 1:27). In the next chapter, the Bible teaches that woman was created to be a helper to complement man, and that marriage is a union of one man and one woman. Jesus also affirmed the truth of Genesis when he said, *“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female...”* (Matt 19:4). The bible teaches two non-negotiable principles:

- Mankind was created in the image of God, and thus the inherent dignity of God is reflected in both male and female.
- God created mankind as male and female, binary sexes. Sex forms an important part of our identity, which is externally defined by God and not internally defined by us.⁵²

Further support for the truth of binary sexes is found where the Bible condemns the practice of men dressing as women or vice versa (Deuteronomy 22:5, 1 Cor 11:3-15). Men and women also have different roles in society and in marriage (1 Tim 2:8-15, Titus 2:1-6, Eph 5:22-33, 1 Pet 3:1-7).

⁵⁰ James, n.d.

<https://reformation-today.org/articles-of-interest/what-is-the-transgender-agenda-and-how-should-christians-respond/>

⁵¹ Trueman & Pruitt, 2023

<https://mortificationofspin.podbean.com/e/the-genesis-of-gender-1685123003/>

⁵² Speech by John Steenhof at FRCA Albany, February 17, 2023. An audio recording of this speech can be obtained by request from ARPA Australia.

God's Word also outlines the cause of the problems in society, the solution, and the truth about children. The problem is not the family and other institutions in society; it is sin (Rom 1:18-3:20). The solution? Salvation through Christ (Rom 3:21-41). The family, the church, and government, rather than being part of the problem, are a blessing from God to restrain sin and proclaim the truth of the gospel (Ex 20:12, Eph 6:1-4, 1 Tim 3:15, Rom 13:1-3). And children, rather than being innocent and corrupted by others, are born in sin (Ps 51:5) and need training, correction, and instruction to live according to the truth (Eph 6:1-4, Prov 13:24, 22:15, 23:13-14). They need to learn wisdom, and how to make decisions with long-term consequences.

Our identity in Christ

One aspect of salvation through Christ is that we are given a new identity by God. This biblical identity is summarized by Patricia Weerakoon in *The Gender Revolution* with the following characteristics: Wondrously created as male and female in God's image, fallen and in need of redemption, redeemed and being restored, and resurrected and being perfected.⁵³ As we will see later, this is the message of hope that we have for the world and especially those struggling with the transgender ideology. The reality of sin and a broken world (Rom 8:20-22) is that many of us struggle with the way that God created us. God's response to our struggles is not condemnation, but the promise of recreation (2 Cor 5:17). We are being restored into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). When Jesus returns in glory, we will be glorified together with Him (Rom 8:17). '*Mortal, perishable men and women will be transformed into immortal, imperishable men and women.*'⁵⁴

The evidence

The best research and evidence is also in line with the truth of God's Word. In contrast to several leaders in Western countries who have struggled to define a woman, the definition is clear biologically speaking. Sex is about the way the body is organized for the purpose of reproduction. A man has the potential to create new life outside of himself, and a woman has the potential to gestate new life.⁵⁵ There is a plethora of research which shows that the differences between the sexes can not be explained by the idea that genders are a social construct. If gender was a social construct, then there should be a great variance in the performance and expectations of men and women across cultures. However, researchers have found that there is a remarkable consistency between cultures, without exception. Some examples include the following:

- Men rank higher in assertiveness and women much higher in nurturance.⁵⁶ This reflects their roles in the biblical model of the family.

⁵³ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, pp. 23-29

⁵⁴ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, pp. 28-29

⁵⁵ Trueman & Pruitt, 2023

<https://mortificationofspin.podbean.com/e/the-genesis-of-gender-1685123003/>

⁵⁶ Family First NZ. (2015). *Boys, Girls, Other: Making Sense of the Confusing New World of Gender Identity*. Family First NZ. Retrieved from <http://familyfirst.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Boys-Girls-Other-FULL-REPORT.pdf>. p. 25. Accessed 11/04/2023.

- The differences in gender are magnified in the more egalitarian countries. The more educational, financial, political, and cultural freedom people have, the greater the distinction between the sexes.⁵⁷

This truth is also reflected in biology, with male and female bodies developing different characteristics apart from sexual organs. This is perhaps the most intuitively manifest in the world of professional sports, particularly with the controversy regarding whether biological men should be allowed to compete as women. World Athletics has recently banned them from doing so if they have gone through male puberty, as they have an unfair advantage.⁵⁸ Note that it only goes one way: there are no examples of biological women attempting to compete with men. Further, research has found that sex has an influence on “many areas of cognition and behaviour including memory, emotion, vision, hearing, the processing of faces and the brain’s response to stress hormones”.⁵⁹

The claim that gender dysphoria is a result of being one sex trapped in the body of the other sex is also tenuous. To date there has been no research that suggests that this claim is true. Rather, studies have found that only between 2% and 27% of children persist in their gender dysphoria through to adulthood.⁶⁰ This suggests that there are other causes of gender dysphoria, and we will now consider the evidence of what causes gender dysphoria and the harms of transition surgery.

