SHAPING ARROWS:

HELPING YOUR CHILDREN UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL SEXUALITY

CLASS #2: CULTURAL CRITICISMS AND HOW CHRISTIANS HAVE RESPONDED

REVIEW AND QUESTIONS FROM WEEK #1

THE CULTURAL SHIFT

What Forces Brought Us Here?
and
What Does It All Mean?

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

- Our understanding of sexual morality informs our understanding of God.
- Sexual practices, both good and bad, have significant earthly consequences
- As Christians, we want to enjoy what is good and reject what is bad.
- "Ideas have consequences. Bad ideas have victims" - Jon Stonestreet
  - We live with our culture's criticisms of biblical sexuality due to the natural sum of multiple bad ideas.
  - These bad ideas have led to bad practices, which lead to bad habits, which in turn form our thoughts.

WHY DOES GOD CARE?

Romans 12:2 – We are not to be like this world, but through God's renewing of our minds we are to demonstrate what is God's "good, pleasing and perfect" will.

Romans 8:5-7 – To set our minds on the flesh is death; we must set our minds on the Spirit

Ephesians 4:22-24 – Sanctification involves putting away our old desires, putting on the new self to instead be like Christ

2 Corinthians 10:5 – We are to demolish every argument and belief that sets itself against God; We must "take captive" our thoughts

WHY DO I CARE?

- I see the LGBTQ+ community as one of the biggest missions fields in modern America.
- I see our culture's conflicts over Identity (sexual, racial, political, etc.) as one of the biggest spiritual threats to my generation.
- *We must actively prepare and inoculate our children to be exposed to these spiritual viruses- Ignorance is not an option.*
- I recognize these issues are close to your heart and lives. I trust that God will bring healing, protection, grace and truth. I am glad you are here.

CLASS #2 GOALS

- Identify the unhealthy ideas and values that culminate in effective arguments against biblical sexuality **(How did we get here?)**
- Recognize the healthy and unhealthy ways the Christian Church has responded in recent decades **(How have Christians responded?)**
- Discuss the heart posture and mindset necessary to give a healthy response to those struggling or criticizing. **(How should we respond ourselves?)**
- Class Structure- Brief Lectures followed by limited group discussion

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

(SPOILER ALERT- SIN DOES BAD THINGS)

THIS TEMPLE HAS PILLARS . . .

Notice how this temple is a place of worship, dedicated to the destructive offerings of false gods.

The roof is held up by many pillars, which support the detailed and (objectively) beautiful images of gods, philosophers and/or famous cultural idols

The pillars hold up the roof for all to see, and create shelter, space and stability for the worship to occur underneath.

Unless you're Samson, this roof is staying up for all to see and admire.



...AND THIS TEMPLE LOST A FEW.

Notice how this temple is in shambles. It is missing many (but not all) of its pillars.

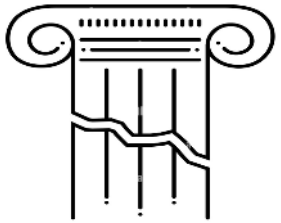
The roof is gone. The false idols are missing

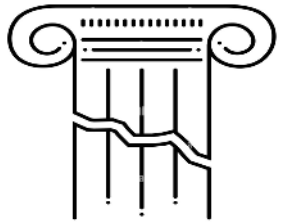
There is no shelter given to the destructive commands of false gods or their worshippers

While still beautiful to some, the ruins of this temple point to the insufficiency of the gods it depicted.



A TEMPLE CRUMBLES WHEN THE PILLARS ARE REMOVED

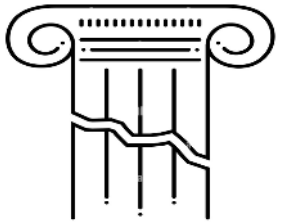


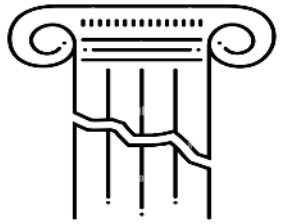


<u>Bad Ideas do as well!</u>

Don't try to remove the roof- You're not strong enough

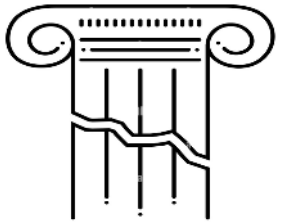
Don't try to debase its beauty- You're not convincing enough

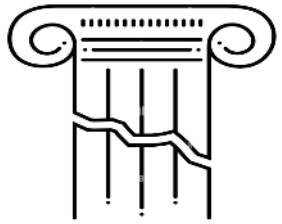




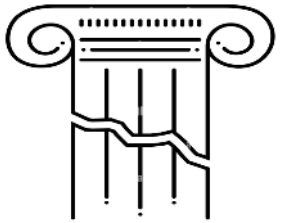
Don't try to mock the attendees- They will (reasonably) retreat inside

Instead, attack the pillars with precision and clarity. Allow God and natural consequences to knock down the rest.

