

# Shall We Trust Transgender Medicine?

*The Bible and Transgenderism*

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We are in the middle of a series that I've been teaching for a few weeks now titled "The Bible and Transgenderism" and I have just one or two more messages after tonight before we finish this series. What we've done so far is that we have conducted a somewhat thorough study of the philosophical and biblical issues that undergird the whole phenomenon of transgenderism in our society here in this age in which we live. We've defined a lot of terms. I'm not going to review things tonight. It's all available online for your review if you choose to do so.

What we have shown without fear of contradiction, is that transgenderism particularly as an ideology, is a sin against God and it's not simply the matter of transgenderism in its personal expression by individuals who are conflicted about who they are in their own mind, we are particularly in this series addressing it as an ideology that is advanced by activists who want to overturn the nature of society itself. And so while this necessarily affects individuals who would identify as transgender, it is more particularly addressed at the ideology and we recognize that that has implications for those who have personal conflicts in their heart about what kind of person that they are. We are the friend of transgender people even though they might disagree with the things and they would certainly disagree with the things that we say in this series; we are not attacking them but rather trying to share truth with them as our Lord has commanded. So we declare what Scripture clearly teaches, that the ideology which centers truth in the heart of man is fundamentally fatally flawed, truth cannot be found in the heart of man, a person cannot know the truth about themselves by looking inward, they must look outside at what God has said, and those things are a matter of great biblical importance.

Now transition here after that little bit of review. I'm quite mindful that everything that we've said in this series is contrary to what our media and what our culture would say. If it ever falls into their hands, I expect them to have a conniption fit if it ever comes up in their minds. A part of what they would say in response to this series is that they would point to the medical field to prop up their ideology, the transgender ideology, and they would point to doctors and medicine as proof for the truth of what they believe and what they assert. And here's the question and I'll point to a few things that they say here, but I want to preface it with the question that I asked in the very title of our message: shall we believe transgender medicine when it speaks to these issues? And what I want to assert clearly to you as a predominantly Christian gathering tonight, is that we have an absolute

right to ask that question. We are not subject to those overlords, we are not subject to what they say, we are not intimidated by their efforts to silence all questions about it. That is not their prerogative to even forbid questions about what is happening in the realm of this so-called medical practice. We have every right to ask if their assertions should be believed and biblically speaking, the Bible tells us to do this. We are under command of God to discern matters. 1 John 4:1 says, "do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they be from God." And in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 we are told to "examine everything carefully." Now that is especially critical in this area of transgender medicine because, as I said earlier, what they practice intersects with the fundamental nature of God's creation and the way that he made humanity, and not only that, beloved, but it has massive consequences for their so-called patients. So tonight what we're going to do is we're going to make an extended application of biblical discernment, and that's the biblical justification for a message like this that I am making.

Now let's just back up and especially for those of us that are a little bit older in life, we have been conditioned over time to trust doctors implicitly. We are supposed to trust them. Ever since the days of Marcus Welby, MD and before, we've been conditioned to see doctors in a favorable light as those who have the knowledge and the desire to advance our best interests and to take care of us as they are required to do by the Hippocratic Oath. So we are supposed to trust them implicitly. Doctors spend many many years of difficult study, long hours of residency to study matters about the human condition, the human body, matters that are beyond the ability of most of us and certainly beyond our training. Doctors carry an air of authority as a result of that. They have an air of expertise and often their authority and their expertise is mingled with genuine compassion for us as they provide care for us, and we're grateful for that, and with their compassion and their training, they are often able to provide us with real help in the physical matters that come up in the course of life on this fallen earth, and they often, doctors often vindicate our trust, vindicate our confidence in them and they help us through life. So I want to be clear upfront that I'm mindful of being targeted in what I say.

