

Voices: A response to ‘On Transgenderism’

October 21, 2024

The Summer 2024 issue of *Christian Ethics Today* includes [a sermon on affirming transgenderism](#) by Ryon Price, senior pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

Price claims certain Bible verses provide for such affirmation. These verses are taken out of context, however. Christians need to be aware Price’s view is not as biblical as he claims.

Price states his three core convictions for why he believes transgender and gender-fluid individuals should be welcomed and affirmed in the church and society:

1. “Everyone is made in the *imago Dei*—image of God.”
2. “The image of God is not biological, sexual, genital or congenital, but spiritual.”
3. And citing Paul: “If anyone is in Christ, therefore, there is a new creation,” (2 Corinthians 5:17) and “In Christ ... there is neither male nor female; for [we] are all one [in substance] in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

Arguing from Paul

However, Paul’s discussion concerns salvation in Jesus. In other words, in matters of salvation there no longer is male or female, not in gender or ethnic roles. [Paul is not claiming](#) gender and race cease to exist, but rather the disunity that still exists can be united only in and through the salvific work of Christ Jesus.

Paul does not negate male and female (Genesis 1:27; 5:2), but as Cardinal Albert Vanhoye and Peter Williams argue in their commentary on Galatians, contends that in Jesus we are a new creation unlike the first creation.

Furthermore, and for reasons unexplained, Price adds the phrase “in substance” to Galatians 3:28. This phrase is not in the Greek text. According to at least one Greek dictionary, there are four words in Greek for ‘substance’: *ousia*, *huparchonta*, *huparxis* and *hupostasis*. None of them are found in Galatians 3:28. Nor are they found in Greek interlinear Bibles.

Price uses the phrase “in substance” to link the idea of its plasticity to support the concept of gender fluidity. He claims, “There is mutuality, and there is diversity, and there is fluidity in creation because there is mutuality, diversity, and fluidity in God.”

Arguing from Jesus

Like angels

Price also refers to Jesus words in Matthew 22:25-30—“that people will not marry or be given in marriage in heaven, but instead, ‘they [are] like angels’”—to argue: “In fact, sex is not a definite or defining characteristic of angels. It’s not a fixed category. Neither is gender.”

“And my question,” he continues, “is in Jesus saying that people one day will be ‘like angels’ in heaven, was Jesus not more than just implying that the roles of sex and gender ought not be considered too definite, too fixed, and too eternal? That they will be changed?”

Commenting on Matthew 22:30, [Bill Muehlenberg quotes](#) Michael Wilkins argues: “Jesus does not suggest that humans become angels; rather, in the same way that angelic beings do not marry or procreate, the resurrected

state ends the practice of marriage and issues in entirely new relationships between resurrected humans.”

Likewise, Muehlenberg quotes Robert Stein: “Since there is no longer death in the age to come, the need to procreate through marriage will have ceased (see Genesis 1:28). Thus marriage as we know it will cease to exist.”

Price’s view of comparing transgenderism with human beings changing to be like or as angels is not supported by his application of the text of Scripture.

Eunuchs

Price also cites Matthew 19:12, claiming: “Jesus himself said about such people: ‘There are eunuchs who were born that way ... The one who can accept this should accept it.’”

From Jesus’ words about eunuchs, Price goes on to say: “It is theological. And it is biblical. It is pastoral. And it is also Christian.”

R.T. France, in his commentary on Matthew, contended: “To be ‘born a eunuch’ appears to refer to those who are physiologically incapable of procreation.”

Clinton Arnold, in his commentary on Matthew, wrote: “Some Eunuchs have been born impotent ... born without properly developed genitalia, like hermaphrodites.”

And Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri, in their commentary on Matthew, explain: “Jesus speaks of eunuchs by nature (men who were impotent, injured or suffered a birth defect.)”

Preston Sprinkle, on [*Theology in the Raw*](#), wrote: “The Romans classified eunuchs into three categories: *spadones*, who were infertile males from birth; *thlibiae*, whose testicles had been ‘pressed;’ *thladaie*, whose testicles

had been 'crushed;' and *castrati*, whose unit was cut off or lost altogether.”

Further on, Sprinkle notes: “Eunuchs were most often considered sexually male even if they didn't always match up to the societal standards of masculinity.”

Conclusion

In conclusion, Price is not applying proper exegetical analysis of these verses, but rather is applying eisegesis to these verses as a way of implying Paul and Jesus claim some third gender or sex that exists somewhere between male and female, in sexless angels, and in some born as eunuchs.

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