

What About Transgender

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Date: 26 March 2023

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[0 : 00] Cool. I'm on. Well, these topics that we're doing on Sunday mornings, I mean in some ways I think they'd be better done in a seminar where we can ask questions and so on. But Sunday mornings are when most people turn up and we really wanted this to be for as many as possible because they're such current issues. I've done a worksheet for the teenagers. I think I would recommend that if there's teenagers in that you actually do the worksheet just to help you follow this this morning. And the worksheet is, yes, on the side. And an adult if you need a help to concentrate then. Why not? Okay. I don't know if you've heard this, the clash of the two Scottish heavyweights.

In the red corner, Nicola Sturgeon, although I must say that's a much better picture of J.K. Rowling than Nicola Sturgeon, isn't it? They haven't caught a most photogenic there.

In the red corner, Nicola Sturgeon, who is First Minister of Scotland until tomorrow. Last day of being First Minister of Scotland today, I believe. Introduced into Scotland the Gender Recognition Act, which was about allowing kids as young as 16 to undergo surgery and have a certificate that changed their gender. When challenged on this, and people raised various problems with this legislation, Nicola Sturgeon kind of implied that people who object to this kind of thing actually have all other kinds of prejudices. Many of them are racist. Many of them are misogynist.

Many of them are homophobic. Not all, but many. In the blue corner is J.K. Rowling. J.K. Rowling was a critic of Nicola Sturgeon's proposals.

J.K. Rowling's personal story is that she was a victim of domestic abuse. And her main concern was that she wanted female spaces to be female spaces and feel safe.

[2 : 37] Changing rooms, other female spaces. But she also supported people who had lost jobs for insisting that a woman is a biological woman. J.K. Rowling has been cancelled by the Harry Potter cast, the cast of the films, because they feel she is transphobic. And therefore, the strange thing is that Harry Potter reunions now happen without the author who made it all possible.

What's going on is a fairly recent thing. Not until mid-1990s did this start to happen academically, which is really very recent in the history of humankind.

Is that your biological sex is now being seen as different from your gender.

Gender is a social thing. Gender is how you live out being a man or a woman, whereas sex is biological.

And nowadays it's being said that sex and gender are two different things. The other term you need to know is gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria is where just a small number of people experience real tension between their sense of being a man and woman and their body.

[4 : 15] So they're very uncomfortable in their own bodies. They feel they are one thing, but their body is something else. Now, we don't actually know that much about gender dysphoria.

My understanding is what we do know, scientifically, is the majority of people who suffer from gender dysphoria have other problems alongside them.

They have been abused. They have mental health problems. Increasingly, quite a number are diagnosed with autism.

So quite what causes what, we don't really know. But what we can say is that these are people who suffer distress and have multiple other issues.

And I think, whatever we say today, we must be seen to be very, very compassionate to people who suffer with problems in this area.

[5 : 17] Do you agree? We must be against bullying. We must be against mistreatment. We must care for people who suffer in this area. And there will be increasing numbers of people who suffer in this area.

We must show compassion. However, our attitude towards the ideology, which I'm going to call transgenderism, may be something different to our attitude towards the people.

And you might wonder why, in the recent UK census, there were only 0.5% of people who felt that their sex was different from their gender, felt their gender was different from their biology.

So why is it such a big deal? Why has it become such a big thing? Well, if you're on Team Sturgeon rather than Team Rowling, transgender is seen as the next phase in the civil rights movement.

We're pretty much agreed racism is wrong. We're pretty much agreed misogyny is wrong. We're pretty much agreed homophobia is wrong in society. So what's next is making sure that transphobia is seen in the same light as those other prejudices.

[6 : 39] As Nicholas Sturgeon puts it, trans rights are human rights. Sorry, Keith. That was the racism.

That was the top one, wasn't it? Yeah. I'm not going to go through each of them. What strikes me about that list of civil rights is there's huge contradictions between them.

