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Enjoying God Ministries  
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## **“Contrary to Nature”**

### **What the Bible Says about Homosexuality and Transgenderism (Part Two)**

**Romans 1:24-27; Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11**

Last week we examined what the Bible says about homosexuality, both in the OT and primarily in Romans 1 in the NT. Today we turn our attention to two topics. First, I want to say a few words about the so-called “transgender” movement. Second, I want us to think deeply about the practical implications of how to live consistently with what the Bible says on these two highly controversial subjects.

#### *The “Transgender” Movement in Today’s World*

On Tuesday, December 1 of this year, an article appeared online announcing that the actress Ellen Page, who in 2014 had declared that she was a lesbian, has now declared that “she” is a “he” who will go by the name of Elliot Page. The first line of the article reads as follows:

**Actor takes aim at transphobic politicians and ‘those with a massive platform who continue to spew hostility’, saying they ‘have blood on [their] hands’**

To oppose transgenderism, Page clearly suggests, is to be guilty of spewing hostility and having blood on one’s hands. In the article, Page is quoted as saying:

“I can’t begin to express how remarkable it feels to finally love who I am enough to pursue my authentic self. I’ve been endlessly inspired by so many in the trans community. Thank you for your courage, your generosity and ceaselessly working to make this world a more inclusive and compassionate place. I will offer whatever support I can and continue to strive for a more loving and equal society.”

Needless to say, this suggests that to oppose the transgender movement means we are cowardly, opposed to legitimate inclusion, lacking in compassion, and devoid of love. Page concluded:

“I love that I am trans. And I love that I am queer. And the more I hold myself close and fully embrace who I am, the more I dream, the more my heart grows and the more I thrive. To all the trans people who deal with harassment, self-loathing, abuse, and the threat of violence every day: I see you, I love you, and I will do everything I can to change this world for the better.”

Although so-called “transgendered” individuals have been among us for quite some time, there is a sense in which *April 24, 2015*, was a watershed moment in the history of our country. That is the day when former Olympic gold medalist Bruce Jenner was interviewed by Diane Sawyer on 20/20 and declared that “he” was a “she”. Bruce would now be known as Caitlyn.

But is it really that easy? Can one simply decide what gender one prefers to be? Can one who is biologically and genetically male suddenly choose to be female? Can a person have his/her sexual identity *reassigned*? We now live in a world where many people say Yes. They contend that one’s personal identity is altogether a matter of choice, not of nature. ***Biology doesn’t determine gender, so they say. Psychology does.*** One’s birth sex need not matter. The only thing that counts is what one feels and desires and prefers. The bottom-line determinative factor when it comes to gender is what one believes will bring greatest and most lasting personal satisfaction, fulfillment, and sense of genuine authenticity.

On that April day in 2015, thousands of years of virtual unanimity on the nature of personal identity and gender was overturned. Notwithstanding the virtual consensus of every culture in human history, we were being told that being male or female is a matter of choice.

It used to be that the words “gender” and “sex” were interchangeable, synonymous terms. But no longer. ***Now we are being told that “sex” refers to one’s biological makeup at birth, while “gender” refers to one’s sense of personal identity. And they need not be the same. You may be biologically male but your gender may be female, and vice versa.*** But one’s sex and gender are determined by God and cannot be assigned or reassigned by humans. If you have a Y chromosome, you are male. Period. If you lack the Y chromosome, you are female. Period.

The announcement by Jenner didn’t occur in a vacuum. It was simply the public declaration of something that had been brewing for more than two hundred years. Today, it is known as ***autonomous, expressive individualism***. According to this now dominant perspective in our culture, ***what an individual wants or feels is the only ultimate criterion for determining right and wrong.*** And no one else has the right to challenge whatever conclusion a person comes to. No one can justifiably say that another individual’s decision is morally right or wrong. The highest goal in life is self-fulfillment, personal satisfaction, without regard to any external moral authority. It doesn’t matter what the Bible says. It only matters what my mind and heart feel and what brings me greatest personal satisfaction.

