

MS/HS Chapel

21V: Gender Identity Issues and the Gospel

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LIVING WITH VIRTUE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Chapel Talking Points Summary

1. Gender Identity: The modern, Western, majority worldview is telling us that gender is a social construct that is oppressive and restrictive. It asks us to disconnect human sexual anatomy and gender expression. There is a growing dogma that gender is not binary but exists on a fluid spectrum.
2. Gender dysphoria refers to confusion regarding one's body and more specifically a disconnect between a person's biological sex and their perceived gender. Gender dysphoria is real and is not new; there are cases of it in antiquity. Those who are actually diagnosed with gender dysphoria actually make up much less than one percent of the population.
3. The Good News is that Christ has come to save all who are lost and broken. All manner of gender and sexual difficulties arise from the fall. But no sin or brokenness is big enough to keep us from a relationship with Jesus by faith. We are all broken people who can find wholeness in God.
4. Facing the transition of puberty can bring on feelings of uncertainty or even fear about your body or your gender identity. Often those feelings are resolved as you get older.
5. People who embrace an alternative gender identity seem more common now because the media and society as a whole have chosen to affirm this choice and celebrate it as life-giving. Many people expressing these seemingly new ideas do not recognize the degree to which they have been shaped by our culture.
6. Gender expression often reinforces reductionist stereotypes of the opposite gender. The Good News is that we find even in Christ a demonstration of the full range of human expression from tenderness to stoic endurance on the cross.
7. God is calling us to speak the Truth in Love. (Ephesians 4:15) Jesus did this perfectly and that is why hurting and broken people were drawn to him during his years on earth. We will struggle as we seek to uphold that balance when it comes to making choices about things like pronouns and how we respond to people who have embraced an alternative gender identity. (Matthew 9:36)
 - a. There is a spectrum of beliefs and approaches on how to foster relationships in this environment. Should we correct pronouns or use their requested pronouns? Should we declare our pronouns? We encourage you to seek wisdom from your parents and pastor to help advise you on how to approach these decisions.

- b. The double dangers here are: legalism and license; pride and fear. To focus too much on truth may cause you to destroy people for the sake of being correct or run from these issues in fear. To focus too much on celebrating anything may cause you to lose focus on what is actually real, pridefully think that others are wrong or further someone's confusion.
8. God is not a God of confusion. He is the one we need to look to for our identity. When we listen to other voices it does not lead to freedom or flourishing. God invites us into his family and we find out who we are in fellowship with others and in obedience to God (Romans 12:2).
9. We should not see our bodies as tools to fulfill our own desires. Rather, we should celebrate that we are not our own but were bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20) and were designed by a creator (Psalm 139:13). Part of our worship to God is taking care of the body given to you so that you can love and serve others.
10. Modern industrialized society sees our bodies as liabilities. We are averse to sickness, weakness, and vulnerability because it makes people less "valuable" for industrial purposes. This has led to a distaste towards the body that often ends in gender dysphoria. One could argue that female bodies are particularly burdensome in many ways (pregnancy, as an example). There is a trend in teen girls who are resisting puberty because they feel unready for those realities.
11. The Good News is that we can trust in God, who gives us everything we need for each season of life (2 Peter 1:3). We won't be perfect, but God will be with us along the way and help us through and in every season of life. We can join communities of faith that encourage each other. We don't need everything for the seasons to come: don't be anxious for tomorrow. Young people: please be kind to yourselves! There is grace and hope in life!!!

