

# Transgender Health

## & *Spiritual Well-Being*



Counseling Christians  
With Gender Identity Issues

*Light*  
in the Closet

Light in the Closet Ministry



## CONTENTS

What is Transgender? .....	2
Gender Identity Disorder (GID) .....	3
Mental and Medical Health for the Transgender Individual .....	4
But I've never heard of this before! .....	7
Isn't this best kept a secret? .....	9
Challenging the Polarized Gender Model .....	10
Counseling Guidelines and Helps.....	11
RESOURCE SECTION	
Transgender Population Information .....	14
Transgender Education and Support.....	15
Light in the Closet Article Lists Questions and Biblical Answers .....	17
Reference and Glossary .....	20

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*Light*  
in the Closet  
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

# Transgender Health

## & Spiritual Well-Being



**T**his publication is designed as a reference and help for the pastor or caregiver who is faced with the issue of gender identity during the counseling process.

The information and guidelines offered are not a replacement for professional, medical or psychological care. When it becomes evident, during counseling, that a care receiver needs professional care, those avenues should be pursued.

*(See the resource section and the Light in the Closet website.)*

Some may wonder if the topic of gender identity or cross-dressing is outside the scope of church care. To those I would say that Jesus desires us to be honest with him and each other, and sometimes that honesty is a bit messy. Jesus never rejected anyone who came to him.

***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*** - Matthew 11:28

***Light in the Closet*** is here to help support you as you best discover how to support your gender variant and transgender members.

# *What is Transgender?*



**T**he word, “transgender” is often used as an umbrella term for any person who bends the so-called traditional male and female gender roles. It usually applies to individuals whose gender identity is skewed towards the gender opposite their legal birth gender. They may identify in part or in full with this other gender. Included are cross-dressers<sup>1</sup>, trans-sexuals<sup>2</sup>, transgenderist<sup>3</sup>, transvestites<sup>4</sup>, and androgynes<sup>5</sup>. Some transgender individuals dress in a non-specific or androgynous gender fashion. Most express their gender identity by wearing clothing associated with the “other” gender and participating in social activities typical for a person of that gender. There are many individuals who simply identify as transgender without citing a specific sub-category or expression. The “transgender community” is a diverse group, including nonbinary<sup>6</sup> and genderqueer<sup>7</sup> individuals, and is estimated to include 1.6 million people in the United States as of 2025.

Those who struggle with something as fundamental as gender may find themselves dealing with social stigma or isolation. Their internal struggles, frustrations and desires can keep them closed off from family, friends and their church community. Those dealing with the highly controversial issue of gender variance are well-practiced at hiding these inner struggles and so “blend in” with the other church members.

The first question usually asked a trans woman, or trans man is, “Are you gay?” Being transgender or trans is not a matter of sexual orientation. Often a person who is transgender is equated with a person who is homosexual. Many people are surprised to learn that the percentage of trans persons who identify as homosexual is the same as the general population.

The issue of gender identity is distinct from the issue of sexuality. People are sexual beings regardless of gender identity and those impulses exist regardless. It is important to have a discussion about gender that is separate from sexual drives.



### *Gender Identity Disorder (GID)*

**T**he term, Gender Identity Disorder, is used by the medical and psychiatric communities to identify patients who are having difficulties with their gender identity. It is the most common term applied to transgender people. This term is widely used in order to classify gender incongruity as a medical condition, a condition that needs medical intervention. The amount of intervention is usually determined or requested by the transgender person. GID is treated as a life-long condition

However, there is a growing movement to normalize gender fluidity and gender variance as being natural life expressions not requiring medical intervention. Better terms to use are “gender congruency” or “incongruence.” GID may still be brought about by crisis or a life change that leads to issues of self-identity in terms of gender.

The “Harry Benjamin Standards of Care” had defined treatment for those exhibiting GID since 1979. The standards of care today have been published by WPATH. The last version, was released in September of 2022. As our Western society begins to understand, and recognize, diverse gender expressions as natural and valid, the medical community may move away from the idea of disorder.



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As new information becomes available, more treatment options and resources do as well. The “one size fits all” approach is giving way to individualized support and treatment. It is up to the individual to determine what is best. LITC believes that calling the transgender condition a “gender disorder” is inaccurate. We prefer the terms “gender-congruency, and gender-incongruency.”

