

The Intertwined Errors of Transsexualism, Malleable Gender Roles, the Body Modification Movement, and Personal Identity

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Defining Transsexualism

The “ism” of transsexualism is offensive to those who claim to be transgender, that is, those who have tried to change or move away from their original biological sex. It does not approve of a person defining his own gender. “Transsexual” is “a medical term applied to individuals who seek hormonal (and often, but not always) surgical treatment to modify their bodies so they may live full time as members of the sex category opposite to their birth-assigned sex.”¹ “Transgender” is simply a self-identification, what a person says about himself, while a transsexual modifies his body to appear more like the opposite sex. This process is called “transitioning.” It is rarely used in the past tense (e.g., “a man has transitioned to female”), since a male cannot actually become female, and vice versa, so it is always an on-going process.²

To be transgender—to say one has the wrong body and biological sex—is now regarded as medically and socially acceptable. It requires a distinctly philosophical view of the body and matter in general, one in opposition to Christianity. The man formerly known as Bruce Jenner is the best known example. He claimed that he has the “soul of a female.”³ Obviously, his body has displayed normal masculine traits, from conceiving children with a woman, to winning an Olympic gold medal in the Decathlon against men. He now claims that his body is wrong for him. Inside him, he says, he is a female. Mr. Eilers (previously Greg and now Gina), a former LCMS minister who is living as a transsexual woman, says the same: “Greg [the male body] hates Gina [the female brain]. Gina hates Greg.” He says of the LCMS: “My own church body wants me to live with this offending body.”⁴

¹*Transgender Terminology* (<http://www.metatranshormone.com/17468/Transgender-Terminology.htm>).

²This response from a survey of females who previously identified as non-female, but who have since stopped medically transitioning, is realistic: “couldn’t pass [as a man in society], feared rape.” “Respondents were more likely to identify that transition[ing] would change too little about their bodies (26%), rather than too much (16%).” “Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey Results and Interpretation,” *4thWaveNow* (<http://guideonragingstars.tumblr.com/post/149877706175/female-detransition-and-reidentification-survey>, 2016).

³“Bruce Jenner: I have the ‘soul of a female’,” Interview with Diane Sawyer (2015; <http://www.cnn.com/videos/living/2015/04/25/orig-natpkg-abc-interview-bruce-jenner-transgender-cws.abc-news>).

⁴“Born in the Wrong . . .” (July 6, 2015; <https://eilerspizza.wordpress.com/2015/07/06/born-in-the-wrong/>).

The physical body is pinpointed as the problem, so that it is described in negative terms as a prison or shell. “The notion that trans individuals are ‘trapped in the wrong body,’ has been the dominant paradigm since the 1950s.”⁵ A surgical solution is now offered to those with perfectly normal bodies to change them to be more like their desired sex.

A person’s feelings and self-chosen label take priority over his own body and biological gender. Despite excruciating surgeries, high heels, and copious makeup, the result looks like one would expect: a man playing dress-up in women’s clothing. The private differences can be erased, but doctors can only change so much. They can only make “counterfeits or impersonators of the sex with which they ‘identify.’”⁶ It is impossible for a man to become a woman or a woman to become a man. The Lord alone creates and assigns to each his sex, as He wills, without our input. Luther teaches us that “each one of us must have the kind of body God created for us. I cannot make myself a woman, nor can you make yourself a man; we do not have that power.”⁷

Most of those claiming to have a gender not consistent with their body are men, in about a 3:1 ratio. It must be stated that, while this transgender category is similar to the public “coming out” of homosexuals, it does not necessarily include any sexual activities or unnatural sexual proclivities. It is a personal, individual, internal feeling—an act of the will. We have come full circle in the emancipation movement, where a middle-aged white man can be a celebrated civil rights hero, simply because he says he is a woman. But as ludicrous as transgenderism is, it is simply the crest of a true “cultural tsunami,” one that has already wreaked gender-confused havoc on bodies, families, churches, and all liberal, developed societies.⁸ This attack on God’s creation involves all modern people, since every sinner is trans (blurring the divine male/female distinction) to some degree.

Gender Identity

Before 1980 trans identifying people were correctly diagnosed as mentally ill. But now transsexualism threatens to erase the last vestiges of the male/female distinction. The root error is a language trick: sex and gender are linguistically pulled apart. “In 1972 the sexologists John Money and Anke Ehrhardt popularized the idea that sex and gender are separate categories. Sex, they argued, refers to physical attributes and is anatomically and physiologically determined. Gender they saw as a psychological transformation of the self—the internal conviction that one is either male or female...”⁹ Gender is now purely theoretical, with no basis in this material world. That makes it impossible to question anyone’s gender and outright offensive to not accept the gendered name and sex they portray, even if everything about their bodies contradicts what they say.

Language is power to the transgenderist. One gender announcement wipes out all biology and

⁵Meredith Cecilia Lee, “The Paradox of Authenticity: The Depoliticization of Trans Identity,” unpublished thesis (Ohio State University: https://etd.ohiolink.edu/rws_etd/document/get/osu1339452660/inline, 2012), 3.

⁶Dr. Paul McHugh, quoted in: Katherine Kersten, “Transgender Conformity,” *First Things* (Dec. 2016; <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2016/12/transgender-conformity>).

⁷*The Estate of Marriage* (1522), LW 45:17.

⁸K. Kersten, “Transgender Conformity.”

⁹Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of the Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 3.

previous references to the birth sex. It also dictates to all society what gendered pronouns are used in conversation about them. This is true even before surgery, though medical intervention is frequently sought.

One's mental gender is given medical validity by the term "gender dysphoria." Dysphoria is simply confusion.¹⁰ Those diagnosed with this condition feel their physical gender, public role, and appearance do not match their internal sense of gender. A man wanting to be a trans woman proclaimed: "My gender is what I say it is. I feel like I'm a woman in a man's body, and I demand that I be treated like one."¹¹ The incongruence between the internal mind and the external body is treated primarily as a physical ailment. Mr. Eilers compares his gender dysphoria to cancer—despite the fact that cancer can be observed by another person and physically removed in some cases.¹² The emotional appeal of this man trying to be feminine is apparent: "I love being a woman! That my self-hatred over being a male is finally gone is no less miraculous to me."¹³

Gender dysphoria has the veneer of scientific truth. But psychology is not a hard science, rather, it deals in atheistic theories and unfalsifiable claims. No one can prove scientifically that the brain or soul of another is not of a contrasting gender. So the end result is simply an emotional appeal to relieve mental suffering. And since it is a cardinal sin of society to question another's identity, all that is left is to change the body. So acceptance into the American Psychiatric Association's massively influential *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) makes it unquestionable for many. A scientific accounting "is held as the ultimate and final truth for modernists."¹⁴

The case of Mr. Eilers is typical. He simply wants to stop suffering from gender incongruence and, in his words, "have a measure of temporal healing."¹⁵ He claims that if he had continued to live as a male, he would have killed himself (the intentional sin of murder) or lost his sanity (a dubious psychological concept).¹⁶ So instead he happily lost his most distinctive male parts to the surgical knife earlier this year. Surgery for unhappy feelings is truly "collaborating with madness."¹⁷ The human body Christ physically created is assumed to have nothing to do with a person's identity or gender. In the words of young man living as a transsexual girl: "I found out that I was happy. . . . Gender actually didn't matter to me anymore. No matter what label you put on me—male, female, transgender, whatever—I will always be myself."¹⁸ Gender identity overtakes every other concern,

¹⁰"Gender dysphoria in the DSM [manual] is just description. It doesn't look at the root causes or offer alternative treatments [to the medical and surgical]." "Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey."

