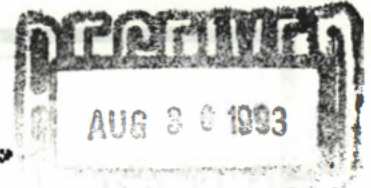


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Psalms 37:4

*Delight yourself in the Lord
and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

Grace and Lace Letter

For Christian Crossdressers, Transgenderists, and Transsexuals

August 1993

**Post Office Box 31253
Jackson, MS 39286-1253**

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A decorative arch of leaves and berries frames the title.

The New Creation

by Norman Grubb

I know that nothing good lives in me —Romans 7:18

MISTAKENLY, WE OFTEN seem to think that God put Adam in the Garden to test him, to see whether he would obey or not. Not so. It was because by no other means could Adam discover his own innate *helplessness*.

It was not, as we often erroneously think, that Adam could have done the good deed of rejecting the advances of Satan. If that were so, man could be good by his own unaided effort. No, he was placed between those two trees to learn that of himself he can do nothing good, and that he is not expected to!

He was put into the Garden to was to learn the basic fact of his creation, that his own human spirit is an empty, helpless vessel so far as living the good life is concerned. "In me, that is in my flesh [my humanity] dwells no good thing."

Man was not created to *be good*. He was created to be *indwelt* by the Good One. The negative command not to eat of the tree, followed by the direct temptation to do so, was not to stir into action some potential capacity in Adam for obedience and goodness, nor to demonstrate that he could be good if he would. It was to reveal to Adam the one essential point he had to learn about himself—that he was created helpless so far as being and doing good is concerned.

Adam was to learn that his little human spirit had one marvelous potentiality: his spirit could be the container of the Divine Spirit via the Tree of Life, and yet he would not lose his own individuality. The glorious fact is that the two—human and Divine—can dwell together, each in the other, in an eternal fruitful bond of union. □

SELF DISCOVERY

by Rebecca (Becky) Allison, M.D.

This is the fifth issue of G&L Letter to which I have contributed. It will be my most intensely personal article, even more so than my first article, "Answered Prayers," which was reprinted in Femme Mirror. The personal revelations are appropriate, even necessary, in view of the changes which have occurred in my life over the last two years.

Perhaps you long time readers have noticed a slight change in the focus of this publication. In the past, it was sent as a letter to Christian crossdressers; but the most recent issues have been directed, as on our front page, to our entire community, or as Lee would abbreviate it, "CD/TG/TS".

Why the change? Because in the past, Lee and Jaye have had no background to relate to transsexuals. They had the "CD/TG" covered quite well; but they didn't have a writer who could speak to the particular spiritual concerns of the transsexual.

Now they have one.

I want to share with you the events which led to my acceptance of my transsexualism. Next to my own personal relationship with Jesus Christ, this acceptance is the most basic and profound experience of my life. It has caused the reordering of all my life's plans and priorities. Perhaps my story will encourage and strengthen others in the same position.

I have known from earliest memories: I don't fit in. I was never "one of the guys". As I remarked in group therapy, "I feel as though my whole life has been an out-of-body experience." And from my teen years, I have been aware of the reason for my difference. And I was frightened, because I could imagine even then the enormous life changes which would result from admitting transsexualism. I simply wasn't prepared to make such fundamental changes.

So when I read in the medical school library the statement -- I believe it was

in Benjamin's text -- "anyone who has had a sexual experience as a male cannot be transsexual." I was almost relieved. "So I am a crossdresser," I thought, "and I can experience this part of myself and retain a 'normal' life." I didn't realize Benjamin's statement was totally erroneous.

For two decades I persuaded myself. "I can crossdress once or twice a year at out of town conventions." I married, fathered a son, and became well established in my profession.

And I was miserable. I changed practice locations half a dozen times, looking for peace and fulfillment.

As I related in "Answered Prayers", I experienced great inner turmoil and prayed for deliverance from my transgendered nature. I could never understand how God would let me remain in such a dilemma. Finally He gave me a reassurance of His love for me as He created me. As I studied scriptures, I realized the verses quoted to condemn transgendered persons did not relate at all to our situations: they have been replaced by Jesus's new covenant of love.

