

Family Discipleship

Conversation Guide

Gender

“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:27

Genesis 1 conveys many complementary aspects of God’s creation: day and night, sea and dry land, earth and sky—then finally—male and female. God’s word tells us there are two genders and each carries complimentary roles and responsibilities in His good design for humanity.

The way society views gender has changed in recent years. Whether someone is identified as male or female has historically been based on their biological sex, determined by chromosomes, anatomy, and physical characteristics. The term “gender” now refers to a person’s internal sense of self as opposed to their biological sex. Additionally, instead of seeing gender as binary (one or the other, either male or female), many people view gender as a spectrum with infinite options between the two.

Cultural issues related to gender are numerous and complex. Gender dysphoria is a diagnosable mental illness in which people may experience significant distress because their psychological experience of gender does not match their biological sex. Transgenderism is a more general term that includes people whose experienced or expressed gender does not conform to societal norms. For some people, gender nonconformity is a choice. For others it is a painful internal struggle.

The Bible does not directly address transgenderism, but it has much to say about gender. God created gender itself. He made Adam a man and Eve a woman. He gives commands and guidance to each gender for the benefit of families, humanity, and the Church. It is against God’s will when people act outside of His design and therefore sinful to live in a way that misaligns gender with biological sex. Gender confusion is a result of original sin and our fallen nature. This is one of many ways people are born broken.

Watch this video about compassion and hope for transgender people: 

Discuss: How are the various issues we see today around gender related to original sin?

In his book *Understanding Gender Dysphoria*, Mark Yarhouse states, “What most people who are gender dysphoric find in the church is rejection and shame--the feeling that there is something fundamentally flawed in them, that the flaw is their fault, and that if others knew about their gender incongruence, they too would reject them.”

Discuss: What are some things we can do to make the church a welcoming place for people who are struggling with gender-confusion?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we praise you for your beautiful design of humanity and the complimentary roles of men and women. Help us to be bold and compassionate followers of you, holding firmly to your truth and humbly sharing your grace with other broken sinners. In the name Jesus who saved us from all our sins, amen.

For more on this topic, see the following Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary senior thesis: [Are Transgender People Sinning?](#)

Links, videos, and quotes contained within this guide do not necessarily represent the teachings of Grace Ev. Lutheran Church and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).