¹¹Richard Corradi, "Transgender Delusion," *First Things* (Oct. 2015), 18.

¹²"The Trials of Gina Eilers Part 1," *Virtue in the Wasteland Podcast* (<http://virtueinthewasteland.libsyn.com/the-trials-of-gina-eilers-part-1>, Oct. 2016).

¹³"Gina Deepens as Greg Lessens" (Sept. 14, 2016; <https://eilerspizza.wordpress.com/2016/09/14/gina-deepens-as-greg-lessens/>).

¹⁴Philip Hale, *Confessing the Scriptural Christ against Modern Idolatry: Inspiration, Inerrancy, and Truth in Scientific and Biblical Conflict* (Omaha, NE: Mercinator Press), 5–6.

¹⁵"Toward Understanding Gender Dysphoria" (June 29, 2017; <https://eilerspizza.wordpress.com/2017/06/29/toward-understanding-gender-dysphoria/>).

¹⁶"Letter: Transgender and the Church" (July 23, 2017; <https://eilerspizza.wordpress.com/2017/07/23/letter-transgender-and-the-church/>).

¹⁷Paul McHugh, "The 'Transsexual' Delusion" (Jan. 9, 2011; <https://daleoleary.wordpress.com/2011/01/09/the-%E2%80%9Ctranssexual%E2%80%9D-delusion/>).

¹⁸"Valentijn De Hingh: Why did I choose?" (<http://tedx.amsterdam/2012/11/valentijn-de-hingh-why-did-i-choose/>).

including biological reproduction, birth sex, and the divine institution of marriage—all of God’s creative words.

Personal Identity

Orthodox Christians are immediately on the defensive in the area of gender, since identity has become a sacred object to be revered. “Identity politics essentially argued that only those who experience something can really understand it or be relied upon to challenge it.”¹⁹ So the social forces bend one to “automatically privilege a person’s perception of themselves over their bodily reality.”²⁰ The concept of identity, which goes far beyond just gender, is a bedrock of our culture.

“Talk about ‘identity’ in the modern sense would have been incomprehensible to our forebears of a couple of centuries ago.”²¹ Identity is simply a creative assertion of the will, which follows the bold claims of radical Enlightenment philosophers. However, this moral concept “has burrowed itself deep into human consciousness.”²² It is implicit in the call to “be yourself” or “be true to yourself.” But this “self” is narrowly defined as having nothing to do with the created order or the neighbors Christ gives. It is a power-play of the conscious subject against everything else—an act of self-definition, and essentially, of self-deification.

The philosopher René Descartes famously said: “I think, therefore I am.” But in his attempt to achieve scientific certainty by doubting everything, he redefined the person by elevating the conscious will over external objects. In the words of Descartes: “Now freewill is in itself the noblest thing we can have because it makes us in a certain manner equal to God and exempts us from being his subjects. . . .”²³ No longer considered to be sinful and rebellious, the will was unbound so that its active power is now made god-like. It is even identified with the entire self, so the self is internal, not physical at all. The self cannot be wrong, because it is the whole person. One woman who formerly identified as a trans man (a female-to-male transsexual) said she fell for the idea that “‘gender identity’ is innate and infallible.”²⁴

To deny one’s identity is to negate the entire person, who is purely an inner self. One article’s title says it well: “The Divine Call to Be Myself: Anglican Transgender Women and Prayer.”²⁵ “The mind or the will—the inner self—is casually identified as the ‘real me.’”²⁶ The Enlightenment focus on the

¹⁹Esme Choonara and Yuri Prasad, “What’s Wrong with Privilege Theory?,” *International Socialism: A Quarterly Journal of Socialist Theory* 142 (April 2014; <http://isj.org.uk/whats-wrong-with-privilege-theory/>).

²⁰Glenn Peoples, “Dualism and Gender Identity” (April 29, 2014; <http://rightreason.org/2014/dualism-and-gender-identity/>).

²¹Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 28.

²²Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 30.

²³Letter to Christina of Sweden, quoted in: C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 147.

²⁴“Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey.”

²⁵Ellen Clark-King, *Anglican Theological Review* 98:2 (April 1, 2016).

²⁶Robert Barron, “Bruce Jenner, the ‘Shadow Council,’ and St. Irenaeus” (June 9, 2015; <https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/article/bruce-jenner-the-shadow-council-and-st-irenaeus/4785/>).

solitary thinking individual led to “the idea that each of us has an original way of being human.”²⁷ Individuality has become a modern pillar in defining humanity, so that “be yourself” essentially means be different from everyone else—and that suggests that morality (God’s law) is not universal.

A sacred personal identity also implies the irrelevance of sexual acts, so they are amoral by definition.²⁸ These physical actions of the body are external to the true self—they do not touch or affect the real person. This is why identifying as homosexual today does not refer to homosexual acts—it is an internal self-definition. This identity is equated to the person, so to deny it is to dismiss the person entirely. But there are celibate homosexuals, whose entire life and worth revolve around a mental identification. What is external does not influence the will’s self-identifying power.

What was dense philosophy became part of pop culture in the 1960s, which was “an individuating revolution.”²⁹ It also wiped out any real idea of sin, because sin became social, not personal. Repentance is now unintelligible, because the mind and will cannot change and conform to God’s will without denying one’s identity, one’s true personhood. To repent of strongly held inner convictions and be a sinner in mind and will is to be less than human. It would mean a complete denial of the self and one’s identity, since the will is supposedly what makes us human. This makes a self-chosen identity of any sort a serious theological problem, since it directly contradicts the Gospel of Christ. But the call to find or discover yourself is insistent today, though it simply means to ignore everyone else, even the divine Creator.