In that feminism, and I've seen this through my years, feminists have been arguing that men and women are not as different as people think. You know, really, there's many women who can do things that were traditionally reserved for men.

And then those gender stereotypes have to go. However, transgenderism is the opposite. It really stereotypes what it feels. If you feel like this, then probably your real gender is a man.

If you feel like this, then probably your real gender is a woman. There's a real contradiction between feminism and transgenderism. It's also really strange, isn't it? That if you, if I as a Christian pastor, try to help somebody who wants to move away from their current sexuality, that there's laws being discussed that might make that difficult for me.

[8 : 02] You're not really supposed to help people change their sexuality. But you are supposed to help people change their gender. I mean, how, why? Does that work?

It doesn't. It doesn't make logical sense. But you have to understand that today, particularly, moral sense isn't really about logical.

Moral sense is really about strong convictions and emotions. And it runs on powerful stories about people's lived experience.

That's how it works. And there's two big changes in society that have made transgenderism possible. Two changes that have made it possible.

The first is the modern view of identity. Emma Watson, who plays Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter movies, says, people are who they say they are.

[9 : 09] People are who they say they are. If someone self-identifies as something, how can you know whether they're that or not? That is for them to say. Only they know who they truly are.

I've shown this before, and I hope it's not too mocking, but I think it's worth seeing again. There's been a lot of talk about identity lately.

But how far does it go? And is it possible to be wrong? We went to the University of Washington to find out. Are you aware of the debate happening in Washington State around the ability to access bathrooms, locker rooms, spas based on gender identity and gender expression?

I think people should be able to have access to the facility. I think bathrooms could and potentially should be gender neutral because there doesn't need to be a classification for differences.

I think people definitely should have the ability to go into whichever locker room they want. I feel like at least public universities should do their best to accommodate for those who do not have a specific gender identity.

[10 : 16] You know, whether you identify as male or female and whether your sex at birth is matching to that, you should be able to utilize the resources. If I told you that I was a woman, what would your response be?

I would maybe think you had some Chinese ancestor.

I would ask you how you similarly came to that conclusion and why you came to that conclusion. I would have a lot of questions just because on the outside I would assume that you're a white man.

If I told you that I was seven years old, what would your response be?

I wouldn't believe that immediately. I probably wouldn't believe it, but I mean, it wouldn't really bother me that much to go out of my way and tell you, no, you're wrong. I'd just be like, oh, okay, he wants to say he's seven years old.

If you feel seven at heart, then so be it. Yeah, good for you. So if I wanted to enroll in a first grade class, do you think I should be allowed to?

[11:37] Probably not, I guess. I mean, unless you haven't completed first grade up to this point and for some reason need to do that now. If that's where you feel like mentally you should be, then I feel like there are communities that would accept you for that.

I would say so long as you're not hindering society and you're not causing harm to other people, I feel like that should be an okay thing. If I told you I'm six feet five inches, what would you say? That I would question. Why? Because you're not. No, I don't think you're six foot five. If you truly believed you're six five, I don't think it's harmful.

I think it's fine if you believe that. It doesn't matter to me if you think you're taller than you are. So you'd be willing to tell me I'm wrong? I wouldn't tell you you're wrong. No, but I say that I don't think that you are.

I feel like that's not my place as like another human to say someone is wrong or to draw lines or boundaries. No, I mean, I wouldn't just go like, oh, you're wrong. Like that's wrong to believe in it. Because I mean, again, it doesn't really bother me what you want to think about your height or anything.

[12:41] So I can be a Chinese woman. Sure. But I can't be a six foot five Chinese woman.

Yes. If you thoroughly debated me or explained why you felt that you were six foot five, I feel like I would be very open to saying that you were six foot five or Chinese or a woman.

It shouldn't be hard to tell a five nine white guy that he's not a six foot five Chinese woman. But clearly it is. Why? What does that say about our culture? And what does that say about our ability to answer the questions that actually are difficult?

So that's modern identity, isn't it?