So I found some peace and self acceptance. But I remained nervous and unhappy over my family situation. And with good reason: when I finally shared my story with my spouse, it was met with as much resistance as I had feared. The subsequent months were a tedious drama, in which it seemed every scene had to be played in sequence, until the inevitable separation. Only now that we know we will have separate lives can we finally speak as friends.

The drive toward fuller acceptance of my true self intensified. Like a hyperbolic curve, it increased slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, but accelerated and reached an "elbow" where the slope rose like a rocket. My whole life, waking and sleeping, revolved around Becky.

In seeking out others like myself, I met Lee Frances. Surely it was God's direction, not coincidence, that brought

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together two transgendered Christians living within five miles of each other.

The more I talked with others in the gender community, hearing their life stories, I became aware of distinct differences in the pattern of their lives. Many were secure in their identity as men with a strong feminine side, finding expression of their personality with temporary assumption of a woman's appearance. And they were happy to return to their male persona afterwards.

Was I supposed to feel that way? But I didn't. Every few hours of feminine expression intensified the need for more. I never wanted to give it up.

Others had a different pattern. They told me of years of frustration, dissatisfaction, and depression before finally finding peace. I listened to them and thought of the old Roberta Flack song, "Telling My Whole Life With Your Words." Because they were describing my life exactly.

And, of course, these persons were transsexual.

With fascination and fear I realized: I don't want to look like a woman part of the time. I want to -- I must -- BE a woman forever, as I feel I already am. And yes, that means I do **not** want to be a man. Never again.

Such thoughts needed a long time for consideration before I could act on them. I did not want to fall into "secondary transsexualism" by mistake. But over months of thought, prayer, and therapy, I came to understand: This is nothing new. This is who I always have been. When viewed in this context, my whole life makes sense.

But what implications did this new understanding have for my spiritual life? I had gone through such a struggle to be confident that God accepted me and loved me as a crossdresser; did I have to start over and reconcile my transsexualism with my Christianity?

The verses usually quoted with regard to crossdressing (Deuteronomy 22:5 and I Corinthians 6:9) might be used in reference to transsexualism only by someone with no understanding of the situation. Neither I, nor any other transsexual person with whom I have spoken, consider ourselves a "man in a woman's garment" or "effeminate".

I am not a man. I am a woman behaving appropriately for my gender.

How do I know I am a woman? I have the anatomy of a man. But just as surely as I know my anatomy, I know my soul -- my spirit. And I have the soul of a woman. I did not arrive at this knowledge hastily. It comes from hours of study, prayerful meditation, and prayer. And I know I have the assurance of the Holy Spirit and the peace that passes all understanding.

And what of the argument, "You should not alter the body God gave you"? Does this apply to cleft palates, congenital heart disease, or even big noses? Who believes it is a sin to correct a ventricular septal defect? And so what is the difference with an unwanted part of the anatomy? Why can we not view our anatomy as a birth defect? In my opinion it is exactly that.

The part of me which is eternal is my spirit, not my body. The body is temporal and so, if my eternal spirit and my mortal body are in irreconcilable conflict, I may alter my body to resolve the conflict.

In summary, I can find no scriptural reference to transsexualism. I must rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit to show me God's will in such a circumstance. He has done so, and I know His peace.

And so I have joyfully accepted my womanhood, even with the implications for total change in every relationship in my life. My marriage is gone; my career will survive, but I will start over one more time. And I have never been more excited about life. In less than one year, I hope to be living and working full time as Dr. Rebecca Allison.

And I hope, in subsequent issues of this letter, to keep you aware of God's working in my life as I continue this greatest adventure imaginable. I pray you will be touched and blessed also.

I would love to hear from you with regard to your spiritual journey. Give me your suggestions on future topics regarding transsexualism and spiritual issues. All will be considered.

Rebecca Allison
P.O. Box 16368
Jackson, MS 39236-6368

BEING MISLED IS EASY

by
Jaye

NO one wants to be misled. At least, no one does when they take a moment to think about their personal relationship with Christ.

Still there are a lot of folks who seem intent on doing some misleading. There are a lot of human reasons for this, of course. In and under these "human" reasons such as ego and power issues, there is but one real reason.

