

For My Transgender Friend

The Bible and Transgenderism

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Well, I have spent several weeks in the past couple of months teaching a series titled "The Bible and Transgenderism" and I have spoken that series based on the text of Scripture and from some very important presuppositions. You see, I am a Christian pastor and I am committed to the truth claims of the Bible and the truth claims of Jesus Christ, and I'm speaking this message today, this particular message today in an effort to speak to those who might identify with the transgender community in one way or another, and I ask you to hear me out as I speak and to give me the benefit of 45 minutes of your time and to listen with a receptive ear even if ultimately you would decide that you don't want anything to do with what I have to say. What do you have to lose to hear something outside of your worldview for just a short time?

You see, the Christian truth claims are mutually exclusive from the worldview of transgenderism. The two cannot be reconciled. They are in direct opposition to one another and I've explained all of that in prior messages, but I didn't want to leave it there knowing that some of you might hear those messages, I wanted to go a step further and to reach to you and to speak to you and to offer to you in a transgender world, in a transgender worldview what Scripture would say to you by way of clarity and hope for the future of your life and indeed the future of your eternity. You see, the Christian worldview, the worldview of the Bible is more than simply a critique of the sins of men and the failures of men. The worldview of Christianity gives clarity and it gives hope to transgender people even as it says that there is a truth claim that overrides and contradicts it, and it's that truth claim to you personally that I want to speak here today.

There's something very important to say and to recognize as I say these things, is that I recognize and I realize that transgender people are not all of one cloth. Transgender people are different from one another just as Christian people are different from one another. You are not a monolithic group. You're not all the same and it would be foolish for any person to speak to you in a way that assumed that you were all alike. Many of you have never even heard about Christ. You've never truly heard about him. I heard of someone recently who didn't even know what the word "sermon" meant. I've heard of others when someone was speaking to them about Christ and the cross, it was new to them, they had never heard of that, and I realize that there would be many who would identify with the transgender worldview who are in that condition of not even being aware of what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is and what it says to you.

I want to tell you who Jesus Christ is today and what his claim is on your life but that's not all. I mean, there are others in the transgender world, transgender community, if you will, that knowingly reject Christ perhaps based on prior negative religious experience, your experience of Christianity was negative and turned you away from it. We could all relate to that to one degree or another. It's not just the world that's sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, the church of Christ has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. I would encourage you to look past that and to look to Christ himself. But in that, I would also want to say this, that in some of your rejections of Christ, some of your pursuits of the transgender world, for some of you we need to be honest and to state clearly that your intentions are destructive, that your intentions are to destroy things that have been built up, that your intentions are wicked against even Christian people, and to you I would encourage you to reconsider and to think about the ultimate outcome of what you are pursuing because the judgment of God is a real thing and the judgment of God on those who knowingly reject Christ and are wickedly against him is especially severe. So I give to you a word of warning even as I speak here today. Yours is not one of ignorance, yours is one of conscious intention to be destructive of the created order that God has established. You're in a position of particular danger, my friend, but beyond that I would also say this, is that I recognize that some of you are truly hurting in life and your existence is miserable because of this conflict that you feel inside of yourself, perhaps you've even tried to or pursuing de-transition, trying to go back to that from which you came, and I would have you that hurt in the midst of your transgender experience to know this, is that a gracious God offers you the mercy of a lifetime, the mercy of eternity and it's that that I want to share with you in particular here today.

So there's multiple applications all coming in the same message and I'll just let you kind of sort out where you fit in on the scale of those things. What I ask you to do is to hear me out because I am truly speaking to you as a friend, even if you don't perceive me that way as we begin. I am speaking to your well-being. I am speaking to help you. I'm speaking to offer you the greatest gift that could possibly be offered to you and it's my privilege to be able to do that here this morning, and I would say that if someone has given you this message on an audio link or via CD or in a video link, they're trying to be your friend too. They're trying to minister to you in giving you this. So I encourage you to respond well to them as well.

