

God's Guardrails on Gender

Transgenderism

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Preached on: Tuesday, November 5, 2019

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Well, we return this evening to our series on the Bible and transgenderism. You could ask the question why spend time studying something like this went to the best of my knowledge it is not immediately affecting our congregation at the present time, there are no transgender issues certainly that we're dealing with as an elder board, why would we deal with this. R. B. Kuiper said this in his book, "The Glorious Body of Christ," at page 228, he said this, he said, "It is important that the church in instructing its membership apply the teachings of Scripture to the peculiar conditions and pressing problems of the day." And so we recognize that this is an issue that has come upon our shores like a spiritual tsunami, as I've said in the past, and it's important for us to be able to know how to respond to it and to understand it from a biblical perspective. I would say this for the benefit of those of you that maybe are just kind of dropping in in the middle of it, is that all of the messages are somewhat interconnected and I can't take the time to repeat and rehearse all of the context of what's gone before, just know that what's said tonight is in a much broader context of teaching that's taken place over the past two or three weeks.

What I want to share with you tonight I've titled "God's Guardrails on Gender." I like the alliteration of that, God's guardrails on gender. God created gender, God designed sex and gender expression, you might say, and set down in Scripture what his expectations are for that. God is the Creator of men and women generally, he assigned a binary dual sexuality to humanity, and in the act of conception forms each person in its mother's womb to be male or female and that is expressed by their biological sex. Gender is not something that you get to choose, it is assigned to you by God at conception and is identified at birth. We've covered all of that and I'm not going to go into it anymore than to review that little bit of summary here right now. What we want to see tonight is that God as revealed in Scripture has established protection for sex and gender. In other words, he has set boundaries upon it which men are not to violate and the fact that it is being violated in our day and age in very open ways and embraced even by society that does not claim to be transgender personally, is a most serious matter as you will see from the teaching that lies just ahead here.

There's something that needs to be said and we start with this fundamental premise: any thinking about any issue of any significance must start with God and his nature and his character. We cannot begin to think properly about this whole issue of gender and transgenderism unless we start with the reality and the character of God. God is the

Creator of heavens and earth, he is the Creator of humanity, he is an eternal Spirit, he is great in his sovereign majesty, he is omnipotent, he is omnipresent, he is omniscient, he is a good God, he is a loving gracious God, but what I want to focus on specifically this evening is this and I'm breaking tonight's message down into two parts and we'll start tonight with this matter as we consider God's guardrails on gender, we're starting with this first point which we'll handle rather briefly, it is the high truth about God's holiness. The high truth about God's holiness. We must understand that God is holy, that he is majestic, that he is separate and he is a God to be feared. In Proverbs 1:7 it goes so far as to say that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and in the whole spectacle of transgenderism, the fear of God has been utterly lost and that has tragic consequences of eternal magnitude for those that do not repent. So we need to come back to God's holiness as we think about this matter of gender. The God who created humanity, the God who made humanity male and female, the God who assigns sex in the mother's womb, is a God who is holy, he is high and he is majestic, and we are reviewing some things that we've taught over the years in this brief portion of tonight's message.

What does it mean that God is holy? Well, first we can say this, the theologian Louis Berkhof defines it in this manner in his standard textbook on theology, he said and I quote, "Holiness is that divine perfection by which God is absolutely distinct from all His creatures and exalted above them in infinite majesty." Holiness, when we speak about the holiness of God, in part with that means is that he is utterly separate from all of his creation. God is separate. He is distinct. He is majestic in an infinite way, and in that way he is different in essence from us. He is uncreated and eternal. We are creatures and finite. He is sinless. We are sinful. There is a separateness about him that is intrinsic to his being.

If you would, turn to the book of Exodus 15. It's always nice and good and important to have a Scripture text to attach to things like this when you are making theological assertions. In Exodus 15:11, Moses after the deliverance of Israel through the Red Sea said this, he said,

11 "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?"

He says, "God, who is like You?" And the implied answer is, "No one is like You. You are different from everyone and everything else. There is no one like You." In the context of what Moses was praising him for, "God, there is no one who can part water and bring a nation through on dry land and then have the waters come back and converge so that their enemies are drowned in the sea. No one does that, God, except You. You are separate. You are distinct. You are above all else. You are infinite in power and in majesty." So God is separate from all else.

