

Ten Stories from the Heart

#1

I'd like to share my own story. I grew up in a God-fearing household that failed to provide me with the emotional support I needed. I had a hard time learning how to truly love other, or maybe even more so, myself. I knew what was right but not how to serve others in genuine love.

I have never fully "lived" the TransGender, Transsexual, or Transvestite lifestyle but it tempted me. I have been diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder and I am, by any reasonable estimate, completely straight. However, somehow, fantasies of crossdressing and being a girl got caught up in the OCD.



In my teens, I did some experimental crossdressing to medicate or counter the anxieties and obsessive thoughts I experienced. Once in college, I felt supported enough by friends (especially girls) that the temptation was subdued. But, when I experienced a traumatic breakup with my girlfriend, I returned to the fantasies (without crossdressing).

I am convinced that the fantasies served as a denial of reality. I was mad at the life I had been given and I denied its reality in the most explicit way possible -- imagining myself as a woman. But was I truly interested in being a real woman? Of course not, I wanted only the sensuality, not the emotional, mental, or spiritual part of femininity. It was desirable because it was so radically not me and required no thought or love. It was so utterly selfish...

This continued and the fantasies gripped me when I was most vulnerable and self-hating.

I looked up transsexuals on the Internet and masturbated to the thought of physically becoming someone else, a woman. Eventually, I tried an experiment: I allowed myself to go full speed into the fantasizing to figure out if it really made me happy. After a few days, I realized that it never brought me one true moment of joy; it was only "filler" time, a way of numbing myself to the anxieties and obsessive thoughts that were crowding my mind. At that point, when I really internalized the sheer joylessness of my fantasies, they lost any attraction that they had previously.

I know that, in a future moment of emotional weakness, these thoughts may well come back to tempt me, but being older and wiser, I can honestly tell them: "Get thee behind me, Satan. Your lies can never make me happy, so depart!"



I write this to show you that there is a distinct link between OCD and transgender behavior. I don't claim to speak for all those troubled by transgender desires, but surely there are others experiencing similar situations. And I shudder to think of those that were not as lucky as I was and had this compulsion take them to actual SRS or self-mutilation. It is really scandalous that the mainstream psychological community has not considered this possibility more specifically. After all, isn't this classic escapism? Written by Oprah

#2

Transsexuality vs Autogynephilia

By Patricia

One of the tests I use in our transsexual support group to try to determine if a person is truly transsexual is to ask him/her about his/her fantasies.

As a teeny I first started to realize that I was different when I read Nancy Friday's books on male and female sexual fantasies. One book states that ONLY 20% of all "men" could fantasize or imagine that they were female. I lately found out that of this 20% only a tiny minority could stimulate themselves to orgasm with this vision of being female. To my amazement I realized around this time that the only fantasies I found stimulating were those of me being female-I couldn't imagine myself as a male in any 3D full color and life form. I think this inability to imagine oneself as male in any meaningful manner is typical of true M to F transsexuality.

Elaine's story which is given on the link below shows how easy it is to be falsely diagnosed as transsexual. Autogynephilia is different in that those with this form of GID can imagine themselves as males, but are sexually stimulated by the feminization process-the results of which they will regret.

Elaine finds the sexual fantasy of being a male trapped in a female body very sexually stimulating, however a deep depression and despair always follows. Autogynephilia is common among cross-dressers, who go to hormones and other forms of permanent feminization which in the long run are enslaving for them and not liberating as is often the case with Transsexuals. Elaine is truly an extreme case of autogynephilia and was believed to be a so-called primary transsexual. She had an optically very successful transition and had SRS at the age of 18.



#3

Running from my True Self

by Kerry (used by permission)

The Lord has been doing some major renovation in my heart. The bottom line is I don't have a gender identity problem, for I know exactly who and what I am. I am a man, I am a child of the living God, I am the husband, lover, and friend of my wonderful wife (Patricia) and most of all I am who God created me to be -- namely ME. To say anything else would be a lie. The truth is I've been a runaway. I have lived the last forty or so years trying to be an island unto myself. There is a wonderful song written by Bill Deaton (and recorded by Bob Carlisle) that expresses my heart perfectly.

It's called "A Chance I Have to Take."

Down deep inside this heart of mine, there's a door locked by design.

Hinges of rust from all the tears, I keep it shut from all my fears.

But you ask me to let down the wall, with no defense to catch my fall.

It's too late to play it safe, it's a chance I have to take.

So I choose Love, a Love that can take a heart so cold and teach it to break.

Tears may fall along the way, but it's a chance I have to take.

For I've seen a mockery made of love, everyone talks but no one does.

So I hide my heart upon a shelf, to never give to anyone else.

But I fall apart when I hear your words, healing will come to those who learn.

Change never comes to those who wait, it's a chance I have to take.

