

A BOOK REVIEW
EMBODIED/TRANSGENDER IDENTITIES, THE CHURCH/ &
WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY

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TITLE OF BOOK: “Embodied/Transgender Identities, The Church & What The Bible Has To Say”

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Candidly, I am not sure why I even decided to read this book. I am not even sure of the source from which I received it. I am quite sure that I did not purchase it, and am also sure that I did not receive it from the source which generally provides the books which I review. Normally, I do not review books which I would call “popular or mainstream books”, as my reviews are generally restricted to books which I would refer to as being “Scholarly, Theological or Philosophical” books. This book of Dr. Sprinkle is, obviously, one meant for popular consumption and sale. All of that said, I am glad that I decided to pick this book up from the pile of books which are sitting there for me to read, and to sometimes review. This book does help to address some of the very troublesome issues which our family is facing, personally, and I think that many families are facing and the Church must face.

I don't like to get personal in these Reviews, and I hesitate to violate anyone's privacy. That said, we are, like many other families, confronting a situation where a seemingly normal individual of one biological sex seems to decide, really without much warning, that their “Gender” is something different than their biological sex, or that they really are “binary”, which, as I understand that term, means that they are of neither biological sex, male or female. I have friends whose families are confronting similar issues. I have a golfing buddy whose grandchild has suddenly made a decision that, while that individual is biologically male, such individual is a female. One would have to bury his or her head in the sand if he or she is not aware of the recent news events where a “Trans” person has engaged in some awful act of mass shooting. Recently, an assassin murdered Charlie Kirk, and there is some speculation (and it is just that, “speculation”) that the fact that his roommate is “transitioning” from male to female provided part of his motivation for murdering Charlie Kirk. I think that most of us, or at least many of us, are cognizant of what seems to be a veritable “explosion” of “Trans” people, and of the fact that internet chat rooms, perhaps some of the schools, and even medical and psychological professionals are encouraging people to question their “gender identities”. What accounts for these seemingly somewhat new, truly vexing societal/cultural concerns (and I use the term “concerns” with some concerns of my own, as I understand that there are ideologies and people who are firm in those ideologies who think that these matters are not a concern or, in any way, problematic)?

Like many Americans I look for simple answers to what are truly complex problems. I have a very good friend whose response in almost any discussion about the many, apparently intractable problems confronting our country and society today (e.g. immigration) is “Well it's just real simple”. Many of our issues, including I think this “gender confusion” issue, are anything but simple. They are complex issues,

and the solutions are not “simple”. Yet, when I tried to discuss the “gender confusion” issue with a very staunch Christian friend, his response was “its simple, just follow Scripture, you are either a man or a woman”. As one of our prominent local radio commentators puts it “you are either an inny or an outy, and don’t try to be something else”. In fact, a sermon which was delivered in recent past in one of our very large churches seemed to address the “gender confusion” or “gender dysphoria” issue in just that fashion, you are made by God as either a male or female and don’t try to deny that. True enough, but how do these simplistic answers help those who truly feel that there is a gap, sometimes a huge chasm, a disabling chasm between their biological sex, and what they feel that their actual “gender” is? As pointed out by our Author, Dr. Sprinkle, some individuals have huge, huge struggles with their “gender identity”. How do we, as parents, grandparents, friends and a Church help, minister to, Love and relate to these people? Do we, for example, refuse to use their “chosen name” (an issue with our family) and insist on using their so-called “dead name” (i.e. the name assigned to them, by biological sex” at birth) or chosen pronouns (i.e. he, his, him, versus she, her, hers or “they”) because we want to “honor the truth”?

