

Name: _____

Apologetics Homework Assignment 24

What does God say about gender identity?

The attached article is taken from this month's (April 2024) *The Lutheran Witness* (TLW) magazine. TLW is a monthly magazine published by our Synod that deals with issues facing Christians today. Every household in our church receives a free mail subscription to TLW; I encourage you to look for yours every month and read any articles that look interesting! The April 2024 issue deals with issues of chastity and sexuality.

Directions: Read the attached article and answer the questions below.

1. What (quoting Romans 1:25) do modern voices of folly do when they reject the design of the Creator and encourage the indulgent sinful desires of the flesh?

2. We are made human when body and soul are joined together. What do transgender activists assert about body and soul that contradicts this?

3. What does the extreme rarity of intersex individuals show about the true, natural, God-given norm for us?

4. List three ways stated in the article in which men and women are biologically different

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

5. What is the most obvious proof that a man cannot complement another man the way a woman can, or vice versa?

6. As washed and forgiven children of God, what defines us besides our sin?

7. Name and briefly describe the five ways listed at the end of the article by which Christians can boldly and lovingly confront LGBT ideology with God's truth.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

Memory Work:

Genesis 1:27: So God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female He created them.

SPEAKING TRUTH TO FOLLY

THE BIBLE AND GENDER DYSPHORIA

These are evil days. Christians who hold to the Bible's teaching on gender and sexuality are under fire from all directions, and nowhere is the battlefield more littered with mines than on the LGBT front. Those who dare to confess God's truth about gender, sex and marriage are labeled as "hate-filled," "out of touch" and "on the wrong side of history." Many find themselves socially ostracized, professionally marginalized, estranged from family or "canceled" online. Some look longingly toward the progressive mainline churches and wonder whether it's really so bad to compromise on sexual morality. Others shake their heads, recall some supposedly more innocent age and sigh, like Frodo Baggins in *The Lord of the Rings*: "I wish it need not have happened in my time."

Gandalf's answer to Frodo in the book applies to us too: "So do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

Christians have faced spiritual battles in every age, and like Frodo, we don't get to decide which battles we will fight in our time. Our privilege, whatever the battle, is to "stand firm thus in the Lord" (PHIL. 4:1), trust His promise to be with us "to the end of the age" (MATT. 28:20) and be ready to fight with the weapons He has already given us by His Word and Spirit (EPH. 6:10-18). In this article, the Rev. Dr. Mark Rockenbach shines the clear light of Holy Scripture on the "folly" of LGBT ideology. Like wisdom in the Book of Proverbs, his words invite and equip us to reject the world's folly and "walk in the way of insight" (PROV. 9:6).

The world is filled with voices luring us down uncertain roads. With so much chatter, it can be difficult to sort out the voice that speaks truth from the voices that speak folly.

Voices of folly are determined to reject the design of the Creator and encourage the indulgent sinful desires of the flesh. However, such voices have "exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (ROM. 1:25).

God created the heavens and the earth and established a natural law by which we live out our lives. Even Adam and Eve lived according to God's natural law, which put limits

upon how the creation works (ROM. 2:14-16). This law is good. It guides creation according to God's purpose and shows men and women the beauty of His intention for them.

However, Adam and Eve were outwardly tempted to desire the fruit that would give them the knowledge of good and evil. Quickly, that desire made its way into their hearts, and they ate. They rejected God's law and exchanged the truth of God for a lie spoken by the serpent (GEN. 3:4).

Unfortunately, the temptation to desire ungodly fruit continues in the hearts of men and women today. Men desire to have sexual relations with other men. Women desire to have

sexual relations with other women. Folly says that there are many genders beyond male and female and multiple ways you can express your sexuality. In addition, folly has determined that some people have been born into the wrong body. The “spirit” of a man can accidentally be placed into a female body, or the “spirit” of a woman can accidentally be placed into a male body. Folly encourages people to gratify the desires of their hearts without considering if those desires are contrary to God’s created design.

Hear the voice of truth spoken by God for the good of His creation: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ... And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that the light was good” (GEN. 1:1, 3-4). Five more times we hear the same phrase declaring His creation good (GEN. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). And when He had finished creating, “God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (GEN. 1:31).

God’s work of creation was not haphazard, random or accidental. Even after the fall, it has purpose and order. What God created was, and is, very good. Paul encourages Timothy — and us — never to forget the truth that “everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer” (1 TIM. 4:4-5).

When God made Adam and Eve, He created them male and female according to His design, and it was good. Even today, He creates us male or female from the very moment of our conception. The spirit of a man cannot be born in a woman, nor the spirit of a woman in a man. Such thinking denies that God is our Creator and that His ways are perfect.

Genesis clearly describes how God created humans: “God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature” (GEN. 2:7). With the dust of the earth and the breath of God, man was created, body and soul. Body and soul are joined together and make us human. Yet transgender activists assert that the body is only a shell animated by the spirit within. They do not think that the body and spirit are interconnected. Therefore, they conclude, it is possible that your spirit is male, though your body is female. This is the voice of folly.

