



GOD'S CREATION **GOD'S DESIGN**

SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE
TO AN IDENTITY-CONFUSED WORLD

PARENT-TEEN
DISCUSSION GUIDE

God's Creation, God's Design

Parent/Teen Discussion Guide

Recognizing the impact transgender ideology is having on our teens and our society as a whole, this discussion guide is designed to help parents and students discuss several of the sessions at the God's Creation, God's Design workshop held at Reston Bible Church on August 20, 2022. The design is that parents and students would watch the sessions together, then discuss the questions provided.

Several tips/suggestions for using this guide with your students:

- Age appropriateness. Given the prevalence of the ideology in our society, especially what is taught in our public schools, we believe this is an important discussion to have with all students aged middle-school and up.
- Schedule. Don't go through all the sessions at once. Spread it out over several sittings.
- Ask. You don't need to ask every question provided. The questions are designed to just be springboards for several of the key topics from each session.
- Listen. Our hope is that this is a discussion with your teens where you are helping them develop critical thinking abilities, not just lecturing them.
- Share. Our students need to hear from you, their parents, on these issues. Don't just let the world educate your children, without them hearing from you and God's Word.

Introductory Questions:

If you have never had discussions with your students about transgenderism, these questions are designed for you to get a pulse or idea of where your student is right now. Knowing where your student is at and the societal pressure they are facing will be helpful for you as you are watching the sessions. You could skip these questions if you have already had many conversations with your students on these topics. Please note that this is not the time for you to preach to your kids. You mainly want to listen.

Questions for Students:

- 1) At your school or with your non-Christian friends, how would you describe their views on transgenderism? Do you know anyone who would identify as trans or non-binary?
- 2) What messages are you currently receiving from media (YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, etc.) about transgenderism or gender identity?
- 3) If you went in your school and said, "I believe gender is set at conception and cannot be changed. You can change your appearance, but not your gender." How would they respond? How would you be treated?
- 4) What do you think the Bible says about transgenderism? Does that seem loving or mean? Why?
- 5) What do you think is causing this increased move towards transgenderism in our present society?

Questions for Parents:

- 1) In your workplace or with your non-Christian friends, how would you describe their views on transgenderism?
- 2) If you went to your office or non-Christian friends and said, "I believe gender is set at conception and cannot be changed. You can change your appearance, but not your gender." How would they respond? How would you be treated?
- 3) How have you seen society's views on gender identity change in your lifetime? Did you know any students that identified as trans or non-binary when you were in middle or high school?

Session 1: Walt Heyer's Testimony

<https://www.restonbible.org/sermons/gods-creation-gods-design-session-1/>

Session 1 Discussion Questions: *(Parents – let your kid try to answer before you jump in)*

- 1) What would you say are the major points of Walt's story? What was most impactful for you? What do you think your friends would find hardest to hear or agree with?
Parents: before you dive into all the questions, just take some time to hear your student's impressions. Share what stuck out to you most as well.
- 2) Walt attributed his struggles to at least 3 events or adverse childhood experiences: the purple dress, hardwood floor plank, and his uncle molesting him. Transgenderism was a coping mechanism for him.
 - a. What does this reveal are the roots or causes of gender dysphoria?
 - b. What does this teach us about the way we love others who are struggling?*Parents: consider sharing a story from your life, how something from your childhood negatively impacted you as you grew up. We want to help our students see past the surface-level symptom to the core underlying wounds. This is important to help them develop critical thinking abilities and should give us a heart of compassion.*
- 3) We commonly refer to LGBTQ+, putting all the groups together. Did it surprise you when Walt said, "90% of the men that I have worked with that have identified as women are heterosexual" (~15:15 in the video)?
 - a. How is LGB different than TQ?
 - b. What did Walt say was the core issue behind gender dysphoria?*Parents: LGB are generally issues of sexual desire. TQ are issues of identity. This is discussed in greater detail in Session #2 and the Q&A session.*
- 4) What pain was associated with Walt surgically transitioning?
 - a. What do you think he was hoping to gain through surgery?
 - b. Given the pain do you think a teen should have the right to medically transition without their parent's knowledge? Why or why not?
 - c. Do you think it is possible to change gender? Why or why not?

Parents: there was the pain of the surgeries, the lifelong consequences of having body parts cut off (he discusses this more in the Q&A), he divorced his wife, abandoned his children, 19x more likely to commit suicide, etc. This was all done with the hope that the medical procedures would somehow heal the pain of his past wounds.

- 5) What does Walt's story tell us about who we should be listening to and trusting? What could we as your parents do better to be someone you would listen to and trust?

Parents: this is a humbling question to ask your kids, but we want to be people our kids turn to.

- 6) Read Romans 12:1-2 – Where do you see yourself currently conforming to the patterns of this world? How do we practically have our minds renewed?

Session 2: Maria Kefler – Kids, Family, & the Gender Industry

<https://www.restonbible.org/sermons/gods-creation-gods-design-session-2/>

Her slides/notes are available on the website. They are helpful to have as you are watching.

Session 2 Discussion Questions:

- 1) What would you say are Maria's major points? What was most impactful for you? What do you think your friends would find hardest to hear or agree with?

Parents: before you dive into all the questions, again you want to hear your student's impressions. Share what stuck out to you most as well.

- 2) What do you think of the statistic that historically 7 of 1000 men struggled with gender dysphoria, but in the past decade they have seen a 5000% increase in teenage girls identifying as transgender? What does this say about the trans movement in our current society? Why do you think this isn't investigated more in the medical community?