Well, I was surprised (I don’t want to say “pleasantly surprised”, as nothing about this topic can, in any way, be “pleasurable”) by this book, and the ways in which our Author, Dr. Sprinkle, confronted and tried to deal with the so-called “trans issue.” He did not do it by writing a simplistic book, for popular consumption. Rather he did so in a very thoughtful, well thought out, well researched manner. Most of his conclusions are supported by the scientific, medical and psychological studies he cites and on which he relies. This is not some off-the-cuff diatribe. It is, at least surprisingly to me when I read that it was a New York Times Best Seller, a book which seeks to objectively identify the “Trans Issues” (my terminology, not that of the Author), and some of its causes, and the theology which should be used in approaching these Issues and the manner in which our churches should do their very best (which will, almost always be imperfect) to accept, love, try to bring into the church community, minister to and with and Love, most of all Love, good people who are wrestling, struggling with what is, for them, a gulf between their biological sex (male or female) and their perceived “Gender Identities”. I assumed that the Author would buy into, and try to justify the current “gender ideology”, which would hold, at least to some extent, that any expression by anyone that one’s sex is biologically determined is engaging in “hate speech” and must be silenced or put down. He did not do so, and he approached the Gender Confusion questions and issues in a thoroughly Christian, Biblical manner, but he did so with great sensitivity. It would be difficult to accuse him of “hate speech”, although, in this day and age there are likely folks who will do so.

I commend, strongly commend this book to any parent, or grandparent, whether or not anyone in their family is confronting the “gender identity” issue, as, whether or not such is the case, it might suddenly be the case and, most certainly, it will be the case with some of a child’s classmates or friends, and it might likely be the case for other parents or grandparents who are known to them. I strongly commend this book as being one which is an essential book for any Christian Pastor or Christian Leader or Christian Teacher (or any teacher for that matter) or Christian Congregation. I can almost guarantee that, in view of the absolute “explosion” of what our author and other experts call “Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria” each of them will be confronted with these sex/gender identity issues. You won’t find simple answers to your issues, but you will find a host of valuable, helpful information and some helpful suggestions which will help you to understand and attempt to deal with those issues. Will your efforts be perfect? No, they won’t. These issues are not simple ones. They are complex, with many complex causes or possible causes, but you will be hugely helped by this book, and the Author’s very thoughtful approach to the “Gender Issues” (again, my terminology, not that of the Author) in trying to confront those issues in a truly Loving, Christian manner.

So, I was surprised by what I found in this book. I think that you, Dear Reader, will be similarly surprised. I strongly recommend this book. However, all of this said, I found that this book was somewhat lacking and disappointing in some respects. The Author exhaustively, and very helpfully, deals with the basic Transgender Issues, but, at least disappointingly to me, does not touch upon the controversial issues of today, such as: 1) What should the position of a church be with respect to celebrating or not celebrating a marriage, or union akin to marriage, between two people who are of the same biological sex, but one of whom perceives themselves to be of a Gender different than their biological sex, thereby, at least for appearance purposes, causing the marriage or union to be of two individuals of opposite sex/gender?, 2) What if one of these individuals has actually “transitioned”, chemically and surgically, to a gender different than their biological sex?, 3) What should the position of the church be with respect to having biological males who have Transitioned to (perhaps actually by chemical, hormonal or even surgical means) a female, or who, perhaps, have not actually Transitioned but have declared themselves to be female, with respect to their competing with females in sports activities or in the sharing of locker/shower rooms? 4) What should the Church or our various churches be trying to do to help young people who are struggling with their identity issues, and who are being inundated through the internet, social media, chat rooms and even in some schools with what I am going to hazard to call Gender Ideology Propaganda, in order to reach them and help them before they actually become a Trans Person (i.e. providing prevention before a cure is needed)? These are questions our society, and in many cases, our churches are confronting? I am somewhat disappointed that our Author does not deal with these Questions and others like them.

While the Author does not, in this book, confront these issues, this book, nevertheless, will provide a valuable resource for Pastors, Leaders, Teachers and many Parents.

WHAT IS THE AUTHOR DOING WITH WHAT THE AUTHOR IS SAYING?

I admit that, when I took up this book my thinking was that these “gender identity” issues were, for the most part, nonsense. Like the radio commentator quoted above, my “thoughtful” (a term obviously used in jest) approach to the issues was “you are born as a boy or girl, a male or a female, and that is that, enough said”. While I believed, as I am sure you Dear Reader believe, that every individual is entitled to love and Christian respect, and that this love and respect requires that every single person (most certainly including Trans persons) be treated with love and respect, and that any sort of hate or condemnation or judgement is terribly wrong and certainly non-Christian, I just assumed, when dealing with a “Trans” person that they were just sick or mentally disturbed, or just plain confused. Our Author has, thankfully, disabused me of my wrong ways of thinking about Trans people.