Christ has promised us, no one can pluck us out of His hand. This means, to me, even the Enemy is powerless to remove someone from the place of Grace Christ has given them. The Enemy knows he has lost the struggle to control the person when they placed total and childish simple FAITH in Christ. So... the Enemy does all he can to interfere with a person's doing this.

Well intentioned people, people who honestly think they are doing others a valued service unwittingly serve the purpose of the Enemy. It is not only dedicated worshipers of Satan who serve his purposes. Those who proclaim anything but the Supremacy of the Propitiation of Christ for the "redemption" (buying back of something previously held) of humanity also serve the purpose of the Enemy.

The Enemy uses many tools. The Enemy is supernatural and thus infinitely more powerful and infinitely more intellectually capable than even the most astute of us humans. In dealing with him, we have but one infallible source of strength: The Holy Spirit of God. We are promised access to the infinite power of God when we invoke it in the Name of Jesus Christ. Only in this way can we blunt the assaults of the Enemy in our lives. Without this infinite Divine

Power Christ gives us, we are helpless.

Once a person submits and yields all of her or him self to the Lord Jesus Christ, believing in total commitment in the promises of Christ, then the Enemy has no more power to remove that person from the very hand of Christ. But....

But, yes there is a but... it is this. The Enemy can still harass and still trouble the believer. The Enemy does this, not for revenge, but for what is to him a very practical reason. If the Enemy can harass the believer into doubting her or his faith, the Enemy can render the witness of the believer null and void.

If the Enemy can't "have" you, he will certainly try to neutralize you, try to make you ineffective and useless as a servant to Christ. He does this in many ways.

If you are a femme-dresser, you are a ready made target for the Enemy's number one weapon. The number one weapon the Enemy uses is GUILT! With guilt the Enemy instills a sense of unworthiness and sinfulness without any promise of an escape. He seeks to keep us focused on how miserable and how unworthy we are by piling on the sense of guilt endlessly.

The fact is, our worthiness is not at issue. Christ has settled all such issues by taking our sins with Him to the Cross and there paying the price we do not have the ability to pay. The Enemy would confuse us, mislead us into thinking we must in some way earn our place of justification before the Throne of God. He uses this to instill guilt at every turn.

None of us, no human knows the wonderful Divine

written Word of God as well as does the Enemy. He knows just what verse or section to use to hammer us into being guilty as a way of weakening our Faith and hoping to destroy our witness.

Deuteronomy 22:5 is one of the Enemy's favorite texts when it comes to making a femme-dresser feel guilty. The Enemy knows Christ has already fulfilled ALL the requirements of ALL of the LAW for us because our sinful nature makes it impossible for us to fulfill it for ourselves. But, unless WE know this and unless WE WALK in a simple CHILD LIKE FAITH, knowing Christ did in fact PAY IN FULL THE PRICE WE COULD NOT PAY.... then the Enemy has us right where he wants us.... over a barrel... a guilt barrel.

There is but one reliable way by which the believer can verify the teaching of one such as this writer... **TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER!** The Holy Word tells us to test the Spirits for no witness can testify Jesus Christ is Lord unless by the power of the Holy Spirit. Likewise and by extension, no teacher, preacher, theologian, etc. can set forth Divine Truth unless it be by the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Do not believe what any human writes or says... not even this one. Believe what the Holy Spirit dwelling in you validates and confirms. Take not my word for it... Take it to Christ in Prayer. These injunctions are true and worthy.

So for the femme-dresser, when doubt and guilt come upon you, the power is yours in the Name of Jesus Christ, to turn aside the blandishments of the Enemy and to send him packing.. in thus to renew your Faith and your JOY in Christ.

Jaye Reviere, Ph.D. DD

**I KNOW I'M
SOMEBODY**



**'cause God don't
make no junk!!**

WHY ME, LORD?

Has this been your cry to our Lord? "Why did this have to happen to me?" "I have prayed and prayed. Lord, for this affliction to be removed from me. Why must I dress and act in the manner of the female gender? Yet I feel so natural and composed when I'm in the femme mode; it's almost as if I should have **been** a woman, but I know you make no mistakes. I asked you to remove the tobacco habit from me. You did. I asked you to remove alcohol abuse from my life. You did. Again my cry was for you to remove the addictive use of prescription drugs from my life. You did. Then I asked you to remove this addiction I have to women's clothes. At least I think it's an addiction. Society looks on it as disgusting, shameful, repulsive; not to say what my wife thinks of it. And if I am ever discovered, my marriage [or relationship] and job are in jeopardy. I couldn't face it all." You have prayed and prayed, and in some cases lit candles in church asking for deliverance. All to no avail.