So what was previously a delusion, that one’s perception does not align with reality, is turned upside down: one’s perception overrules reality, so that a sense of gender identity can overcome one’s physical body parts. No external factor, such as Scripture, is allowed to influence one’s identity, though part of the modern identity crisis is that it demands social recognition. “Our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *mis*recognition of others. . . .”³⁰ So others in society, who are naturally external to the critical consciousness, play a part in approving one’s identity. This is why calling a self-proclaimed trans woman, who is really a feminized man, a man is hate speech. It is denying his existence, which is equated to his chosen identity. A trans civil rights activist exclaimed: “I am not trapped by my body. I am trapped by your beliefs. And I want to reclaim this body from those who want it to breathe and be fed by their dogmas.”³¹ So the world happily ignores the physical reality of these transgenderists, because of a ridiculous philosophical sand castle.

The Body Modification Movement

Despite the fact that the body is marginalized in the philosophy of personal identity, this new view of man changes how the body is seen and used by thinking, self-identifying subjects. The body

²⁷C. Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” 30.

²⁸For many today physical intercourse is like shaking a person’s hand—so both are meaningless enough to do with complete strangers.

²⁹Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 473.

³⁰C. Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” 25.

³¹Sass Rogando Sasot, Speech at the University of the Philippines-Diliman (Oct. 6, 2010; <http://transgriot.blogspot.com/2010/10/reclaiming-wronged-body.html>).

becomes “the basis for the creation of a sense of self-identity.”³² It is visible all around us in extreme tattoos, piercings, and other body modifications (or “mods”). The individuating revolution gave license to advertise one’s identity on all parts of the body. The body is no longer seen as created in the image of God and inherently reflecting His glory, but as a blank canvas on which to project one’s personal identity. Such a person “perceives no purpose in nature. [He] has become ‘psychological man’ and the soul has become the self. . . .”³³ The body is just along for the ride, a mere billboard to advertise the true self.

Tattoos are no longer for the rebellious. They are for stay-at-home moms, grandparents, and through temporary tattoos, the smallest children. Historically, for example in Greece and Rome, tattoos were “an official means of identification.” They were used to “mark slaves, criminals, indentured workers and soldiers.”³⁴ Tattoos are ordinary today, but it is common knowledge that face, “neck and hand tattoos [are] “game changers.”³⁵ They signal something subversive and mark one’s independence from the rest of civilized society. The decorated primitives and aboriginals first met by exploring Europeans were shocked at their body art and unnecessary physical modifications. The new pagan has come full circle back to body adornment for identification purposes. The modern pagan, though, marks the canvas of the body not to fit into a group, but to differentiate oneself from it. For example: “Every new mod I get brings me closer to feeling truly like myself. . . . my mods make me, me.”³⁶

For transsexualists, “the metaphor ‘trapped in the wrong body’ reinforced the notion that the body needed to be altered to authenticate one’s true self hidden within oneself.”³⁷ The promise of surgery for genital reconstruction, feminization of the vocal cord and facial features, breast implants, nose jobs, and buttocks implants are all related. Cosmetic plastic surgery implies that the body is moldable and changeable to fit one’s internal view. It is discardable clay in the hand of the all-powerful mind. The body is disconnected from the self—it is merely an “instrument” of the true self.³⁸ A disabled man boasts: “I have reclaimed my body through physical adornment because, for me, this coincides with my mentality. I have pierced and tattooed myself, my body, to complement my disability. Body art gives me a new way of looking at myself.” Since “the 1990s, an industry has developed based on cutting, piercing and tattooing.”³⁹ The practices go far beyond ear piercing, to gauging or stretching holes in ears, nostrils and cheeks. Tongues and male genitals are bisected and pierced. Implants are put under all parts of the skin and scarification allows aggravated wounds to heal visibly. Self-castration or penectomy for body mod purposes merges with transsexualism, at

³²Daniel Wocjik, *Punk and Neo-Tribal Body Art*, quoted in: Sheila Jefferys, “‘Body Art’ and Social Status: Cutting, Tattooing and Piercing from a Feminist Perspective,” *Feminism & Psychology* 10:4 (2000), 418.

³³K. Kersten, “Transgender Conformity.”

³⁴Jane Caplan, “Speaking Scars,” transcript from a lecture at the Museum of London (June 30, 2014; <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/speaking-scars-the-tattoo>).

³⁵Jane Marie, “Don’t Tell Me I Can’t Get A . . . Neck Tattoo” (Sept. 2015; goo.gl/AFCDma).

³⁶“What is spiritual/ritual modification?” in the Church of Body Modification Internet forum, message posted Aug. 5, 2014 (<http://uscobm.com/forum/ritual/what-is-spiritualritual-modification/page-2/>).

³⁷M. Lee, “The Paradox of Authenticity,” 19.

³⁸Robert George, “Transgenderism, ‘Marriage Equality,’ and Liberalism’s Tragic Error,” *Modern Age: A Conservative Review* (Winter 2016; <https://home.isi.org/transgenderism-marriage-equality-liberalisms-tragic-error>).

³⁹S. Jefferys, “‘Body Art’ and Social Status,” 424, 409.

least in the result. To physically change the body evidently demonstrates that the will dominates the material world, as illustrated in the phrase “mind over matter.”

The idea of body ownership is common among serial body modifiers. Instead of the body made in the image of God and intended for specific purposes, a spiritual father of modern body modification “uses the argument that piercing and cutting enable the victims to reclaim their bodies:” “to not have encumberments, to not have holes in your body, to not have tattoos may be debilitating.”⁴⁰ To have no external identifying marks is to be less than human. It is not a large step to alter the body to be more like the opposite sex, usually female. Theologically, it can be seen an act of recreation, following God’s pattern of making Eve from Adam. Though it certainly does deny the goodness of His original work, man attempts to fix or improve himself. The *Small Catechism* tells us “that God has made me; . . . that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members. . . .” Should a person cut off and throw away what is divinely made and meant for a holy purpose? By no means—it is a confession that our Maker is evil and made a mistake. But for the transsexual “being in the wrong body” is not the product of a corrupt and blind will, but an opportunity to show who he really is. And the inner self cannot be wrong, because it is infallible and therefore negates all creation.

Transsexualism ties together the private, internal definition of the self with an instrumental use of the body: it is simply a blank screen on which to project one’s identity. No longer believed to be, by default, in God’s image, the body modification movement disfigures the body to recreate the self and declare that sinners own their bodies, and no one else—especially the Creator.⁴¹

The Externalizing of Sexuality

The word sex rarely means biological gender today. It is everywhere and applies to everything. Everything is classified and stereotyped to gender, especially the feminine. Sex today is a body image and public projection of oneself, not a divine role in an ordered hierarchy.

