

# When a Child Asks, 'What If I Identify as a Dinosaur?'

It's amazing how children sometimes have more sense than adults, asking simple questions that jar us back to reality.

I was speaking to a group of young people, primarily aged 12-18, at an apologetics conference at a local Christian school, addressing the issues of sexuality and gender. Towards the end of my presentation, I played a video about the man who first identified as a woman but now identifies as a mythical, female dragon.

The video also mentioned another man who identifies as a woman, a white woman who identifies as black, a father of seven who identifies as a little girl, a man who identifies as a dog named Boomer, a woman who identifies as a cat, and a man who identifies as a parrot (and has had surgical modifications to make him look more parrot-like).

As always, I spoke about the compassion we needed to have for those who struggled with their gender identity, and I mentioned those who have genuine biological or chromosomal abnormalities. At the same time, I talked of the real danger of believing that perception is reality, and then I opened the floor for questions.

A young man asked me what would happen if he identified as a grown man. Would he be able to buy liquor?

What about a 12-year-old girl who identified as 18? Would she be allowed to get her driver's license?

What about a teenage boy who identified as Bill Gates? Would he be allowed to withdraw all of Gates' funds from the bank?

And what about another teenage boy who identified as a

dinosaur? Would this prove that dinosaurs are not extinct? And would he have the right to sue all scientists and textbooks for claiming that dinosaurs did not exist?

These kids were not minimizing the pain of those who struggle with gender identity issues (or other identity issues, including “transracial” issues and “trans-species” issues). Instead, they were challenging the idea that perception is reality, with each of their questions leading to the obvious reply of, “But you’re not \_\_\_\_\_” (fill in the blank, in this case, either “an adult” or “an 18-year-old” or “Bill Gates” or “a dinosaur”).

And that is the whole point.

Bruce Jenner is not a woman, Rachel Dolezal is not black, the cat woman is not a cat, the parrot man is not a parrot, the dog man is not a dog, the father of seven is not a little girl, and man who believes himself to be a female mythical dragon is neither female nor dragon.

So, I suggested that the kids try out this social experiment with the help of one of their parents. (Perhaps you would like to try it with one of your kids?)

Go into the local DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) with your child, preferably 12 or younger to underscore the point. (Be sure to video all this with your cell phone.)

Let’s say you go with your daughter, who then tells the person behind the counter that she is there to get her driver’s permit.

When she is told, “But you have to be least 16 (or whatever the age is in your state) to get a permit,” have her answer, “But I identify as 18, so I’d like to take the test, please.”

Obviously (or should I say “hopefully”?) there’s no possible way that the DMV would let her take the test, especially

because she couldn't produce ID verifying that she was 18.

But that again begs the question: Why can't she get ID saying she's 18 if she truly believes she is? After all, if a 12-year-old girl in Canada can be granted a new birth certificate, identifying her as male based entirely on her self-perceptions, why can't a 12-year-old girl be granted ID that says she's 18? If you can change your birth gender based on your perceptions, why can't you change your birth date?

To be sure, these kids were just asking logical questions, based on the examples they had seen on the video. But in reality, is it any more outlandish for a child to identify as an adult than for an adult to identify as a child? Or for a boy to identify as Bill Gates than for a woman to identify as a cat?

These kids had the sense to understand that perception is not reality, recognizing how society cannot function without constant reality checks – unless you think it's fine for a boy who identifies as an adult to buy liquor and for a young child to be able to get behind a steering wheel or for a teenage boy to be able to withdraw all your money from the bank or for another boy to be able to sue the scientific community for claiming that he, a dinosaur, doesn't exist.

Ironically, the school where I spoke is located in North Carolina, where the Obama administration is threatening to withhold as much as 4.5 billion dollars in federal funding unless the state allows boys who identify as girls to play on the girls' sports teams and share their locker rooms, bathrooms and showers.

I wonder what this administration would say in response to these kids' questions?

They can't have it both ways. Either perception is reality, or we had better keep boys out of the girls' locker rooms.