For true joy in living is found only in forgiving, those who've scared you so - let them go, let them go.

Now you are asking for my trust that's been abused so very much.

So I give to you the me that breaks -- It's a chance I have to take.

#4



My Own Reflections:

I knew from the time I was a small boy that my mother wished that I had been born a girl. I don't remember her ever dressing me in girl's clothes -- I guess the wish itself was enough. My father was a very hard worker and worked the strangest hours to this day I've ever heard of - 1 week of days, 1 week of 2nd shift, 1 week of 3rd shift and then a week that consisted of 2 day shifts, 2 days of 2nd shifts and a day of 3rd shift. And he did that for over 30 years. So he was always tired (and a little cranky). I'm not trying to make excuses for him. When he didn't show up for my music concerts, my (few) athletic events, or even my wedding day it still hurt me. He always seemed to have time to play a round of golf or listen to a baseball game. But since I was born 10 years after my brother I always felt like I was an accident anyway - perhaps even a burden.

In the summer (especially after my mother was diagnosed with cancer) they would pack me off to my grandparents. I adored my grandmother; of all the people in my childhood I wanted to be just like her. She made time for everyone -- and maybe even more importantly (to me) she was the best cook on the face of the planet!!!! I realize now that she had qualities I desperately wanted. She was a very loving person; she would go out of her way to be kind or helpful. She just seemed to have a personality that you wanted to be around. It's not that she couldn't be tough if she had to be. Believe me, if she could handle my grandfather she could handle anybody!

My Grandfather on the other hand was rather self-absorbed and he loved to play mind games.

He would take me fishing from time to time but the thing he enjoyed the most was scaring the bejebers out of me. One of his running gags was to stare at me (just a little crazy) and tell me he was going to take his straight-edge razor and cut my hair off in the middle of the night. Or that some morning I would wake-up hanging by my feet from the ceiling. It gave him great joy to pass me the butter at the table and just as I was taking it he'd give it a little push and there would be my thumb in the middle of the stick. His favorite game was "hot hands"-- you know where you put your hands on top of the other player's hands (palm to palm) and you try to move your hands out of the way before the other player flips his hands over and slaps yours. My granddad had the fastest hands in the world and when he slapped you he didn't play around. Many a time my hands were beet red because I just wasn't fast enough. My Grandmother was always after my Granddad to stop teasing me, but Charley just had an odd way about him. The funniest (perhaps saddest) part of it all is that I'm a lot more like my granddad than my grandmother. But it's true that whatever you hate the most (and don't forgive!) ends up shaping you more into its image than you could ever imagine.

So my image of masculinity was not the best, and my image of femininity was overly glorified and false. This has led (in my case) to one screwed up life.

The hardest person to forgive in all this mess is of course -- me. Why would anyone like, (let alone love), me. If they only saw the mess I've made of my life they would avoid me like typhoid Mary. Time to refer to the song lyric's above. Yet amazingly I am very



loved. The Lord has proved over and over again how very much He loves me and so has Patricia. If the Lord loves me so much why didn't he protect me when I was growing up? The simple truth is -- He did and He is. But without pain there is no growth and more importantly there is no empathy for the pain of others. The truth is the Lord has shaped me for a purpose and though I may not always understand what that purpose is I know He allowed it because He Loves me. That's not just a platitude or convenient saying. I know that as bedrock truth in my heart. It was not an easy lesson to master but I'm finally seeing the truth of it.

Not only that but I don't want to run away from who I am anymore. Are there many things to learn and face up to -- YES! But to be an "island unto one's self" is a miserable way to live. My wife and I are finally starting to rediscover intimacy -- it is a work in progress. There is sometimes pain -- but there is also great reward! The Lord through the Holy Spirit is constantly illuminating my self-centeredness and my selfishness. Is it a pleasant thing to behold -- NO! But I must allow the Holy Spirit to deal harshly with these things. I don't want to be in charge anymore -- I have found through experience that it's really lonely at the top.

Let me make mention of the house church I attend. I have stated, *"There are Christian people here (including ALL of my pastors) who know about my struggles. I belong to a care-ring of believers as well as my regular church yet I have no real support system concerning these issues. The simple truth is it's more reality than most people want to know. Most of the time they don't know how to respond anyway."* The Lord has been leading me to the conclusion that these are exactly the people the Lord wants to use to deal with the issues I'm facing. Once again, this isn't about gender confusion -- I don't need to be convinced that God didn't make a mistake by making me male. It's simply about living the Christian life -- it's about discipleship, it's about my sanctification for God's purposes.