To be a woman today is to be overtly sexual, so that the body is at the forefront.⁴² It is “more closely scrutinized, measured, and cataloged than the male body.”⁴³ Nudity or near nudity is a marker for the feminine, making modesty masculine. This informs female fashion, even down to toddlers. Instead of focusing on the female duty of child-bearing, transsexual-wannabes latch on to the most superficial indicators of femininity: “When I first had gender reassignment surgery, I wanted to look more feminine. . . . So I said to myself, ‘what is the ultimate in femininity? It’s a plastic sex blow-up doll.’”⁴⁴

⁴⁰Fakir Musafar, quoted in: S. Jefferys, “‘Body Art’ and Social Status,” 421.

⁴¹“I began to see myself as an icon of resurrection. That led me to see all trans people as icons of resurrection. An icon should be treated gently, with respect and dignity.” Episcopal priest Carla Robinson, “How Do You Hold Together Your Trans Identity and Your Life of Faith,” *Christian Century* (Jan. 18, 2017), 23.

⁴²“I felt pushed into identifying as male because I wasn’t ‘good enough’ at being female (aka performing femininity).” “Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey.”

⁴³M. Lee, “The Paradox of Authenticity,” 14.

⁴⁴Amber Belus, “Meet the ‘Botched’ Patient Who’s Desperate to Resemble a Blow-Up Doll” (Apr. 29, 2015; <http://www.intouchweekly.com/posts/meet-the-botched-patient-who-s-desperate-to-resemble-a-blow-up-doll-57243>).

It may not be too much to suggest that to be human in our sexualized culture is to project the feminine body image. I believe some women rebel against this objectification and try to be masculine, while some men want to feminize themselves to be more overtly human.⁴⁵ One doctor confesses: “The post-surgical [trans woman] subjects struck me as caricatures of women. They wore high heels, copious makeup, and flamboyant clothing,” but were “indifferent to children.”⁴⁶ Our feminized culture is so oppressive that now “men need liberation from masculinity,” since it is so restrictive.⁴⁷ Every action is stereotyped as belonging to a gender, but men in daily life must be almost asexual, nonemotional robots. What message does two men being close or hugging send?

The trans actor Laverne Cox responded definitively to those questioning his femaleness by flipping her styled hair in an exaggerating fashion and saying: “ain’t I a woman.”⁴⁸ But the Bible explicitly condemns such superficial shows of femininity, even for biological females: “women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works” (1 Tim 2:9-10). Mr. Eilers admits that he tries to downplay “talking about the cute shoes I just bought or how good it feels to make myself pretty.”⁴⁹ Though claiming to be a woman, he blatantly ignores the next verse in 1 Tim. 2, by trying to publicly evangelize the “ignorant” LCMS regarding the reality of gender dysphoria: “Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.” The feminine modesty and submission urged by Christ, in order to protect marriage and motherhood, is radical to an immodest culture, to which the body is simply a bare wall with which to display the internal self to others.

The New Dualism

In a dualist mode of thought visible matter and the invisible world are contrasted and opposed. The modern dualism is philosophical, rather than religious (as in the gnosticism early Christianity battled), but there are parallels between them. The Manichaeism Augustine had accepted said that “the human soul is a fragment of Light which has fallen from its home, the kingdom of heaven, and is trapped in the body. It can escape by disciplining the body and with the help of saving powers.” Like present-day dualists, “gnostics believed that the physical world is of no value,” so Augustine was “taught to avoid procreation because it entraps more divine spirits in matter.”⁵⁰ This is eerily

⁴⁵“My trauma was not examined at all, nor was the sexism I was trying to escape. When I talked about trouble with people sexualizing my breasts, getting rid of them was seen as the most valid option. When I spoke about being jealous of boys’ ability to take off shirts without sexualization, it was viewed as a ‘sign’ of being trans from my early childhood.” I “wanted to be sexless rather than a different sex.” “Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey.”

⁴⁶Paul R. McHugh, “Why We Stopped Doing Sex Change Operations,” *First Things* (Nov. 2004; <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2004/11/surgical-sex>).

⁴⁷Jane Pilcher and Imelda Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts In Gender Studies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004), 85.

⁴⁸“Ain’t I a Woman: My Journey to Womanhood” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQkXnDkLW5Q>).

⁴⁹“Gina Deepens as Greg Lessens” (Sept. 14, 2016; <https://eilerspizza.wordpress.com/2016/09/14/gina-deepens-as-greg-lessens/>).

⁵⁰Gillian Clark, “Augustine and Platonism,” introduction to *Augustine: Confessions, Books I-IV*, ed. Gillian Clark, *Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

similar to today: unborn babies are called “lumps of tissue,” just worthless matter.

Cartesian dualism, named after Descartes, is the term for our modern dualism in which “the human mind and the human body are fundamentally distinct from one another.”⁵¹ Since the consciousness dominates through self-identification, the true self has nothing to do with the body, which is just lesser matter. So also for the transgenderist, the body has nothing to do with the internal self, therefore it can be of the “wrong” biological sex, simply because it does feel right to one’s mind.

Cartesian dualism is enshrined medically through the DSM manual in defining those with gender dysphoria as “people whose gender at birth is contrary to the one they identify with.”⁵² Note that in this statement sex is assigned by society at birth, not before. It is human construct, by definition. The material world is entirely dismissed in the bowing down to one’s identity.

Equality, which is the universal modern god, is an illusion materially. It must ignore biology and solely focus on consciousness and the will, which healthy adults have. But babies do not display rational cogency, thus they are not equal to the adult with a self-stated rational identity. This new dualism privileges the mind over the body in the most radical way.

The dualism of Descartes is the necessary consequence of the isolation of the individual mind, which is supposed in his theory of doubt. . . . If, in order to arrive at certainty, I am compelled to doubt, i.e. to exclude as possibly non-existent everything except the thinking self which doubts, it follows that the attainment of certainty involves an opposition, thoroughgoing and original, between thought which doubts and the world of things, including the bodily organism . . . it followed from this theory . . . the divorce of the human mind from the world of matter.⁵³

So the body is somewhat “unreal” and people are not defined bodily, that is, as materially created beings. This shift in self-understanding allows one to do to the body things which can only be called self-mutilation by those who believe a person is a body and soul united. This even allows suicide to be the most noble act of self-assertion against the body, a common evil that is praised today.

Rational power is exercised by hurting the body, as the body modification movement shows. The body is seen as a mere shell or machine, to be improved, modified, or upgraded—a canvas or slate on which to imprint a person’s sense of himself. Nothing done to it can affect the inner self. The body is an instrument, so “we have to objectify the world, including our own bodies, and that means to come to see them mechanistically and functionally, in the same way that an uninvolved external observer would.”⁵⁴ As it is crassly put by a transgenderist: “I can cut off anything I want to from my body, but that doesn’t mean its going to change anything inside myself.”⁵⁵ The body and biological sex have become irrelevant in this dualistic scheme.