To suggest otherwise, in today’s world, is to be guilty of hate speech. And the day may well come in the United States, as it already has in other countries around the world, when calling homosexuality or transgenderism a sin is a crime. The day is likely coming when insisting that one’s gender and personal identity is tied to their biological sex at birth will result in a fine or imprisonment or both.

Recently, a father in Canada objected to his 14-year-old daughter's desire to identify as a male and stood opposed to her decision to receive hormone therapy. But the courts ruled with the daughter, not only affirming her “right” to begin the therapy, but also banning the father from referring to his own daughter by her birth name or referring to her as female, even in the privacy of his home. If he dared to do so, he could be arrested on the spot. I’m not a prophet, but that very scenario, I believe, will soon emerge here in the United States.

The interesting thing is that whereas the biblical texts on homosexuality are subject to debate, with varying interpretations, there is no doubt what the Bible says when it comes to the issue of gender:

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27).

“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’” (Matt. 19:4-5).

An individual man may *think* he is a female. He may *wish* he were a female. He may *feel good about himself* when he envisions himself as a female. But that doesn’t make him a female. The same can be said about a female who is convinced she is a man trapped in a woman’s body. ***But thinking and feeling and wishing and declaring that one is a particular gender rather than another does not make it so. The only one who defines gender is God.***

So, who wins when self and Scripture disagree? The issue ultimately is whether or not the Creator has the right to speak truth about his creation. It all comes down to ***competing authorities***: you or God.

That being said, what is meant by the word “transgender”? There are people who undeniably experience what is called ***gender dysphoria***. That is to say, they claim that there is a disconnect, so to speak, between their body and their mind. Their body may be female, but their mind, their sense of personal identity, is male. Or, conversely, their body is male, but in the case of someone like Bruce Jenner, their sense of identity and feeling and passion and what they are convinced will make them most happy, is female.

Therefore, ***gender is no longer tethered to and determined by sex, but rather by self-perception***. It is one’s feelings and desires that determine gender. And if surgical procedures and hormone treatment are needed to bring one’s body into alignment with one’s self-perception, then by all means do it.

People with “gender dysphoria” experience the feeling that their body is lying to them. Their body, their biological sex may say that a person is female, but this individual may find a better feeling identifying as a male, and vice versa. This doesn’t mean a person is transgender. Many who experience gender dysphoria remain true to their biological sex.

It’s important to remember that ***the experience of gender dysphoria does not in any way diminish the image of God in a person or undermine or change their value and worth and dignity***. A person who experiences gender dysphoria is not sub-human because of that. Our response to them must be one of compassion and care. That does not mean we should endorse their experience. It does mean we should come alongside them, try to understand their struggle, and direct them to the truth of God’s Word and the life-changing power of God’s grace and the Holy Spirit.

But what if someone responds by saying, “I’m simply born this way”? But we are all born with distorted dispositions and broken bodies. The issue isn’t how you were born but how you choose to respond to it. Virtually all heterosexuals are born with a disposition to lust. But that doesn’t make it morally legitimate. I was born naturally greedy and envious and selfish and prideful. But Scripture calls on me, like it calls on all of you, to avail myself of God’s gracious work through the Holy Spirit to defy and resist what feels natural. ***The simple fact is that much of what feels “natural” is also “sinful”.***

Let’s once again make certain we understand the difference between what the world calls “love” and what the Bible says. Our society says that to love someone you must not only grant them freedom under the law to pursue or practice whatever they believe will bring them true happiness and personal fulfillment. You must also affirm the moral legitimacy of their choice. You must never challenge what they believe to be true. You must embrace their choice as morally legitimate. The Bible, on the other hand, says that love is speaking the truth, even if that truth runs counter to their individual preferences. The Bible’s definition of love is increasingly being labeled as hate. ***To affirm someone in a path or a belief or a behavior that is contrary to Scripture and puts their soul in jeopardy of eternal damnation, is never loving.***

Although people can be healed from gender dysphoria, not everyone is. For some, it will remain a lifelong struggle. But Jesus is asking a person to live with that experience and to follow him simultaneously. Struggling with gender dysphoria does not mean you aren’t born again. What you do in response to it over time will progressively disclose whether or not you truly know Jesus.

