



Genesis 1:27

SO GOD CREATED MANKIND IN HIS OWN IMAGE, IN THE IMAGE OF GOD HE CREATED THEM; MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28

John 13:34

A NEW COMMAND I GIVE YOU: LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, SO YOU MUST LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

## GROWING IN HIM COUNSELING Gender Identity

“Haven’t you read, he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh...’”  
Matthew 19:4-5

According to “Focus on the Family,” there are a couple myths about gender identity that need to be understood when talking with youth (and others). **Myth #1: “Some people are born in the wrong body.”** DNA proves a person is either male or female and there is no scientific development that states gender dysphoria is “naturally occurring.” This is simply how a person feels and we know our emotions can and do lie to us. **Myth #2: “Transgender people must be supported in their change or they will commit suicide.”** While the rate of suicide is much greater in people who struggle with gender/sexual identity confusion, it is not because they weren’t supported. The rate of suicide is more closely linked to depression and a lack of hope. Research has found the rate of suicide is just as high for people who have undergone transgender surgery as those who struggle in silence.

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/helping-kids-recognize-the-myths-of-gender-identity-and-transgenderism/>

### How do I respond when someone I love is struggling with Gender Dysphoria?

The first thing to remember is to LOVE. People who are struggling with gender dysphoria are really struggling with who they are. If they are a Christian, we can lovingly remind them of who they are in Christ and how much our Lord loves them! If they are also struggling in their faith, you can still tell them how much God loves them, but remember they may have a hard time hearing that. They first need to know someone here on earth loves and cares about them. It is okay for you to say they are beautiful/handsome just the way they are. You can kindly and without judgment ask questions about the reason for the struggle, or what makes them question their identity. Most importantly, let them know you care about them as a person. Research is showing that catering to this belief system is not beneficial for anyone. We can gently state that DNA does not change regardless of how we feel or what surgeries have been performed. Most people who have transitioned to another gender regret this decision and begin de-transitioning which is emotionally and physically traumatic and can result in lifelong struggles.

## Loving Conversations with people who are struggling with Gender Dysphoria

**Validate their feelings.** People who are struggling with gender dysphoria are truly struggling. Recognize how hard it must be to feel uncomfortable in their body. Everyone wants to feel loved and accepted and this is where we start. Love them for who they are and understand they are hurting.

**Stay away from judgmental statements.** No one wants to feel judged. Most likely, this person is already judging themselves. Ask what would be helpful to them and focus on listening to how they feel and what they are going through.

**Do NOT offer advice (unless it is asked for).** Most people have strong opinions and offer them freely. These opinions are often very hurtful and can drive a wedge rather than build a relationship. If your friend/family member is seeking advice, do so gently. It is important to speak truth, but it is not our place to condemn.

**Do NOT use Bible Verses as a weapon.** The Bible is a source of truth and Jesus is Love. When we use verses as weapons to shame and condemn others, it pushes them away from us and from God. Instead speak truth in love after you have built a trusting relationship.

**Build one another up.** The Bible calls us to LOVE one another. Rather than focusing on one area in which you disagree, focus on what this person does well and who they are in Christ. Gender dysphoria has a lot to do with identity, insecurity and unworthiness. Show people they are worthy, loved and important. This will go much further than simply stating they are wrong in what they believe.

**Seek professional help.** Culture as well as current laws (specifically in Colorado) encourage transitioning to another gender. There are hormones you can get as well as surgical procedures. These can be medically very traumatic and have life long consequences. Additionally, a large majority of people who struggle with gender dysphoria are able to work through it with proper mental health treatment and many who go through with medical transitions begin de-transitioning years later.

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