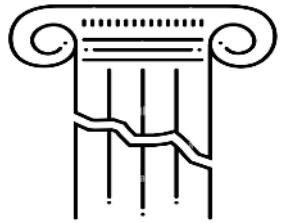




Analogy Translation:
We will look at the pillars (ideas) upholding the temple (total argument) of unbiblical sexuality, recognizing their strength and impact, before preparing to knock them down.



THE PILLARS OF UNBIBLICAL SEXUALITY

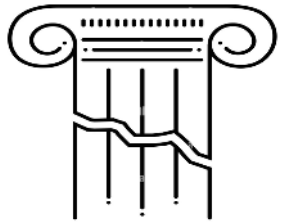


"Marriage is a social construct"

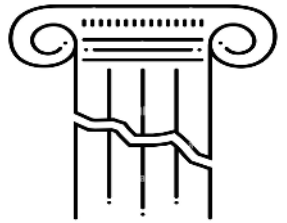
- Factors such as "No Fault" Divorce and the rise of cohabitation lead to a devaluing of covenantal marriage
- Marriage is viewed as a political/economical relationship- not a spiritual/covenantal one.
- Worldview Impact: Marriage can be ended for little-to-no reason. Marriage has no significance on sexual ethics.

"Body/Soul Separation"

- Materialistic Worldviews reject the spiritual world and any soulish nature to humanity; The body is all.
- Spiritual Worldviews reject the physical world as good; The body is nothing.
- Worldview Impact: Our bodies hold no prescriptive purpose for our lives. They can be changed and used as we see fit.



THE PILLARS OF UNBIBLICAL SEXUALITY

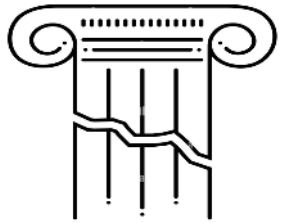


"Sex is everything."

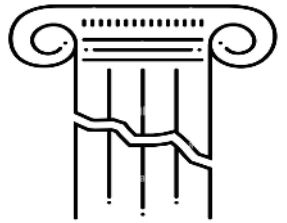
- Hook Up Culture, Cultural Sexualization, Cohabitation and Dating Apps
- "Try before you buy" and "The importance of experience" separates sex from commitment.
- Worldview Impact: The Covenant is reduced to consent; the purpose is reduced to pleasure.

"Sex is nothing"

- Pornography is rampant in video, audio and book forms- everywhere, always.
- Average age of exposure is 13, with 84.4% of boys and 57% of girls being exposed before or during ages 14-18
- Worldview Impact: Sex is not that big of a deal. You can learn about sex however, wherever and whenever you want.



THE PILLARS OF UNBIBLICAL SEXUALITY

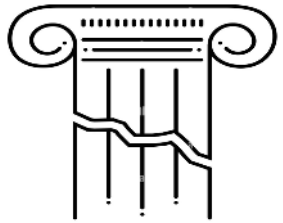


"Children are an obstacle to sexual liberation"

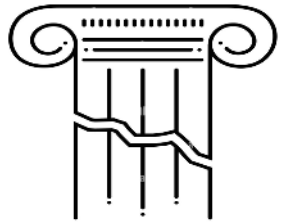
- Abortion kills roughly 2363 children every day in America
- According to W.H.O. "73 million induced abortions" occur yearly and "6/10 unwanted pregnancies" and "3/10 of all pregnancies" end in abortion
- IVF and Surrogacy *often* turn children into property
- Worldview Impact: The creation and preservation of life/children is detached from sex. The bodies of women can be violated; fathers can have their children killed. Children fulfill adult desires.

"Homosexuality is morally neutral, or even good"

- Non-Scriptural Arguments against homosexuality depend on
  - The physical complementarity of male/female bodies [DENIED]
  - The creation of children [DENIED]
  - The historical recognition of what marriage is. [DENIED]
- Worldview Impact: Homosexuality, when structured by consent, is not a bad or broken thing.