I cannot properly summarize all of our Author’s thoughts or conclusions, but let me take a shot at doing so (imperfectly) in an outline format as follows:

- a) **NO UNIVERSAL TRANS PERSONS/CONSTANT MANTRA:** Our Author’s constant mantra is “If you have met one Transgender Person, you have met one Transgender Person”. He means, says and constantly reiterates, that “Transgender People” (and I am going to shorten this to “Trans People”) are like the rest of us. None of them are the same. They are, like the rest of us, individuals with individual lifetime experiences, unique biologics, and unique mental make ups. We cannot stereotype them, just as we cannot stereotype any human beings. “Trans people are about as diverse as non-trans people”. Trans people must be approached, dealt with as unique individuals and they are to be hopefully loved and befriended as such. We should approach them, and deal with them, and relate to them and hopefully befriend them

- just like we would approach, deal with and hopefully befriend or establish a relationship with any human being.
- b) WHAT IS A TRANSGENDER PERSON/A TRANS PERSON?:The Author defines the term “Transgender Person” (or “Trans Person”) as being any individual who, for whatever cause or reason, experiences an incongruence between their biological sex (i.e. male or female) and their internal sense of self (Gender Identity), which determines who they are and why”. **“Transgender is ‘an umbrella term for the MANY WAYS in which people might experience and/or present and express (or live out) their gender identities differently from people whose sense of gender identity is congruent with their biological sex’”** (emphasis added). In other words, a “Transgender”/”Trans” person, in some way or another (and these ways can be unique from one Trans person to another) experiences, or lives out or presents a Gender Identity (male, female or bisexual) which is different than their biological sex.
 - c) “SEX” AND “GENDER”: The Author distinguishes the two terms, “Sex” and “Gender”, one from the other. The “Sex” of an individual is a biological fact which is established at birth. An individual is either biologically a male or a female. A possible exception to this rule would exist for so-called true “intersex” persons, or persons who have all of the physical characteristics, including genitalia, of both males and females. The Author characterizes these individuals as being a “blend of both the male and female sex”. So “Sex” is a biological fact. It is not a social construct. While “Sex” and “Gender” used to be synonyms terms, such is no longer the case, at least for Trans people. A pretty generally accepted definition of “Gender” is: **“The psychological, social and cultural aspects of being male or female”**. So, a person’s perceived Gender (at least to that person and for that person, if not for others such person might encounter) might be different than that person’s biological Sex. Trans people experience, in one way or another, a lack of congruity between their Sex and their Gender.
 - d) GENDER ROLES: *“Gender Roles’ have to do with how males and females are expected to act in any given culture.”* Most cultures establish expectations for how males will act, dress and present themselves to others. Similar expectations are culturally established for females. For example, in our current day culture, boys are expected to be sports minded, to not wear pink, to not wear “girl’s clothes”, etc. Girls are expected to be interested in art, poetry and similar “female concerns”. When a boy decides that he wants to play the violin as opposed to playing sports, then he can be considered as being “girly”. If a girl wants to try to play football or baseball or engage in martial arts, then she is considered as being a “Tom Boy.” These are very imperfect examples of the culturally attached expectations placed on males and females, but you get the point. Most cultures establish defined Roles for Males and Females. The Author raises the Question: **“Are Gender Roles-masculinity and femininity-determined by nature, or nurture, our biology or our culture?”** (emphasis added).
 - e) GENDER IDENTITY: “Gender Identity”, the manner or way in which one perceives such person’s Gender, is defined by our Author and commonly as being “one’s internal sense of self as male, female, both or neither”.
 - f) NATURE, NURTURE, BIOLOGY OR CULTURE?: Well, again I, probably like many of you Dear Readers, wanted a simple answer to this question. What causes a person to experience a disconnect, sometimes a huge disconnect, a disconnect like a chasm, between such person’s biological Sex and such person’s perceived/believed/experienced/lived/exhibited (sometimes in ways which are stronger than others) “Gender Identity”? Unfortunately, there is no simple answer to this complex question.
 - a. Nature: Clearly, for some, Nature plays a role. For a true Intersex person, and individual, one biologically born with all of the physical characteristics of both of the male and female sex (a person who our Author characterizes as being a “blend of

