

Review: The Body God Gives

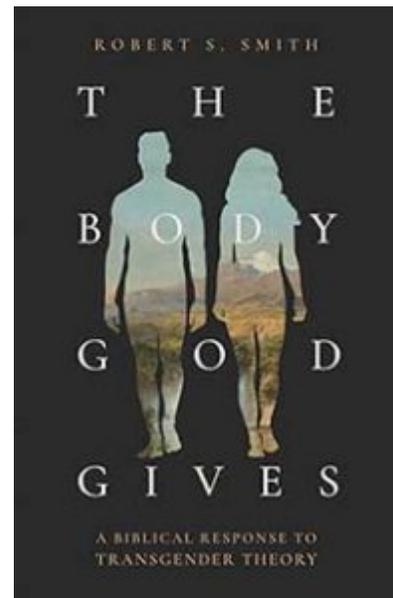
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The Body God Gives: A Biblical Response to Transgender Theory

By Robert S. Smith (Lexham Academic)

Gender identity is a hot and divisive topic at present—in politics, education and throughout society—frequently referenced by the word “transgender” or “trans.” Christian leaders and thinkers have been responding to this topic for many years, though their work has not always been widely known among Christians. Robert Smith is one such author.

Smith has published two previous books addressing gender identity at a more popular level. His third book on the topic, *The Body God Gives*, is a much more in-depth study aimed at a scholarly audience.



One clue is the publisher—Lexham *Academic*. Another is the word “theory”

in the subtitle, which indicates Smith is not dealing with street-level gender identity discussions. Rather, he is evaluating the subterranean foundations of those discussions—and that’s the reason this book deserves attention. Every hot topic is built on a preceding foundation not always known or understood by the larger public.

Smith begins with an introduction to the current state of gender identity discussions, a survey of Christian authors who have addressed gender identity, an explanation of his own method, and a description of the history and philosophy of transgender theory, the latter not being for the casual reader.

He argues, in essence, transgender theory is predicated on the separation of biological sex from gender, that gender is not biologically but psychologically determined and thus fluid. Acknowledging there is a difference between sex and gender, “[Biological] sex ... is the foundation; gender is the construction that rests on (and can only rest on) that foundation,” Smith contends (p. 167).

Smith’s approach in *The Body God Gives* is philosophical, theological, analytical and evangelical. He spends three chapters thoroughly analyzing the text of Genesis 1 and 2—with specific focus on biological sex, gender and marriage—and two further chapters examining the treatment of sex and gender identity through the rest of Scripture. As with his philosophical examination, his scriptural analysis is not for the casual reader, delving into the original Hebrew and Greek and more technical theological discussion.

Smith’s conclusions, already noted above, are as one would expect given his starting place. His conclusions do not, he admits, include pastoral counsel for those struggling with gender dysphoria or other gender identity questions. Those can be found in other books, some he includes in his survey of literature near the front of this book.

For those who want to dive as deep into biblical/theological/philosophical study of gender identity as perhaps they have with sexuality—whatever presuppositions the reader brings or conclusions the reader draws—*The Body God Gives* is up to the task.

*Eric Black, executive director/publisher/editor
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