As Emma Watson says, people are who they say they are. It's for them to define. They have to look within, decide who they are, and then you must affirm what they say.

[13:48] Of course, Nicola Sturgeon then came unstuck because there was this trans prisoner called Adam Gardner who wanted to be known as Isla Bryson.

He committed a rape but was now presenting as a trans woman. Nicola Sturgeon believes you must affirm people's identity. So a trans woman is a woman.

Is she going to place this rapist in a woman's prison? Exactly what J.K. Rowling was worried about, that female spaces would be invaded by predatory men.

And at that point, Nicola Sturgeon, who's a very intelligent woman, is completely unstuck, isn't she? Because self-identity is not enough to address complex moral problems.

But transgenderism has come about partly because of modern identity, but also partly, let's face it, because of medical technology. We now have puberty blockers.

[14:49] We can now perform operations that change people's sex organs. And so because modern identity says you are who you feel you are, you can now change your body to fit your sense, your inner sense of who you are.

So your body is like Lego. Your body can be arranged to fit who you are. And there's three levels at which people present as trans. There is social presentation, where you might change your name, you might change your dress.

There are puberty blockers. You can't take puberty blockers until you are 16. But at the age of 16 in the UK, you can take puberty blockers.

There are side effects. It limits the growth of bone density, limits certain brain development. Or at 18, subject to certain checks, you can have surgery.

What do we do with our kids when they're going through this? Maybe they're influenced by this. 98% of teens who experience gender confusion grow out of it.

[16:09] I mean, who knew through world history that the teenage years and puberty are a time of confusion? 98% of kids that experience gender confusion grow out of it.

Nor, really, is there any evidence that having operations decrease people's sense of suicidal feelings or mental health problems. We don't know much about it.

But in the larger study that I've come across, there was a massive increase in suicidal feelings after people had surgery. The fact is, we just don't know enough about this.

But we are pursuing quite radical policies, I think, based on quite a lack of evidence. What does God say?

We're going to read from Matthew chapter 19. So Matthew 19, verses 1 to 12.

[17:17] When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan.

Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. Some Pharisees came to him to test him.

They asked, Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?

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.

So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate. Why then, they asked, Did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?

Jesus replied, Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard, and it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman, commits adultery.

[18:38] The disciples said to him, Is this the situation between a husband and a wife? It is better not to marry. Jesus replied, Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given.

For some are eunuchs because they were born that way. Others were made that way by men. And others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.

Thank you. The Bible doesn't directly address the issue of transgenderism.

It does address the issue of cross-dressing. There have always been some people who cross-dressed, but not before that wasn't thought that by doing that, you were therefore changing your gender.

What the Bible does give is a framework for understanding issues of gender and sexuality. And the framework is that you and I are created.

[19:47] We are not self-created. We are made all around us. We can see that there is a design in the world, and there is a design in humanity.

And so as we look at these issues, the way forward is to understand what God's good design is and to try to live as closely to that as we can.

And right back at the beginning of the Bible, when human beings are made, do you remember the first man is made from the dust? He is made from the physical stuff of the earth.

The Hebrew word is dharma, d-a-ma-a. And so the name given to him is Adam, a-d-a-ma.

He is dependent, his body is a physical thing made from the stuff of the earth. God breathes into him a soul, so he is both body and soul.

[20:54] He is not a soul trapped in a body. He is first body and then also soul. His body is not an unfortunate appendage to the soul.

His body is him. And it says, so God created mankind in his own image. In the image of God, he created them, male and female.

Right at the beginning, there is only one distinction between people. We categorize people in so many ways, don't we? Racially, class, wealth, introvert, extrovert.

There is only one fundamental category of difference between people in the beginning. And that is male and female. And in Genesis, that is a binary. In the beginning.

Complications come, but in the beginning, it is a binary. And in creation, there are all kinds of binaries. Darkness and light, night and day, earth and land, male and female.