THE PILLARS OF UNBIBLICAL SEXUALITY



The LGBTQ+ Movement

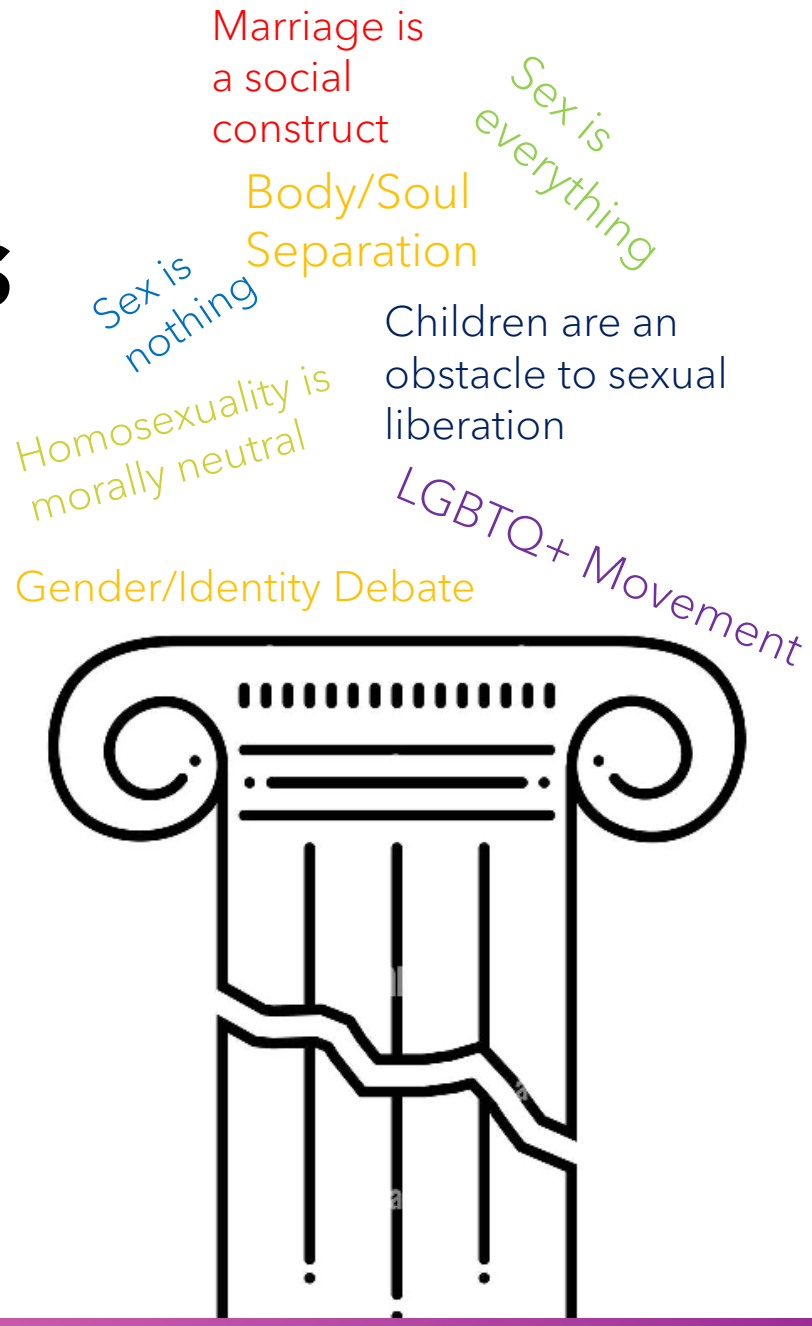
- A Matter of **Justice**
- "This is the harm that was felt/done!"
  - Experiences, Perception, Historical Memory
- "These are the changes that must occur!"
  - Political, Economical, Religious and Social consequences
- Worldview Impact: According to the new moral order, LGBTQ+ people have been mistreated. This must be changed, though the methods and goals of this change differ based on the individual.

Gender & Identity Debate

- A Matter of **Identity & Value**
- "This is who I am!"
  - Worldview Impact: To reject my action/desire or call it bad is a personal attack. Sexuality/Gender is an identity definer.
- "This is how I was born!"
  - Worldview Impact: It's wrong to treat someone differently because of something they can't change or didn't choose.
- If our bodies have no prescriptive impact, we can't prescribe action, diagnose illness, or challenge morality.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What "Pillar" stands out to you? How have you been impacted by these worldview claims?
2. Is your child aware of these "Pillars" and their claims? What "Pillar" do you think your child would be most impacted by?