You know, for many of you, I would recognize and imagine that it's hard for you to trust anyone because I know that many of you are in your position with a history of having been abused by people that you trusted, people that hurt you when you were vulnerable, and that's an awful position for anyone to be in. So what I have to say to you is a message of mercy from a gracious God who can be trusted no matter what anyone has done to you in the past. It was our Lord Jesus Christ who gave this gracious invitation that you can believe and trust when he said, "Come to Me all who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest." It's that rest that I want to offer to you here this morning.

You see, the Bible tells us that there is a Gospel and what the word "Gospel" means is this, it's a word that means "good news," and it's a word of good news to everyone in the

world that would hear it, the good news that God would bring to everyone that would hear his word with an open and receptive heart. The Gospel is described in the Bible like this where a man named the Apostle Paul said these words in 1 Corinthians 15, he said, "Now I make known to you, my brethren, the gospel which I preach to you." Then he went on and said what the Gospel was. He said that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. Now why would that matter to you? Why does it matter to anybody in this room? Why is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ good news? And that's what I want to explain to you and to help you see how it applies to you even within your transgender life and your transgender world, what it means for you and what its significance is for you. I believe that everybody ought to be able to hear this at least once in their lifetime, to hear such wonderful news, that you ought to be able to hear it at least once explained clearly in a sympathetic way from someone who on behalf of Christ is seeking your spiritual good. Why wouldn't you want to hear that and listen and be able to assess it for yourself?

Well, that's what we want to do here in the brief time that we have here this morning and we need to walk through why we even need good news because there is some bad news that is embedded in Scripture for all of us. And we'll start here with the first point that I would make to you, that I would share with you here this morning, it's that God is holy. God is holy. You see, the Bible tells us that God is the Creator of heaven and earth; that he existed before time began and everything that we see is a result of the direct creative power of God; that he spoke the worlds into existence and that this God who is sovereign over all, that he reigns, that he rules, that he's Master over all, that it's that God in whom we live and move and have our being. You can see that in the book of Acts 17, if you want to look it up later in your Bible. And there's something particularly unique about this God, something special about him that makes him different from us. The Bible tells us that this God is holy. He is morally perfect. He is good in an absolute sense, so good that he cannot tolerate anything in his presence that is inconsistent with his own righteous character. He's holy in the sense also that he is separate from man, he is separate from his creation. Even though he's active in creation, he's completely different and distinct from it and so great and holy and mighty is he that Scripture says, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory."

So this is who God is and this is the God in whom we live and move and have our being and you might ask the question, "What does that have to do with me? I don't even care about God. What difference does it make that God is like that? I want nothing to do with him." Well, my friend, it's not quite that simple for you. You see, this God is not only holy, he's also a judge and he is the final judge of the entirety of mankind, of every man, woman and child that ever lives, every man, woman and child will stand before this holy God. The Bible says also in Acts 17, it says that God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent because he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom he has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising him from the dead. You see, there is a real day of judgment that is coming, that every one of us will stand before this holy God and give an account to him for the way that we've lived. Judgment is coming to all. You, my transgender friend, will

one day stand before a holy God and he will require an account from you for the way that you've lived your life.