Defining gender variance as a disorder effectively validates the idea that male and female (gender-polarization) are the only valid gender forms. In January 2025, president Trump issued a presidential order declaring only two biological genders valid, and thus halting gender diversity programs.



## *Mental and Medical Health for the Transgender Individual*

**G**ender clinics enjoyed an earnest beginning in the 1960s. They focused almost exclusively on the transsexual. By the late 1970s, it became obvious that the academic physicians and psychologist were more interested in promoting theory rather than helping transsexuals live better lives, this attitude has since become unpopular. Since then gender care has become more inclusive offering services to a wide range of individuals under the transgender umbrella. Lists of surgeons and clinics that provide gender-affirming surgery services are available through resources like the TransHealthCare website.

In the 2020s, healthcare for transgender persons was under attack. Over a thousand anti-trans legislations have been considered on the state and federal level that would restrict or eliminate access to needed healthcare, education, legal recognition, and the right to publicly exist. Even so, many healthcare professionals remain dedicated to provide quality care.



A good gender specialist understands that each individual's needs are unique. Historically, if a person was not self-identified specifically as a transsexual, they were often denied mental health services or medical treatment since they fell outside of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)\* Model. This changed somewhat in 1994, when the DSM IV entry was changed from "transsexual" to "gender identity disorder" (GID).

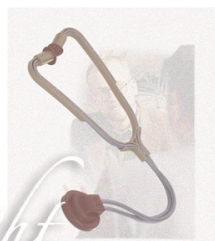
The biggest challenge facing the transgender community today has been to develop a non-pathologizing support model that protects the individual's right for self-identification. As a result, many of the old descriptive gender labels are being challenged.

Most transgender persons are well practiced in hiding the truth about their gender identity. They suppress their inner struggles hoping to overcome them by an act of sheer self-will. When suppressed, gender-identity issues intensify during times of significant personal change or crisis. Unfortunately, many seek help only during these times. Crisis mode is generally a poor time to make life-altering decisions.

For the most part, transgender individuals are emotionally balanced, but the lack of acceptance by society often creates significant challenges and difficulties. The church should be one of the places where a transgender person can find acceptance and support. Unfortunately, most churches reflect the attitudes and cultural bias of society as a whole, and this group remains misunderstood and under-served.

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\*DSM: Produced by the American Psychiatric Association providing diagnostic criteria for mental disorders. Used by clinicians, researchers, psychiatric drug regulation agencies, health insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies and policy makers.



Often the combination of internal and external struggles will lead to gender dysphoria<sup>8</sup>. This can manifest itself in unhealthy coping mechanisms including, self-abuse, addictions, relationship difficulties, moodiness, depression and even suicide.

Millions of Americans deal with uncertainty or emotional distress regarding their gender identity. What should be a natural process of self-examination is often treated as a pathological condition. The negative reactions a transgender individual experiences in their gender exploration is daily and life-long. The constant barrage and ridicule is evidenced in peer-stigma, social isolation, emotional frustration and distorted self-image. These abuses by society and peers are often echoed in the medical community through denial of health care or mis-diagnosis. Many pastors see this struggle as a spiritual one and disregard the emotional, psychological and medical needs.

It is important for transgender persons, especially those dealing with GID, to get good support counseling and seek out a social group that is accepting. Counseling sessions or support groups should strive to create an atmosphere of normalcy and inclusion. A care provider should be aware that, although some studies have shown a higher-than-normal incidence of personality disorders, psychosis and mental illness among transgender individuals, there has never been a reliable control group to ascertain the validity of such studies. One dynamic not taken into account is the fact that many transgender individuals experience uncommonly severe social stresses such as discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, violence, abandonment by family, friends and church, loss of employment and poor job options. These external pressures, if relieved, can help to foster emotional healing, and eventually create a better self-image.

## *But I've never heard of this before!*

**G**ender is a person's single most important defining characteristic. It permeates every aspect of our lives. Our gender influences everything we do: how we should behave, what we should wear, who we associate with, what job we can pursue, and who we can love.