HOW HAVE CHRISTIANS RESPONDED?

(SOMETIMES BIBLICAL, SOMETIMES NOT)

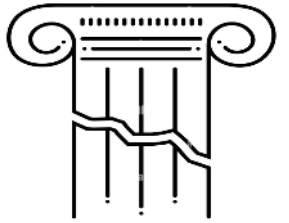
TEMPLE ANALOGY, CONTINUED

- The Temple analogy has limits, but it still applies here.
- What Temple are we building? Where do we guide our kids to "worship"?
  - Building the right pillars...
    - Are we choosing the right materials (arguments and reasoning)?
    - Are we building beautifully and invitationally (offering the gift of life in Christ)?
  - . . . with the right method . . .
    - Are we building on the right foundation (of God's Word)?
    - Are we building these pillars through the suffering of others or through righteous means?
  - . . . to display the right roof.
    - Are we promoting the right depiction of God?
    - Does it invite others to enter and worship God?

No Christian will respond perfectly in every circumstance

These debates continue "in-house" and "out of house"

PURITY CULTURE AND THE CHURCH



- Most popular in 1990s – 2000s; still present today
  - Many of you were likely growing up around the height of purity culture
- Good Aim - Regulated sexual activity to biblical marriage
- Bad Teachings
  - Sexual Prosperity Gospel / Works-based Salvation
  - Singleness is a sign of personal or sexual brokenness
  - Ignored anything other than heterosexual attraction

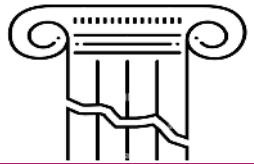
Purity Culture

- Men = Sexual time bombs
- Women = Sexual gatekeepers
- "Purity culture dehumanizes women and girls by oversexualizing their bodies. It dehumanizes men and boys by oversexualizing their minds" - Zachary Wagner
- WC- Sexual morality is the woman's responsibility, because the men can't handle themselves.
- WC- Sexual Purity will result in the best marriage and best sex you could have! Sexual Sin results in unredeemable consequences and shame

Biblical Sexuality

- Men and Women are both responsible for sexual morality (1 Thess 4:3-5)
- Both husband and wife are to not withhold themselves from each other, to lower the chances of sexual sin (1 Cor 7:2)
- There are appropriate times for a couple to say no to sex (1 Cor 7:5)
- Men
  - You are capable of self-control through Christ
  - Sex is neither a survival need nor a sovereign right
  - You are not an animal, but men made in the image of God.
- Women
  - Your body and sexuality is a gift from God
  - You / Your body is not a "stumbling block" or source of temptation
  - You are meant to neither be flaunted with pride or hidden away in shame

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH



Gay People...

1960

"...should stay in the closet"

- Churches should ignore them
- LGB should keep it hidden and surpressed

1969

"...are perverts and criminals"

- Churches should protect themselves
- LGB damage society and individuals

Late '90s & Early 2000s

"…are hapless victims who need healing"

- Churches should promote "Ex-Gay" treatment
- LGB need support and care towards orientation changes

2000

"...are admirable saints called to a celibate life"

- Churches should care with empathy
- LGB should live as celibates w/o expecting orientation changes

2013

The Debate Continues within the chuch...

Modern Response Title	"Celibate Gay" Christians	"Ex Gay" Christians	"Same-Sex Attracted" Christians	"Gay Affirming" Christians
Beliefs about Sexual Orientation Homosexuality is...	Desires can't Change Fallen/Broken	Desires must Change Fallen/Broken	Desires can change, but it's not required Fallen/Broken	Desires can't Change <u>Not</u> Fallen/Broken
Community Options for non-heterosexual Christians	Friendships Mixed Orientation Marriage	Heterosexual Marriage Changed desires confirm healing and sanctification	Similar to "Celibate Gay" Rejects "gay" in favor of "SSA"	Same-sex partnerships can be blessed by God
Source of Homosexual Attraction and it's "Fix" Information paraphrased from *Scripture, Ethics and the Possibility of Same-Sex Relationships* by Karen Keen	Biological/Spiritual Factors Rejects reparative therapy	Environmental/Casual Factors Encourages reparative therapy	Primarily caused by our Sin Nature Rejects reparative therapy with orientation change as the main goal in favor of increasing relationship with God	God's Design Rejects a need to change desires when confined to monogamous relationship