Secondly, we can say this about God's holiness. Let me just read because it's a little bit hard to find the book and I don't want to spend the whole law of time here, from the book of Habakkuk 1:13, the prophet said this about the character of God. He said that,

13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor.

Habakkuk 1:13,

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And in this we see that in God's holiness not only is he separate and distinct, God's holiness means this in addition, again quoting from Berkhof, "Holiness means that God is free from all moral impurity or sin and is therefore morally perfect." So God is separate and he is morally perfect and that aspect of his essence and nature means that he is to be respected, he is to be feared, he is to be obeyed and we are not to trifle with him no matter how much comedians stand in pulpits and make us try to think something different and diminish God by their small way of handling his word.

Now let me just take this a little step further here. For us as men, us as members of humanity, for us as mankind, God's holiness as it pertains to us is revealed in his moral law. God's word, the 66 books of the Bible and the 10 Commandments in particular, reveal his moral will for men. God's holiness and as it is to be understood and respected and obeyed by men is revealed in his word and specifically in the 10 Commandments. There is absolute truth and absolute morality revealed in God's word. That is a direct contradiction of the moral relativism of our day. We realize that men reject this and all that we can say in response is that we reject the thinking of men. What else can we say? This is, as I've said throughout this series, we are talking about a direct collision of worldview and ultimate truth claims and we as Christian people cannot back away from that. We have to step up to the front lines of the battle and assert God's truth in dependence upon his Spirit and in explanation of his word. We can't avoid this and we don't want to. We're not trying to make friends with the world. Scripture is clear that the one who wants to be friends with the world makes himself an enemy of God, James 4. It takes my breath away even as I'm standing here talking about these things to you, the severity and the reality of these things is breathtaking and so in dependence upon the Spirit of God, we press forward.

Now stay with me here, this is all just kind of an unfolding of some basic theology here. In the 10 Commandments, in God's word, God demands exclusive worship of himself as the only true God. "You shall have no other gods before Me," Scripture says, the 10 Commandments say, and so God requires and demands exclusive worship as the one true God. In the second table of the 10 Commandments, Commandments 5 through 10 in summary fashion, the 10 Commandments require the honoring of parents, loving others, "You shall not commit murder," and sexual purity, among other things, it forbids theft and dishonesty and coveting. So there is this searching moral dimension of the 10 Commandments and when we understand them at any basic level, we understand that we all fall short of God and of his glory and of the holiness that he requires. That's why we need a Savior. That's why we're profoundly grateful that Jesus Christ became a curse for us on the cross, because God's word condemns us and places us under the curse that is

attached to those who disobey his will, and Christ in love went to the cross, bore that curse, became a curse for us, that those who believe in him might be forgiven, and ultimately the 10 Commandments point you inexorably to the cross of Jesus Christ when you are convicted the law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ.

Now beloved, with all of that little bit of background said, here's what I want you to understand. I'm making simple points here tonight. God has revealed his will and he has revealed it in Scripture. As part of the revelation of his will, he has expressed his judgment on those things which contradict his holiness. He has expressed his judgment on the rebellion and ungodliness of men. Romans 1:18, "The wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness." Comprehensive statement. As you read through Scripture, you find that God attaches that judgment and that declaration of condemnation on specific matters as well, and there is a word that is used frequently, particularly in the Old Testament, that we're going to focus on here, to express God's view on some particular sins of men and it is the word "abomination." I'll take you to a few passages in just a moment, but the word "abomination" is used to describe those things which God considers detestable, repulsive, or loathsome. Abomination is used for those things that God considers detestable, repulsive or loathsome. It refers to those things that are repugnant to God and fall under his judgment, and this is all under the point that we're making here about the high truth about God's holiness. What we see and what we're about to see is that God's holiness has consequences and it is incumbent upon us to take his holiness seriously and to adopt God's perspective on the things that we see in the world around us rather than letting the world influence us.

Beloved, when it comes to the matters of revealed morality, let me give you a hint: what you want to be in this discussion is you want to be on God's side here. You want to think God's thoughts after him. You want to have a godly mind and a godly mind is a mind that is shaped and informed by the revelation of God in Scripture, not what is popular in the world, not what is politically correct, not what is going to win you friends with people who have no regard for God. We have to think God's thoughts after him and when you go into Scripture, you find what God says about many different things.