Now you might say, "So what? What do I have to fear? Why does this even pertain to me? I don't even believe in that God." Well, it's not quite, it's not quite that simple. The fact that you don't believe in him does not change the reality of his existence and it does not change or alter in any way, shape or form his intention to bring judgment upon all men; that all men will give an account to him and that includes you, and you cannot exempt yourself from that judgment by denying his reality. It doesn't work that way and because of that, my next explanation, my next point for you has a particular relevance for you. Our second point here this morning is that you are sinful. You are sinful and that's a problem. To say that you're sinful is simply a way of saying, we could say in readily understandable language, is that you don't meet the standard that God requires. Neither do I, frankly. You see, God requires perfection to enter his presence and anyone who lacks perfection will face his judgment. Jesus said in Matthew 5, "You are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." And my friend, my transgender friend, even if you're sympathetic to that worldview even though you don't practice it yourself, you need to understand something really important: it is precisely at this point that you have reason to fear because you do not meet God's standard of perfection. Scripture describes you in this way as it describes all men, not simply you in a transgender world but what is said to all men including the people that are listening to me as I give this message here today. You do not meet God's standard of perfection. You are not a basically good person that simply has a conflict inside of your soul. You see, the Bible says that your very nature, the very person that you are at the very core of who you are is depraved, is hostile to God, is dead in trespasses and sin, and that there is not a spark of righteousness in you just like there was not one in me in a prior time in my life. You see, the Bible says in Romans 3 that there is none righteous, not even one. There is none who understands. There is none who seeks for God. All have turned aside. Together they have become useless. There is none who does good. There is not even one. Their throat is an open grave. With their tongues they keep deceiving.

Now my friend, this is a tremendous problem for all of us and a particular problem for you as you're hearing me as I'm speaking directly to you, is that this is a biblical description of what you're like inside apart from Christ. You're not righteous. You don't understand. You don't seek for God. You don't do good. And your throat is an open grave. That's really serious. And why is that such a problem? It's a problem because God is holy, because God is a God of truth, of absolute truth and he does not allow any deception or any lies or anything like that in his presence, nor the ones who practice such things. So we find that there is a terrible problem here that is of consequence that goes beyond our lives.

You see, my friend, you see, God is an eternal God and a violation of his character, a sin against him is a matter of eternal consequence. It's something that requires eternal judgment, lasting, everlasting condemnation because it's not simply that we lie to one another and maybe we hurt each other humanly in the process, a holy God sees that and rejects it and judges it because it's a violation of the very nature that he is. And this

coming judgment as we all march down the aisle toward judgment with God, we're carrying a weight of deception, a weight of sin, a weight of rebellion and indifference to God that we're going to show up on judgment day. What do you expect to happen to you when that comes? That can't go well for you, my friend, just like it couldn't go well for anyone in this room that's listening to me as I say these things to you here this morning.

And Scripture makes this very very evident. It's a very burdensome thing to say things like this because I'm concerned not only for the glory of God but I'm concerned for the reality of your eternal soul as I speak these things, because the Bible says that those who die in sin will face eternal death. Scripture says in 2 Thessalonians 1, it says this, the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. This is pretty serious and it's not like God didn't tell us in advance about his intentions to judge the world.

Now my friend, I want to be really clear here in terms of what I'm saying to you. Your sin against God is more than being transgender, although it does include that. You see, it's a bigger problem than the way that we choose to live life or the way that we choose to represent ourselves before men, or even the way that we choose to think about ourselves. Those things are involved but it's a bigger problem than that and that's what you really need to understand. You see, your sin is the fact that you've lived for self, not for Christ. Your sin is that you have not loved Christ or known him. You see, you are like I once was, you're lost and your sins have separated you from God and that you are dwelling in darkness and you are moving forward to a judgment from a God that you do not know and who has declared his intention to judge people just like you. What an awful place to be in. It breaks my heart to think about it. It truly does. And you see, friends, I can understand the situation because I was there too. I was never transgender but I was a sinner rebelling against God, who had no use for God. I had no desire for his word, no desire for Christ. I was once lost also and so I speak to you as one who's been there in the realm of my own manifestation of sin, you might say.

So the question, then, is how is the Gospel good news? How is there any good news when we are like that and when there is judgment coming and we can't undo the consequences of our sin? My friend, let me tell you, you cannot work your way out of that situation. You cannot suddenly get religion and fix it because your account carries a debt of sin and guilt that you do not have the power to forgive. You can't forgive it. You don't have the power to wash it away. How then is there any hope? Where can we go for good news because I started this, right, there's good news here?