[22:02] Sometimes I think, people think, well, why do Christians get so hot under the collar about issues of gender and sexuality? Aren't Christians really supposed just to love people as they are?

Why can you guys not just do that? And I think, I think we need to hear that, actually. I think that is how we want to come across, isn't it?

Very difficult. But that is how we want to come across. We want to come across as loving people.

But, if this is the way God has designed humanity, this fundamental category, then we want what's best for people.

We want what's best for people. And God's design is good. We want people to flourish. And because this is so fundamental, that's why it matters. To human flourishing.

Louise read for us from Matthew chapter 19. What does Jesus say about sexuality and gender? Matthew 19, he is speaking to religious people about divorce.

[23 : 08] And, the debate there was, it was men who could divorce women, not the other way around. And, it was, Jesus feels they think it is too easy to divorce your wife, to the great detriment of women.

And so, what does Jesus do? In verse 5, he takes them right back to God's design in the beginning. Yes, the world is broken. But, if you want to live well, you've got to go back to God's design in the beginning.

In the beginning, God united man and woman together, and they became one flesh. So, what God has joined, let not, let not people separate.

Goes right back to the beginning for marriage. But, but, but, but, then he also, introduces male and female, in verse 4.

Now, to make Jesus' point about marriage, he doesn't need to say male and female, does he? He just needs verse 5, if you look at it. Man and wife. Verse 4 is not required, for the point about divorce.

[24 : 14] But, Jesus sees a parallel between male and female, and man and woman. For Jesus, male, female, man, woman, masculine, feminine, sex, and gender, go together.

In Genesis, human bodies are designed for our task on the earth, to, to, to fill the earth, and to bring it to its potential. human bodies are designed for that.

So, in answer to the question, what is a woman? Which politicians keep being asked, don't they? What is a woman? The Bible's answer is, a woman is a human being with a body structured towards bearing children.

children. Let's not go any further in biology. We were debating that before the meeting, but let's just leave it there. Whether, whether, whether a woman has kids or not, a woman is someone with a body structured towards bearing children.

And we could also define a man. Our bodies are us. Our sex and gender were made to go together.

[25 : 31] In, in 2015, Bruce Jenner, Bruce Jenner was, an Olympic decathlon.

To me, decathlon is like the ultimate athletic activity. You've got to do all 10 disciplines. So, he was, he was a real powerful man.

But, in 2015, he gave an interview to Vanity Fair, really moving interview, saying how he'd, he'd, he'd always had this, this issue. He'd always been distressed by it, that he felt that inside he was really a woman and he was born in the wrong body.

And so he, he transitioned to a woman and was put on the front of Vanity Fair. And this, I think, because it was a famous person, the first like, cele, big celebrity, whom we all knew, transitioning, this felt quite groundbreaking.

But what do, there's two things, what do you, what do you notice about that picture? First you notice that he's, she, Caitlin, is hiding the hands.

[26 : 46] Caitlin's hiding the hands, because the hands are big whopping man's hands. Because in actual fact, there are, they reckon, this is all stuff I've read, I actually know this, right?

They reckon there are 1,559 differences between the male and female bodies. So, in other words, our bodies are gendered right through.

Goes through to your skin and your brain size, and all over, all your, your skin cells, every, so much of you is gendered. So, merely changing the sex organs, doesn't actually give you, doesn't actually give Caitlin, a female body.

What it is, is presentational. It, it allows, it allows someone, to present, in line with their feeling, as someone of the opposite gender.

here. That's the first thing I notice. The second thing I notice, is, it's a very feminised view of a woman, isn't it? It's a very feminised version.

[27 : 57] Because, transgenderism, works on gender stereotypes. So, if you love football, and cars, and all those boyish things, but you're actually biologically a girl, perhaps it is, that inside, really, your gender, is male.

Whereas, if you like theatre, and performance, and craft, and ladies cream teas, even though, you're, even though, you're physically a boy, maybe, really, inside your gender, is female.