With that qualification said, beloved, you and I should never forget that doctors are mere men. They are subject to error like the rest of us. They are subject to doing things with hidden motives that are not disclosed. And even though they have an air of authority and expertise, often they will bristle when they are questioned about their treatment or their proposed care for us. They don't like, some of them, they don't like to be asked questions but that does not mean that we are in any way doing anything wrong when we question and ask questions that we might be able to understand what it is that they are asserting and what they want to do to our bodies. They are accountable to answer those questions. Patients are entitled to give informed consent to whatever procedures are proposed to them and so those that are too proud to take questions have problems of their own. And going just a little bit further, the very existence of abortion doctors show us that the medical profession certainly has no monopoly on virtue. So we are within our prerogative and it is right and proper for us to ask questions to gain understanding of what is happening in medical fields that intersect with our interests.

Now what does all of that have to do with a study, what I've just said, what does all of that have to do with our study on transgenderism? Well, let me start it this way. There is an interactive map at the website for the Human Rights Campaign, a well-known LGBTQ organization, and that map is titled "Clinical care programs for gender expansive children and adolescents," and at that map when I last looked at it two or three weeks ago, it now lists over 50 medical facilities in the United States and Canada which will treat, I use air quotes around the word "treat," they will treat children as young as four years old who supposedly have gender identity issues. Four years old, some no doubt would go even younger. So you have doctors bringing children under their care, so-called care and I'll just qualify that, you know, anytime I say "care" in this message, understand that I'm using it in the sense of so-called care, bringing children who aren't even old enough to determine their own diet and to treat them because these children are supposedly presenting with gender identity issues and trying to help children at different stages of their development to determine whether they are a boy or a girl, whether they will live according to their biological sex or whether they will pretend to do something else.

Now when you have 50 medical facilities doing that, and as I've said Cincinnati's Children's Hospital is one of them on the list, it is proper for us to examine even the medical profession carefully to examine their truth claims. One of the things that you will find if you go to the website of Cincinnati Children's Hospital on their Transgender Unit, is that they have a list of recommended resources for people to follow up. Almost without exception, perhaps without exception, it is filled with material that is written by pro-homosexual groups. There is no balance even to the recommended resources that they do. Again and again and again you find this agenda-driven material that they promote as recommended resources, there is absolutely no balance in it whatsoever. That should cause thinking people to take pause and to consider whether we should actually just implicitly believe every assertion they make simply because, and this is really important for those of us later on in life, simply because a doctor tells us that that is what should be the case.

Now all I want to say is this, beloved, and to help you think through these things rightly. You and I will be better able to stand for the truth, you and I will be better able to help other people who come across our path dealing with these kinds of issues if we have a more mature understanding and approach to the role of medicine in the transgender debate and tonight I want to give you three warnings, three warnings that will caution you from simply implicitly believing whatever you're told by a doctor on these matters. There's not a lot of biblical content here tonight. We'll go to some Scripture at the end, but I just want to give you a perspective on three warnings that need to be heeded that would caution any reasonable thinking person from plunging into the depths of this and handing over the future of their life and the future of their body to these people who approach them with pharmaceuticals, knives and an invoice.

Now let me give you three warnings on why we should all be cautious about this. 1. Let me give you a warning from history. A warning from history. Dr. Benjamin Rush lived from 1745 to 1813 and he is hailed by some as the father of American medicine, and he certainly had a distinguished career. Dr. Benjamin Rush, r-u-s-h. Dr. Rush was a signer

of the Declaration of Independence. He was the treasurer of the United States mint. He was also the most celebrated doctor of his generation so he was a man of no small accomplishment and recognized as a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a man who was involved in the very founding of our country. So this was a man of prestige.

Now during the course of his medical career, Dr. Rush was elected physician at the Pennsylvania Hospital and he was appointed as Professor of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania. By one estimate, he probably instructed more than 2,250 prospective doctors during his academic career. Physicians and layman throughout the country as it existed at that time constantly sought his clinical advice for patients that were under their care or for medical conditions that they were facing. He was Dr. It, you might say, at the pinnacle of the profession.