#5

I am now 8 yrs post op and I guess for the last 4 years I have grown increasingly unhappy with my situation. I now feel that in my attempt to run away from my "manhood," it has taken me down this road which I now feel very alone, unhappy, lonely, and saddened -- by what I have done to those around me and myself. I guess I feel trapped in the sense that while most of my family have supported me or eventually come around to the new me, I don't know how I can again face them and say what I have done is a mistake; not to mention how do I tell my friends, co workers and others that I have built up over the last eight years that this is all a mistake ... a "false face." I don't know how even to start to explain this to anyone.

I think people who don't know about my past see me as very aloof, distant, and somewhat unapproachable.

Its not that it's just I am unhappy with who I am and what I have become.

Every morning I wake up and look in the mirror I see someone that instantly says what I am not! Getting dressed in clothing, that while appropriate for my “current state,” does not come close to who I am. I go out with my "friends" and listen to their little stories, adventures ... and pretend to be interested in what they are saying and making my comments, but I just find this to be totally absurd, and not of the least bit of interest to me, however I go along with it as they are my friends and I feel some sort of obligation to offer support to them.



I work in an office for a large company. After I get home, I can't wait to get out of the clothes that I wear and just put on jeans and a shirt; pull my hair back and relax saying, “god it feels good to be out of those clothes! It's so strange since I can vividly remember when I actually couldn't wait to wear them, and the time when I would be living full time as a woman. Well, let me tell you after doing it for this long its not cracked up to be like what I would have expected or felt it was.

I just want to go back to who and what I was before all this happened!

#6

Humiliation of the Auction Block

Romans 7:14

“I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do, for what I want to do I do not do. But what I hate to do is exactly what I end up doing. It is no longer I myself that does this, but the sinful demands of my wounded heart. I know nothing that is truly good residing within this sinful-inclination of my heart. I have a desire to do what is right and good, but the inability to carry that out. For what I end up doing is not the good that I have intended to do; but instead the very self-serving thing that I fully intended not to do. So, I find within my heart resides a tenacious stubbornness to have my own way regardless of what I know to be right and good. What a very wretched man I am! Who can ever come to my rescue? Thanks be to God – through the indwelling power of the risen Christ, I can be set free from this constant push towards my own demise.”

One of the most moving African-American Spirituals I've heard sung has the words,

“No More Auction Block For Me. No more Master's whip for me. No more! No more!”

Those words mean everything to one who has known the merciless, tearing and lacerating blow of the cruel task-master's whip. Oh! The power of the degrading, dehumanizing humiliation of the auction block.

Those words express the Emancipation Proclamation which purchased the guarantee of

deliverance for each and every black slave who was placed upon the auction block, sold to the highest bidder. And they speak volumes to all of us who know what it is like to be sold daily unto sin – seemingly incapable of doing anything about our helplessness to put an end to the misery, insanity, torment and shame.

It's popular now for those who sell themselves to sin's servitude to align themselves with the plight of the African American slave. We can so craftily deceive ourselves, using the term "minority issue" to replace the proper definition, "moral issue." All of us are at best only sinners saved by God's loving forgiveness. But we have an incredible way of categorizing sin. Some sins, we think, are more tolerable than others. Corrie Ten Boom often referred to people within the established church as those who see themselves as "respectable sinners."

I used to have the kind of sin that no one would ever think of talking about, in or outside of the church. I kept that part of my life totally secret, living in constant shame and fear of being discovered. A statement made in many recovery settings is, "We are only as sick as our secrets."

I have spent the greatest part of my life on the auction block, sold unto my sin; my bodily members dutifully obeying the demands of such distorted thinking processes. My emotions were ravaged by wrong perceptions of myself and the world about me. I was a slave, not of Christ, but of the flesh, the world and the devil. It wasn't that I was a non-Christian, either. I loved Christ and His Church. I believed the time-tested Doctrines of the Church. I fully embraced the Scriptural teachings about my salvation, not in my good works, but in the redemptive power of God demonstrated through the cross and resurrection of Christ. But, I found that I was given to doing that which I knew in my mind was wrong to do. I knew that I was a practicing heathen by the secret things I constantly chose to do. The auction block was my home. And I allowed myself to be sold to the "lowest bidder."

What was it that kept me in such torment and so isolated? What sin was I caught in that prevented me from being the person God created me to be? How was I sold unto sin?

I began to attend a recovery group for those who are forsaking previous life-dominating forms of sexual immorality. I am yet a recovering sex-addict/transsexual. My life is daily being changed by the life-giving power of God, through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

It's interesting that we live in such a sex-crazed world and yet find it so difficult to admit our powerlessness over our sexual addictions and cravings. Our society winks its eye at sexual immorality and then hypocritically gasps in mock disbelief when someone gets caught. I've been in Christian ministry of one form or another since I was in college.

I have been married to the same lovely bride all of those years and have fathered two delightful children. But, for most of my married life I kept my secret ... a secret. My private emotional pain was only known to my parents, sibling, and wife. And even with her, the depth of my real anguish was never fully known by her.