And, it's operating on, sort of, extreme gender stereotypes, of what a, what a, a man, and woman, are. Previously, it was mostly men, transitioning to be women, women, but now, it's being

rebalanced, by a massive increase, in teenage girls, who, see themselves, as boys. And, it's suggested, the reason for that, is that, young girls, are bombarded, on social media, by very feminized, versions, of what it is, to be a woman, even perhaps, very sexualized, versions, of what it is, to be a woman, and lots of girls, are thinking, no thank you, that's not me, well, maybe, therefore, my gender, is something else.

In the Bible, Jesus is equating, male, female, with man, woman, and he's equating, sex, and gender, but there is no template, nowhere does the Bible, say this is how you be a man, and this is how, you be, a woman.

[29 : 33] There are a few, things around role, that we need to do, and to be, but there is, wide diversity, about different kinds of men, and different kinds of women. Can you think of examples?

I'm thinking of, Esau Jacob, in the Bible, two twins. Esau is, very hairy, and, Esau is a man's man, he's a hunter, you can imagine him, playing rugby, liking a few pints, that's Esau, Jacob is opposite, Jacob was born, with the specs on, reading a book, he's a stay at home, mummy's boy, he likes to sew, and wants to learn, how to cook a good stew.

They're very different, kinds of men, but they're both men, there's no suggestion, that one is not, a man, there are different ways, of being a man, there are different ways, of being a woman, and when you see studies, of course there are, particular male tendencies, and there are, particular female tendencies, we've always known that, haven't we?

But, there are, there is considerable overlap, there are some women, who have, a lot more male tendencies, and there are some men, who have a lot more, what might be called, traditional female, tendencies, but that doesn't mean, they're not men, or women, gender is not, the way you are, a man or a woman, is not a fixed thing, there is wide diversity, for instance, in Scandinavia, where they've done, the most, to remove, differences, between men, and women, in society, still, women, and outnumber men, in caring professions, by 20 to one, 20 to one, because that, is more of a female tendency, but if you're, a caring bloke, and you're, you know, there are blokes, also that have those, tendencies, that there's diversity, there is no must, about being, a man, and a woman, and I think churches, have not always, got this right, would that be fair to say, many of us, were brought up, with an identikit, for this is what, you need to be, as a man, and this is what, you need to be, as a woman, and some of us, didn't fit,

I was a teenager, in the 1980s, I missed all it was, to be a man, but I was very clear, on what it was, to be a woman, but women, were expected, to be more demure, preferably, to wear flowery dresses, if you're a teenage, teenage girl, it was often expected, that you would be interested, in looking after, the young children, and generally, we expected them, to become nurses, teachers, social workers, not to go into business, and we picked that up, didn't we, and some of us, didn't fit, but that's cultural, that is not biblical, the Bible doesn't say, you need to wear, a flowery dress, and learn to cook, a good lasagna, in order to be, a proper woman, and it's really, unhelpful, to our kids today, with all this gender ideology, if they come to church, and we have those, clear, gender expectations, so the Bible, puts male, female, man, woman, together, in creation, that's God's design, but we also know, that that's not, the end of the story, there is also, brokenness in the world, human beings, turned away from God, and so we don't, fully see God's design, realized, things have got messed up, and gone askew, so people, in our minds, are not what they should be, we suffer, mental health, and psychological problems, and we also suffer, problems with our bodies, and gender dysphoria, is where the mind, is not aligned, with the body, and that's a really, difficult thing, to deal with, and so it's really, helpful I think, that Jesus covers that, did you hear those, that thing, at the end of the reading, in verse 12,

