

# Gender Identity & The Church

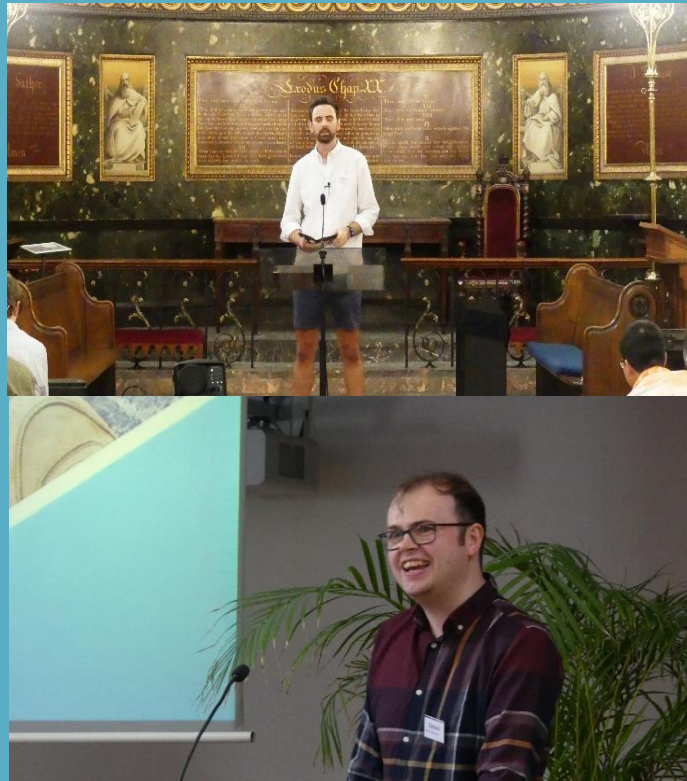
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# What is True Freedom Trust?



Pastoral Support



Speaking & Teaching



Articles & Resources

# Gender Identity & The Church

- **Defining our terms**
- **This cultural moment**
- **A Christian understanding**
- **A pastoral approach**

# Defining our terms

**“Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.”**

**- Source: ‘What does trans mean?’ – Stonewall, March 2019.**

# Defining our terms

- **Dysphoric/non-dysphoric trans**
- **Experience or ontology**
- **Transition Experiences (Social, Medical, etc)**
- **Emerging gender identities**
  - **Non-binary**
  - **Genderfluid**
  - **Agender**

# This cultural moment

- **1931** – Dora Richter (Berlin) becomes one of the first known people to undergo gender reassignment surgery
- **1964** – Academics establish the term ‘gender identity’ to propose that someone’s gender identity is not always the same as their biological sex
- **1970** – Corbett vs Corbett court case
- **2002** – Goodwin vs United Kingdom court case
- **2004** – Creation of the Gender Recognition Act

# This cultural moment

- **2015** – Bruce Jenner gives an interview to ABC news discussing gender identity and adopts the name Caitlyn later that year.
- **2020** – J. K. Rowling receives a furious backlash on social media for her views on gender inclusive language.
- **2021** – Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust becomes the first in the UK to introduce a ‘gender inclusive language policy’.

# This cultural moment

- **So... what is going on here?**
  - **Expressive Individualism – Life finds meaning and purpose through the expression of internal desires & emotions**
  - **Critical Theory – Society is a power struggle between oppressed and oppressor**
  - **Postmodernism – Truth is subjective – one person's truth can differ from another's**



# Over to you

**Zoe, a year 10 student in your youth group, who has grown up as a girl, tells you that they are non-binary and that they would like to be known as 'Zed' and to have people use they/them pronouns.**

**What do you say to her? How might you present her request to the group should you choose to?**

# A Christian Understanding

## **Genesis 1:26-28**

- **Male/Female are of equal value – the bible doesn't ever separate gender from sex**
- **There is purpose in the way we are created**

## **Proverbs 31:10-31**

- **Gender stereotypes are cultural, not biblical**

## **Galatians 3:26-29**

- **In Christ, there will be no oppression**

## **Hebrews 4:15-16**

- **We have a saviour who understands our pain**
- **There is nothing that cannot be redeemed**

# A pastoral approach

## Considerations when responding to pastoral dilemmas:

- **Scripture – Does the Bible address this issue? What principles are at play?**
- **Safeguarding – What risks are there to the person or others?**
- **Sharing – Will there be an impact your future ability to share the gospel?**
- **Speech – What will your decision communicate to the person involved?**
- **Stability – Is your approach consistent with related issues?**
- **Sin - Could your own sin/prejudice be affecting your judgement?**