both sexes”) Nature has played a dominant role. In other cases, Genetic issues/chromosomal issues identified by the Author play a role. There is some evidence (some disputed) that male embryos are flooded with Testosterone in Utero, while most female embryos are not, and that this plays a role in the after-birth characteristics and preferences and personalities of the child. Just as some Non-Trans children are born with what might arguably be called abnormalities, there is some evidence that the Sex/Gener Identity disconnect for a Trans person is a similar abnormality. Christians can certainly believe, to some extent or the other, that The Fall has led to what I am going to call “The Trans Disconnect” between Sex and Gender. So, at least for some Trans people, Nature had played a critical role in their “Trans Disconnect”.

- b. Male/Female Brain: There are some, highly disputed and not yet fully fleshed out by experiment and study, some arguments or contentions that there are differences between the “Male Brain” and the “Female Brain”, and that someone can, for example, be born with a Male Body and a Female Brain. The Author finds that this Male/Female Brain concept cannot be completely disregarded, but that it is disputed and not yet adequately proven out by adequate study and experiment. One might also note that a contention that the Male Brain is different than, and, in some pursuits or areas of thought (example, mathematics, leadership and science) differs from, or is perhaps superior to the Female Brain is a contention that seems to fly in the face of either or both of two contentions which are asserted by liberal feminist advocates who advocate for both the total mutuality or equality between the Sexes and the Trans Ideology, such arguments being: 1) That there are no differences between the competencies of the sexes, males and females and they are equally competent in all areas of intellectual endeavor, including mathematics, science, leadership and engineering (an assertion which I think most of us believe to be true) and 2) and the “Trans ideology” argument that one can be born with a body of one Sex, male or female, and a mind/brain of the other sex. These arguments seem to be mildly inconsistent. I don’t see how they can be both asserted with equal confidence. Are male brains and female brains equal in all respects or are they different?
- c. Nurture: The Author submits that there is clear evidence that the experiences of one’s childhood upbringing, and the daily experiences which one encounters throughout one’s young life can have a clear impact on the “Trans Disconnect” for that person.
- d. Culture: As noted in d) above, the Gender Role Stereotypes which are attached to Males and Females in almost every culture (and probably every sub-culture) can cause a person, and other individuals, to have opinions and perceptions about the “Gender Conformity” dress, appearance, speech, preferences and actions of the individual. An apparently simplistic statement by some Trans Person (but, in my personal/family experience, a true statement by such Person) might be: “Yes, I was born a biological female but I think, act, and have preferences and a personality which are not Female but are Male and, therefore, I hereby declare myself to be a Male, and my Gender Identity to be that of a Male, and I demand that you use my chosen Female Name and not my Dead Male Name”. I am no social psychologist or scientist and I am not an expert in any sense, but, in my judgment, the subject which the Author deals with at a later part of his book, “RAPID ONSET GENDER DYSPHORIA” has been caused and is caused, at least in substantial part by Cultural Factors including: 1) primarily the advent and availability of Smart Phones and their accompanying Social Medias,

Chat Rooms and Websites, and the constant pandering, preaching, and advocating on line of the Gender Ideology, 2) Medical and Psychological personnel who irresponsibly advocate for the Gender Ideology, some urging prescriptions like those described by the Author “Transition or Suicide”, 3) Encouragement in some of our schools for already confused, sometimes lonely and isolated children, to question their Sex or Gender Identity, and even to conceal a child’s gender confusion from parents or family, 4) Advocates who want to remove parents from having any role in nurturing or trying to help a child who might be struggling with Gender Identity issues. Ok, these are my thoughts, but I think that our Author would support them, as would another prominent Author, Jonathan Haidt. See his book, *The Anxious Generation/How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*. Jonathan Haidt, Penguin Press, 2024. Dr. Haidt attributes the almost geometrical surge in teenage and young adult incidents of depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, hopelessness and isolation to the explosive use of smart phones by children and young people which began, in his view, in the watershed year of 2010, the year in which the “play generation” (children learned social skills, relational skills and coping skills through play, generally play not supervised by adults) and the “smart phone/phone generation”. Ok, as a non-expert, I respectfully submit that the conclusions of Dr’s Haidt and (our Author) Sprinkle supplement and complement each other.

