

Touching the Untouchables

By Sara Whitaker

As self-worship and glorified narcissism becomes more socially and culturally acceptable in the 21st century, followers of Christ are facing a new and complex mission field. Hearts that are so twisted and self-absorbed, think they can alter their gender while wholeheartedly believing that God is wrong, and everyone must conform to their delusion.

In Gender Identity Disorder, therein lies an emotional conflict between one's created biological disorder (male or female) and strong feelings of identification with the opposite gender.

A heart fixated on this phenomenon blames God for his or her unhappiness and must relent of their blame shifting ways and seek forgiveness. That is the first remedy for healing; godly sorrow which brings repentance and true heart change. God does not make junk, and He does not make mistakes in created order, either.

In the transgenderism movement, we see the rise of the individual happiness over reality itself. The expense of reason and the even the safety and security of others is threatened, as women unwillingly surrender their private spaces and athletic titles to confused and perverse teenage boys and men.

Sexual sin is challenging to overcome, yet God's grace is sufficient, and His Word brings forth healing, correction, and transformation.

How does the Church respond to this cultural moment? Secular podcasters and political commentators have been faithful to fight this movement on the front lines. Why pastors, and fathers of female athletes are so silent is baffling.

While some in the media are consistent with their rebuke on this departure from basic biology, they seem to lack the gentleness, patience, and compassion displayed when Jesus interacted with those ensnared in sin who could not save nor help themselves. That is all of us apart from Christ.

Transgender individuals are broken in mind and spirit. They are suffering. If we truly love them, we will tell them the truth, but the truth will be salted with grace and mercy for those in anguish and profound emotional and mental pain.

“While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, ‘Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.’¹³ And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, ‘I will; be clean.’ And immediately the leprosy left him.¹⁴ And he charged him to tell no one, but ‘go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them.’¹⁵ But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.¹⁶ But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray,” Luke 5:12-16

The leper walked in wisdom. *“And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, ‘Lord, if you will, you can make me clean,’”* (Luke 5:12b) This is a sober recognition of sinful man encountering the Son of God. We see brokenness over sin and penitent humility, and an appropriate approach and response to the King of Kings. Essentially, the leper is saying, “I am unworthy to come into your presence, and I need your divine resources and favor. In and of myself, I am bankrupt.” This is the godly sorrow which leads to genuine repentance.

How our lives would transform if we adopted this posture daily!

Jesus responds with gracious benevolence. Not a rebuke, not estrangement that He Himself could become contaminated, but a simple acknowledgment of His identity, willingness and eventual action.

“And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, ‘I will; be clean,’” (Luke 5:13a) As the Lord spoke; the leper’s life and terminal condition were forever changed. *“And immediately the leprosy left him,”* (Luke 5:13b). Jesus touched the untouchable, so should we.

The story does not end with a healed leper, but with consequences for the Son of Man. The leper, ostracized and isolated from community, essentially changes places with Jesus on a social level. Now, Christ, whose earthly fame ignited due to the transformation, was forced to retreat to desolate places to continue His work and mission. Jesus was willing to heal this outcaste man and was the only one who could. And yet, in community

life, there was a reversal. Jesus now retreats to isolation and the leper is received. This healing came with a cost.

“But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sickness. But he Himself would often slip away to the desolate regions and pray,” (Luke 5:15-16).

How do we help those enslaved with sinful passions, deluded in mind, and wish to surgically alter their bodies to match their fallen, inward emotions and self-perceived reality? By pointing them to their greatest need, and the only One who can heal them and speak the truth in love.

Our all-sufficient High Priest was tempted in every way that we are, and yet without sin. ***“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things like we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need,”*** (Hebrews 4:15-16).

Our greatest need is Christ. This notion is true for the growing saint in need of ongoing sanctification and suffering sinner entrapped in the slave market of sin. How do we help transgender people? By pointing them to Jesus.

“And when the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, ‘ELOI ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI’ which is translated, ‘MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?’” (Mark 33-34).

Why had the Father forsaken Jesus? What had Christ become that caused Him to turn His back on His One and only Son? Jesus, atoning for our sin, had become the sin of the world. He drank the cup of God’s wrath to purchase the title deed to the earth in His blood.

Oh, storm tossed, confused, helpless sinner, the most gender dysphoric moment on earth was when the spotless lamb became the sin of the world!

While most cannot identify with gender dysphoria, (only 0.6% of the population, approximately 1.4 million people do), there is One who walked the road of ultimate suffering and yet was profoundly innocent and without sin. Jesus can restore the mind of the insane, as demonstrated in Mark 5, and He is still transforming hearts and lives today.

Let us give the hope of Jesus to those who are trapped in perpetual confusion and chains of darkness and reach out with mercy and truth to the untouchables of our day. Christ is our greatest need and only Hope.

Church, do we love the sinner and the sufferer enough to take them by the hand and bring them to Jesus? He is willing and able to save. Let us take up our cross and follow Him. (Matt 16:24-27).