Remember this: God did not make a mistake in giving you the body you have. And when he calls on you to live consistently with your biological identity as male or female he is not putting you down, seeking to make you miserable, or in any way violating your dignity.

The mere experience of gender dysphoria is not sin. Unwanted psychological or emotional distress is not in itself sinful. “But deciding to let that feeling rule – to feed that feeling so that it becomes the way you see yourself and the way you identify yourself and the way you act – is sinful, because it is deciding that your feelings have authority over you, and will define what is right and what is wrong” (A. Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate*, 68).

Some children are diagnosed with “ROGD” (Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria) and believe that genital mutilation is their only hope. But the American College of Pediatricians recently concluded that if one will remain patient and let bodily development run its course, between 90 and 95% of children who say they are transgender naturally come to accept their sex and to enjoy emotional health by late adolescence

Will people struggling with gender dysphoria hear us talk about it in such a way that they are prompted to stay at Bridgeway? Or will they feel shamed and embarrassed? We at Bridgeway want to be a community of Christ followers who are committed to encouraging and loving and helping everyone in their battle with sin. And if you are wondering if that can be done without endorsing or compromising what the Bible teaches, the answer is Yes!

Before I move on from this topic, some will ask, “What about ***intersex***, those born with ambiguous genitalia?” These are individuals whose biological sex at birth cannot be ascertained with absolute certainty. They appear to give indications of both male and female genitalia. The problem with determining what percentage of the population is truly intersex is that not everyone agrees on the

definition of the term. But most experts say that the number of births with ambiguous genitals is in the range of 0.02% and 0.05%.

You need to understand that they are not transgender. Intersex does not disprove the biblical teaching that there are two genders: male and female. Intersex conditions are a deviation from the binary norm, not the establishment of a new norm. It is an aspect of creation that has been marred and distorted by the fall. Intersex is a biological condition, not a personal choice. The only counsel I have for such a person is that they be encouraged to live out their biological sex as best as it can be determined.

### *Addressing Perplexing Practical Questions*

#### ***(1) What should I say if my son or daughter confesses to me that he/she is same-sex attracted?***

Never stop loving them. Never stop praying for them. Never think that your parental responsibility is to affirm the moral legitimacy of their feelings or choices. Never think that you have failed to love them by telling them, gently but firmly, that unrepentant homosexual conduct puts their soul in jeopardy of eternal damnation. Assure them that their feelings do not determine their identity. Assure them that if their same-sex attraction remains, the Holy Spirit can still empower them to live a celibate life. They do not have to yield to their desires.

#### ***(2) What should I do if my lesbian daughter asks if she and her partner can spend the night at my house?***

Welcome them into your home but make it clear to them that if they wish to spend the night there, they must sleep in separate bedrooms and promise you that they will not engage in any form of sexual intimacy.

#### ***(3) What should I do if my child tells me he/she is getting married to their same-sex partner and they want me to help pay for the wedding and attend? Is it ok if I attend a so-called "same-sex" wedding? Can I serve as a bridesmaid or groomsman in it?***

The opinion of American citizens has drastically changed when it comes to what constitutes a genuine marriage. In a recent issue of USA Today, people were asked "whether marriages between couples of the same sex should be recognized by the law as valid and equivalent to 'traditional marriages.'" In 1996 68% said such so-called "marriages" between two people of the same gender should not be valid. In 2009 the percentage had fallen to 57%. This year, 2020, only 31% believe such "marriages" should be regarded as invalid.

Is there such a thing as a same-sex "marriage" or same-sex "wedding"? No. Genesis 1-2, together with the rest of Scripture makes clear that marriage is always and only a covenant commitment between one man and one woman. Woman was clearly created to be man's divinely designed complement in life. The two are said to be "one flesh" which clearly presupposes two persons of the opposite sex entering into

both a covenantal and sexual relationship. Only a man and a woman can fulfill the mandate to be fruitful and fill the earth. That doesn't mean that a marriage that doesn't result in biological children isn't a marriage. It simply means that marriage by God's design and aim "is a covenant between two persons whose one-flesh commitment is the sort of union which produces offspring" (DeYoung, 29).

That being said, I don't want to have to constantly insert the qualifying words, "so-called" or "alleged same-sex marriage." So, for the sake of efficiency in language, I will refer to same-sex marriage or a same-sex wedding even if I don't believe something of that sort truly exists.

The purpose of a wedding or a marriage is to solemnly celebrate the union between a man and a woman. But as Christians you cannot celebrate or even acknowledge what is not true. You cannot and must not affirm or endorse or enjoy and bless a union that the Bible calls sinful. Your physical presence or financial contribution, even if silent, is a loud statement that you are pleased with the decision these two people have made and that you support it. You are making a public statement of affirmation even if you don't participate, send a gift, participate in the reception, or even sign the guestbook.

Instead, kindly decline the invitation and then extend one of your own, that the two individuals come to your house for dinner where you can listen to their story and, hopefully, share the truth of the gospel with them.

### ***Can a practicing, unrepentant homosexual become a covenant member at Bridgeway?***

They can certainly attend Bridgeway and we should welcome them if they come. But no, such a person cannot become a covenant member. A person who experiences same-sex attraction but is committed by God's power and grace to live a celibate life can become a member. But to live in willful, unrepentant sin is another matter. And that applies to someone who is living in unrepentant heterosexual sin as well.

### ***Is homosexuality genetically caused? And if so, how can it be called sinful?***

Although neither the American Psychiatric Association nor the American Psychological Association are known for their conservative Christian beliefs, they agree on this point. The latter states:

"Although much research has examined the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social, and cultural influences on sexual orientation, no findings have emerged that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors" (<http://www.apa.org/topics/lgbt/orientation.pdf>).

***Simply because something is physically caused does not make it morally right.*** A person may be naturally aggressive, but that does not mean his violent behavior is to be condoned. A person may be naturally lethargic and passive, but that does not mean their laziness is morally ok. We are all born with distorted dispositions that if left unchecked would produce immoral behavior. But identifying the root of

the problem as genetic does not suddenly transform one's actions from sinful and wicked into actions that are righteous and good. In sum, "is" does not imply "ought".

John Piper summarized it this way: "In a world where the effect of sin permeates to the roots of nature and disorders all of life, we cannot define as good and natural whatever has physical roots. There must be a higher norm than fallen nature. There are many physically based abnormalities in the world. Therefore having a physical base or root is not sufficient reason for condoning anything as natural or good."

### ***Is it permissible for someone to self-identify as a "gay Christian"?***

I understand why many say yes to this question, but I think it is extremely unwise to do so. ***We should never use our sinful desires as a way of identifying ourselves.*** We are new creations in Christ, justified by faith and adopted into God's family as his beloved children. Yes, it is important to be honest and vulnerable about our struggles, but who among you would ever introduce yourself as a "greedy Christian" or an "envious Christian" or a "lustful Christian"? There is a huge difference between speaking openly about one's sinful failures, on the one hand, and making use of language about our sinful desires as a personal identify marker. As one person put it, ***whereas we name our sin, we are not named by it.***

There is also the practical reality that when someone hears a believer identify himself as a "gay Christian" one typically assumes this means you are a practicing homosexual, or at least that you approve of such behavior. Most who use this label intend only to say that they are same-sex attracted but not that they are engaging in same-sex physical intimacy. But what they intend and how they are interpreted are most often two entirely different things.

So, to modify the word "Christian" with an adjective that most people associate with sinful behavior is highly misleading. It too often sounds as if a person is justifying his/her sinful struggles. So, my counsel is that such language not be used. Our most fundamental identity as the children of God is a redeemed, forgiven, born-again follower of Jesus. Simply put, desires that are inconsistent with God's design are to be resisted and put to death, not celebrated or accommodated.

### ***Can a person be healed of same-sex attraction? Can a person, over time, experience the diminishing of same-sex attraction and the development of heterosexual desires?***

One thing is certain: none of us, no matter what our sinful struggles may be, should ever be content to remain unchanged. It is through the grace and power of Jesus Christ, the truth of the gospel, and the work of the Holy Spirit that all of us, including those who struggle with same-sex attraction, are being transformed into the moral image of Jesus himself.

There is undeniable personal testimony from many that change is possible. But it doesn't always happen, and rarely does it occur instantaneously. Notwithstanding persistent efforts as enabled by God's grace, some struggle with same-sex attraction throughout the course of their lives. They have chosen to obey Scripture and not to indulge their desires in same-sex intimacy. There are sinful desires, not necessarily sexual ones, that all of us battle daily and from which we may not experience complete deliverance until

we receive our glorified bodies. All of us, whether heterosexual or homosexual, are to experience progressive change by the power of the Spirit. How much change is something we can never know with certainty.

There are some who insist that a person's so-called sexual "orientation" cannot be changed, and that no effort of any sort should be undertaken to facilitate that change. It all depends on how one defines the term "orientation." If it means simply that a person experiences a persistent and predominant desire in a particular direction, it may be used. But if it is defined to suggest that a person's homosexual desires are normative, the immovable and immutable essence of a person's fundamental identity, such that any attempts or hope for change are both futile and dangerous, we must reject the word.

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

Consider the testimony of Rosaria Butterfield who, in 1999, at the age of 36, was a tenured professor in the English department at Syracuse University where she taught courses in the field of Queer Theory. She was, at that time, happily living with her lesbian lover. In her book, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*, she tells the story of how she was converted to faith in Christ and is now a devout Christian, homeschool mom, and the wife of a Presbyterian pastor. She writes:

"After many years and much struggling, God used the words of Romans 1 as he led me to repentance and faith. Through the crucible of conversion, I learned that the central thrust of this passage required eyes of faith. What I called love for my lesbian partner, God called defilement."

### ***Is AIDS the judgment of God?***

If by "God's judgment" you mean that each person who has AIDS has contracted the disease because of some personal sin, the answer is No. Consider the case of those infected in the womb and hemophiliacs infected through blood transfusions.

Consider the analogy of *war*. In the OT war is often God's judgment on his people. But not all who suffer the ravages of war were guilty of the idolatrous behavior that provoked it. One of the mysteries of divine providence is the incidence of so-called *innocent bystanders*, as in the case of the children of a compulsive gambler or alcoholic.

We must remember that some who are sinning escape the suffering of AIDS while some who are *not* sinning contract it. The fact that not all who deserve to suffer do suffer and the fact that some who don't deserve to suffer, do, does not prohibit us from recognizing God's hand of judgment in this scourge. The



fact is, if there were no sexual promiscuity there would be *virtually* no cases of AIDS. Those who are most sexually promiscuous are at greatest risk. “It is exceedingly difficult – not to say morally and biblically irresponsible – not to see a connection” (Carson, 259). Says Carson:

“The fact of the matter is that the overwhelming majority of those who suffer from the disease have engaged in biblically forbidden promiscuity or self-destroying drug use; and the small percentage of additional people who have suffered from the disease would never have contracted it had it not been for the larger groups” (260).

### *Biblical Counsel for Someone with Homosexual Desires*

John Piper provides a few words of counsel to those who have homosexual desires.

1. Acknowledge the presence and pain of a disordered sexuality, with all the ambiguity of where it came from — much like other disorders and disabilities — and do not define your God-given personhood by your disordered sexuality.

2. Put your faith in Christ alone for the forgiveness of all your sins and for the gift of God’s righteousness and for the fulfillment of all his promises to you (Romans 1:16–17). The only sinner who can successfully battle his sins is a justified sinner. In other words, you fight against sexual sins *from* relationship, not *for* a relationship.

3. Begin to reorder your entire life around the centrality of the glory of God as your highest treasure. Homosexual sinning, like all other sinning, is an echo of exchanging the glory of God for other things. So restore the sun of God’s glory to its place at the center of your soul and all the planets of your desires will begin to return to their God-given orbit.

4. Resolve to live a chaste and, if necessary, celibate life by the power of God’s Spirit, with the confidence that if God does not heal now, he will in the age to come; and all the patience of purity will be worth it (Rom. 8:18).

5. Seek wholesome friendships with both sexes, especially in groups. Here the burden lies heavily on the church to be a place where this can happen. We don’t do very well at this. And so I call on us, especially families, to go out of our way to have people (especially single people) over for meals and other gatherings. The more we do things in groups rather than pairs, the more opportunities we create for wholesome non-sexual relationships.

[There are ministries like First Stone here in OKC that have insights and experience and encouragement and biblical counsel from a depth of awareness that goes beyond what most of us can bring. This may be something God would use in your life.]

## **BRIDGEWAY CHURCH POLICY ON SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY**

As a church we recognize that there are some persons whose experience of their gender (identity, expression, behavior) is at variance with the physical reality of their biological birth sex. Our responsibility as Christians is to affirm such individuals as being created in the image of God and to respond with respect and love as informed and governed by the following biblical principles.

(1) God's original design in creation was that humanity be manifest in two distinct sexes, male and female (Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6). Each individual was intended to experience congruence between the physical and experiential dimensions of their sexuality. Except in very unusual cases, our sex as male or female is a consistent biological given from conception and is an unchangeable, stable, enduring characteristic of the person established by God's creational intent.

(2) Because of the sinful rebellion of our first parents, Adam and Eve, sin, corruption, and death have permeated the human condition. The totality of our experience as humans is distorted by this fallenness, including biological, psychological, sexual, and spiritual dimensions of our existence. Thus our experience of sex and gender is not always as God originally designed.

(3) Gender, as the experiential and psychological counterpart of an individual's sex, is considerably more fluid and variable than one's fixed, dichotomous biological sex. Nevertheless, we believe the Bible calls us to maintain a clear, biologically rooted distinction between male and female (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 1:18-32). While recognizing that we are released from certain ceremonial guidelines in the Old Testament governing gender roles and expressions, we believe we are to lovingly resist the blurring of gender distinctiveness and that cultural trajectory which denies God-given boundaries to our created sexual and gender identity.

(4) Because we believe in the reality of God's redemptive healing and sanctifying power, we do not support the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender by the adoption of a psychological identity that seeks to change one's given biological birth sex in favor of the identity of the opposite sex or of an indeterminate identity. Neither can we support the use of surgical or other medical procedures that seek to change facets of one's biological sex as established at conception and during gestation and subsequently manifest at birth. Such efforts inherently flow from the individual's rejection of the gift of his or her biological sex.

(5) While acknowledging the considerable variance in gender identity, expression, and behavior, we still regard persistent or exaggerated manifestations of gender atypical behavior as inconsistent with biblical morality, Christian maturity, and the proper embrace of the gift of one's biological sex. Tension and conflict between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender should be treated with pastoral concern and love based on the shared understanding that one's biological sex is a given of one's gendered embodiment.

### *Practical Guidelines at Bridgeway Church*

In view of the preceding biblical and theological principles, the following guidelines have been adopted at Bridgeway Church.

(1) Our aim is always to lovingly engage with and respectfully relate to those who embrace views of sexual identity that are at odds with our own. But this love requires that we direct such individuals toward alignment with their biological birth sex as God's creative design. Bridgeway Church will not support persistent or exaggerated examples of cross-dressing or other expressions or actions that are deliberately discordant with birth sex. While we recognize, regret, and stand opposed to the hurt caused by some professing Christians to men and women whose experience of sexuality is atypical, we must, at the same time, seek to be agents of healing and care for such individuals in accordance with the principles stated above.

(2) When it comes to matters of employment and covenant membership at Bridgeway Church, we regard the biological sex at birth as the identification of each individual that will govern all interaction with and naming of said individuals. We will not affirm attempted alterations by medical intervention of one's sex at birth. If a person who has experienced such treatments has repented of those actions and embraces the Christian perspectives articulated in this document, together with the requirements set forth in our formal documents related to covenant membership at Bridgeway, he or she may be fully accepted in this community as a covenant member. On the other hand, we regard the actions or intentions of those seeking fundamental changes of any kind to one's sex at birth as a rejection of the biblical and theological understanding to which this local church is committed and hence as grounds for rejection of any applicant from consideration for employment, as well as grounds for termination of any current employee. This would equally apply to anyone seeking covenant membership at Bridgeway Church or to a current member whose behavior is determined by the Board of Elders to be inconsistent with the standards of sexuality and gender identity as set forth in Scripture and as outlined in this document.

(3) The bathroom facilities at Bridgeway assigned to males shall be open only to those whose biological sex at birth is male. The bathroom facilities at Bridgeway assigned to females shall be open only to those whose biological sex at birth is female. The only exception to this policy is for parents and/or legal guardians of infants and young children who need to change diapers or assist with bathroom needs of children of the opposite sex. All other decisions regarding the use of facilities at Bridgeway or involving the ministries of this church shall not be determined on the basis of a person's psychological choices but rather in light of a person's sex at birth. This policy is an expression of our biblical convictions concerning God's creation of humanity as male and female.

Furthermore, we will speak to and of all persons with pronouns appropriate to their biological sex at birth. Therefore, even in the case of those whose biological sex is not readily discernible, and whose sense of gender is at variance with their biological sex at birth, Bridgeway staff and representatives cannot be expected to utilize the preferred pronoun of any individual present in our facilities or participating in any of our ministries.

(4) The Board of Elders at Bridgeway Church reserves the right and latitude to make reasonable judgments about issues outside the explicit bounds of these specified policies based on our Statement of Faith, the biblical and theological principles outlined in this document, and the terms of covenant membership as set forth in our official church documents.

[This document of stated beliefs and policies has been largely shaped by, is dependent upon, and adapted from the *Wheaton College Policy on Sex, Sexuality and Gender Identity* (approved on 12/5/2012 by the Wheaton College Board of Trustees Executive Committee) and the views of the Evangelical Alliance, a trans-denominational group representing Protestant evangelical churches in the U.K., as published in *Transsexuality: A Report by the Evangelical Alliance Policy Commission* (London: Evangelical Alliance Policy Commission / Paternoster, 2000).]

The following is not intended to be a political statement or an endorsement of any political party. It is simply an alert to what may well be coming our way in the days ahead. The headline reads as follows:

**Chuck Schumer Endorses Biden's Plan To Force Public Schools To Allow Males In Female Bathrooms**

December 3, 2020, by Jordan Davidson

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer supports former Vice President Joe Biden's plans to force schools receiving federal funding to accommodate students who want to use bathrooms, locker rooms, and play sports with students of the opposite biological sex.

"Joe Biden said that on his first day of office, he will give transgender students access to sports, bathrooms and locker rooms in accordance with their gender identity in federally funded schools," a reporter stated. "Do you think he has the ability to do this and do you agree with his decision?"

"I agree with the decision and I know he'll check things out thoroughly, legally," Schumer responded.

In October, Biden told a mother during his televised town hall that he supports young children choosing to "transition" and reaffirmed his promises to "flat-out just change the law" to accommodate his agenda.

"The idea that an 8-year-old child or a 10-year-old child decides, . . . 'I decided I want to be transgender. That's what I think I'd like to be. It would make my life a lot easier.' There should be zero discrimination," said Biden.