

A Theology of Gender: Affirming and Protecting the Design**

Raising A Gender-Stable Child in A Gender-Fluid Culture

Introduction: I assigned myself this subject because I desired to gather my thoughts to be prepared to address parental questions regarding this phenomenon of transgenderism. We all need to be ready to respond to questioning parents, schoolteachers, Sunday School classes, and even ourselves. Whether watching the news, attending a school board meeting, or meeting with counselees, the phenomenon is being imposed upon us.

I. Beginning in the beginning.

- A. Genesis 1-3
- B. Birth forward affirming and protecting
- C. Isaiah 1-4 The Father who understands the pain

Let us begin with this reminder. God the Father has much experience with wayward children. This passage of Isaiah summarizes this reality.

Isaiah 1:4 God does understand the heart of the parent of wayward children. God's been there, done that.

II. Clarifying what we do and don't do as Biblical counselors

- A. We do not practice what the psychiatric profession terms conversion therapy. We live and practice biblical Christianity. The only conversion we teach is the conversion that God does when he enlightens a sinner's mind to hear his call to trust Jesus for eternal life.
- B. We practice listening to God and His example of calling sinners, those who choose to do what God says a person should not do, to repentance. That is the call of God for them to act responsibly in accordance with God's design. Our responsibility to unrepentant people is to love them and model God's love for them.
- C. When the professional system desires to forbid our calling people to repentance, it asks us not to practice the freedom of religion that the Constitution of the United States guarantees.
- D. When children persist in sexual deviation from biblical standards, we have only one recourse. God and Jesus model this recourse:

1. *The appeal to Israel Is. 1:18-20*

"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; red as crimson, they shall be like wool.¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land, ²⁰ but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken

2. *The 2nd appeal is the offer of salvation (John 1:12-13)*

- To receive Jesus--12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.
- To engage in the will of God (I Thessalonians 4:3-9)

3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; 6 and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all who commit such sins, as we warned you and warned you. 7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. 8 Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit. 9 Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.

III. Parallel the Model of Raising a Drug-Free Kid

A. How to raise a gender-stable kid parallels Raising a drug-free kid.

B. Prevention advice from Shalom

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| 1. Talking to your kids | 4. Participating with your kids |
| 2. Asking your kids | 5. Attending with your kids |
| 3. Listening to your kids | 6. Helping your kids |
| 7. Teaching and instructing your kids. | |

IV. Seven Principles for Raising Confident Children with Appropriate Sexual Identities

Caveat: remember God is the parent from creation forward. He instructed Adam and Eve, and they chose to rebel. He chose Abraham and, through him, Israel, and they decided, as a nation, to rebel. Consider Isaiah 9:13-17 but also remember Deuteronomy 6:1-10. Remember Deuteronomy 29:4, Ephesians 1: 1-9, and Deuteronomy 29:29.

- A. Love them up close, like Jesus, the disciples, not at a distance like David (I Kings 1:6)
- B. Teach them the truth, historical narratives, and their principles, not stories of wonder
 - a. Teach formally – a great place to accomplish this is at the dinner table or end of the day (put them to bed thinking about God, not the last TV show or ball game)
 - b. The wonder catches the eye, but the truth and principles capture the mind (Deuteronomy 6:1-10)

- c. Weave truth and principles into the fabric of life
- d. Use truth principles to frame culturally appropriate activities, including play, toys, and role models
- C. Take your commission to parent seriously as the Apostles took the commission to disciple (Acts nine forward and pastoral epistles to Timothy and Titus))
- D. Model affection before them and generously show loving appreciation to them— establish comfort of belonging
- E. Live your own sexuality proudly—be a man, be a woman
- F. Listen to their hearts with compassion and not judgment. If they express gender dysphoric questions, listen, help them sort it out, and teach them by letting the Word of God speak regarding the design, male and female, and both equally the image of God. Teach them roles and values.
- G. Walk with Jesus daily—from quiet time through the hustle and bustle of life so that they observe your joy in your happy and tearful times.
- H. Practice biblical parenting from the womb forward
A national tragic error that teaches an essential lesson for parenting. If you crack the door, the door is cracked. When you cut the umbilical cord, connect the emotional cord, and don't let it get cut. There are predators ready to step in, connect, and take over your child.