So turn to the book of Leviticus with me, if you will. I'm going to show you four passages briefly that show the word "abomination" being used in God's revelation of his moral will in the foundational first five books of the Bible, the five books of Moses, the book of the law which is intended as just as it was written by one author, these five books of the law are meant to be read together as a unit, to be understood together. And in Leviticus 18:22, you find this word "abomination" in reference to the sin of homosexuality where it says,

22 'You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. [It goes on and says] 23 Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion.'

This idea of abomination, it is detestable before God and Scripture declares that in no uncertain terms.

Turn over to the book of Deuteronomy in chapter 7. We're doing a little bit of a brief word study on this word "abomination" because it is important for what comes in the second half of the message. In Deuteronomy 7:25 you see this word "abomination" being applied to the sin of idolatry. In Deuteronomy 7:25 it says,

25 "The graven images of their gods you are to burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, or you will be snared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God."

Now beloved, we are just building a context. We're putting together a matrix through which to see things. The sin of homosexuality is called an abomination. A separate sin, in a sense a different kind of sin, the sin of idolatry is called an abomination to God.

It goes on and you can see how some of these things are classed together. In Deuteronomy 12:31 it says, in fact, let's start at verse 29 as we see false worship and this additional sin tied together in it. Deuteronomy 12:29,

29 "When the LORD your God cuts off before you the nations which you are going in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, 30 beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?' 31 You shall not behave thus toward the LORD your God, for every abominable act which the LORD hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods."

Child sacrifice mingled with idolatry falling under the condemnation of an abomination before God. These are the grossest kinds of sins that even in today's society, to some extent, abortion certainly takes the, blunts the edge of what I'm about to say, but even in that, we're talking about things that would even repulse our society, what's left of it in terms of thinking about sacrificing children by fire to a false God, I mean, we're just appalled at the thought of that, aren't we, and God expresses his condemnation of it in his word.

One more in Deuteronomy 18:9 through 12 as Moses is giving instruction to the children of Israel, shortly before they enter into the Promised Land and take possession of the land that God had given to them, he said to them this,

9 "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations."

Detestable things being a translation of the same word that is elsewhere translated "abomination."

10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. 12 For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you."

The nations were being judged as God drove them out from the land, in part it was not only a deliverance of the land to Israel, it was a judgment on the nations for doing these detestable things in the sight of God. So beloved, what we see is this, is that nations lost their existence over these things and therefore God obviously takes them seriously.

One more passage that perhaps hits a little bit closer to home, that's a little bit more in our personal kitchen since none of us are sacrificing children to false gods here tonight. Look at Proverbs 6:16 and you see more respectable sins falling under the umbrella of that which is an abomination to God. I use "respectable sins," of course, in an ironic way. Proverbs 6:16,

16 There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him [detestable, loathsome, repulsive in the sight of God]:
17 Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, 18
A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, 19 A false witness who utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.

All of these things being a detestable, repulsive, loathsome thing in the sight of God.

Now beloved, let me just sum this up as we talk about the high truth of God's holiness. God abhors these things that fall under the label of an abomination. God abhors your lying lips and your lying tongue, and the reason in part that he hates it is because God is a God of absolute truth. There is no deceit in him. It is impossible for him to lie, so that every dishonest word and misleading action that comes out of our lives is a contradiction and a violation of that which is of the very essence of God and he abominates it. It's frightening to think about. And God abhors all of these things and he judges those who do them. One resource said about these matters, these acts of disobedience were sure to bring God's wrath on those who perpetrated them.

So God is high and holy. He has expressed his holiness in his word and in his moral law, and it has consequences and God works it out in detail in the things that are now widely accepted and approved and endorsed and defended within our society, and yet the approval of the world does nothing to change the perspective of God on them, and as the people of God, as those redeemed by Christ, forgiven of our sins through the redemption that is found in Christ alone, it is our responsibility, it is our duty and it is our privilege to understand these things from God's perspective rather than simply swimming along

downstream with the world. Christians are not meant to be fish that just swim downstream and go with whatever the existing current of the day is. We must know God's word and we must respect it and we must believe it and we must adopt it as our own perspective on these things lest we be found in sharing in the approval of that which God hates.