Well, let's get to the good news, then, the good news in the third matter that I would share with you this morning is this, is that Jesus Christ is the Savior. He is the Savior. The one and only. The Savior of the world. The only Savior that the world knows. There is no salvation for you in your transgender worldview. There is no salvation for you amongst your transgender friends. There is no salvation for you among those who would affirm you in your chosen lifestyle. There is no hope in that. You need to come to Christ to find

the only hope that can deliver you from eternal judgment, and the wonderful thing about the message of the Gospel, the wonderful thing about Jesus Christ is this, is that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners just like you, and sinners just like me, and sinners just like the ones that are hearing me in this room here this morning.

You see, the eternal Son of God took on the body of a man and thereby gave meaning to our physical flesh and our physical existence. The eternal Son of God became man so that he could identify with men and he had a specific reason for doing that. In grace and in mercy, he was coming to save people just like you from sin. You see, unlike all of us, Christ actually did live a perfect life. He lived a perfectly righteous life in complete obedience to this holy God and he did so as the eternal Son of God, he was God himself in human flesh and Jesus said in the Gospel of John 8, he said, "I always do the things that are pleasing to My Father." Do you know what? It's interesting when you read the Gospel accounts, God the Father said that in return to Christ as well. On different occasions he looked down from heaven and he declared in a way that many people heard at the time, he said, "This is My beloved Son. In Him I am well-pleased."

So God while he does not find anything pleasing about us, about you and me in our sinful condition, God is pleased with his Son Jesus Christ. He is pleased with who Jesus is and who Jesus was during his time on earth. So somehow in Christ we find that which pleases the God who is the judge, that God accepts in a way that he doesn't accept any one of us. And what did Christ do with that perfect life and why did he come down from heaven to live out a life like that? What possible sense does that make? If you're God in heaven, why would you come down and live here among people like us? Well, Christ came on a mission of mercy. The Bible says that it's a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost, the Apostle Paul said. He came to save the chief of sinners, he'd probably save you too and he's willing to save you too. And what did he do with that perfect life? Well, he gave it up. He gave it as a sacrifice. He gave it as a sacrifice.

You see, God requires perfect righteousness from anyone who would be in his presence and he requires that there would be an eternal punishment upon anyone that violates his law like all of us have done. And so we've got a double problem here. We've got a double problem in that we deserve judgment and we lack the righteousness that God requires. How are we ever going to get out of that dilemma? Well, the Bible says that Christ is the answer to that dilemma. At the end of his earthly life, he went to a cross, a Roman cross. He gave himself over to be crucified by wicked men and what Scripture tells us is that God orchestrated that so that that death of Christ could be a sacrifice on behalf of everyone who would ever believe in him; that he would pay in his own person the penalty that your sins required, that my sins required; and he shed his blood and offered that life up as a sacrifice to a holy God to satisfy, to quench, to turn away the wrath of God from sinners like you and me.

It's amazing. He didn't stay dead. The Bible says in 1 Peter 3 that Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust so that he might bring us to God. Christ died in place of a people. Instead of a mass of people, Christ died on their behalf, in their stead, on

their behalf, and suffered the penalty of God. In his infinite being, he absorbed that infinite punishment that your sins deserve, that my sins deserve. He absorbed eternal judgment when he died on that cross. You may have heard as you've read Scripture or heard people talk about it in times past, he cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" an indication of the alienation that he was experiencing from a righteous God, from his Father in a great mystery that we can't fully understand, but God somehow judged his Son and laid all of our guilt on him and he absorbed the wrath of God that sinners deserved.

He died. So dead was he that a Roman soldier thrust a sword in his side, blood and water came out. These soldiers who were experts in human death because they executed people all the time, looked at Christ and said, "He's gone. He's dead." And so they buried him in a grave, but this glorious Lord Jesus Christ didn't stay dead. On the third day, God raised him from the dead. He came out from that tomb. He came out with power. He came out with majesty. He entered into the realm of death and came out on the other side and, my friend, what that means is that his resurrection shows that he had conquered sin and death, that death which is the penalty for sin, Christ has paid it and it's paid in full and now that he lives forevermore you can know that the penalty is fully paid in Christ.