If you have prayed this way, take heart in what the Lord told St. Paul when he asked three times for the Lord to remove the thorn in his flesh given to him to keep him from becoming too conceited. "My grace is sufficient for you... My power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9) We don't know why we were chosen to be CDs or why we were made this way. Your thinking may go: "Well, St. Paul's conceit is not immoral like CDing is." WHAT!! Immoral? How dare you!! Crossdressing is like everything else. In itself it is not immoral until it is put to immoral use. I am talking about the innocuous aspect of crossdressing. We are normal heterosexual males who have a pronounced feminine side in our psyche (soul, mind) which demands expression in our imitating women, given the opportunity.

Our daily lives are no different from any other responsible male. We are scientists and janitors and everything in between, with no distinguishing marks to betray or status as CDs (unless you run into the office for a moment after changing into men's

clothes, having forgotten to remove lipstick and earrings! My place of part-time employment knows I am a CD and my big boss doesn't care what I wear as long as I generate sales. My immediate supervisor can't handle CDing, so I acquiesce to her good pleasure and thus keep peace in the family.) I see no immorality in our brand of CDing. It is a "thorn" in that we have to conceal it and worry about discovery. This kind of weakness can be made into a strength.

I used to pray for deliverance using all of those choice adjectives as I prayed, telling God that my CD "habit" was a vile, repulsive, disgusting habit. The truth is, I didn't feel that way at all, but God said in Deuteronomy 22:5. I was an abomination to him. I couldn't let him know how much I enjoyed it. The laughable thing is, I was trying to "con" God by speaking to him in terms I felt would tickle his ear. He knew those were baseless, empty prayers, as I enjoyed CDing and God KNEW I did. It was later I learned he made me this way. I came out of the womb a CD because he "created my inmost being and knit me together in my mother's womb." (Psalm 129:13). In asking for deliverance we are asking that God's divine plan for our lives be breached. We may as well pray for the color of our eyes to be changed to our choice of color. [Pink and blue are my favorite colors, in that order. One of the nicest things about coming out of the closet in 1989 was I could wear my pink suit with abandon! The sun could shine on it and intensify its beauty. I am satisfied with my blue eyes, so I thank God for my pink suit and blue eyes.]

God has said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. If you want to label CDing as a weakness (as I did for my entire adult life until 1989) then it is a weakness and you're stuck with it. On the other hand, when you finally accept yourself as God made you and quit banging on the gates of glory to be "delivered" from the way God made you, then you will relax and, for the first time in your life, pray to God with a free, unshackled mind. You can expect and re-

ceive answers to your prayers as a CD/TG/TS free of the false guilt that Satan lays on you in his war against God. Let God handle Satan. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of THIS world [dogging our heels --ed.], against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12) As the scripture said, "High places". Out of our reach, but not out of God's reach. Every one of us that Satan can keep in a defeated state because of CDing or being TG/TS is a credit to him. Yes, CD/TG/TS is a strength when we release ourselves from hostage by accepting the way God made us and thanking him for it. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thess. 5:18). It doesn't say "In everything, except CD/TG/TS. It says EVERYTHING. Webster defines "everything" with one word: ALL.

In our new found strength, when we receive no answer to a specific prayer, we can accept God's "no" and not say, "Oh, he doesn't answer because I am a CD/TG/TS." God's grace is sufficient and is all we need. We can now worship Him in spirit and in truth (Johhn 4:24). We are free in the Holy Spirit to actually thank him. We can say with King David, "I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made... and that my soul well knows." (Psalm 139:14).

Christian transsexuals: God bless you. You either will give, or have already given, your bodies over to a surgeon for a "makeover" via sexual reassignment surgery. Don't stop there. Be all you want to be both physically and spiritually. You have lost a lot of blood to become what you are. Christ lost his blood to pay for the sins of mankind, of which all are included. Let him give you a spiritual makeover, and then you are complete in him.