Since most of those who struggle with gender identity do so in secret, many pastors are under the impression their congregation doesn't include any transgender or gender-variant people (those who do not fit a particular gender profile). They remain unaware that statistically, an average of 2-10% of their congregation could be in a gender identity crisis. The reason so many stay closeted is due in part to the fact that many in the Church feel gender-variant people are unacceptable and unnatural. A profound lack of information and understanding keeps those with gender identity issues silent.

The Western Church has historically turned a blind eye towards gender-variant people and written them off as outside of God's care or concern. Those who do seek help find little support and are often expelled from most mainstream denominations. The grace that is preached from the pulpit, which is intended to cover all God's children, often fails to extend to those who by their nature, nurture or choice do not conform to the accepted polarized gender model.

Those who do not consider themselves gender-variant may find it difficult to understand those who are. Although very few people embrace the absolute polarized models of male and female, they can at least identify more towards one gender over the other. This usually aligns with their legal initial birth gender.

However, imagine if you will that you had to live your life as the gender opposite your birth gender. If you were born a boy, how would you feel being forced to live your life now as a woman? How would you cope, if you were born female and forced to live your life as a male? Imagine if from a very early age you felt that there was something wrong or shameful about your body;

- ◆ that you can never be fully known or accepted as you are.
- ◆ that whatever is different about you must be kept a secret.
- ◆ that you can never be what your family expects you to be.
- ◆ that if you expressed yourself fully, you would be criticized, punished or rejected.
- ◆ that who you are is a deep disappointment to those you love and depend on.

Imagine life on those terms. Then, picture the church adding to this condemnation and preaching that “who you are” is displeasing to God. No wonder the attempted suicide rate for those who are transgender with GID may be as high as 50% by the time they are 30 years of age.\*

*\*Some information adapted from “Made in God’s Image” by Ann Thompson Cook  
Published by Dumbarton United Methodist Church, Washington DC 2003.*

## *Isn't this best kept a secret?*

**I**s dealing openly with highly personal issues really necessary?

God asks us to be honest with Him (1 Chronicles 29: 17). He desires that we pursue Christ with our whole heart, mind and spirit. For us to be effective in Christian service we should be fully integrated people. All aspects of our personality should be open and subject to the authority of God.

When we hide a secret or live a double life, we close off the power of God to move within us, which greatly cripples our ability to follow him. Confessing our struggles to God and each other is important if we are to pursue a grace-filled, abundant life. *"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* (John 10:10)

In the book, "Speaking the Truth in Love - How to be an Assertive Christian," by Ruth Koch and Kenneth Haugk, the authors state:

*"Of course the fully integrated personality is the ideal. Human beings are all less than fully integrated. In fact, one of the life tasks for everyone is to move in the direction of more fully integrating all the separate components of his or her personality... What was whole at creation was broken and fragmented by sin, and Jesus has come personally into history and into individual lives to restore wholeness... God is willing to supply, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the wholeness that you need."*

Confessing struggles, weaknesses and failings, and pursuing self-acceptance is critical to becoming a fully integrated person. Caregivers and pastors have a powerful opportunity to encourage those members who are part of the transgender community to live an integrated life.



## *Challenging the Polarized Gender Model*

**T**he issue of gender identity is not new. The gender-polarized society (male and female) has been called into question many times throughout history, both socially and by the medical community. Political and social pressures can be immense and many in the transgender community find themselves in oppressive and demeaning situations where their fundamental rights are restricted or eliminated. Even the right to exist has been under attack. Acts of resistance to the limitations of western social gender roles and gender diversity oppressions continue.

Some have taken dramatic personal steps to carve out a lifestyle that expresses their individuality. Those who decide to embrace and honestly examine their gender identity often find themselves on the outside of most social situations, including family events and church participation. Most, as a result, find it difficult to go against cultural gender stereotypes. Those who feel they do not align socially or psychologically with their birth gender, sometimes fight their natural impulses in order to conform. This usually leads to a closed and guarded life full of frustration as well as a poor self-image.

For some, frustration with gender identity is momentary and fleeting. For others, it is more pronounced and causes uneasiness on a daily basis. Their discomfort with their assigned gender role creates a paradigm break. These usually opt to live life completely in the role of their preferred gender or in a gender neutral way, focused on person-hood.

