

Session 1: Understanding the Intersection of Christ, Culture, and Sexual Identity

The Cultural Story

Overview:

	Cultural Story	Christian Story
Creation My identity/purpose	I have no _____ identity	I am designed _____ or _____ in God's image
Fall My problem	I am lost until I _____	I can't accurately know who I am apart from God's grace and truth
Redemption The solution to my problem	I must _____ who I say I am	I am being transformed into a _____ in Jesus with my brothers and sisters
Restoration My ultimate hope	I long to be _____ for who I am	I long for the day when I am free from sin, fully satisfied in Jesus

Step by step:

CULTURAL STORY

CREATION - my identity/purpose

Cultural Story - I have no intrinsic identity

If this is true, then,

“There isn’t actually a ‘you’ at the heart of all of these experiences.... You are the sum of your parts...if everything else in the universe is like this, why are we different? Why think of ourselves as somehow not just being a collection of all our parts, but somehow being a separate, permanent entity which has all those parts?”

Julian Baggini

Western culture now believes in

“a _____ self from which all [moral and meaning] judgments are supposed to flow.”

Robert Bellah

This is what Abigail Favale in *The Genesis of Gender* calls the

“underlying fantasy of postmodernity ... is that we have control over our nature, that we are the masters, the gods, the makers, seeking a piecemeal self, where body and psyche and desire are split off from one another and rearrangeable - where the body is not the foundation of personal identity but rather its lifeless tool.”

Abigail Favale

FALL – my problem

Cultural Story – I am lost until I find myself

Jean Jacques Rousseau –

“When I saw Abby, I remembered my wild. I wanted her, and it was the first time I wanted something beyond what I had been trained to want. I loved her, and it was the first time I loved someone beyond those I had been expected to love. Creating a life with her was the first original idea I’d ever had and the first decision I made as a free woman. After thirty years of contorting myself to fit inside someone else’s idea of love, I finally had a love that fit – custom made for me, by me. I’d finally asked myself what I wanted instead of what the world wanted from me. I felt alive. I’d tasted freedom, and I wanted more.

“I looked hard at my faith, my friendships, my work, my sexuality, my entire life and asked: How much of this was my idea? Do I truly want any of this, or is this what I was conditioned to want? Which of my beliefs are of my own creation, and which were programmed into me? How much of who I’ve become is inherent, and how much was just inherited? How much of the way I look and speak and behave is just how other people have trained me to look and speak and behave? ...

“Over time, I walked away from my cages. I slowly built a new marriage, a new faith, a new world view, a new purpose, a new family, and a new identity by design instead of default. From my imagination instead of my indoctrination. From my wild instead of from my training.

“What follows are stories about how I got caged – and how I got free.”

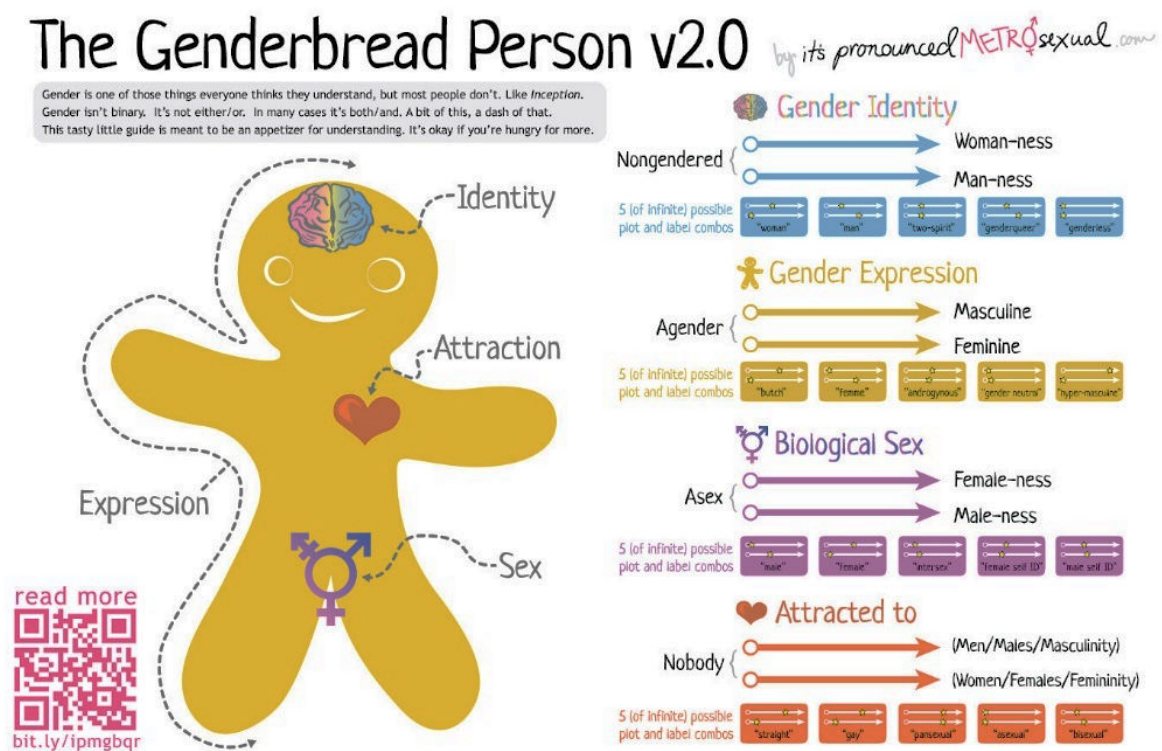
Glennon Doyle

REDEMPTION – the solution to my problem
Cultural Story – I must live out who I say I am

Charles Taylor, a Canadian philosopher, describes what he calls “a culture of authenticity.”

“Our moral salvation comes from recovering authentic moral contact with ourselves.... There is a certain way of being that is my way. I am called to live my life in this way and not in imitation of anyone else’s If I am not, I miss the point of my life. I miss what being human is for me.”

Charles Taylor



RESTORATION – my ultimate hope

Cultural Story – I long to be socially affirmed for who I am

“There is no other cosmetic operation where it is considered morally acceptable to destroy a human function. None. There is no cosmetic operation that I could propose in front of a room full of my colleagues where I could say, ‘Hey, listen, I am going to improve this guy’s nose but take away his ability to smell.’ Or, ‘I’m going to improve the appearance of this boy’s ears, but he’s going to be deaf.’ They’d say, ‘Sir, we’d like to see your credentials.’ But in the case of an adolescent girl, surrendering her capacity to breastfeed so that she can appear to be a boy, that’s considered morally correct. Forgive me for my skepticism.”

Patrick Lappert, M.D.

Why does disagreement feel like hate?