Now we're supposedly in the middle of a series on transgenderism, right? What does all that have to do with transgenderism, you might ask. Well, let's go to point 2 and talk about the hard truth about transgenderism. The hard truth about transgenderism. We must remember what I've been saying all along through this series, is that the holy God of whom we have been speaking here this evening, that God himself created the distinction between male and female and he embedded it in the human race. It is shown in our external anatomy. It is hardwired in our DNA and that is a result of the creative work of God, and as we've said, he creates individual males and females in the womb. If you're a male here tonight, it's because that's what God created you to be. If you are a female here tonight, that's what God intended you to be. And as I think about people that live in the midst of gender confusion and gender dysphoria and they want to be the opposite sex of what they were created, I want to tell you there's something that's absolutely liberating. This is a beacon of light into that darkness is to realize that your bodily anatomy is not an accident, it has a purpose from God, it was given to you by God, that therefore you don't have to try to change and be somebody that you're not no matter what you feel inside, it's not about changing your body to conform to the confusion and stress that's in your mind, it's about conforming your mind to what God has made you to be and that's revealed in the physical structure of your body. I'll have more to say about that in a week or two.

For now, what does the Bible say about transgender behavior? That's the million-dollar question for this evening and for that I want you to turn to Deuteronomy 22. Deuteronomy 22:5. And again, beloved, I don't mind telling you it makes me tremble to read these things in light of what is happening all around us and in light of what we have said already this evening about the high holiness of God. Deuteronomy 22:5,

5 "A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God."

This is frightening to think about in terms of the headlong rush that society is making in the opposite direction. God's word condemns cross gender behavior in the strongest possible terms. He abominates it. It is repulsive to him. It is loathsome to him. It invokes the reality of his judgment.

Listen carefully here, listen carefully here as I'm speaking, trying to anyway, speaking with great precision in what I'm about to say. God condemns any effort by a man or woman to intentionally present themselves in a way that their culture interprets as the opposite of their biological sex. Let me say that again. It's a complex sentence. God condemns any effort by a man or a woman to intentionally present themselves in a way that their culture interprets as the opposite of their biological sex. This is very serious.

Men or women who intentionally, and I think the word "intentionally" is important here, men or women who intentionally blur the distinction between male and female or blur their own biological sex by the way they present themselves, are committing acts which invoke the judgment of God upon them. This is no minor matter. This is not child play here. This is the view of God on things.

Now the question is why is this so important to God? What's a few pieces of clothing? Why is this so important that it would be classed by the same word with homosexuality and idolatry and child sacrifice and deceitful lips and all those things that we looked at before? Why would this fall under that condemnation? Well beloved, here's what I want you to see, this is part of the guardrails that God has put on gender. We're not to go off this road and to jump over the cliff on these things because, beloved, it pleased God to establish a created order for humanity and the pleasure of God was that humanity would be distinctly male and female, therefore anything which starts to blur that line, that violates what God established in creation, is fundamentally going against his very created order and the moral order that he has established for mankind to live by. It is an attempt to hide, disguise and disfigure that which God declared to be very good when he created mankind male and female. Genesis 1, right? God looked at all that he had created and said, "This is very good." The whole spectrum of transgenderism comes along and says, "I think I'll change that. I'll erase this with my ideology, with my activism or with my personal behavior." It is to walk up to the throne of God and say, "I'll do creation my way, not Yours." It's breathtaking in its implications.

Now as long ago as the nineteenth century, commentators saw this point, the nineteenth century commentators of the famous commentary on the Old Testament, Keil & Delitzsch said this about Deuteronomy 22:5 and I quote, they said, "The divine distinction of the sexes was to be kept sacred in civil life by the clothing peculiar to each sex. The immediate design of this prohibition was to maintain the sanctity of that distinction of the sexes which was established by the creation of man and woman, and in relation to which Israel was not to sin. Every violation or wiping out of this distinction was unnatural and therefore an abomination in the sight of God." This is unnatural. The wiping out of this distinction is an abomination in the sight of God. The sanctity of the distinction between the sexes was to be respected and I would say for those of you that have been with us, this is simply an outworking and a consequence of the things that we said when we taught on the biblical view of sex and gender two Sundays ago. All that we said there about the biblical view of gender from creation, from Christ and at conception, those three things that we talked about, that's the positive nature of the teaching, you could say, that's the biblical perspective on it, that's how we see it and recognize it. What we're seeing tonight is the fact that God takes that seriously and establishes guidelines that are not to be violated so that that distinction of the sexes would be respected, that it would be recognized, that it would be honored by men.