- e. Biology: This contributing factor to the Gender Disconnect of some individuals is dealt with in a. above. However, our Author also notes that many Trans People are suffering from mental and emotional illnesses or conditions, such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, and other conditions. In addition, many of them feel a sense of isolation and hopelessness. In our Author’s opinion, these conditions strongly contribute to the Gender Identity crises faced by some Trans people.
- f. Female Soul in a Male Body and Vice Versa: Some argue that there is somehow a difference between the Soul of a Male and the Soul of a Female, and that one can be born with the body of one Sex and the Soul of the other Sex. This discussion gets into the area of what the Author calls “Theological Anthropology”. Frankly, much of the book’s discussion in this area is outside of my limited mental capacity. That discussion must first approach the Christian concept of Body and Soul. The boundaries of this concept are: 1) Physicalism: There is no Soul, only the Physical body, 2) Non-Reductive Physicalism: There is an immaterial part, a spiritual part of you which is inextricably bound to the physical part of you, and neither can be separated from the other, 3) Soft Dualism: Body and Soul are “two ontologically distinct substances that are conceivably separable” but are each/both significant to personhood, and 4) Strong Dualism: The body and soul are two fundamentally, distinct parts of the human person, but “the immaterial soul is much more central to who we are than our physical bodies”. (Note” An extreme version of this last view would denigrate the body as being worthless and evil (i.e. Gnosticism, heresy) and is a Non-Christian point of view, as the Bible makes it clear that God values the human body and the human soul). Soft Dualism is the Christian view. Some advocates in the Gender Identity area use the concept of Soft Dualism to argue for the proposition that Souls, like Bodies, are Sexed and that, therefore, one can be born with a body of one Sex, but the soul of the opposite Sex. The Author strongly challenges this proposition, arguing that, from the point of view of the Biblical Authors, the Biblical point of view, the body and soul, together, are what constitutes one’s identity. They are not so separable, as to

be totally independent of one another. From the Old Testament, a person's "*Nephesh*" (meaning, as best I can understand it, the very essence of the being of that person) includes both the body and the soul. The Author goes on to argue that "It is tough to say then that humans have ontologically distinct immaterial parts that ought to overrule the body if the two are at odds....Sex Categories are physical, not spiritual. Sex categories-male and female-are by definition physical categories (and) unless one has an intersex condition they are unambiguously male or female in their biology; these are physical categories...Sex is not a spiritual category. It's a biological one. All the immaterial aspects of personhood are important, body, mind, soul, spirit, emotions, personality, likes and dislikes. But these don't determine a person's sex."

So, unfortunately, the Question about whether or not the Disconnects experienced by Trans people are caused by Nature, Nurture, Biology or Culture does not have a Simple Answer. As our Author has repeatedly pointed out by his Mantra, "if you have met one Trans Person, you have met one Trans Person". They are as unlike each other as are the rest of us. What has melded our individual personalities and characteristics, and, yes, our "Self-Identity" is a combination of Nature, Nurture, and Culture.