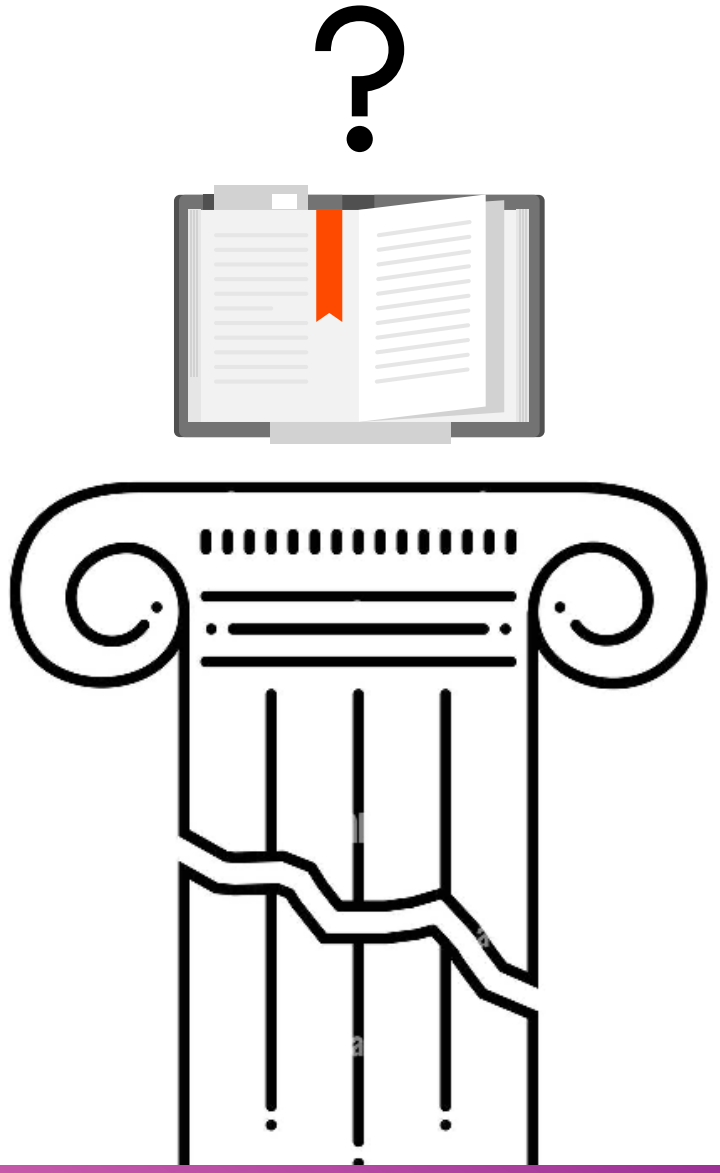
MODERN "PILLARS" ON GENDER IDENTITY

Info paraphrased from *Emerging Gender Identities* by Mark Yarhouse and Julia Sadusky

Christian Response "Camp"	Fundamentalist	Orthodox	Liberal
Foundation of Gender Identity and Self-Understanding	Prioritizes creation account as prescriptive Genital Structure and Chromosomes determine GI	Prioritizes creation account as prescriptive GI can be healthily and unhealthily impacted by genetic, anatomical, mental, social and cultural forces	Creation account is descriptive, not prescriptive Physical aspects are minimally applicable. Psychological aspects are more important.
Exceptions and/or Differences are...	...questionable if not sinful, especially when departing from traditional roles Emphasizes diversity between men and women as two strict categories.	...multicausal; not inherently or primarily a sinful act. Some will tragically experience "nonnormative gender identities"	...to be understood as "God's creative capacity" deserving of "ongoing community affirmation ...never related to moral brokenness
Christians should respond by...	...emphasizing the distinction between men and women instead of the varied ways of being a man or woman ...celebrating a narrow range of diversity within the man or woman category	...being compassionate; listening first ...recognizing that "nonnormative" experiences are opportunities for God's love and redemption to shine forth.	...affirming and supporting, similar to how we support the dignity of anyone "regardless of race, social status, etc." ...not challenging this narrative, as to do so is "failing to love like Christ".

