



**“Hot Topics: Gender Identity”**  
*Selected Passages*

**Main Point:** Gender identity is designed and assigned by God, damaged by sin, but redeemed and restored in Christ.

Foundations for understanding that gender identity is designed and assigned by God, damaged by sin, but redeemed and restored in Christ.:

**God created men and women in His image (Gen. 1:27; Mt. 19:4)**

- *With earthly purpose (Gen. 1:28),*
- *With complementary roles (Gen. 2:18-23),*
- *With ordained relationship (Gen. 2:24), and*
- *With heavenly intent (Is. 43:7).*

Gender is a part of our identity that has a special design and purpose in God’s plan for creation. Genesis 1 and 2 lay the foundation for this truth. In the creation account, God created males and females separately and distinctly. Unlike all of the rest of creation, God created men and women uniquely in that they were created in His image. Gen. 1:27 emphasized this fact, making a point of making the point that males and females were created by God and that both genders were created in the image of God. In dealing with the issue of divorce in Matthew 19, Jesus validated this creation account and God’s design in the creation of gender. Further, we see that gender has a fundamental purpose in fulfilling God’s design in procreation: Filling the earth with men and women who reflect His image (Gen. 1:28). Genesis 2 goes on to provide more details related to the reason and design of gender. Specifically, God reveals that men and women were created to have complementary roles (Gen. 2:18-23) and that they were designed to have ordained relationship within monogamous, heterosexual marriage (Gen. 2:24). Jumping forward to Isaiah 43:7, God affirmed His intentional design in the creation of men and women, and He added to this affirmation the amazing reality that men and women were uniquely created for His glory! Add it all up, and God’s Word makes it clear that God created men and women in His image with earthly purpose, with complementary roles, with ordained relationship, and with heavenly intent.

1. Take time to read through all of the passages listed with the points above. Discuss each truth related to God’s design and assignment of gender.
2. What does it mean that God created man and woman with complementary roles? What are those roles individually, in marriage, in the church, etc.? In what ways has sin impacted and affected God’s perfect, complementary design for the genders?
3. How would you lovingly share the truth about God’s design and purpose for gender with someone who is struggling with gender identity or who is sympathetic to the position that gender is a changeable aspect of identity?

**Sin brought shame that damaged self-identity in men and women (Gen. 2:25; 3:7).**

So what happened? If God created males and females with such design and purpose, why does anyone question gender? Why is it that some humans — apart from all other living creatures — face a crisis of identity related to their gender? The answer is found in the creation account and the account of the fall that happens in Genesis 3. The answer is sin that uniquely affects the human race. After the creation account of man and woman in Genesis 2, God’s Word stated that man and woman were “naked and were not ashamed” (Gen. 2:25). That’s a strange thing to say, isn’t it? Or is it? Man and woman had just been created. They enjoyed perfect fellowship with God and with each other, and they had no

questions or issues with their identity. They were Adam and Eve, and they were created by God. However, in chapter 3, when both the man and the woman disobeyed God and sin entered their lives, God's Word said that they knew that they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves (Gen. 3:7). Isn't it interesting that sin brought shame that damaged their self-identity and led them to cover the part of their physical identity that uniquely revealed gender? Gender identity is only one of the many ways that sin can cause an identity crisis in the lives of men and women. Sin is the root of all identity issues in mankind.

1. Read Genesis 2 and 3 together, and discuss the identity crisis that sin brought into the lives of the man and the woman, changing so many aspects of their lives and relationships.
2. How exactly does sin play a part in the identity crisis when it comes to gender? Is this the same of different than other identity problems that are rooted in sin? If so, why? If not, why?
3. If God's Word claims that gender is God's design, then any claim to change God's design for gender is sinful. Would you agree with this statement or not? Why would this statement cause so much anger on the part of some?
4. As believers, knowing that sin is the root of gender identity problems, how should that approach the way we view, interact with, and approach those who are struggling with gender identity issues?

**In Christ, God redeems men and women and is restoring His image in mankind (Col. 1:9-23; 3:1-4).**

So is there hope for those who struggle with gender identity? Is there hope for those who struggle with sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, theft, greediness, drunkenness, reviling, swindling and more? God's Word says that there's not only hope, but there's forgiveness, restoration, and freedom in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6:9-11). The gospel is our hope, which proclaims the truth that God redeems and reconciles those who put their faith in Jesus (Col. 1:13-22). How does this happen? It happens by the power and grace of God through the gift of faith and the work of Christ. Most importantly, it happens when we realize that saving faith is not about intellectual belief in Jesus; rather, saving faith is about new birth and life in Jesus. Gender identity — along with other identity issues that sin can manifest — is restored as the believer dies to self and finds their "life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Real security in our true identity comes from knowing that Christ "is your life" as a believer (Col. 3:4). Redemption and restoration is the amazing grace of God in redeeming us and restoring us to His image. The church today must love those who are struggling with gender identity, loving them enough to share with them the truth that God designed and assigned gender, sin damaged identity, but God redeems and restores us in Christ.

1. Read the passage listed above in 1 Corinthians. Discuss the context and content of these verses. How do these verses bring hope into a conversation with someone who says that the issue of gender identity is just "who they are?"
2. Read the passages in Colossians. Discuss how these verses speak into the issue of victory over the issue of questions related to gender identity. What is the importance of these verses when it comes to any "identity" issue and the gospel?
3. Take time to pray as a group or in smaller groups of two or three, asking God to use His church to proclaim His gospel in love to those who are in crisis with their identity apart from Christ.