Since my earliest recollections I believed that one segment of our population had life so much better. I grew up thinking that I would have been far more acceptable to my parents

and the world at large, if only I were a girl. I was clinically diagnosed as a transsexual; which caused me to live in a daily horror of not only being rejected by others (if they were to discover my secret!), but also by my Creator.

I recall the many times I would preach about Christ's redemption – while all the while wondering why that provision was not applicable to me? I stood for hours in front of the bathroom mirrors, creating what I had come to believe was what I should have been. My early childhood girlfriends had actually renamed me as we played house and dress-up. They called me Jennifer Elaine.

I lived in the awful shame of knowing that I was really a bad person, perhaps bound for hell, by my wicked choices. When other boys my age were going to bed at night asking for God to give them their new Tonka dump-truck, or for muscles like their Dad, I was praying that I would awaken the next morning as a girl.

When I was in my formative years, there were so many compliments and affirmations from unsuspecting parents and friends when I was dressed as Jenny. I do not really believe that these kinds of affirmations were intentionally given to hurt me, or set me up for a lifetime of personal self-hatred and contempt. It was simply that my parents really wanted a girl and thought it cute for me to dress as one. It proved to be anything but cute! Further fuel to the already raging fire was that I just never seemed to measure up to my Dad's expectations, or the expectations of other men. I much preferred the feelings of "being pretty," when fully or partially dressed with the other girls. And, I noted early-on how girls got the positive attention of men, not the kind of attention I received as one of them

I could relate better to other girls and really preferred their glamorous world to mine. I wanted more than anything to be accepted as one of their kind. It was not that I was "born that way and should then celebrate it," for it was a distinct series of choices that I made which established my sexual and gender identity brokenness.

I am perplexed by the common explanation that people are created by God to be sexually deviant...and then judged to hell by the same God who made them that way; and that we should just accept it all as God's doing. If that be true, then all I'm capable of doing is distrusting and hating the God who would do such a thing to an innocent male-child.

The fact is that it was by many thousands of self-willed choices, I eventually sold my heart to the many sensual bidders. Why would the church of Christ accept so glibly the lies that are perpetrated by those who have failed to embrace and live in the Truth; saying that there is no hope for such poor souls – that it's really God's doing after all? Hitler's murdering political machine was correct when it said, "Tell a lie often and long enough and it will eventually be believed."

You have seen the television talk shows telling their stories of never having been happier than they are now, thanks to the marvelous intervention of their sex change surgeon. They declare that it's the panacea, the best and only real recourse that has lasting good effects. But what you have not listened to are the nightmarish accounts of those who have discovered, albeit too late, that the promises of the sex change industry cannot be truly delivered; that the emotional pain cannot be excised by the "sex change surgeon's"

scalpel.

Years ago I came to the conclusion that my life was entirely too miserable to continue.

Suicide became a desirable option, though a professing Christian believer. I was being sold on the auction block of the bidders of sensual fantasy and illusion, compulsive and insatiable lusts of the flesh ... and the quest for more immediate self-gratification.

It was only after I had acquired a distaste for the metallic end of the pistol barrel that I dared to reveal my secret to a trusted Christian Psychotherapist. I showed him the photos of myself when dressed as Jennifer and told him everything in order to rid myself of the horrid secrets; along with the source of my personal shame and self-hatred. I asked, "Is there really any hope for me?" He answered, "Yes, for I don't know of any human condition that God cannot touch and remedy." I believed him.

I have since discovered how freeing it is to share with others my secrets. I routinely open up my life's struggles with others. I just as regularly receive from them their unconditional love, prayers, and inviting welcome into their lives, no matter what my personal struggle has been. I have placed myself in the direct accountability group setting for the purpose of living as God had fully intended: a man.

I've had to unlearn many of the destructive patterns of an unrenewed mind and to actively combat old feelings which before would have again placed me up for sale to the many bidders of sexual sensuality.

Now when I encounter old thought patterns and the incessant temptations to medicate myself in the old ways, there is in place a network of brothers who know all about me; and to whom I can turn for support. I have also the working awareness that God is my first and best resource for personal healing and restoration. I no longer play the role of the victim. I have clear-cut choices to make each and every day.

When it feels like the old auction-block days, when I stood there passively awaiting the call of the lowest bidder, knowing that I had repeatedly sold myself into degrading sin,

I have chosen instead to declare my independence, proclaiming, "Will you, Holy Spirit, rescue me from this old way of doing things? Thanks be to God, I know you are and will." God has given me many precious people who give me additional cause for rejoicing because they see the good in me and affirm it, saying:

My wife: "You are the man of my heart and a precious son to God, our Father."

My brothers and sisters in the Faith attest: "I respect you so much for being a victor, not a victim."