Truth about gender transitioning: Leaving people in their wake⁶¹

In 2021, A comprehensive study about gender dysphoria was released by researchers from Westmead Hospital in NSW. The results of this study provide some insight into what causes gender dysphoria, and lead the researchers to conclude that a comprehensive, holistic model of care which considers the patient’s history is required rather than a closed-minded gender transition approach.⁶² The study reports a high correlation between patients presenting with gender dysphoria and comorbid mental health disorders, as well as adverse childhood experiences resulting from dysfunctional families or maltreatment.

These observations reflect those of studies by other experts.⁶³ The evidence suggests that the problem with gender dysphoria isn’t being ‘trapped in the wrong body’, but rather could be linked to events and mistreatment from childhood. This also makes sense when considering the conditions which are like gender dysphoria. Some experts have likened

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 28

⁵⁸ Morse, B. (2023, March 24). *World Athletics tightens rules on transgender women athletes*. Retrieved from CNN: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/23/sport/world-athletics-transgender-ruling-spt-intl/index.html>. Accessed 11/04/2023.

⁵⁹ Anderson, 2018, p. 88

⁶⁰ Family First NZ, 2015, p. 41

⁶¹ A more detailed summary of the research around transgender ideology can be found in Chapters 6 and 7 of *The Gender Revolution*, by P. Weerakoon et al.

⁶² Kozłowska, K., McClure, G., Chudleigh, C., Maguire, A. M., Gessler, D., Scher, S., & Ambler, G. R. (2021). Australian children and adolescents with gender dysphoria: Clinical presentations and challenges experienced by a multidisciplinary team and gender service. *Human Systems: Therapy, Culture and Attachments*, 1(1), 70–95. <https://doi.org/10.1177/26344041211010777>. Accessed 11/04/2023.

⁶³ Anderson, 2018, ch. 6

gender dysphoria to anorexia or body integrity identity disorder.⁶⁴ Is the correct way to treat anorexia to encourage the child in their belief that they are fat, and encourage them to eat less? Wouldn't that just exacerbate the problem? Further, do you treat someone who thinks they should have only one leg by amputating the other leg? These disorders, including gender dysphoria, are a result of beliefs about oneself that are not consistent with the biological reality. The correct way to respond is to seek to correct the mistaken beliefs and deal with the underlying causes⁶⁵. In contrast, the transgender movement seeks to exacerbate the issue by entertaining the delusion and encouraging patients to perform surgery which is, in effect, castration – the amputation of the sexual organs.

The connection between gender dysphoria and mistaken beliefs about life events finds further evidence when considering the stories of those who have regretted transition. These people consistently tell stories of childhood neglect and abuse, consequent gender dysphoria, transitioning, and then the realization that transitioning did not deal with the underlying mental health issues caused by the neglect and trauma. The following two examples are typical of these stories:

- The first example is Walt Heyer. When he visited his grandmother during childhood, she would clothe him in a dress and praise him when he dressed as a girl. These actions planted the idea that he was born in the wrong body. His father also reacted negatively when he found out, and then didn't believe Walt when told of abuse by his uncle. He didn't find healing through transitioning, discovering later that he had developed a dissociative disorder in childhood to cope with the trauma caused by his grandmother and uncle.⁶⁶
- The second example is Chloe Cole. She and a lot of her peers were sexually assaulted as teens, and this reinforced the belief that she wouldn't be harmed in that way if she were a boy. When she went to a therapist, her parents were told that she was likely to commit suicide if they didn't go ahead with the transition process. After 'transitioning', she regretted her decision when she realized the damage that had been done to her body, and her desire for children. Sadly, she is not sure whether she is still fertile and will never be able to breastfeed a child.⁶⁷

Further stories can be found in Chapter 3 of *When Harry Became Sally* and *Free to Change: Survey of 78 Ex-LGBT People*. Some common themes of these stories include sexual abuse, absent or abusive parents, particularly fathers, and childhood bullying for not being a stereotypical boy or girl. Rather than receiving therapy to work through underlying beliefs and trauma, they were told that their only choice to prevent the risk of suicide was to transition. After going through the transition process, they realized that it didn't help. The transition only caused more harm and exacerbated the underlying issues. They found