If the true self is mental, having nothing to do with the body, gender identity is to allowed be “free-floating” from all created matter. This self-willed identity then “hangs free from, and can be explained and described without reference to, both their physical bodies, and their experience of

⁵¹J. Pilcher and I. Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts In Gender Studies*, 6.

⁵²G. Peoples, “Dualism and Gender Identity.”

⁵³*Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology*, ed. J. H. Blunt (London: Rivingtons, 1872; <https://books.google.com/books?id=A2YBvz0H3hcC>), 224.

⁵⁴C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 145.

⁵⁵“Valentijn De Hingh: Why did I choose?”

being socially read and treated as a person with such a body.”⁵⁶ So the body, God’s immediate creative action, plays no role in personal identity. In fact, this mirrors Marcionism, which jettisoned the Old Testament and called the creator god evil. All radical dualisms serve “to sever the sphere of religion from that of practical life,” rendering divorce, adultery and self-murder as irrelevant to the true self’s chosen identity as Christian.⁵⁷ This is why living together—a public dishonoring of marriage in the body—is not usually seen as contradictory to Christian faith. It is believed that nothing one does externally with the body affects the spiritual nature of man. In addition to being a flat denial of God’s authority over bodily man, this anti-Christian dualism rejects marriage as inherent in our creation as either male or female.

Both dualisms, old and new, must deny the reality of the resurrection to come of our physical bodies. Bodily matter, if it is to be glorified for eternity, cannot be bad, worthless, or problematic. The older dualisms made matter evil, the newer one makes matter less real, but both see the body not as the temple of the Holy spirit, but as a “detachable envelope” that is not necessary to value or treat respectfully.⁵⁸

We do not choose our own bodies. They are chosen for us and they must inform how we are to live, if we believe the Creator is the Redeemer. A body created good cannot be a prison, so no one is “trapped in a body,” as if physical matter is the problem. We are trapped by sin, especially sinful minds and hearts which do not love God or honor His creative will for our lives. Though true love from the inner self is considered infallible and more significant than material reality today, all human emotion absent the Lord is idolatry. Since the modern dualistic mind has become recalcitrant, the body became the expendable appendage for those setting up an identity opposed to the glorious and holy Father in heaven. This disposable view of the body is incompatible with Christianity, since “the sexually immoral person sins against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18). I would argue that modern bodies themselves are adored as outer “images resembling mortal [inner] man,” reflecting the invisible rational idols of the mind (Rom. 1:23).⁵⁹ The physical body is an essential part of a human being, a physical creation of the holy God. A doctrine of creation that says nothing positive about the human body or its normal biological function is impotent.

Feminism: The Root of Transgender Thinking

While this new dualism is philosophical, it manifests itself as an attack on nature in the name of equality. The mind must not only be the true self, but it must dominate and control the body in this antagonistic relationship. The movement known as feminism is the most virulent form of this anarchy in modern times. Matter, biology, and the body become the enemies to be overthrown.

It is widely acknowledged that transsexualism is a direct result of radical feminist thinking about gender. The “emergence [of gender studies] can be dated as recently as the late 1960s, and

⁵⁶Rebecca Reilly-Cooper, “Sex And Gender: A Beginner’s Guide” (2015; <https://sexandgenderintro.com/>).

⁵⁷F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *Christian Difficulties in the Second and Twentieth Centuries: A Study of Marcion and His Relation to Modern Thought* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & sons, 1903), 106-107.

⁵⁸F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *Christian Difficulties in the Second and Twentieth Centuries*, 131.

⁵⁹See Philip Hale, *Confessing the Scriptural Christ against Modern Idolatry*.

its development [was] triggered by second wave feminism.”⁶⁰ “Feminist theorists view the body not as essence, but as a bare scaffolding on which discourse and performance build a completely acculturated being.”⁶¹ It is pure talk which completely denies material creation. These feminists want to define themselves and, to do so, the body must be overcome. So the trans definition of gender is simply the feminist one: “the sex/gender dualism . . . placed in a dichotomy, necessarily excludes biology.”⁶² Biology, God’s marvelous handiwork, is simply bigotry.

It is basically a societal sin to say so, but male and female are built unequally for unique purposes. So the feminist attempt to make what is clearly unequal appear equal used Cartesian dualism to attack the body. “Biology has always been central to women’s oppression.”⁶³ Biology—what God created—is the problem. Equality can only be real where the body is an illusion. This is actually transgender thinking: “Women’s bodies must become more like men’s if equality is to be achieved.”⁶⁴ The female sex is clearly made to do one thing very different than males: to bear and raise children. So control and domination of the reproductive function is fundamental to feminists. “We have sleepwalked into a situation where the reality of female biology is routinely denied,” even in churches.⁶⁵ If equality is rationally authorized, then the creation of the body in God’s image must be denied. The body is remade according to the sinner’s own image, that is, his inward consciousness.

Gender dysphoria is fundamentally hating one’s own body, a form of self-disgust and contempt. One former trans person admits: I “conflated body hatred and self-loathing with gender dysphoria.”⁶⁶ It also is a hatred of the body’s Maker. The hatred of physical life and its Author makes the ultimate rebellion of suicide, sadly, too tempting. The trans community has the highest rate of suicide today and, likely, of all of human history.⁶⁷ If the will is everything and the body is unreal, murder, even of one’s external body, does not seem to affect the true self. It can actually be done to confirm one’s identity, just like transsexualism is an act of aggression against oneself.

Before the focus on authenticity and individuality could emerge, the restrictive roles of father and mother first had to be conquered. Biology had to be overcome or modified so as to be subject to the human will. This happened in the 1960s by separating “sexual pleasure from reproduction.”⁶⁸ This “contraceptive revolution” allowed individuals to set their own course bodily, apart from God’s institution of marriage and the roles which give it structure.⁶⁹ As a feminist admits: “Only the most radical changes in biological reproduction can liberate women.”⁷⁰ The domination of nature,

⁶⁰J. Pilcher and I. Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts In Gender Studies*, ix.

⁶¹A. Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*, 6.

⁶²A. Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*, 21.

⁶³Joan Hartman and Ellen Messer-Davidow, *(En)gendering Knowledge: Feminists In Academe* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 121.

⁶⁴J. Pilcher and I. Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts In Gender Studies*, 6-7.

⁶⁵R. Reilly-Cooper, “Sex And Gender.”

⁶⁶“Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey.”

⁶⁷“Forty percent (40%) have attempted suicide in their lifetime, nearly nine times the rate in the U.S. population (4.6%).” “The report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey” (Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality; <http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/USTS-Full-Report-FINAL.PDF>), 5.