Now you read a little bit about Dr. Rush and you might ask this question: what was Dr. Rush's primary means of medical therapy? Hold your ears. One medical historian tells us this, that Dr. Rush promoted the elimination of blood and other bodily fluids as the only means to heal. Copious bloodletting, administering drugs to induce diarrhea, salivation, sweating and vomiting, and drawing out bodily fluids by blistering the skin served as the mainstay of Dr. Rush's approach. Did you get that? Should I repeat it? This is Dr. It. This was the man above all doctors who was training the medical profession in the country at the time and his primary means of medical therapy involved eliminating blood from the body, producing fluid-losing responses of diarrhea, salivation, sweating and vomiting, and blistering people in order to supposedly purge their system of whatever was ailing them. And this medical historian writes: Dr. Rush's bleed, blister and purge gambit remained the backbone of American therapeutics for almost 100 years and had a devastating impact on Civil War soldiers as well as contributing to the loss of life of President Garfield after he was shot on a train platform on the East Coast.

Beloved, Dr. Rush's therapies seem shockingly backward and ignorant to our ears today, don't they? This is unthinkable medical treatment in our day and age and understanding and the advances that have been made in medicine in the ensuing 200 years. But that's not the point. That's not the point and you must follow the logic here and what the concern is here. At the time, Dr. Rush's medical treatments were the prevailing medical opinion of the times. This is what doctors believed was the way to treat people who had any kind of physical illness. How could that be?

The medical historian goes on and says this and I quote, "There was a simple explanation for this seemingly bizarre therapeutic behavior. The scientific ignorance of the times was overwhelming and the great mass of poorly educated physicians remained blindly devoted to old medical routines." My point here for this evening is this, is that something may be the prevailing medical practice of its day but that does not make it right and that doesn't even make it intelligent.

Let me give you a more modern illustration because I realize quoting something from that time period might seem to be a little bit of special pleading using the past to critique the present, and so let's go to a modern source. Let me give you a modern illustration of the

point about warnings from history against implicitly accepting whatever a medical professional tells you to do. Let me give you a modern illustration from an impeccable source in medical literature. In 2013, the Mayo Clinic published an article titled, it's kind of a long title so I'll quote it and let you know "end quote," the Mayo Clinic published an article titled and I quote, "A decade of reversal, an analysis of 146 contradicted medical practices." The authors of that article reviewed 10 years of articles in the New England Journal of Medicine. Among other things, the Mayo Clinic authors did this, they reviewed 363 articles that tested the existing standard of care in a variety of current medical practices. Okay, so let's just back up. I know we're used to talking in biblical terms here. This is outside of what we're used to hearing so I want to make sure that you get it. You have the Mayo Clinic that's doing a study of what other people have written in the medical field. The Mayo Clinic doctors went to a standard medical journal, one of the leading medical journals of our day, the New England Journal of Medicine. Within the context of the New England Journal of Medicine, they reviewed 363 articles that had been published over a period of 10 years. In those articles, those articles were testing the existing standard of care for a variety of medical practices. Okay? 363 articles. This is within the past decade as I'm speaking here tonight. What did they find as they reviewed those 363 articles? This is deflating. In 146 instances of the 363, 40%, the existing practice was reversed, meaning that it was found to be ineffective or no better than a lesser therapy that was available. So you have the standard of care, what's considered the standard of care for a variety of different medical practices, reviewing hundreds of them, finding 40% of the time that that standard prior existing standard of care had been reversed and found to not be proper medical treatment.

The authors of the Mayo Clinic article, this is the Mayo Clinic, I'm not making this up. This isn't me critiquing medical things that are beyond my ken, I'm quoting the Mayo Clinic, and the authors of that Mayo Clinic article state this, quote, "Although there is a weak evidence base for some practice, it gains acceptance largely through vocal support from prominent advocates and faith that the mechanism of action is sound. Later, future trials undermine the therapy but removing the contradicted practice often proves challenging." So doctors continue to do that which is contradicted because it's what we've always done. It's Benjamin Rush, part 2. This is what we've done for 100 years in Benjamin Rush's day, why would we change it? Today there is this accretion of medical practice continued perhaps without justification, perhaps not even being effective.

The conclusion of the article says this, the Mayo Clinic article, it says, "The reversal of established medical practice is common and occurs across all classes of medical practice." In other words, beloved, the mere fact that something is being done today doesn't mean that it's right, doesn't mean that it's proven, doesn't mean that it won't be contradicted in the future. If you want to, if this stimulates your interest at all, let me recommend something else. Do a Google search sometime with the search terms "debunked medical practices." Debunked medical practices. You will find all kinds of once standard medical treatments that are now considered repulsive. Beloved, doctors may be doing something today but that doesn't make it right. It may not even be intelligent.

How does that apply to our topic tonight? Beloved, transgender medicine one day will eventually go the way of Dr. Benjamin Rush. The practice, the accepted practice of amputating healthy flesh and administering pharmaceuticals to people who have a mental condition will one day be looked on with the same shock that you and I look back at the bloodletting of Dr. Rush and all of his students at the beginning of our day. Will you and I live to see that day when this statement is vindicated? Maybe, maybe not but we are right to take warning from history to learn not to defer to those people who perhaps don't deserve the deference which they assert.

Beloved, let me tell you, let's bring in a little of the biblical background here. I realize how easy it will be for a critic to dismiss what I'm saying because I'm not a medical doctor. That's why I've been careful to quote doctors in what I'm saying here thus far. But beloved, what you and I have to understand is that our standard of truth is the word of God and the word of God came to us in part through highly educated men. Moses was educated in all the ways of the Egyptians. Paul was a leading Jewish scholar of his day before his conversion. But there were also very humble common men in the course of biblical revelation. The prophet Amos was a shepherd. Several of the apostles of Jesus Christ were fishermen. That did not mean, their background did not disqualify them from being agents of the revelation of God and in our day as we rely on the word of God, we are not disqualified from exercising discernment simply because we don't have medical training. We're entitled to use a sense of sanctified common sense to look at things and say, "This is ridiculous and I don't have to wait 100 years for a medical writer to say so in order to make that determination today." Now look, we wouldn't even be talking about this except for the fact that lives are at stake, truth is at stake, and all of this transgender medicine is driven by an ideology that is utterly without foundation as we've established in our past messages.

So, yes, we take warning from history in our effort to exercise discernment on these matters and we refuse to believe and submit simply because a doctor says so. Secondly, let's take some warning from ignorance. Some warning from ignorance. You'll see what I mean as we go along. Now the whole premise of transgenderism is that a person can have the brain or soul of one sex and the body of a different sex, so that their mind is of a different quality, of a different essence than what their body itself is. Now the fact of the matter, just let me give you a summary statement and then unpack this, there is no reason to believe that. There is no reason to believe that a person can have the brain of one sex and the body of another. There is no objective factual basis for that assertion as I plan to detail to you in what I'm about to say. Now as our conflicted transgender friends hear this, they would say, "But you don't understand," and I'm happy to concede the fact that a person may have a strong feeling or deeply held conviction that that is their reality, that they are in the wrong kind of body for the kind of person that they are. I concede that people feel that way but I do not concede that that is an actual objective fact.

Now activists would have you believe that there are settled medically recognized causes for gender dysphoria and for transgenderism. It's a bluff, which is another way of saying it's an unbridled fiction, and you can tell that they know that it's fiction by the fact that they try to shut down anybody who raises objection to it.

Now you deserve and you're entitled to some support for those conclusions that I have just made. Drs. Lawrence Mayer and Paul McHugh published a report in the fall 2016 issue of a journal known as the New Atlantis, a journal of technology and society. The report by Dr. Mayer and Dr. McHugh was titled "Sexuality and Gender: Findings from the biological, psychological and social sciences." Now you say, "Who are these guys? What's their credibility in the field?" Dr. Mayer is Scholar in Residence in the Department of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. McHugh was the Psychiatrist in Chief at the Johns Hopkins Hospital for 25 years with a long history of dealing with issues surrounding transgenderism. These guys have the chops to speak about that which they have written in this very lengthy report. I think the total report, if I'm remembering correctly, runs to like 140 pages or more as they address many issues in addition to transgenderism.

After a 27 page discussion of various medical and biological issues surrounding gender identity, Dr. Mayer and Dr. McHugh conclude this and I quote, it's lengthy, I want to let the doctors speak for themselves. "The hypothesis that gender identity is an innate, fixed property of human beings that is independent of biological sex, that is that a person might be a man trapped in a woman's body or a woman trapped in a man's body, is not supported by scientific evidence." Continuing the quote they say, "In reviewing the scientific literature, we find that almost nothing is well understood when we seek biological explanations for what causes some individuals to state that their gender does not match their biological sex. Yet despite the scientific uncertainty, drastic interventions are prescribed and delivered to patients identifying or identified as transgender. This is especially troubling when the patients receiving these interventions are children." I'm continuing the quotation here, "We are deeply alarmed that these therapies, treatments and surgeries seem disproportionate to the severity of the distress being experienced by these young people, and are at any rate premature since the majority of children who identify as the gender opposite their biological sex will not continue to do so as adults."

Let me just summarize in a little bit of layman's terms what I just read to you. They said that the idea that transgenderism is something that is produced by biological causes is not supported by scientific evidence. They say that nothing is well understood when trying to explain transgenderism by biological means. And yet despite this lack of understanding, despite this lack of evidence, doctors are nevertheless proceeding with these drastic interventions in a patient's treatment using, and using my terms here, using pharmaceuticals, knives and with an invoice in the other hand, to do drastic things to the bodies of these people, to these children, when there is no scientific basis to do it, and Dr. Mayer and Dr. McHugh express their deep alarm at this.

It's interesting, I'm not quoting from the article here, but in the introductory material of this article, they said this and this was telling. I'm summarizing, giving you the gist of what was said. They said in our conversations with other doctors, we found that there are other medical professionals that share our concern but they are not willing to go on the record for fear of the consequences of disagreeing with LGBTQ dogma. They're afraid they're going to lose their jobs, lose their university positions, and so they won't even say

what they professionally believe to be true because they prefer their jobs over saying what their own study proves to be the case. Now Dr. McHugh, Dr. Mayer were sympathetic to their colleagues. They deferred to them in saying that but the gist of it was there are other people who believe what we're saying in this report but they won't put their names on it because of the consequences that it has for their professional careers. This is hardly a profession that deserves our admiration for its courage.

Now beloved, if you are interested in a more in-depth examination of these matters, let me recommend a book to you which gives a far broader base of documentation for the things that I'm saying in this message here this evening. The book's title is this, "When Harry became Sally." It's written by an author named Ryan Anderson. It is a courageous book. It is a meticulously documented book. It is not a Christian book. I think the author may be Catholic. He's certainly not writing from the Christian worldview that we've presented in this series. I will say this, it documents the medical, legal and social issues surrounding transgenderism with a rare courage in this environment which goes beyond what even many Christian writers have shown in the matter.

Shall we believe transgender medicine? There are many reasons to say no. The warnings of ignorance caution us, vast ignorance is the foundation of this realm of medical practice and, beloved, I don't hesitate to say once again it will eventually go the way of Dr. Benjamin Rush.

Now thirdly, let's consider the warning from results. We've seen a warning from history, we've seen warnings from ignorance, let's consider the warning from results, and here I just want to give you some background information, some statistics. How broad is the transgender issue, the transgender phenomenon? A recent estimate suggests that less than 1%, to be precise 0.6% of US adults identify as a gender that does not correspond to their biological sex. In other words less than one person in 100, which makes it odd, doesn't it, to think that this is driving so much of public discourse? It makes it odd, doesn't it, that the House of Representatives found it necessary to pass an Equality Act to enforce these transgender delusions upon the American public?

Well, let's ask some questions here and I'll just give you some, a little bit of brief Q and A with answers attached. All of this is documented. I won't refer to the providing source here this evening. Let's ask this question: is the transgender lifestyle one that is safe and secure and healthy? Well, here's one way to answer that, the rate of lifetime suicide attempts across all ages of transgender individuals is estimated at 41% compared to under 5% of the overall US population. 41%, more than two out of five attempt suicide in the course of their life. Why on earth would anyone encourage someone in a lifestyle with that kind of outcome? Why would we not be trying to help people away from that which is proven to be self-destructive? There is no acceptable answer to that question.

What about these children who supposedly identify as transgender, what becomes of them? And it's just becoming increasingly common to see this. As far back as 2012, the Washington Post published an article titled "Transgender At Five," giving the course of a child in the Washington, DC area's supposed claim to being transgender starting from the

age of two, and this is held up and reported and it's just becoming increasingly popular, so much so that children are even becoming talent show objects in a transgender identity. But leaving those extremes aside, what can we say about children who express feelings of transgenderism? Well, the statistics show that between 80 and 95% of children who express a discordant gender identity will come to identify with their bodily sex if natural development is allowed proceed. In other words, they outgrow it 80 to 95% of the time. If we just let them grow up, it will not prove to be a lifelong problem.

Dr. Mayer, who incidentally, this is important for his credibility, Dr. Mayer identifies himself as someone who supports equality for the LGBT community. He has no agenda against people in the homosexual community. He supports equality for them in a way that we would not support. So he says, "I'm on their side." He says this about children and transgenderism, he uses the word "iniquitous," meaning it's sinful. I quote, "The notion that a two-year-old having expressed thoughts or behaviors identified with the opposite sex, that notion that he can be labeled for life as transgender has absolutely no support in science. Indeed, it is iniquitous to believe that all children who have gender atypical thoughts or behavior at some point in their development, particularly before puberty, should be encouraged to become transgender." He says it is sinful, it is iniquitous to think, to believe that children who express some kind of atypical thoughts should be labeled and then entered into the transgender protocol and set on a course that changes the entire outcome of their lives. Why would you do that when 80 to 95% of them will simply outgrow it?

Now why would Dr. Mayer say that? What do these doctors do to these children and as they become adults? And there are various stages that are used. There is a process that goes through here and I just want you to understand this ever so briefly. In younger people and even with adults, the process starts with what is called social transitioning. What that means is that people start to dress differently, they'll go out in public dressed as the opposite sex. They'll start to use a different name. Harry wants to be called by the name of Sally now, and so there's this social transitioning before anything medically is done. Now from there with younger people what has happened is that puberty-blocking drugs are administered to stop their normal physical development. I don't know how that works chemically but that's what they do, so that a girl doesn't develop female characteristics and the males don't develop their male characteristics. The idea is you just put a pause button on it so you administer these drugs that interfere with the body's normal development. What follows after that, after a period of time, is that they will administer hormones, cross sex hormones so that biological males will develop female characteristics or vice versa, and eventually cosmetic surgery is done where healthy flesh is amputated in some ways, and in other ways, I'm trying to be very delicate here, through the use of skin grafts and other kinds of cosmetic devices, they will create artificial appendages to help this person identify with what they think is their gender in their mind. Well, so you do surgery and from what I'm told, what I've read, you know, you can have some pretty impressive outward appearances. It looks kind of real. It's not real and it doesn't function in a real way, that's so important for you to understand, but it looks real.

What's the long-term consequence of sex reassignment surgery? What happens to these people after they do it? Sex reassigned individuals are about five times more likely to attempt suicide and about 19 times more likely to die by suicide than the general population. Understand beloved, that these so-called sex reassignment surgeries or whatever the current name is, they change the terminology all the time, it's hard to keep up with even the labels that are used, but what you have to understand is this, is that that process does not change a person to the opposite sex at all. Dr. McCue says, "Transgendered men do not become women nor do transgendered women become men. The best they can ever hope to become is counterfeits or impersonators of the sex with which they identify." The biology is hardwired in the DNA and Ryan Anderson's book goes into this in great detail. You can make a few cosmetic outward appearances but it does not change the biological wiring of the body. So you cannot change somebody into the opposite sex, you can simply participate in the delusion and the deception that's being practiced.

Well, in addition to the suicide, you could view it from this way. This is all part of the warning from results. Do people ever regret sex reassignment surgery? Beloved, there is an entire subculture crying out to have a voice in the discussion conveniently ignored, but there is an entire subculture of people who have pursued gender transition only to de-transition and to seek to return to living according to their biological sex. Chapter 3 of "When Harry Became Sally," devotes 28 pages to telling the heartbreaking stories of several such people. They went the gender transition route and they wanted to come back, and so they tried to get their life back after years of this medical stuff, and one can only imagine the heartache that they feel realizing the years that were squandered aided and abetted by the doctors who treated them. I'm hoping that there rises up a whole phalanx of qualified, skilled, medical malpractice, plaintiff attorneys who will put this whole industry out of business. Well, public propriety forbids me from describing the surgeries or some of the ways that these dear people have suffered at the hands of their doctors, but just to say this, the results are a cheap counterfeit for God-given biological sex.

Now beloved, we're about out of time here this evening. I want to tell you that I have left out a lot of information that I think is really important but there is just a tolerance level for this that we've certainly approached here this evening. I believe that vast harm is being done by transgender medicine and I believe that it will all eventually go the way of Dr. Benjamin Rush, and that day cannot come soon enough. All of this, beloved, now having addressed outside the walls of our church and coming back inside now, why have I subjected you to all of this uncomfortable information? In my judgment, it's been my judgment and I've been preparing this for many many months, it's been my judgment, my considered judgment that this all has been necessary to help establish a critical spiritual point for you. You and I as believing Christians, you and I as the people of God are right to stand on God's word against the world in this realm, and as a church and as families and as individuals, we cannot capitulate to the pressure that this realm would bring upon us, to change us, to silence us, to intimidate us, to keep us from even having a voice in the discussion. We reject all of that and I believe that clarity leads to courage when you're standing alone.

Turn to the book of Joshua as we close here. When Joshua stood on the brink of the Promised Land, God said to him knowing that Joshua was going to encounter serious military battles with the residing nations as they went in to take possession of the land that God had promised to his people, God said to Joshua in verse 6,

6 Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. 8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Those are the same words that Christ said when he commissioned the church, "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age." And beloved, I know that most of you agree with me when I say I fear the Lord God Almighty far more than I fear transgender medicine doctors, but that comes with a call to make a clear decision.

Look at Joshua 24. We have to be clear in our minds and we have to be resolute in our commitment to the truth. We cannot straddle the fence on this one. In Joshua 24:14, we're faced with what the world says, we're faced with what God's word says as we've seen over the prior four messages, we've seen the warnings from history, ignorance and results that cause us to not accept the claims of transgender medicine, now here in verse 14 we see the spiritual heart of it. Joshua 24,

14 Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. 15 If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

I see this transgender issue in those terms. We see the god of this world which has more than one meaning and I mean them both, we see the God of this world and what the world is doing, we see God's word, beloved, I want to fear the Lord here, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." What about you?

Let's pray.

*Father, we commit these very difficult matters into Your hands. How distasteful it is to feel like it was necessary to discuss them. Father, we pray that You would guide us,*

*protect us, and help us. We pray for those that have been harmed by transgender medicine. We pray, Father, that You would hasten Your grace in the message of free forgiveness in Christ, Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ calling them out of their misguided world to Himself for eternal life. We pray that you would hasten the delivery of the Gospel to those who are in this confusion and have been affected by these things. We pray boldly, Father, that there might be those medical professionals within this realm who would repent, who would say, "What have I done? O God!" And they would cry out for forgiveness and disown the abominable practices that they have inflicted upon others. And Father, we pray for families and individuals that we know, perhaps facing these issues now, perhaps facing them in the issue, we pray that we as a church might somehow find the wisdom to handle these things in a way, Father, where we could be known as those who speak the truth but speak it in love and speak it in a way that Your Spirit is pleased to bless in the days to come. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

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