



**Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues [what we would call churches], proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**

*Matthew 9:35-36*

### **God and gender: What's the truth?**

When I was a teenager, one of the first things they taught me in computer class was you can't believe everything you read, see, or hear on the internet. That was great advice! Sure, you can Google practically anything or ask Alexa to find something for you and get a response. But, as many facts as you can find on the internet, you can find just as many opinions, biases and straight up lies. It's hard to know what's true and what isn't.

I've learned over the years that the only source of unaltered truth is the Bible, God's Word. It tells it like it is. It doesn't sugar coat sin. It reveals it. It also highlights God's love and mercy like no other book ever written. That's why we're going to be studying the Bible for the next four weeks as we wrestle with the subject of transgenderism. It means someone who identifies with a gender different from their birth one. This is a big topic causing a lot of confusion among Christians and non-Christians alike.

It's a confusing topic because people we look up to, like celebrities, movie stars, athletes, friends, and family members are all giving us conflicting messages. It's hard to know what's right and what's wrong. It's also easy to jump from one extreme to the other. One side will say, "Live and let live. It's not for me to judge. You do you." The other side will say, "I can't believe anyone would think about changing their sex! What's wrong with them?" Both extremes lack truth, and most importantly they lack biblical love.

That's where I want to start today. Before we get into what's right and what's wrong, I want all of us, no matter our personal thoughts or opinions about transgenderism, to make sure we're starting where Jesus wants us to start.

Matthew 9:35-36 says, "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues [what we would call churches], proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."

Every person Jesus ever saw, he loved. He had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Sheep without a shepherd don't know which way is right and which way is wrong. They don't know how to tell the difference between the truth and lies unless someone guides them. Jesus wants to guide them . . . gently and with compassion. He wants to guide you gently and with compassion so that you can do the same for others.

I want to emphasize that the next devotions will not be based on my opinions or biases or anyone else's. They will be based on the timeless, changeless, and compassionate words of God.

**Prayer: Lord Jesus, my Good Shepherd, thank you for being compassionate with me in my ignorance and lack of understanding. As I learn more about the topic of transgenderism from the truths revealed in your word, please help me to be compassionate towards others. Amen.**