⁶⁸Heather Albanesi, *Gender and Sexual Agency: How Young People Make Choices About Sex* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 3.

⁶⁹C. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 502.

⁷⁰Joyce McCarl Nielsen, *Sex and Gender in Society: Perspectives on Stratification* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland

especially the body, is now universal in developed society. What logically ends up in transsexualism, all moderns partake of—it is a part of our philosophical air. We all basically think: “The body does not tell me what to do, I decide what I will do with my body.” Who really wants biology to bend their will and determine their lives on earth? So to reproduce naturally within holy marriage (simply being fruitful as the Lord enables), is irresponsible and reckless, according to one LCMS pastor—precisely because it involves no exercise of the rational will.⁷¹ Biology, God’s creative and intimate action in all things, must now submit to the sinner’s feelings. No longer is this 16th century description true: “the Lutherans untiringly preach to the people, ‘Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth.’”⁷²

Why is transsexualist anarchy a boon to feminism? It destabilizes the marriage structure and the hierarchy of male and female. A feminist theorist confesses “heterosexuality is inherently oppressive within patriarchal society and inconsistent with gender equality.”⁷³ Or stated more bluntly: “We’re going to attack the idea that gender is intrinsically linked to one’s anatomy, and we’re going to boost the visibility of trans and intersex people.”⁷⁴ Transgenderism is the ultimate atom bomb upon God’s creation, even if it means biological men can now become the oppressed minority. The body and its God-given purposes have been left for dead.

Male/Female Roles

Over the last few centuries, our “history is essentially that of emancipation of humankind from patriarchal and authoritarian conceptions of life and society.”⁷⁵ Transsexualism is evidence that we are watching society collapse. It originated with the denial of the divine roles God made for male and female. These assigned positions have duties that are informed by the body created by Christ our Lord, not the sinful will.

“If we are not our bodies, marriage cannot essentially involve the one-flesh union of man and woman. . . .”⁷⁶ In, through, and because of our created bodies, Scripture clearly delineates external roles for Christians. “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord” (Eph. 5:22). “Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands” (Eph. 5:24). “Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord” (Col. 3:18). “As in all the churches of the

Press; 2nd ed., 1990), 258.

⁷¹“Neither does faith put the Lord God to the test by proceeding recklessly or foolishly into harm’s way without [rational] cause, that is, where love does not require it.” Man is supposed to have an “appropriate use of reason” in modifying how the body normally functions, so controlling the reproductive function (a divine purpose of marriage) is compared “to look[ing] both ways before crossing the street.” Rick Stuckwisch, “Pastoral Considerations of Contraception” in *From Taboo to Delight: Ethics of Sex*, ed. Gifford A. Grobien (St. Louis: CPH, 2017), 117.

⁷²Unpublished translation by Brandt Klawitter from Stephen E. Buckwalter, *Die Priesterehe in Flugschriften der frühen Reformation* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998), 161.

⁷³H. Albanesi, *Gender and Sexual Agency*, 3.

⁷⁴“Trans-exclusionary Radical Feminism,” *RationalWiki* (http://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Trans-exclusionary_radical_feminism).

⁷⁵W. A. Visser ’t Hooft, *The Fatherhood of God in an Age of Emancipation* (Philadelphia Press: Westminster Press, 1982), ix.

⁷⁶R. George, “Transgenderism, ‘Marriage Equality,’ and Liberalism’s Tragic Error.”

saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission . . . For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church” (1 Cor. 14:33-35). For the Spirit-led woman, submission is a willful act performed out of love for her Creator, as opposed to being forced upon her.

Men are to love and be the head of their wives in this divine hierarchy: “the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3). “Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7). All are to submit (none of us is equal to our Creator), but we are to do so where we have been assigned by God. Doctors, society, and parents do not assign sex. The Father who made all from nothing assigned us our body and our earthly role. Male and female are a physical, but also divine, calling in Christ.

Male and female roles revolve around marriage and public leadership, not external style or public image. They do not define the colors men and women may wear, or the minutest aspects of appearance. God’s gender roles are built around family. Even single people are ordered within the bigger picture of marriage. After all, young women appear “to be potential mothers,” because they were created to be such.⁷⁷ Biology, that is God’s creation of our bodies, must tell us how to live. Or else we do not confess that the Creator of all is Christ, our Lord and God. To deny the body and its biological function puts us in danger of making two gods: a good god for internal, spiritual faith and something lesser that is responsible for our bodies and their function.

No one lives up to their divine gender roles—we are all sinners before God. Despite outward shows of individuality, we all fall short of the holy law. If you do not have some dysphoria or confusion over your gender role, you have not been married or let Christ determine your station in life and use of your body. It does not affirm one’s personal sense of self to be physically joined to another sinner or to refrain from sexual immorality. The Christian hope is that Christ’s forgiveness of sins will lead to the deliverance of the body from all sin, not merely its outward modification.⁷⁸

The pagans of today search for meaning. But for Martin Luther “the ‘meaning’ of life was all too unquestionable . . . as it was for his whole age.”⁷⁹ God’s will—our earthly purpose—is written into our bodies. Many Christians acknowledge Christ’s creation of the world, but authority becomes personal and definite in our created body. This maggot-sack we carry around tells us how to live and what role we have in this world, which is passing away. Christ in His law, natural and revealed, legislates how we are to live.

Man was given dominion over creation and Eve was given to Adam as a helper. The New Testament continually goes back to this natural fact that Adam was made first to determine how men and women should relate to each other today: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve” (1 Tim. 2:13). The responsibility of leadership and the sacrifice of submission are not about stereotyped appearances. We should not categorize or genderize every aspect, decision, or fashion statement of people, as the world does (as if drinking wine coolers is truly feminine and smoking cigars is the epitome

⁷⁷R. Reilly-Cooper, “Sex And Gender.”

⁷⁸“No one told me I didn’t have to be trans to be dysphoric.” “Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey.”

⁷⁹C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 18.

of masculinity).⁸⁰ Biblically, there is much flexibility in gender expression, as long as marriage is honored and Christ's authority is respected in all the forms of headship He instituted. We are to act externally as we were designed according to God's will. Our discomfort, or dysphoria, dare not overrule Christ the Creator. Instead, take hope that in heaven our bodies will not function or appear as they do now.

The Christian View of Matter and Marriage

The transgenderist thinks he is escaping the problem by condemning and hurting his body, but he is condemning and hurting himself. He ultimately denies and sins against God and His good creation. Matter is not evil. It came by God's Word and is still good, despite being marred by sin. The substance of sinful man is still good, including the biological functions for which he was designed. Scripture reminds us that without the distinct biological workings of male and female, none of us would be here: "As woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God" (1 Cor. 11:12).