And what does God do? What is the message of the Gospel? God forgives all the sin of those who come to his Son in humble faith. God even goes further and declares righteous, he accepts as righteous those who come to his Son Jesus Christ in the way that I'm going to describe in just a moment. You see, our problem when I say "our," mankind's problem with sin has been addressed by Jesus Christ at the cross. God has provided salvation for those who believe in his Son and here's what this means for you, my transgender friend, for you friends listening in the audience here, it means that Jesus Christ has the ability to deliver you from the judgment that your sins deserve. He can give you new life. He can reconcile you to God. He can bridge that infinite gap between you as a sinner and God as holy. Christ is able to bridge that gap because he is both God and man and he has lived the perfect righteous life that God requires.

Jesus said in words that are more true than anything that your feelings could ever tell you, words that are more true than any human could ever say because Christ cannot lie, we know that what I'm about to say is true, to be accepted fully and unconditionally Jesus said this about himself, he said, "I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." There is reconciliation to God that is available in Christ.

Well, if you're like me, I want to know how to get that. If I am a guilty judged sinner facing eternal judgment from the hands of a holy God, I want to know how to get out from that position of condemnation, and I would have you know that reality as well, my transgender friend. That brings us to our fourth point this morning. We've said three things so far: God is holy; you are a sinner; Jesus Christ is the Savior. Now that Christ has died and rose again and ascended back into heaven, God doesn't just automatically forgive everybody. There must be a response to his Son and this is the critical bridge, this is the fork in the road, this is the pivot point of life for everyone who would hear this message, is that now there is a response that is required to Christ and our fourth point that

we would share with you is this, is that you must repent and believe in Christ. You must repent and believe in Christ. That is the call of God on you. That is the call of Christ on everyone that would hear.

Jesus himself said this, he said, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel," Mark 1:15. The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel. Well, what does that mean? If this is what Christ commands, what does it mean? That's kind of important. Well, it means that you must admit before God that you're a guilty sinner. You must flee to Christ. You must abandon yourself, you must leave yourself behind and go to Christ and ask him in humble dependence, claiming no righteousness of your own, go to Christ and say, "I leave my life behind. Save me! I come to You for this salvation of which I have heard, this salvation of which You have spoken in Your word. O Lord Christ, save me too!"

You see, Jesus said in Mark 8, he said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel will save it." My friend, we're talking about something that is far bigger, far transcendent, far more important than simply turning away from a transgender lifestyle or whatever the sinful lifestyle is that those of you in the room are pursuing. It's far more than that. It's turning away from the God-hating mindset that has defined your life, the God-ignoring mindset that has shaped your life, the self-centered, self-justifying way of life, and just coming to Christ as a guilty sinner, as one deserving God's judgment and saying, "I need a Savior and I have heard and I believe that You're the only One. O Christ, won't you save me too!" A response like that in your own words from the depths of your own heart to cry out to Christ like that, that's the response, a response that says, "I'll leave this world behind. I'll leave my life behind. I come to You and I give my life to You. By faith I believe everything that I've heard about You. I believe You. Save me! Make me Your own! I submit to You, Lord Jesus."

Now that's a pretty remarkable claim of assertion of authority that Christ would make upon your life. I realize that. But you have to remember who he is, my friend. He's God in human flesh. He's Lord. He's Master. He is King and therefore he has the right to speak to any of his creatures and command what he will. It is his sovereign prerogative as King to say, "This is what I require from you." It's the claim and it's the demand that he makes but what you've got to understand is that this is a loving and gracious King who is speaking this way. He's calling you to himself so that he would forgive you of all of your sins, so that he would cleanse you, so that he would bring you into the family of God, so that he would make you his own throughout all of eternity, and that the threat of eternal condemnation would be removed from your conscience and in its place would be instead a reconciliation with God, a peace with God knowing that all of your sins have been forgiven, that God has accepted you in Christ. This is the promise of the Bible. This is the promise of God.