[33 : 48] Matthew 19 verse 12, Jesus talks about eunuchs, now a eunuch, was a man, who couldn't operate, sexually, because, of whatever, Jesus has three categories, some, because they've had, an operation, done by men, so to serve, in the royal court, in some places, you had to be a eunuch, so, some, Jesus says, were born that way, so, there are some, intersex conditions, conditions, where, fully formed, and, and there's a third category, that Jesus talks about, metaphorically, where people choose to live, that way, Jesus is, Jesus is saying, I know, that due to the fall, there are people, in different conditions, there is male, and female, man, woman, but I know, there are, there are people, for whom that binary, doesn't easily fit, but Jesus doesn't say, because there are people, like that, therefore, the male, female thing, that God designed, at the beginning, oh, that's not right, no, that is, that is right, that is the design, but there are, a small number, of exceptions, and they are exceptions, you don't make the rule, by exceptions, exceptions

point, to the fact, there is a rule, and so, as Christians, what we want to encourage, as far as possible, and I'll talk about that, more in a minute, is not that we go, with the fallenness, yes, there is gender confusion, yes, that can be very, painful, but as far as possible, in order to flourish, we want to stick to God, we want to encourage people, to live according to God's, good design, but we have to be realistic, that for some people, there are real, challenges there, okay,

I'm going to take, a two minute break, and I'm going to finish off, by talking about, some practical issues, so first of all, how do we care, for people, who struggle in this area, and then secondly, some issues about, how we as Christians, handle this in society, so just take two minutes, to reflect, or to talk to the person, next to you, about anything, that's been said, or about what your, practical questions are, and if I don't touch on them, then let me know, what they are afterwards, and I can try and, say something to them, so two minutes, reflect, or chat to your neighbour, hmm, hmm, .

Thank you.

Okay, 30 seconds. Do-do, do-do, do-da-la-do.

Okay, folks. So, practical issues.

[38 : 14] How do we then work some of this out? So, the Bible is against transgenderism. The Bible is not against trans people.

And it's so important that we come across that way. And we don't want to hit the transgenderism so hard in what we say that people hear, you are against me as a person.

Or you're against these kind of people. That's very difficult. But that's how we want to come across as far as we can. So, as trans people come into church, I think what we need to be saying to them is, okay, so I've never suffered from this.

Tell me what it's like to be you. Tell me what it's like. I don't have your lived experience. Help me to understand. And then church should be the safest of spaces for people to be able to work this through.

When someone comes to Christ, there are not cisgendered Christians and transgendered Christians. There are just Christians.

[39 : 28] And if anyone is in Christ, they are new creation. That means our main struggle is over.

We were alienated with God, alienated from God, and we have been brought near to God. Our main identity problem, our main problem with our destiny is resolved.

And that makes a massive difference to resolving our other struggles. But there are some struggles that won't be resolved until we get to glory.

The Bible says we await a saviour, the Lord Jesus, who by the power that enables him to bring everything under control, will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.

One day, there will be no more gender confusion. There will be no more gender dysphoria. So when somebody comes to faith, I think as far as possible, subject to everything I've said, trying to be gentle as we can.

[40 : 40] We want to help people live according to God's design, don't we? We want to help people, as far as they can, live in their biological gender. But that might depend how far they've gone down the road of making changes.

It might not be a good idea to reverse stuff that's happened. Maybe that's why Jesus accepts there are eunuchs. There are people who don't quite fit.

But as far as possible, this is God's design. It's for our good. We want to help people live in it. What about in society? What have we got to say there about gender dysphoria? Without creation norms, of course, gender is fluid.

You look within. That's why looking within is not a reliable way of finding out who you are. I guess that's why in some school guidance there's 72 different genders.

Because you look within one time, you might see something. You look within, you might see something else. And across society, even in children's books, this is being promoted.

[41 : 51] What have we got to say to that? I think probably gender dysphoria is best seen as a psychological problem.

I think it's probably best treated through counselling, through psychotherapy or whatever, not through realigning the body with the inner sense of self.

And I think that's one of the big concerns about some of our teachers. Some of our teachers feel really exercised about this. Because some children and young people who are presenting as

gender confused, this is being seen as their problem.

Whereas often underneath, there are all kinds of other problems that are being missed because it's being put down to gender confusion. And that's a massive concern for those that we care for.