So, my dear sisters, let's lay aside the matters of gender; put on our "pink suits"; and stand, sit, or kneel in the middle of the room and praise and thank God for the way he made us. Step out of the door of the spiritual hostage life, into the sunshine of God's freedom and love, and see the beautiful person he made you in your spirit.

Experience his liberating love and grace which will see you through the rest of your life in the strength he has made out of our weakness.

-- Lee Frances



Love all God's creation,
the whole and every
grain of sand in it. Love
every leaf, every ray of
God's light. Love the
animals, love the plants,
love everything. If you
love everything, you will
perceive the divine
mystery in things. Once
you perceive it, you will
begin to comprehend it
better every day.

—Dostoevski



Lee Frances/Editor
Grace & Lace Letter
Jackson MS 39286-1253

Dear Friends,

Rebecca is in Atlanta on personal business so I had to type the Letter Section and this communique. Rebecca is responsible for the fine look of G&LL as she has done it all on her computer. She has never said so but I know there is some personal sacrifice involved. Thank you Rebecca, again. She always replies, "I'm just glad I am able to do it. So am I. Thank you Lord for causing our paths to cross. First our Lord put Jaye and I into each others lives and then Rebecca. This issue and others are a testimony in our lives to accomplish His purpose in all of our lives. I thank ' God we can be of service to Him in this way. When I first proposed G&LL all I got were blank stares. From God I got a "go ahead" and I went and have been going ever since and will continue to go 'til the breath of life leaves me. If you have a literary contribution, please send it along for consideration. It can be in the form of a letter----you don't have to write an article but we do need to expand the pages of G&LL. Your help would be appreciated. Our next issue will be in Nov

Do you find it next to impossible to thank God you are a CD/TG/TS? Does it seem strange to thank God for what you may consider to be on the same level as an addiction? Read on. Here's a free book for you.

PRISON TO PRAISE is not about a prison with bars, but about a prison of circumstances and how to be set free. (M.C.)

Now I don't want to suggest this book is a "how to" to eliminate CD?TG?TS in your life. This is what you happen to be and in this context you can thank God how fearfully and wonderfully you are made. You can be set free from guilt and self condemnation thru thanking Him. Are there people in your life who reject you because of your lifestyle? Thank God for them!. By now you are considering I may be a bit off the trolly. You have to read the book and see the whole picture. The Bible says very simply"--give thanks in ALL circumstances for THIS is the will of God for you."

"A most inspired account of the grace of God working in a human life---
-Norman Vincent Peal.

"This is the book that has made me understand many of the seemingly awful things that have happened to me in the past and has taught me not to judge circumstances by their appearance---If we can praise God no matter what, it can turn out to be the most wonderful blessing in the world."

-Gloria Swanson

Merlin Canothers is the author. He is simply an Army Chaplain God chose to use in the ministry of praise he has been blessed with.

We have purchased, at printer's cost, a limited number of copies to share with you. Don't wait--request your free copy now.

That's it for this time. Now we "go to press!" Happily, gleefully, joyfully praising the Lord and thanking Him we are what He made us and accept that with thanksgiving.. I am thankful for the love He has given me for YOU.

Lee Frances

Lee Frances

Position Statement

Blanket Requirement for Real-Life Test Before Hormonal Therapy: In Our Opinion, Inadvisable

Ms. Dallas Denny, M.A.
 Executive Director

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12/31/92

For immediate release

This position statement was approved by the AEGIS Interdisciplinary Advisory Board, which is comprised of 29 men and women who are volunteers serving without compensation. They represent various professions, including psychiatry, psychology, sexology, endocrinology, plastic and reconstructive surgery, and electrology. Consumers with gender dysphoria are well-represented on the board.

A number of gender clinics, including the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto and the Rosenberg Clinic in Galveston, Texas, have a blanket criterion for the initiation of hormonal therapy: the individual must make the necessary arrangements to change gender roles and cross-live on a full-time basis for an extended period of time before hormonal therapy is initiated. This is not required by the Standards of Care of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc.

The reasons for this requirement have been given as clinical judgment, a need for the individual to experience the new gender role before making irreversible hormonal changes, and concern about some of the effects of hormones and the medical risks involved in their administration. In a few cases (not necessarily at the facilities we have mentioned), this criterion seems to have been set up as a roadblock, with the idea that those who want sex reassignment badly enough will persevere, no matter what the obstacle.