Even though discomfort with gender is well documented, very few have addressed this issue as it should be addressed, especially within the mainstream church. Much of the discussion in the church is related to the issue of wrong and right. Only in recent years has serious the Church

given attention to the issue of gender identity as it relates to mental and physical health. Jesus spoke about gender-based social expectations in Matthew 19. He cited three conditions in regards to the saris<sup>9</sup> (translated eunuch): the human condition, social upbringing, and free will (nurture, nature, choice).

Regardless of the reasons why a person is frustrated with their gender identity or gender role in society, the issue needs to be addressed by the church and real help should be readily available in as non-threatening a way as possible. These children of God need to be affirmed that they are children of God. The process a person goes through to come to terms both mentally and physically with GID should be within the scope of church care ministries.



## *Counseling Guidelines and Helps*

**B**elow is a list of helpful counseling suggestions for caregivers counseling a transgender care receiver.

- 1** Provide a safe and private location to discuss the issue.
- 2** Begin, continue and end in prayer.
- 3** Affirm, reflect, inquire.

**Affirm:** Let them know you will listen without passing judgment. Affirm the emotions behind their words and let them know it is OK to talk to you.

**Reflect:** Reflect back their comments by rewording them.

**Inquire:** Show your interest by asking them to continue.

Example of a typical question:

**Care receiver says:** *"Hi, my name is Bill. I have been cross-dressing for years and you are the first person I have told this to. I am scared because my wife found a pair of ladies underwear under our bed and they are not hers. She has always trusted me, but now thinks I might be having an affair. I am freaking out."*

**Caregiver responds:** *"Hi Bill. I am so glad you found the courage to come here and talk about this with me. Please know that whatever you say to me will stay between the two of us. I can hear in your voice how scary this must be for you. (Allow them to respond emotionally. If no response then continue.) It says a lot about your marriage that your wife trusts you. How long have you been married? Tell me more about what happened."*

- 4 Treat them with respect and dignity.
- 5 Do not judge them. Let them know they are welcomed and valued.
- 6 Watch your body language. Keep an open and listening demeanor. Lean forward, and make eye contact. Avoid sitting back in your chair, folding your arms or scowling. What is revealed in this conversation may catch you off guard, so be prepared for the unexpected.
- 7 Keep your focus and conversation on care-related issues. You might be curious as to their motives and activities, but be patient and let them volunteer information as they are ready.

- 8 Do not react with negative judgment towards actions that you feel are questionable; rather redirect the conversation towards healthy discovery.
- 9 Ask them to self-identify. This may be the first time they have “come out” to anyone. They just may need a shoulder to cry on. Not all problems need to be fixed. If you attempt to “answer” every question you may appear to be uninterested in the emotions they are going through. Labels can be risky and care providers are advised that no one label is inclusive.
- 10 More often than not, those who deal with gender identity issues have been doing so for a long time. They are very aware of the religious and cultural taboos that surround gender identity issues. They do not need a lecture on morality.
- 11 Do not offer advice unless it is solicited. If you encounter specific needs, point them to a professional care provider who is licensed and trained. Do not attempt to solve issues or problems you are not trained to handle.
- 12 Those dealing with this issue often have ideas of suicide as a way to escape. Do what you can to encourage them that this is not a good option. Also have resources readily available for them.
- 13 Address them with the gender specific pronouns that are in line with the gender they are presenting. If you are unsure, then ask how they wish to be addressed.  
(She, her / they, them / he, him)

*Light in the Closet* caregivers are available by email or telephone.

## Transgender Population Information

*From the UCLA Williams Institute concerning transgender in the US*

As of 2020 there are an estimated 1.6 million people who identify as transgender in the US according to University of California Los Angeles. This is less than one percent of the population. Recent data provided an opportunity to update prior population estimates. The Williams Institute used data from the 2014-15 BRFSS to estimate the number of adults (ages 18 and older) and youth (ages 13 to 17) who identify as transgender. Since then, a total of 43 states have used the BRFSS optional gender identity module for at least one year, providing more years of data from more states since these initial estimates.