So I think we want to say probably psychotherapy, counselling, if someone has serious problems in this, is the way to go. Lastly, what about Christians in society?

[42 : 58] How do we handle this, where this is a gender that's very strongly being promoted? I don't know what questions you discussed, but I think I want to say this is not a right and wrong issue.

This is a wisdom issue. Let me hit on a few passages. So if you know your Bible, you'll be all right with this. In Daniel chapter 1, Daniel has come from a very God-honouring culture, and then he's plunged into an alien culture that has very different values.

What do you notice? In Daniel chapter 1, it's amazing how much he accepts. He's not a hardliner. He doesn't say, no, I can't do that. I'm one of God's people.

We don't believe that. He just accepts that's the way society is, but he does draw some lines. Yeah, it's a wisdom issue. In Jeremiah 28, isn't it?

The exiles like Daniel are written to and said, as far as you can, do good to your society. Pray for your society. Pray that it will go well. Pray that it will flourish. Pray that policies that do people good will be promoted.

[44 : 13] Do good as far as you can. But then it also says, 1 Corinthians 5 and 6, it's not our job to judge the world. If you're in judgmental this morning, it's not your job to judge the world.

It's your job. It's our job to ensure holiness in the church. But if the world kind of doesn't follow God's standards, well, there's no surprise.

That's how it is. Well, what our job is, is to commend the gospel to the world. So I think all those things are relevant and have to be balanced.

So for Christian teachers, how do you handle this? If a child suddenly wants to be called, I don't know, if Catherine wants to be called Conan?

School may have a developed policy or may not. Your trust may have a policy that you may have to abide by.

[45 : 16] But I think there are opportunities. As you discuss cases and individuals, surveys show that a majority of people are still sceptical about gender identity.

So as you raise your concerns, you may be surprised how many people agree with you. A lot of people are unsure about this, but they're afraid to say so.

Because they feel you're not supposed to have doubts about it. So there may well be opportunities for you to have an influence, to inject a note of caution, where kids have many other problems and say, are we sure the kid knows what it's doing?

Is this really for the best? Sex and relationships education. Under the Equalities Act, gender, as self-identified, is a protected characteristic.

But so is religion. So is religion. So as I understand it, you have a right, if you want to, to withdraw your kids from sex and relationships education, where you feel this is being taught.

[46 : 35] You have that right, because religion is a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act. Whether that's good for your child or not is another question.

It's not always helpful, is it, to be taking our kids out of stuff, making them look odder than they are. It's not always helpful.

It may be best to leave them in and to teach them at home, if you know what's being taught. But I, you know, in my upbringing, I was withdrawn from stuff. I was cool with it.

It depends on your child. So you have that right. But you've got to decide what's best. What about work situations? I think where pride is being sponsored by your company or being heavily promoted.

I personally would find that very difficult. Where trans ideology is being promoted through something. And I would look to say, look, if there's any flack under the Equalities Act, my religion is protected.

[47 : 42] When it comes to personal pronouns, I think that may be a different area. You know, if you use the wrong pronoun, you can be accused of misgendering someone. On the one hand, you don't want to affirm what's harmful, do you?

That that would be your preference. On the other hand, if you don't do it, you're probably making a stand that other people don't understand. You know, you're feeling pure.

But what are you actually expressing? How does that person understand what you're saying? So you may decide it's better to try and show grace in this situation in order to commend the gospel.

I just don't think there's a right or wrong. It might depend on your relationship. But I don't think you're wrong necessarily if you choose to go with someone's self-identity.

These are the dilemmas we face. It's not very uplifting ending to a sermon, I know. But let's keep discussing it. And let's try and work through how we handle this.

[48 : 51] We don't know where this is going, do we? We don't know what the future of it is, whether it will change or whether it will increase. But let's pray for our own children, try and handle it wisely.

And let's try and do the best we can for our society, being harmless as doves, wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Thank you.