- g) GENDER DYSPHORIA: "Gender Dysphoria is a psychological term for the distress some people feel when their internal sense of self (i.e. their Gender Identity) does not match their biological sex.This experience of dysphoria can range from mild to severe." The actual physical manifestations (heart rate, inability to sleep, pain, etc.) can be very severe. One Trans person characterizes it as "feeling like hot serum is coursing through my body". It is difficult for a Non-Trans person to even relate to the experiences of an individual who is experiencing true gender dysphoria.
- h) RAPID-ONSET GENDER DYSPHORIA: "Whatever you want to name it, the percentage of teenagers identifying as trans-a growing number of whom later detransition-has risen exponentially, especially among female teenagers." This phenomenon has been experienced in almost all western countries, not just the U.S. A study conducted in the U.K. observed a 5,000 percent increase in cases of teenage female gender dysphoria between 2009 and 2016, while the increase in teenage males was significant, but at a much lower percentage. Similar increases have been observed in the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, the Netherlands and other Western Countries. In most cases, for "most of these kids" "they announce that they are 'Trans' in a way that seems quite sudden to their parents and counselors." Hence the term "Rapid-Onset Gender Dysphoria". This "Sudden Onset", totally out of the blue declaration of "I am a Trans" (or a sudden declaration for a girl, "I am a boy", or for a boy "I am a girl") comports with personal family experience and the experiences of friends and buddies whose families have had a similar experience. The Author notes that, in about 63 percent of the cases of Rapid-Onset Gender Dysphoria ("ROGD") the individual had one or more diagnoses of a psychiatric disorder or of a neuro-developmental disability before, or contemporaneous with his or her Gender Dysphoria. Furthermore: 1) Few of them had previously shown any signs of gender dysphoria, 2) their new identity appeared to come about totally out of the blue, 3) many of their friends were either "Trans" or were "Coming Out as Trans", 4) many became more popular after their declaration that they were Trans, 5) many, if not in fact most of them engaged in **HEAVY ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY (MORE THAN NORMAL) SURROUNDING THEIR COMING OUT** (emphasis added), and 6) Many had, as noted above, other mental health concerns. Contrary to what one might expect, a majority of their parents had liberal social views and positions and liberal social values. In other words, they were not

“fundamentalist, narrow minded” people who were trying to impose their views on their children. It’s not just parents. It is the kids themselves who have observed that ROGD is a recent, highly concerning development. YET THERE ARE THOSE IN THE MEDICAL AND PSYCHIATRIC PROFESSIONS WHO ARE ADVOCATING FOR MEDICALIZING AN INDIVIDUAL’S ROGD THROUGH CROSS-HORMONE THERAPY AND/OR SURGERY.

- i) THE CHRISTIAN POINT OF VIEW: At the risk, perhaps strong risk, of somehow denigrating the Author’s point of view in the eyes of some, particularly those in the Trans Community and the eyes of parents and others who have family members and friends who have come out as Trans or who are experiencing Gender Dysphoria, in one way or another, I am going to attempt to do a dangerous thing, which is to summarize the Author’s views about what the Christian/Biblical view of Sex and Gender is. This summary will be inadequate. So, please read the book and draw your own conclusions about the Author’s views. While the Author, using various parts and passages of the Bible, submits that, in the eyes of God, our Sexual Identity is that of our biological sex, and that our identity in God is that we are a loved person of our given biological sex, he in no way, minimizes the significance of the Gender Dysphoria which some people encounter, and he, most certainly, does not place himself in the position of God by “adversely judging” people who experience a disconnect between their biological Sex and their Gender Identity. He, in no way, judges the people who experience this Dysphoria. He cites the instances of Trans People who are not just his good, fast friends, but who are the most remarkable Christ lovers he has ever encountered. He describes the story of one of these friends who is the person to whom he turns when he has issues about how to follow Jesus. He argues that the church, which is full of imperfect people like each of us, should be full of Trans people. He argues that all people in the church should be invited into its community, and should be encouraged to use their respective gifts and callings for the benefit of the church community. He wants Trans people, each of them, to be just as much a part of the church community as is the case with non-Trans people, each of whom, like each Trans person, is an imperfect, broken person with their own sinful issues. The Author does, however, respectfully submit, and describe, in a well-researched, Biblically supported, Loving manner that our bodies are Sexed (meaning our biological sex) and that our Identities before God are Sexed (our biological sex), and that our bodies, our biologically sexed bodies are important to God. I will let you read the ways in which he comes to this conclusion. However, this conclusion notwithstanding, the Author argues, as stated above, that Trans people, as many as can be invited into the church community, should be, in every respect, as much a part of that community, with full participation in that community, as is the case with Non-Trans people, each of whom also has his or her broken nature. However, the Author is clear in his views that God values the human body, and that the human body is Sexed, either male or female (except in the case of truly intersexed people, who are a blend of male and female), and that, in the Author’s view, our resurrection bodies will also be either male or female. All of this being the case, in the Author’s view, each of us, including Trans-people, is viewed by God as, and is loved by God as, and is in God’s view identified as being of their biological sex. These facts, however, do not change the fact that Trans-people have needs, just as the rest of us have needs. In many cases they feel isolated or rejected or unfairly judged or condemned. The role of Christians and of the Church, in dealing with Trans people is not to judge them, and certainly not to condemn them or make them feel that they are condemned, but to try to meet them, as human beings created in the Image of God and loved by God, and to seek to meet their needs for love and acceptance and community, with opportunities to use their individual giftings for the edification of the church. Is this going to be an easy thing to do? It is not. Mistakes will be made, but, with the help of God and the guidance of the