In 2020 about 1.3 million adults in the U.S. (18+ years-old) identify as transgender. About 500,000 are transgender women, 480,000 are transgender men, and 320,000 are gender nonconforming. Among youth (ages 13 to 17) in the U.S. about 300,000 identify as transgender.

Overall, based on estimates from 2014-2020 the percentage and number of adults, compared to the overall population, who identify as transgender has remained steady. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data has given us a better understanding of the youth gender identity profile. Youth ages 13 to 17 comprise 18% of the entire transgender-identified population in the U.S., up from 10% who identified as transgender previously. Some of this increase is due to a wider range of identity “labels” being included under the transgender umbrella.

Of course, education and acceptance will account for much of the increase overall in youth and adults in the past 15 years. With the anti-trans environment in 2025, the number of self-identified trans youth and adults will likely begin to decline as more individuals are hesitant or fearful in coming out.

A very comprehensive survey was published in 2022 by “U.S. Transgender Survey” and is accessed at: [ustranssurvey.org](https://ustranssurvey.org).

## Transgender Education and Support

### ADVOCATES FOR TRANS EQUALITY (was NCTE)

*Advancing equality through advocacy, collaboration and empowerment.*

National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) was founded in 2003 by transgender activists who saw the urgent need for a consistent voice in Washington DC for transgender people. Leveraging decades of experience on the frontlines of power, we shift government and society towards a future where we are no less than equal. A4TE was formed in 2024 as NCTE and Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF), two long-time champions for the trans community, merged together as one organization. A4TE builds on their successes to boldly imagine a world where trans people live our lives joyfully and without barriers.

For more information contact:

**[transequality.org](https://transequality.org)**

### GLAAD RELIGION AND VALUES PROGRAM

*Changing hearts and minds*

As more and more faith traditions take steps to embrace and support LGBT people, GLAAD is working to ensure that mainstream media outlets reflect this progress and show the growing acceptance of LGBT people and issues in many faith communities. The Religion, Faith & Values team works with denominational groups and faith leaders to help elevate their voices in the mainstream media, and works with both mainstream and faith based media outlets to ensure that the stories of inclusive faith leaders and communities appear in the media.

For more information please visit:

**[glaad.org/faith-groups](https://glaad.org/faith-groups)**

### DIABLO VALLEY GIRLS

*Northern California (East Bay) Support Group - Located in Diablo Valley*

If you can make it to the SF Bay Area, the Diablo Valley Girls (DVG) might be a good fit! They are a social and support group serving the cross-dressing and transgender community in Northern California. They have attendees from all over Nor Cal.

For more information please visit:

**[diablovalleygirls.com](https://diablovalleygirls.com)**



**GENDER SPECTRUM EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

*Providing education, resources and training to help create a gender sensitive and supportive environment.*

Gender Spectrum Education and Training is committed to creating a more supportive world for people of all genders. They do this by increasing awareness and understanding of the normal range of gender variations found in everyone.

Whether you are familiar with gender variance or are just starting to learn about gender identity and expression, Gender Spectrum Education and Training can help you create a more gender sensitive and supportive environment for all people, including gender-variant and transgender youth.

For more information please visit:

**[genderspectrum.com](https://genderspectrum.com)**

**HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN (HRC)\***

*HRC Religion and Faith Program*

Their mission is to change the conversation about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and faith. Because of the pioneering efforts of brave religious people speaking out for equality, a new movement for change is emerging that embraces a culture of welcome, compassion, and hospitality. These are values at the heart of all our faith traditions.

For more information please visit:

**[hrc.org/resources/religion-faith](https://hrc.org/resources/religion-faith)**

**BETTER HELP**

*Convenient and affordable therapy for LGBTQ individuals.*

BetterHelp will match you to one of 35,000 licensed therapists based upon your location, preferences, and therapist availability..

For more information please visit:

**[betterhelp.com](https://betterhelp.com)**

## LIGHT IN THE CLOSET MINISTRY

*Light in the Closet* offers a safe place for individuals to discuss with confidentiality personal issues, desires and fears they are dealing with related to gender identity and cross-dressing. This support ministry is designed for those who are already Christians, but also benefits those who are seeking spiritual or emotional guidance.