We do not value marriage, the purpose for male and female, and its fruit. If we valued children as direct divine gifts, equality of economics, public roles, and worldly status would dissipate.⁸¹ Any equality that denies the created purpose of the physical body and the holy distinction between male and female is false. Woman's external position of submission points to her value in marriage as man's helper and bringing forth life: "the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control." (1 Tim. 2:14–15). "Saved" here is not used apart from Christ, but underscores the supreme value placed on bare, created biology by the Creator. Normal biology is the Lord's will, since He made it and works through it still today.

The divine commandments revolve around God and His material creation. The fundamental location He puts us in to exercise love is biologically determined: you are a son or daughter, a brother or sister, a husband or wife (or potential one). Marriage is central to humanity and the very reason there is male and female. Without divine roles and the authority of male headship on behalf of Christ, marriage and all society crumbles. Transgenderism is the patent evidence.

It appears that feminists understand God's design better than the church. To a large extent, heterosexual sex is "patriarchal," because it reinforces our biologically inbuilt roles.⁸² The body simply shows forth God's glorious design, which sinners hate. "The nature of men is so formed by the word of God that it is fruitful not only in the beginning of the creation, but as long as this nature of our bodies will exist."⁸³ The bodily impulse and purpose to be fruitful is divine, since it

⁸⁰"I was able to identify femininity, not womanhood, as my problem and understand that these are separate." "Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey."

⁸¹Because God created it and man and woman are made for it, sexual knowing is intrinsically good and a driver to marriage not to be combated: I "was desperate enough to [transition] to foster delusions as a way to express permanent, indelible disinterest in reproduction and sexual functioning." "Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey."

⁸²J. Pilcher and I. Whelehan, *Fifty Key Concepts In Gender Studies*, 156.

⁸³*Apology to the Augsburg Confession* XXIII, 8; *The Book of Concord*, eds. R. Kolb and T. Wengert, 249.

was authored by God’s creative Word. The Christian should not see a difference between the Word of Scripture and the Word of creation revealed in the body.

What we confess about the body is a statement about Christ. He took on human nature, just as we have, but without sin. The Athanasian Creed uses the body-soul unity of man to describe Christ Himself: “For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.” Christ’s human nature healed and performed miracles, so it cannot be bad, evil, or a prison for us. To attempt to change our nature casts a negative light on the resurrection of Christ, who has not ceased being man. We were baptized in our bodies to “be united with him in a [bodily] resurrection like his,” so “we too might walk in newness of life” now in our bodies (Rom. 6:4–5).

The *Formula of Concord* explicitly rejects the dualist teaching “that Christ did not have a true human nature [consisting] of body and soul, as Marcion imagined.”⁸⁴ One cannot hate his own body and simultaneously see salvation in the physical body of Jesus. Mr. Eilers is cutting off as many of his distinctive male parts as possible, but strangely believes he will be resurrected as a male.⁸⁵ He claims, contrary to Christ’s creative action: “Male genitals simply were wrong on me.”⁸⁶ What we believe Christ saved and will raise, we should honor and respect as something holy—because that is what we, body and soul, are declared to be in His sight, through His own physical blood. “The body belongs as an integral part to man; soul and body make the complete man.”⁸⁷

It is not a coincidence that the weepy heretic Eilers has something in common with another demoniac who sliced healthy body parts voluntarily: “Night and day . . . he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones” (Mk. 5:5). To hate and attempt to destroy our own created bodies is evil. It is a denial of the goodness of the biblical Christ, through whom “the world was made” (Jn. 1:10). Some thankfully do not go through with transsexual surgery because they value the possibility of children, though sadly trans children are now given hormones that can make them permanently infertile.⁸⁸ All children (what adults start as) are material beings made in the image of God personally by Christ. They reflect God’s image and allow the Gospel to reach new ears. What we say about the reproductive function is a confession of marriage and its Author.

What Can We do?

Simply put, if we truly valued children as God does, these gender issues would go away. Children are not curses, but works of God that direct to the roles God setup for men and women in marriage. When boys are not taught to lead, they learn to submit in order to appease women.⁸⁹ We do not

⁸⁴SD VIII, 23.

⁸⁵“The Trials of Gina Eilers Part 1,” *Virtue in the Wasteland Podcast*.

⁸⁶“Sex and Sexuality questions” (April 23, 2017; <https://eilerspizza.wordpress.com/2017/04/23/sex-and-sexuality-questions/comment-page-1/>).

⁸⁷Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 4 vols., trans. T. Engelder, J. T. Mueller and W. W. F. Albrecht (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 1:501.

⁸⁸“Concern about loss of fertility.” “Female Detransition and Reidentification: Survey.” “‘If your teen may want to have a biological child, it’s important to look into sperm banking before treatment is started,’ Seattle Children’s Hospital advises parents.” Kersten, “Transgender Conformity.”

⁸⁹Hence the term playfully used by some men for their wives: swmbo, “she who must be obeyed.”

raise women as potential mothers, but as unisex beings, playing the same sports and learning the same skills as boys. But the culture is forcing kids into “really restrictive stereotypes” and “rigid gender roles from the earliest age”—ones that have nothing to do with what we were made to do.⁹⁰ Too much concerning gender is socially determined. These superficial sex-typed behaviors are what artificial transsexuals and homosexuals try to imitate.⁹¹ But for those who love Him, God the Father’s all-powerful authority neuters what society legislates. We should not want to be equal to other sinners, but holy before the Father in Christ and renewed by the Spirit.

Income does not determine worth and potential people are infinitely more valuable than any economic status. But these things must be taught and illustrated to the young. The world teaches only an overt sexuality of image and appearance, but without divine meaning or purpose. Divorce and sexual sins are not simply breaking the rules, they are breaking bodies and the one flesh union that God Himself makes. “For biblical people human love is never a disembodied reality, but rather expresses itself through the body.”⁹²

Marriage is not about love or feeling, but preset physical roles that require real sacrifice. Those not prepared or ready for their bodily role will be disappointed with marriage, because it does not fulfill the inner self. It is the Lord’s work and He makes it fruitful according to His will. Marriage, the lifelong union of two bodies, necessitates different roles for man and woman, if they are not to overlap and contradict each other. “Monogamy, with its implied headship of man over woman, is an order of creation which God established as a protective dam against the demonic powers of sin,” since it better to marry than to burn with lust (1 Cor. 7:9).⁹³

In marriage the two are no longer two, but one. This is the meaning and purpose of physical knowing in the marital duty, which God uses for procreation. God expresses Himself through the sex urge, which is a divine call *to* marriage (1 Cor 7). To speak of humanity is simply to speak about marriage, even for the celibate. To define a female apart from men or the female body is un-Christian. The world indoctrinates in its dualistic philosophy that the body must be reclaimed by physical mutilation or biological denial. So we must teach that the table of duties is still divinely given and is a part of our *Small Catechism* for the head of the household to teach.