The voice of truth says through the psalmist, “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (PSALM 139:13-14). You were not arbitrarily or mistakenly “assigned” a sex at birth. You were created by God, knitted together by His loving hands, fearfully and wonderfully made, body and soul, to be a man or a woman. It is true that in rare instances, some children are born with genetic or chromosomal abnormalities that make their sex ambiguous. Yet the existence of these intersex individuals does not disprove the Bible’s teaching on creation. By contrast, their extreme rarity

shows “male and female” to be the true, natural and God-given norm for mankind.

God did not design men and women to be interchangeable. Humans are not Legos that can be taken apart and reassembled to make something different. Men and women are designed by God to be distinct from each other. Consider how men and women are biologically different: They have different chromosomes, different physical features, different hormones, different bone structures and different brain functioning. A man might claim to be a woman and dress in women’s clothing, take estrogen and have various surgeries to cosmetically change his physical features — but he is still a man. Instead of lamenting the differences between men and women, we should celebrate them.

Men and women are created differently to complement each other. Adam was not complete without Eve, and Eve was not complete without Adam. But together they became one flesh, and it was good that they were united as a man and woman in marriage. Homosexuality ignores the complementary design of a man and a woman and believes that men can substitute a man for a woman, or that a woman can substitute a woman for a man. However, a man can never complement another man in the same way that a woman can complement a man. The most obvious proof of this is that people in homosexual unions cannot bear children.

God instituted marriage between a man and a woman so that they would be one-flesh (GEN. 2:24). Folly rejects the one-flesh design of men and women and dismisses the truth that they are created to complement each other. Instead, folly calls gender a mere “cultural construct” and promotes gender identity over biological reality. The modern expression of gender comes with a long list of options for personal identification: bisexual, demisexual, pansexual, queer, homosexual, lesbian, gay, non-binary and sexually fluid, among others. In addition, there are multiple choices for choosing your preferred pronouns, including “she/her/hers,” “he/him/his,” “they/them/theirs,” “ze/hi/hirs,” “xe/xem/xyrs,” “ver/vir/vis,” “te/tem/ter” and “e/em/eirs.” When we reject the godly design of men and women who are created to complement each other in a one-flesh relationship, it opens the door for all the desires of one’s heart to be explored and indulged, no matter how strange and unnatural.

Vocab Lesson: [Here] →

Complement. *Verb.* To add to something in a way that enhances, improves, or makes it perfect. “Adam was not complete until God created Eve to complement him.”

Note that “complement” is spelled with an ‘e’ in the middle and is unrelated to the verb “compliment,” meaning “to say something nice about someone.”



If someone you know has been taken captive by LGBT ideology, what can you do? How can Christians boldly and lovingly confront LGBT ideology with God's truth?

1. BE IN THE WORD

In God's Word, we not only find words of life and salvation, but also a clear and consistent sexual ethic. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible shows us the beauty of God's plan for gender and sexuality — and the evil that results when that plan is rejected.

2. KNOW YOUR HISTORY

St. Augustine in the 400s; Martin Luther in the 1500s; C.S. Lewis in the 1900s — all saw eye-to-eye on the basic principles of Christian sexuality and had similar things to say about it. "The Christian rule is," Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*, "Either marriage, with complete faithfulness to your partner, or else total abstinence." For nearly two millennia, the church's witness on this issue, like the biblical teaching on which it is based, has remained largely unchanged.

3. REPENT

As Christians, we are called to find our identities in Christ and exercise our sexuality within marriage. If we have failed to do these things in any way, we must repent — asking Christ to remove the log from our own eye (MATT. 7:4) — before we can speak clearly and boldly about LGBT issues.

4. PRAY

Some problems are simply beyond our power to fix. The LGBT movement has left many feeling helpless and discouraged. When we are tempted to despair, we can turn to God in prayer and cast all our anxieties on Him (1 PETER 5:7). Our God hears us and will answer.

5. SPEAK OUT

"Speaking out" may look different, depending on the context. But the heart of our message should be consistent: "I am a Christian. As a Christian, I believe that God created male and female. I believe that He ordained marriage to be the lifelong union of a man and woman. I believe that He created me in His image, that He loves me and that He sent His Son to die for me. And I believe that He created you, loves you and sent His Son to die for you too."

St. Paul encourages us to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires" (ROM. 13:14). However, the temptation to be one's own god and one's own creator is strong, and it is easy to be tempted to live out the desires of the flesh and ignore God's Word of truth.

Paul also warned the Corinthians, saying,


Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 COR. 6:9-10)

But Paul does not stop with verse 10. He goes on in verse 11 to say, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 COR. 6:11).

God does not desire the eternal death of men and women. He wants all people to repent of their sinful hearts and sinful lifestyles and be washed in the saving blood of Jesus Christ (EPH. 1:7; 1 PETER 1:18-19). Peter clearly states this desire of God: "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 PETER 3:9).

As washed and forgiven children of God, we are not defined by our sin, but by the work of Christ in our lives: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 COR. 5:17). If you continue to identify yourself in relation to your sin, you attach yourself to an identity that is not rooted in Christ. Those who promote and claim a right to living out their sexuality in a way that is contrary to God's created design and natural law might gain the whole world, but in the process forfeit their souls (MATT. 16:26; MARK 8:36; LUKE 9:25).

"Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus" (ACTS 3:19-20).

The voices of folly echoing throughout the world today will encourage you to indulge in the sinful desires of your heart and reject the created design of God. The voice of truth says, "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth" (PSALM 121:1-2). 

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