My children say: "I'm so proud of you, Dad, for loving us enough to fight hell and reject the pathway so many have chosen. Thanks for loving us more than yourself."

My inner man now affirms: "I am worth more than the price I have before sold myself into the continuing anguish and sinful choices."



Thanks to the redemptive work of God and the ongoing daily appropriations of Grace, I can write you the encouragement,

“There is hope for you, too! No more auction block for you!”

#7



Goodbye, My Love, Beth!

Ours has been a long romance, a dance so often enjoyed.
Your embrace will surely be missed.
The kiss of your look, your appeal.
Jenny, our romance has brought such an admixture of elation and sorrow.
But that's how it is with a true "first love."

Remember how you were there to comfort me when I was but three, if not before?
Your touch, fragrance, inexpressible charm and beauty have swept me off my feet more than once, you recall.
Just to feel you again so close...
to see and feel myself transformed in being in and with you.
These are now memories I must abandon, forsake.

Far more dependable than any human love, you have been to me, or so it has seemed.
You have been available
no matter the time of day, or night.
To listen, to protect, to shield from other harm.
To hold close to your welcoming maternal breast;
the feminine softness of your enfolding gown.
Oh, the joy! The elation of once more seeing you.
Being one with you.

But, I cannot continue in this accursed romance, this game, this adulterous affair.

Our love for each other is not of God's design, not blessed, perhaps cursed!

For you see, I have another love.
His beauty far surpasses your own.
Oh! Please forgive me, my darling, my first love.
I mean you no harm by saying that.
It's just that He, the Everlasting Father of us all has said,
"I am jealous over you and want you for my own;
a love that cannot be shared with any other."
And I know he means what He says.
To make things clear, He demands I make Him my first love!

Yes! I know that He is the Unseen One ...
while your tangible and sensuous beauty is everything to satisfy
my momentary longings;
to bring immediate comfort to my wounded, lonely and
frightened heart.
But, listen to Him say,
"I am the One who gave you mortal life and the assurance of life
eternal with Me.
I have always answered your prayers.
I have looked after you many more times than Jenny or anyone
else.
I have protected you, directed you, comforted you, understood
you, and loved you,
not with just a temporal love, or for my selfish pleasure;
but with the infusion of inner ability to make right choices and
forsake all idolatrous forms of love-making.
You are mine! I have purchased you, not with jewels, but with
My Life!
I demand that you love me with all of your heart, and with all of
your soul, and with all of your mind."

When He stopped and turned and thought about my affair with
you, Jenny, he broke out into language of utter amazement,
saying, "Be appalled, O Heavens, at this, be shocked, be utterly
desolate, for Kevin has previously forsaken Me, the fountain of
living waters, and instead has turned the hewn out cisterns of
sensuous love that Kevin offers, which cannot truly quench his
thirst."

I remember all of the times we've had together.
We've laughed as we have viewed each other in the mirror or the
storefront window, or numberless photographs.
We've thrilled to the moments we've been seen again together ...
as one.
Yes, you and I have shared in the elation of our stolen moments.
But, no more!

I have so much to live for.

My true and everlasting Lover calls for my undivided affections.
My covenanted and ever-faithful bride awaits my undefiled,
unencumbered embrace.
My offspring request my masculine attention.
My soul longs for that which is real and eternally lasting.
So, though you have been my first love, I must now break off any
such relations with you.
A much Greater Love beckons me to follow and fully love,
completely and forever.
Goodbye, Beth!

#8

The Transsexual Life

By Jake



I had tried repeatedly from the earliest memories of my childhood to understand the innate compulsive drive to “recreate myself” as a daughter of my mother. It is nearly impossible to make a clean break from transsexual fantasies and a false identity; but it is possible with much care and assistance of those who can come alongside in a supportive role. Even then, it is an uphill climb all the way to lasting freedom. The person who identifies their inner persona as a member of the opposite gender/sex will at some point, by the admixture of one’s own confused heart and soul, as well as the self-focused politicized view found in the therapist’s domain, to consider entering into supportive therapy that validates their condition as a “true transsexual,” deserving of full recognition and physical alterations through “corrective surgical intervention.”

I am very content living as a man now. That reality has come ever-so-painfully and slowly and certainly not without the loving care of those who loved me and wanted to see me embrace the man God made me to be; not just to ease their pain, but most importantly to empower and enable me to take a stand against the negative and destructive self views I had acquired throughout my life.

I will attempt to make it very clear that no matter what extent of self-delusion may be present, and no matter how extensive one’s anatomical structure may be altered thorough chemical and invasive surgical arrangements, the one fact remains: A man cannot become a woman; a woman cannot become a man. Yes! Body parts can be magically reconstructed to assume the look, but will never be ‘the real-thing.’

Those men who make the choices to change their appearance from that of a male to a fantasy-female will inevitably grieve their loss and always know they have done a terrible wrong, though their faulty thinking will momentarily trick them into accepting terrible delusions; delusions which will never be able to truly produce what is promised so vociferously by the gender specialists, who apply their deceived psychotherapeutic and

physical restructuring and removal of what is otherwise perfectly sound & healthy flesh; not by the solutions found in sound psychiatry, but by the application of a surgical removal of viable and healthy flesh. I call it the “frontal lobotomy of the 21st century.” One day the world system will tire of this attempt to play God, or become sculptors or re-designers, using their talented art of plastic surgery; and they will then admit they have done their patients a horrid wrong by removing their perfectly sound human tissue and reconstructing it to fit their notions and ideas of what makes a male a male and a female a female.

I’ve have had the awe-inspiring privilege of working with over 1700 transsexuals since 1989 and have witnessed their ongoing deep misery, even following SRS, which doctors quickly attribute to grief and depression. I ask the question, “Why such a paradox among the post-operative transsexuals? They should be among the happiest and emotionally pleased specimen’s on the planet, not the most depressed and upset about their outcome.” Check it out for yourself: post-operative transsexuals are all-too-typically on a lengthy drug-list just to keep them afloat. Something is wrong with that picture.

We transsexuals are merely trying to solve our emotional problems through the modern technology of the surgeon’s well-practiced art; but in the end, when it should be all now settled; there is still inside the radical mood changes and unending vacillation; accompanied by unexplainable bouts with emotional unrest and excruciating soul- pain. Why?

It is my hope that you will see within the content of this website a solution to the bewildering condition called transsexuality. If you would care to write us, please do so. It’s always great to hear from others who are on their journey of becoming whole. My appeal is that in the hearing of an alternative, you will no longer believe the lies and stop filling physician’s bank accounts with your hard-earned money. There is hope for you to be counted among those who overcome otherwise unbeatable odds.

#9

Are Transsexuals Born that way

by: Neil Whitehead

Most transsexuals believe that their longing for sex-change is biologically determined. However there is no real evidence for a biological basis for transsexuality in terms of measurable differences in genes, brain microstructure or physiology. Like homosexuality, transsexuality appears to be the result of a complex interaction between biology, social environment and personal choice. Relationships between the sexes are intended to mirror that between Christ and his bride, the church. Transsexuality is therefore wrong; but the Christian response should not be judgment, but rather love and compassion, providing the means and support for a change in behavior. As more studies are produced and misreported each year, so the gap between scientific thought and popular belief widens.

Only about 5% of cross-dressers, or transvestites, have any desire to be the opposite sex, but those who do are often convinced they are trapped in the wrong body.[1] One in thirty thousand of the population is transsexual, with more men than women being

affected. To meet their demands, ten thousand sex-change operations have been done to date,[2] creating people physically of one sex but chromosomally of the other. Despite this high absolute figure, only a small proportion of transsexuals actually undergo surgery. A significant number withdraw for reasons of unsuitability of appearance, psychological instability or expense, although some resort to prostitution for financing. Many refuse essential preparation such as living successfully two years as the opposite sex, and fail to keep follow-up appointments, thus disqualifying themselves from surgery.

Many transsexuals are therefore frustrated; they do not undergo surgery yet continue to live as the opposite sex. Loneliness is a significant problem[2] and comes on top of a surprisingly high rate of psychiatric disturbance.[3,4] A significant minority regret even a successful operation.

The question arises as to whether these people should have special rights. The Civil Rights movement in the USA produced case law that said one criterion for new rights was the unalterable nature of a given condition (e.g.. black skin). Groups such as transsexuals and homosexuals[5] therefore argue that their biology determines their sexual orientation. This strikes a chord with many, particularly sympathetic Christians. This is a modern argument as fifty years ago,90% of homosexuals believed they were not born that way while today, most transsexuals think that their longing for sex- change is innate, biology-derived and unchangeable -a standpoint known as 'determinism '.

Transsexual rights

Men and women who have undergone sex-change operations may be allowed to marry and adopt children under new proposals drawn up by Home Office Ministers. It is currently illegal for Britain's 5,000 transsexuals to have their original sex altered on their birth certificate. However last year they won the right under the Sex Discrimination Act to have their new gender recorded on passports and driving licenses; and also to have sex change operations on the NHS. Civil liberties groups claim that Britain is out of step with the rest of Europe where, with the exception of Andorra, Albania and Ireland, transsexuals are not prevented from marrying. The Evangelical Alliance is opposed to any change in the law. The issue hit the headlines in June this year when the Bishop of Bristol, Barry Rogerson, gave his blessing to a vicar having a sex change operation. (Daily Telegraph 2000; 22 July)

Biologists discarded behavioral determinism decades ago yet politicians and activists still cling to this theory. Even sociobiologists such as E.O. Wilson deny determinism:

'Scientists never speak of genes causing behavior except as a kind of laboratory shorthand and they never mean it literally '.

Downright maverick is the opinion of Richard Dawkins: 'We are survival machines - robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes '.

Identical twin studies have been carried out to determine the degree of influence of genes on transsexual behavior. Identical twins (virtually always) have identical genes so if genes directly cause sexual orientation, both twins should demonstrate the same orientation. Few twin studies on transsexual behavior have been conducted, so studies on homosexual behavior are examined. It has been shown that homosexual behavior in co-

twins is 50% or less. One small study [6] on four monozygotic male twin pairs, one of whom was transsexual, showed only one pair to be concordant in transsexual behavior. Genes do not, therefore, exclusively determine homosexual or transsexual behavior, so we are not compelled to believe in determinism.

Transsexuals (and homosexuals) argue that studies have shown that their brain microstructure is more feminine. [7,8] While it is difficult to determine whether brain structure in a particular person is produced by or influences their behavior, the most unequivocal evidence is that structures are produced by long-continued behavior. It is known that the brain changes physically in response to our behavior - London taxi drivers, for example, have an enlarged part of the brain dealing with navigation! Transsexual brain differences are therefore more likely to be the result of transsexual behavior, rather than its cause.

Studies on enzymic and hormonal abnormalities, physical dexterity, auditory phenomena and psychological profiles of transsexuals have also been carried out. [9,10] There is little consistency between the studies, they are poorly replicable and only demonstrate minor links between sexual behavior and the variables studied. Physiological differences cannot therefore be claimed to determine or even influence sexual orientation.

Many transsexuals (and homosexuals) showed childhood gender non-conformity with boys displaying girlish behavior and girls acting as tomboys. [11] Only a small minority of these children become homosexual or lesbian, and a much smaller proportion become transsexual. Early sexual experience or distant fathers may be a factor in the development of sexual orientation in some boys, but only a minority progress to adult homosexuality, let alone transsexuality.

Unfortunately, the language used by the media to describe homosexuality and transsexuality often appears to support determinism. A scientific study which suggests a correlation or link between transsexual or homosexual behavior and brain structure or hormones, for example, is reported as showing that these behaviors have a 'biological basis' or are 'genetic' or 'due to hormones'. The actual strength of the correlation is rarely mentioned. As more of these studies are produced and misreported each year, so the gap between scientific thought and popular belief widens.

There is thus no evidence for the political case that transsexualism is an unalterable condition and therefore there is no basis for special civil rights to be granted to transsexuals. Behavior genetics, for all its faults, has established that all behaviors are a mixture of genes, family environment, unique circumstances, and individual choice. No one forces us into a given behavior. The influence of each factor may be alterable; for example the contribution of genes may be minimized by more intervention from the environment. It may become clear with time to an individual that his will can be used to support genetic tendencies or fight against them. Sexual orientation may be established in adolescence and people may make such lifestyle and belief changes that they come to believe that they were born that way. It is these individuals in particular who come to the attention of clinicians, yet this sample is highly biased and gives the false impression that all transsexual behavior is equally entrenched and difficult to alter.

What should the Christian response to this difficult area be? I suggest that the ideal for a

Christian in the medical profession is that any behavior or practice should be done 'on earth as it is in heaven'. [12] Relationships between the sexes are supposed to mirror the relationship between Christ and his perfected bride. It must therefore be asked whether a particular sexual activity mirrors the final glorious and pure relationship found at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Divorce is inappropriate for a Christian because Jesus will never divorce his bride. Homosexuality (however loving it may be) is wrong because it does not reflect the relationship. Transsexuality is wrong because it tries to alter the pattern.

As Christians, however, we must be careful not to condemn a particular wrong in others. We are all wrong-doers very much in need of God's daily grace, help and forgiveness in our lives to enable us to become more like Christ. Jesus condemned the Pharisees, 'They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them'. [13] We as Christians should show love and compassion towards transsexuals and provide the means and support for a change in behavior.

For a Christian transsexual, at least, this ideal must be slowly and gently presented, preferably with personal testimony from those who have reached it. Skilled psychotherapeutic help is often needed. In the USA I know of one such specialist transsexual Christian counseling ministry. For the non-Christian transsexual, however, change in behavior is still possible, although it may not be deemed necessary and may even be discouraged in today's Western culture.

So is it possible to change? Definitely. I have personally met some who have slowly lost their lonely longing. It is possible to come to believe that God has made us physically, and intends that we are fulfilled as he made us. It is possible to lose desire to become a member of the opposite sex, and then to marry. It is possible to find fulfillment, particularly in Jesus, and to believe that problems here on Earth are negligible compared with the future glory. It is possible with God's help to become the people God wants us to be.