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, ch. 6

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, ch. 6

⁶⁶ Heyer, W. (2015, April 1). *I Was a Transgender Woman*. Retrieved from Public Discourse: <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/04/14688/>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁶⁷ Jordan B Peterson. (2023, January 3). Detransition: The Wounds That Won't Heal | Chloe Cole | EP 319 [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6O3MzPeomqs>. Accessed 10/01/2023.

freedom when they identified as their biological sex again and dealt with the underlying beliefs and trauma.⁶⁸

Another cause of gender dysphoria which is becoming more prominent is peer pressure. As children are being encouraged and affirmed in the transition process, others are also participating to gain social acceptance and a community. As society continues to praise those who 'transition', is it any wonder that people who struggle to find acceptance or to fit in are 'transitioning'? This pattern of 'social contagion' is closely connected with a recent phenomenon, labelled 'Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria' (ROGD), where many teenagers (mostly girls) appear to suddenly adopt a transgender identity. Often several girls from the same peer group will 'come out' together. ROGD is commonly associated with heavy usage of social media and online video websites such as YouTube or TikTok. The truth is, however, that they are enticed by empty promises. The medications and surgeries detach them from their true identity and prevent growth and maturity in becoming a full adult, thus isolating them further from those with whom they are struggling to find acceptance.⁶⁹

One may wonder where the parents are in this story. Are they trying to prevent their children from transitioning? It is disturbing to note that coercion of parents through perceived threats of suicide as we saw in the example of Chloe Cole are a common tactic. Transgender ideologues often pose the question, "Would you rather have a living son or a dead daughter?" (in the case of a girl who wants to identify as a boy). Parents are often guilt-tripped into supporting transition through this tactic, although the evidence suggests that transitioning actually increases suicidality.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Anderson, 2018, ch. 3; Coalition Against Unsafe Sexual Education. (2021). *Free to Change: Survey of 78 Ex-LGBT People*. pp. 47-52, 70-107.

⁶⁹ Anderson, 2018, ch. 6

⁷⁰ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, pp. 142-143

When considering the results of the gender transition process promoted by the transgender movement, it is important to first understand what the process is. The following graphic details the transition process, the age at which each stage is promoted, and the reported effects of each stage of the process.

THE GENDER AFFIRMATIVE MODEL

| | Examples | Ages | Risks |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| Social Transition | Change hairstyle, clothing, name, pronouns, access restrooms of the opposite sex | Toddlers to adults | Increases likelihood of persistence |
| Puberty Blockers | Gonadotropin-releasing hormone analogs such as leuprolide and histrelin | Early puberty, around 9-11 | Brittle bones, joint problems, ³² impaired memory. ³³ Puberty blocked kids go on to use cross-sex hormones in nearly 100% of cases, ³⁴ which causes permanent sterility. |
| Cross-Sex Hormones | Testosterone for girls, Estrogen, plus androgen inhibitor for boys | Around 14 to adult | Sterility if used after puberty blockers. For women: lowered voice, weight gain, balding, possible cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, bone density loss, and increased risk of cancers (breast, cervical, ovarian, and uterine). For men: breast growth, gallstones, weight gain, blood clots, sexual dysfunction, possible cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and breast cancer. ³⁵ |
| Sex Reassignment Surgery | “Top” surgery: Double mastectomy or breast implants; “bottom” surgery: Alterations to or removal of, genitalia or reproductive organs | Around 14 to adult | Loss of sensation, infections, irreversibility. Post-surgical complications to genital SRS are common in both men and women. ³⁶ |
| Legal Document Changes | Changing sex recorded on birth certificates, school records, or other official identification | Any age | Inaccurate recording of vital statistics; mistaken sex in medical care. |

Figure 1: Gender Transition Process and Risks. Responding to the Transgender Issue, Family First NZ p15. Obtained from <http://familyfirst.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Responding-to-the-transgender-issue-in-NZ-schools-A-guide-for-parents-and-schools.pdf>

As we can see from this graphic, the social changes are being pushed onto young children and dangerous medical treatments are given to young people who are only in the early stages of puberty. During this important and impressionable stage of their development, children and being encouraged to take a pathway which leads to damaging and potentially irreversible changes to their beliefs and bodies.⁷¹ Research has shown that the brain develops in responding to immediate emotional stimuli (peaking at about age 19) more quickly than it develops in regulating emotions and rational and long-term decision making. For this reason, there are questions about whether children even through to the end of their teens can make long-term decisions and to give informed consent.⁷² Is it wise to encourage them to make the decision to take these treatments which have a permanent effect on the body?