Holy Spirit, we can and will work our ways through these mistakes. I think that, in summary, the Author's position is that our identities in God are our Biologically Sexed person which existed at birth, which is as a Male or Female (or, in the case of true intersexed persons, a blend of male and female), but that Trans people are as loved in the eyes of God as are Non-Trans people, with both Trans people and Non-Trans people being broken and in need of God's Grace and Forgiveness. Therefore, we, as Christians (and as a Church) should seek to relate to, minister to, provide Pastoral care to, engage with and provide inclusion in the Church community for Trans people just as should be the case for Non-Trans people.

- k) **TRANSITIONING AND DE-TRANSITIONING:** Should a Christian Trans Person actually transition to a gender/sex different than their biological sex by Cross Hormone Therapy or by Surgical means. The Author's view is that they should not do so for moral and ethical reasons, and also for practical reasons. Studies show that, while Transitioning is touted as being something that will save a Trans individual from emotional and physical distress, such is, many times, not the case, and in many cases a True Transitioning will actually lead to emotional and psychological issues. The question is also raised about whether a Trans person who has actually Transitioned should De-Transition, as many Trans people have actually done. I think that, in the Author's view, about all we and the Church can do in the case of questions about whether one should actually Transition or De-Transition is to walk with them and try to point out to them the pitfalls of either course of action. Unfortunately, some counselors and mental health professionals urge Trans people and their parents that it is "either Transition or Suicide". Would you rather love a child of that child's chosen Trans Gender/Sex or a dead child? This sort of advice, which is often promulgated in the Trans community, is, in the Author's view, highly irresponsible advice.
- l) **SUICIDE:** The Author, reluctantly, broaches the topic of Suicide and Suicidality among Trans people. Unfortunately, Suicide or thoughts of Suicide have increased as a result of "Social Contagion", "Minority Stress" (Trans people oftentimes feel that they are socially isolated and socially frowned upon or condemned, or socially rejected), and, in some cases, "Transitioning." The Author attempts to deal with these issues, although relevant studies are incomplete.
- m) **PRACTICAL GUIDES:** The Author makes a limited attempt, very limited and inadequate in my view, to provide practical advice about such topics as Restrooms which will be used by Trans and Non-Trans people, sleeping/cabin arrangements at camps, and some other issues. I did not find this advice to be all that helpful. I have already noted, at the outset of this Review, my disappointment with the fact the Author did not deal with some of the more practical issues which the Church must confront in dealing with the Gender Dysphoria issue.
- n) **PRONOUNS AND CHOSEN NAMES:** The Author confronts the issues which many of us must deal with. How do we respond, by pronouns and name, to an individual who has Transitioned to, or Declared themselves to be of a Gender different than their biological sex? For example, a biological male might demand that his chosen female name (e.g. Mary as opposed to Bob) be used in addressing them, and that feminine pronouns be used in addressing them (i.e. she, her, hers as opposed to he, him, his). I have received letters from a female lawyer who is a member of a large, well respected Dallas law firm, in which, below her signature, she states "desired pronouns, she, her, hers". To me, this is ridiculous. I almost responded with a letter stating my desired pronouns, "he, his, him", but, fortunately, refrained from doing so. What if a biological female, Evelyn, declares herself to be a male and that their name is Noah? How do we deal with the name and pronoun issue? The Author cites two opposing points of Christian view, one being the view for "Truth", which demands the use of an individual's given name, their so called "Dead Name" (i.e. the name assigned to them at birth) and biologically

sexed pronouns (i.e. we are not going to give in to the untruth of their chosen Gender Identity), and the other being the view of “Resect For the Individual”, which requires the use of their self-chosen Life Name (as opposed to their Dead Name) and of their Gender appropriate (appropriate to their chosen Gender Identity appropriate) pronouns. The Author favors the Respect point of view, which seems to me to be an appropriate choice.