After citing Mark Shaw's very Biblical approach to raising a drug-free kid, and Joseph Califano's book by the title, *Raising a Drug-Free Kid*, I set forth my ten strategies for raising a gender-stable child. They are as follows:

Total Parenting is More than Siring, Birthing, and Providing Sustenance.

- Talking —conversational age/appropriate
- Asking —expressing interest in them and clarifying understanding
- Listening —hearing the heart and not just the words
- Participating —doing with them —family activities
- Engaging—being involved in their activities
- Teaching—the Word by integrating its relevance in all life
- Helping—includes disciple, support, and defence (both teaching them how to defend themselves and step in where they are vulnerable.
- Evangelizing—purposefully teaching the gospel with appeal
- Disciplining—yes, a form of teaching, but it deserves its own listing (2 Tim 3:16 -17)
- Modeling—by your living - " Don't talk the walk if you don't walk the talk" Jack Wertzen

Deliver all of this in the context of a loving, caring, and affectionate relationship

In the wake of the Roe v Wade reversal, certain cities have declared themselves sanctuary cities for abortion. When a sanctuary city is not a sanctuary at all. Sanctuary cities came to be because the State Government said “No!” to the Constitution like a two-year-old to a parent and got away with it. Now some cities have declared themselves “sanctuary cities,” saying they won’t enforce protections for the unborn. So, again, a temper tantrum, “No!” to the legitimate Supreme Court’s upholding the Constitution.

Parents, beware! A two-year-old who is allowed to say a foot-stomping “No! without being corrected and repenting, may become a 15-year-old who will decide and execute gender change in defiance of God, parents, and reason and will find sanctuary in a hostile contemporary culture. Remember, it began with “No!” being uncorrected at two.

V. Counseling Distraught Parents

- Start with God the Father and his depraved and disobedient children. Been there, done that!
- Remember, there go I, but for the grace of God.
- Remember, even the worst sinner is created in the image of God and should be respected as an image-bearer
- Remember, God loves sinners, even deviant sinners (think King David)
- Remember, they are responsible for their choice, not you.
- Remember to listen before you talk. Listening means more than asking questions; it means exploring how, when, where, and why. It means listening to hopes/dreams and then helping to understand the implications of choices for those dreams.
- The question too late asked, what went wrong? Here is the observation of World.org writer, Bethel McGrew, commenting on young men committing mass shootings:
- *In my observation, children with intact families, structured schedules, and caring friends tend to mature into a healthy balance. But a child without one or more of these supports is at risk of remaining in a permanent state of arrested development. He is inclined to be bitter, aimless, and lonely. And even before he stumbles down a rabbit hole of porn or violence, his pliable brain has been desensitized, primed to seek an endlessly refreshed dopamine hit.¹*
- *This has taken a devastating toll on young men and women. Sometimes, young women will hurt or kill themselves. Some young men will do this, too. But others will direct their pain outward. Lacking a stable father figure or a healthy channel for their natural*

¹ Bethel McGrew is a high school teacher, math Ph.D., and widely published freelance writer. Her work has appeared in First Things, National Review, The Spectator, and many other national and international outlets. The comment cited was her contribution to World.org online piece sometime in April/May 2023. I apologize, I’ve lost the exact reference.

masculine aggression, they will make an idol out of violence and worship men who deal it out.

- In the same manner, some will choose the idol of drugs, some the idol of sex, and some the idol of self-designated gender. All have the common origin of a fallen nature not curbed by grace through intense appropriate parenting and community support.

Finally, how leaders, whom parents enshrine as models, handle these issues influences young people's attitudes. For example, think of a thirteen-year-old faced with a double standard. Her parents have taught her a biblical gender approach, and they have taught her to honor leaders in their denomination. But then she hears a certain denominational leader her parents highly esteem say that faithful Christians should practice "pronoun hospitality" in addressing "transgender" persons.

**These notes do not have everything the PP slides have and vice versa. Several discussions following my presentation suggested several refinements. I will continue to develop and refine this and eventually publish the finished product in an article format. If you decide to quote me, please add this footnote: *These notes are a document in process and not intended to represent all that can and should be said nor that what has been said is a (or my) final word.*