There is an abundance of clinical and practical information on the *Light in the Closet* website. A good deal of the website is dedicated to the investigation of scripture as it relates to gender identity. This section is entitled, "Biblical Q&A." This section contains articles that ask and answer questions about transgender issues from a Christian perspective.

Listed below are articles with the corresponding questions that inspired the articles or are related to the subjects discussed. [www.lightinthecloset.org](http://www.lightinthecloset.org)

### Article 1 ... "NURTURE, NATURE, CHOICE"

#### The Biblical Perspective of Jesus in Matthew 19

*Scripture: Genesis 1:27 / Deuteronomy 22: 5, 24 / Matthew 19*

Addresses the following two questions:

Q: "There has been a long standing debate over nurture, nature and choice. Does Jesus have anything to say about it?"

Q: "How does Jesus feel about those who bend gender roles?"

### Article 2 ... "Am I Loving Others or Compromising My Faith?"

#### Live a life pleasing to God within the LGBT Community

*Scripture: Romans 3: 19-24 / Ephesians 2:8-10*

Addresses the following three questions:

Q: "Am I compromising my faith if I explore gender identity issues?"

Q: "If God has a problem with LGBT people then how can we fellowship with them? Isn't being transgender a sin? I listen to my brothers and sisters in Christ telling me that any LGBT person cannot be a Christian as long as they live as they do. If a long-time Christian comes out as LGBT (as I have) then perhaps they were never saved in the first place."

Q: "Am I denying God's will, by not renouncing my transgender nature? How can I convince someone that I'm not compromising my faith?"



## Article 3 ... "Do Your Clothes Fit?"

*Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:16 / Ephesians 5:29*

Addresses the following three questions:

Q: "What is your motive for dressing up in clothing of the opposite gender?"

Q: "Can clothing really affect the way you feel about yourself?"

Q: "Why do I loathe my body?"

## Article 4 ... "Is Cross Dressing A Sin?" (A Perspective on Grace)

*Scripture: Matthew 5:27 / John 14:6 / Matthew 19 / Romans 14*

Addresses the following questions:

Q: "I feel awful about my cross-dressing. Am I in hopeless sin when I cross dress?"

## Article 5 ... "Is Wearing Panties a Sin?"

*Scripture: Colossians 1:13-14 / John 16:7-16 / 2 Corinthians 12:9*

*Romans 3:9-23, 5:1-19, 6:23 / Matthew 7:2-5, 9:11-13, 23:13-29, 24:4-5*

*Galatians 2:19-21, 3:3-24, 4:4-7, 5:1*

Addresses the following question:

Q: "Although no scripture verse speaks to this directly, is wearing female undergarments underneath your male clothing a sin?"

## Article 6 ... "Legalism & Indulgence"

### When Is Enough, Enough?

*Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6*

Addresses the following question:

Q: "Aren't the laws of God there for us to vigorously uphold? Isn't it safer to err on the side of legalism?"

**Article 7 ... "Transgendered Living Without Sexual Reassignment Surgery (SRS)"**  
**A Grace-filled Perspective of a Male to Female Transgender**

*Includes: "Eight things you can do to fight the religious imposter and undo the damage caused by polarized gender."*

*Scripture: Matthew 11 and 23 / Romans: 5 / John: 17*

Addresses the following two questions:

Q: "Can I create an emotional balance through cross dressing?"

Q: "Do we really have to choose one gender over the other?"

**Article 8 ... "Weighing Our Options: Making purposeful choices."**

Addresses the following question:

Q: "What Sort of Choices Do We Really Have?"

**Article 9 ... "Questions From a Pastor to a Transgender Christian"**

Q: How does cross dressing promote His (God's) image and your acceptance of who He has made you (in relation to your gender)?

Q: "Is cross dressing a way to express your confusion in reference to who you are and God's design for your life?"

Q: "Could it be that your expressed transgender nature is a sin nature that needs to be re-coursed and restored in reference to God's primary intention for your life? God made male and female (different needs, expressions, body parts, etc.) - He never made man out of the context of these two genders."