- o) CIS-GENDER: In order to cover all of the terminology matters, the Author, I think, defines the current term “Cis Gender” as being the Gender Identity of those of us who do not suffer from Gender Dysphoria. In other words, we who are Non-Trans are, as I understand it, Cis-Gender. Don’t hold me to this conclusion.

The Author’s views on all of these matters are well thought out and well documented by research and studies, where data from research and studies was available at the time when this book was written in 2021. I just wish that the Author had had available to him the opinions and deep research of Dr. Jonathan Haidt as described in Dr. Haidt’s 2024 book, *The Anxious Generation/How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*, Penguin Press, 2024. I think that our Author, Dr. Sprinkle, provides excellent information and very helpful counsel, which will greatly assist Christians, Christian Leaders and the Church in relating to Trans people, and in ministering to and pastoring for Trans people, and for including Trans people in the Church community. What he does not do, and perhaps was unable to do because of the status of knowledge and information that existed when the book was written, is to try to provide advice as to how to help young people who have not fallen into the category of being a “Trans” but who are confused and who are being inundated by non-helpful information (what I would be so bold as to call “propaganda”) from the Trans community and the Trans ideology and who are being urged to question their Sexual orientation and Gender in order to actually keep them from falling into the “Trans Trap”. Forgive me for using the terminology “Trans Trap”, but if Dr. Haidt is correct in his conclusions (and one has to conclude that he is or very likely is) young people are falling into the traps of mental and emotional issues and disorders (likely including Gender Confusion) through the Rewiring of our society which occurred, starting in roughly 2010 with the advent of wide usage of smart phones. I am not denigrating, in any way, the very real, not propaganda caused Gender Dysphoria issues which some individuals have to deal with because of the Nature, Nurture, Biological or Cultural factors mentioned above. However, I think that each of Drs Haidt and Sprinkle would agree that this huge expansion of Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria which we are experiencing has as at least one of its causes the assertion of Gender Ideology propaganda (and that is my term not a term of either author) on the internet. Young people, particularly young girls are feeling isolated, lonely, depressed, anxious and very confused about their bodies and gender for the reasons described by Dr. Haidt, those being the rewiring of kids through the Smart Phone/Internet and the conversion from a Play Generation to a Cell Phone Generation. So, and this is my View and not the View of the Author of the book being reviewed here, prevention being much better than a cure, the role of Christians, Christian Leaders and our Church is to provide young people with the social connections and outlets, play opportunities, Faith and relationships with God which will shield them from the emotional distresses and Identity Confusions which our rewired society is foisting upon them. Sorry. I just wish that our Author, Dr. Sprinkle, had had the information and opportunity to make some suggestions in this respect.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK?

Sorry folks, there is no shortcut for the reading of this book. You need to read it, fully, and consider it fully. This is particularly true for Church Pastors, Christian Teachers and Leaders and PARENTS of young people. I know that each of us has terrible demands placed upon our time, but I would urge that the reading of this book should be followed by a reading of Johathan Haidt’s book, which is cited in the

preceding paragraph. Our young people are, as a result of what our technological culture (MEANING US) has foisted upon them, facing a crisis. If the Church properly recognizes its roles, one of those roles is to find ways to try to confront this crisis, and to help young people and their parents confront this crisis.

IS THIS BOOK ONE WHICH SHOULD BE RETAINED IN THE TEI LIBRARY/WOULD IT BE USEFUL IN CONNECTION WITH ANY TEI/ECLI CLASS?

TEI should have and retain this book in its library and should recommend it to the Pastors and Church Leaders it seeks to help and counsel. That said, I am not sure that I know how this book can be used in a TEI or ECLI Class, but it, and Jonathan Haidt's book which is cited above, would provide excellent material for a round table discussion among pastors, leaders and parents.

Thank You

Dan Simon