Scripture says, maybe you've heard the verse, John 3:16 that, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but

have eternal life." You see, this is a command that comes with a promise attached. The command is, "Repent and believe in Christ. Receive Him unconditionally." The promise is complete forgiveness of all of your sins, complete welcome into the family of God, complete heaven forever with him. So my friend, in the name of Christ I call upon you to repent of your sins and to believe in Christ for eternal salvation. I plead with you, as the Apostle Paul said, I beg you on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God.

Now the reality of Christian salvation has a special meaning for you, my transgender friend. There's a special application of what it can mean for you as you leave behind this lifestyle that you had chosen. There's a special meaning. There's something new in its place that is the greatest earthly aspect that I could offer to you, that I could explain to you, and it brings us to our fifth and final point here this morning, is that in Christ you find a new identity. You find a new identity. You see, not simply for transgender people who turn to Christ but for all people who turn to Christ, there's a new reality that sets in. It is immediate. It is instantaneous. There is nothing that we do to earn it but there is a new reality and it's this and, oh, my friend, I delight to tell you this, is that as a Christian we no longer find our identity in how we feel about ourselves inside. There is a whole new identity that is given to us that is based on Christ.

And what is identity, anyway? What is it, anyway? It's our meaning. It's our purpose in life. It's what's most important to us. It's how we see ourselves. Well, my transgender friend, for a person that's in Christ, now it's no longer a matter of how I think about myself, my whole thinking is reoriented toward how God thinks about me and what God has done for me and who he is, and what the consequences of that are. You see, to be a Christian is to have a completely new identity in addition to having a completely new life. Christians are identified as those who are in Christ.

What does that mean? Why is that important? It means that we have a vital spiritual union with him. Scripture describes us as being placed in Christ; that we belong to him and that the life principle that animated Christ now animates us as well. And that determines our meaning and purpose in life. You no longer have to look at yourself and say, "What kind of person am I? Am I a male? Am I a female? Am I something else?" It's no longer like that anymore. We don't even think in those categories anymore in the sense that there is a transcendent way that we think. In Christ you think about yourself as this, as one that God loved enough to send his Son into the world to save, a sinner just like you; that in Christ you have an abiding friend, you have an abiding God who said that, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." A love that loved you enough to suffer on a cross and to take all of your sins and pay for them and wash them all away. A love like that is never going to let you go. It's a love that you can never be separated from. It's a love that carries you through life and all the way into eternity. That's what the love of Christ is like. Permanent. Unchanging. Eternal. Once you are reconciled to God, you can never fall away from him again.

And that determines meaning. That determines purpose. It's no longer about how you feel inside but objectively outside of you what God has done for you in Christ. And it is the richest, most wonderful thing that a human being could ever experience and ever know,

that I am on the receiving end of eternal love from a holy God and he in Christ has reconciled me to himself. What wondrous love is this, that a holy God would receive me, a sinner, like that? And the love that you start to develop for Christ replaces that prior love for self, and even replaces that prior hatred you have of the way that your body was made and changes your whole mind and outlook on life so that a Christian understands that, "I'm no longer defined by my failures, by my prior sins. I'm no longer defined by the feelings that I have inside even. I'm defined by something external to me that God has done, that God did for me, that God loved me enough to bring me to hear and to respond to." The Bible says, a Christian said in the Bible, the Apostle Paul again in Galatians 2:20, he said, "It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me."

You see, Paul found his complete identity, his complete purpose, his complete satisfaction in the direction and scope of his life in the reality that Christ loved him and gave himself up for a sinner like Paul, and that's a reality that everyone that comes to Christ finds and inherits as their own. It becomes ours. I'm not defined by my family, by my preaching, by my ministry, I'm not defined by any of that. That could all be taken away and the fundamental reality that is mine as a Christian, which is true of everyone that is in Christ, is that all, everything earthly could be taken away and the most important thing is still in place, the eternal love of God for my soul exercised by Christ, delivering me from my sin at the cross and now having brought me into his family, he'll keep me forever. The world could pass away, those who have Christ have not lost an iota of their identity in him.

