

## Review of *God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say about Gender Identity?*

*God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say about Gender Identity?* Andrew T. Walker. Expanded and Updated Edition. The Good Book Company, 2022; ISBN 9781784986940. 16,99 USD.

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In the last 10 years, and especially in the last few, the issue of the gender identity/transgenderism came to the forefront of the Western culture. The Evangelical Church also felt compelled to respond to this issue via public speeches, articles and books. One great response is the *God and the Transgender Debate*, book written by Andrew T Walker, an Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Public Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

This book is written in a very simple language, mostly for the lay members of the Church or, as the author says, “for busy and thoughtful people” (p. 8). For example, the author finds it important to explain the difference between a “heart of stone” and a “heart of flesh” (p. 90) which is one of the simpler and more known bible metaphors for people who do not love God and have hearts of stone versus those that do love God and have hearts of flesh.

The book starts with a very short explanation on how we got to where we are, by mentioning relativism, individualism, Gnosticism and post-Christianity (ch. 2) and some basic description of the trans issues like the difference between sex and gender and gender dysphoria (ch. 3). Then it goes into a biblical response to these issues.

The response is very familiar and reminiscent of the books that provided answer to the issues of homosexuality. It is also very general and can be applied to any defense of the biblical worldview. The world has a Creator. The creation was very good, and God created humanity as male and female. “A person with male anatomy is reflecting...that they are created a man. A person with female anatomy is reflecting that she is a woman” (p. 50). The Bible and even our reason are clearly showing that men can not be anything

else and same for the women, and their role is to complement each other and to “bring children in the world” (p. 59).

It is clear that the author will not accept any of the transgender arguments about the fluidity of gender or the need to transition from one sex to another because of gender dysphoria. He, however, does not question the gender dysphoria. He accepts that people have that issue and, while he doesn't think that people should transition from one sex to another, he is inviting the church to be loving to these people. And this is really very strong part of the book. His genuine care for those people comes out from almost every page. He also gives some very good advice on how to communicate and help those people with gender dysphoria even though he does not accept sex changes and even claims that if a person who changed their sex becomes Christian, they should start thinking about changing back (ch. 10).

The book ends with two additions. One is a vocabulary used to describe the transgender community and other is an advice on when and how to use the preferred pronouns when talking to members of the transgender community.

All in all, this is a good book that gives a solid Biblical advice, even though sometimes oversimplified and repetitive, that can be of great use for the everyday Christian who has a busy life, but wants to be informed and fair on this issue, and also to be able to respond thoughtfully, truthfully, and, what seems to be something very important for the author, with Christian love.

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