Advisory

It is our position that the psychological and social effects which occur as a result of preparing for and beginning a period of full-time cross-living are in most cases potentially far more disruptive than the lingering effects or physical dangers of a short period on hormones. We believe that requiring a mandatory period of real-life test before initiation of hormonal therapy can be and often is harmful, and should not be a universal requirement or even the usual rule. While we agree that the individual should have experience in the new gender role, we urge practitioners and clinics who adhere to this practice of global requirement of full-time crossliving before hormones to change it.^{1,2}

Discussion

Hormones are not without danger, and some of their effects, like breast development in the genetic male and hirsutism and voice-deepening in the genetic female, are indeed irreversible.³ Hormones should not be administered except in accordance with the Standards of Care of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc.; that is, the individual should be in therapy and have been given a diagnosis of gender dysphoria by a clinical behavioral scientist. Before hormonal therapy is initiated, care should be taken to rule out other conditions which can masquerade as transsexualism.

Real-life test does not occur in a vacuum. Friends and family must be informed, marriages must be dissolved, and accommodations must be made at

work—if the individual is fortunate enough to keep his or her position. Not only the primary client, but others are affected: parents, children, husbands and wives, neighbors, employers, co-workers.

The result of failed hormonal therapy is at worst some physical characteristics which run counter to type and which may be difficult for the individual to explain. The result of a failed real-life test is a life in shambles. Family, friends, and employers cannot be untold about transsexualism, marriages and family life are unlikely to be resumed, and lost employment is unlikely to be regained. A non-passable appearance, which is likely if the individual has not been on hormones for a significant period, can be highly stigmatizing, and can place the individual in physical danger in this era of hate crimes. Furthermore, a failed real-life test can result in a high potential for self-destructive behavior, including suicide.

A stigmatizing appearance is not necessarily a contraindication for sex reassignment, but it is certainly a disadvantage, and one which can be lessened by the provision of hormonal therapy prior to actual changing gender role. The individual who has had such treatment is more likely to be viable—and therefore successful—when the role of choice is assumed.

Globally denying needed medical treatment, including hormonal therapy, in persons diagnosed as transsexual, or making it contingent on the individual structuring his or her life style according to the demands of the caregiver or clinic is in our opinion needlessly obstructionistic, a holdover from the days of less sophisticated treatment.

We believe that although conservatism is usually given as a reason for requiring cross-living before initiation of hormonal therapy, it is not in reality a conservative approach, except from the purely medical standpoint of the effect hormones have on the body—a narrow viewpoint, in light of the profound and largely irreversible social changes that real-life test requires.

¹ Administration of small doses of estrogens has proved to be a useful tool in differential diagnosis. Male transvestic fetishists on a regimen of estrogens are likely to show reduced desire for sex reassignment.

² Procedures such as orchidectomy, hysterectomy, or sex reassignment surgery should not be performed before the individual is living successfully in the gender of choice. This is in accordance with the HBGDA Standards of Care. We support the Standards of Care.

³ Hormonal therapy in genetic females has more profound and irreversible effects than in genetic males, and more precautions are in general indicated, but this advisory applies to both genetic males and genetic females.

ON GENDER DYSPHORIA AND THE CHURCH

by Terri Main

NOTE: Terri Main is a new woman (July 1993) who has written extensively on transsexualism and spiritual issues. Her essays on the Compuserve bulletin board system have been a great blessing to many transsexual persons, myself included. The following selections from "On Gender Dysphoria and the Church" are reprinted by permission from her Compuserve library. -- RA

Talking about THE CHURCH is sort of like talking about THE COMPUTER or THE TREE or THE BIRD. Each denomination is different. In fact, each local congregation is different. So, maybe I should clarify the perspective from which this essay is written. I am writing from the point of view of orthodox, fundamental Christianity. I am writing as one who believes the Bible to be the revealed Word of God, who believes that Christ was the Son of God in substance as well as spirit, who believes that Christ's death on the cross acted as an atonement for the sins of the world, who believes in a personal God, a personal salvation, and a personal relationship with God through Christ. Much of what is said in this piece would apply to any mainstream denomination, including both Protestant and Catholic.