Articles above are located at: **"Biblical Q&A"**

[lightinthecloset.org/qa-article-index](http://lightinthecloset.org/qa-article-index)

**RESOURCE ARTICLE: Andropause**

**Am I Going Nuts? "No, but you may be going through Andropause."**

*Scripture: Deuteronomy 22:5 / I Ephesians 5:2*

Addresses the following question:

Q: Why are my transgender feelings so overwhelming?

Article above is located at: **"Resources"**

[lightinthecloset.org/resources](http://lightinthecloset.org/resources)



## Reference and Glossary

Some information in this booklet was adapted from the following publications:

### All God's Children

*A guide to teaching young children about sexual orientation and gender diversity. Written by long-time sexuality educator Melany Burrill, All God's Children will help parents, teachers, clergy, and other caring adults find the right words, model openness and respect, and convey affirming messages.*

Written by Melany Burrill

A publication of Dumbarton United Methodist Church, Washington DC 2003

God Loves Each One Ministry / Ann Thompson Cook, Director

**Web:** [www.manyvoices.org/blog/contributor/melany-burrill](http://www.manyvoices.org/blog/contributor/melany-burrill)

### Made in God's Image

*A resource publication for dialogue about the Church and gender differences.*

Written by Ann Thompson Cook

A publication of Dumbarton United Methodist Church, Washington DC 2003

God Loves Each One Ministry / Ann Thompson Cook, Director

**Web:** <http://annthompsoncook.com>

### Transgender Care

*Recommended Guidelines, Practical Information and Personal Accounts*

This publication is a forward thinking tool and reference guide for both the medical mental health communities. It puts forth recommendations for guidelines of care for transgender client.

Written by Donald E. Tarver II, M.D. and the late Gianne E. Israel

Published by Temple University Press, Philadelphia 1997

### By the Grace of God

*Many transsexual persons and cross-dressers who had nearly lost their faith, found new hope through this publication.*

Written by Lee Frances Heller and Friends

Published by SSP Publications, Wheaton, Illinois 2001

### **<sup>1</sup> CROSS-DRESSERS (also spelled CROSSDRESSERS)**

Those who wear the clothing of the “other” gender but have little desire to physically alter their gender. The reasons and catalysts to cross dress are varied. It may result from fundamental brain chemistry, reconciling abuse from a parent or trusted caregiver (usually resulting in a fetish), biologically inter-sexed, or simple curiosity.

### **<sup>2</sup> TRANSSEXUAL**

A person whose gender identity is different from the sex (gender) they were assigned at birth and who wants to permanently transition to their identified gender. Transsexuals often seek medical assistance to help align their body with their gender identity, such as sex reassignment surgery (SRS).

### **<sup>3</sup> TRANSGENDERIST**

May be used more generically as a term for any transgender person, in which case it may be considered derogatory. At times “transgenderist” refers to a trans person who elects not to undergo any surgery as part of their transition. Not frequently used.

### **<sup>4</sup> TRANSVESTITE**

An older term that refers to a person (especially a male) who adopts the dress and often the behavior typical of the opposite gender. The word “transvestite” when used incorrectly to describe a transgendered person can be considered derogatory.

### **<sup>5</sup> ANDROGYNES**

A person who is psychologically androgynous. The personhood of an androgynous individual. This may include a person with an androgynous physical appearance, a person with a combination of both masculine and feminine personality traits, or a person who has no sense of being either male or female.

### **<sup>6</sup> NONBINARY**

A term describing a wide range of gender identities not exclusively male or female. It is an umbrella term encompassing various gender expressions outside the traditional gender binary.

### **<sup>7</sup> GENDERQUEER**

An identity term for those who identify outside of the traditional binary of male and female. It encompasses a spectrum of identities that may include identifying with multiple genders, no gender, or a gender that shifts over time.

### **<sup>8</sup> GENDER DYSPHORIA**

A discomfort with one’s birth gender. A feeling of incongruity.

### **<sup>9</sup> SARIS**

A term used in the Bible to describe an individual assigned male at birth who either develops female characteristics at puberty or has their sex characteristics altered. Refers also to individuals who are naturally intersex (saris hamah). The Talmud discusses saris in the context of Jewish law and ritual, particularly regarding marriage and procreation, recognizing that biological sex is not always binary.



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