

Is John Piper a Bigot Because He Won't Tell This Lie?

In an age where #TransIsBeautiful is trending on social media and a man with sex-reassignment surgery receives an award for "courage," bold Pastor John Piper is drawing a line in the sand over gender identity.

Piper did not dance around the subject. Rather, he declared that biblically, to call a male a female would be "lying."

"We have a pervasive, biblical warrant to say that God wills for our sexual identity to be of one piece with our biological, genetic identity," Piper said.

To address the cultural trend of gender fluidity, Piper makes three points.

First, he says, given names can be "culturally arbitrary." That is to say that just because a name is typically associated with a particular gender does not define that person as male or female. Take, for example, women named Blake or James or Kyle, and men named Harper or Morgan or Madison.

American culture takes gender-swapping names in stride, and many baby websites offer options for unisex baby names. Just because a person has a certain name does not necessarily mean that person ascribes to a particular gender.

"We can name (our kids) after cars or planets or Greek virtues or Grandma," Piper says. "And calling someone by that arbitrary name that their parents may have chosen or they may choose halfway through life may not imply agreement with all that that name was created to signify by the person."

The name game becomes more convoluted when addressed in an office setting, Piper says.

In his second point, he broaches how a male named “Sally” might deal with gender-specific pronouns in the work environment.

“I am not lying to call a male ‘Sally,’” Piper says. “That is a culturally arbitrary weird fluke. But I am lying if I say about a true Jim who wants to be called Sally, ‘she.’ And it would be contrary to my understanding of sexuality and I would start looking for another job.”

Third, though, addressing a gender identification different than the biological assignment touches on the heart of the issue: Should a transgender be given access to facilities associated with their chosen gender rather than what is anatomically correct?

Take, for example, the transgender man who wanted to use the women’s locker room at Planet Fitness, or transgender men wishing to use women’s bathrooms.

Piper tackles this one head on, simply saying he wouldn’t share a bedroom, bathroom or locker room with someone who is biologically different than he is.

Piper is not alone in his pursuit for truth in a gender fluid world.

Charisma News columnist Michael Brown pointed to a stark truth he realized at the doctor’s office:

The medical form had a line that said: ‘FEMALES: Time of last menstruation?’—and in a flash, I said to myself, ‘Yes! There really are differences between males and females.’”

But the issue of dealing with men and women who identify as transgender remains.

“Naming may have a certain ambiguity and arbitrariness to it, but the language of he and she and the use of bathrooms and hotel rooms does not,” Piper says. “And I will draw a line and

say, I will not call he 'she.' I will not call she 'he.' And I will not intrude on the sexual privacy of a person of the opposite sex or walk into a situation where they would intrude upon mine."