I remember growing up in the church. I was born on Sunday and was in church Wednesday evening. I've gone ever since. My parents and grandparents were active in the church, but mine was no second hand experience. I personally prayed and read my Bible. I personally experienced the presence of God in my life. Around our house, God was no philosophical construct; he was an objective reality like another member of the family. As a child and teenager, I had one major prayer: "Lord, please either make me a girl, or make me like other boys." The Lord in His wisdom did neither. I didn't see any conflict between being a transsexual and being a Christian. I still don't, but now I know there are others who do.

What is the source of this feeling?

The answer is simple: ignorance. Ignorance of the nature of transsexualism and ignorance of scripture combine to cause many well meaning Christian people to brand transsexualism as a sin.

Now, before condemning the actions of Christians who vociferously oppose transsexualism, remember that their motives are noble, even if their actions are not. If I believe that you are doing something that will cause eternal harm to you, I have a moral obligation to try to save you from that harm. The best analogy is that of a person wandering out into a street and not seeing a car racing toward them. A bystander would have a moral obligation to warn that person that a car was coming. Such is the motivation of the Christian warning a person away from sin.

So the problem is not usually motivation, but rather understanding. How do people often misunderstand transsexualism?

I think the name transsexualism is what throws a lot of people off. They seem to take the "sex" part as referring to the sex act (an act many of us on hormones would find difficult to perform anyway) rather than to gender. I prefer to talk about gender dysphoria. It sounds more clinical, and it is more accurate. It usually won't lead people to misunderstand the sexual connotations of the condition.

People who condemn transsexualism as a sin not only are ignorant of gender issues, they are also ignorant of the Bible on this subject. This area simply is not covered in scripture one way or another. It falls into the category of "working out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Two scriptures which some point to as condemning transsexualism are Deuteronomy 22:5 and I Corinthians 6:9. In the first, "wearing apparel pertaining to a woman" is condemned. I might add, in the next verse so is taking a mother bird away with her brood; building a house without a parapet; and

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sowing a vineyard with two different kinds of seeds. In understanding this scripture, we must look at the cultural setting. In many idolatrous practices, great orgies would be held in which men and women would crossdress for the purpose of sexual arousal and ritualistic indiscriminate sex. Such bacchanals often ended with some men castrating themselves and becoming eunuch priests to pagan goddesses. From the transsexual's point of view, we are not men wearing dresses; we are women -- in training before SRS -- in body afterward. In fact, it is most appropriate that we dress as women, since it is proper for women to wear women's clothing! I might add that this is the only scripture in the entire Bible dealing with crossdressing at all. It is poor hermeneutics (scriptural analysis) to build an entire doctrine from a single verse, especially a verse from Old Testament law most of which has been superseded by the grace of the new covenant in Christ.

The second scripture lists a series of types of sinners who are not to inherit God's kingdom. In the King James version this reads: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor EFFEMINATE, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but you are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God." (I Cor. 6:9-11) The word, "effeminate", is the word which causes some people problems. However, it is a mistranslation. It is better translated "Catamite". Catamites in Greek cultures were prostitutes. But the word also applied to those who purchased their services as well as those who managed their careers. Most modern translations [are] more accurate.

So, if it is not specifically condemned by Scripture, how then can transsexualism be viewed? In my opinion, I believe it can be viewed in much the same manner we would view a birth defect. If there is a defect which can be cured by surgery, most Christians would applaud the medical community as an agent of healing. They would not

say, "That's the way God made you, you should stay as you are" to the person with a club foot, with a cleft palate, or even with a crooked nose, big ears, or other facial features which could be corrected by surgery.. Why should not the same be said to the transsexual who simply wishes to live a normal life as a woman? Not a perverted life; just a simple, and in the case of the Christian transsexual, a virtuous life as a woman.

There is one other gauge the Christian has to judge an action. That gauge is the peace of God. At salvation, the Holy Spirit puts a type of spiritual barometer inside. It quickens the spirit when an action is considered which is wrong. From personal experience, I have the peace of God about what is happening. I don't always understand what is happening, but God gives me his assurance that he has everything under control. His presence holds me firm when the painful episodes come. Without his presence and peace, I'm not sure what I would have done a few years ago. I might not even be here writing this essay.

About nine months ago, I was crossliving part time, attending church alternately as a male and as a female (different churches). I was wondering whether I might have been mistaken, so I set forth a test for myself. I prayed and said, "Lord, I want to do what's right. So, I won't set any routine for my dressing. I will simply go by the unction of your spirit. As I feel, so will I dress." I have never felt the leading of the spirit to dress as a male ever again.

My transition so far has been amazingly smooth. I have seen literal miracles of finance, timing, and circumstances occur. In short, I have seen the hand of God in everything that has happened so far. I believe God has a purpose in this. Romans 8:28 says "God works all things together for the good of those who love him, and are the called according to his purpose." A looser translation put it this way: "God is putting all the pieces of the puzzle together." To me that is exciting. In the words of an old song of the church, "I don't know about tomorrow. I don't seem to understand. But I know who holds tomorrow. He's the one who holds my hand."

"I enjoyed the sample copy of GLL very much and would like the current issue and to be placed on your subscription list."

MI

"I enjoy being a man but also enjoy passing as a woman. Your articles in GLL are sure comforting and I fully agree that God loves us, CDing and all.. I'm not sure I can say my CDing is a blessing but I realize that the "softer side" is an asset which can help me further the Lord's work."

MS

"I am a 25 year old Black Transsexual person who is very active in the Church. From the moment I accepted my CDing I began to have some questions about it. concerning the Bible. Most of my questions stem from I Cor. 6. and from Hebrews 9:12. Is CDing sacrilegious?"

KY

NO. CDING IS NOT SACRELIGE. (DESECRATING WHAT IS SACRED). THE I CORINTHIANS QUESTIONS WERE ANSWERED IN THE SAMPLE COPY OF G&LL WE SENT TO YOU AND THE HEBREWS QUESTION IS ANSWERED IN THE SEPERATE ARTICLE, "IS GOD AGAINST US" OUR REDEMPTION IS COMPLETE AND CD/TG/TS HAS NO BEARING ON IT. THANKS FOR SEND ING FOR THE G&LL SAMPLE. (LEE)

"The opportunities for me to dress have been few but God in His goodness and graciousness has allowed the desire to subside. He has shown me other ways to express my feminine side; in loving and caring ways. He is allowing me to show a love to my wife and children that I don't often get to show. I have also been writing to a few sisters encouraging them and sharing Christ with them. At least I can witness as to that which Christ has done for me in releasing my guilt, etc. The Ministry of G&LL has benefited me in many ways in the short time I have known it. Please pray for me as I pray for you and the ministry of G&LL.

FL

THIS LETTER SETS FORTH THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF G&LL; TO ENCOURAGE OUR DEAR SISTERS TO TO GIVE CHRIST THE PRIME PLACE IN OUR LIVES. YES, I PRAY FOR YOU AND MANY OTHERS AND I ASK THE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME FOR MYSELF AND G&LL. SEND ME A POSTCARD SAYING YOU ARE PRAYING FOR US AND YOUR NAME WILL GO ON MY PRAYER LIST. (LEE)

"I am very glad to hear of a Christian perspective which is in touch with the Gender Community. Both of my sisters go to our Bible Study and are always throwing quotes around, no matter who interprets it. So when the time comes that I may have to confront them with my CDing I need to be able to defend my convictions and truly in my heart I know the barrier was made by society and CDing is not something that gives a person a one-way ticket to hell.

PA

Your Publication clearly explains why I feel no conflict with my status as a Baptist and a pre-op transsexual. May I have a copy of "Is God Against Us?" (sent-ed) I am trying to convince my Bible Study that a sex change is not evil. Please send G&LL to my Church at the enclosed address. (sent-ed)

Launa [REDACTED], CA

That's it for this time. May God give the increase. Rebecca is away and as she does all of the typing on her computer (thank God for her) I have to do the letters this way. God bless all of you. You have my love always.

-LEE



"Bad enough, I say, to have women ordained in the first place. Now, what was all that about ordaining some Lebanese woman? What?"

DUNAGIN'S PEOPLE



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"RELAX, THAT'S NOT A FEMALE PRIEST. IT'S OUR REGULAR PRIEST IN DRAG."

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