So what does that mean for you, my transgender friend? Well, it means this if you would come to Christ, it means that you're delivered from that life that's based on your shifting feelings and the conflicts that you feel inside, you're delivered from that and you no longer live life based on those feelings of alienation, those feelings of alienation from the very body that was given to you at birth. Not your identity, not your gender, but the very body that was given to you, the alienation that you have felt from that is no longer the defining reality of your life. Instead, in Christ you go forward in life as a man as you were born, or as a woman as you were born, restored to the image of God, restored to the purpose of God in making you like that in your mother's womb. That's what David said in Psalm 139, "You fashioned me in my mother's womb." God made you to be the very body that you have and instead of living in conflict with that, as a Christian you can have peace because God has accepted you in Christ. You can live to glorify him and you can have this sense that, "I have been restored to what I was originally intended to be."

And friend, those who are in Christ think differently about their bodies. We don't look at ourselves and say, "I am someone different, or I wish I was someone different." We see something completely different. You see, in Christ because Christ has accepted you and Christ has forgiven all of your sin and reconciled you to God and your identity is in him now, that means that things of earthly consequence, their meaning is changed and you can accept your body as its give to you and understand why you have it. Why do you have the body that you have? Why do I have the body that I have? Well, as a Christian Scripture says that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit; that God in the person of the Holy Spirit comes and indwells you and your body becomes the dwelling place of the

Holy Spirit of God and it is through your body that he lives out his life in you. It is in your body that he changes you and shapes you and uses you in his service. That's in 1 Corinthians 6 where it also says to glorify God in your body. Your body now becomes an instrument by which you can glorify God and therefore takes on a much higher significance than anything about the transgender worldview could ever inform you to live your life by.

And one day, the Bible says, that Christ will even transform our earthly bodies. He will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of his glory, Philippians 3 says, meaning that this decrepit, decaying flesh that we have is one day going to be subject to a miraculous transformation when we die and enter into the presence of Christ. When he raises our bodies from the dead at a future point, we will be transformed so that we have a perfect, glorious body in which we feel complete harmony with God and harmony within ourselves because it will be the ultimate culmination of what God created you to be.

And so, my friend, my transgender friend, what I say to you is there is so much more to life than what you have ever known. There is so much more to God than you ever suspected. A God to be feared, for sure, but a God who will relieve those fears of judgment in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so what does Christ call you to do? He calls you to come out. He calls you to come out of everything about your life. To come out of everything that you've ever used to define your meaning and existence and to come to Christ alone, to come as a beggar saying, "Lord, save me! I leave this life behind. I come to be Yours and Yours alone," is the saving response.

And I suppose I should be very clear that you cannot save yourself. This is not a call for you to change yourself. This is a call for you to come to Christ. Christ is your only hope. Christ can do what you cannot do. Christ will receive you. Christ will change you. Christ will love you.

And so, my transgender friend, I'm bringing this to a close here, I call you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I call you to come out of your life and to come to Christ and to find salvation in him alone. You see, my transgender friend, and I wouldn't be surprised if you needed to listen to this another time or two to let it all sink in, it's kind of the nature of things, but my transgender friend, everything that I have said here on behalf of Christ is in the spirit of what he himself says to you in his word when he says in Matthew 11, "Come unto Me, you who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." My friend, that is a promise that you can depend on completely. Come to Christ. Come out of this life that you have known and come to Christ and he will save you. He will change you. He will make you his forevermore.

Please bow with me in prayer.

O God, we ask You to let Your light shine into the darkness, let Your light shine into the hearts of those who hear these words, and shine into their hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. Take these words which have been

spoken this morning, Father, and by the great omnipotent power of Your Holy Spirit use them for the purposes that you have ordained. In the name of Jesus Christ I pray. Amen.

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