# Galatians 5:13-26

**You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.**

**So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

# Galatians 5:13-26

**The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other**

# A pastoral approach

**Love: In all things will the good of the other person**

**Joy: Keep perspective – this is A thing, not THE thing**

**Peace: Move the conversation on – don't keep arguing but seek peace**

**Forbearance/Patience: Remember, we're dealing with people**

**Kindness: Be kind to ourselves – model acceptance of our own bodies**

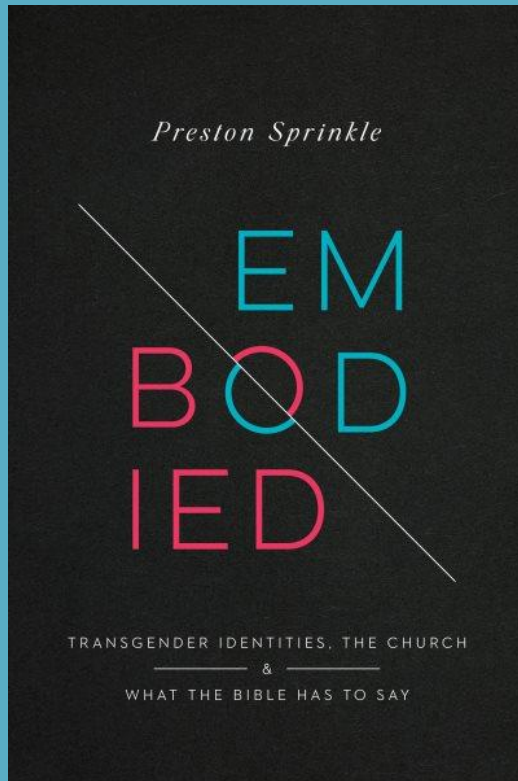
**Goodness: Engage with God, engage with other things in His creation**

**Faithfulness: Continue sharing the goodness of God's design**

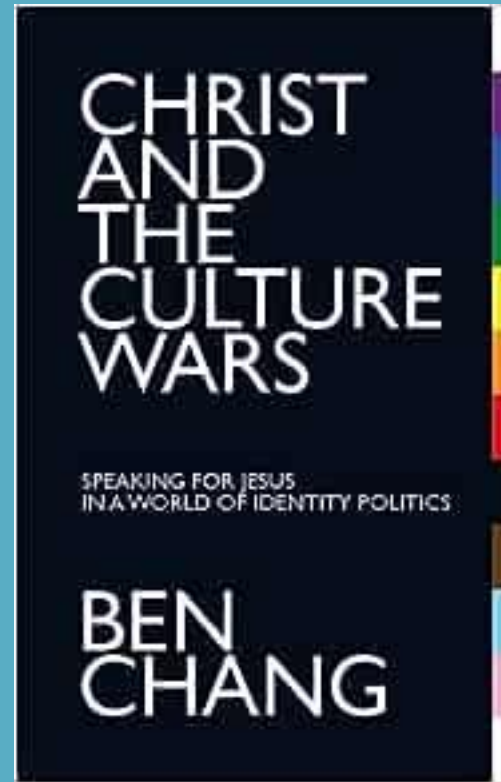
**Gentleness: Establish small points of connection**

**Self-control: Don't make conversations about your own emotions**

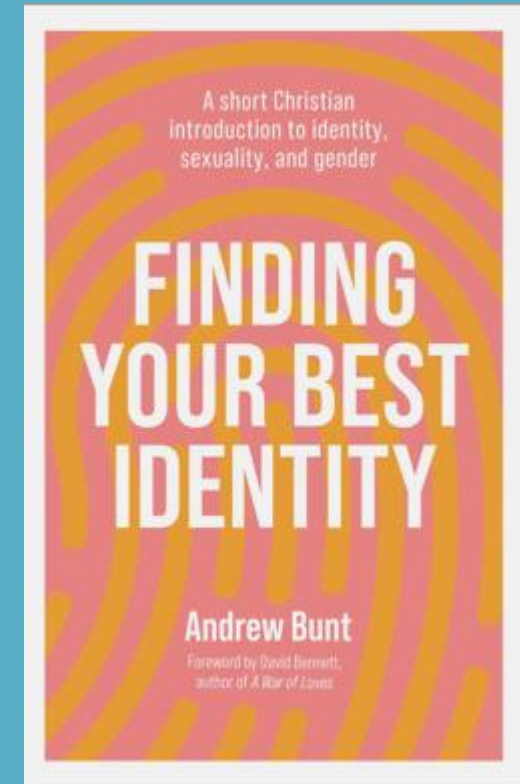
# Recommended Resources



**Embodied – Preston Sprinkle**



**Christ and the Culture Wars – Ben Chang**



**Finding Your Best Identity – Andrew Bunt**

[truefreedomtrust.co.uk](http://truefreedomtrust.co.uk)