The Image of God Renewed

The Christian cannot define himself. Whatever we do or imagine about ourselves is idolatrous—it does not please the Lord. Nothing from the mind or inside us can save us—it is condemned by God who says we must love Him and demonstrate our trust in Him by loving our neighbors, especially our biological ones. “Or do you not know that your body is . . . not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Christ redeemed not just your soul, but

⁹⁰“‘We Should All be Very Angry’: An Interview with UK Writer, Activist, and Critic of Pediatric Transition, Stephanie Davies-Arai” (Oct. 2015; <https://4thwavenow.com/2015/10/15/an-interview-with-uk-writer-activist-and-critic-of-pediatric-transition-stephanie-davies-arai/>).

⁹¹As if homosexuality is really about wearing pastel colors or positioning one’s hands a certain way, not the unnatural, and therefore, sinful act of sodomy.

⁹²R. Barron, “Bruce Jenner, the ‘Shadow Council,’ and St. Irenaeus.”

⁹³Fritz Zerbst, *The Office of Woman in the Church* (Omaha, NE: Mercinator Press, 2017), 58.

also your body through His own sinless body. The Christian identity is entirely Christ, and it is shown in living the baptismal life: one of dying to sin and being resurrected to new life in Jesus. Transsexuals think the struggle against their feelings is the problem, but the only salvation is in Christ's body that was sacrificed for the world.

Though baptism "is an external thing" and "external things [are said] to be of no benefit," there is enough in baptism to keep us occupied the rest of our lives.⁹⁴ To trust that we are righteous through baptism is to "put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph 4:24). It is not a self-chosen identity. Rather, baptism makes us new before the holy God—acceptable in His sight.

Now, since both, the water and the Word, are one Baptism, therefore body and soul must be saved and live forever: the soul through the Word which it believes, but the body because it is united with the soul and also apprehends Baptism as it is able to apprehend it. We have, therefore, no greater jewel in body and soul, for by it we are made holy and are saved, which no other kind of life, no work upon earth, can attain.⁹⁵

Body and soul will live forever through the external Gospel.

We are not supposed to be at home in this world, or even in our bodies. Temporal happiness is not promised, except by Satan. "I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members" (Rom. 7:23). But eternal life, true joy, and the final victory are promised us in the Gospel of Christ. As Luther said: "we must battle unremittingly not only against the opinions of our own heart, on which by nature we would rather depend in the matter of salvation than on the Word of God, but also against the . . . saintly appearance of self-chosen works."⁹⁶ Baptism informs us of our true identity as a new man before God. This means fighting against sin and the will's disobedience of God's law, revealed both through His commands and in our bodies. "To leave the old man unchecked is to fail to use baptism rightly," which is to resist Christ and His baptism.⁹⁷ Baptism is to be lived in until we are entirely dead to sin, so we can rise in a glorious body. This trust in Christ's victory for us will one day overcome all earthly frustrations.

We were made for faith and to partake of the divinity in our body (2 Pet. 1:4). "Man was created to be the most quiet dwelling-place of the holy Trinity."⁹⁸ This restoration of the image of God overcomes all pagan negativity towards matter. At the last day this same body we discipline will be raised a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44). It will shine gloriously, as the sun (Mt. 13:43).

We live in two different kingdoms, not the bodily and the mental, but between our sinful birth and spiritual rebirth. Christ calls us righteous. We are His righteous children, made by Him and also redeemed from sin. We value our bodies, not because of what they look like or what society says, but because they were made to be temples of the Spirit. Christ is our worth and newness. "I have

⁹⁴*Large Catechism*, Holy Baptism, 8; "We who are baptized thereby obligate ourselves for the rest of our lives to fulfill the meaning of baptism in all that we do and in everything that happens to us." Paul Althaus, *The Ethics of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 21.

⁹⁵*Large Catechism*, Holy Baptism, 46.

⁹⁶*Galatians Commentary* (1535), LW 27:57.

⁹⁷Jonathan D. Trigg, *Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 93.

⁹⁸Herman Preus, *The Doctrine of Man in the Writings of Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard* (St. Louis: CPH, 2006), 29.

been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20).

The Gospel renews us in the true image of God and makes us spiritually new and righteous through faith. “You ought to restore and keep the likeness of God in the spiritual part of your being, not in the mortal clay of your body”⁹⁹ Take your place in the marital state, body, and gender the Lord assigned to you in hope. “Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches” (1 Cor 7:17). Luther’s analogy, used to describe how the renewed Christian views the divine law, also works well for the Christian view of the body:

The “shutting up,” the confinement, of the Law should teach us to desire faith and to recognize the evil tendencies of our nature; for faith is a spiritual freedom, liberating only the heart. To illustrate: Suppose you were confined in a prison [or a body], where you were very reluctant to remain. Your captor might release you in either of two ways: First, he might give you physical freedom by destroying the prison and letting go you where you desire. Secondly, he might make you mentally free by bestowing many blessings upon you in this prison—illuminating and enlarging it, making it pleasant in the extreme, adorning it richly and to an extent rendering it more desirable than any royal palace, more to be desired even than a kingdom; and by so reconciling you to your surroundings, so altering your mind, that you would not, for all earthly possessions, be removed from that prison, but would pray for its preservation that you might continue therein, it being to you no longer a prison, having become a paradise. Would not the latter be preferable? The former liberation would leave you but a beggar, as before. But in the latter case, your mind being free, you would possess all you might desire.¹⁰⁰

Baptism is death to all sin, including all self-chosen callings and the idols of societal images. And how do we live as new creations in faith? Baptized and holy before the Lord in the body that He assigned and thoughtfully designed for His purposes. Amen.

⁹⁹Bernard of Clairvaux, quoted in: H. Preus, *The Doctrine of Man*, 49.

¹⁰⁰Sermon on Gal. 3:23-29. Martin Luther, *Complete Sermons of Martin Luther*, 7 vols., eds. John Nicholas Lenker and Eugene F. A. Klug (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000; vol. 1–4 published as *Sermons of Martin Luther: The Church Postils*, 8 vols. in 4 vols., 1995; vols. 5–7 published as *Sermons of Martin Luther: The House Postils*, 3 vols. 1996), 3.2:275. “I had to live with the reality that body parts were gone. My full genitalia could not be restored—a sad consequence of using surgery to treat psychological illness.” Walt Heyer, “I Was a Transgender Woman” (April 1, 2015; <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/04/14688/>).