⁷¹ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, p. 113

⁷² *Ibid*, pp. 115-116

The truth is that all the medications and surgeries of the gender transition process are experimental, they are known to have seriously harmful short-term side effects, and the long-term effects are unknown.⁷³ They do not create a new sexual identity, rather they destroy one's biological sex and render them infertile. There is also no evidence that transitioning helps with mental health: researchers in Sweden found that those who went through the transition process still had poor outcomes in general death rate, suicide, psychiatric problems, and substance abuse.⁷⁴ In fact, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and the UK, all countries which previously endorsed gender transition surgery, have pulled back in favour of a cautious and neutral approach similar to that recommended by the researchers from Westmead Hospital.⁷⁵ Australia should take note: others are ahead of us on the journey, and they have turned around because it only leads to disaster.

We have seen earlier how liberation from sexual stereotypes, particularly those on women, was an important ethos of the transgender movement. However, in a tragic irony, this movement now reinforces the very same stereotypes that it claimed to be fighting against. When a girl or boy displays preferences that are outside the stereotypical behaviour of their sex, they are now being encouraged to declare that they are the other sex (or gender), regardless of their biology. The measure of sexual expression and identity has changed from biology (sex) to behaviour (gender), and the behavioural stereotypes of masculinity and femininity are held even more rigidly than previously.⁷⁶ Rather than liberating people from sexual stereotypes, the transgender movement now enslaves people through sexual stereotypes.

In summary, the transgender movement is one deception and maltreatment. The victims, including children, are lied to at every stage. They are coerced by threats of suicide and lies about the side effects and consequences of the surgery, coerced into harmful experimental treatments for the sake of a political and ideological agenda. Scripture warns those who participate in this agenda: "*whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.*" (Matt 18:6)⁷⁷ The victims of this, the Devil's, agenda are primarily children and women. Children, who are not yet mature enough decide their own bedtime let alone make decisions which will permanently disfigure their body, are being led astray. Women are more likely to transition,⁷⁸ which makes sense considering they are more likely to suffer dissatisfaction with their bodies in a time when society largely objectifies

⁷³ Anderson, 2018, ch. 6

⁷⁴ Family First NZ, 2015, p. 45;

Heyer, W. (2016, February 2). *50 Years of Sex Changes, Mental Disorders, and Too Many Suicides*. Retrieved from Public Discourse: <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2016/02/16376/>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁷⁵ Speech by John Steenhof at FRCA Albany, February 17, 2023;

Human Rights Law Alliance. (2022, October 28). *Australia lagging behind UK gender dysphoria developments*. Retrieved from Human Rights Law Alliance: https://www.hrla.org.au/australia_lagging_behind_uk_gender_dysphoria_developments

⁷⁶ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, p. 97

⁷⁷ Although Jesus is talking about children who believe in him, one of the principles behind this text is that we are accountable for the influence we have on children, who are innocent and impressionable. Other texts such as Exodus 22:24 warn against mistreating the fatherless and oppressed.

⁷⁸ Weerakoon, P. et al, 2023, p. 130

women for their physical beauty,⁷⁹ and they are more likely to suffer sexual abuse. This movement also enables abuse and molestation: predators can abuse the new bathroom policies by freely entering women's bathrooms and changerooms, and those who abuse children are less likely to be caught when a holistic method of counselling is abandoned.

Being a product of the Devil's agenda, the transgender movement is also one full of hypocrisy and irony. It promises freedom but only enslaves people to a disfigured body; it promises happiness but only exacerbates pain and mental health problems; it promises to liberate women, but it destroys their role and purpose in society; it proclaims inclusivity but is intolerant toward those with other views; it proclaims diversity but enforces rigid stereotypes and beliefs; it promises life, but only brings death. The antidote to this culture of death is the truth, which is proclaimed by the Church and exhibited and perpetuated through the family.

