

# OpenTheo

## Two Sexes, Created to Be Distinct

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### **Life and Books and Everything** - Clearly Reformed

Kevin reflects on the current cultural climate of gender expression and offers the explicit opinion of scripture as a rebuttal.

### **Transcript**

(upbeat music) - Greetings and salutations. Welcome back to Life and Books and Everything. I'm Kevin DeYoung and I'm reading my latest world article which is actually from a week ago.

It's taken a little time. We've been experimenting with different microphones and sound machines and... sound neutralizers. Anyways, hopefully this sounds good and we're trying to step up our game to make sure that the podcast and these recordings consistently sounds excellent.

And just something to look for in the weeks ahead, maybe sometime this summer, but we know there can be some confusion when Life and Books and Everything on the one hand. We have interviews and discussions with leaders and then these articles show up. It seems like people really benefit from being able to listen to these articles on the fly and in the car.

I know I do that with other resources. We continue to do that, but we are looking to split the two into different avenues. LBE will continue Life and Books and Everything as it originally was designed as conversations, interviews.

And at some point, probably this summer, we'll spin off another app that's... don't have a name for it yet, but it will be where I can read these articles. And so we'll give you more information about that and you'll need to... well, hopefully you would subscribe to that other place, but we'll keep the interviews in one place and we'll put the articles in a different place. This is called Two Sexes, created to be distinct.

The Bible shows sexual differentiation is not a light matter to God. During one of my summers as a college student, over 25 years ago now, I served as a counselor at a

Christian camp. One of our responsibilities, as counselors, besides keeping watch over a rowdy bunch of kids and teenagers and trying to teach them something about Jesus, was to come up with skits for the many large group gatherings during the week.

Some of the skits were supposed to be serious, but most of them were supposed to make the campers laugh. The camp director, an older man who has since gone to be with the Lord, told us there were two new rules we had to follow in putting together our brilliant sketch comedies. One, we couldn't do anything so gross that some poor camper might get sick.

And two, no cross-dressing. The first rule was disappointing, but made sense. You don't want to ruin a camper's week by doing some nauseating food gag.

But the second rule felt more inconvenient. After all, it was a staple of zany camp hijinks to have counselors dress up and outlandish outfits, especially men stuffing their shirts full to look like models of exaggerated femininity. The director didn't explain his rationale in great detail, and I don't think it is always wrong for people to wear silly clothes and silly contacts.

But I've often thought about the prescience in that older man's wisdom. He knew that we were performing for puberty-throttle teenagers. Even in the late 1990s, he could see the potential confusion that a week of cross-dressing skits might cause.

Likely no one would have been scarred or let down a path of sexual deviance, but he figured, "Why risk it? Why risk making teenagers feel even more insecure about their bodies? Why risk presenting drag, and I'm not sure we even knew the term at the time, as a fun playful option for Christians?" Maybe he was stricter than he needed to be, or maybe he was ahead of his time. Anyone with half an ear open to the news knows that we are living through a disturbing and disorienting cultural moment in which grown men and women don't know, or pretend like they don't know, the difference between men and women. Trans news is in the news every single day, whether it's Dylan Mulvaney drinking Bud Light or J.K. Rowling getting pummeled online or entertainers coming out as non-binary or influencers lecturing their followers about preferred pronouns or manly-looking "women" taking the prize in women's sports or drag queens, gyrating for little children or politicians lauding the ghastly disfigurement known as gender affirming care.

We are a wash in a world that refuses to believe that God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. Genesis 1.27. Thankfully, while the pastoral and personal issues are complicated, and they are, whenever we're talking about a real life human being in front of us, those genuinely struggling with gender dysphoria trying to make sense of themselves and their place in the world, those are difficult, they require lots of patience and pastoral wisdom. The biblical teaching is not nearly so complicated.

The biblical teaching on the trans issue is rather straightforward. Deuteronomy 22 verse 5, for example, states matter of factly, "A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God." I know, citing a verse from the Law of Moses can be fraught with difficulties. Why should we listen to this verse when just a few verses later, God's people are told not to sow with two kinds of seed, not to wear cloth of wool and linen mixed together? For starters, Jesus said he did not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them.

So before we throw out any Old Testament command, we should be prepared to explain how Christ has fulfilled the command and transposed it to another key. Likewise, if the sacred writings are able to make us wise for salvation, 2 Timothy 3.15, and if all scriptures breathed out by God and profitable, verse 16, then every part of the Old Testament has something to teach us about God's will for our lives. This is especially true for prohibitions in the Old Testament that are not given as case law or connected to the sacrificial system or tied to ritual uncleanness.

The fact that Deuteronomy 22 verse 5 prohibits an abomination suggests that this command was about more than good agricultural common sense. And actually, the laws about seed and cloth help us understand what the prohibition against cross-dressing is really about. God's concern is with confusion and mixture.

I've been preaching through Leviticus on Sunday and we see these same themes. This helps us make sense of some of these strange laws. The principle is what God has created distinct.

He created distinct for a reason to give glory to God and he doesn't want them, their distinctions to be eradicated. God's concern with confusion and mixture is reinforced later by the Apostle Paul. This same point in Deuteronomy 22 verse 5 is really Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 11 when he teaches it is shameful for a woman to appear as a man and for a man to appear as a woman.

Sexual differentiation is not a light matter to God. 1. Because he means for us to reflect his image as male and female and 2. Because he means for male and female to reflect Christ and the church. God created mankind in general as a sexual binary and he created each one of us as one or the other.

When we attempt to conceal God's design by dressing like men as women or by dressing like women as men or even worse by seeking to alter our sexual anatomy as men and women. We not only reject God's good plan for us, we undermine the order he has established for all. Humanity.

I'm not sure my camp director two decades ago saw all this, but we could sure use more of his spiritual instincts today. We know we now live in a mad, mad world when sanity

itself begins to look suspect.

[Music]

(buzzing)