Parents: this is one of the most powerful data points to share that something much bigger is going on. You don't want to minimize the feelings and confusion that many teenagers are feeling, but again we want them to critically think about the messages they are hearing from our culture.

- 3) Maria talked about examples of trans ideology being presented in public schools. Can you think of any examples from your school (e.g., books, peer led sex-ed)?

Parents: You are just trying to hear what is going on in their school. Don't freak out.

- 4) Maria talked about lots of examples from media, YouTube, social-media, etc. What messages about gender identity do you see in media?

Parents: Share some examples of what you have seen as well.

- 5) Based on what Walt and Maria shared and what you have seen, what do you think are the major root reasons people struggle with transgenderism? How does this change the way we have compassion for them?

Parents: Maria shared four reasons/groups: 1) men who have experienced trauma (like Walt), 2) young women with autism or other social interaction issues, 3) the effect of pornography, 4) parents manipulating their kids for their own gain.

- 6) Have you ever thought you were the opposite gender? What were the circumstances around those thoughts or what lead you to think that way?

Parents: This question requires a level of openness. Don't freak out.

- 7) How did you feel when Maria was sharing about the medicalization related to transgenderism (e.g., Lupron side effects, profits & "growth industry", making people lifelong patients)?

Parents: the goal is not to make our kids hate doctors, but to make sure they see that portions of society are trying to manipulate them. It should also help grow my compassion for the hurting. There are life-long consequences for starting the transitioning process.

- 8) Maria mentioned 4 things to keep your kids safe: 1) Sort out what is happening (where are they getting these influences); 2) Cut off unhealthy influences / strengthen good ones; 3) strengthen your relationship with them; and 4) engage your child's critical thinking skills. As your parents, is there anything we can do to help you in these areas?

Parents: you should have your own ideas, but it is helpful to ask your kids and just listen.

Session 3: Sharon Supp – Behind the Scenes: ***Parental Rights Under Attack***

<https://www.restonbible.org/sermons/gods-creation-gods-design-session-3/>

This session is primarily designed for parents and important for you to understand. It could be helpful for your students, but not directed at them. As such, discussion questions are not included. At a minimum, parents should watch this session independently before watching the final session with their students. Her slides/notes are also available on the website for reference.

Session 4: Question & Answer Session

<https://www.restonbible.org/sermons/gods-creation-gods-design-session-4/>

Session 4 Discussion Questions:

- 1) One of the major themes of several of the questions was on how to practically engage with people who are struggling with gender identity issues. What are some of the points or advice you felt most helpful?
- 2) Walt said he typically asks three questions to people who are struggling with gender identity: “1) Why do you want to erase who you are? 2) How are you going to be better off doing this? and 3) Who is telling you to do this?” What do you think he is trying to get at with these questions? What does this reveal about the way we should care for people who are struggling?

Parents: note that these are generally people who are coming to Walt for help or someone he has an existing relationship with. We would see these used most within the context of an existing relationship, not in a conversation with a person I just met. As shared multiple times, gender dysphoria is a symptom of other issues. We need to care for and minister to the root issue, not the symptom. People’s biggest need is Jesus.

- 3) How do you care about someone without agreeing with them / affirming them? How do we do what Jesus did? How should we respond if they walked into our church?

Parents: you could consider reading the story of the women caught in adultery in John 8. Both Walt and Maria in their sessions as well as in the Q&A discussed how important it is to get to know people and ask them about their story.

- 4) How do you think societal norms (e.g., boys play with cars, girls with dolls) or the abundance of affirmation students receive for coming out has affected the rates of transgenderism in American teens?

Parents: you want to ask questions like this to help your child’s critical thinking abilities. The hope is that they see these principles and influence for themselves.

- 5) Maria stated, “If we believe that God created people in the wrong gender bodies, He is either cruel, incompetent, or doesn’t exist.” Would you agree or disagree with her? Why or why not?

Parents: one of the things so malicious about the trans issue is it is attacking the way God created you. Consider reading Genesis 1:26-28 (made in God’s image), Psalm 139:13-14 (skillfully and wonderfully made), Jeremiah 1:5 (known from the womb). God didn’t make a mistake when he made someone who is now struggling.

- 6) Aaron shared that middle school is an awkward period of transition and that transgenderism is currently being presented as a way to solve the awkward problems. Parents share, when you were a teen what are some of the ways you felt awkward going through puberty? Did you enjoy middle school? What were some of the solutions to that awkwardness presented when you were in middle/high school?

Parents: this is a great opportunity to be open with your kids about your life. They need to see how God has worked in your life and changed you.

- 7) Both Maria and Walt shared that medical intervention was giving a permanent alteration to a temporary condition. What does this mean? How do you think non-Christians would respond if you shared this?

Parents: Teens (and adults) are all works in progress. Just because your child struggles with something now, doesn't mean they will the rest of their lives. This is why it is so crazy that a teen can have such life-altering medical procedures.

Final Notes:

We pray that these sessions and discussions have been fruitful and encouraging to you and your students. We pray they have helped give a proper Biblical and medical framework for transgender ideology in our society. We pray they have grown your compassion for those who are struggling and confused. Finally, we pray and hope you, parents, realize that this is just the beginning of the conversation. We want to continue to help shepherd and guide our children through this world in need of a Savior.

Reston Bible Church exists to know Jesus Christ and to make Him known. Learn more at:
www.restonbible.org