The importance of the family

The function of the family in society is well summarized by Jim Witteveen, who writes, '*It is within that family structure [instituted by God] that the most essential society-building and society-stabilizing work is done. It is the family that passes down, from generation to generation, the mores, religious beliefs, behavioural codes, and traditions that keep a culture alive.*' This means that in order to destabilize a society, or even a particular group within a society, it is the stability and even the very existence of the family unit that must be undermined.⁸⁰ The family is not only important in maintaining a good society through teaching the next generation. It is important for children to have both a mother and father for the sake of their well-being. Mothers and fathers bring different strengths to the task of raising their children, so much so that the evidence shows that boys and girls achieve the best outcomes in achievement and development when they are raised in a family by their biological parents.⁸¹ One example of such is how important fathers are to the well-being of daughters. They protect their daughters from dangerous boys and promiscuity through the affection they show and the boundaries they place over their daughters' relationships. Even the mere presence of a father has a positive effect biologically: the pheromones released from his body slow down his daughters' sexual development, which makes them less likely to experience early puberty and be sexually active at a young age.⁸²

Considering how important the family is in maintaining a stable society which is built on the truth of God's Word and cultivates life as He intended it, it is no wonder that the Devil is targeting the family so strongly. We have already seen the damage that the Devil inflicts through dysfunctional families in the strong connection between gender dysphoria and the abuse and trauma which are caused by such a family. However, the impact of the destruction of the family goes further than broken lives. Without the family, society has no future. Without the family, the church has no future.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 132

⁸⁰ Witteveen, 2022, p. 56

⁸¹ Anderson, 2018, ch. 7

⁸² *Ibid*, ch. 7

What should we do?

Now that we know some of the harm the transgender movement causes on society and individuals, the importance of resisting this agenda becomes clear. Do you care about society? Your neighbour? Those who are oppressed, particularly the women and children? Do you care about the church? The believer who sits next to you in church? Do you care about your family? Your children? If any of the above is true, then in order to protect the people you care about it is important to stand firm. The family must be preserved, the church must be a salt and light, and we must stand up for the truth. We will now look at some things we can do to fight against the Devil's agenda, and what better place to start than in the home?

Preserving the family

Men and Women

If the Devil is targeting the family, and the family is essential to a strong church and society, then we must protect and preserve the family. We must first get our house in order. Are we maintaining the distinction between male and female and their roles in our families? Are we setting a godly example in our marriages, promoting a thriving and flourishing household? Men, are you diligent in providing for and leading your family? Loving and cherishing your wife? Protecting your family from the lies of the Devil? Or are you lazy: lazy in leadership, in providing, in loving, or in learning? Are we encouraging women to be homemakers and nurturers? Women, is this your priority: to be a homemaker and nurturer? Consider the following, posted by *reformedmum* on Instagram:

"When our homes and families receive the leftovers of our energy, gifts, and talents, while our workplace or side hustles receive the cream of the crop, our house is not in order and we've bought into the lie that it's of secondary importance. Our homes and families are worthy of the very best of our attention as we prioritise glorifying God by loving our husbands and children while building Gospel-centred homes that look different from that of the world. (Titus 2) That's not to say there isn't a place for jobs or side hustles, as there are many needs to fill within the community and we have all been given different talents and gifts. However, we need to ask; Does it take away from my family or does it bless it? Has it become a way for me to avoid my responsibilities at home? Does it leave my family with only the dregs? For years, the world has drilled into women's ears the lie that staying home to raise a family is a pointless endeavour and pursuing a career is the only worthwhile pursuit. Live coram deo (before God's face) and reject those lies wholeheartedly. Invest in your home, your husband, and your children with your first fruits, not your leftovers."⁸³

This message is not just for wives and mothers, but for all of us. Do we value and promote motherhood? And, on the other hand, do we value and promote biblical masculinity? When we are godly men and godly women, our family thrives (Ps 128), and our children will learn what it means to be a man or woman through our example.

⁸³ <https://www.instagram.com/p/CoMGnkdLjns/?igshid=MWNmMTk3NmQ%3D>. Quoted with permission. Accessed 25/03/2023.

Raising children

In addition to being a good example for our children, it is also important to *'bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord'* (Eph 6:4). Consider: who is raising our children? Who are they learning from? Are they being raised by their parents, who are supported by a faithful church community? We may think this is impossible, as we all make mistakes. How can we be a faithful parent? How will my child stay faithful to God when he grows up, considering how strong the attacks of the Devil are and his influence all around us? Scripture gives us encouragement: *'Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it'* (Prov 22:6). When we are a good example to our children and teach them the truth, this truth will guide them through their whole life. We can also see God's work through imperfect but faithful parents when we consider the history of the church. God has preserved the truth through the generations, and many of us believe because we have believing parents. We can be confident that he will bless us despite our weaknesses and failures.