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12. Matthew 6:10b
13. Matthew 23:4

#10

“Oh yes, I’m a great pretender,

Pretending I’m doing so well.

My need is such I pretend too much,

I’m lonely, but no one can tell.”

I have already shared about my role as a “keeper of the secret,” and how much exposure was necessary for both Jerry and I to begin the healing process. Now, as I reflect on my ‘history’ during the first twenty years of our marriage, I realize why I was able to hide the truth from others so successfully. Most of the time, I hid it from myself.

I was the ‘great pretender.’ Instead of telling myself the truth about the situation, I told myself what I wanted the truth to be. I played, “let’s pretend.”

Let’s pretend that it won’t happen again.

Let’s pretend that I’m not hurting so badly.

Let’s pretend that my needs aren’t really that important.

Let's pretend that (since they don't know about it), this is not affecting our children.

Let's pretend that his anger isn't all that bad.

Let's pretend that things won't get any worse.

Let's pretend that he's going to tell the truth from now on.

Let's pretend that my love for him will cause him to change.

Let's pretend that, except for this, we have a great marriage.

A paragraph in Rich Buller's book, *Pain and Pretending*, could have been taken from my journal:

"Stuff the pain and the knowledge of what caused it down deep inside. I lock it in a sealed room where I don't want to venture and where I don't want to take anyone else. The wound, even though it is not healed, is covered up, hidden. And I set about constructing my life in which I pretend as though what happened to me did not happen or that I do not feel the pain of it." [1]

In her book, *An Affair of the Mind*, Laurie Hall (whose life was devastated by her husband's addiction to pornography and prostitutes) pinpoints why many of us choose pretending over reality:

"If God wants to give us a lamp for our darkness, why do we keep quenching it? Because we're afraid that the darkness will destroy us. That fear causes us to shove the darkness into a room, bolt the door, and hang up a No Trespassing sign. Then, just in case the lock doesn't work, with our hearts beating furiously and our breath coming in rapid, shallow gulps, we press our backs into the door with all our might. We dedicate ourselves to this post with eternal vigilance. [2]

But there is a high price to pay for eternal vigilance. Exhaustion. Panic Attacks. Depression. Emotional breakdown.

"It's time we stopped playing "Let's pretend" and began to walk into the truth – truth about ourselves, our husbands, our situations, and truth about God Himself. Pretending is great fun for children, but a deadly game for us. We are told in 1 Corinthians 13:11 that "when I was a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; Now that I am an adult, I'm done with childish ways and have put them aside."

It's time to 'buckle up!' Because somewhere in the midst of the struggle, we've let our belt slip! Ephesians 6:4 reminds us to "Stand therefore – hold your ground – having tightened the belt of truth around your loins."

"As you travel toward recovery, you must learn to value truth above all else – to cherish discovering it, knowing it, and making decisions based on it. Until now, you have been dedicated to avoiding pain at all cost. If you were headed toward pain, you automatically chose a different course, regardless of whether or not the new direction was one of health.

If I want to solve my problem, I frequently have to walk in the direction of pain, not because I like pain but because I want to know the truth, which happens to be somewhere in the direction of the pain.”[3]

It’s time to take down the “No Trespassing” sign that’s been blocking the door to truth. Listen to the counsel of Laurie Hall, a wife who has truly walked in your shoes:

“Let me tell you something. The power isn’t in what’s behind the door. The power is in the fear that keeps the door locked. Yes, there’s lots of pain behind the door, and yes, you will have to grieve your losses, but it will not destroy you. The pain will not kill you. Not taking the pain out is what will kill you. Not shining the light into the darkness is what will destroy you. Here’s a promise that can give you the courage to let God shine His Light of Truth into that locked darkness of denial: “The Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never empowered it – put it out, or ... absorbed it.” (John 1:5)[4]

The best way out is always ‘through.’[5]

In the movie, *Shawshank Redemption*, a man who has been long imprisoned escapes to freedom through a large sewage pipe. You watch him gasping, sometimes retching, as he sloshes through the muck and putrefaction. But he never turns back. He knows the best way out is through. Finally, he emerges on the “freedom-end.” What exultation! What release! What joy! And as the rains pour down, washing away the filth, he raises his hands in triumph!

Here’s a promise from Father when we’ve decided to “risk the sewage pipe.”

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, for they will not overwhelm you; when you walk through the fire you shall not be burned or scorched, nor shall the flames kindle upon you. For I am the LORD our GOD, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior ... you are precious in My sight, and honored, and I love you ... fear not for I am with you.” (Isaiah 43:2-5).

Let the journey begin ...

[1] Rich Buller, *Pain and Pretending*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988, p. 101.

[2] Laurie Hall, *An Affair of the Mind* (Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family, 1996), p. 150

[3] Buhler, 134.

[4] Hall, 150.

[5] Hall, 177.