

Church Baptizing Transgenders in the Name of Jesus

It's a first. New Chapel Unitarian and Free Christian church is offering transgender baptisms in the name of Jesus.

The church agreed to baptize transgenders, essentially initiating them into the Christian faith with their public demonstration that they have died with Christ and have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life, at its general meeting.

It seems soulish compassion rather than spiritual discernment led to the change. According to the BBC, the church's worship leader felt sorry for a family with a transgender child who was "being shunned by mainstream churches."

I would feel sorry for the family also, but for perhaps different reasons. Although I believe churches should welcome transgenders as they are, expose them to the Word and the Spirit and pray for them, it's not helpful to affirm anyone's sinful lifestyle no matter their gender identity—and water baptism does just that.

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This issue is not a matter, as worship leader Jean Clements describes, of being "very willing to accept change and progress." Our goal as believers should be to change and progress toward the image of Christ rather than straying from who He's created us to be.

We don't know if the parents have accepted the boy's decision to identify as a girl or if they are seeking baptism hoping that Christ will break in with light and break the deception. I pray it's the latter and that the deliverance comes.

Two out of every three transgender individuals have considered suicide, according to a study conducted by Ryan J. Testa of the Center for LGBTQ Evidence-Based Applied Research. (By comparison, the suicide rate of the general population ranges from between 6 percent and 12 percent.) And 26.3 percent of trans women and 30.4 percent of trans men reported a history of suicide attempts.

I submit to you that affirming the transgender lifestyle isn't the answer to end transgender suicidal thoughts—or suicide attempts. And Sy Rogers agrees with me. I know because I once heard Rogers speak at a church. He has been open with his struggles as a transsexual in order to set other captives free, and his story touched my heart—and touches the hearts of many transsexuals seeking deliverance from the suicidal thoughts that torment them.

Rogers explains, “It wasn't that my parents didn't love me, but a series of tragic circumstances deprived me of a normal childhood. I was born the only child of a disintegrating middle-class couple. Due to my mother's alcoholism, she was often incapable of nurturing and protecting me. As a result, I was sexually molested at age 3 by a man who was a 'friend' of the family. Although the molestation didn't make me a homosexual, it left me deeply confused, fearful of men and imprinted with a powerful, perverted knowledge of sexuality.”

Rogers goes on to discuss how he lived a double life. He was active in church, school and Boy Scouts. He played football and went out for track and the swim team. But he felt like a failure as a boy and begged God to change him into a woman. He later joined the military, where he says some men sought him out for secret encounters. Eventually, he decided to take the plunge—to set out on the journey to surgically become a woman.

Ultimately, it was an encounter with God that delivered Rogers from the transsexual lifestyle. He never had the sexual reassignment surgery. And although he admits he continued to

struggle in many respects after handing his life over to God, he is today happily married to a beautiful woman, and God is using him mightily to speak the truth in love about the bondage of gender identity issues.

“In over a decade of living this challenging yet satisfying new life, I’ve had a unique opportunity to travel the world and minister to the sexually broken,” he says. “I have met many hundreds—if not thousands—of men and women who have overcome various sexual disorders. Many more are ‘in process of recovery’—a phrase I believe accurately describes God’s ongoing triumph in the lives of those reconciled to Him. As has often been said, ‘God gets glory out of the *process*—not just the end *result*.’ Becoming a Christian is just the beginning!”

Hopefully, baptism in this Unitarian church is just the beginning to this little boy’s journey toward truly knowing Christ, his deliverer.