Although much of the work in training and nurturing our children is done by mothers, the responsibility to bring them up according to their truth is on fathers (Eph 6:4). It is important for fathers to be personally involved in the lives of their children, and we will see that as we consider what can lead our children down the road of gender confusion.

Many children are confused about sexuality because they are not presented with the truth in the first place. The breakdown of the family has led to many children not having a father or a mother, which means they do not have a male or female role model in their life. Even when there is a father and mother, they may not be good role models: they may be absent or abusive.

The Devil is also very active in contemporary culture, whispering lies to our children. One product of the 'sexualisation' of culture is that girls are judged by appearance. Girls may be dismissed or bullied because of their appearance, particularly in the company of other immature boys and girls. They may conclude that, if they are going to be objectified for their appearance, they would prefer not to be a girl.⁸⁴ Others may have been, or know someone who was, sexually abused, and conclude that they need to be a boy to protect themselves or others from it. We have also considered another lie of our culture: that women must have a career to be successful. Girls may see their sexuality as a hindrance to a successful life.

The Devil's influence is not limited to girls. There is a lot of pressure on boys to be a prime physical specimen – think about all the men in the ads and the glorification of sports stars. Boys who are shorter or bad at sport may be teased for being a 'girl'. Further, boys may see the violence and abuse perpetrated by men and conclude that the problem is men. Thus, boys may also question their sexuality.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ James, n.d.

<https://reformation-today.org/articles-of-interest/what-is-the-transgender-agenda-and-how-should-christians-respond/>

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Fathers, are you aware of the messages the Devil is telling your children? Are you fulfilling your daughter's need for love, attention, and affirmation? Are you providing them with a safe and secure home? Are you protecting them from dangerous boys and men? Are you teaching your children that masculinity and femininity is not all about appearance? Are you showing them that strength can be used to protect and preserve rather than destroy? This is only possible when fathers are involved in their children's lives. So, fathers, are you an involved father or an absent father? How much time are you spending with your children, and is this time relationship building? Is there anything hindering you from raising your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord? Is work? Leisure? Church and community involvement, whether it be as a member of consistory or a committee or association? Parents, are you aware of the way your children may respond to your treatment of them? Are you showing favouritism to girls or to boys, even unintentionally? Even statements like, 'if only you were a girl, you wouldn't be like this,' can plant the seeds for gender confusion, particularly when repeated or reinforced through negative attention. Are you a parent who is impossible to please? Are you withdrawing affirmation from your children, maybe giving them 'tough love' because they 'need to grow up' or 'need to become successful'? When children do not receive affirmation and encouragement from their parents, where will they go to find it? The message of contemporary culture is that we can be praised and accepted by changing our sexual orientation, or our sex itself.

It's important to know not only what the Devil is telling our children, but how he is doing it. Parents cannot rely on Christian schools (such as the John Calvin Schools or John Calvin Christian College) to protect their children from the Devil's agenda. Much of the bullying and teasing, and the negative peer pressure which can plant or grow the seed of gender confusion happens at school, and Christian schools are no exception. It is important to be aware of the way our children are treated at school. Further, we must also be aware of the other means through which this message is communicated: books, movies, the internet, the media, and others. Do you know what books and movies your children are reading and watching? Are you aware of the influence that social media and the internet can have on your children, particularly in questioning their identity and setting them against their parents?

We should cultivate strong, open relationships with our children. Relationships in which they are comfortable to express their questions and struggles knowing the love and care of their parents. It is normal for children to have questions and doubts about their sexuality, particularly as they come to grips with who they are during the teenage years. Further, when our children grow up, they live in this society, so it is not helpful just to tell them the truth and hide the lie from them. They will be exposed to the lie. Therefore, we must teach our children how to discern truth from error (1 John 4:1). John Steenhof has some good practical steps that parents can take:

- When your children are young, consciously teach them biblical truth, including about sexuality.
- Delay engaging with children about sexual orientation or transgender issues for as long as possible, ideally when they are teens.

- Have one-on-one time with every child as they are growing up, particularly as they reach puberty. One way is to read a book with them. This provides a private and safe space to discuss issues of sexuality with them.
- Help and equip your children to navigate through issues of sexuality, whether it be their own questions or other influences. This means being equipped and prepared yourself.
- Be aware of the content your children are reading or viewing. Keep an eye on their emails, their social media, their phones etc. Be aware of what their peers are showing them.⁸⁶

When we cultivate a positive environment in our home, then we can also do so in our church. We can be a witness to the world, and particularly those who have been cast aside in the wake of this evil agenda. We will now look at how we, as individuals and as a church community, can stand firm and proclaim the truth.

The Church: Salt and light

The gospel is the good news of salvation, and it is the good news of the identity we have in Christ. This is the message of hope that we have for the world and for our children. Our identity, being dependent on God and not us, is eternally secure. The biblical truth of sexuality explained previously is also good news. We can be confident about our identity knowing that our biology is not lying. We do not need to doubt, always questioning whether we have discovered our true self, whether we really have our identity right. The gospel is the truth, and it sets us free (John 8:32). We are set free from the lies of the Devil, from the uncertainty and insecurity which comes when our identity is dependent on us, and free from being reliant on others to affirm our identity.

Christians who live out the truth of this gospel message are a salt and light (Matt 5:13-16). In the family, teaching children the truth. In the church, encouraging one another to live in the freedom of our identity in Christ. In the world, proclaiming the truth of salvation and our identity in Christ, and standing firm against the attacks of the Devil knowing that we are secure in Christ.

There is one more thing we should avoid as we seek to proclaim the truth to our children and the world around us: enforcing rigid stereotypes of masculinity or femininity which are not biblical. It is normal that there are girls who want to play 'boys' games (hence the term 'tomboy'), and boys who prefer creativity over physicality.⁸⁷ When we try to enforce rigid stereotypes onto them, we are contributing to the problem by reinforcing the message of society that they may have the wrong body. Rather, we should encourage diversity and individuality within the bounds of biblical sexuality.

A church in which the truth is proclaimed and exemplified will also be a haven for those discarded by the world. Many people are asking, 'Who am I?' Many people, having been

⁸⁶ Speech by John Steenhof at FRCA Albany, February 17, 2023

⁸⁷ James, n.d.

<https://reformation-today.org/articles-of-interest/what-is-the-transgender-agenda-and-how-should-christians-respond/>

broken by the transgender movement, have questioned the agenda, and been discarded. The truth they are seeking will be found in the gospel. These people need our help, our compassion, our love – not censorship.⁸⁸ Are we striving to cultivate a church culture which helps the broken with compassion and love, and proclaims the truth to those who doubt? Remember, it is the gospel that sets people free. Meanwhile, it is also important to support fellow believers who are under attack. We saw earlier how people are being persecuted for proclaiming the truth. Some are vilified, others are losing their job. As governments add their force to the Devil's attacks, this is likely to increase. Scripture calls us to stand alongside our brothers and sisters for the sake of the gospel (Phil 1:27).

The following passage from *The Gender Revolution* is also a good summary of what the response of the church should look like:

“What will a genuinely biblical, biological, and compassionate response to gender incongruence look like? It will require us to encourage and assist people to recognize and accept their biological sex, either male or female, while simultaneously acknowledging the complexity and painfulness of such identification for gender-dysphoric people. But even more importantly, we must help and encourage them to lift their eyes to the hope of Jesus Christ, who alone can (and one day will) truly heal all our fallenness – including our gender confusion. We are all sin-afflicted beings who are deeply affected by this fallen world. We are all, in various ways and to various degrees, broken people in need of Christ's forgiveness and healing. Humility and gratitude, therefore, must be our posture at all times.

Christians, however, must also be courageous when facing the sex denialism and censure of transgender ideologues, activists and allies. This requires us to have a clear understanding of the source of our identity, of biblical sexual ethics, and of God's plan for men and women – a plan that spans the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We need a deep-rooted trust in the goodness of God's plan for our life and our flourishing.”⁸⁹

In society: Some scenarios

Finally, we will consider some things we can do when we are faced with the transgender agenda. One principle that should be held is that we should interact with all people in as peaceable and respectable a manner as possible (Rom 12:18). At the same time, we should be a salt and light by proclaiming the truth and exposing the lie. So, what do we do when we discussing these issues with people who believe the lies? Peter Abetz has some good advice: ask 'Why?'. When we ask for evidence, they either expose their foolishness by failing to give any or present us with their beliefs which we can then engage with. We can then present the truth when we ask questions such as, 'Did you know that there are over 1000 known biological differences between men and women?'⁹⁰ To do this we need knowledge, and a good place to start is with the recommended reading at the end of this paper. It is also

⁸⁸ Weerakoon et al., 2023, p. 159

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 178

⁹⁰ Peter Abetz speech at Momentum Baldivis 30/03/2023. Free Reformed Church Baldivis. (2023, March 30). Free Reformed Church of Baldivis Live Stream [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrioZHVllw>

important to be careful that we convey the truth through the language we use. Consider, for example, phrases such as ‘trans man’ or ‘trans woman’. There is no such thing as a ‘trans person’, only men who think they are a woman or vice versa, and this should be reflected in our language.

Consider the scenario introduced at the beginning of this paper: How do we respond when we are encouraged or coerced to participate – for example what do we do when the business we work for wants us to wear rainbow armbands? Scripture says, *‘Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them’* (Eph 5:11). When the world affirms sin, we must take no part in it.

What about when people pressure us to affirm their chosen pronouns? Should we go along with it in order to ‘keep the peace’, or to keep the relationship intact for the sake of our gospel witness? Scripture is also clear about this matter: using transgender pronouns is a sin against the ninth commandment.⁹¹ Daniel Huit writes: *‘Since pronouns imply the gender inherent in the pronoun, to refer to a person by a specific pronoun is to recognize that person as the gender assigned to that pronoun. Therefore, to refer to a person by a pronoun clearly inconsistent with biology would be to approve of that person identifying contrary to God’s design, which would be sinful. It would therefore be sinful to refer to someone as “he/him” whom God has clearly created as “she/her” and vice versa. Use of “they/them” pronouns for a single person or any “neo-pronouns” similarly denies a person’s God-created identity as male or female by refusing to acknowledge truth and instead implying ambiguity. It is therefore sinful for a Christian to refer to a particular individual by “they/them” or “neo-pronouns”. This does not apply to situations in which “they/them” pronouns are used to communicate anonymity rather than gender ambiguity.’*⁹² Huit continues that this principle does not apply when someone changes their name, as their name doesn’t specifically imply a particular gender. But is this really the case? We may be uncomfortable about going along with the name change, believing that it is affirming the same lie. In these cases, we should follow our conscience.

The final scenario we will consider is: what do we do when the government introduces punishments on those who do not affirm one’s chosen identity? What do we do when the government threatens to fine or imprison us when we do not call our girl a boy, or when we pray for someone who is struggling with gender dysphoria? As we have seen, these issues are a reality in some Australian states. In this situation, we should *‘obey God rather than men’* (Acts 5:29). We have seen what the scriptural response is in various situations, how we can honour God and love our neighbour. Does government legislation change this? Remember what Jesus says: *‘Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and*

⁹¹ Butterfield, R. (2023, April 03). Reformation21. Retrieved from Why I no longer use Transgender Pronouns - and Why You shouldn't, either: <https://www.reformation21.org/blog/why-i-no-longer-use-transgender-pronouns-and-why-you-shouldnt-either/>. Accessed 10/04/2023.

⁹² Huilt, D. (2023, January 10). Pronouns and the Christian. Retrieved from The Shepherd's Church: <https://www.theshepherds.church/blog/pronouns-and-the-christian>. Accessed 12/04/2023.

kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour.' (Matt 10:16-19) Further encouragement for when we face persecution is found in the Sermon on the Mount: *'Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.'* (Matt 5:11-12)

Conclusion

The rise of the transgender movement can be explained by the following, stated at the start of this paper: men have forgotten God, and men have forgotten the Devil. In this paper we have seen how the Devil is using the transgender movement to destroy Western society by undermining Christian values and targeting the family and the church. We have seen the lies used to promote this agenda, and the harm that it causes on society, Christians, and individuals, particularly women and children. It is important to fight against the work of the Devil manifest in the transgender movement. We have looked at some ways in which we can resist the Devil in the family, in the church, and in society. In a society in which many are oppressed and harmed by those who have forgotten God, the message of the church is the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, who declared, *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light"* (Matt 11:28-30).

Author: Nathan Terpstra

The author welcomes and appreciates any feedback or comments regarding this Research Paper. Please feel free to reach out at nathan@arpa.com.au.

Recommended Reading

Trueman, C. R. (2020). *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway.

Weerakoon, P., Smith, R., and Weerakoon, K. (2023). *The Gender Revolution*. Matthias Media.

Further resources can be found in pages 195-198 of this book.

Witteveen, J. A. (2022). *How In the World Did We Get Here?*

Anderson, R. T. (2018). *When Harry became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment*. New York: Encounter Books

James, S. *What is the Transgender Agenda, and how should Christians respond?* Reformation Today: <https://reformation-today.org/articles-of-interest/what-is-the-transgender-agenda-and-how-should-christians-respond/>

Family First NZ. (2015). *Boys, Girls, Other: Making Sense of the Confusing New World of Gender Identity*. Family First NZ: <http://familyfirst.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Boys-Girls-Other-FULL-REPORT.pdf>.