More recently, Walter Kaiser in his book "Toward Old Testament Ethics" said this about Deuteronomy 22:5, echoing what's already been said here tonight, and I quote, "The maintenance of the sanctity of the sexes established by God in the created order is the foundation of this legislation. The tendency to obliterate all sexual distinctions often

leads to licentiousness and promotes an unnaturalness opposed to God's created order. This provision in Deuteronomy 22:5 aims mainly at one's clothes as an indication of one's sex." The language there can be interpreted even more broadly than just clothing but we're focusing on clothing here just to keep things simple for this evening. The point for tonight, the thing for you to see is that God's word, the holy Scripture confronts the spirit of our age. One other writer says and I quote, "We are to signal our recognition of both the God-given differences between men and women and our grateful embrace of our own biologically given gender." This is what we're to do and so people with male biological anatomy should not be presenting themselves as women, creating an act of deception by which people will mistake them for the other kind, for the other sex, and likewise with women.

We're so quickly getting accustomed to this that we're losing any sense of moral outrage at it and that's why it is so important for us as church, for you individually to understand and to grasp these things that we would not be sucked into this, and that as God gives us opportunity and platform, that we would be prepared and equipped to speak these kinds of things in love when the occasion requires it. I'll go back to what Al Mohler said in the title of his book on these and other issues, "We cannot be silent." We have a unique responsibility as those who have been born again by the Spirit of God, who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, who belong to Christ by right of redemption. It is our responsibility, it is our obligation and it is our privilege, beloved, to speak forth on his behalf what his word says about these things with clarity and without compromise. That is what we are to do no matter what people think about us, no matter what the consequences may be, we leave the consequences to God on these things. If it costs us our livelihood, it costs us our livelihood. How could it be any other way in our perspective? If our salvation cost Christ his blood and his life, what price would we pay in a grateful response to the blood of Christ? What price would be too high? What price be too unfair for us to pay to be loyal to the one who went to the cross on our behalf? We have to think about these things rightly. We have to think about them clearly. Our primary loyalty is vertical to our Lord. Everything else is secondary.

We live in a day and age where for the first time it is medically possible to alter your outward body to try to conform to transgender desires. People administer puberty blockers to kids, cross sex hormones, and eventually even plastic surgery to try to attach things to women or to amputate things from men in an effort to go along with this transgender mindset. Now look, this is all a delusion. There is no such thing as a real sex change. That does not happen. It cannot happen but we have all of these medical things that people can pay a lot of money for and which the transgender medical industry makes a fortune off of, we have all of these things medically that can be done that go beyond cross-dressing and alter the appearance even more, further the personal delusion and to further the deception that is perpetrated on the people around. All of that simply to ask this question, beloved: if in Deuteronomy 22:5 cross-dressing is an abomination to God, I ask you, how much more serious is medical intervention to alter gender identity? If these doctors, as I like to say, these doctors with knives in one hand and an invoice in another hand, knew what awaited them for tampering with God's design in creation, surely they would tremble at the thought unless their greed and their love for money just so

overwhelms them that they cast all fear of God aside. But there is an accounting coming for these things.

Beloved, we have gone as a society far beyond cross-dressing. We celebrate children who claim to be transgender. We put them on television. CNN recently featured one and to give a question at a Democratic Presidential Debate. This is insanity and children who are not old enough to drive, old enough to vote, old enough to drink, are given drugs, hormones and eventually have healthy tissue amputated from their bodies because at an early age a boy says, "I think I'm a girl." A girl says, "I think I'm a boy." And what children's hospitals including Cincinnati's Children's Hospital does in the name of transgender medicine, I'm talking about all of this next week, it is abhorrent, it is despicable, and someone needs to say something against it and I'm grateful for the men on whose shoulders I stand that have laid the groundwork for me to be able to say the things to you that I'm saying here tonight.

The point for this evening is this, is that God's word rebukes that revolt against creation and it doesn't matter how widely accepted it is. It doesn't matter how many billions of people are Catholic or how many billions are Muslims or anything like that, none of that, we don't count noses in order to determine truth. It doesn't matter if there's a whole industry that's doing this. That says nothing about whether it is true and whether it is right. Those questions are answered by God's word alone. So all of this transgenderism that we see going on around us is under the judgment of God because it is a fundamental rebellion against the nature of truth, God's word, and the fundamental order that he assigned to creation and to life. My friends, this is no minor matter. God must vindicate his holiness against this assault.

Now if everything that we've said tonight is true, and it is, if God has placed these kinds of guardrails on gender and he takes his creation of humanity so seriously and is so intimately involved in it that he determines the sex of every baby that is conceived, why then does God tolerate this? Why does he tolerate this assault on his created order? Well, I want to give you a couple of answers to that particular question. First of all, just in general, one of the consequences, one of the outworkings of this, of God's delay is this, is that we are getting a picture before our very eyes of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. We are getting an idea of how dark sin is, how black it is, that when it takes over the mind of a society, that society will abuse children in advance of their interests. Children who have no idea what they're talking about become pawns in a greater game played by adults to further their agenda. And just briefly to warn you and to caution you that the activists, the doctors who get involved with this gladly separate your children from you and will interrogate and question your children deliberately excluding the parents from the process. This is stated on the website of Cincinnati Children's Hospital as the way that they do it. Parents are continually being removed from the decision-making process. That's how wicked it is.

But why does God allow this? Well, everything that I was just saying there gives us an idea, you get a sense of how utterly wicked and dark this is. This is really really bad and when we see, when the fullness of this sin is manifested, when God eventually brings his

judgment on it, beloved, I want to tell you in advance that there will be no questions about the justice and the righteousness of God in bringing judgment down upon it. When his justice is displayed against this, everyone will have to acknowledge that is righteous because the darkness and sinfulness of sin will have been so manifested that there will be no arguing about extenuating circumstances. The rebellion of man will be manifested in all of its great ugliness for all to see.

But there's a gracious side to this as well and what I would say if somehow this message falls into the hand of a troubled, beleaguered, transgender individual, for all that I've said here, I speak as your friend not as your enemy, though that may seem hard to believe. Someone has said the one who tells you the most truth is your best friend, the one who hides truth from you is not a friend to you at all even if they act nice to you and tell you what you want to hear. The doctor who hides the cancer diagnosis when it is eminently treatable is not doing you any favors.

Why does God delay? Oh, turn to 2 Peter. God's glory will be vindicated in his judgment but it will be shown even more in the grace that he shows to some that have practiced and taught and advocated transgenderism, just like God has been gracious to you in your sin. Why does God wait? Well, it's not for a lack of ability to deal with it. It's not because he approves of it. No, no, God has gracious purposes in his delay. 2 Peter 3:9,

9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

God waits while sinners sin against him knowing that in his timetable he has an intention to bring the Gospel to some; that he intends to save some out of the fire, as it were. He intends for men in that darkness to come to repentance, to come to salvation in Christ, and if he exercised his judgment now, some that he intends to save would be lost. And so he waits. He does not exercise his judgment prematurely. He doesn't exercise it in accordance with the provocation against his holiness. He acts in his way and he acts in his time with a spirit of patience toward sinners, that those who are invited to Christ might have time to come. What a gracious God! What a wonderful God he is, that men who violate the very heart of his holiness are even as they are violating it are on the receiving end of grace as he waits, as he delays, as he withholds his judgment.

God delays his judgment because he would call people to Christ that they might be saved and not experience the judgment that their sins deserve. This is a universal principle. This goes far beyond transgenderism, this is why you are saved here tonight, right? Didn't your sins deserve immediate judgment and God was gracious to you? God waited. God didn't exercise the demands of his holiness against you, instead he was gracious to you. He worked in someone's heart to bring the Gospel to you. The Holy Spirit opened your heart to believe and you were saved from your sin. Well, take what God did to you personally, Christian brother, Christian sister, and realize that that's his intention in delaying his judgment in these matters of transgenderism as well. His delay is an

expression of grace, grace to allow time for his word to go out, grace to allow men time to repent.

But beloved, a day of judgment is coming. Look at verse 10 of 2 Peter 3,

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness [speaking to Christians], 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

Christian friends, as his people we recognize these things, we trust his promise to keep us and we grow in holiness today.

Look at verse 13,

13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,

You and I, we trust him. We guard our hearts and we grow in grace together.

Look at verse 17,

17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

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