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was your experience with Purity Culture? How might it affect your child today?
2. How can the mistakes of the past positively and negatively affect the way you guide your child today?
3. What do you think about the modern "pillars" regarding homosexuality and gender identity? Which "pillar" are your beliefs presently being supported by?



HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND OURSELVES?

(PREPARE TO ENTER THE BATTLEFIELD)

TWO TACTICS I HAVE FOUND HELPFUL

"The Lazarus Method"

- Inspired by John 11 and Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead
- Seeks to mimic Christ's example in caring for people with both truth and grace
- It helps guide my heart and priorities

"The Rogerian Argument"

- Inspired by an english class
- Seeks to enable clear thinking, healthy conversation and joint problem solving.
- Discourages arguments, encourages discussion
- It helps guides my thinking, words and response to be as generous and non-offensive as possible

"THE LAZARUS METHOD" - JOHN 11



- 11:1-16 – Jesus Waits to Visit
- 11:17-27 – Jesus Points Martha to the Hope He Offers
- 11:28-37 – Jesus Weeps with Mary
- 11:38-44 – Jesus Raises Lazarus
- 11:45-57 – Jesus' Enemies Plot Against Him

THE LAZARUS METHOD; CONT.

Jesus's Example

- Jesus Waits
- Jesus Points Martha to the Hope He provides.
- Jesus Weeps with Mary
- Jesus Raises Lazarus
- Jesus' enemies plot

Our Action

- We wait for God's Timing
- We point to Christ as their ultimate need
- We mourn and grieve suffering, alongside the victim and those around them. Is our love obvious?
- We pursue Godly fixes, trusting in God's miraculous power
- We must expect opposition from those who refuse to see the truth

THE ROGERIAN ARGUMENT METHOD

A Traditional Thesis

- Encounter an opinion you disagree with
- State your opposing view in a concise, easy to understand way
- In an organized fashion, present your reasoning and address counterarguments
- End with your clear thesis again with clarity, confidence and no apologies!

Rogerian Method

- Encounter two opinions in conflict
- Recognize and clearly state where they agree
- Recognize and clearly state where they disagree
- Recognize any counter arguments these opinions give for each other
- End by sharing who you are convinced by

THE ROGERIAN ARGUMENT CONT.

Example: Your daughter says "Mom and Dad- I've been thinking and praying about how I've not liked my body recently. I've realized that God meant for me to be a boy. That's why I've been having so much trouble! I'm a boy now- will you help me?

A Traditional Thesis

- Encounter an opinion you disagree with
- State your opposing view in a concise, easy to understand way
- In an organized fashion, present your reasoning and address counterarguments
- End with your clear thesis again with clarity, confidence and no apologies!

Example Response

- "I appreciate you telling me this, but I think that you're wrong."
- "God made you a girl- it's undeniable based on your body!"
- "I'm sorry that you don't like being a girl right now, but I promise this will pass someday. If someone tells you otherwise, they are lying to you!"
- "God made you a girl, sweetie. It's no mistake!"

THE ROGERIAN ARGUMENT CONT.

Example: Your daughter says "Mom and Dad- I've been thinking and praying about how I've not liked my body recently. I've realized that God meant for me to be a boy. That's why I've been having so much trouble! I'm a boy now- will you help me?

The Rogerian Argument

- Encounter two opinions in conflict
- Recognize and clearly state where the opinions agree
- Recognize and clearly state where these opinions disagree
- Recognize any counter arguments these opinions give for each other
- End by sharing who you are convinced by

Example Response

- "I appreciate you telling me this. It seems to me that your body and your mind are telling you two different things about who and what you are."
- "We both agree that the pain you are feeling now is bad. It's an evil thing that you are suffering; that your body and mind seem to be saying different things to you about who you are."
- "Your body seems to say you are a girl, but your mind suggests that you are boy."
- "Some will tell you that changing your body to fit your mind is the best option."
- "But I think that it is healthier and wiser to change your mind to fix your body."

NO MATTER THE METHOD...

- Your child needs Christ more then they need anything else.
- Don't expect sanctified behavior from unsaved hearts.
- God has loaned you your parental authority- Trust Him to care for your child, who ultimately is His responsibility.
- Loving Jesus involves both truth and grace. Do not overvalue one at the expense of the other
- Listen, Ask, Think, Respond (Do not React).
- Use Scripture as a foundation for the pillars of your ideas to support a clear depiction of God and His Will.

THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS?