



*"And such were some of you..."*

## Transgenderism, Truth, and Love

### Position Paper

God's original design for sexuality is that our biological sex, gender identity (mental perception), gender expression, and sexual attractions would all align. God created females to understand themselves as female in their minds, present as female in their bodies, and experience attractions to males. Likewise, God created males to understand themselves as male in their minds, present as male in their bodies, and experience attractions to females. If a person's biological sex does not align with their gender identity/expression, it is not an indicator that they were born in the wrong body or that God made a mistake. Rather, it is an indicator that something is out of alignment because their gender identity doesn't align with their God-given body (biological sex).<sup>i</sup> Rather than changing our body to match our fallen mind, we renew our fallen mind to match the body God gave us.

As Christians, RHN's perspective on transgender is based on scripture as the authoritative word of God. We believe that God is the creator of all things and the ultimate source of truth. God's design for humanity is found in Genesis 1:27, which states, *"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."* From this foundational verse, we understand that gender is inseparably tied to biological sex and is an essential aspect of God's created order, with a binary distinction between male and female.

Throughout scripture, gender is consistently affirmed as a biological and immutable characteristic. Jesus himself reaffirms this binary understanding of gender in Matthew 19:4 when he says, *"Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female?"* Therefore, any attempt to alter or reject one's biological sex contradicts God's intended design.

We are called to live in accordance with God's purposes and design which includes embracing one's biological sex as a fundamental aspect of one's identity. We reject the notion that gender is merely a social construct or that individuals have the autonomy to redefine their gender based on subjective feelings or desires.

Human experiences, feelings, and perceptions are to be viewed through the lens of God's revelation, recognizing that sin has corrupted our understanding and distorted God's intended order (Romans 3:23). Gender dysphoria and other manifestations of gender confusion are understood within this framework of brokenness, emphasizing the need for redemption and restoration through Christ.

Deuteronomy 22:5 prohibits cross-dressing and underscores the importance of respecting and maintaining God's created order and indicates that expressions of gender should align with one's biological sex as part of honoring God's design.

Based on the aforementioned scriptures, RHN believes that God assigns individuals their fundamental identity and gender, and that any intentional expression of gender identity counter to one's biological sex is contrary to God's will, including, though not limited to, social transitioning, cross-dressing, cross-sex hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery, and other transgender and nonbinary behaviors.

### Development & Understanding

Research into the origins of transgender feelings and gender dysphoria reveals a complex interplay of factors, with no singular biological cause identified despite extensive study of genetics, brain structure, and prenatal hormones. Instead, these feelings often stem from deep-seated emotional and psychological wounds affecting individuals' perceptions of their gender identity. These wounds, rooted in issues like idolatry, jealousy, and self-hatred shape a distorted view of self, leading some to believe that living as the opposite sex is more desirable than embracing their God-given identity.

Various environmental factors also contribute to the development of gender dysphoria including adverse family dynamics, life circumstances, and childhood sexual abuse. These experiences, combined with an individual's unique personality, temperament, and gender nonconformity, further influence their understanding of gender. Rigid gender stereotypes prevalent in society can exacerbate feelings of gender incongruence and insecurity by imposing narrow definitions of masculinity and femininity that do not align with an individual's God-given identity. It's important to affirm and support children and adults in their unique God-given personalities and gifts, rather than imposing cultural stereotypes that may conflict with who God made them to be.

Transgender experiences are diverse: some individuals may experience both gender dysphoria and same-sex attractions, while others may experience gender dysphoria and attractions to the opposite sex. Some individuals experience gender dysphoria as children, others closer to the onset of puberty or even later in life.

While RHN's view on gender identity is grounded in scripture, God's truth is also evident biologically. It is impossible to change one's biological sex. Every cell in one's body is gendered containing either XX or XY chromosomes (other than sperm and eggs). One's chromosomal sex remains unchanged despite surgical alterations or hormone treatments. Hormone therapy and sex reassignment surgeries do not make someone the opposite sex; they only make someone look like the opposite sex. Sex reassignment surgeries and hormone therapies mutilate perfectly healthy bodies and organs.

### Healing/Transformation

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Rom. 12:1-2)*

This passage underscores RHN's belief in the availability of transformation through Jesus Christ. It affirms that through faith and reliance on God's grace, individuals can experience profound healing and restoration. This approach encourages a holistic approach to healing—one that integrates spiritual, emotional, and psychological dimensions within the context of God's redemptive work.

Transformation of transgender feelings is a dynamic and individual process, shaped by both spiritual growth and healing of root issues. Over time, the healing journey can lead to a reduction in the frequency, intensity, and duration of transgender feelings. This process of sanctification and transformation is understood as a lifelong journey. It underscores its potential challenges—messiness, pain, and slowness—as well as its transformative power.

Transgender feelings may gradually diminish over time and for some they may completely resolve. However, this resolution is not uniform, and some may experience fluctuations in the intensity of these

feelings, especially during periods of psychological stress. This variability underscores the complexity of the healing process, highlighting its non-linear nature and the need for ongoing support and understanding.

Philippians 1:6, *“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”* shows how transformation is an ongoing process in believers’ lives. That despite the impact of sin and brokenness in one’s life, God continues to work towards the completion of His transformative work. This perspective provides hope and encouragement for those grappling with transgender feelings, emphasizing God’s faithfulness and the potential for continued growth and healing in Christ.

For additional insight on transformation of transgender feelings, please refer to the RHN position paper *“Transformation of Persons with Same-Sex Attraction: Becoming Who We Are.”* Most of the principles in that paper also apply to the transgender condition.

### Intersex

Those born with a rare intersex condition are also created in God’s image, have equal value and worth. Unlike transgender feelings which involve a psychological mismatch between one’s gender identity and biological sex, intersex conditions typically involve physiological differences, often between chromosomes and external appearance.

### Summary

*“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”* (Ephesians 4:22-24)

RHN’s view on gender identity emphasizes seeking alignment with God’s truth and purpose, finding one’s identity in Christ rather than in societal norms or personal feelings. This approach invites individuals to embrace their God-given identity and to experience healing and wholeness through a relationship with Christ. Jesus offers redemption for all aspects of human brokenness, including issues related to gender identity and sexuality.

As Christians, we are called to engage in discussions surrounding transgenderism with humility, seeking to uphold biblical truth while extending grace and empathy to those affected. It is through informed dialogue, grounded in both scripture and scientific understanding, that the complexities of gender identity can be addressed with wisdom and compassion in the light of God’s love and purpose for every individual. This requires listening attentively, respecting personal narratives, and offering support grounded in truth and love.

*\*All scripture is NIV*

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<sup>i</sup> Referenced from Linda A. Seiler, PhD, TRANS-Formation: A Former Transgender Responds to LGBTQ (Grand Rapids: Credo House, 2023) p. 46.